

# Lesson Plan: Islamophobia in the Shadow of 9/11

## Grades

10-12

## Purpose

In this lesson, students will critically analyze various media for manifestations of Islamophobia. They will also learn to recognize the ways in which Islamophobia enters into discussion of social and political policy options.

## Objectives

Extreme forms of Islamophobia are readily apparent. In this lesson students will learn to recognize subtle forms of Islamophobia in news media, in public discourse, and in academia.

## Vocabulary

Islamophobia, terrorism, Al-Qaeda, subnational groups

## Activities/Procedures

The following exercises may be conducted in small groups. Not all exercises need to be included in each group discussion. But Exercise #1 should be included in all discussions because it provides important definitions of "Islamophobia" that are relevant to each of the other exercises.

### **Exercise #1 – Islamophobia**

Here are two definitions of Islamophobia:

An exaggerated fear, hatred, and hostility toward Islam and Muslims that is perpetuated by negative stereotypes resulting in bias, discrimination, and the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims from social, political, and civic life. (*Ali, Wajahat, Duss, Matthew, Fang, Lee, Keyes, Scott, and Shakir, Faiz, 2011, Fear, Inc.: The Roots of the Islamophobia Network in America, Center for American Progress.*)

Islamophobia refers to unfounded fear of and hostility towards Islam. Such fear and hostility leads to discrimination against Muslims, exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political or social process, stereotyping, the presumption of guilt by association, and finally hate crimes...Islamophobia has resulted in the general and unquestioned acceptance of the following:

- Islam is monolithic and cannot adapt to new realities.

## Overview

Islamophobia has been a significant feature in American life going back at least to the early 20th century and the portrayal of Muslims in the famous Rudolph Valentino movie *The Sheik*. But after the events of September 11, 2001, Islamophobia in America took on a new significance. Since then, it has played an important part in our national discussion of racial profiling, public security, foreign and military policy, and our sense of America as a 'melting pot.'

Islamophobia tends to be reinforced by 9/11 anniversary activities because remembrance activities and news coverage often fall into stereotypical characterizations and use language that emphasize Islam as 'the other,' a dangerous, threatening enemy. This phenomenon has been enhanced since the 2016 presidential campaign as inflammatory rhetoric has become a prominent element of public discourse.

This lesson plan is intended as a supplement to September 11 remembrance activities.

- Islam does not share common values with other major faiths.
- Islam as a religion is inferior to the West. It is archaic, barbaric and irrational.
- Islam is a religion of violence and supports terrorism.
- Islam is a violent political ideology.

(Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), <http://www.cair.com/issues/islamophobia/islamophobia.aspx>.)

How are these definitions similar? How are they different? Do you think it's true that there is "general and unquestioned acceptance" of the five statements in the second definition?

Have you observed or experienced any of the manifestations of Islamophobia described in

### **Exercise #2—Terrorism**

Here are four definitions of terrorism:

"The term 'terrorism' means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience." (*Title 22 U.S. Code, Section 2556f(d)*)

"The calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological." (*U.S. Department of Defense Dictionary of Military Terms*)

"Terrorism is the use of violence against people or property to try to force changes in societies or governments." (*Danzer, G. 2005, The Americans, Boston; Houghton Mifflin/McDougal.*)

"Terrorism is the use of violence by non-governmental groups against civilians to achieve a political goal." (*Remy, Richard C., 2006, United States Government: Democracy in Action, Columbus, OH; Glencoe/McGraw-Hill.*)

These definitions have important differences. Which ones allow for the possibility that terrorist acts can be committed by a national government? Which ones consider that only noncombatants or civilians can be victims of terrorism?

Do you agree with the idea that only non-combatants or civilians (and not members of the military in active service) can be victims of terrorism?

The following four people either engaged in or headed groups that engaged in violent acts in pursuit of political goals. Would you consider each of them to be terrorists? Why or why not?

- George Washington
- Nelson Mandela
- Fidel Castro
- Yasser Arafat

What does it mean to say that “One person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter?”

### **Exercise # 3 – September 11 and the War on Terror**

After the attacks on September 1, 2001, President George W. Bush declared a “War on Terror.” He said that the war would not end “until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated.”

Ten years later, Lady Eliza Manningham-Buller, former director general of Britain’s Security Service charged with protecting the UK against threats such as terrorism, said that the September 11 attacks were “a crime, not an act of war” and that “I never felt it helpful to refer to a war on terror.”

The distinction between criminal acts and acts of war is a critical one. It has implications for:

- Foreign policy,
- Military action,
- Application of legal principles, both national and international, to such issues as acceptable interrogation techniques and the use of drones to kill suspected terrorists,
- Limitations on civil liberties.

Do you consider that the attacks on September 11, 2001, were criminal acts or acts of war? Why? What’s the difference?

Is it more precise to describe the events of September 11, 2001, as an attack on America or as coordinated attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon? Why?

