

Lecture 17: Religious Conflict and Terrorism

- Part I: Islam and Christianity
 - September 11, 2001
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- Part II: Religion and Terrorism
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Part I: Christianity vs. Islam ?

- In this section, we will briefly consider some of the reasons why Huntington believes that the future hold great conflict between Christian and Muslim societies.

WHAT IS ISLAM?

- ❖ The word “**Islam**” means “submission” (to the will of Allah).
- ❖ The word “**Muslim**” means “one who submits.”



BASIC TENETS: General

- Islam means: Peace & Self-surrender to the Will of God
- A universal message - confirms preceding Divine revelations. Prophet Mohamed is God's messenger sent to complete & compliment previous revelations:
- Abrahamic religion: "... it is the belief of your father Abraham. It is He (God) Who has named you Muslims, both before and in this (Revelation)" 22:78
- 6 pillars of faith and 5 pillars of religion

Jihad

- The word means ‘striving’ or ‘struggle’
- Often used in the sense of personal striving in the path of God.
- According to Islamic law there are two domains
 - Dar al-Islam, the house of Islam
 - Dar al-Harb, the house of War

Jihad

- “The more common interpretation, and that of the overwhelming majority of the classical jurists and commentators , presents jihad as armed struggle for Islam against infidels and apostates.”

(Bernard Lewis, professor of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University)

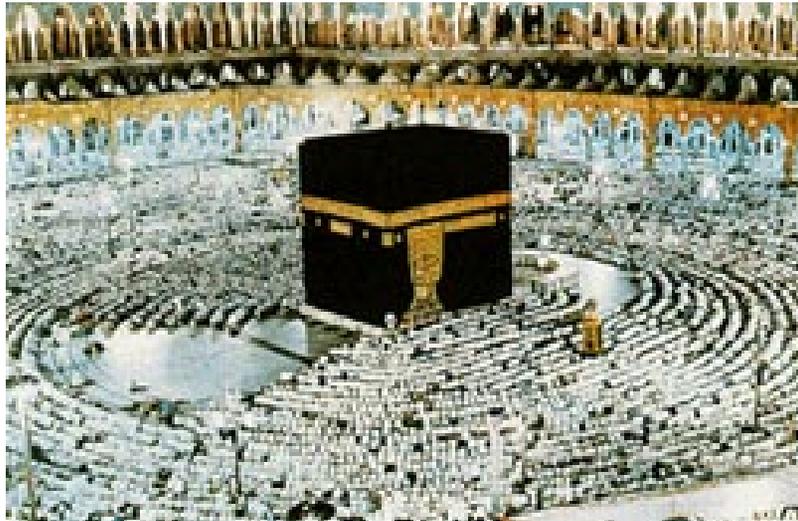
Jihad and Non-Muslims

- (9:5) “Fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleager them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem.”
- (9:29) “Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Prophet, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.”

Jihad and Non-Muslims

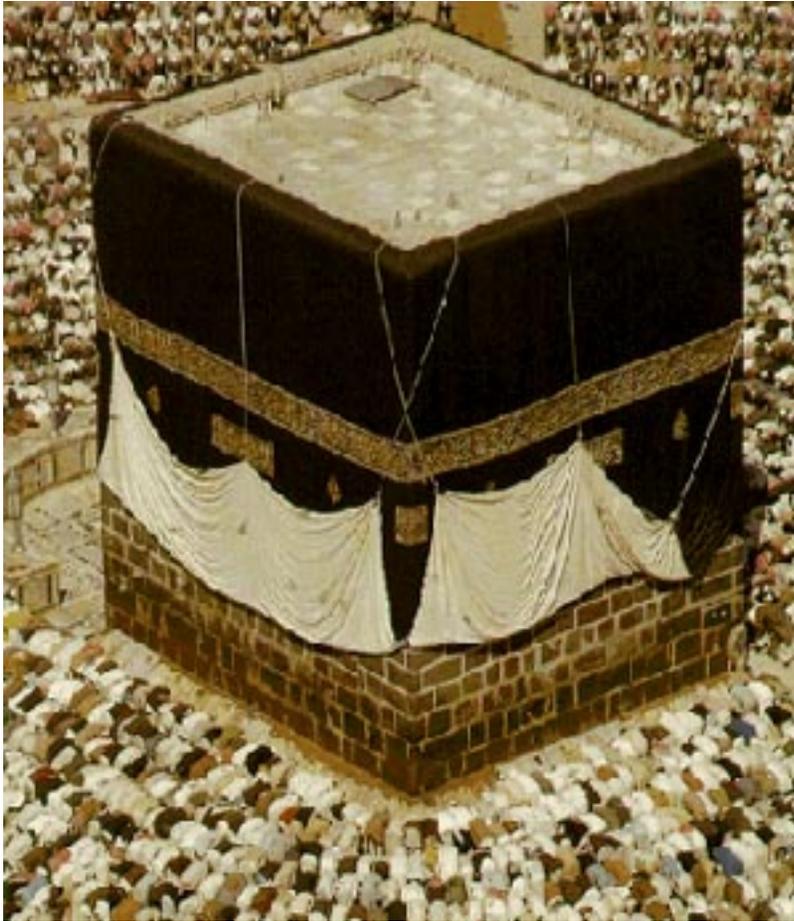
- (47:4-7) “When you meet unbelievers, smite their necks, then, when you have made wide slaughter among them, tie fast the bonds; then set them free, either by grace or ransom, till the war lays down its loads...And those who are slain in the way of God, He will not send their works astray. He will guide them, and dispose their minds aright, and He will admit them to Paradise, that He has made known to them.”

