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Dear Assoc. Prof. Dr.,

DECISION OF THE PUBLICATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON THE MANUSCRIPT ENTITLED: "PHILOSOPHY & THE ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW"

May this letter reach you while you are in the best of health.

2.   Please be informed that the above-mentioned manuscript was deliberated during the Publication Technical Committee Meeting No. 8/2024, which concluded on 18th December 2024.

3.   We are delighted to notify you that the Committee has approved the manuscript for acceptance and further processes, with the intent of publication by IIUM Press.

4.   The details of the manuscript are attached as Appendix I.

Your attention and cooperation in this matter are highly appreciated.

Thank you. *Wassalam.*

"Leading the Way"

PROF. DR. NOOR LIDE BT ABU KASSIM
Director
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International Islamic University Malaysia
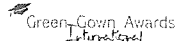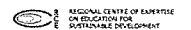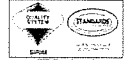
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Extremism and Islamophobia Unravelled: Exploring Origins and Implications

Bachar Bakour

Introduction

In today's complex global landscape, the topics of religious extremism and Islamophobia have become increasingly pertinent and intertwined. From acts of terror to discriminatory policies, these issues permeate societies worldwide, shaping political discourse, social interactions, and even individual perceptions. To navigate this intricate terrain, it is essential to delve into the depths of these phenomena, unraveling their origins, dissecting their causes, and examining their far-reaching implications. At the heart of our exploration lies religious extremism, a multifaceted phenomenon that manifests in various forms and ideologies across different religious traditions. Whether driven by political agendas or fervent religious beliefs, extremist movements have left an indelible mark on history, challenging notions of peace, coexistence, and tolerance. Yet, understanding the roots of religious extremism requires more than surface-level analysis; it demands a nuanced examination of historical, socio-political, and psychological factors that contribute to its proliferation.

Simultaneously, the rise of Islamophobia has cast a long shadow over Muslim communities worldwide, exacerbating tensions, fostering prejudice, and perpetuating discrimination. Stemming from deep-seated biases and misconceptions, Islamophobia manifests in various forms, from systemic discrimination to hate crimes, underscoring the urgent need for critical introspection and societal change. Moreover, pivotal events such as the 9/11 attacks have served as flashpoints, igniting fears, exacerbating divisions, and reshaping global dynamics in profound ways. While embarking on this journey of exploration and analysis, I examine the complexities of extremism and Islamophobia, challenging preconceptions, interrogating narratives, and envisioning pathways toward understanding, empathy, and reconciliation.

Religious extremism

Extremism is indeed a challenging term given that labeling individuals or actions as 'extreme' and determining what qualifies as 'moderate' or 'ordinary' is contentious, as these distinctions depend on the context, society, and timeframe in which they are applied.[1] One person's extremist is another person's devout believer. Extremism, derived from the Latin word *extremus* meaning far from the center, is commonly viewed in opposition to ideas of moderation and mainstream. It characterizes a political, religious, or ideological stance that has reached its "utmost" expression.[2]

Operating as a double-edged sword, religion possesses the capacity for both good and evil. Depending on divergent interpretations of sacred texts, religion can lead its adherents to paradisiacal realms or plunge them into abysmal suffering, fostering either global harmony or widespread discord. Frequently, religion serves as the fault line that divides opposing factions.[3]

In contemporary times, the world's religions face internal challenges and external threats from extremist, radical, or fanatical groups. Driven by fervent adherence to their purportedly authentic religious beliefs, these groups have perpetrated heinous massacres and egregious crimes on a large scale, inflicting immeasurable grief upon countless innocent families. Islam is not immune to such occurrences. Due to sporadic acts of violence and troubling incidents involving certain Muslim extremists, the image of peaceful, moderate, and tolerant Islam has been overshadowed or vehemently denied, particularly in the aftermath of 9/11. This tragic event, compounded by various factors, has reinforced the negative portrayal of Islam in Western media as an alien, violent, hostile, and uniform religion, whose followers are perceived as dedicated to waging a global holy war against non-believers.

