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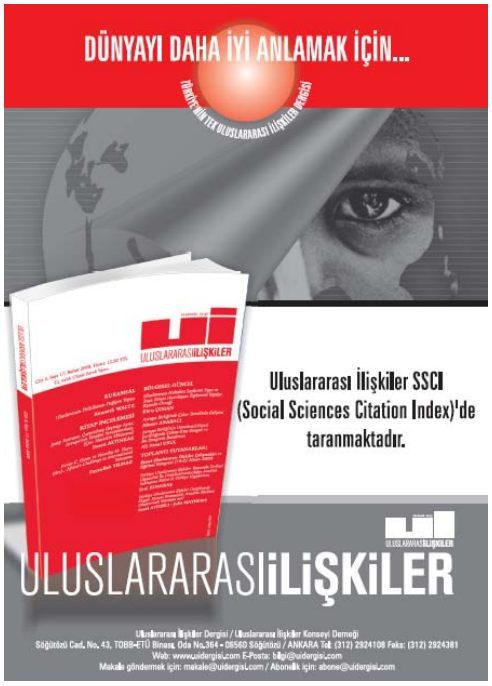

The Middle East and Religious Fundamentalism as a Source of Identity-Based Conflicts

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The Middle East and Religious Fundamentalism as a Source of Identity-Based Conflicts

Dan TSCHIRGI*

ABSTRACT

An understanding of religious fundamentalism as a source of conflict in the Middle East is significantly furthered by examining "asymmetrical threats" in other areas. This article suggests that a particular form of asymmetrical conflict ("Marginalized Violent Internal Conflict"[MVIC]) was proliferating well before September 11, 2001, and that examples appeared in Mexico and Egypt, as well as possibly in Nigeria, Chile and the Philippines. Arguing that the "War on Terrorism" may be the result of MVIC having been raised to the level of Marginalized Violent International Conflict, the author examines policy implications raised by the goal of global security.

Keywords: *Al-Qaeda, Arab World, Asymmetrical Conflict, Chiapas, Egypt*

Orta Doğu ve Kimlik Temelli Çatışmaların Kaynağı Olarak Köktendincilik

ÖZET

Orta Doğu'daki çatışmanın kaynağı olan köktendincilik, başka bölgelerdeki "asimetrik tehditler" incelenerek daha rahat anlaşılabilmektedir. Bu makalede asimetrik çatışmanın özel bir türünün ("Marjinal Şiddetli İç Çatışma "[MŞİÇ]) 11 Eylül 2001'den epeyce önce de artmakta olduğu ve bunun örneklerinin de Meksika ve Mısır'da, muhtemelen Nijerya, Şili ve Filipinler'de de görüldüğü belirtilmektedir. "Teröre Karşı Savaş"ın MŞİÇ'nin Marjinal Şiddetli Uluslararası Çatışma seviyesine çıkmasının sonucu olduğunu öne süren bu çalışmada yazar, küresel güvenlik amacıyla birlikte ortaya çıkan politika yansımalarını incelemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: *El Kaide, Arap Dünyası, Asimetrik Çatışma, Chiapas, Mısır*

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ULUSLARARASİİLİŞKİLER, Cilt 2, Sayı 8, Kış 2005-2006, s. 151-165.

A major contention of this work is that an understanding of religious fundamentalism as a source of identity-based conflict in the Middle East is significantly furthered by examining "asymmetrical threats" in areas far removed from that region. The following pages will first elaborate on the point that has just been made; second, examine the nature and dynamics of the main fundamentalist religious threat to world order in the Middle East; and, finally, offer some thoughts on the quest for security in light of that threat.

Marginalized Violent Internal Conflict as a Possibly Global Phenomenon

The term "asymmetrical threat" is understood here to signify an actual or potential conflict in which the protagonists are characterized by enormous disparities of power. Such threats are most clearly evident when one protagonist is a non-state actor bent on challenging either a state or the state system itself.