ISLAMIC HOLY PLACES



- **Saudi Arabia considers itself to be the caretaker of Mecca, the most holy place in Islam.**
- **It allows no Christian missionaries to enter it and no Christian churches to be built on its soil.**

ISLAMIC HOLY PLACES



- It is the sacred duty of every Muslim to make a *hajj*, or pilgrimage, to Mecca once in their lifetime.
- A triumphant Muhammad purged the ka'aba of idols. Today pilgrims circle it seven times, reciting prayers and the Quran.

The Early Muslim Empire Spread Rapidly

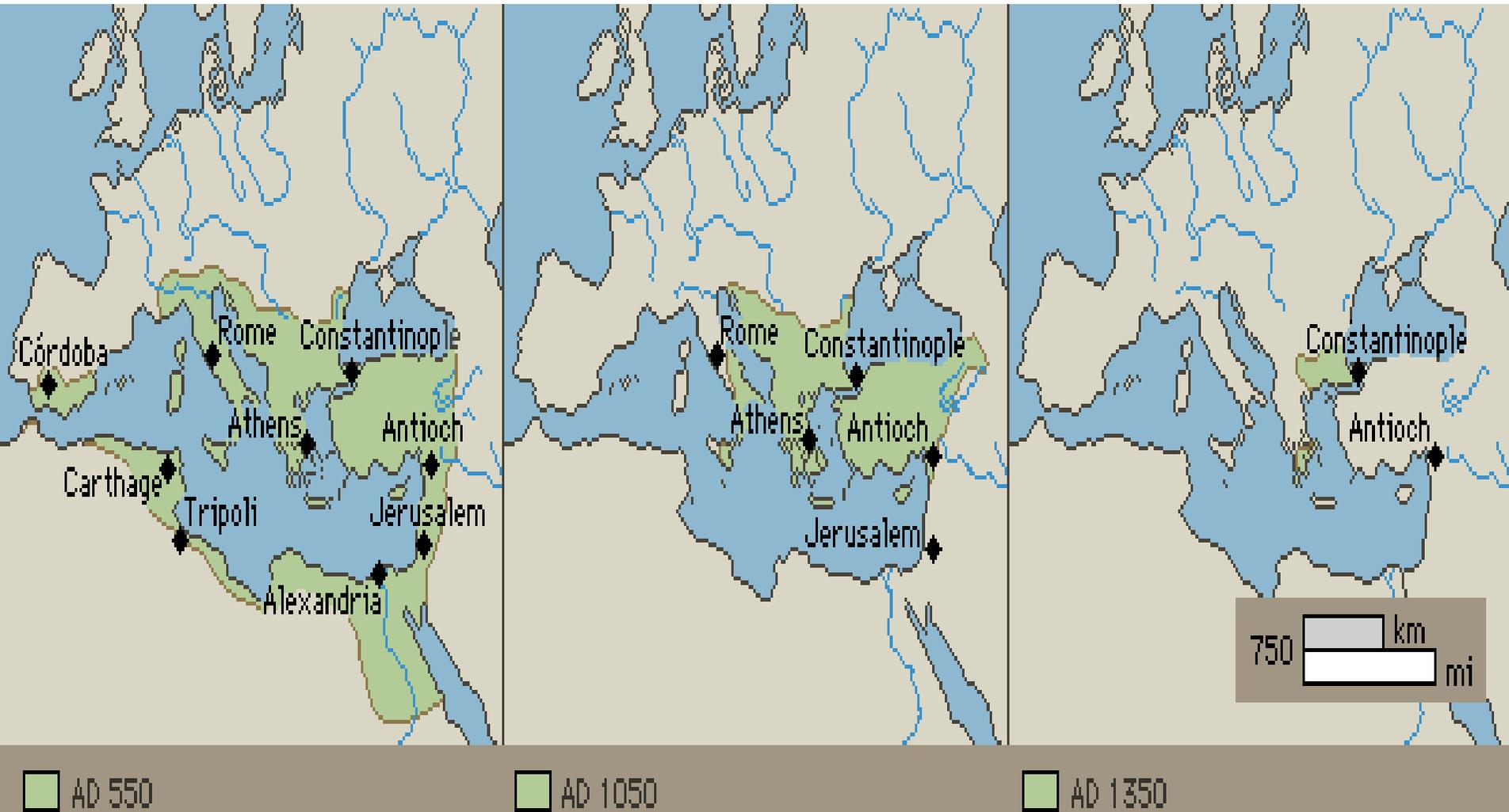




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The Massacre of the Christian Prisoners