Of course, religious extremism is not unique to Islam. In reality, numerous groups with puritanical ideologies have hijacked various religions, manipulating them to propagate intolerance and violence. Jewish Defense League (JDL), an American urban terrorist organization which,

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[1] Peter Coleman, Andrea Bartoli, 'Addressing Extremism,' ICAR, George Mason University; ICCCR, Teachers College, Columbia University; Noël Merino, (ed). *Extremism*, USA: Greenhaven Press, 2014, 15-16. On the relative understanding and application of extremism, see Azmi Bishara, *On Extremism*, Qatar, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2015).

[2] See Stephens, William, et al. "Preventing Violent Extremism: A Review of the Literature," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 44, no. 4 (2021), 346-361. doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1543144

[3] It's important to note that religion is not the sole defining factor of violence. Some of the most significant acts of human cruelty and destruction in the twentieth century were perpetrated by secular governments, such as Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, and Mao's China, rather than religious entities.

according to FBI reports, is the second most violent group in the United States;[4] Gush Emunim, an Israeli movement with fanatic religious-chauvinist stance; IRA terrorists in Britain; Bharata Janatra Party (BJP) in India; Aum Shinrikyo, Buddhists; Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a terrorist organization in the USA; Baruch Goldstein and the massacre of many Palestinians while praying; Timothy Mcveigh and the Oklahoma City bombing; Reverend Michael Bray and the bombing of abortion clinics; the conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants in Northern Ireland; the assassination of Rabin, Israel's prime minister, by Yigal Amir, who belongs to an extremist Jewish organization; the genocidal killing of Muslims in Bosnia and Palestine, to mention but a few examples.

The mention of the aforementioned terrorist individuals and groups is not intended to blame Christianity, Judaism, or Hinduism. Instead, it aims to illustrate that violence and extremism, masked under different names and affiliations, transcend specific national or religious affiliations; they can emerge anywhere, under the guise of any religion. Therefore, singling out Islam for allegations of condoning fanaticism and terrorism, while ignoring similar occurrences in other religions, is an unjustified accusation.

Causes of extremism

No one is inherently extremist or violent. Any suggestion linking a propensity for violence to race, class, color, or gender reflects a racist or chauvinistic mindset. Additionally, religion alone cannot be held responsible for violence or terrorism. Extremism, whether religious or general, often arises from a complex interplay of religio-cultural, socioeconomic, and psycho-intellectual factors.[5] These elements, either individually or collectively, serve as fertile ground for the growth of extremist ideologies and fanaticism.

    1. Dangerous knowledge

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[4] Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck. "The Dynamics of Islamic Identity in North America." In *Muslim on the Americanization path*, edited by Yvonne Haddad and John Esposito. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 25.

[5] See Loza, Wagdy. "The psychology of extremism and terrorism: A Middle-Eastern perspective," *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 12 (2007), 141–155; Leary, Mark, Twenge, Jean, and Quinlivan, Erin. "Interpersonal Rejection as a Determinant of Anger and Aggression," *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2006, 10, No. 2, (2006), 111-132. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr1002_2; Kruglanski, Arie, et al. "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism," *Advances in Political Psychology*, 35, Suppl. 1, (2014), 69-93. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12163.

Dangerous knowledge here refers to a superficial understanding or a misconstrued interpretation of religious texts. A half-educated individual can pose a significant intellectual challenge to their community, occupying a middle ground between a fully learned scholar and complete ignorance. Superficial engagement with religious texts does not warrant assuming roles such as a *mufti* (Jurisconsult), a prominent commentator of the Qur'an, or a reliable expert in prophetic tradition. To attain authority in any field, religious or secular, one must first acquire essential prerequisites. Inadequate religious insight may lead to various issues, such as a literal interpretation of texts. Religious texts, conveyed through language, can be expressed in univocal, ambiguous, specific, general, or metaphorical terms. Relying solely on literal understanding, without considering the spirit, when necessary, can be misleading and have significant implications. In Muslim legal history, the Zahiri school, established by Dawud ibn al-Zahiri (d. 817), epitomizes this approach. Its proponents advocate for the apparent and literal meaning of the Qur'an and Sunna, rejecting other normative methods of interpretation and disregarding qiyās as a valid method.[6]