Which of the following best describes the perpetrators of the September 11 attacks:

- Al-Qaeda operatives,
- international terrorists.
- Islamic terrorists, or
- fundamentalist terrorists?

What makes your choice better than the other alternatives?

### **Exercise #4 – Evaluate a Textbook**

Read the two selections from the 2006 textbook *United States Government: Democracy in Action* (written by Richard C. Remy and published by Glencoe/McGraw-Hill).

The first selection poses the question: How is the role of religion different in Islamic governments than in democratic ones? Note that the question counterposes “Islamic” and “democratic” as comparable adjectives describing types of governments. This statement would be more objective if it compared the role of religion in Islamic, Christian, Jewish or Buddhist governments or if it compared authoritarian vs. democratic governments.

The section called “Islamic Governments” begins with the sentence, “Islam is a religion spread

by the prophet Mohammad, who lived from A.D. 570 to 632.” Note the use of language: “Islam is a religion spread by...” rather than “Islam is a religion based on teachings...”

Analyze the rest of the first segment and assess how it addresses the issues raised in the definitions of Islamophobia in Exercise 1.

The second selection includes sections called “International Terrorism” and “A New Terrorist Threat.” The “International Terrorism” section links together terrorist attacks, Middle Eastern groups, Muslim fundamentalists, and the governments of Libya, Syria, Iraq and Iran. However, it doesn’t mention the fact none of the perpetrators of the September 11 attacks were from these four countries. Nor does it say that Libya, Syria and Iraq were among the most secular nations in the region at the time and were not involved in supporting “Muslim fundamentalists” who turned to terrorism to achieve “a return to traditional Muslim religious laws.”

The “New Terrorist Threat” section discusses the rise of Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda, which it says “recruited Muslims and channeled money and arms to the Afghan resistance” to the Soviet supported government of Afghanistan. It does not mention that the U.S. also channeled money and arms to the Afghan resistance. Did the U.S. support of the Afghan resistance make the U.S. a state sponsor of terrorism?

Analyze the rest of the second segment and assess how it addresses the issues raised in the definitions of Islamophobia in Exercise 1. Pay special attention to incomplete, missing or misleading information that could cause the unwary reader to false or prejudicial conclusions.

### **Exercise #5 – Evaluate Newspaper Articles**

Read the two newspaper articles “Good life returns to Timbuktu” (by Robyn Dixon, *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2013) and “Jihadists Launch Surprise Attack” (by Kirsta Larson, Associated Press, *U-T San Diego*, February 11, 2013). Both articles address events in northern Mali but they are strikingly different in word choice and contextual facts.

The *Los Angeles Times* article refers to “militants,” “insurgents,” “extremists” “occupiers” “zealots” who “tried for nine months to impose their extreme form of Islam.” Among them were members of a group related to Al Qaeda. The *U-T San Diego* article refers to “jihadists,” “Islamic fighters,” “Islamic radicals,” “Islamic combatants,” “Islamic rebels,” and “Islamic extremists.”

Approximately 90 percent of people in Mali are Muslims, including members of the Malian army and residents of the city of Gao (the subject of the *U-T San Diego* article). So what clarity does repetitious use of the word “Islamic” bring to the story?

Thinking of the 5 statements in the definition of Islamophobia in Exercise 1, review the two articles and assess how each addresses the issues raised in the 5 statements.

### **Resources/Materials Needed**

Chapter 25, Section 2 “Authoritarian Governments,” Remy, Richard C., *United States Government: Democracy in Action*.

Chapter 25, Section 4 “Global Issues,” Remy, Richard C., *United States Government: Democracy in Action*.

“Good life returns to Timbuktu,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2013.

“Jihadists Launch Surprise Attack,” *U-T San Diego*, February 11, 2013.

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## Supplemental Materials

“Anti-Muslim Hate Crime Rash Reported Around 9/11 Anniversary,” Hatewatch, Southern Poverty Law Center, <http://splcenter.org/blog/2011/09/16/anti-muslim-hate-crime-rash-reported-around-911-date>.

Cole, Juan, “Islamophobia and American Foreign Policy” in *Islamophobia and the Challenges of Pluralism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, [http://www12.georgetown.edu/sfs/docs/ACMCU\\_Islamophobia\\_txt\\_99.pdf](http://www12.georgetown.edu/sfs/docs/ACMCU_Islamophobia_txt_99.pdf).

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“Islamophobia: Understanding Anti-Muslim Sentiment in the West,” Gallup World, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentiment-west.aspx>.

“Islamophobia worse in America now than after 9/11, survey finds,” The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/mar/10/usa.religion>.

“MI5 former chief decries ‘war on terror.’” The Guardian, <http://guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/sep/02/mi5-war-on-terror-criticism>.

Nelson, Leah, *Backlash*, Southern Poverty Law Center, *Intelligence Report*, February 17, 2016. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2016/backlash>.

