Skandalon 2001: The Religious Practices of Modern Satanists and Terrorists

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Skandalon is an expression found in the Gospels that refers to an obstacle upon which one keeps stumbling, a trap, a snare; it is associated with Satan. In Girardian terms, *skandalon* designates an inability to walk away from mimetic rivalry that results in all kinds of destructive practices and exemplifies the predicament of the model-obstacle of mimetic theory. This article considers five aspects of skandalon: personifications, rivalries, models, religions, and sacred violence, as manifested in the concepts of both Satanism and terrorism. The similarities are striking, compelling and significant.

While the theme of terrorism has been consistently and appropriately addressed in media accounts of the American tragedy that occurred on September 11, 2001, there is another relevant concept that intermittently appears in the press but has seldom been specifically considered. The Islamic extremist position that the United States is the “Great Satan,” the thousands of reports of the face of Satan seen in the photographs of the smoke coming out of the World Trade Center (http://detnews.com/2001/nation/0109/19/a05-297999.htm orhttp://www.snopes2.com/rumors/wtcface.htm), and the essentially evil nature of this act suggest that Satanism needs to be examined. The concept of Satanism is just as disturbing, frightening, and elusive as the concept of terrorism. For some, Satan is a personified evil being, for others, he is a metaphor for the existence of evil, and, for many more, Satan is a myth that arose out of biblical literature. Whatever views you may hold concerning the reality of Satan, there is no question that Satanism exists.

Personifications

Modern Satanism

Satanism is present in American culture as a religion, as a genre in film, music, and art, as a political ideal, and as a popular subject in the media. Satanism is a religion, acknowledged by the US Federal Government, that maintains ethical doctrines, specific rituals, and true believers. This religion is widely practiced in Western society, both individually and communally, through Satanic churches, covens, and grottoes. As with other organized religions, beliefs vary among different sects and congregations, ranging from a form of ethical egoism to worshiping a specific deity. In most sects, Satanism is a reversal of Christianity, and similarities are found between the symbolism and ritual practices of each group. In this article, I will present an overview of contemporary American Satanic groups, beliefs, and practices, describing how those beliefs differ from extreme fundamentalist Islamic views of Satanism and how modern American Satanists interpret the tragedy of September 11 from their own theological perspective. Finally, I will apply the Girardian concept of ritual violence and specifically *skandalon* to these manifestations of Satanism.

Modern Terrorism

Terrorism too is present in American culture as a religion, a genre in film, music, and art, a political ideal, and a popular subject in the media. Like Satanism, terrorism is enacted by religious groups that maintain ethical doctrines, specific rituals, and true believers. Often referred to as cults, militias, or cells, these religions are widely practiced throughout the world, both individually and communally, and include Christian Identity, Aum Shinrikyo, Islamic fundamentalism, and many others. As with organized religions, beliefs vary among different groups and followings, ranging from a form of devout purism as a return to original strict interpretations of sacred text to the worship of a leader as a deity. Similarities are found in racist, elitist ideologies that advocate violence, terrorism, and genocide and view every other group as satanic or the evil Babylon. In this article, I will present an overview of the beliefs and practices of modern terrorists, notably including Wahhabism, the religion of Osama bin Laden and nearly every devout Muslim terrorist since the eighteenth century. I will describe how terrorists justify their violent acts theologically by claiming that American culture is completely satanic. Finally, I will apply the Girardian concept of ritual violence and specifically *skandalon* to these manifestations of terrorism.

Rivalries

Defining Satanism

Definitions of Satanism are problematic because it is a relative concept determined by the theological, moral, political, sociological, and legal perspectives of each group. Basically, one man's God is another man's devil. From a fundamentalist Christian theological perspective, any practice other than Christianity is considered satanic, and from a fundamental Islamic perspective, any practice other than Islam is considered satanic. This is based on strict interpretation of identical prohibitions found in both the Bible and the Quran. The Quran 28.70 states, "And He is Allah, there is no god but He," and the Bible in Exodus 20.2-3 states, "I am the Lord your God. . . . You shall have no other gods before Me."(1) One result of these prohibitions has been a history of holy wars; another has been that some people denounce God and embrace Satanism. Modern Satanists clearly admit that their religion is anti-God, and it is irrelevant to them whether it be the God of the Christian Bible or Allah of the Quran. However, that does not necessarily mean that all modern Satanists are devil worshipers. Contemporary Satanism entails either worshiping Satan as a personified evil being or glorifying what he represents. Other characteristics of Satanism include beliefs based on a form of hedonism or egoism. Many contemporary Satanists also identify with pagan pre-monotheistic beliefs.

Historically, Satanism was attributed to groups designated as heretical simply because they deviated from strict Christian or Islamic practices. Today, many non-traditional religions, especially those that entail occult practices, such as Santeria, Voodoo, Wicca, and Druidism, are often still categorized as Satanic. This controversy has provoked a vehement debate among new religious movement scholars. These usually fall into three general categories: Anticult scholars, who emphasize potential harms among new religious groups, cult apologists, who emphasize religious freedom, and countercult organizations, who oppose religious groups on theological grounds. The debate is complex and ongoing. The anticult position on Satanism is that it exists in a variety of individual and group religions, some of which are responsible for serious crimes. The cult apologist position is that it is a benign new religious movement and that allegations of crimes are due to satanic "panics" and urban legends. The countercult position is that, from an orthodox perspective, any group other than the true religion is heretical and/or satanic. Thus, Satanism is a culturally relative construct that varies in place and in time and is intrinsically intertwined with issues of religious freedom, even if that freedom entails the subjugation and harm of others.

Defining Terrorism

Like definitions of Satanism, definitions of terrorism are problematic because it, too, is a relative concept, determined by the theological, moral, political, sociological, and legal perspectives of each group. Basically, one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. There are many contrary definitions of terrorism, dependent upon the perspective of the author. Similar to the anticult / cult apologist debate among religious scholars attempting to draw the line of religious freedom, political philosophers and legal scholars attempt to distinguish between political freedoms, terrorism, anarchy, and justice.

The FBI has two general categories of terrorism, domestic and international. Domestic terrorism is defined as "The unlawful use, or threatened use, of violence by a group or individual that is based entirely within the United States or its territories without foreign direction and which is committed against persons or property with the intent of intimidating or coercing a government or its population in furtherance of political or social objectives."(2) The FBI's definition of international terrorism involves "violent acts, or acts dangerous to human life, that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or any state, and which are intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the police of a government, or affect the conduct of a government."(3)

The concept of violence is intrinsic to the definition of terrorism, but that only further complicates the issue because not all acts of violence are considered negative. One political view will consider an act as terrorism and another will deem it justifiable retribution. Furthermore, the distinction between terrorism and retribution is dependent upon the perception of who was violated first. This is exemplified by the similarities in the post-September 11 speeches by President Bush and Osama bin Laden, in which each accuses the other of being a terrorist. "And there are civilians, innocent children being killed every day in Iraq without any guilt." "Americans have known surprise attacks but never before on thousands of civilians." "Muslims, this is the day of question. This is a new (inaudible) against you, all against the Muslims and Medina. So be like the followers of the prophet, peace be upon him, and all countrymen, lovers of God and the prophet within, and a new battle, [a] great battle . . ." "I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why so many have come here. We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them." "Let the whole world know that we shall never accept that the tragedy of Andalucia would be repeated in Palestine." " I will never forget this wound to our country, or those who inflicted it."(4) The tones of the speeches are so similar that it can be difficult to identify who is being quoted. (Transcript of President Bush's speech: http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html; transcript of Osama bin Laden's

video:http://abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNews/strike_binladentrans011007.html .)

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In a recent article in *Le Monde*, René Girard commented on the current crisis and described terrorism as a form of mimetic competition on a planetary scale. “The error is always to reason within the categories of “difference,” when the root of all conflicts is rather “competition,” the mimetic rivalry between persons, countries, cultures. Competition is the desire to imitate the other in order to obtain the same thing he or she has, by violence if need be”(5)(http://www.lemonde.fr/article/o,5987,3230–239636-,00.html). Imitation and competition are not evident just in President Bush’s and Osama bin Laden’s speeches, they are apparent in their identical desire to protect their beliefs by violently imposing their ideologies. Eric Gans described the current conflict in terms of resentment from his originary model of reciprocity in “Window of Opportunity” *Chronicle* 248 (http://anthropoetics.ucla.edu/views/vw248.htm). Essentially Gans claims that since every social order generates resentment, the current conflict is not a clash of religions or cultures but a battle between those who lead civilization and those whose resentment is so strong they will its destruction. Although Gans clearly states that terrorism is unacceptable, he argues that one can never wholly eliminate the source of terrorism because “Any ethical model with a claim to practical application must allow for the existence of individuals and groups within the larger society who consider that society unjust and who ardently desire its destruction, even if they be destroyed along with it.”(6) The problem is that there is no means to acceptably defer this resentment. Terrorism is a culturally relative construct that varies in place and in time and is intrinsically intertwined with issues of political freedom, even if that freedom entails the subjugation and harm of others.

Models

Typologies of Satanism

Typologies of Satanism are just as problematic as definitions, since it is a culturally relative construct that is generally defined by its adversaries. There are additional controversies concerning the very existence of some Satanic groups. As a result of these debates, it is especially difficult to present an agreed-upon typology. It is significant to note that the study of Satanism is in its infancy; basic demographic and ethnological data have yet to be compiled, and it is unclear whether accurate information is available. However, after reviewing proposed typologies from a variety of sources, I have been able to detect four general categories, although they

may be referred to by different names or only for purposes of condemnation.(7) These categories are: religious / organized Satanists, traditional / intergenerational Satanists, self-styled Satanists, and youth subculture Satanists. These classifications are broad and not mutually exclusive. In addition to the four major categories of Satanic groups, another classification is sometimes used to differentiate Satanists: Satanic groups can be characterized as either atheistic or theistic. Theistic Satanists glorify what they imagine Satan represents; they worship Satan or other deities as incarnations of an evil being. Finally, there are many other occult organizations that, although not specifically Satanic, have similar practices and rituals, such as many vampire religions, Goth, and the fetish scene. Some of these groups are described in detail in my previous *Anthropoetics* article, "The Sacrificial Aesthetic: Blood Rituals from Art to Murder" (http://anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap0502/blood.htm).

Religious / Organized Satanists

Religious Satanism consists of organized groups and churches with diverse varieties of Satanic beliefs. Religious Satanists are also known as "true believers," individuals who have seriously committed themselves to the beliefs, tenets, rituals, and ideologies of a Satanic religion. Currently, in the United States, some Satanic churches are recognized by the government as religions, and, consequently, are not only protected by the First Amendment but also receive tax-exempt status. There are many American Satanic churches and a variety of other religious organizations that openly practice Satanism, most of which have web pages on the Internet providing information on their beliefs and practices as well as membership applications. Satanism is often also referred to as the Left Hand Path, occultism, black magic, or the Dark Arts; various similar groups use the same designations.

Due to the provocative nature of this religion, the Internet has become the primary source for the substantial growth of the Satanic community. The World Wide Web provides a significant forum for recruiting new members, disseminating information, and exchanging ideas. There are hundreds of web sites for Satanic organizations, churches, support groups, occult supplies, and all things related to the Left Hand Path. In addition to individual web sites, there are libraries, chat rooms, message boards, and resource sites. Just a few of the more active resource web sites include: The Satanic Network (http://www.satannet.com/), The Australian Satanic Council (http://www.satanic.org.au), Devil Spawn (http://www.geocities.com/satanism_au/index.html), and The 600 Club, whose name is a deliberate parody of the Christian 700 club (http://the600club.net/cgi-bin/community/index.pl). There are so many Satanic web sites that there are several awards given to the best sites, including Lucifer's Top List and Tomb of Darkness. Some of the hosts of the Satanic awards have their own web sites listing the winners, with convenient hyperlinks. They include The Fire

Within Top 100, The Best Satanic Sites on the Internet (http://members.hostedscripts.com/top.cgi?user=TheDevil), and Blacklist Top 100, which is truly disturbing because it links to violent pornography, torture, and images of actual murders (http://www.damnage.com/BlackList/index.shtml).

Finally, as unimaginable as it may seem, there is Radio Free Satan (http://radiofreesatan.com), available 24 hours a day, advertised as the voice of Satan on the Internet (http://www.live365.com/cgi-bin/directory.cgi?autostart=radiofreesatan). The Church of Satan just recently announced the premiere of Satanism Today, another Internet radio station, whose stated goals are to publicize the philosophy of their church and its membership; they list the following topics: news from the satanic perspective, applications of satanic theory in daily life, and practical applications of greater and lesser magic, featuring a new guest each week and much more.

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The two most established, best-known American Satanic churches are The Church of Satan [CoS] and The Temple of Set [ToS], which are described in detail in the next section. It is worth noting that Satanic religious organizations are often referred to by the first initials of their names but, significantly, these initials are not read as acronyms. Some other Satanic organizations include: First Church of Satan [FCoS] (http://www.churchofsatan.org/main.html), Cult of Mastema [CoM] (http://www.geocities.com/satanism_au/library/genintro.html), Ordo Templi Satanis [OTS] (http://www.satanist.net/satan/satanism/Ots/Ots.htm), Church of Lucifer [COL] (http://www.churchoflucifer.org/), Ordo Sinistra Vivendi [OSV] (http://www.geocities.com/satanism_au/library/svrc.html). There are many orders, grottoes, pylons and covens of the main churches, and a significant number of unrelated, less well-known groups, many of which also have web pages on the Internet. Although it is difficult to establish numbers and geographical locations of members, most are located in the United States, Europe, and Australia; they can be found on every continent except Antarctica. On the African and South American continents, occult dark magic is practiced in the context of indigenous religions, which would account for the smaller membership in Western Satanic churches in those countries. In many countries, organized Satanic groups are not tolerated and must remain underground. Although the ideologies of these groups may be highly offensive to more traditional religions, it is generally thought that religious Satanists are on the whole law-abiding citizens whose known practices rarely constitute illegal activities. However, this has been questioned in statements of the many survivors and victims of occult-related crimes, who claim that these groups are simply covers for criminal acts.