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, strict adherence to literal interpretations of religious texts has sometimes resulted in profound devastation, as seen in the protracted conflict in Palestine. Mass killings, torture, arbitrary detentions, and other war crimes have been perpetrated for over half a century, justified by literal interpretations of the Bible's theological and historical accounts. Christian Zionists, drawing on Biblical literalism, vigorously argue that the establishment and continued existence of Israel are morally sanctioned by Holy Scripture.[7] Furthermore, evangelical preachers and religious leaders, basing their beliefs on literal interpretations of Scripture, have formulated what they perceive as God's providential plan for humanity. This plan, seen as immutable, encompasses concepts such as 'Covenant,' 'Eschatology,' 'Rapture,' 'Tribulation,' and 'Armageddon,' among others.[8]

As Professor Fuad Sha'ban correctly observes,

The Dangers inherent in this 'Judeo-Christian' literal interpretation of sacred text prophecies and the concept of the millennium can be clearly seen in the unconditional support given by the United States to Israeli policies and actions that violate the principles of human rights,

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[6] *Qiyās* (Analogy) is the assignment of a legal ruling *(hukm)* of an existing case, found either in the Qur'ān, or *Sunna*, or *Ijmā'* (consensus), to a new case whose legal ruling is not existent in these sources, on the basis of availability of a common underlying attribute (*'illa*) between both of them.

[7] See Sizer, Stephen. *Christian Zionism: road-map to Armegeddon?*. USA: IVP Academic, 2004; Sha'ban, Fuad. *For Zion's Sake*. London: Pluto Press, 2005. Both are an excellent account and an indispensable source for the topic.

[8] See these terms in the above references.

international law and the UN Charter. It entices persons like Michael Rohan to set fire to the Dome of the Rock to prepare for the kingdom of the Prince of Peace in the Temple. It encourages person like Baruch Goldstein to slaughter 29 Muslims while they were praying in a Heborn mosque.[9]

2. *The denial of diversity*

The Quranic verses 11:118 and 5:48 affirm that Allah intentionally creates humanity with diverse beliefs, ideas, customs, and intellectual abilities. Failing to acknowledge this universal principle often leads to stubbornness in opinions, indicative of extreme disposition. In Islamic law, differences among jurists are viewed positively as each has the right to seek truth without arrogating it exclusively to themselves. Students of Jurisprudence are taught the maxim that goes, 'Our [legal] opinion is right with the possibility of being wrong. Also, other's opinions are wrong with the possibility of being right.' [10]

The Renowned scholar Muhammad al-Ghazali highlights two factors behind the dilemma of self-opinionated individuals: scholarly inadequacy and psychological issues. These individuals possess limited knowledge and harbor ill will, leading to their aberrant behavior.[11] In light of the above, (i) showing biased support for individuals or groups, (ii) compelling others to adhere rigidly to a particular opinion or legal school, and (iii) labeling dissenting individuals as heretics or disbelievers not only contradict fundamental Islamic principles but also reveal a narrow-minded and self-opinionated mentality.

3. Targeting Islam[12]

Islam, despite being the second largest religion in Europe and America, is frequently misrepresented and vilified worldwide. Media outlets often depict Islam in a negative light, especially following events like September 11, portraying Muslims as violent, militant, who pose threats to the West. [13] This exaggerated stereotyping fueled by anti-Muslim prejudice only serves to deepen the divide between moderate Muslims and Western populations.

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[9] Sha'ban, *For Zion's Sake*, 207.

[10] Ibn Nujaym, Zayn al-Din. *Al-Ashbah wal Naza'r*. Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1986, 452; Ibn 'Abidin, Muhammad. *Hashiyat Ibn'Abidin*. Damascus: Dar al-Thaqafah watturath, 2000, 1: 160.

[11] Al-Ghazali Muhammad. *Dustur al-Wahdah al-Thaqafiyyah bayn al-Muslimin*. 3rd ed. Damascus: Dar al-Qalam, 1998, 94-95.

[12] While the first two reasons are commonly found among all extreme religious groups, this one is exclusively directed to Muslim extremism.