In the early 1990s there erupted an armed struggle in Mexico that some hailed as the world's first "post-modern" conflict: the Zapatista Rebellion.[1] The revolt in Chiapas' Highlands was waged against the Mexican state by a relatively small number of insurgents. According to the rebels, they - and not the Mexican government - represented the state's true values.

At the same time, and some seven thousand miles away, the *Gama'a al-Islamiyya* voiced the same argument in its struggle against the Egyptian state. Rooted in the cultural context of Upper Egypt, the *Gama'a* also pitted its own small numbers of insurgents against the might of Egypt's government. Despite clear differences, the two rebellions shared a range of significant features. Both sprang from communities for whom economic, social and political marginalization had long been a reality. Both were based in communities that had long been geographically isolated from centers of national power and which were culturally distinct from the dominant national societies. Both communities had experienced, in the relatively recent past, pronounced hopes for socio-economic improvement, and both had also seen those hopes

[1] In the 1990s two researchers at the RAND Corporation, John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, noticed that the Zapatistas were making good use of the internet. This led them to theorize a post-modern dimension to the revolt. For a critical view see Chris Hables Gray, "Real War 2000: The Crisis in Postmodern War", http://www.routledge-ny.com/ref/cyborgcitizen/cycitpgs/realwar.html. For a more sympathetic treatment, see Maria Elena Martinez Torres, "The Internet: Post-Modern Struggle By the Dispossessed of Modernity", hhtp:// www.infoamerica.org/articulos/m/martinez_torres.htm.

frustrated. Finally, in each case mobilization for violent political action had been spurred by syncretistic radical religious activism. [2]

I have shown elsewhere that in each case the combined force of economic and political marginalization, hopelessness and a syncretistic religious-based ideological certainty that "justice will always prevail" led the rebels to challenge the state despite the obviously enormous imbalance of power they faced:

> What made the mobilizers' message credible to those who followed their lead?...What caused these relatively small numbers of mainly impoverished Indian peasants in Mexico and lower stratum Upper Egyptians to believe they could force desired change despite the full military resources available to governing authorities? Undoubtedly the answer is complex and probably includes an intensity of frustration, anger and desperation that galvanized some to conclude that the effort must be made regardless of cost. But this alone cannot explain the conviction of those who took up arms that their cause would ultimately win. Perhaps the answer also partly lies in the deep impact of a cultural context permeated by a syncretistic religious orientation in which the miraculous or magical is accepted as a normal part of life. The suggestion is that the folk-religions of the Chiapas Highland peasant Indians and Upper Egyptian fellahin fostered cognitive frameworks that were receptive to the notion that a just cause will eventually triumph, regardless of objective power relationships. [3]

It is not surprising that unorthodox religious currents filled this role. Indeed, much of the "unorthodox" element of the mobilizing religious interpretations in both Chiapas and Upper Egypt lay precisely in their activist, militant challenges to the socio-political status quo. Thus, religion could simultaneously reinforce conservative demands for the affirmation of cultural identity and be a vehicle for radical demands for far-reaching socio-economic-political change. Sociologist Manuel Castells has summarized the attraction of militant affirmations of cultural identity in today's world:

> Globalization and informationalization, enacted by networks of wealth, technology and power, are transforming our world. They are enhancing our productive capacity, cultural creativity and

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[2] Dan Tschirgi, "Marginalized Violent Internal Conflict in the Age of Globalization: Egypt and Mexico", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No 3, Yaz 1999, p. 13-34; Dan Tschirgi, "In Egypt and Mexico, A New Type of Conflict: Zapatistas and Islamists Fight the Odds", *Le Monde Diplomatique*, January 2000.