The Clash Between Islam and Christianity



The Crusades

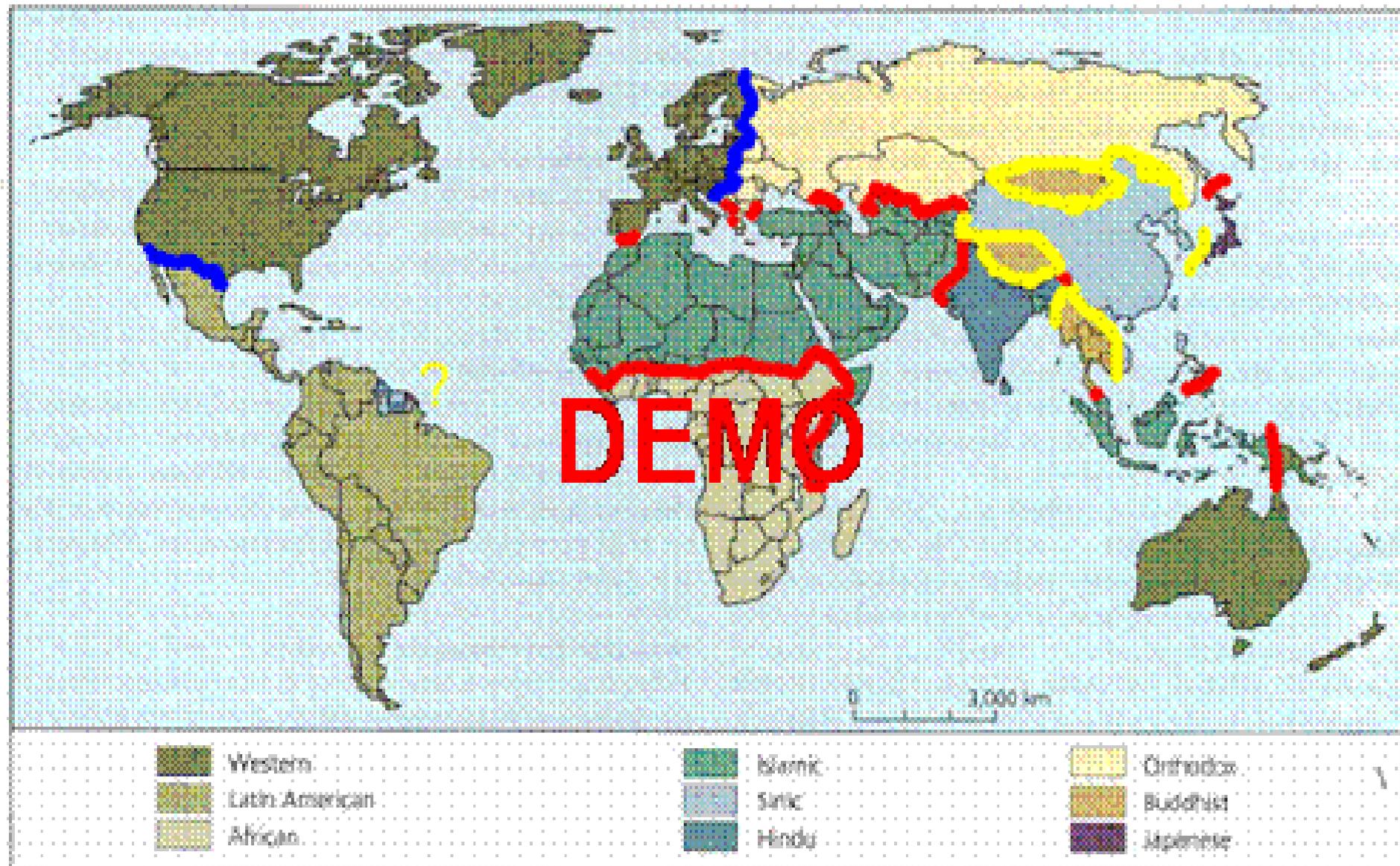


The “Crusades” were never successful for long, and the Muslim general Saladin became famous by recapturing Jerusalem in 1187.

The land of Palestine remained under Islamic control until the establishment of the modern nation of Israel in 1948.

The Crusades left an enduring legacy of deep bitterness and a still-vivid sense of grievance among Muslims toward the West.

“Islam Has Bloody Borders” ?



5. Which civilizations fight the most?

Islamic civilization has plenty of conflicts....

...but other civilizations have more “civilizational” conflicts!

Cold War era

Post-Cold War era

Civilisation	Cold War era			Post-Cold War era		
	Total number of conflict years	% of all conflict years	% civilisational	Total number of conflict years	% of all conflict years	% civilisational
Western	183	11.09	56.28	70	11.29	45.71
Confucian/Sinic	227	13.76	11.45	25	4.03	72.00
Slavic-Orthodox	20	1.21	50.00	48	7.74	52.38
Latin American	144	8.73	16.67	48	7.74	0.00
Hindu	143	8.67	19.58	42	6.77	50.00
Islamic	452	27.39	35.18	221	35.65	38.46
African	347	21.03	22.19	139	22.42	16.55
Indigenous	102	6.18	0.00	20	3.23	0.00
Mixed	32	1.94	0.00	7	1.13	0.00
Total	1650	100.00	33.77	620	100.00	38.50

Tests: Statistical evidence on “Fault Lines”

- a. Little evidence of cultural wars 1819-1989
- b. Post-1989:
 - i. States of different civilizations LESS likely to fight than states of same civilizations
 - Controls for contiguity, power, democracy
 - ii. Ethnic diversity \neq civil war
 - Controls for economic growth
 - iii. Islam has not precluded democracy (rights)
- c. Did the end of the Cold War mark a new era of conflict?

Internal Military Disputes: Is Islam Prone to Intra-Civilization Violence?

Table II. Tests of Hypotheses Regarding Frequency of Militarized Disputes Within Civilizations, 1950–92