Traditional / Intergenerational Satanists

Traditional Satanists are considered a highly organized international secret cult network actively engaged in a variety of criminal activities, including arson, ritual abuse, sexual abuse, incest, kidnapping, child pornography, and ritual murder involving mutilation, dismemberment, and sometimes cannibalism. Similar to religious Satanists, traditional Satanists are also known as “true believers”; they are exceptionally devoted to their beliefs, which comprise an extreme fundamentalist version of Satanic religion. They are also referred to as generational or intergenerational Satanists. Many members contend that they were raised in this belief system, going back as far as several generations. Ideologically, traditional Satanists worship Satan as the evil deity described in the New Testament; their religious practices include blood rituals, animal and human sacrifice, and a variety of sadistic sexual rites for the glorification of Satan. The previously described religious Satanists all vehemently deny engaging in these activities and consider the allegation as a form of defamation. Because of a lack of empirical evidence, many scholars, Satanic church members, mental health professionals, and a large portion of the general public consider these assertions to be urban myths, false memories, and a form of satanic panic. Although studies have not been conducted to determine the frequency with which it occurs, there is factual evidence that the practice of traditional Satanism exists.

Examples of criminal cases involving alleged traditional Satanists include the infamous McMartin preschool trial that lasted six years and was the first multi-victim multi-offender child abuse case. Beginning in March 1984, 208 counts of child abuse involving 40 children were directed against 7 adults; the two owners of the school, one owner’s son, and four schoolteachers. By January 1986, a new district attorney dropped all charges against five of the adults; remaining were 52 charges against Ray Buckey and 20 counts against Peggy Buckey, with one count of conspiracy. After several years, in August 1990, another jury was hung and the prosecution gave up trying to obtain a conviction. This case spurred many similar prosecutions, which were referred to as witch hunts by people who argue that this type of abuse does not occur. This trial was also a national media event, the subject of many books, studies, and films. Other famous controversial descriptions of victims of Satanic ritual abuse and entire Satanic communities practicing traditional Satanism are found in the classic non-fiction (although some claim, fictional) books *Michelle Remembers* and *Satan’s High Priest*. Both books describe in detail heinous ritual practices of traditional Satanists. The web site ReligiousTolerance.org lists 41 multi-victim multi-offender court cases with allegations of ritual abuse (http://www.religioustolerance.org/ra_case#us). Hyperlinks to more details about the cases are provided by the authors; however, the reader should take note that their viewpoint is that satanic ritual abuse does not occur. For an objective and

informative description of the debates and issues concerning satanic ritual abuse, see:http://www.gospelcom.net/apologeticsindex/s05.html . As an example of the debates on satanic ritual abuse, an article entitled “Satanism: Skeptics Abound” can be viewed athttp://www.xeper.org/pub/tos/archives/satskep.html .

Self-Styled Satanists

Self-styled Satanists are either individually involved with Satanism or belong to small, loosely organized groups. Self-styled Satanists are sub-classified either as “dabblers,” people who are intermittently and experientially involved in occult activities, or as “true criminals” who use the occult as an excuse to justify or rationalize their criminal behavior. The rituals and belief systems of dabblers and true criminals are either entirely self-invented, a combination of a variety of traditions, or are emulated from media/cultural images of Satanic practices. Self-styled Satanists are not viewed as true believers, since their primary interest is usually the acquisition of personal power, material gain, or gratification through criminal activity rather than spiritual Satanic worship. Religious Satanists are offended by the claims and actions of self-styled Satanists who bring bad publicity to their already controversial religion.

Some self-styled Satanists engage in criminal activities, ranging from child molestation and animal mutilation to homicide, and their crimes conform to their self-invented ideologies. It is in this category of Satanism that most ritualistic crimes are placed; Satanic ritual abuse is often mistaken for a form of sexual sadism or serial murder. A classic example of a self-styled Satanist is Richard Ramirez, dubbed “The Night Stalker,” who in 1985 terrorized Los Angeles by breaking into people’s homes, raping, torturing, mutilating, and murdering his victims, and, most notably, forcing them to declare their love for Satan. In the spring and summer of 1985, Ramirez committed over twenty attacks. In 1989, Ramirez was found guilty on thirteen counts of murder and, in a famous gesture during the trial, raised his hand with a pentagram on it and said, “Hail Satan.” Currently awaiting execution at San Quentin prison, he continues to be completely devoted to Satan. For more details on Richard Ramirez, see:http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Shadowlands/4077/ramirez.html .

Youth Subculture Satanists

Youth subculture Satanists are similar to self-styled Satanists; however, their interest in Satanism is usually transitory and may not evolve into criminal activities. Youth subculture Satanists are sub-categorized as dabblers; they are teenagers and young adults who are usually introduced to Satanism via music, film, the Internet,

and other media. Most often, these young adults turn to the occult because of a deep sense of alienation from mainstream culture and spiritual traditions. They either eventually return to more traditional beliefs or are recruited into one of the many Satanic religious organizations. Their rituals usually escalate depending upon the length of time they are involved in Satanism, beginning with simple magical incantations and sometimes evolving into animal and human sacrifice. Common crimes of youth subculture Satanists include vandalism, arson, grave desecration, animal mutilation, school violence, and sometimes murder. Depending upon their level of seriousness at the time of their involvement, they can also be considered momentary true believers.

There are numerous examples of youth subculture Satanists who commit crimes. Examples of the more serious crimes of homicide and mass murder committed include the case of sixteen-year-old Luke Woodham, who, on October 1, 1997, in Pearl, Mississippi, stabbed his mother to death, then went to school and opened fire with a rifle, killing two of his classmates and wounding seven. Luke Woodham was part of a larger group of youths who had embraced Satanism. His new peers, who were part of a group known as the Kroth, which sought to destroy its enemies and practice Satanic worship, instructed Luke that murder was a viable means of accomplishing the purposes and goals of the shared belief system (http://www.cnn.com/US/9806/11/school.shooting.03/index.html#links). Another example occurred in Chiavenna, Italy on June 6, 2000, when three teenage girls brutally murdered a nun, Sister Mary Laura Manetti, after they had formed their own Satanic group, which, they said, was influenced by the lyrics of heavy metal musician Marilyn Manson. (Seehttp://www.petersvoice.com/nunmurder3.htm and http://www.metalhammer.co.uk/article.asp?ID=4607&type=NWS .) Numerous murders and suicides have been attributed to the media and cultural influence of Satanism.

Anti-Satanism

A typology of Satanism would be incomplete without mentioning organizations specifically established to combat Satanism and who are chiefly responsible for assigning Satanists to the preceding categories. These are variously referred to as anticult organizations, countercult organizations, and watch groups. For an in-depth look into these categories, Apologetics Index contains a vast archive of articles, newspapers, commentaries, and resources. Apologetics Index states that it “provides research resources on religious cults, sects, new religious movements, alternative religions, apologetics, anticult, and countercult organizations, doctrines, religious practices and world views. These resources reflect a variety of theological and/or sociological perspectives.”(8) Although a self-proclaimed Christian countercult organization, it provides a surprisingly objective perspective on most

pages (http://www.gospelcom.net/apologeticsindex/c11.html).

A few of the better-known anticult groups include the Cult Awareness Network (CAN), formerly a clearinghouse for information about cults whose mission was to educate the public and to provide support to victims of cults and their families. CAN was subjected to a huge scandal when sued by the Church of Scientology, who eventually forced them to close down, obtained all their records, bought all of their logos, trademarks, and so on through bankruptcy and are currently operating their own version of CAN. The American Family Foundation, founded in 1979, is a research center and educational organization whose mission is to study psychological manipulation and cultic groups, to educate the public, and to assist those who have been adversely affected by a cult-related experience. The Watchman Fellowship is considered the foremost Christian countercult ministry; its resources include over 9,000 files and a 35,000 volume library on abusive religious groups, cults, and the occult. These are just a few of the numerous countercult and anticult organizations.

The primary goals of the previously mentioned anticult organizations are to protect their people from external violence and to preserve their way of life. As we examine the religions of modern Satanists, it will be evident that their own primary goals are identical to their rivals'. Significantly, all of the above-mentioned models of Satanism are classified not by the groups themselves but by organizations external to these groups, often acting in direct opposition to their ideologies, thus exemplifying the predicament of mimetic rivalry and the model-obstacle.

Typologies of Terrorism

Typologies of terrorism are just as problematic as definitions, and for similar reasons; terrorism is a culturally relative construct defined by its enemies. The most relevant source for categories of terrorism from the ideological perspective of the US government can be found in a Congressional Statement made to the US Senate Committee on Appropriations, on May 10, 2001, by Louis J. Freeh, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, entitled "On the Threat of Terrorism to the United States" (http://www.fbi.gov/congress/congress01/freeh051001.htm). This pre-September 11 statement accurately foreshadowed current terrorist incidents by describing recent trends, statistics, arrests, and investigations into acts of terrorism.

International Terrorism

The FBI's classification of terrorism into international and domestic is based on geography and not on the goal of the behavior. According to the FBI typology,

international terrorism has three subcategories based on the structural organization of the various groups: loosely affiliated extremists, formal terrorist organizations, and state sponsors of terrorism. The first category of international terrorism, loosely affiliated extremists, includes Sunni Islamic extremists, such as Osama bin Laden and those affiliated with his Al-Qaeda organization–individuals from varying nationalities, ethnic groups, tribes, races, and terrorist groups who support extremist Sunni goals. The common element among these diverse individuals is that they are committed to the radical international jihad movement, whose ideology includes promoting violence against the “enemies of Islam” in order to overthrow all governments not ruled by conservative Islamic law. Foreshadowing the American tragedy, in the congressional statement dated May 10, 2001, loosely affiliated extremists were considered the most urgent threat to the US because their goals consisted of carrying out large scale, high profile, high casualty terrorist attacks against US interests and citizens.

The second category of international terrorism, formal terrorist organizations, includes extremist groups such as the Palestinian Hamas, the Irish Republican Army, the Egyptian Al-Gama Al-Islamiyya, and the Lebanese Hizballah. They are characterized as autonomous, generally transnational organizations that have their own infrastructures, personnel, financial arrangements, and training facilities. They have a presence in the US, with members engaged in fund-raising, recruiting, and intelligence gathering. Additionally, they maintain operations and support networks in the US. Prior to September 11, the Hizballah were responsible for the deaths of more Americans than any other terrorist group.

The third category of international terrorism is state sponsors of terrorism, consisting of countries that view terrorism as a tool of foreign policy. At the time of the May 10 congressional statement, the Department of State listed seven countries as state sponsors of terrorism: Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Libya, Syria, Cuba, and North Korea. Iran represented the greatest threat to the US because it supports financially and logistically anti-Western acts of terrorism by others.

Domestic Terrorism

Domestic terrorism also has three subcategories, but these are based on the ideologies of the various groups, designated as right-wing extremist groups, left-wing extremist groups, and special-interest extremists. The right-wing extremist groups are characterized by adherence to the principles of racial supremacy and their embrace of antigovernment, anti-regulatory beliefs. Formal right-wing hate groups that represent a continuing terrorist threat on a national level include the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC) and the Aryan Nations; racism-based hatred remains an integral component of these groups’ core orientations. Another group in

this category is the Southeastern States Alliance, an umbrella organization of militias in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, and other southern states, a group that planned to attack national guard armories in 1999 . The goal of this group was to create social and political chaos, thereby forcing the US government to declare martial law, an act they believed would lead to its violent overthrow by the American people. Two of the seven planned acts of terrorism prevented in 1999 were potentially large-scale, high-casualty attacks.

The second category of domestic terrorism comprises left-wing and Puerto Rican extremist groups who view themselves as protectors of the people against the dehumanizing effects of capitalism and imperialism. Generally professing a revolutionary socialist doctrine, they believe in bringing about change through revolution rather than the political process. Several of these groups are seeking to secure full Puerto Rican independence from the US. These extremist Puerto Rican separatist groups are the Armed Forces for Puerto Rican National Liberation, FALN, Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional Puertorriquena, and Los Machesteros. FALN has carried out bombings in the US mainland, primarily in and around New York, and Los Macheteros is suspected of three bombings in Puerto Rico.

The third category of domestic terrorism is special interest extremists, who differ from right- and left-wing terrorists in that they seek to resolve specific issues rather than overthrowing the entire political system. They conduct acts of politically motivated violence in order to bring public attention to their specific causes. These groups occupy the extreme fringes of animal rights, pro-life, environmental, anti-nuclear, and other political and social movements. The groups most noted for acts of vandalism and terrorist activity include the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), which have caused millions of dollars in damages to businesses they consider hostile to the environment or to animal rights.