[13] Jack Shaheen's seminal study of Arab and Muslim images on TV and in Hollywood concluded that the entertainment media perpetuates four basic myths about them: They are fabulously wealthy; they are barbaric and uncultured; they are sex maniacs with a penchant for white slavery; and they revel in act of terrorism. Cited in Pintak, Lawrwnce.

Commenting on the outrageous, Danish cartoons , John Esposito writes,

"What we are witnessing today has little to do with Western democratic values and everything to do with a European media that reflects and plays to an increasingly xenophobic and Islamaphobic society. Cartoons defaming the Prophet and Islam by equating them with terrorism are inflammatory. They reinforce Muslim grievances, humiliation and social marginalization and *drive a wedge between the West and moderate Muslims*, unwittingly playing directly into the hands of extremists."[14]

Moreover, what significantly ignites the passions and grievances of Muslims is the perception of a conspiratorial attempt to target Muslims globally. Examples include the brutal massacres at Sabra and Shatila Refugee Camps in Lebanon, the one-sided Gulf War involving Muslims against Muslims, the ongoing repression of Palestinians amidst Arab disunity, the indiscriminate slaughter and torture of Bosnian Muslims by Serbians, the persecution of Kashmiris, Hindu violence against Muslims in India, the slaughter of Rohingyas in Burma, and the civil war and famine in Somalia, etc.[15] The list is long.

Islamophobia: roots and implications

>	"*We should invade their countries, kill their leaders, and convert them to*
>	*Christianity. We weren't punctilious about locating and punishing only*
>	*Hitler and his top officers. We carpet-bombed German cities; we killed*
>	*civilians. That's war. And this is war.*" [16]

>	"*Western European societies are unprepared for the massive immigration of*

Reflections in a Bloodshot Lens. London: Pluto Press, 2006. 31. Materials of Western Perception of Islam are abundant, such as Daniel, Norman. *Islam and the West.* Oxford: OneWorld, 2000; Hourani, Albert. *Islam in European Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; Ahmad Gunny, *Perceptions of Islam in European Writings*. Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 2004; Said, Edward. *Covering Islam*. London: Vintage Books, 1997; Michael Frassetto and David R. Blanks. Ed. *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999; Kalin, Ibrahim. "Roots of Misconceptions: Euro-American Perceptions of Islam Before and After September 11." in *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition,* Edited by Joseph E.B. Lumbard. Canada: World Wisdom, 2004, 143-187.

[14] Muslims and the West: A Culture War?. 14 Feb 2006. Accessed at 20 Nov 2007.

http://ww.unaoc.org/repository/3840Muslims%20and%20the%20West%20A%20Culture%20

[15] see Edward Said's comment on this conspiracy. *Covering Islam*. The new introduction Xiv, xv

[16] Ann Coulter, "This is War," The National Review (September 14, 2001).

brown-skinned peoples cooking strange foods and maintaining different

standards of hygiene…. All immigrants bring exotic customs and attitudes,

but Muslim customs are more troublesome than most." [17]

Prejudices against Islam and its followers existed long before the term Islamophobia emerged. Early negative depictions arose shortly after the advent of Islam, particularly from writers in the Middle East whose religious (e.g., Christian) or political (e.g., Byzantine) institutions felt threatened by the expansion of Islamic society in the region. Many historians attribute the structural biases of modern Islamophobia to medieval Europe. They cite evidence of anti-Muslim sentiments during both the Crusades of the Middle Ages, when Christian rulers aimed to conquer Muslim-controlled lands, and the Reconquista of Spain, a series of campaigns by Christian states that led to the capture of the Iberian Peninsula by the late 15th century.[18] The Resurgence of Islamophobia can be traced back to events such as the Iranian revolution, hijackings, hostage-taking incidents, the 9/11 attacks, and subsequent terrorist acts in Europe by groups like Al Qaeda and more recently ISIS.[19]

The Runnymede Trust report highlighted the pervasive issue of bias and discrimination against Muslims, identifying it as the "elephant in the room." Titled "Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All," the report defined Islamophobia as "the dread, hatred, and hostility towards Islam and Muslims perpetuated by closed views that propagate negative stereotypes and beliefs." This bias leads to exclusion from economic, social, and public spheres, as well as discrimination. Additionally, it fosters the perception that Islam lacks common values with the West, is inferior, and is viewed as a violent political ideology rather than a faith like Judaism and Christianity.[20]