[3] Tschirgi, "Marginalized Violent Internal Conflict", p. 26

> communication potential. At the same time, they are disenfranchising societies. As institutions of state and organizations of civil society are based on culture, history and geography, the sudden acceleration of the historical tempo, and the abstraction of power in a web of computers, are disintegrating mechanisms of social control and political representation...people all over the world resent loss of control over their lives, over their environments, over their jobs, and, ultimately, over the fate of the Earth. Thus, following an old law of social evolution, resistance confronts domination, empowerment reacts against powerlessness, and alternative projects challenge the logic embedded in the new global order.[4]

Another sociologist, David Apter, foreshadowed Castell's analysis of world trends years ago, when he argued that currents of modern life were relentlessly rendering increasing numbers of individuals socially, economically and politically "superfluous".[5]

Whether the sort of conflict that marked Chiapas and Egypt (which I have labeled "Marginalized Violent Internal Conflict" [MVIC]) has indeed become a widely spread "type" of asymmetrical conflict in the underdeveloped world remains an unverified, though intriguing, proposition. While parallel dynamics have been established in the cases of the Zapatistas and *Gama'a al-Islamiyya*, further investigation is clearly required before a category of conflict can credibly be claimed. Low intensity conflicts involving Nigeria's Ogoni People, the Mapuche in Chile and the Cordillera People of the Philippines offer compelling targets for further research in this regard. Each of these conflicts is decidedly asymmetrical, pitting insurgents who proclaim themselves as guardians of true national values against the forces of government.

To the extent that the MVIC model accurately describes some patterns of conflict, particularly in terms of the force of transcendent religious beliefs as militant mobilizing ideologies, it may well be true that on September 11 Osama bin Laden and his *Al-Qaeda* cohorts catapulted that sort of conflict to a higher level: Marginalized Violent *International* Conflict (MVIC-2). If so, it is a development that points to the most pressing political problem of the Twenty-First Century.

There can be no doubt that those who carried out the suicidal attacks on the United States on September 11 were inspired by a belief, based on religious conviction, in the irrelevance of objective power relation-

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[4] Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, Cilt III, "The Power of Identity", Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1997, p. 68-69.

[5] David E. Apter, *Rethinking Development: Modernization, Dependency and Postmodern Politics*, Newbury Park, Sage Publications, 1987, p. 308.

ships. A videotape in which Osama bin Laden is seen gloating over the September 11 attacks was captured by US officials in late 2001. The commentary of journalist James Poniewozik is incisive:

> ...the tape is a firsthand look at the absolute religious certainty of bin Laden and his followers. Repeatedly, he and the Sheikh talk about visions and dreams that associates had, before the attack, about planes crashing into buildings. This, perhaps, is something that Americans do not yet fully appreciate: these people live in another millennium, another mental universe. These are people who think magically, who see the world in terms of visions and fate, who honestly feel they have a divine mandate. We can say all we want, however truthfully, that Sept. 11 does not represent true Islam. But we will never fully understand it until we understand, as this video graphically showed, that their entire world is defined by their belief in divine sanction.[6]

On the surface, neither Osama bin Laden nor many of the September 11 attackers appear to fall into David Apter's category of "superfluous" individuals. Bin Laden enjoyed financial resources beyond the dreams of most men, many of the attackers were educated young Arab men who seemed to have had bright professional futures before them. What was there in the Middle East that made them feel "superfluous"?

Militant Religious Fundamentalism in the Middle East

More than fifty years ago, almost at the dawn of the era of Arab Independence, the Syrian historian and proponent of Pan-Arabism, Constantine Zurayk, attempted to identify both the requisites for obtaining Arab unity and possible obstacles to that goal. Zurayk cited industrialization, secularism, scientific training and the assimilation "of what is best in Western civilization" as four steps necessary for the Arab Nation's development. None of this, he argued, would be easy, and success would depend upon whether Arab Nationalism:

> becomes broad or narrow, tolerant or exclusive, progressive or reactionary - whether, in other words, it becomes the outward expression of an inner civilization or contracts upon itself and dies of suffocation....[7]

Zurayk offered this as a necessary (though not sufficient) basis for Arab development:

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[6] James Poniewozik, "The Banality of Evil", www.time.com/ (December 15, 2001).