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# Authoritarian Governments

## Reader's Guide

### Key Terms

Muslim, mullah, shah

### Find Out

- How does China's Communist Party control the government?
- How is the role of religion different in Islamic governments than in democratic ones?

### Understanding Concepts

**Comparative Government** What are the differences and similarities among the governments of China, North Korea, and Saudi Arabia?

## COVER STORY

### Jail for Teen Hustlers

HAVANA, CUBA, NOVEMBER 1, 1996


Every day the streets of this city fill with teenagers in search of an income. Called *jineteros*, these young street hustlers will sell nearly anything—a cigar, a place to stay, a night on the town—to foreign tourists. Alarmed at their growing numbers, Havana police have begun throwing *jineteros* in jail. Many of them express resentment because of the meager job outlook in Cuba's poor economy. "I have to earn a living," complains Miguel Angel Iglesias, a 19-year-old *jinetero*. "I used to like it in Cuba," Iglesias explains. "Now I have nothing. Before, there was hope. Now it's all gone."



Iglesias hustles for money.

While the number of democratic nations around the world is increasing, many authoritarian governments still exist as well. Governments such as those in the People's Republic of China, Cuba, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Iran present a stark contrast to democracies.

## The People's Republic of China

 Modern China is a study in contrasts. A recent U.S. State Department report on human rights called China an "authoritarian state" in which citizens lack most civil rights and in which the government commits "numerous human rights abuses." At the same time, China's Communist Party government is pursuing economic reforms that are reducing the government's tight grip on the people.

**Political History** China was ruled by emperors until the late 1800s. In 1911 an uprising overthrew the last emperor, and China became a republic a year later. Rival factions divided the new republic until 1929, when the Nationalist Party, under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, defeated the Communists and gained partial control of the nation. When Japan invaded China in the 1930s, the Nationalists and Communists came together to resist the Japanese. After Japan's defeat in World War II, a civil war broke out in China between the two rival parties.

In 1949 Communist revolutionaries led by Mao Zedong seized power. The Nationalists fled to safety on the offshore island of Taiwan, where they remain today. Mao then led China for the next 30 years. He established a totalitarian government strictly controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), in much the same way that the Soviet Communist Party once controlled the Soviet Union.


Mao's government turned China into a socialist state by taking control of all major



political and economic relations with the United States. So far, these efforts have failed to move Castro toward instituting democratic reforms.

**Cuba's Future** Castro has ruled Cuba for nearly 50 years while grooming a new generation of Communist leaders. What will happen when Castro relinquishes power is unknown. Experts predict everything from civil war and more communism to a peaceful transition towards democracy.

## North Korea

 After World War II, the Korean peninsula was divided into North and South Korea. With aid from the United States, South Korea became a democracy with a strong, free-market economy. North Korea became a Communist nation supported by the Soviet Union, until its collapse, and led by dictator Kim Il Sung. Since 1994 Kim's son, Kim Jong Il, has ruled the country with an iron fist.

**Cult of Personality** Today, North Korea's totalitarian government centers on unquestioning loyalty to Kim Jong Il. Kim's government controls all aspects of people's lives. This includes where people live and travel, what jobs they can have, and what schools children will attend.


North Koreans are almost totally cut off from outside sources of information. National propaganda glorifies Kim as the "Great Leader." Kim, people are told, deserves "absolute devotion" because he protects them against foreigners and will someday lead them to great prosperity.

A totalitarian regime like North Korea can cause great suffering. Currently, for example, about 70 percent of the nation's children are malnourished. In the last decade, more than 2 million North Koreans starved to death because the economy could not produce enough food, and much of the nation's money was spent on military weapons and luxury items for Kim.

**Tension With the United States** The first concern of totalitarian leaders is their own survival in power. Although North Korea's economy is weak, its military is strong. In the early 1990s, the country began to develop chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. Few experts believe Kim would use such weapons directly against the United States, but Kim

could sell the weapons to terrorists. Also, the existence of such weapons might lead other non-nuclear nations in the region to develop their own nuclear weapons. As a result the United States has sought to limit North Korea's development of nuclear weapons.

## Islamic Governments

 Islam is a religion spread by the prophet Muhammad, who lived from A.D. 570 to 632. Muhammad claimed that he received the teachings of God (Allah) in a vision. These teachings were written in the Quran. A **Muslim**, or follower of Islam, is "one who submits" to Allah and the instructions of the Quran. For many Muslims, Islam is not only a religion, it is also an identity and a loyalty that transcends all others.

Today there are over one billion Muslims spread across the globe. Muslims form a majority in the Arab countries of the Middle East. However, only one in four Muslims is an Arab. Muslims also make up the majority of the population in some non-Arab countries like Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and Indonesia. In a number of other countries Muslims hold considerable political influence.