More, a significant number of Europeans perceive Islam as a more significant threat to their values compared to other religious traditions. These biases are not insignificant; they frequently shape and are shaped by laws, policies, and practices. Negative attitudes and perceptions can lead to restrictions on religious attire, opposition to mosque construction projects, and hostility towards

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[17] Daniel Pipes, "The Muslims Are Coming! The Muslims Are Coming!," National Review (November 19, 1990).
[18] "Islamophobia", Britannica, accessed 20/April/2024
 https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamophobia
[19] Esposito, John. "Islamophobia and Radicalization: Roots, Impact and Implications," In *Islamophobia and Radicalization*, Edited by Esposito, J., Iner, D., Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.
[20] Ibid., 17.

refugees from Muslim-majority nations. Furthermore, social, political, and economic difficulties may intensify these negative sentiments.[21]

Islamophobia, a visual summary
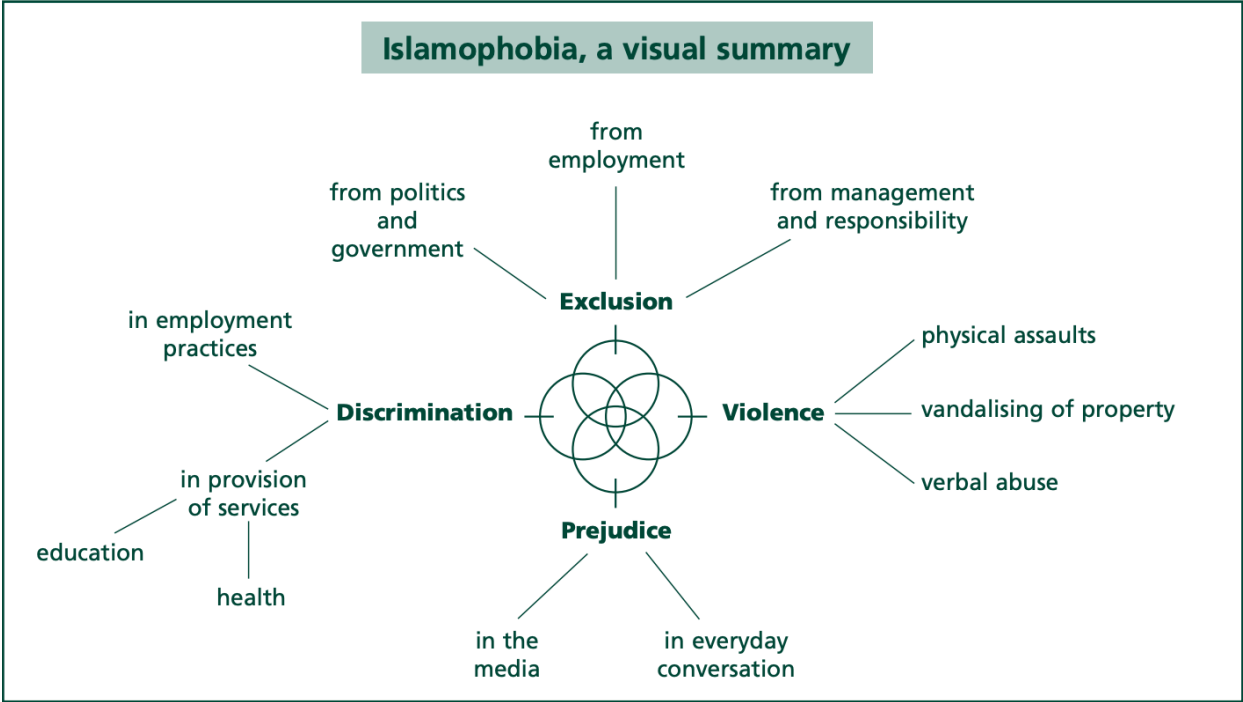
The source: The Runnymede Trust report[22]