Current Trends in Terrorism

Additionally, the FBI’s terrorist typology includes a category called “current trends in modern terrorism.” These fall into two categories: weapons of mass destruction, including what is currently referred to as bioterrorism, and the use of the Internet to commit acts of terrorism, including what is currently known as cyber-terrorism. Weapons of mass destruction include chemical, biological, and radiological agents. A 1999 *Emergency Response to a Terrorism Self-Study Manual*, published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to train fire, medical, and hazardous materials first responders, lists five categories of terrorist incidents. The acronym B-NICE is a simple way to remember the five: biological, nuclear, incendiary, chemical, and explosive. FEMA also lists the four routes of entry: inhalation, absorption, ingestion, and injection, and the four common types of biological agents: bacteria,

viruses, rickettsia, and toxins. The FEMA manual describes handling of biological, nuclear, incendiary, and chemical incidents. Chemical agents fall into five classes: nerve agents, blister agents, blood agents, choking agents, and irritating agents, the effects of which are described in horrifying detail.(9)

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Statistics listed in the May 10, 2001 FBI congressional statement claim that, between 1997 and 2000, the FBI investigated 779 weapons of mass destruction reports, generally involving individuals or small groups. The vast majority of these cases were found to be without merit; the two agents most involved in the investigation were the biological toxin ricin and the bacteriological agent anthrax. Surprisingly, although the actual ricin toxin had been involved in some cases, no anthrax agents had been uncovered in any law enforcement investigation in the United States, even though, in 2000, 90 of the 115 biological threats investigated involved the use of anthrax. In a more recent congressional statement specifically on bioterrorism, dated November 6, 2001 (http://www.fbi.gov/congress/congress01/caruso110601.htm), posterior to the events of September 11 and the tragic deaths of five persons from anthrax, the FBI claims to have responded to approximately 7,089 suspicious anthrax letters, 950 incidents involving weapons of mass destruction, and an estimated 29,331 telephone calls from the public about suspicious packages. Their statement on bioterrorism classifies potential threats into two categories: overt and covert releases, based on the way the biological agent is released into the community. An overt scenario involves the announced release of an agent; a covert release is not discovered until individuals report symptoms.

Terrorists are increasingly using the Internet to recruit members, communicate between cells and members, raise funds, and spread propaganda. Other terrorist uses of the Internet include attacks on government websites and e-mail servers and attempts to inundate systems with e-mail messages. Cyber-terrorism is the use of cyber tools to shut down or degrade national infrastructures, such as energy, transportation, communications, or government services, for the purpose of coercing or intimidating a government or civilian population.

Anti-Terrorism

As with Satanism, a typology of terrorism would be incomplete without mentioning organizations specifically established to abolish terrorism and who are chiefly responsible for assigning terrorists to the preceding categories. These are variously referred to as antiterrorist organizations, counterterrorist organizations, and watch groups. The FBI and other US government agencies have counterterrorist divisions;

legislation is enacted and armies are mobilized to enforce antiterrorist laws. The most recent notable examples include the USA Patriot Act, an acronym for Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 (Enrolled Bill H.R.3162), whose purpose is to deter and punish terrorists around the world and to enhance law enforcement's investigative tools (http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:H.R.3162.ENR:); the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (Enrolled Bill S.1447) to improve aviation security (http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:S.1447.ENR:); and Authorization for Use of Military Force (Enrolled Bill S.J.Res.23) to authorize the United States Armed Forces to take action against those responsible for the recent attacks launched against the United States (http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:S.J.RES.23.ENR:). For a complete list of legislation related to the attack of September 11, 2001, see the Library of Congress web site or Thomas legislative information on the Internet (http://thomas.loc.gov/home/terrorleg.htm). In addition to government legislation, there are many private terrorist watch groups, such as the Terrorism Research Center, dedicated to informing the public of the phenomena of terrorism and information warfare (http://www.terrorism.com/index.shtml), and the Emergency Response and Research Institute, which provides 24-hour news, information, analysis, and coverage of disasters and major emergency events. The Institute, located on the web athttp://www.emergency.com , contains a Counterterrorism Operations page that lists a summary of worldwide terrorism events, groups, and terrorist strategies and tactics (http://www.emergency.com/cntrterr.htm). The Southern Poverty Law Center's intelligence project tracks active hate groups in the US (http://www.splcenter.org/intelligenceproject/ip-index.html). Domestic terrorists have their own watch groups; one example is a white supremacist web site called Jew Watch, a response to Hatewatch, advertised as keeping a close watch on Jewish communities and organizations worldwide (http://www.jewwatch.com/).

The primary goals of these antiterrorist organizations are to protect their people from external violence and to preserve their way of life. As we examine the religions of modern terrorists, it will be evident that they share these goals.

Religions

Modern Religious Satanism

Just as Christianity is manifested in a number of diverse Christian religions, there are many varieties of Satanism and Satanic sects, sometimes pejoratively designated as cults. Most practitioners of Satanism proudly acknowledge the designation of Satanists, others admit that their religion entails occultism, magic, and worshiping specific deities but do not consider it specifically Satanic; all

religions vehemently disavow the category of cult. Commonalities among the major Satanic churches include: hierarchical structures, opposition to Christian tenets, magical ideologies, and advocating ethical egoism and the acquisition of personal and political power. Like other religious denominations, individual Satanic churches profess spiritual superiority over each other and claim that they are practicing the one true faith. Most of these groups do not practice theistic Satanism, worshipping Satan as a personified evil being, but atheistic Satanism, glorifying what they imagine he represents, including indulgence, vengeance, and engaging in sin as a source of self-gratification or self-deification.

Three active groups best exemplify the religious practices of modern Satanists: the Church of Satan, the Temple of Set, and Ordo Templi Orientis–which earnestly claims that it is not a Satanic organization. All three groups have large international memberships, degrees of initiation, and sophisticated web sites translated into many languages, and are recognized as religions by the US Federal Government.

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Scholars generally agree that modern religious Satanism evolved from two specific traditions and the writings of their influential leaders, Aleister Crowley and Anton LaVey. However, there is a debate as to whether modern Satanism began with Crowley in the early twentieth century or with the founding of the Church of Satan by Anton LaVey in 1966. We should note that self-styled Satanists, satanic dabblers and traditional Satanists may follow unrelated philosophical and mystical traditions.

Ordo Templi Orientis

Aleister Crowley never considered himself a Satanist, although he was a member of many secret occult societies, founded the Abbey of Thelema, and proclaimed himself the Antichrist in 1904. Crowley's writings on magic influenced many contemporary Satanic groups, most notably the Ordo Templi Orientis or O.T.O. (http://www.otohq,org/oto/). "O.T.O. is incorporated in the State of California as a not-for-profit religious organization with tax exemption in California and the United States under section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. O.T.O. currently operates in 40 countries around the world and has approximately 3,000 active members."(10) According to its web site, "O.T.O. functions as a fraternal, initiatory, social and educational organization of a religious nature."(11) Although officially founded at the beginning of the twentieth century, O.T.O. draws from a variety of traditions of esoteric wisdom, such as the Freemasonic, Rosicrucian, and Illuminist movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Knights Templar of the Middle Ages, early Christian Gnosticism, and the pagan mystery schools. The O.T.O was founded in 1895 by Karl Kellner and Theodor Reuss, both of whom were high

level Freemasons. Reuss brought Crowley into the O.T.O. in 1910 and admitted him to the level of three degrees. In 1912, Crowley was appointed National Grand Master General X for Great Britain and Ireland. He subsequently revised rituals and moved O.T.O away from Masonry and towards Thelema. In 1922, Crowley was appointed the highest-level Outer Head of the order, which he remained until his death in 1947. His writings became the cornerstone of the contemporary O.T.O. Current members of O.T.O take Crowley for their prophet; they practice his religion, known as Thelema, and call themselves Thelemites.

The Holy Books of Thelema, all authored by Crowley, form the canon of Thelemic Holy Scripture. The most important text is *Liber AL vel Legis, sub figura CCXX*, commonly referred to as *The Book of the Law* (entire text at http://www.otohq.org/oto/l220.html**)**. Another significant text that is part of the Thelemic canon but not the Holy Books is *Liber XXX: Aerum vel Saeculi, sub figura CDXVIII*, commonly called *The Vision and the Voice*. "The theology of Thelema postulates all manifested existence arising from the interaction of two cosmic principles: the infinitely extended, all-pervading Space-Time continuum; and the atomic, individually expressed Principle of Life and Wisdom. . . . The Thelemic theological system utilizes the divinities of various cultures and religions as personifications of specific divine, archetypal, and cosmic forces. Thelemic doctrine holds that all the diverse religions of Humanity are grounded in universal truths. . . . History is considered to be divided into a series of Aeons, each with its own dominant concept of divinity and its own formula of redemption and advancement. The current aeon is termed the Aeon of Horus . . . According to Thelemic doctrine, the expression of Divine Law in the Aeon of Horus is "Do what thou wilt."(12)Thelemites keep a record of their personal practices in a magical diary, practice a particular form of prayer four times a day, and often take mystical names for themselves as a sign of commitment. They customarily greet each other with the phrase, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law," to which the customary response is, "Love is the Law, love under will."(13)O.T.O. has a liturgical arm called Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica (E.G.C.), the Gnostic Catholic Church, whose principal ritual is called the Gnostic Mass. There is a Thelemic calendar, which begins in 1904 EV (the year *Liber AL* was received); each Thelemic year starts on March 20 of the civil calendar, at the Vernal Equinox. Holy days are observed as set forth in *The Book of the Law*; they include the equinoxes and solstices and dates important to Crowley's life. Three rites of passage are observed in each Thelemite's life: birth, puberty, and death.

The religious structure of O.T.O. is similar to Freemasonry and the ancient mystery schools. It is based on a series of ceremonially conferred initiations. This very complex system involves 21 initiate degrees: thirteen numbered degrees and eight unnumbered intermediate degrees or sub-degrees. Membership is divided into two

primary categories, associate and initiate. Associate members have access to publications and may attend activities but do not enter into degree ceremonies. Membership in Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica is conferred through ceremonies of baptism and confirmation. The O.T.O. U.S. Grand Lodge hierarchical structure includes a Grand Master General, Grand Secretary General, Grand Treasurer General, Initiation Secretary, Electoral College, Quartermasters, and Internet Secretary. The international headquarters is located in Berlin, Germany. As of this writing, there are 96 separate web sites listing branches throughout the world. They are referred to as Camps, Oases, Encampments, or Lodges, with identifying names preceding them. Membership information and detailed accounts of the religion are readily available through their many web sites. O.T.O. does not consider itself to be a Satanic Religion or a Freemason practice, although the theology and ritual practices have significant elements of both. Ordo Templi Orientis is listed as a Satanic religion in most reference books and web sites.

There are no recorded incidents of violence; however, litigation is documented in US courts involving claims by different factions of O.T.O. to ownership of the copyrights of Aleister Crowley's works, intellectual property issues, and administrative control. There are also conspiracy theories surrounding high-ranking members' activities during the World Wars. Although O.T.O vehemently claims not to be a Satanic religion, Aleister Crowley, their prophet, variously known as The Great Beast 666, the Antichrist, and the wickedest man who ever lived, inspired the basic principles of many contemporary Satanic groups.

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Church of Satan

The beginning of religious Satanism in America is generally dated from the establishment of the Church of Satan, CoS (http://www.churchofsatan.com/home.html), founded on April 30, 1966, Walpurgisnacht on the occult calendar, by Anton Szandor LaVey. LaVey declared himself the High Priest of the Church, the Black Pope, and announced that a new era, "I Anno Satanas," had begun. The church was officially formalized on September 20, 1971 as a California non-profit religious corporation. (There is contrary information concerning its application for tax-exempt status: one claim states that they were denied this status by the IRS and the California Franchise Tax Board, while current leaders claim that they oppose government assistance and that the church never applied for tax-exempt status.) The Church of Satan received nationwide attention as the first publicly self-proclaimed Satanic religion. Because its membership is kept private, there is no available data on the number of current members.

The founder, Anton LaVey, worked at various unusual jobs before founding the Church of Satan, including lion tamer for a circus, carnival hypnotist, organ player at a burlesque club, and photographer for the San Francisco police. In 1950, in San Francisco, LaVey started a group known as the Magic Circle, an occult club that began to attract attention and led to the founding of the Church of Satan in 1966. In 1967 the Church received tremendous publicity when LaVey presided over a Satanic wedding, a Satanic funeral for a church member, and the Satanic baptism of his three-year-old daughter Zeena. LaVey was also an actor and consultant on several Hollywood films, playing the role of the devil in *Rosemary's Baby*. Many celebrities are purported to have had connections with the church, including Sammy Davis Jr., Jayne Mansfield, and Kim Novak. More controversial connections include Marilyn Manson and one of the murderers in the Charles Manson family.

Although just about every aspect of Anton LaVey's history has been scrutinized, with several allegations that his personal history was fabricated, there is no doubt that, in 1969, he authored*The Satanic Bible*, which has sold over a million copies and is widely distributed throughout the world. This book contains the core beliefs of the Church of Satan. Additional texts by LaVey include *The Compleat Witch* in 1970, later entitled *The Satanic Witch,* and *The Satanic Rituals* in 1972. Anton LaVey, who inspired thousands to embrace modern Satanism, died on October 29, 1997, leaving a controversial legacy.