**Religion and Government** In modern times, Islamic countries view the relationship between religion and the state differently than do most Western democracies. Since the beginning of Islam, many teachers of the Islamic faith have believed that political rulers should use Islamic tenets in shaping governmental authority. As a noted scholar of Islam, Bernard Lewis, explains, "In the universal Islamic polity as conceived by Muslims, there is . . . only God, who is the sole sovereign and the sole source of law." Islamic leaders believe there is no need for a separation between religion and the state, since Allah is inherent in politics. The Quran provides the guidance needed on issues such as what the duties of citizens and rulers are, what rights citizens have, what makes a government legitimate, and how the government should exercise power.

Since the American and French Revolutions, some Western nations have drawn a line of separation between religion and the authority of the state. The U.S. Constitution, for example, clearly states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." Not all Western nations, however, follow this principle.



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## We the People

### Making a Difference

#### Mark, Dennis, and David Richard



Wheels for Humanity logo

In 1988 Mark Richard saw a disabled woman crawling along a roadside in Guatemala. He made up his mind to bring the woman a wheelchair. When he returned to the United States, Mark contacted the local chapter of the Spinal Cord Injury Association. Together they delivered 20 wheelchairs to Guatemala. Twice a year after that Mark repeated the trip, distributing 2,000 wheelchairs. His older brother Dennis helped until he died in 1994. In July 1995 David Richard, another brother, began collecting wheelchairs throughout southern California. He created a nonprofit

organization called Wheels for Humanity. In a California warehouse, volunteers restore battered wheelchairs to be distributed to disabled children in Vietnam, Guatemala, Bosnia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and other countries. In just 18 months the Richards improved 987 lives with the gift of a wheelchair. "Once you put your hand on a used wheelchair, you're hooked," David says.

The work of Wheels for Humanity continues. Various sources estimate that more than 21 million people worldwide are in need of wheelchairs.

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The Church of England, also known as the Anglican Church, is the official church of Great Britain. The Evangelical Lutheran Church is the state church of Norway. Some democratic countries even have political parties with religious identities, such as Germany's Christian Democratic Union.

Even when religion does play a role in Western democracies, that role is mostly symbolic. For example, many U.S. coins are imprinted with the phrase "In God We Trust." But religion is generally not the basis of authority in democracies, nor is it central to their political programs.

**Two Views of Islam** Less than 30 years after Muhammad's death in A.D. 632, a debate developed within Islam over which institution—religion or the state—should have ultimate authority. This debate continues to the present day.

Some Muslims, often called secularists, believe that religious doctrine and **secular** (nonreligious) law can and should be kept separate. Islam, they argue, is strictly a religion; it should not dictate what happens in government and politics. Other moderates call for practical compromises, with Islamic teachings playing a role but ultimately deferring to government authority on some key issues, such as declaring war. Moderate Muslims believe that Islam can and should try to coexist with the modern world

and modern ideas about government. These Muslims desire friendly relations with Western nations. Some want democratic institutions and the benefits of capitalism in their own countries.

Muslim fundamentalists (also called traditionalists or radicals) take a very different view. They believe Islamic countries should base their legal systems strictly on the *shari'ah*, or law of the Quran, rather than on any Western legal principles. These fundamentalists also hope Muslims across the world can be united in one spiritual, cultural, and political community. Further, they want to preserve or bring back cultural traditions such as requiring women to cover their faces in public and banning modern movies and music. They look to specially trained Islamic religious leaders called **mullahs**, who interpret and uphold traditional Islamic teachings. Some fundamentalists preach that the obligation of every Muslim is to rebel against any society or ruler that does not follow traditional Islamic principles.

Many fundamentalist Muslims see Western culture and society as a threat to Islamic culture. Some fundamentalists encourage negative attitudes towards Western democracies, especially the United States. Their main goal is to drive from power moderate Islamic governments that have adopted foreign customs. In 1991, for example, fundamentalists



murdered the moderate Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in a failed attempt to take over the government.

**Revolution in Iran** So far the most successful effort by fundamentalist Muslims has been in Iran. In the 1960s and 1970s, Iran built a capitalistic economy based on oil revenues. At that time Iran was ruled by a **shah**, or king, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, who strengthened economic ties to Western nations. Muslim religious leaders in Iran resented the shah's apparent embrace of Western values and sought a return to Muslim traditions. However, for many years the shah's secret police prevented any action and silenced all dissent.

Muslims who opposed the shah rallied around Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a Muslim leader living in exile in France. In 1979, Muslim fundamentalists in Iran organized massive demonstrations and forced the shah to flee to the United States. Khomeini returned to Iran from France and formed a new government based on Islamic principles. In this regime, conservative religious leaders had veto power over the actions of political leaders.

The new Iranian government demanded that the United States return the shah to Iran to stand trial. The United States refused, and relations between the two countries grew more and more strained. At the same time, anti-American sentiment increased in Iran. In late 1979, Iranians took American diplomats hostage in the U.S. Embassy in Iran and held them there for more than a year.