[7] Constantine Zurayk, "The National and International Relations of the Arab States", T. Cuyler Young (ed.), *Near Eastern Culture and Society*, Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1951, p. 222.

> In facing the difficulties that now stand in the way of their national progress, and to be able to tackle the serious problems that are confronting them, the Arabs are in need of two things: enlightened and capable leadership and a radical change in their attitude toward life. From them the new attitude requires searching self-examination: merciless rejection of all weakening and reactionary factors in their national life; objective appreciation and cultivation of universal values in their culture; readiness to assimilate Western technique and, above all, the positive intellectual and spiritual tradition of the West.... Furthermore, the leaders of the revived Arab nation must be capable and progressive. They must have a real understanding of the political and social conditions of the modern world, and must be able to adjust to the requirements of those conditions.[8]

Today, these words echo with a sad hollowness, as though resounding from a moldy museum of faded wishes.

The ambitions of Arab Nationalists of Zurayk's ilk have long since been smashed on the rocks of Middle East political reality. The hope of "enlightened and capable leadership" has yielded to the reality of venal, authoritarian regimes whose existence depends, at best, on cowed acquiescence and, at worst, on sheer fear. Instead of a rejection of reactionary thinking, the past decades witnessed the ascendancy of exclusivist, obscurantist interpretations of Islam among the populations of Arab states. What has been created, instead of societies with "a real understanding of the political and social conditions of the modern world," is just the opposite: societies that in the main have been left behind by the world's dominant currents of thought and social and cultural development. How can this be explained?

The answer is largely to be found in the interplay between Arab and international politics. To its misfortune, the Arab World - because of oil, because of its strategic geography - was inevitably caught up in global politics almost as soon as its Era of Independence dawned. In their determination to prevail in global rivalry, the world's leading powers, caught up themselves in the Cold War, showed little concern for conditions within the Arab World. Local regimes, so long as they could link themselves to one or another international patron, could, and did, (and do) indulge in the type of politics in which power is sought and retained only for its own sake. Civil society in Arab states remained tightly controlled or virtually non-existent. Some Arab populations coped with this by slipping steadily more into a condition of political apathy and cynicism. Others, for various reasons found cause to try to

[8] Ibid, p. 223.

break the mold through violence. Egypt marked one extreme, Lebanon marked the other.

Thus, exactly thirty years after Zurayk penned his futile hopes, another observer of the region, Fuad Ajami could write this scathing obituary for Pan-Arabism:

> The seemingly harmless games played by the preceding generation, the hair-splitting arguments of Arab ideologues, gave way to a deeper and more terrifying breakdown. One generation had sown the wind and the other was now reaping the harvest. The stock in trade of men like Nasser, the Syrian Ba'athist theoretician Michel Aflaq, the braggard Ahmed al-Shuqairi of the Palestine Liberation Organization, was symbols and words. In the decade or so that followed the Six Day War, words were replaced with bullets, which now seemed the final arbiter. This generation, writes one observer, split into two groups: those who saw authority growing out of the barrel of a gun and those who packed up and left....[9]

The Six Day (1967) Arab-Israeli War referred to by Ajami marked, as he indicates, a turning point in Arab politics. The secularist, modernizationist first generation of Nationalists, Nasserists and the Ba'ath, soon stood naked before their publics, having failed to modernize, failed to recover Palestine or even to defend their own lands, and - and was soon shown - failed to secularize their societies. In addition to undermining the credibility of these regimes and their modernizationist ethos, the 1967 War led to two other significant developments.