The Church of Satan is a hedonistic religion that does not worship Satan as a supernatural being but as a symbol of defiance against Christianity. The central doctrine of the church is summed up in the "Nine Satanic Statements" written by Anton LaVey in *The Satanic Bible*:

> (1) Satan represents indulgence, instead of abstinence. (2) Satan represents vital existence, instead of spiritual pipe dreams. (3) Satan represents undefiled wisdom, instead of hypocritical self-deceit. (4) Satan represents kindness to those who deserve it, instead of love wasted on ingrates. (5) Satan represents vengeance, instead of turning the other cheek. (6) Satan represents responsibility to the responsible, instead of concern for psychic vampires. (7) Satan represents man as just another animal, more often worse than those that walk on all fours, who, because of his divine spiritual and intellectual development has become the most vicious animal of all. (8) Satan represents all of the so-called sins, as they all lead to physical, mental or emotional gratification. (9) Satan has been the best friend the church has ever had, as he has kept it in business all these years.(14)

There are also Nine Satanic Sins: stupidity, pretentiousness, solipsism, self-deceit, herd conformity, lack of perspective, forgetfulness of past orthodoxies, counterproductive pride, and lack of aesthetics. Additionally, there are Eleven Satanic Rules of the Earth, and a 1988 treatise entitled *Pentagonal Revisionism, a Five Point Program.* The theology of the Church of Satan proposes that emotions such as greed, lust, and hatred are natural instincts and that the denial of these feelings is wrong. Members consider themselves to be in tune with the carnal nature of humanity. Their religion incorporates magical ideologies, occult symbolism, and three main types of rituals: sexual rituals to aid in attaining physical ecstasy, healing or happiness rituals to help loved ones, and destructive rituals to release anger and hatred. Ceremonies are pageants where male members wear full length black robes, female members wear sexually suggestive clothing, amulets are often worn, and the most distinguishing symbol is the Sigl of Baphomet, a goat's head drawn within an inverted pentagram. Candle magic is employed, the language is "Enochian"; in the church's early days, a nude woman was used as the altar.

The hierarchical structure of the Church includes a grotto system, which consists of individuals in geographic proximity who form a grotto for ritual activity, socialization, and the pursuit of various projects. Grottos are run by individuals referred to as Grotto Masters; many grottos remain underground while others have Internet sites. The official representatives of the philosophy of the church are found in the higher levels, which include the Priesthood of Mendes whose initiates are given titles of Priest/Priestess or Magister/Magistra. Members of the priesthood make up the Council of Nine, which is the ruling body of the organization, responsible to the High Priest/Priestess. The Order of the Trapezoid consists of individuals who assist in the administration of the Church. Membership in the priesthood is by invitation only. As of April 31, 2001, Magister Peter Gilmore and High Priestess Blanche Barton, who was the mother of LaVey's son Xerxes and his partner until his death, are High Priest and Priestess.

The Church of Satan has no recorded incidents of violence; however, the *Satanic Bible* has been in the possession of and/or cited as an influence by many self-styled Satanists who committed heinous crimes. The Church of Satan has been involved in many legal disputes and controversies surrounding LaVey's life: his daughter Zeena's becoming a Priestess in the rival Temple of Set, divorce proceedings, financial problems, and claims to succession fought between Barton and LaVey's daughter Karla. Notwithstanding the controversies, the Church of Satan has had an irrefutable impact on the establishment of Satanic churches and on advancing Satanism as a contemporary religion.

Temple of Set

The Temple of Set, ToS (http://www.xeper.org/pub/tos/), was founded in 1975 by Michael Aquino, a former High Priest of the Church of Satan. The same year, it was recognized as a non-profit church and subsequently received exemption from federal and state taxes. This is a highly sophisticated, intellectual religion, whose philosophy is focused on the acquisition of self-knowledge and power through magic, responsibility, and will. Michael Aquino, still the head of the Temple of Set, is a former Lieutenant in an Army intelligence unit that specialized in psychological warfare. His secular *vitae,* which is available on the Temple of Set web site, lists among his accomplishments a Ph.D. in Political Science with a dissertation entitled "The Neutron Bomb," many distinguished service awards, military decorations including the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, and Vietnam service medal for three campaigns, and training in special forces and military intelligence. Aquino joined the Church of Satan in 1969 while he was in the army, became a priest in the church in 1970, and was promoted to the level of Magister IV, the highest ranking below High Priest, held by Anton LaVey. In 1975, philosophical differences, as well as the feeling that LaVey was using the Church for his own personal gain, led Aquino to leave the Church of Satan, along with a number of others, to found the Temple of Set.

Historically, the Temple of Set may be considered a sect of the Church of Satan. However, in contrast with Anton LaVey's hedonistic philosophy, Setian philosophy aspires to ultimate self-control and power through magic. Members refer to themselves as Setians because they identify the Egyptian God Set as a much more complex role model than the Judeo-Christian Satan. However, they still consider their religion to be Satanic, in that it is a Left Hand Path that opposes traditional Judaeo-Christian beliefs. The Temple of Set rejects the spiritual emptiness, nihilism, and mindless hedonism of modern society, as manifested in phenomena from advertising to superstition; its ideal is "Being is Knowing," the opposite of the Buddhist Right Hand Path philosophy of "Being is Suffering." "Setians, even though they believe in a literal deity, do not worship Set in the same way that Christians worship God. Rather they honor Set for representing a deeper consciousness and individual strength–thus worshipping Set is analogous to worshipping the individual. The ultimate goal of Setians is to reach this higher spiritual consciousness and understanding of the self–the process of self actualization is called Xeper, an Egyptian term meaning "to come into being."(15) Their goal is to recreate a tradition of self-deification. In brief, they do not pray to Set, they emulate him. *The Book of Coming Forth by Night,* written by Michael Aquino, supposedly with the help of Set himself, may be considered a sacred text of the Temple. The Temple also maintains a series of encyclopedias entitled *TheJeweled Tablets of Set* and a regular newsletter called *The Scroll of Set*.

The Temple of Set's religious hierarchy entails six degrees of initiation: Setian I, Adept II, Priest/Priestess of Set III Magister/Magistra Templi IV, Magus/Maga V, and Ipsissimus/Ipsissima VI. New members start out as Setian I, then advance to Adept II only after mastering the essential principles of black magic. If new members do not advance to Adept II in two years, their membership is discontinued. Most members stay at the second degree level throughout their membership in the Temple. Executive authority in the Temple is held by the Council of Nine, which appoints both the High Priest of Set and the Executive Director. The Temple of Set is highly organized and has members worldwide, but, because it avoids publicity and keeps its membership private, there is no available data on the number of members. Their web site, The Official Temple of Set World Wide Web Site (http://www.xeper.org/pub/tos/), provides information in seven different languages. The organizational structure consists of Pylons, named after the gates of ancient Egyptian temples, which are geographically localized and are under the trust and responsibility of a designated officer called a Sentinel. There are also divisions in the Temple called Orders that specialize in one or more particular fields of the magical arts and sciences. Each member, once having reached Adept II status, must affiliate within one year with an Order reflective of his or her personal interests and aptitudes. The collective knowledge of all of the Orders is available to the Temple membership. The Temple of Set currently lists eleven pylons and nine orders, each with its own corresponding web page.

The Temple of Set has no recorded incidents of violence. However, the Temple has been plagued with legal issues over the years, specifically concerning its founder. In 1986, a scandal broke out involving allegations of child molestation at the day care center at Presidio Army Base where Michael Aquino was assigned. "Gary Hambright, a daycare worker, was charged with 12 counts of sodomy, oral copulation, and lewd conduct. Aquino, along with his wife Lilith, were identified by some of the children as possibly being another who had participated in the molestations. However, no formal charges were ever brought against Aquino and the case against Hambright was later dismissed. In 1994, Aquino sued Linda Blood, a former member of the Temple of Set, for libel in her book *The New Satanists*. The book, Aquino's attorneys claimed, depicted him and his fellow Setians as pedophiles, child abusers, murderers, and the masterminds behind a nationwide Satanic conspiracy. The suit was settled out of court, with details of the settlement kept confidential. The latest lawsuit, in 1997, was brought against an Internet provider for failing to block defamatory posts from an anonymous user. A person using the name "Curio" had posted over 500 messages that accused Aquino of having participated in heinous crimes, sexual perversions, and acts of moral turpitude, according to Aquino's lawyers. The case against the Internet company ElectriCiti was thrown out of court.(16) Notwithstanding the controversies and the Temple's position on keeping details of its development private, there can be no doubt that the Temple of Set is a

highly organized, sophisticated, influential, and flourishing Satanic religion.

Modern Religious Terrorism

Just as there are many varieties of Christianity manifested in a number of diverse Christian religions, there are many varieties of non-recognized religions and religious sects pejoratively designated as terrorist religions or cults. Practitioners of these non-recognized religions vehemently disavow the terms “terrorist” and “cult.” Commonalties among the major non-recognized religions designated as terrorist groups/cults include: hierarchical structures, opposition to mainstream Christian tenets, and the quest for personal and political power. Similar to other religious denominations, these religious sects profess spiritual superiority and claim that they are practicing the one true faith. I will confine my discussion to three active religions that exemplify the religious practices of modern terrorists: Christian Identity, Aum Supreme Truth, and Wahhabism, all three of which earnestly deny that they are terrorist organizations.

Christian Identity

The Christian Identity Movement is comprised of many radical fundamentalist Christian churches, extreme right-wing political groups, and survival groups. It is a complex, highly varied, and loosely organized movement whose fundamental teachings are based on the ideology that Anglo-Saxons are the direct descendents of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel and are thus the true chosen people of God. Current groups that practice Christian Identity are associated with preaching hate, racism and genocide and condoning violence towards minorities, especially Jews. However, the original movement evolved from the British Israelism movement of the mid-nineteenth century, which did not start as a hate group nor did its leaders preach violence. Christian Identity took shape in early twentieth-century America, when it was influenced by American Nativism, the Ku Klux Klan, and various strands of anti-Semitism. By the 1970s and 1980s, Christian Identity ideology merged with anti-tax and paramilitary movements and rhetoric, and its actions became more violent. In its current form, Christian Identity is the unifying theology for a number of diverse groups; it provides its members with a religious basis for racism and a religious doctrine that allows believers to fuse religion with hate, conspiracy theories, and apocalyptic fear of the future.

There is no single founder of the movement, which developed over a period of seventy years and is still changing. Three people who were significant to its evolution are Reverend John Wilson, Edward Hine, and Howard Rand. Wilson and Hine began the movement as British Israelism in 1840. It developed into the Identity

Movement when Howard Rand founded the Anglo-Saxon Federation of America in 1930 with the help of Wesley Swift, who was a member of the KKK. Later, Swift founded his own church, called the Church of Jesus Christ Christian, which developed into the Aryan Nations.

The following beliefs are held in common by most Christian Identity groups: (1) A very conservative interpretation of the Christian Bible, which is their main sacred text. This interpretation includes a hatred of homosexuality and homosexuals, and a strict rejection of followers of other religions. (2) A view of the white race, which is sometimes referred to as the Adamic Race or True Israelites, as superior to all others. The view that other races are the satanic spawn of Cain leads to a hatred of African Americans, Native Americans, and any person from "non-Aryan" countries. (3) The belief that other pre-Adamic and non-white people were already in existence when Adam was created and that Adam and Eve were white. This leads directly to the belief that Anglo-Saxon Protestants are the true descendants of God's chosen people of the Hebrew Scriptures. (4) That the commandment which forbids adultery does not refer to extramarital affairs but to racial adultery and interracial marriages. The tenth commandment in their view already bans adultery. (5) That they are the direct descendents of God's chosen people, the Jewish people having descended from Cain. This belief is associated with extreme anti-Semitism within their movement. These beliefs can be summed up in what is referred to as the "two-seedline" doctrine: "Christian Identity followers assert that Adam was preceded by other, lesser races, identified as 'The beasts of the field' (Gen.1:25). Eve was seduced by the snake (Satan) and gave birth to two seed lines: Cain, the direct descendent of Satan and Eve, and Abel, who was of good Aryan stock through Adam. Cain then became the progenitor of the Jews in his subsequent matings with the non-Adamic races. Christian Identity adherents believe the Jews are predisposed to carry on a conspiracy against the Adamic seed line and today have achieved almost complete control of the earth."(17)

Christian identity does not have a national organizational structure; rather, it is a grouping of churches throughout the country that follow its basic ideology. Some of these churches are as small as a dozen people and some have memberships in the thousands. The Southern Poverty Law Center currently lists 602 active hate groups, of which 32 are specifically identified as Christian Identity groups (http://www.splcenter.org/intelligenceproject/ip-index.html). Some of the better known organizations that follow Christian Identity beliefs include: Aryan Nations, American Nazi Party, Church of Jesus Christ Christian, Confederate Hammerskins, National Association for the Advancement of White People, Kingdom Identity Ministries, Posse Comitatus, Christian Research, Scriptures for America, White Aryan Resistance (WAR), and White Separatists Banner. Although many Internet search engines will not link to racist web sites, the *Nationalist Observer* prides itself on

having the world’s largest white racist internet links page: http://www.cwporter.com/RACISTLINKS.html .

The Aryan Nations is a particularly large group that adheres to Christian Identity and espouses hatred towards Jews, the federal government, African Americans and other minorities. Their ultimate goal is forcibly to take over five northwestern states, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, Washington, and Montana from the US government in order to establish an Aryan homeland. Aryan Nations has a headquarters in Hayden Lake, Idaho and a number of state chapters. Its annual World Congress attracts a number of different factions from right-wing groups and has strengthened their base of support.

The activities of Aryan Nations and similar groups led to a study conducted by the FBI, announced on October 20, 1999 as “Project Megiddo.” This study was intended to alert US law enforcement to what is described as “the potential for extremist criminal activity in the United States by individuals or domestic groups who attach special significance to the year 2000.” An accompanying FBI statement mentioned that, “The threat posed by extremists as a result of perceived events associated with the year 2000 is real. The volatile mix of apocalyptic religious and New World Order conspiracy theories may produce violent acts aimed at precipitating the end of the world as prophesied in the Bible.”(18) The data for the report was collected over nine months by the FBI’s domestic terrorism unit and was not supposed to be made public. However, the Center for the Study of New Religious Movements, CESNUR, a cult apologist organization, obtained a copy and placed it on their web site, at http://www.cesnur.org/test/FBI_004.htm . The Christian Identity movement was discussed at length in the Project Megiddo report because of its apocalyptic beliefs.