**Saudi Arabia** The struggle between fundamental Islam and the modern world has caused political tension in Saudi Arabia, a country that has provided oil and important military bases to the United States. The Al Saud family established the country in 1932 and have ruled as absolute monarchs ever since. The government is based on a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam with no separation of religion and the state. Next to the royal family, the most powerful political force in the country has always been the mullahs who impose traditional Islamic social and political ideas through government sponsored organizations like the Committee for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice.

The discovery of oil in the 1950s transformed Saudi Arabia from an isolated, desert nation to a wealthy, urban nation with tens of thousands of foreign workers and a large middle class of professionals. A growing number of Saudis have also started making demands for an elected government. As a result, the royal family has been searching for ways to create a modern economy, culture, and government while placating hard-line Muslim radicals. Since the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, many American critics have accused the Saudi government of indirectly supporting terrorism. These critics claim the Saudi government has funneled money to Islamic radicals as a way to appease fundamentalist critics within Saudi Arabia.

## Section 2 Assessment

### Checking for Understanding

1. **Main Idea** Use a graphic organizer like the one below to profile each of the countries covered in this section, and indicate whether the country is moving toward or away from democracy.

Authoritarian States		
Country	Controlled by	+/- Democracy

2. **Define** Muslim, mullah, shah.
3. **Identify** Politburo, Falun Gong, Bay of Pigs.
4. What events in 1979 returned Iran to Muslim control?
5. Why is China not a democratic nation?

### Critical Thinking

6. **Recognizing Ideologies** How does the North Korean government promote its state leader to the people?

### Concepts IN ACTION

**Comparative Government** Choose a country discussed in this section. Research recent political developments in this country. Imagine that you are traveling to the country that you chose. Write a letter to a friend describing the country, its government, and the extent to which the government affects people's lives.



# Global Issues

## Reader's Guide

### Key Terms

terrorism, state-sponsored terrorism, nuclear proliferation, human rights

### Find Out

- What is state-sponsored terrorism?
- Why has the United States been reluctant to sign the treaty creating the International Criminal Court?

### Understanding Concepts

**Global Perspectives** What steps have been taken to halt the global threat of nuclear proliferation?

## COVER STORY

# Day of Terror

NEW YORK CITY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Terrorists today crashed two commercial airliners into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. A third plane hit the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C., and a fourth went down outside Pittsburgh. All 266 people in the four jetliners were killed.

Within an hour of the first attack, Americans watched in horror on television as the south tower of the World Trade Center collapsed due to the heat of the explosion. Shortly after that the north tower fell. Many office workers in the twin towers jumped out of windows to their deaths to escape the flames. Hundreds of firefighters and rescue workers searched the debris but found few survivors. The U.S. military was put on the highest state of alert, and the nation's borders were immediately closed.



Smoke billows where twin towers stood

In today's interdependent world, citizens, national leaders, and officials in international organizations must increasingly deal with global issues that affect a large part of the world's population and cannot be solved by the actions of any single nation. Important global issues today include defeating terrorism, limiting the spread of nuclear weapons, promoting human rights, and protecting the environment.

As the world becomes more and more interconnected, even the most powerful nations, including the United States, cannot escape the impact of global issues. As one leading American political scientist explains, "U.S. security and economic interests are inevitably tied to what happens in the rest of the world. Whether we like it or not."

Global issues pose a challenge to a nation's ability to claim authority within its own borders and to act independently of other nations. This is because responding effectively to issues of a global scale sometimes requires a country to accept the decisions or rules of an international body such as the United Nations or the World Trade Organization, even if such decisions or rules differ from that country's own.

Some global issues are so large in scope that a group of nations must cooperate to solve the problems. This often means that individual nations must give up some measure of national authority. For example, to combat worldwide pollution, nations may agree to participate in a treaty that limits a nation's economic and industrial choices for the good of all treaty members. In other words, solving global issues may require cooperation among nations. A prime example of such cooperation came after the 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, when President George W. Bush met with nearly 80 foreign leaders to ask for their cooperation in fighting terrorism.



## Terrorist Attack

### Attack on the World Trade Center

Rescue workers and firefighters desperately search for survivors in the rubble of the 110-story towers. Hijackers took over passenger jets and flew them into the twin towers in a planned and coordinated act of destruction.

**Do you think such incidents help terrorists achieve their objectives? Why or why not?**



## International Terrorism



The U.S. State Department reports that recent years have seen more than 300 attacks of terrorism per year across all regions of the world. **Terrorism** is the use of violence by non-governmental groups against civilians to achieve a political goal.

International terrorism has become one of the greatest dangers of the new global era. This truth became very clear to Americans on September 11, 2001. Terrorists launched their most devastating attack ever on the United States, hijacking commercial airliners and crashing them into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Another plane intended for a similar attack crashed in Pennsylvania.