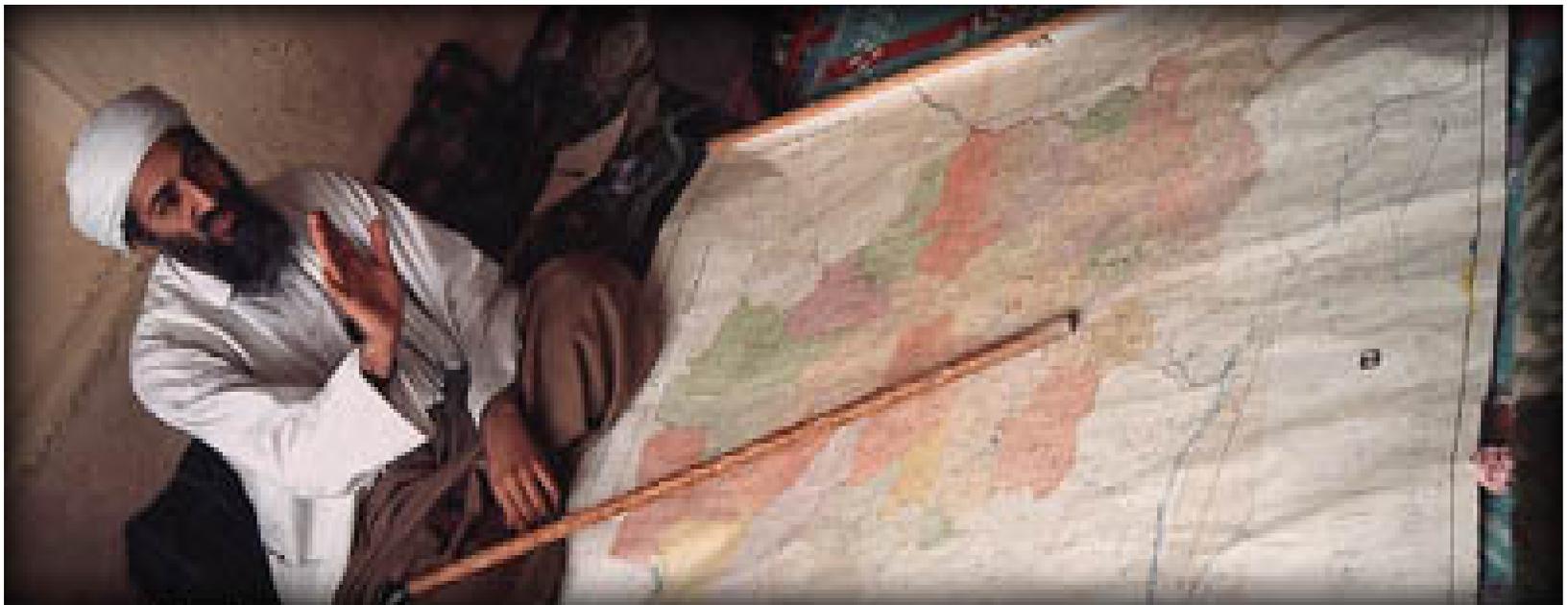
<i>Variable</i>	
CONTIG	3.62 (0.19)***
ALLY	-0.39 (0.21)*
CAPRATIO	-0.06 (0.05)
DEM _L	-0.05 (0.01)***
DEM _H	0.03 (0.01)***
DEPEND _L	-3.33 (6.71)
WESTERN	-1.08 (0.31)***
SINIC	2.83 (0.34)***
ISLAMIC	0.26 (0.22)
HINDU	-0.56 (0.54)
ORTHODOX	-0.38 (0.58)
LATIN	-0.28 (0.38)
AFRICAN	0.12 (0.26)
BUDDHIST	1.64 (0.43)***
Constant	-6.06 (0.15)***
<i>N</i>	269,181

Table reveals:

- West = more internal peace
- Sinic = less internal peace
- Buddhist = less internal peace
- Others, including Islam, unrelated to rate of intra-civilization disputes

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$; one-tailed tests.

In 1998 Osama bin Laden declared that his work was a continuation of the struggle against “infidel” Crusaders of the Middle Ages.



osama bin laden

Part II: Religion and Terrorism

Terrorism, one of many definitions:

- Premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."

Strategies of Terrorists

- Terrorists usually strategize their actions by planning the amount and type of violence to achieve desired goals
- Terrorists are usually weaker than those they are up against, thus violence, destruction, and fear is a way of creating power.



Purpose of Terrorism

- Organizations or groups have a dispute with another group, or nation, and plan a way to implement change, usually with violence.
- **Terrorism as theatre:** make a big show for many to see and contemplate.



