



TERRORISM GOES GLOBAL BY THE INTERNET

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Globalization began with the advent of information technology, i.e. automation of computers and digital systems, the making of microcosm, satellite-based communications, optical fibers and the internet, creating and legitimizing interdependence between companies and peoples, hence making global economic integration more likely than before.

Globalization goes beyond commercialism in such a fashion as to be an international system of special nature that affects politics, geography and the economy of any country. Globalization *per se* has contributed to shifts in the level of violence globally; there has been an increase in the magnitude of terrorism estimated at 200% between 1990 and 1996 compared to the timespan from 1968 to 1989. The suicide bombings of the World Trade Center in the 9/11 Attacks are key indicators on the globalization of terrorism. Simply put, the two towers represented a global symbol, icon of modernity and western capitalist values, and the attack meant targeting the icons and symbols of culture and ethical values with all its associated representations and manifestations.

When interviewed by Jürgen Habermas five weeks into the 9/11 Attacks, Jacques Derrida explains that the most terrifying point about the terrorism against the West is that it is the child of the West itself, and with the tools of the West itself, it is the violence of modernity against modernity, and not violence from outside. Derrida considers that Al-Qaeda violence is anti-globalization violence, and this globalized violence should not be understood outside the context of the widespread and targeted violence practiced by the policies of the West itself, without making any of the two types of violence moral or ethical.

The terrorism of terrorist organizations is characteristically globalized and transcontinental, which goes beyond the central local tendency and reaches global decentralization. Such terrorist organizations own flexible and mobile networks that

exploit the internet to spread their ideologies, in addition to providing technical expertise necessary to carry out terrorist attacks. All these factors bring about challenges in the war on terror. Eliminating the elements of such terrorist organizations and their leaderships does not pay off. Daesh is almost part of the final image of modernity; that is, it represents a reflection of the violence of modernity, but in a primitive way: modernity with its very smart and neutral humanitarian weapon, and with its media and cinematic image that is portrayed daily in a cumulative manner. "Daesh films are the next logical step for the films we make. Their culture is in fact ours as well, and Daesh has not invented its horrific scenes from its brainchild, but it has connected our thoughts to the most distant, honest, most authentic, deepest step and most realistic," explains Carol, a filmmaker and critic.

Digital World and Globalized Terrorism Channels

The number of internet users in the world is estimated at more than 4 billion users, including more than 164 million users in the Middle East region, which accounts for about 64.5% of the population. Extremist organizations have realized early the importance of the internet and social media platforms, and considered it a safe alternative to spreading and implementing their ideological projects, after acknowledging the failure of the covert organizations and direct recruitment. In his book "The Call of the International Islamic Resistance" (2004), Omar Abdel Hakim, known as "Abu Musab Al-Suri", explains that "what should be acknowledged and on which confrontational planning should be based are the failure of the method of covert hierarchical organizations operating in light of the international security attack and regional coordination, and the inability of secret organizations to accommodate all the youth of the nation who want to perform the duty of *jihad* and resistance, by any contributions without having to abide by the consequences of affiliation to a central organization, the failure of the idea of fronts and constant confrontation with the enemy due to the enemy's use of the air-to-air strategy of devastating missile strikes and satellite-control air-to-air missile strikes on the ground and the state-of-the-art technology that can scan the underground covert operations."

The internet has served as a safe haven and channel for spreading extremist ideologies to many theorists, as is the case of Anwar Al-Awlaki, the Al-Qaeda leader who was one of the influential figures and rhetoricians of Al-Qaeda to English speakers. Al-Awlaki was the inspiration for many terrorists, the most notable is Nidal Hassan Malik, the American officer who killed 13 colleagues at Fort Hood base on 11/5/2009, and Roshonara Choudhry, who was convicted of trying to kill British MP Stephen Timms on 14/14/2010. Although Al-Awlaki was assassinated in September 2011 by a drone, his

impact still remains strong, his records are still being followed and his thoughts are spread through the internet today, according to the New York Times.

The zeitgeist of the current globalized age wafts the spirit of the network through time and place. The founding principles of networks have become a driving force for individual social, economic and political life. Networks have become like wombs, from which emerge a new type of human communities, whereby identity, politics and economics are organized and operate in the form of networks. That is a focal point that makes up the concept of networked community.

Therefore, the internet and the development of technology have brought about disruption to the network of social relations, communication tools and volume, especially with the emergence of virtual communities that represent a group of people with common interests, and are not necessarily bordered by geographical boundaries, or ethnic, tribal, political or religious ties, interacting via means of communication and modern social media. They further develop among themselves the conditions for affiliation with the group, the rules of entry and exit, the means of behavior and the rules and ethics that must be observed. Social networks are defined as interactive networks that allow their users to communicate anytime, anywhere in the world. Examples of social media networks include Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and Snapchat. Social media has attracted millions of users worldwide. For example, the number of Facebook users reached 2 billion, including more than 116 million users in the Middle East.

Social networking sites have been a prominent arena for recruitment by extremist organizations, as it is estimated that 80% of Daesh recruitment was carried out via social media in 2015 vis-a-vis 20% in 2012.

Globalized Audience of Extremist Groups

The Management of Savagery by Abu Bakr Naji (2004), translated into English by William McCants, walks the reader through the most dangerous stage for the *Ummah* to pass through. The book identifies the philosophy of savagery that Daesh has adopted and applied to the territory under its control and influence. The book describes the features of the media strategy pursued by Daesh, and the nature of the target group of such strategy; the book states that the media strategy targets as many people as possible and attracts them to join *jihad* and provide positive support and sympathy for those who cannot make it. It also explains the critical importance of designing a media strategy based on rational and legitimate justifications for their operations, particularly for youth, while steering clear of targeting other Islamic groups. Including youth from among the peoples is easier than including them among the youth of Islamic

movements tainted by suspicions of evil notables. The youth of the *Ummah*, regardless of their sins, are closer to their natural instinct, and the past experience gained through the previous decades offers evidence to this. As for the recent events, it was made clear to everyone that the commoner, by his or her nature, interacted with them in stages better than the network of Islamic groups who turned their faith over to bad rabbis and monks.

Therefore, the strategy of the organization is mainly based on providing an emotional marketing message that targets the general public, youth and disobedient, non-religious people or followers of Islamic groups. The book warns of the necessity to pay attention to the minds and emotions of the common people while drafting of the media article, warning of slipping into the response to the suspicions of the clergy from various Islamic groups.

Scott Atran, a researcher in extremist movements, notes that the recent wave of extremism attracted and contained more marginalized and unemployed youth. For instance, the recent wave of extremism tempts the new generation in large numbers by the media, charged with a global political surge that raises a living and collective awareness of injustice and the unbearable sufferings of Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Chechnya and others. Moral anger, an acute sense of frustration, ennui and tedium seem to fuel the search for meaning and adventure. Groups of friends and family from the same region in the “motherland” in North Africa, the Middle East, Central and South Asia, or belonging to the same European housing projects in disadvantaged neighborhoods, are drawn to action while they navigate online *jihad* sites to find guidance from Al-Qaeda inspiration. Most of the affiliates of this third wave of terrorism display poor religious education, or no basic religious education until they became “newborns”, so to speak, in their late youthhood or early adulthood. As such, globalization overshadowed many social phenomena, increased their complexity and contributed to their expansion, very much similar to what happened to terrorism. Therefore, preventive and restrictive or deterrent efforts should be built to combat terrorism at the global level, down to the local special environments.