Since World War II, most terrorist attacks on Americans have been carried out by Middle Eastern groups. One reason for such attacks stems from the history of American investment in the oil industry. Such investment enriched the ruling families of some Middle Eastern kingdoms but left most of the people poor. Some of these people became angry at the United States for supporting the wealthy ruling families. American support of Israel also angered many in the Middle East.

The global importance of the oil industry also increased cultural exchanges between Middle Eastern countries and the West. Many Muslim

fundamentalists resented this contact, fearing that it weakened traditional Islamic values and beliefs. New movements arose calling for a strict interpretation of the Quran—the Muslim holy book—and a return to traditional Muslim religious laws. Eventually, some of the more militant fundamentalists began using terrorism to achieve their goals.

In the 1970s, several Middle Eastern nations realized they could fight the United States by providing terrorist groups with money, weapons, and training. When a government secretly supports terrorism, this is called **state-sponsored terrorism**. The governments of Libya, Syria, Iraq, and Iran have all sponsored terrorism.

**A New Terrorist Threat** In 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. In response, Muslims from across the Middle East headed to Afghanistan to join the struggle against the Soviets. Among them was a 22-year-old Muslim named **Osama bin Laden**. Bin Laden came from one of Saudi Arabia's wealthiest families. He used his wealth to support the Afghan resistance. In 1988 he founded an organization called **al-Qaeda**, or "the Base." Al-Qaeda recruited Muslims and channeled money and arms to the Afghan resistance.

Bin Laden's experience in Afghanistan convinced him that superpowers could be beaten. He also believed that Western ideas had contaminated Muslim society. He was outraged when Saudi



Arabia allowed American troops on Saudi soil after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Operating first from Sudan and then from Afghanistan—then under the control of Muslim fundamentalists known as the Taliban—bin Laden dedicated himself and al-Qaeda to driving Westerners, and especially Americans, out of the Middle East. In 1998 he called on Muslims to kill Americans. Soon afterward, truck bombs exploded at the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

In 1999 members of al-Qaeda were arrested while trying to smuggle explosives into the United States in an attempt to bomb Seattle, Washington. Then, in October 2000, al-Qaeda terrorists crashed a boat loaded with explosives into the USS *Cole*, an American warship docked in Yemen. Finally in 2001 came the devastating attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., and the United States responded by going to war.

**War on Terrorism Begins** Experts on Islam point out that Islamic terrorists misrepresent the teachings of the Quran and that many of their statements actually contradict core Islamic principles. According to Bernard Lewis, an internationally recognized authority on Islam, “The callous destruction of thousands in the World Trade Center . . . has no justification in Islamic doctrine or law and no precedent in Islamic history.” When the United States began bombing targets in Afghanistan in October 2001, Bush emphasized that he had ordered the military to attack al-Qaeda’s camps and the Taliban’s military forces, and he reiterated that Islam and the Afghan people were not the enemy.

President Bush also vowed that while the war on terrorism began by targeting al-Qaeda, it would not end “until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated.” In order for terrorism to be defeated on a global scale, however, many nations will have to work together towards that common goal.

## Nuclear Weapons Threat



Another problem that the world faces is **nuclear proliferation**, or the spread of nuclear weapons. Five nations—the United States, Russia, Great Britain, France, and China—have had nuclear weapons for many years. Israel, South Africa, Argentina, and Taiwan are also believed to

possess nuclear weapons. More recently, India and Pakistan have acquired the capability to produce nuclear weapons.

The United States, in cooperation with many other developed nations, has taken several steps to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. In late 1956, a joint agreement of 81 nations created the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This organization oversees the safe operation of nuclear power plants and limits the export of plutonium processing technologies needed to build nuclear weapons.

In 1968 the major nuclear powers created the nuclear **Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**, in which they promised not to provide nuclear weapons technology to other nations. They also vowed to ensure the safe use of nuclear power and to encourage general disarmament and destruction of existing nuclear weapons. Since the NPT’s creation, over 180 parties have joined this treaty. On occasion the United Nations has also imposed sanctions on nations seeking to build nuclear weapons.

A new challenge to limiting the spread of nuclear weapons has arisen, making the success of these international agreements more difficult. Scientists have revealed that it is possible to build small nuclear weapons using readily available low-enriched uranium or spent nuclear fuel, the waste left over by reactors used to generate electric power. Previously it was thought that only plutonium or highly enriched uranium could be used. As a result, the treaties and monitoring programs put into place so far have focused only on those two substances. The fact that these cheaper, more readily-obtainable substances can be used to make weapons of mass destruction means that a wider range of nations may have access to the materials needed to build nuclear weapons. This means that the chance of terrorists obtaining weapons of mass destruction has increased.