Christian Identity also believes in the inevitability of the end of the world and the Second Coming of Christ. It is believed that a cleansing process is needed before Christ’s kingdom can be established on earth. During this time, Jews and their allies will attempt to destroy the white race by any means available. The result will be a violent and bloody struggle, a war, in effect, between God’s forces, the white race, and the forces of evil, the Jews and nonwhites. The view of Armageddon varies among Christian Identity believers. Some contend there will be a race war in which millions die; others believe that the United Nations, backed by Jewish representatives of the antichrist, will take over the country and promote a new world order. Only after the final battle is ended and God’s kingdom is established on earth will the Aryan people be recognized as the one true Israel. Christian Identity adherents believe that God will use his chosen race as his weapon to battle the

forces of evil. They believe that they are among those chosen by God to wage this battle during Armageddon and that they will be the last line of defense for the white race and Christian America. To prepare for these events, they engage in survivalist and paramilitary training, storing foodstuffs and supplies, and caching weapons and ammunition. They often reside on compounds in remote areas.(19)

The Megiddo Report also identified potential violent threats from groups and individuals whose mission is to bring about a race war. Some of their stated reasons for potential violence were the lack of structure in Christian Identity, which creates a greater potential for violence from lone offenders and/or leaderless cells, the ease with which persons can move from one group to another until they find a more radical one, the increased cooperation between different groups pairing up with militias and receiving paramilitary training, and, finally, the formation of splinter groups or state chapters whose leaders have diminished control over the members. Unfortunately, there are many examples of violence committed by practitioners of Christian Identity. A subgroup of the Aryan Nations called The Order, headed by Bob Matthews, committed a number of violent crimes, including murder. Their mission was to bring about a race war, and they inspired several other groups to pursue the same goal. Dennis McGiffen formed a cell called The New Order whose members were arrested before they could follow through on their plan. Another person who spent time at the Aryan compound, Chevie Kehoe, was convicted of three homicides, conspiracy, and interstate transportation of stolen property. Just a few of the recent incidents perpetrated by Christian Identity members include bombings at a Birmingham, Alabama abortion clinic and at the Atlanta Olympics, the torching of three synagogues in Sacramento in July, 1999, and the murder of a gay couple near Redding, CA. Christian Identity openly advocates racism, hatred, violence, genocide, and terrorism.

Aum Shinrikyo

Aum Shinrikyo, translated as Aum Supreme Truth, is a Japanese religious movement founded in 1987 by Shoko Asahara. This religion, which reached a peak of about 40,000 members worldwide, was officially registered with the Japanese Government under the Religious Corporations Law (*shukyo hojin ho*) in August 1989. Aum Shinrikyo, which combines elements of Buddhism, Christianity, and a variety of Asian traditions, evolved into an apocalyptic movement. It is best known for its violent acts, including detaining, coercing, torturing, and killing people and, most notably, the development and use of weapons of mass destruction. Both CESNUR (http://www.cesnur.org/testi/aum1.htm) and Apologetics Index (http://www.gospelcom.net/apologeticsindex/a06.html) have pages listing the many articles dealing with this religious group and its activities.

Shoko Asahara, born in 1955 as Chizuo Matsumoto, was partially blind at birth. He attended a school for the blind from the age of five, and after graduating in 1977, he moved to Tokyo, where he failed to get into Tokyo University and turned to studying acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine. He married in 1978, and, in the early 1980s, opened a folk medicine shop and established a school for yogis with his wife. During that time, he joined Agonshu, a “New New Religion” that stressed liberation from bad karma via mediation. In 1986, while alone in the Himalayan Mountains, he claims to have received enlightenment, and upon his return in 1987 changed his name from Chizo Matsumoto to the holy Asahara Shoko. This inspired him to organize his religion, which he named Aum Shinrikyo. The name of the religion includes the Hindu and Buddhist sacred syllable “Om,” which, Asahara taught, refers to the creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe. Shinrikyo is translated as “teaching of the supreme truth”; Aum Shinrikyo teaches the “supreme truth” about creation and destruction.

Aum Shinrikyo’s fundamental religious claim is that it offers liberation from suffering and illness. “Full of Hindu motifs and practices, the primary deity in Aum is Shiva, the god of destruction. This deity embodies Aum’s main focus: the creation and destruction of the universe. The Buddhist ideas incorporated include transmigration and rebirth, the world of suffering, and the goal of better rebirths and enlightenment through meditation. . . . He initially taught that members must work to transfer evil energy into positive energy and avoid mass destruction via nuclear war.”(20) “Asahara claimed he was the savior who would establish the perfect Shambhala kingdom on earth. The aim was to make Japan into Shambhala, and then to make the whole world into Shambhala. . . . In Asahara’s 1987 book *Initiation*, he predicted that a nuclear war would occur between 1999 and 2003, but could be averted if Aum established centers overseas and gained 30,000 renunciants. . . . Even if Armageddon occurred, Aum devotees would be saved because they would have the ability to consciously abandon their physical bodies for existence in the astral world.”(21) With this theology, he began what was called the Lotus Village Plan, the building of small communes in order to be self-sufficient and rebuild civilization after Armageddon. “But Asahara’s thought began to take a more pessimistic turn as he studied the New Testament Book of Revelation on which he produced two commentaries,*Doomsday*, 1989 and *From Destruction to Emptiness: A Sequel to Doomsday*, 1989. By 1990 the Lotus Villages needed to be equipped with shelter for protection from nuclear, chemical and bacterial weapons . . . In 1989 to 1990 his focus shifted to a catastrophic millennialism involving a pessimistic evaluation of society and unredeemable humanity, corresponding with Aum’s increasing conflicts with the world outside its communes.”(22)

In 1990, Asahara and a number of other top-ranking members of the group announced their candidacies as Supreme Truth Party representatives for the House of Representatives. They believed they were serious contenders and were severely disillusioned when they lost. “The loss of the election combined with many negative news articles significantly affected the ideology of Aum Shinrikyo; they now viewed the world as persecuting them and no longer attempted to save the world, only Aum members. In addition, Aum members were being taught that enemies identified as the United States military, Freemasons, the Japanese government, and Jews were conspiring to destroy them. Asahara started preaching Armageddon by utilizing the predictions of Nostradamus, the New Testament book of Revelation, Hitler’s statements about a thousand-year Reich and his own psychic powers.”(23) In 1992, he wrote *The Ideal Society Shambhala*, and, in 1993, he compiled a collection of his public talks entitled *The Frightening Prophecies of Asahara Shoko*.

In the years after founding the religion, Shoko Asahara claimed that he was a Buddha who possessed psychic powers, including the power to levitate and to soul-travel out of the body, and that he had an infallible power of prophecy. “In his book *Initiation*, 1987, Asahara claimed that*shaktipat* given by himself to the devotee was necessary to awaken the *kundalini*. In 1994, Aum scientists began producing drugs, LSD, sodium thiopental, mescaline, methamphetamine, and PCP, for use in religious initiations. Even those chemically induced mystical experiences were attributed by Aum believers to the Shakti, the spiritual power, energy of the guru.”(24) Members of Aum believed that their own enlightenment would come if they submitted to Asahara as the guru; in fact, they were encouraged to repeat 20 times a day, “I pledge faithfulness to Aum, the Guru and the God Shiva. Please lead me (name) quickly to enlightenment.”(25) Shoko Asahara not only identified himself as the Buddha of the current age and the reincarnation of the god Shiva, but, in 1992, he published a book entitled *Declaring Myself the Christ*, where he also claimed to be the lamb of God who absorbed the bad karma of his disciples even though it made him ill. “Asahara taught that people who rejected him as the guru were destined for rebirth in the lower realms of the animals, hungry ghosts, and the hells due to their bad karma. Acceptance of Asahara as the incarnation of Shiva, as the guru was necessary to attain good karma and salvation”(26) “Asahara’s role as the messiah was to enable persons to attain a superhuman condition. Aum Shinrikyo was an organization of superhumans, who would survive Armageddon and then establish Shambhala on earth, which would be a 1000 year kingdom.”(27)

Shinrinkyo rituals included the “initiation of blood,” a secret Tantric rite where the blood of the Guru is taken into one’s body; consequently, vials of Asahara’s blood were sold so that devotees could absorb his special DNA by drinking his blood. Special caps called PSI, short for “perfect salvation initiation,” were rented and worn by members to bring their thoughts into harmony with the Guru. Asahara insisted

that his devotees practice an extreme form of asceticism or else they would not achieve salvation in the Shambhala millennial kingdom. His practice of asceticism included fasting or living on a meager diet, being lowered into scalding or near-freezing water, being hung upside down, or being given drugs such as LSD to stimulate altered consciousness. “Every member was encouraged to meditate and practice a variety of yogic disciplines, and the most committed disciples became shukkesha, renunciants. Becoming a renunciant meant cutting off all contact with one’s family, turning over all property and assets to Aum, pledging devotion to Asahara, living communally and practicing rigorous asceticism. By these means, shukkesha believed they would develop superhuman powers of clairvoyance, levitation, and the ability to travel through the spiritual realms. The shukkesha aimed to become superhuman beings, the only ones who would not be destroyed in Armageddon”(28)

Aum Shinrikyo reportedly was worth over a billion dollars from real estate, stocks, blood and headgear sales, and donations from members. Asahara also had a number of small businesses. Aum attracted highly educated young men and women who felt that Japanese society had become too commercialized. The men who became the Aum leaders were highly educated scientists who researched and developed a variety of weapons of mass destruction. There were also a significant number of female leaders involved in diverse fields such as medicine, nursing, and bookkeeping who oversaw the administration of the communes and the factory work. Asahara had sex with a number of Aum women with the intention of impregnating them and explained this by claiming that the guru knew how to catch the good souls floating in the air and bring them into physical incarnation. There is little information about the children except that they were generally neglected.

Members were convinced that society outside the Aum compound was under the influence of evil mind control and that Aum counteracted society’s brainwashing with good mind control that taught supreme truth. Aum members would listen for hours to audiotaped affirmations that they should not doubt Aum because doubt is an illusion caused by earthly desire. Members were severed from contact with their families and the outside world, and systematically indoctrinated into worshipping Asahara with the use of standard mind control techniques, such as drugs, sleep and food deprivation, fear, physical beatings, isolation, and constant reinforcement of new beliefs. Once inducted into Aum Shinrikyo under orders of Shoko Asahara, members were prepared to destroy the world in order to recreate it.

The violence associated with Aum Shinrikyo ranged from the extreme ascetic practices of its members to murdering individuals and attempting to annihilate thousands of people. The following is a chronology of some of Aum Shinrikyo’s acts of violence. In 1988, a member died while being subjected to cold water immersion.

In 1989, several parents hired the Yokohama lawyer Tsutsumi Sakamoto, who represented the Aum Shinrikyo Victims Society, families of members in the group. He was interviewed in 1989 by the Tokyo Broadcasting System and revealed details of the group's illegal activities. The interview was never broadcast, because Tsutsumi, his wife, and their 14-month-old child were kidnapped and murdered in their Yokohama apartment by Aum members, who later confessed to the killings. In June 1993, Aum scientists tested their first weapon of mass destruction by using a fan on a rooftop of a Tokyo building to spray anthrax across the city. Birds, pets, and plants died, people got sick, and cars and clothing were stained. In June 1994, sarin gas was released by Aum devotees from a truck in the central Japanese city of Matsumoto, killing seven people and injuring 600.

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In January 1994, two former members attempted to rescue one of their mothers who was still in the commune. They were captured and brought before Asahara and his wife; one was forced to murder the other and then report to family members outside the commune that everyone was fine. In September 1994, a lethal gas used in WWI was released into the apartment of a journalist who had written two anti-Aum books and critical articles; she was hospitalized but survived. In December, a Tokyo parking attendant who had provided shelter for five defectors was injected with VX nerve agent; he was hospitalized but survived. In December 1994, a man who was believed to be an undercover police agent was killed on the street when an Aum member injected him with VX nerve agent. In January 1995, the head of the Aum Shinrikyo Victims Society was sprayed with VX as he walked across a parking lot; he was in a coma for several weeks but recovered. In February 1995, a businessman who was hiding his sister after she defected was abducted from a Tokyo street and injected with sodium thiopental; he died during interrogation, and an industrial size microwave oven was used to incinerate his body. His sister had donated about $600,000 to Aum. Aum also ran a hospital in Tokyo where they treated dissenting and disruptive members by incarcerating and drugging them; this hospital had an unusually high death rate. Japanese police concluded that Aum members killed approximately 32 people between October 1988 and March 1995; at least eight died from ascetic practices and others were killed for wanting to defect.