[21] Abdelkader, Engy. "A Comparative Analysis of European Islamophobia: France, UK, Germany, Netherlands, and Sweden," *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law*, 16: no. 1 (2017), 29-63.
[22]https://assets-global.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/617bfd6cf1456219c2c4bc5c_islamophobia.pdf

Closed and open views of Islam		
Distinctions	**Closed views of Islam**	**Open views of Islam**
1. Monolithic / diverse	Islam seen as a single monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities.	Islam seen as diverse and progressive, with internal differences, debates and development.
2. Separate / interacting	Islam seen as separate and other – (a) not having any aims or values in common with other cultures (b) not affected by them (c) not influencing them.	Islam seen as interdependent with other faiths and cultures – (a) having certain shared values and aims (b) affected by them (c) enriching them.
3. Inferior / different	Islam seen as inferior to the West – barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist.	Islam seen as distinctively different, but not deficient, and as equally worthy of respect.
4. Enemy / partner	Islam seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, engaged in 'a clash of civilisations'.	Islam seen as an actual or potential partner in joint cooperative enterprises and in the solution of shared problems.
5. Manipulative / sincere	Islam seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage.	Islam seen as a genuine religious faith, practised sincerely by its adherents.
6. Criticism of West rejected / considered	Criticisms made by Islam of 'the West' rejected out of hand	Criticisms of 'the West' and other cultures are considered and debated.
7. Discrimination defended / criticised	Hostility towards Islam used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society.	Debates and disagreements with Islam do not diminish efforts to combat discrimination and exclusion.
8. Islamophobia seen as natural / problematic	Anti-Muslim hostility accepted as natural and 'normal'.	Critical views of Islam are themselves subjected to critique, lest they be inaccurate and unfair.

The source: The Runnymede Trust report[23]

9/11 attacks

Undoubtedly, the tragic events of 9/11, which targeted prominent American economic and military symbols, had far-reaching consequences. It exacerbated the already fragile relationship between Islam and the West, reigniting discussions around the 'clash of civilizations' theory while stifling dialogue efforts. Moreover, it blurred the distinction between 'terrorist' and 'moderate' Muslims in the eyes of Western media, which often depicted the Muslim world through the lens of terms like 'Islamic fundamentalism,' 'militant Islam,' and 'Islamophobia.' Muslims, particularly American Muslims, faced a surge in individual attacks, arson incidents, and hate crimes. Concurrently, anti-American sentiments, accompanied by deep-seated distrust and resentment, intensified in the Arab

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[23] Ibid.

and Muslim world, particularly following the perceived retaliatory actions in Afghanistan and later Iraq.[24]

I have a few remarks on 9/11 given its significance as a turning point in Muslim-Western relations:

1.Rather than an assault grounded in cultural, civilizational, or religious differences, the events of 9/11 are best contextualized within America's longstanding, often unbalanced policies in the Muslim world, including unwavering support for Israel and backing authoritarian Arab regimes.

2.Al-Qaeda cannot be considered a reflection of the Muslim world, just as Timothy McVeigh and the Jewish Defense League do not authentically represent Christianity and Judaism, respectively.

3.Initially, the Conservative Republican-led U.S. Administration did not deeply investigate or contemplate the motives behind the attack. Instead, the focus was on swiftly bringing the perpetrators to justice, employing a steadfast "with us or against us" strategy.

4.In spite of a large-scale war on terror, neither USA nor the world seems to be living in a safer and more secure atmosphere. "If we compare the numbers of dead and wounded in 2000 and 2002, there has - *in spite of the multi-billion dollar war on terrorism* - been an increase from 405 to 725 dead (or 79 per cent) and an increase from 791 to 2,013 wounded (or 154 per cent) world wide. "[25]

5. Viewed as a long-awaited rationale to initiate a "moral war" backed by the international community, 9/11 presented neoconservatives with a golden opportunity to advance pre-existing agendas and operations.[26] Rahul Mahajan, a vocal critic of US imperialism, provides an example that sheds light on the themes of US imperialism post-9/11. He refers to the document "Rebuilding America's Defenses" by the Project for the New American Century, which mentioned the necessity for a 'new Pearl Harbor.' Mahajan emphasizes three major themes of this document: the expansion of military bases worldwide to project power, the pursuit of 'regime change' in unfriendly countries, and a significant increase in military spending, particularly for missile defense, aimed at maintaining American dominance. He suggests that the 9/11 attacks presented an opportunity to escalate military spending, aligning with the objectives outlined in the document. Additionally, Mahajan points out the document's prediction that such a transformation of the military would