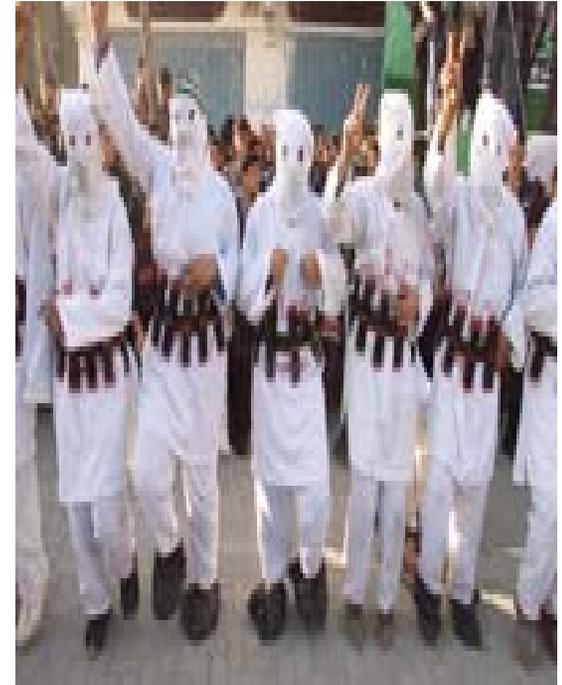
Ruins of Pan Am 103,
Lockerbie, Scotland, 1988.
(AP Photo/Dave Caulkin)

Strategies of Terrorists cont.

- Use enough shocking violence to bring attention to a cause felt to have been neglected, but limit scales of violence that might turn domestic and foreign audiences against the cause.
- Terrorists *usually* want a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead

Modern Strategies

- Suicide attacks not a completely modern strategy (e.g., kamikaze pilots)
- Diffusion of the Terror Tactics
- Weapons of mass destruction.
Examples: 9-11, 1995 nerve gas by “Aum Shinrikyo” in Tokyo, Anthrax letters.
- Nuclear attacks, smallpox?



Hamas members

Trends: Terrorism on Decline, Lethality Increases

- Incidents peaked in 1987 with 666 worldwide cases. (1992; 364 cases, 1996; 296).
- Deaths becoming more common.
- Causes: Tighter security makes hijackings and kidnappings more difficult; **rise of religious terrorism**; simpler and deadlier bombing tactics chosen.



What is Special About Religious Terrorism?

- Lets stop here for a while and discuss the articles in the reader.
- Mark Juergensmeyer (2002). Terror in the Mind of God.

Religious Terror has a Long History

- 1000-1200 C.E. – A group called *assassins* emerges among Shiite Muslims; they murder Muslim leaders whom they accuse of responsibility for corrupting Islam; the assassins resent the passing of Islamic leadership from Mohammad's family to others. This group also opposed Crusader occupation of the Middle East.

Part III: Osama Bin Laden

- Why is he and his followers in conflict with the U.S., Saudi Arabia, and Israeli?
- What are his goals?



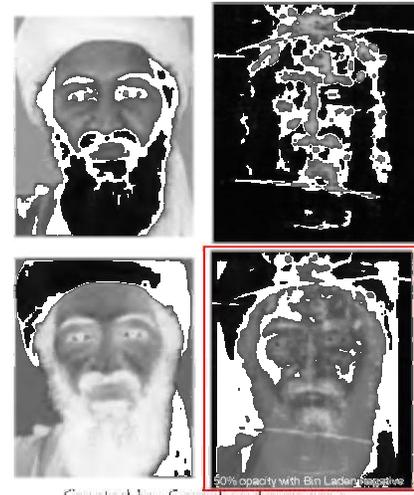
Who is Osama Bin-Laden?

- Born in 1957, was the 7th son of 50 brothers and sisters.
- Osama was exposed to many things at an early age.
- Lost his father at the age of 13.
- Married at the age of 17, who was a relative. Father became a billionaire during the oil boom of the 1970's (construction)
- Has four wives and 15 children
- Osama grew up religiously



Osama Bin-Laden

- Had a degree in public administration in 1981.
- Started forming Islamic responsibility at an early age.
- In 1986, Osama decided to have his own camps inside Afghanistan.
- In April 1991, Osama send a letter to his brother telling him he was not coming back and apologized for letting down the royal family.
- In early 1994, he was regarded as a Saudi opposition.
- His assets were frozen between 1992 and 1994.



Osama Bin Laden

- In 1996 bin Laden issued a fatwa, a formal religious decision calling on Muslims to kill American troops in Saudi Arabia.



Osama Bin Laden

- 1998 Fatwah
 - “...to kill Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible...”
 - “...to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque” and to remove their armies from the lands of Islam.



Osama Bin Laden

- Three complaints
 - Americans in the holy land
 - Oppression of Iraq
 - American support of Israel



Al-Qaeda: What is it?