On March 20, 1995, five members of Aum Shinrikyo boarded five subway cars at different stations in Tokyo. At 8:00 AM, they deposited plastic bags containing sarin gas on the floor, punctured the bags, and immediately disembarked. The fumes of the deadly nerve gas injured over 5,000 people and twelve people died. Two days later, a videotaped message from Shoko Asahara was broadcast in Japan that motivated members to further violent actions. On March 30, the head of the National Police was shot outside his residence as he left for work and seriously

injured; two hours later, an anonymous call to the media warned that more police officers would be assassinated if the investigation was not stopped. Asahara predicted that on April 15, 1995, a huge catastrophe would occur in Tokyo; this prediction caused the closing of two shopping complexes, quieted the normally bustling Shinjuku station, and caused 20,000 police to be deployed. On May 5, an attempt to release hydrogen cyanide at Tokyo's busiest station failed when the device burst into flames. An intensive police hunt led to the arrest of over 200 Aum members, but Asahara remained at large until May 16, when he was found hiding at Aum headquarters. He was charged with murder in connection with the Tokyo subway gas attack, the Matsumoto gas release, the murders of the Sakamoto family and Kariya, and the production of illegal drugs. On the same day as his arrest, May 16, 1995, a letter bomb was sent by Aum devotees to the Tokyo governor's office that exploded in the hands of a secretary. This was attributed to the governor's announcement of his intention to revoke Aum Shinrikyo's status as a registered religion.(29)

Shoko Asahara went to trial on 17 criminal charges in April 1996. In October 1998, an Aum member was sentenced to death for the murder of four people, and in September 1999 and June 2000, two other members were sentenced to death for releasing sarin gas in the subway. Many members were given long prison sentences. Asahara maintains his innocence, although many followers have confessed their involvement in these crimes and have claimed they acted under Asahara's direct orders. On June 22, 2001, Asahara's trial reached its 200th hearing with no verdict in sight. In January 2000, the cult, still in existence, changed its name to Aleph, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, indicating a new beginning. Although the group has publicly renounced its founding leader Asahara, police have found instructions for making nerve gas in a member's car. Aum's every move is now being monitored by authorities under a new law, passed in December 1999, that allows police to conduct raids and demand information without a warrant. In the aftermath of September 11, the US government updated its list of foreign terrorist organizations on October 5, 2001 to include Aum Shinrikyo/Aleph. (http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rpt/fto/2001/index.cfm?docid=5258)

Wahhabism

Fundamentalist sects of Islam emerged in the eighteenth century in reaction to what was felt as the weakening of Islam through Western influence. Fundamentalists believe that the law of Allah that was first revealed by the Prophet is just as relevant today as it was then, and they seek to establish the ideal society that Allah proposed. Although Islamic fundamentalists may adhere to the basic principles of Islam, their political interpretation of Islam is significantly different from that of most Muslims. This is most obvious in the fundamentalist application of

the concept of Sharia. Sharia is a complete sacred legal system, derived directly from the Quran, that guides Muslims in all times and all places, governing every aspect of individual and social life. Whereas the Quran may be viewed as the constitution of Islam, the Sharia comprises the revealed and canonical laws of the religion. It is the core of Muslim practice regardless of sect and is essentially what unites all the diverse communities of Islam. How the Sharia should be interpreted to adapt it to modern times is a major point of contention among the different sects. Islamic fundamentalists attempt to live by a strict interpretation of the Sharia and view the lifestyle of the West as a threat and the antithesis of what the Sharia represents. An excellent paper by Knut Vikor entitled “The Sharia and the Nation State: Who Can Codify the Divine Law?” presented at the Fourth Nordic Conference on Middle Eastern Studies in August 1998, describes the political significance of this concept. (Seehttp://www.hf.uib.no/smi/pao/vikor.html .)

Although there are other Islamic fundamentalist religious sects, two of the most important are the Kharijites and the Wahhabis. The Kharijites are the oldest sect of Islam; the name means “seceders.” They were formerly extremely violent and were responsible for the assassination of the fourth caliph, Ali. Today they are strict fundamentalists and Quranic literalists, and they believe that the succession of the Prophet is open to anyone of true faith, not just the Sunni and Shiites.

The Wahhabi movement is considered the most conservative of all Muslim sects in its refusal to accept any revision of Quranic Law. It is essentially a purification of Sunni Islam that regards the veneration of images, ostentatious worship, and luxurious living as evil. Its goal is to return to the ideal, fundamental form of Islam of the era of the first four caliphs following the Prophet; it teaches that all additions to Islam after the third century of the Muslim era are false and should be rejected. Members describe themselves as Muwahhidun (Unitarians), those who firmly uphold the doctrine that God is one, the only one, Wahid. The Wahhabi view of Islam asserts that all who do not adhere to its beliefs are infidels, including mainstream Sunni and Shiite Muslims. Wahhabis practice an extreme form of Puritanism; they limit themselves to simple short prayers, worship in undecorated mosques where even the name of the Prophet cannot be inscribed, and refuse to celebrate his birthday. Many Islamic scholars and organizations have published denunciations of Wahhabism as a rigid minority sect intolerant of other forms of Islam. For one such article published by the Islamic Supreme Council of America, seehttp://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org/RadicalMovements/radicalism.htm .

The Wahhabi Movement was founded by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab in the eighteenth century. In 1744, Abd al-Wahhab was exiled from his native city,

Uyayna, because of his controversial preaching from his book *Kitab al-tawid* or *Book of Unity*. During his exile, he went into the northeast Nejd and converted the Saud tribe. Once the Saudi sheik was convinced that it was his religious mission to wage holy war, jihad, against all other forms of Islam, he began the conquest of his neighbors in 1763. By 1811, the Wahhabis ruled all Arabia, except Yemen, from their capital at Riyadh. The Ottoman sultan attempted to crush them by sending out expeditions, but to no avail. However, the Sultan met with success when he called on Muhammad Ali of Egypt, and, by 1818, the Wahhabis were driven into the desert. In the Nejd they reassembled their power and from 1821 to 1833 gained control over the Persian Gulf coast of Arabia. Their subsequent domain steadily weakened; nonetheless, a third triumph came for the Wahhabi movement when Ibn Saud advanced from his capture of Riyadh in 1902 to the reconstitution in 1932 of nearly all his ancestral domain under the name Saudi Arabia, where Wahhabism remains dominant to this day. Members of the Wahhab family continue to hold prominent positions in Saudi Arabia because their ancestors helped the Saudi ruling family unify its kingdom in 1932. Wahhabism has also served as an inspiration to other Islamic reform movements, from India and Sumatra to North Africa and Sudan.(30)

Wahhabi theology and jurisprudence is based respectively on the teachings of Ibn Taymiyah and on the legal school of Ahmad ibn Hanbal; they stress literal belief in the Quran and Hadith and the establishment of a Muslim state based solely on Islamic law. The contemporary Wahhabi movement is flourishing in every Muslim country. In Lebanon alone, the movement is estimated by officials to have about 4,000 members; it is far larger in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan. It goes by many names, including Ikhwan, Salifiyya, Mowahabin, and the best known, Taliban. Anti-Wahhabi Muslims refer to Wahhabism as *fitna an Najdiyyah* or “the trouble out of Nejd.” Wahhabis receive financial support at the highest levels of the Saudi Arabian government.(31) Wahhabi religious schools, known as *madrassas*, are part of a worldwide network of Muslim extremists. Beginning at ages 7-15, Wahhabi schools indoctrinate young men into the fundamentals of strict Islam, religious obligations, and radical militancy. Between the ages of 15-25, the young men are prepared for jihad and are trained to fight for the conquest of Wahhabi Islam. Not all of the young men who attend Wahhabi schools turn to violence. Some become religious teachers, and the vast majority of Wahhabi communities do not openly maintain armed militias, although they may engage in paramilitary training. The exception is the Taliban, who do not conceal weapons or other arms.(32) The term Wahhabi has pejorative connotations, and Saudis themselves do not use the term, preferring to call themselves Unitarians, believers in one indivisible deity.(33)

The Wahhabis’ strict interpretation of the Sharia has sanctioned extreme laws and forms of punishment. According to Stephen Schwartz in the October 6, 2001 *London*

Spectator, virtually all recent acts of terrorism have been enacted by Wahhabis. “Bin Laden is a Wahhabi. So are the suicide bombers in Israel. So are his Egyptian allies, who exulted as they stabbed foreign tourists to death at Luxor not many years ago, bathing in blood up to their elbows and emitting blasphemous cries of ecstasy. So are the Algerian Islamist terrorists, whose contribution to the purification of the world consisted of murdering people for such sins as running a movie projector or reading secular newspapers. So are the Taliban style guerrillas in Kashmir who murder Hindus.”(34)

According to some sources, the Taliban do not practice Wahhabism but belong to what is known as the Deobandi Movement, named after a small town in the Indian Himalayas where the movement was founded in 1860, during the period of British rule in India. Similar to Wahhabism, it is an unusually strict form of Sunni Islam. The followers of both the Deobandi movement and the Wahhabi movement make a sharp distinction between revealed sacred knowledge and profane human knowledge, which they reject. Deobandi philosophy has helped spawn many fundamentalist groups in the Muslim world, including the Taliban, although Afghans have been part of the Deobandi movement since its beginning. Over time, Deobandi philosophy has evolved toward more orthodoxy and militant fundamentalism.

The violence inflicted because of Deobandi and Wahhabi religious ideology has been substantial. Among the thousands of discussions of Islamic fundamentalism since September 11, one statement sums up the religious connection: “Not all Muslims are suicide bombers, but all Muslim suicide bombers are Wahhabis.”(35) There is no debating the violence that this belief system has inspired and continues to inspire. Unfortunately, we have all become familiar with the names of terrorist organizations such as al Qaeda, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Algerian Armed Islamic Group, Harakat ul-Mujahidin in Pakistan, and the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines, all of whom have been linked to bin Laden. (For a complete list of terrorists and groups identified under Executive Order 13224, signed by President Bush on September 23, 2001, see http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/2001/index.cfm?docid=6531 .) The violence perpetrated by these groups includes many incidents of suicide bombing, kidnapping, hijacking, and murder.

The following is a selected list of documented Islamic Fundamentalist terrorist crimes in the past twenty years against US citizens abroad and at home. April 18, 1983: bombing of the US embassy in Beirut by the Islamic Jihad, killing 63 people, including the CIA’s Middle East Director, and injuring 120; October 23, 1983: simultaneous bombing of marine barracks in Beirut by the Islamic Jihad, killing 242

Americans; March 16, 1984: kidnapping and murder of Embassy Political Officer William Buckley in Beirut by the Islamic Jihad; April 12, 1984: restaurant bombing by the Hizballah, killing 18 US servicemen and injuring 83 people near a US Air Force base in Torrejon, Spain; June 14, 1985: hijacking of a TWA flight by the Lebanese Hizballah, killing a US navy sailor and holding 145 passengers for 17 days; October 7, 1985: hijacking of the Italian cruise liner Achille Lauro by the Palestine Liberation Front, killing one US passenger; April 5 and February 17, 1988: kidnapping and murder of US Marine Corps Lt. Col. William Higgins, serving in Lebanon, by the Hizballah; February 26, 1993: First World Trade Center bombing by Islamic terrorists, leaving 6 dead and injuring 1,000; February 23, 1997: Empire State Building sniper attack by a Palestinian gunman, killing one and wounding 4; November 17, 1997: attack on tourists in Egypt by Al-Gama'at al Islamiyya, killing 58 tourists and wounding 26; August 7, 1998: U.S. Embassy bombings in east Africa, attributed to Osama bin Laden, killing 91 and wounding over 5,000; October 12, 2000: attack on the USS Cole, attributed to bin Laden, killing 17 sailors and injuring 39, and, of course, the September 11, 2001 hijacking of commercial airliners, destruction of the World Trade Towers and attack on the Pentagon, also attributed to bin Laden, leaving approximately 4,000 dead and an undetermined number injured. For a complete list of terrorist incidents from 1961-2001, see http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/pubs/fs/index.cfm?docid=5902 .

A final observation is that the treatment of women under the Taliban is a heinous form of physical, psychological, symbolic, and spiritual violence that exceeds even the most extreme interpretations of patriarchal religious tenets. For an excellent article written prior to September 11 on the treatment of women under the Taliban, see "Buried Alive: Afghan Women under the Taliban" by Jan Goodwin (http://www.echonyc.com/~onissues/su98goodwin.html).

Sacred Violence

Satanism and Sacred Violence

Regardless of how heinous, irrational, or inexplicable it may be, sacred violence is always considered justified by the religious groups that practice it. The two most common sacred and secular justifications are sacrifice and retribution. Throughout history and across cultures, sacred violence has been sanctioned, condoned, and deemed necessary on religious principles. In the year 2001, sacred violence is still sanctioned, condoned, and deemed necessary on religious principles, only now we have the technology to, at best, scandalize the world and, at worst, completely destroy it.

Sacrifice

Satanic sacred violence is manifested in both overt and covert ways. The most obvious example is sacrifice, derived from the Latin *sacrificare,* meaning “to make holy.” An ancient concept of sacrifice involves a religious offering or gift to a supreme being, in which the offering is consecrated through its destruction. The Satanic religions mentioned above, Ordo Templi Orientis, Church of Satan and Temple of Set, have published vehement disclaimers affirming that they do not engage in Satanic ritual abuse, blood rituals, or any form of animal or human sacrifice. However, there is one traditional Satanic group that openly promotes sacrifice, a British-based organization called the Order of the Nine Angles or ONA (http://members.easyspace.com/oww/satan/Satanism/Ona/Ona.htm). Their web site provides a guide to human sacrifice that advocates both voluntary and involuntary sacrifice, that is, ritual murder. The ONA have three methods of involuntary sacrifice: (1) by magical means, (2) by the “death ritual,” the direct killing of a person chosen as a sacrifice, and (3) by assassination. The ONA describe ritual death as a powerful form of magic that has two purposes: it releases energy which can be directed or stored and draws down dark forces which can then be used for specific goals. Their sacrificial rituals are described in detail on their web page,http://members.easyspace.com/oww/satan/Satanism/Ona/Odoc10.htm . The ONA refer to human sacrifice as just another way of furthering the work of Satan.