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[24]See 2002 Gallup Poll of the Islamic World. Accessed 20/April/2024.
 https://news.gallup.com/poll/10000/2002-gallup-poll-islamic-world.aspx
[25] Jan Oberg, "11 Things to Remember on September 11," Sept 2003. Accessed, 20 Nov 2007. <http://www.transnational.org/pressinf/2003/pf186_11ThingsOnSept11.html>.
[26] See Griffin, David Ray. *The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11*. Massachusetts: Olive Branch Press, 2004. P. 12. Accessed, 10/ May 2011. Available at http://sandiego.indymedia.org/media/2006/10/119637.pdf

require a catastrophic event like a new Pearl Harbor, which, he argues, was realized within a year of its publication, enabling the realization of imperial strategies.[27]

Similarly, David Ray Griffin writes,

The official account of 9/11 has been used as the justification for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, which have resulted in the deaths not only of thousands of combatants but also of far more innocent civilians than were killed on 9/11. This account has been used as the justification for dozens of other operations around the world, most of which are largely unknown to the American people. It has been used to justify the USA PATRIOT Act, through which the civil liberties of Americans have been curtailed. And it has been used to justify the indefinite incarceration of countless people in Guantanamo and elsewhere. And yet the press has been less aggressive in questioning President Bush about 9/11 than it was in questioning President Clinton about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, a very trivial matter by comparison.[28]

5.The story of al-Qaeda, a former recipient of U.S full backing,[29] being the mastermind of such highly sophisticated and organized operation has been seriously questioned, with a big question mark over the official narrative altogether. A barrage of tough, disturbing questions[30] and conclusive evidences demonstrate the complicity of the U.S government in the 9/11, or at least refer to prior knowledge of the attacks.[31]

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[27] Cited in Griffin, p. 13. Cf. David Kay, *The Big Lie: 9/11 and the Government's Complicity in Mass Murder*. (2005). p. 70.73. Available at
http://www.habiru.de/Dirk_Gerhardt/TheBigLie.pdf
[28] Ibid., 10.
[29] Michel Chossudovsky points out that al-Qaeda was originally created by the CIA during the Soviet Afghan war, a fact supported by various sources including official documents of the US Congress. Despite being widely acknowledged, this aspect is often overlooked by the mainstream media. Chossudovsky provides a detailed account of al-Qaeda's connection with US intelligence in chapters 2, 3, and 4 of his book *America's War on Terrorism*. 2nd ed. (Canada: Global Research, 2005).
[30] See 18 questions in Kay, *The Big Lie: 9/11* pp. 134-137.
[31] For references introducing well-organized, and extensively documented arguments that contradict the U.S official account and make it profoundly suspicious, see Michel Chossudovsky *America's "War on Terrorism"*; James Bamford. *Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-Secret National Security Agency*. New York, NY: Anchor, 2002; Kenneth S. Deffeyes, *Hubbert's Peak: The Impending World Oil Shortage*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003 ; Eric Hufschmid, *Painful Questions: An Analysis of the September 11th Attack*. Goleta, CA: Endpoint Software, 2002; David Ray Griffin and Peter Dale Scott. Eds. *9/11 And American Empire: Intellectuals Speak Out*. Olive Branch Press, 2005; David Ray Griffin, *The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11*. Massachusetts: Olive Branch Press, 2004; Alex Jones, *9/11: Descent into Tyranny*. Oklahoma City, OK: Hearthstone Publishing, Ltd., 2002; Webster Griffin, Tarpley, *9/11 Synthetic Terror: Made in the USA*. Joshua Tree, CA: Progressive Press, 2005; Thierry Meyssan, *9/11: The Big Lie*. London: Carnot, 2002; David Kay, *The Big Lie: 9/11 and the Government's Complicity in Mass Murder*. 2005; Gore Vidal, *Dreaming War: Blood for Oil and the Cheney-Bush Junta*. Nation Books: 2002. Nafeez Ahmed, *The War on Freedom: How and Why America Was Attacked*