The first of these was enshrined by the Arab Summit at Khartoum shortly after the war's end, and, in effect, led to a *modus vivendi* between so-called "moderate" (and Western-backed) oil-producing Arab states and so-called "radical" Arab Nationalist states. The essential elements of the exchange were clear: in return for much needed financial infusions, "radicals" legitimized post-war business-as-usual links between oil producers and their global markets as well as the existence of the oil producing regimes themselves.[10] An unintended, but very real, consequence of this accommodation was that the propagation throughout the Arab World of the more conservative Islamic outlooks prevailing in Arab Gulf States not only became more "legitimate" but also easier as Saudi Arabian and other Gulf money was put to this use.

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[9] Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 4.

[10] Dan Tschirgi, "The United States, the Arab World and the Gulf Crisis," Dan Tschirgi and Bassam Tibi, *Perspectives on the Gulf Crisis, Cairo Papers in Social Science*, Vol. 14, No 1, Cairo, The American University in Cairo Press, 1991, p. 16.

The second major consequence of the 1967 War unfolded in the aftermath of the hostilities, as the Arab World discovered that what Constantine Zurayk had termed "the positive intellectual and spiritual tradition of the West" would be selectively applied—that is, that such proclaimed Western values as self-determination and the inadmis-sibility of territorial acquisition by force were apparently inapplicable to the Palestine problem. As the so-called "Middle East Peace Process" dragged on over the decades, this lesson resonated ever more loudly in the Arab World.

As if this were not enough to bolster the attraction of militant, fundamentalist Islam among the Arab public as an alternative to the vacuous, hypocritical modernizing ideologies of defeated Arab Nationalist regimes, events in the broader Islamic World strongly reinforced the message. The first such development came in early 1979 with the overthrow of Iran's Pahlavi Regime and its replacement by an Islamic state. The second began to take shape at the end of that year with the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan and the ensuing US decision to sponsor anti-Soviet fundamentalist *Muhajedeen* guerrillas. Both phenomena not only captured the imagination of thousands of Arabs who sought a socially significant framework in which to live their lives but also seemed to point to a politically successful alternative.

The rise of Islamic fundamentalism as a political force did not, of course, go unnoticed by Arab regimes. Most soon sought to make use of it, in one way or another, though they remained determined to prevent it from prevailing politically. Egypt's Anwar El Sadat epitomized the trend, offering political space to Islamists as a counterbalance to Leftist trends in order to consolidate his new regime, and then abruptly curtailing them. As have most other Arab leaders, Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, has allowed his regime to pursue Sadat's policy of measured, if erratic, accommodation with the Islamists. The result has been the ongoing spread of Islamic fundamentalism as a feature of contemporary Arab societies. It is a feature increasingly manifested in educational systems, in legal frameworks and, ultimately, in social mores. It has helped lead to societies that are, as Zurayk warned against so many years ago, contracting upon themselves.

Islamic fundamentalism is not in itself necessarily "militant." For many it simply provides a framework of values that points to a better society, and therefore to a better existence for all members of that society. Many who are inclined to fundamentalist perspectives find no difficulty, despite what are perhaps logical difficulties, in also adhering to an essentially tolerant worldview. Yet, as fundamentalist views increasingly define the societal matrix, there are those who cannot accept

the dissonance of illogic and will therefore balk at what is seen as the "betrayal" entailed by moderation. These may become militant and find in their version of "Islamic Purity" an ideology that has no patience with details or facts about objective calculations of relations of power.

It is because of this that many Arab regimes have had to confront Islamists on the battlefield over the past two decades. Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and others serve as examples. Israel, of course, is a special case, but one that highlights the more general difficulty prevailing in the Middle East today. As the Palestinian Authority progressively turned into another typically venal and authoritarian Arab regime, the popularity of Islamist and fundamentalist militancy increased among the Palestinian rank and file. Hamas, the chief expression of this phenomenon, benefited accordingly.