> Voluntary sacrifice occurs every seventeen years as part of the Ceremony of Recalling: the one chosen becomes Immortal . . . An involuntary sacrifice is when an individual or individuals are chosen by a group, Temple or Order. Such sacrifices are usually sacrificed on the Spring Equinox . . . There are no restrictions concerning involuntary sacrifices other than that they are usually in some way opponents of Satanism or the satanic way of living. . . . Candidates are zealous interfering Nazarenes, those (*e.g.*, journalists) attempting to disrupt in some way established Satanist groups or orders, political/businesspersons whose activities are detrimental to the Satanist spirit, and those whose removal will aid the sinister dialectic and/or improve the human stock. . . . The victim or victims are brought or enticed to the area chosen for the Ritual, bound by the Guardian of the Temple, and, at the appropriate point in the Ritual, sacrificed either by the Master or the Mistress using the sacrificial knife. The body or bodies are then buried or otherwise disposed of. . . . Those who participate in the Ritual of Sacrifice must revel in the deaths.(36)

In addition to groups such as the ONA, there are many examples of teenagers and young adult youth subculture Satanists who regularly kill animals in an attempt to

develop their magical skills. In fact, when examining a mutilated animal carcass, the most effective way to identify the perpetrator is by the level of skill evidenced in the attempted ritual sacrifice. Unfortunately, animal sacrifice can easily escalate to human sacrifice, especially when teenage dabblers can get detailed instructions instantaneously on the Internet.

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Violent Scripture

Violence is not blatantly evident in the rituals of the Church of Satan, Temple of Set, or Ordo Temple Orientis; however, sacred violence is explicitly expressed in many verses of the holy scriptures of the OTO. In Chapter III of *Liber AL vel Legis / The Book of the Law*, Crowley the Thelemite prophet speaks:

> III,11: Worship me with fire & blood; worship me with swords & with spears. Let the woman be girt with a sword before me: let blood flow to my name. Trample down the Heathen; be upon them, o warrior, I will give you of their flesh to eat! III, 12: sacrifice cattle, little and big, after a child. III,18: mercy let be off: damn them who pity! Kill and torture; spare not; be upon them! III, 24: The best blood is of the moon, monthly: then the fresh blood of a child, or dropping from the host of heaven: then of enemies; then of the priest or of the worshippers: last of some beast, no matter what. III, 34: Another prophet shall arise, and bring fresh fever from the skies; another woman shall awake the lust & worship of the Snake; another soul of God and beast shall mingle in the globed priest; another sacrifice shall stain the tomb; another king shall reign . . . III, 51: With my hawk's head I peck at the eyes of Jesus as he hangs upon the cross. III, 52: I flap my wings in the face of Mohammed & blind him. III, 53: With my claws I tear out the flesh of the Indian and the Buddhist, Mongol and Din. III, 55: let Mary inviolate be torn upon wheels: for her sake let all chaste women be utterly despised among you!(37)

It is apparent from just these few verses that *The Book of the Law* is the antithesis of Christianity. According to Crowley's final comments at the end of the text, it is mandated that Thelemites interpret the holy scripture of *The Book of the Law* for themselves. Although it is possible to interpret it as a form of allegory, there can be no doubt that the writings of Thelemite holy scripture advocate violence, and are anti-Christian and anti-Islamic. Although Thelemite rituals do not explicitly contain violence, their principle that "do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law" has an obvious potential for violence.

Vengeance

The Roman legal concept of *lex talionis* or “law of retaliation” is a common form of sacred violence and one of the fundamental principles of Satanic religions. The *lex talionis* is also the basis for retributivist justifications for punishment, such as the death penalty in the US, and is associated with the Old Testament maxim of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. According to the retributivist view, when a person has been wronged, the state is justified in inflicting the same degree of harm that the perpetrator inflicted on the victim. Retribution is, so to speak, legal revenge administered by designated authorities to prevent vigilantism from leading to a cycle of mutual revenge. Satanic churches not only promote the *lex talionis* but argue that it requires stricter and swifter enforcement. This concept is so important to Satanism that Satanic churches refer to *lex talionis* as *lex Satanicus*.

The law of retaliation is one of the fundamental principles of the Church of Satan and is found in several of their tenets. The fifth of the nine Satanic Statements found in the *Satanic Bible* reads, “Satan represents vengeance instead of turning the other cheek.” The *Book of Satan* portion of the *Satanic Bible* is quite clear on this issue, “7. Hate your enemies with a whole heart, and if a man smite you on one cheek, smash him on the other!; smite him hip and thigh, for self-preservation is the highest law! . . . 9. Give blow for blow, scorn for scorn, doom for doom–with compound interest liberally added thereunto! Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, aye four-fold, a hundred fold!”(38) Finally, the application of the *lex talionis* is found in the third point of the Church of Satan’s Pentagonal Revisionism:

> Third, we call for the re-establishment of Lex Talionis throughout human society. The Judeo-Christian tradition which exists secularly under the guise of liberal humanism has exalted the criminal over the victim, taking responsibility away from the wrongdoer with their doctrine of forgiveness. Such thinking is a disgrace towards the ideal of justice . . . Satanists are particularly disgusted by the extraordinary level of criminal activity which abounds today and advocate a return to the Roman “Lex Talionis”; let the punishment fit in kind and degree to the crime. To achieve this, we would be pleased to see the institution of an elite police force, of men and women in peak physical and mental condition, trained in advanced techniques of crime fighting who would be truly equipped to handle the vermin that make so many of our cities into little more than concrete jungles. Man is by nature a social creature and makes his social contract with his fellows, thus rules of conduct are established to allow maximum freedom for individuals to interact. Disobey those rules and punishment should be swift and sure, and most probably public as well.(39)

The Satanic concept of *lex talionis* is consistent with Satanism's political Social Darwinian philosophy and their promotion of eugenics. Eugenics is advocated in the first point of their Pentagonal Revisionism and is referred to as "stratification," where each member of society reaches a level commensurate with their own development based on the principle of survival of the strongest. For an in-depth article on the Church of Satan's philosophy, see "Satanism: The Feared Religion" by Magister Peter H. Gilmore (http://www.churchofsatan.com/Pages/Feared.html). For a Satanic interpretation of the *lex talionis* by Magister R. Strunch of The Fire Within, see http://home.vest.net/re-jo/satanism/lextalionis.htm .

18

In the first chapter of his classic text, *Violence and the Sacred*, René Girard addresses the concept of retribution. Girard demonstrates that the institution of sacrifice and the judicial system share the same function: to subdue violence, stifle the impulse to vengeance, and stop it from escalating in an endless cycle of uncontrolled reciprocal violence. "The procedures that keep men's violence in bounds have one thing in common: they are no strangers to the ways of violence. There is reason to believe that they are all rooted in religion. . . . Whether it be through sacrificial killing or legal punishment, the problem is to forestall a series of reprisals."(40)Modern Satanists hold the same fundamental premise concerning violence and human nature as that put forth in Girardian theory. Satanists maintain that humans are violent by nature; they recognize mimetic desire, and consider rituals of sacrifice to be sacred and necessary to defer violence. The significant difference is that Satanists embrace these attributes and manipulate them for their own agendas. They are cognizant of mimetic rivalries and not only welcome them but instigate them, which is what makes them authentically Satanic. Since Satanists advocate indulgence in human desires, it logically follows that they recognize the need for strict punishment. The *lex talionis* is attractive to Satanists because it provides them with a cultural mechanism for dealing with what they deem to be unacceptable behavior, indulging in the emotion of revenge, and enforcing their Darwinian ideology. The Satanic emphasis on revenge also serves as an excellent recruiting device, since revenge is exactly what alienated teenagers are often seeking. Whether you refer to it as the *lex talionis*, retribution, retaliation, or vengeance, without some such system of conflict resolution, whether in the form of religious sacrifice or the secular death penalty, there is always the looming threat of a cycle of uncontrolled reciprocal violence.

Satanic Responses to September 11, 2001

There were a variety of responses to September 11 from different Satanic groups. Most expressed condolences, informed their members if anyone was killed or

injured, and provided hyperlinks to donate blood or money. Of course, their acknowledgment of the tragedy had a particularly Satanic perspective; for example, Grand Magister Blackwood of the Worldwide Order of Satanists posted on his web site, “Sept. 11, 2001, a day on which the stupidity of those who believe in god crap and their stupid holy war shit has taken lives. As Satanists we can not let the screwballs win this war. I plead with every Satanist out there to donate blood and save a life. We know that god does not exist and it is up to real people to step in and save someone who may need it.”(41) Satanic Priests, similarly to many other American clergy, wrote sermons concerning the tragic events and interpreted their theological implications for their followers. Lex Satanicus / Lex Talionis was explicitly expressed in many of the Satanic responses to the events. Peter Gilmore, High Priest of the Church of Satan wrote on their web site, “Moving among my fellow New Yorkers, it was heartening to hear residents of this city calling out for the blood of those who are the cause of these acts of war, as well as for the punishment of those who shield, support, or otherwise sympathize with terrorists. The philosophy of Satanism is clear on such issues: the Fifth Satanic Statement from the Satanic Bible says ‘Satan represents vengeance, instead of turning the other cheek’ . . . many of the people of this nation now share this point of view. Yesterday, Americans saw things they hold as precious being shattered by those who view our society as being the adversary of the theocracy they wish to establish. They call us The Great Satan. It is time for our nation to play that role with grim purpose.”(42) For the complete statement, see http://www.churchofsatan.com/Pages/News.html .

Lord Egan, the High Priest of The First Church of Satan, discussed his church’s position on the attacks on their web site:

> On September 11, in the Year One, commercial airliners were hijacked by a group of Islamic fundamentalists who perceived the United States as “the Great Satan” . . . On behalf of the First Church of Satan, I wish to express our profound sorrow and grief for the tragic loss of life and suffering . . . [R]ather than shun evil, we should strive to understand it, for without darkness there can be no light. We must strive to close the gap which separates God from Satan because, if we don’t, millions more will die. The split mind theology is part of our national heritage of international psychosis. Good and evil cannot be divided as quintessential absolutes, for certainly there are strengths and weaknesses in everyone. Furthermore, spiritual salvation does not require blind obedience to the will of a messiah. Satanists speak of a process whereby we continue to challenge ourselves and strip away the layers of blindness which separate us from our own humanity. . . . I am understandably opposed to rhetoric used by leaders who refer to these terrorists as “evil.” . . . However, I am

> not opposed to the use of force against those who initiate force, therefore we support US President George W. Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and others who have called for military action.(43)

To view the entire statement, see http://www.churchofsatan.org/main.html .

Patriotism is not lost on Satanists, and some flew American flags in recognition of their support; however, since it is obviously against their beliefs to write God Bless America, Grand Magister Blackwood of the Temples of Satan (http://www.realsatanism.com/real_satanism.htm) wrote “Hail America,” as in “Hail Satan,” under the image of the American flag. A European Satanic organization called The Black Order of the Trapezoid (http://www.schwartzeorden.org/) also had an American flag, but underneath they wrote “God Hates U.S. All!” The Black Order of the Trapezoid, like many other Satanic groups, openly advocates neo-Nazism, which they have merged with Satanism. Their response to September 11 was that the U.S. provoked the attack with their foreign policy, and they took the opportunity to curse the US government.

Unfortunately, many Satanic groups used the tragic events of September 11 as an opportunity to recruit young Americans by appealing to their fresh emotions of revenge, disillusionment, and insecurity. Modern Satanists fundamentally understand the nature of sacred violence and know how to manipulate the political situation so that ordinarily peaceful people will engage in violence as a necessary religious obligation. Trapped in a cycle of righteous revenge, one feels no remorse, because sacred violence is always justified.

19

Violent Priests

Sacred violence is manifested in the Christian Identity Movement in a concept referred to as the Phineas Priesthood. This relatively new tenet justifies the use of violence if it is perpetrated in order to punish violators of “God’s Law,” as found in an extreme interpretation of the 25th chapter of the Book of Numbers. These Priests are initiated by committing violent acts such as murder, referred to as “Phineas Acts,” against non-whites, Jews, and homosexuals. Unfortunately, this is a very appealing concept to Christian Identity extremists, who believe they are being persecuted by a Jewish-controlled US government and are eagerly preparing for Armageddon. The Phineas Priesthood is viewed as a call to action or a badge of honor.

The concept of the Phineas Priesthood in Christian Identity originated in an obscure

book entitled *Vigilantes of Christendom: The Story of the Phineas Priesthood* by Richard Kelly Hoskins, published in 1990. According to Hoskins, history is a series of ongoing judgments meted out by God and responded to by believers. This response takes the form of murdering those who transgress the Law. “For Hoskins, the Phineas Priest–the embodiment of Christian Identity belief and obedience to God–is not one who prepares for impending race war, but one who commits racist, anti-Semitic or homophobic murder to stave off God’s ongoing judgment of white people for failing to uphold the “Law.” For Hoskins this includes such “crimes” as interracial marriage and allowing homosexuals to live.”(44)

The concept of the Phineas Priesthood was further advocated in a gathering in Estes Park, Colorado that included Reverend Pete Peters of the La Porte, Colorado-based Church of Christ, Identity followers, and members of the neo-Nazi Movement and the Ku Klux Klan. They met shortly after the murder of Vicki and Samuel Weaver in 1992, during an armed standoff with federal agents near Naples, Idaho, and the result was a report that many observers claim to be the impetus for the armed wing of the Patriot Movement, the militias, and the Phineas Priesthood. The Estes Report, initially called “Special Report on the Meeting of Christian Men held in Estes Park, Colorado October 23, 24, 25, 1992, Concerning the Killing of Vickie and Samuel Weaver By the United States Government,” clearly advocates vigilante violence:

> As was the case with our Founding Fathers, the establishment of a Christian civil body politic should be a primary goal for Christian men across the nation, for it is the chief means for carrying out the judgments of God. It has the authority to punish the evildoer as mandated in Romans 13. This country’s existing government does not fit the description of the “governing authorities” in Romans 13. The current situation in America is one in which the established government does not punish evildoers, but rather is increasingly using its power to punish the righteous. It is a tyrannical government. Therefore, it is not a Christian civil body politic. . . . The means for Christian men to bring about Divine judgment is not limited in certain cases to the actions of the body politic. In such cases, God’s Word also provides precedent for what is today termed “vigilante action.” Vigilante action is Scriptural, but any such action must be in conformity with Bible precedents and directives. Vigilante action is the exception, not the rule. It should be noted that the action of Phineas (Numbers 25:1-9) is considered by many not to be true vigilante action, but was in fact the carrying out of directives of God through the civil body politic.(45)

Reverend Peters' writings have made him one of the foremost leaders of the Christian Identity Movement. The Estes Park Report also included a text by Louis Beam Jr., Ambassador at Large for the Aryan Nations and former Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, entitled "Leaderless Resistance," which was used as a model by the paramilitary right for the creation of "phantom cells"–decentralized gangs of terrorists that carry out special operations in militia groupings.