What accounts for terrorism

The roots of terror and extremism extend beyond mere ideological indoctrination. They encompass a range of factors, including bias, discrimination, xenophobia, racism, and underlying political and socioeconomic conditions. Research on Islamophobia and terrorist entities has revealed that the main grievances driving militant groups and homegrown terrorists are authoritarian regimes in Muslim nations, along with the foreign policies of the US and Europe towards Muslim-majority countries, rather than religion itself.

A study conducted in 2011, titled "Assessing the Threat of Homegrown Islamist Terrorism," examined the motives behind terrorist attacks carried out within the United States from 2001 to 2011 concluded that "the magnitude of the threat posed by homegrown Islamist terrorism has been greatly exaggerated."[32] And that the main motive was US foreign policy, reported that "Most Homegrown Islamist Terrorists Believe that the United States is at War with Islam."[33]

Robert Pape, American political scientist, challenges the commonly held opinion that religion is the primary motivation behind individuals volunteering for suicide missions. According to him, what unites suicide bombers is not religious zeal but rather a political goal: the expulsion of an occupying force from their homeland, which they perceive as serving the collective interests of their society.[34]

Regarding the widespread anti-American sentiment in the Arab and Muslim world, it's important to note that this animosity, primarily directed at the government rather than the populace, extends beyond Muslim communities. Arab, Eastern, and certain Western nations share in this sentiment. Moreover, this resentment is viewed as a predictable reaction to decades of misguided and insensitive U.S. foreign policies and military interventions across numerous regions. The United States' support for oppressive and authoritarian Arab regimes, which maintain prisons filled with countless unidentified prisoners from various segments of society, adds to the grievances.[35]

September 11th, 2001. Progressive Press, 2006; T.H. Meyer, *Reality, Truth, and Evil: Facts, Questions, and Perspectives on September 11, 2001*. Temple Lodge Publishing, 2005.

[32] Heinkel, Wes and Mace, Alexandra. "Homegrown Islamist Terrorism: Assessing the Threat," *Journal of Public and International Affairs*, 22, no. 1 (2011), 109–136. https://jpia.princeton.edu/sites/jpia/files/jpia2011-2.pdf#page=109

[33] Ibid., 120.

[34] Pape, Robert. "Dying to Win: the Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," In: *The Theory and Practice of Islamic Terrorism*, edited by Perry, M., Negrin, H.E. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008, 129-132; and his article "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review*, 97 , no. 3 , (August 2003), 343-361.

[35] On the U.S hegemonic policies, one may come across substantial materials, like Lens, Sidney. *The Forging of the American Empire. From the Revolution to Vietnam: A History of U.S Imperialism*. London: Pluto Press; Chicago:

As William Blum writes " From 1945 to the end of the century, the United States attempted to overthrow more than 40 foreign governments, and to crush more than 30 populist-nationalist movements struggling against intolerable regimes. In the process, the US caused the end of life for several million people, and condemned many millions more to a life of agony and despair. " [36]

In this critical juncture of history, events like 9/11 serve as a crucial wake-up call, urging not just the West but especially the U.S. Administration to reassess their strategic approaches. Rather than exacerbating Arab and Muslim resentment, there's a pressing need to address it. This requires policymakers, decision-makers, and influential thinkers to earnestly delve into the underlying causes of heightened suffering among their neighbors and respond with fair and equitable policies. However, if Western governments persist in playing the blame game and remain indifferent to Muslim pain and anguish, we risk perpetuating a vicious cycle with no end in sight.

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[36] Blum, William. *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*. USA: Common Courage Press, 2000, 21. Referring to this hate-generating policy, Patrcik Buchanan writes, "We are not hated for who we are. We are hated for what we do. It is not our principles that have spawned pandemic hatred of America in the Islamic World. It is our policies." *When the Right Went Wrong*, 2004, p. 80, cited in Malik, Iftikhar. *Crescent Between Cross and Star Muslims and the West after 9/11*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, 286.

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