Because of the increasingly fundamentalist coloration of Arab societies and the priority given by Arab regimes to remaining in power with the least effort, the ongoing crisis in Palestine also fuels glaring contradictions. Thus, while the Mubarak regime remains solidly opposed to militant Islamic fundamentalism in Egypt, its officially appointed Sheikh of Al-Azhar waffled violently during the spring of 2002 over the question of whether Palestinian suicide bombers were or were not acting within the bounds of "true" Islam. Ranging from one extreme to the other, the learned Sheikh eventually concluded that the suicide bombings were appropriately Islamic. In doing so, he simply reinforced the fundamentalist matrix from which militancy throughout the region arises.

It is in this context of the political use to which Islamic values have been put by the self-serving regimes of the Arab World that we find at least the outlines of an answer to the question of why the September 11 attackers felt "superfluous". Confronted by unresponsive regimes, and militarily defeated by each Arab government they attempted to overthrow by force, the militants behind September 11 were indeed superfluous in determining the fates of their own societies. That they then attacked the chief international sponsor of the current Middle East status quo was only logical. Olivier Roy gives a succinct and penetrating description of those who now raise the threat of militant fundamentalist Islam:

> In effect, they exhibit a new characteristic: they are international and 'deterritorialized,' that is, their militants wander from jihad to jihad, generally on the margins of the Near East (Afghanistan, Kashmir, Bosnia) and are indifferent to their own nationalities....They define themselves as internationalist Muslims and do not lend their militancy to any particular national cause. Their

'centers' are in the no mans land of Afghano-Pakistani tribal zones.[11]

The question now is what is required to achieve security against this threat?

Security in the Twenty-First Century

Any meaningful discussion of "security" must clearly identify the threat; security against what? What is the threat? In the time that has passed since September 11, three outlooks, or paradigms, have developed within which today's security threat is identified and responses proposed. These are not mutually exclusive perspectives but do lead to significant differences in views on threat-response and, particularly, on the nature and timing of the steps required to achieve security.

The first such perspective can be termed the "Popular Paradigm" and is widely disseminated in the United States of America through the thrust of comments made by major figures in the Bush Administration, leading political figures and political pundits.[12] Essentially, it identifies Al-Qaeda and its chief state supporters as the source of terrorist threats to national and global security. Thus, it has focused on the need to eliminate Al-Qaeda, Afghanistan's Taliban government, and the rule of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Although recognizing the global extent of Al-Qaeda's network, this outlook locates the present security threat almost exclusively in the Islamic World, and particularly in the Middle East. It implies that the successful use of military force and political pressure to terminate Al-Qaeda's organizational existence as well as the existence of state institutions that succor Al-Qaeda's networks are the keys to achieving security.

The second perspective is closely related to, though broader than, the first and might be called the "Wider Paradigm." It extends and deepens the portrayal of the current threat. This is accomplished by adding geographical as well as cultural dimensions to the menace posed by "terrorism." Thus, the list of areas that are seen as supporting Al-Qaeda extends beyond Iraq to include governments or groups found in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. At the same time, much more attention is given to what are seen as manifestations of cultural dynamics supportive of militant Islamic fundamentalism - such as

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[11] Olivier Roy, "Tragique impasse du fondamentalism sunnite", *Manier de voir 60,* Le Monde Diplomatique, Novembre-Decembre, 2001, p. 51. Author's translation.

[12] President Bush's first major speech after the events of 9/11 set the tone of the popular paradigm. See the speech at http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/gw-bush-9-11.htm

educational systems and the Arab popular press. It implies that military force and political pressure must accordingly be applied at a broader range of targets in the Arab/Islamic Worlds. It further implies that global security requires that these tools must be employed not only to eliminate institutionalized supporters of Al-Qaeda but also to promote pro-active steps to render the cultural environment unfriendly to militant fundamentalism. This was the paradigm that Pakistani President Pervez Musharaf seemed to adopt in January, 2001 when under the impetus of US pressure he announced a series of reforms that made some wonder whether his goal was to become his country's Ataturk.[13]