- Al-Qaeda in Arabic means, “the base.”
- In 1989, Bin Laden and Muhammad Atef founded Al Qaeda.
- Dedicated to opposing non-Islamic governments with force and violence.
- Principle goal is/was to drive the U.S armed forces out of Saudi Arabia and Somalia by violence.

The rise of Al-Qaeda (continued)

- Under pressure from Saudi Arabia and the U.S., Sudan in 1994 expelled Bin Laden, who then moved his base to Afghanistan.

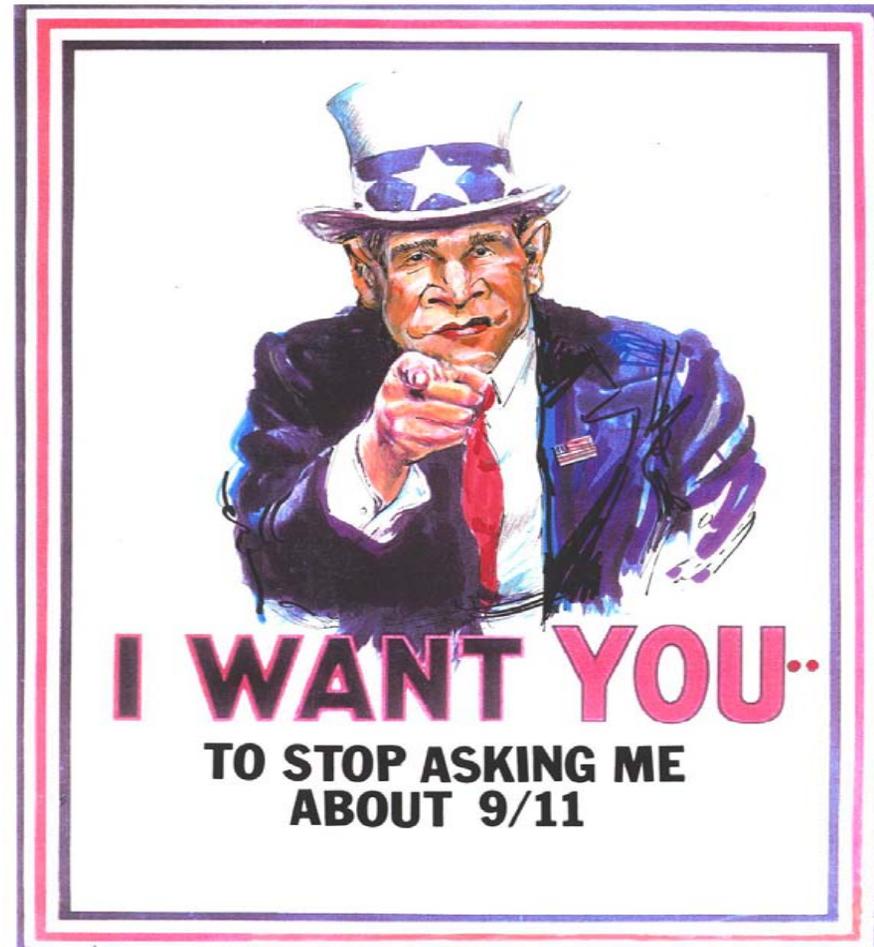


Interesting Facts

- A poll of England's Muslim community revealed that 98% would not fight for Britain; 48% would fight for Osama or Islam.
- Over 30% of Muslims in Kuwait believe that Osama is a freedom fighter.
- Former Sudanese President Sadiq el-Mahdi has prophesied that Islam will dominate the world by 2010.
- 28 of the current 30 conflicts in the world include Muslims.

Links with U.S. Government?

- Fahrenheit 911 by Michael Moore presents facts about U.S. oil and money interests in the Middle East, and ties between top politicians and power people in Saudi Arabia.



Part III: Institutions and Negotiation

- Are there any institutions in place to limit violent conflict between groups from different civilizations?
- What would Gandhi say? Is this fight too big to seek the truth, and find common ground?

Controlling/Preventing Terrorism

- Adding tracers to explosives.
- Controlling biological, chemical, and nuclear materials.
- Limit flows of weapons.
- International political pressure (e.g., sanctions on Iraq).

Detering Terrorists

- It is difficult to deter some terrorists with threats of violence; most are difficult to locate (also, some are willing to die).
- If violence is used, moral high ground is lost, and violence may escalate. If violence is not used, terrorists interpret the enemy as weak, and operate freely?