North Korea signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1985 as a non-nuclear weapons state. In 1992 both North and South Korea agreed to sign a Denuclearization Statement which stated that neither country was allowed to test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons and forbade the possession of nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities. Also, plans were discussed for nuclear weapons inspections in both countries. After these promising beginnings, however, North Korea showed little



# Good life returns to Timbuktu

With the militants gone, residents savor their freedom and tales of resistance

BY ROBYN DIXON

**TIMBUKTU, Mali** — There were public protests and whispers of secret love affairs. Heroes of resistance everywhere: the female fishmonger who angrily knocked down one of the occupiers, the imam who sent them away from his mosque, the elderly sheep trader beaten for complaining about their ill treatment of others.

Residents of this legendary caravan crossing are free of the violent militants who tried for nine months to impose their extreme version of Islam. French and African forces are continuing to chase them farther north into the Sahara.

And although many doubt that they are gone for good, now is a time for sweeping up and storytelling, for the music, flirting, smoking, community meetings and other small joys that make life in a desert town pleasurable.

Two sisters in clothing as bright as parrot plumage mime out life under the extremists, falling all over each other with throaty, guttural laughter. One exaggerates the creeping terrified walk of women under militant rule, then acts out a woman fleeing, her clownish eyes wide and her bottom sticking out comically.

Azahara Abdou, 20, lashed in public 40 times by militants who accused her of fornication — and then raped her while she was in custody — tells her story wearing a low-cut, clingy red tank top and carefully applied eyeliner.

Timbuktu, pronounced “Tom-book-too” by residents, is a maze of sandy alleys between gray mud houses and mud brick mosques, where sad-looking donkeys stagger, heads down, searching for something to eat, and old men sit on benches surveying the street and drinking small glasses of tea.

It’s a shell of what it was in its tourist heyday, before November 2011, when gunmen killed a German tourist and kidnapped three others, probably relinquishing them to Al Qaeda-linked extremists for a price. The incident wiped out tourism in a single blow. When the militants swept in five months later, most of the population fled. But the town’s bedraggled, trash-strewn streets belie its reserves of quiet bravery.

The insurgents streamed into town in convoys of SUVs filled with heavily armed fighters, among them the Al Qaeda-linked groups Ansar Dine and Al Qaeda in the Is-



JEROME DELAY Associated Press

**MALIAN WOMEN** make their way in Timbuktu, where street lights came on for the first time in months after the routing of militants.

‘We told them get out of our country, leave our town. It’s not for you to tell us how to practice *sharia* law.’

— JUMA TRAORE, one of about 200 women who demonstrated against militant Islamic rule in Timbuktu

lamic Maghreb. They said they were fighting the government and corruption, not the people, but soon plunged into a punitive campaign to impose their ways.

The extremists blotted out parts of advertising signs, targeting a mermaid, a cow and informational messages about mosquito nets and AIDS. They smashed bars and shops. And they visited Imam Abdelrahman Aqib at the famous Sankore Mosque, demanding to use it for Friday prayers.

“I didn’t let them. I didn’t even want to talk to them,” said the elderly imam, wretched in flowing white garments and seated beneath a portrait of his ancestor, the revered 16th and 17th century poet Ahmed Baba, author of some of Tim-

buktu’s thousands of priceless manuscripts.

Aqib has a fearsome reputation in Timbuktu, where believers think that if you anger the old man, you’ll meet a dreadful fate. He got his way.

The occupiers’ violent, extreme form of Islam clashed sharply with a tolerant attitude here that allows dancing, men and women mixing socially, acceptance of those who smoke and drink, and the wearing of protective amulets. In Mali’s capital, Bamako, women in tight-fitting, colorful costumes speed independently around on their motorcycles, a rare sight in Africa.

Timbuktu’s religion is imbued with legends of the city’s 333 saints. Prayers to them play an important role in daily life. At its height, in the 16th century, Timbuktu was a key post on the Sahel caravan routes, where salt, spices and fabrics were shipped by camel across Africa. It was also a legendary center of learning.

Mayor Ousmane Halle, one of the few government officials who did not flee, recalled that he went out to meet the militants when they arrived.

“I said if it’s true that they came to Timbuktu to help the people of the north, why did they destroy everything?” For that he got an eye-glazing lecture on reli-

gion. Halle said that once the beatings started, he went back to the militants and complained.

“They said, ‘There’s a lot of people here who do things they should not do.’”

The zealots set up a base in the Ahmed Baba Center, opposite the Sankore Mosque, and used the square for floggings, meted out with a camel hide whip, with three salt-hardened strands at the end.

The head of the Islamic police, Mohamed Mossa, a Mallan from a village outside Timbuktu, was known for the relish with which he ordered people to be flogged, particularly women.

Abdou said she came face to face with Mossa after she was picked up in the market wearing a diamante-studded *hijab*, or head covering, and accused of fornication. There was nothing more specific. When she denied the charge, he ordered 40 lashes, carried out that day, for her denial and an additional 100 two weeks later for the alleged crime.