The "Popular" and "Wider" paradigms appear to be intermingled in the current US effort to ensure global security. The most salient feature of this approach is one of timing, the tactical ordering of priorities delimiting in sequential order steps to be taken. The essential feature in which both the "Popular" and "Wider" paradigms coincide is that what was once known as the "Middle East Peace Process" must be degraded in the Western international agenda and give primacy of place to demands of the "War On Terrorism." This was made most evident by the September, 2002 meeting of the so-called "Middle East Quartet" which held out the prospect of a Palestinian state by 2005. The Palestinians were essentially told that in the interim they must revamp their own political structure. In short, by putting the onus of far reaching action on the Palestinians, revival of any serious movement on the Middle East Peace Process was placed in abeyance for at least three years.

The third perspective vying for attention as a framework within which to understand and deal with the quest for global security can be termed the "Long-Range" paradigm. It views the phrase "War On Terrorism" not so much as an accurate description of the threat embodied by September 11 as a marketing label devised by the current US administration to mobilize support for responding to the very real threat implied by those attacks. This position rests on the conclusion that despite multiple definitional nuances, "terrorism" at bottom is the employment, or threat of employment, of force against civilians in order to further political objectives. In this light, "terrorism" is seen as a phenomenon that has historically been linked to politics and war and which, incidentally, reached its greatest extent in practice during the twentieth century at the hands of the world's Great Powers. To under-

[13] President Bush's first major speech after the events of 9/11 set the tone of the popular paradigm. See the speech at http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/gw-bush-9-11.htmwww.pak.gov.pk%2F,,aol

stand this point, one has only to reflect on that century's sad history—from the *Lusitania* to the saturation bombing practiced by all sides in World War II, to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the killing fields of Vietnam and the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

The "Long-Range Paradigm" holds that the real issue at stake in the so-called "War on Terrorism" is the contemporary state-system—and specifically the issue of whether non-state actors will be permitted to utilize international war as a tool for seeking political objectives. This is the crux of the issue, and it is made terrible and of universal concern by the technological levels to which the human race has pushed. The "suitcase nuclear bomb" is a reality, as is the possibility that biological or chemical weapons of mass destruction could come into the hands of non-state actors. If, at this juncture, the state fails as the organizing principle of global society, the world might easily be plunged into the nightmarish scenario of a high-tech Hobbesian environment.

September 11 raised this specter. The message was reinforced by the 2004-05 bombings in Istanbul, Madrid and London. By the same token, the prolonged resistance in Iraq to the US occupation must be seen as a microcosmic herald, a wakeup call warning of a greater peril than that posed by fundamentalist Islam. It was hardly accidental that the sea-change in the international situation wrought by September 11 had its origins in the Arab World. In no other region have states proved more adept at frustrating their populations' desire for communal participation. In no other region have governments more consistently failed to be either responsible or responsive. The militants who carried out the September 11 attacks, along with those who flock to the banners of other Muslim terrorist groups in the Middle East and elsewhere, found solace and purpose in transcendental or "consumatory" values which promised that "justice" would always prevail, regardless of objective power relationships. What must be kept in mind is that religion - whether Islam or any other - has no monopoly on transcendent or "consumatory" values. Purely secular ideologies have in the past successfully mobilized political struggles on the basis of promises of ultimate "justice". and may easily do so again. The same, of course, is true of secular visions of ethnic or racial "destiny". The present plight of Sub-Saharan Africa and of masses in other parts of the world who see themselves and their children deprived of hope for the benefits that modernity supposedly offers underscores the potential attractiveness of ideologies that supercede, or bypass, the state.

Castells warns that "the ability, or inability, of the state to cope with the conflicting logics of global capitalism, identity-based social move-

ments, and defensive movements...will largely condition the future of society in the twenty-first century."[14] The ominous implication is clear, particularly in light of the mounting numbers of dysfunctional states in our day: "if governments cannot or will not offer hope of responsiveness to the needs of the governed, non-state actors will find, or create, ideological grounds upon which to mobilize resistance, regardless of the forces arrayed against them."[15] It is evident after September 11 that such resistance may come in the form of international war.