She was dragged out of jail, made to kneel with a black covering on her face. The first lash was unbearable, she recalled. At the end, she collapsed. The next day, Abdou said, her captors summoned her and told her she was to be set free. Instead, she was dragged into an office and raped by five

men. Her father reported the rape to Mossa’s superiors, and she was released.

Women were so outraged by Mossa that about 200 of them staged a demonstration outside the police station in October, organizing themselves by sending text messages. Juma Traore, 50, who with her sister Badji, 44, did the impromptu mime of life under the zealots, said she took part because she was too furious to be afraid.

“I was fed up, and I said, ‘I’d rather die today than live like this,’” she said. “We shouted. We told them get out of our country, leave our town. It’s not for you to tell us how to practice *sharia* law.”

The demonstration lasted less than five minutes. Islamic police fired bullets in the air and people fled. Things got worse for women after that.

“But I don’t regret it,” Traore says.

Timbuktu residents also like to hint at the hanky-panky that went on under the noses of the militants. They celebrate the courage and toughness of Tina, an older woman who fries tiny fish and sells them at the market with a spicy salt, who got into a fight with a militant and got the better of him.

Ali Moubareck, 70, like many Malians, wears protective amulets to keep away evil and make him strong

and brave. Berated for selling his sheep in the market instead of going to the mosque, he lost his temper.

“I said, ‘You’ve got to stop hitting people and treating them like animals.’ I didn’t care that they were angry. I wasn’t scared. I could see that if they didn’t have guns, they’d be nothing.” They manacled his ankles, beat him and took away his amulets, money and silver bracelets.

“I don’t regret it, because I had to do it,” he said. “People had to see my example.”

But much has been lost, and most people agree that it will take a long time to rebuild.

Ousmane Dicko, 50, a building contractor, is wasting no time.

He gathered the members of his community association to clean up his neighborhood, like they used to every Sunday until the extremists stopped them. Pitching in, trying to put things right, shouting instructions and encouragement — the work gave meaning to his regained freedom.

As dusk settled over Timbuktu, dust rose as the men raked up rubbish and reset cobblestones to make the road passable once more.

“I feel like a citizen,” Dicko beamed.

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French soldiers secure the evacuation of foreigners during exchanges of fire with jihadists in Gao, northern Mali, on Sunday. JEROME DELAY • AP

## JIHADISTS LAUNCH SURPRISE ATTACK

Invasion of Gao in northern Mali comes 2 weeks after troops ousted the rebels

**KRISTA LARSON**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

### GAO, MALI

Black-robed Islamic extremists armed with AK-47 automatic rifles invaded Gao in wooden boats Sunday to launch a surprise attack on the most populous city in northern Mali, two weeks after French and Malian troops ousted the jihadists.

Gunfire echoed for hours across the city of mud-walled buildings. The combat started at about 2 p.m. in downtown Gao and the fighting was continuing as night fell. Later the sound of gunfire was replaced by the clattering of French military helicopters overhead.

The attack in Gao shows the Islamic fighters, many of them well-armed and with combat experience, are determined and daring and it foreshadows a protracted campaign by France and other nations to restore government control in this vast Saharan nation in northwest Africa. The Islamic radicals fought against the Malian army throughout the afternoon and were roaming the narrow streets blanketed in sand and on rooftops in the center of Gao, which had a population of 90,000 before the conflict caused thousands to flee. Families hid in their homes. One family handed plastic cups of water through the locked iron gate to others hiding on their patio. Piles of onions lay unattended where market women fled when the Islamists arrived. There were no signs of civilian casualties.

The fighting appeared to center near the police headquarters, where Malian soldiers with rocket propelled grenades traded fire with

the combatants believed to be from the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa, or MUJAO.

Ever since French forces took Gao on Jan. 26, the Islamic rebels had clashed with security forces on the city's outskirts. This was the first time they succeeded in entering the strategic city.

The Islamic fighters used pirogues, large wooden dugouts with motors, and other boats to cross the Niger River and penetrate Gao, according to French Gen. Bernard Barrera, who cited Malian officials.

The Islamic radicals had already tried to spread violence into Gao. On Saturday night, a suicide bomber detonated himself at a checkpoint at the entrance to the city, killing himself and wounding one Malian soldier. An earlier suicide bomber on a motorcycle also blew himself up at the same security spot on Friday, killing himself.

Besides Gao, French and Malian forces have also retaken the fabled city of Timbuktu and other northern towns, pushing the Islamic extremists back into the desert, where they pose a constant threat to Malian and allied forces. But the Islamic fighters made strategic retreats and are dug into desert hideouts. Several African nations have contributed troops to battle the extremists, who imposed their harsh version of Islamic Shariah law when they controlled cities.

The armed Islamic fighters seized the northern half of Mali in April 2012, sending poorly disciplined and equipped Malian forces retreating in disarray. France launched its military intervention in its former colony on Jan. 11.