Conclusion

Ex-President Bill Clinton's Dimbleby Lecture delivered in London in December, 2001 was implicitly rooted in the "Long-Range" paradigm and urged a major reorientation of global priorities to meet the demands of long-term security in this new Millennium.[16] It is clear that the immediate demands of international security require the destruction of Al-Qaeda and the presentation of serious disincentives to its actual or potential state sponsors. However, it is just as obvious that achieving these goals will not guarantee long-term global security. If the waging of successive international wars by non-state actors is to be avoided, the conduct of international relations must be fundamentally altered. Priority must be given in international politics to promoting "political and economic conditions that will allow, persuade, and even require governments to perform in ways that not only sustain their own legitimacy but also that of the state-dominated global system."[17]

There is an obvious paradox here, for the contention is that the state must somehow, in a sense, be "weakened", so that the international state-system may be strengthened: To repeat, *"priority must be given in International promoting political and economic conditions that will allow, persuade, and even require governments to perform in ways that not only sustain their own legitimacy but also that of the state-dominated global system."* It seems patently obvious that in this highly technological age the international community cannot afford to permit non-state actors to pursue political ends via international war. If this is so, the state must be strengthened. However, it cannot be strengthened in ways allowing it to promote, rather than reduce, marginalization within its own borders. Such an outcome would only increase the probability of non-

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[14] Castells, *The Information Age*, p. 109.

[15] Dan Tschirgi, "The War on Terror: Marginalized Violence as a Challenge to the International System", *Perceptions*, Vol. VII, No. 3 (September-November, 2002), p. 120.

[16] See Bill Clinton, "The Struggle for the Soul of the 21st Century", www.geocities.com%2fldrefl%2FdimblebyLecture2001.html,,aol

[17] Tschirgi, "The War on Terror," p. 121.

state actors entering the world stage as belligerents. It is, therefore, "in the interest of greater security for all [that] the powers of the state...be directed in ways that reduce marginalization and which, by doing so, enhance the legitimacy of the state-system."[18] We have reached a point at which it becomes increasingly clear that true global security demands that the legitimacy of the state-system take precedence over the legitimacy of the state itself. The bottom line is that a state's legitimacy must be linked to the degree to which it promotes the legitimacy of the state-system. The use of political, economic and, ultimately, military instruments by the international community to enforce this principle will increasingly have to become the foundation of global security.

This, of course, underlines the need for another instrument, an acceptable and accepted framework that can lend consistency, purposefulness and legitimacy to what would otherwise be no more than provocative political, economic and military interventions. The conceptual essence of such a framework exists: International Law, and particularly that body of it that deals with Human Rights. The need for global security requires general recognition that strengthening International Law and the enforcement of its provisions for Human Rights are rapidly becoming immediately necessary tasks rather than goals to be pursued in the future. The implications for current affairs of considerations cast in terms of this "Long-Range Paradigm are parallel to, but quite distinct from, those of the earlier two paradigms. While coinciding with the latter on the need to deal promptly with the threat of Al-Qaeda and its known state supporters, this view inherently suggests that a prior, or at least simultaneous, effort be made to revive the Israeli-Palestinian peace process on the basis of a strict adherence to international law.

Given that supporters of the Long-Range Paradigm are, at least in the US, currently limited to a small minority of those active in the foreign policy discourse, as well as the fact that both alternative paradigms imply the necessity of relying on Israel's military might and goodwill as a strategic asset during the perilous period of uncertainty that lies immediately ahead, there is virtually no chance that its policy implications for the Middle East peace process will be heeded. The most that can realistically be hoped at present is that once the dust settles from what seems virtually certain to be an impending upheaval in the Middle East, longer-range perspectives will have their day and be effective guidelines for the development of an international system that will be truly guided by law.

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[18] Ibid.

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