Christian identity ideology has inspired many individuals to commit heinous crimes. In just the two months of July and August 1999, subsequently known as the "Summer of Hate," there were three unrelated incidents of hate crimes involving murder. Benjamin Smith, a 21-year-old student at the University of Indiana, went on a weekend shooting rampage in Illinois and Indiana, killing two people and wounding nine before he committed suicide. He specifically targeted minorities; on July 2, 1999 he first murdered the well-known college basketball coach Ricky Birdsong, then wounded six orthodox Jews in Chicago. The next day, Smith opened fire on two African American and six Asian men in the Illinois towns of Springfield and Champagne-Urbana. On July 4, Smith killed a Korean man outside a church in Bloomington, Indiana, and then shot himself when police were closing in. Smith was a member of the World Church of the Creator (http://www.wcotc.com/index.shtml) headed by Reverend Matthew Hale, Pontifex Maximus, that publishes texts such as *The White Man's Bible* and overtly preaches white supremacy. Dr. William Pierce, head of The National Alliance (http://www.natvan.com/), author of the *Turner Diaries* and a leading figure in the White Supremacist movement, commented on Benjamin Smith's shooting spree in an article entitled "Knowledge and Discipline":

> I don't know anything about Smith except what was on the television news and the internet, but I cannot help but feel sympathy for him. Smith, according to those who knew him, was intelligent, quiet, and serious. He was a student of criminal justice at the University of Indiana. Most notably, however, he was racially conscious. He was unhappy about the destruction of our White society in America and the perversion of our European culture by the program of Multiculturalism promoted by the government and the media. He distributed leaflets on the University of Indiana campus in Bloomington, expressing his views, and the university administration harassed him for it. He distributed leaflets off the campus in Bloomington and in the Chicago suburb of Wilmette, Illinois, where he grew up. Leftists, feminists, and Jews organized a public demonstration against him in Bloomington in an effort to stop his leaflet distribution, and the police in Wilmette arrested him. Blacks repeatedly smashed the windows of his apartment in Bloomington to show their disagreement with Smith's "racist" views. It must have been very stressful for Smith, trying

> to exercise his freedom of speech in a society which pays lip service to our Bill of Rights but which actually tries its best to make life difficult for anyone who doesn't toe the party line.(46)

To view William Pierce's entire article, see http://www.natvan.com/free-speech/fs997d.html . This is a clear example of how white supremacist ideology justifies violent acts and praises their perpetrator as a hero.

This incident inspired legislation called the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, a bill that amends the existing federal hate crimes law to expand the government's role in investigation and also expands the definition of hate crime to include sexual orientation, gender, and disability. Unfortunately, one day before the bill went to congress, another hate crime occurred. On July 21, 1999, two brothers, Benjamin Matthew Williams and James Tyler Williams, broke into a gay couple's home in Northern California and shot them to death. During Benjamin Williams' confession, he said his only regret about the murders is that they didn't inspire others to emulate him, and he insisted that his actions do not constitute a crime. The Williams brothers are practicing members of Christian Identity. Benjamin Williams stated, "You obey a government of man until there is a conflict, then you obey a higher law. . . . It's part of the faith. So many people claim to be Christians and complain about all these things their religion says are a sin, but they're not willing to do anything about it. They do not have the guts."(47) Williams is revered in jail by his fellow white supremacists and received considerable media attention. The two brothers were also suspected of three Sacramento area synagogue arsons and were recently given lengthy prison sentences: Benjamin Williams received 30 years and James Williams, 21 years for the synagogue fires. They both still face murder charges. The police discovered a letter from Benjamin Williams to National Alliance leader William Pierce in which he allegedly asked the white supremacist for assignments and suggested he could bring other recruits aboard.(48)

The third major incident in the Summer of Hate occurred on August 10, 1999. Buford Oneal Furrow, Jr. walked into the North Valley Jewish Community Center in suburban Granada Hills, California and opened fire, wounding five including one five-year-old and two six-year-old boys. Shortly afterward, he murdered a Filipino-American postman. In the early 1990s, Buford Furrow had joined the Aryan Nations (http://www.aryan-nations.org/) and was influenced by the Christian Identity concept of the Phineas Priesthood. *War Cycles Peace Cycles*, another book by Richard Kelly Hoskins, was found in his possession. According to the indictment,

Furrow expressed no regrets over the killing of Joseph Santos Ileto and the wounding of five people at the Jewish Community Center. In the 61-page indictment, he said he would not have killed the postal worker if he had been white and that he targeted the center because of his hatred for Jews. At the time of his arrest, Buford Furrow admitted the crimes and said it was a wake up call to anti-Semitic and hate groups.

One of the major influences on these crimes is Reverend Pete Peters' book *The Bible: Handbook for Survivalists, Racists, Tax Protesters, Militants and Right Wing Extremists*, where he reinterprets the Biblical story of Phineas for his racist believers: "perhaps there was an organization in Phineas' day known as the NAACP, National Association for the Advancement of Canaanite People, who took exception with this teaching of segregation. Perhaps there were pulpits proclaiming a more tolerant and socially accepted view and government agencies crusading for affirmative action. We really do not know; but we do know from the Bible story in Numbers chapter 25 that the Israelite people began to disobey God's law, accept integration, cultural exchange and a type of interracial marriage, and thus were struck collectively by a plague. Phineas was the man who courageously fought against the racial treason even to the point of bloodshed, and he too was honored by God."(49)

Another radical and influential voice of the racist right is Alex Curtis, who, through his Internet magazine, the *Nationalist Observer*, and telephone hotlines promotes a new ideology called "Lone Wolf Activism," which encourages white supremacists to act alone in violent ways. He advocates a two-tiered revolutionary hate movement. The first tier is above ground and spreads subversive propaganda that guides the underground, the second tier are lone wolves, racist combatants acting alone or in small groups who chip away at the government's infrastructure by daily anonymous acts.(50) Curtis also copied a chart from Louis Beam's book *Essays of a Klansman* that assigns point values to various targets and entitled the chart the "Lone Wolf Point System." "Policy Formulation and Decision making Leaders of International satanic anti-Christ Conspiracy for control of the world are each worth one full point. Members of Congress are each valued at one-fifth of one point. The Director of the FBI carries a reward of one-sixth of one point and lone wolves earn half of one point for each national leader of the NAACP. A racist who collects one full point earns the designation Aryan Warrior, one-third of one point merits the title Commando and so on."(51) Curtis was the target of a joint investigation of the FBI and the San Diego Police Department dubbed "Operation Lone Wolf," which revealed that Curtis led a cell of various white supremacist associates to commit criminal acts and target public figures who spoke out against hate crimes. The investigation led to an indictment charging Curtis with conspiracy to violate civil rights by targeting prominent members of the community. For the entire investigation, see the FBI web

site athttp://www.fbi.gov/majcases/lonewolf/lonewolf1.htm . For an article written by a white supremacist on the subject of lone wolves, see http://www.wakeupordie.com/html/lupus.html .

This ideology has not only influenced Phineas Priests but led to a number of other violent hate crimes. Two particularly disturbing examples are the 1998 sadistic dragging death of James Byrd Jr., in Jasper, Texas, during which the three white supremacists who tortured and murdered James Byrd made reference to William Pierce's *Turner Diaries*, and the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing of the Murrah Federal Building by Timothy McVeigh, killing 168 people. McVeigh referred to the dead children as "collateral damage," and his only regret was that their deaths were a public relations nightmare that detracted from his cause of avenging Waco and Ruby Ridge. The crimes committed in the cause of white supremacy are too numerous to mention but, significantly, not one of the perpetrators has displayed remorse, because violence in the name of the sacred is always justified.

21

Holy War

Islamic fundamentalists justify sacred violence through various interpretations of the religious doctrine of *jihad*. This term, which does not literally translate as "holy war," is very controversial, and Islamic scholars have continually been divided on how it should be interpreted. Similar to other concepts in the Quran, the interpretation of jihad is dependent upon the religious and political views of individual Islamic sects. Even contemporary definitions are contradictory. According to the *Islamic Glossary of the Muslim Students Association at USC*, "Jihad, sometimes spelled Jihaad, is an Arabic word the root of which is Jahada, which means to strive for a better way of life. The nouns are Juhd, Mujahid. Jihad, and Ijtihad. The other meanings are endeavor, strain, exertion, effort, diligence, and fighting to defend one's life, land and religion. Jihad should not be confused with Holy war; the latter does not exist in Islam nor will Islam allow its followers to be involved in a holy war. The latter refers to the Holy War of the Crusaders"(52). The *Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion* states, "The Islamic idea of Jihad, which is derived from the Arabic root meaning to strive or to make an effort, connotes a wide range of meanings, from an inward spiritual struggle to attain perfect faith to an outward material struggle to promote justice and the Islamic social system."(53); T.P. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam* presents a different definition, "Jihad: An effort, or a striving. A religious war with those who are unbelievers in the mission of Muhammad. It is an incumbent religious duty, established in the Quran and in the traditions as a divine institution, and enjoined specially for the purpose of advancing Islam and of repelling evil from Muslims."(54) (For the entire dictionary entry, see

http://www.answering-islam.org/Index/Hughes/jihad.htm .) For some, jihad means to struggle to maintain one's faith, for others, it represents the duty of Muslims to preserve Islam by ridding the world of Western influences. The concept of jihad for militant Islamic fundamentalists, including Osama bin Laden, is holy war to rid the Muslim Holy Land of infidels; it is their duty to wage war against all enemies in their struggle for an Islamic State. In fact, some consider Jihad the sixth pillar of Islam, the missing or forgotten obligation.

The origins of bin Laden's concept of jihad date back to early twentieth-century Pakistan and Egypt. Two leading figures, Hassan al-Banna and Syed Abul Maududi, sought to restore the Islamic ideal of the unity of religion and state, which, they believed, could only occur by returning Islam to a traditional society governed by a strict interpretation of Islamic law. Al-Banna and Maududi emphasized the concept of jihad as holy war in order to end foreign occupation of Muslim lands. Maududi views true Islam as a modern revolutionary party: "Islam is a revolutionary ideology which seeks to alter the social order of the entire world and rebuild it in conformity with its own tenets and ideals. . . . Jihad refers to that revolutionary struggle and utmost exertion which the Islamic Nation/Party brings into play in order to achieve this objective."(55) In the 1950s, a prominent member of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, Sayed Qutb, took the arguments of Al-Banna and Maududi much further, proclaiming that all non-Muslims were infidels, even the so called people of the Book, the Christians and the Jews, and he predicted a future conflict between Islam and the West. "Islamists emphasize the battle against jahiliyya, traditionally understood as the pagan state of ignorance in pre-Islamic Arabia, but reinterpreted by Qutb to mean any contemporary system not based on the original holy sources of Quran and Hadith and not operating under Sharia. Qutb also reinterpreted jihad to mean permanent conflict between the Islamic system and all contemporary jahili paradigms. The concepts of the two systems are totally incompatible, so there is no possibility of compromise or coexistence between them."(56) When Egyptian President Abdel Nasser executed Qutb, his writings gained even wider acceptance in the Arab world, especially after the defeat of the Arabs in the 1967 war with Israel. Qutb's writings shaped the militant view of Islam and contributed to the fundamentalist designation of the US as the Great Satan: "Qutb divides the world into two camps: God's party versus Satan's. Man faces a moral choice he cannot evade, and he must voluntarily submit to God's moral laws in Sharia. There is only one God and one truth. All else is error. There is only one law, Sharia. All other law is mere human caprice."(57) For further reading on how radical Islamic movements have altered traditional Islamic concepts, seehttp://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2001/issue4/jv5n4a2.htm .

The writings of Qutb and Maududi influenced many younger Arabs, including Palestine scholar Abdullah Azzam, who had fought with the PLO in the 1970s. While

studying Islamic law in Cairo, Azzam met the family of Sayed Qutb; he eventually taught at the University in Saudi Arabia, where one of his students was Osama bin Laden. The battle to liberate Afghanistan from Soviet occupation in 1979 provided Azzam with an opportunity to put his revolutionary ideals into practice. He was dubbed the "Emir of Jihad" because he was one of the first Arabs to join the Afghan fight along with Osama bin Laden. They worked together to recruit Arabs to fight in the holy war, and Azzam published books and magazines advocating the moral duty of every Muslim to undertake jihad. Azzam's assassination by car bomb in 1989 contributed to the emergence of a still more radical fundamentalism, led by the Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahri, whose cause was again furthered by the 1991 Gulf War, which brought US troops to Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden and his Muslim soldiers were extremely disturbed to see land they regarded as sacred occupied by infidel soldiers. It was Zawahri's influence over Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda organization that paved the way for the famous 1998 "Declaration of War" against the United States and the beginning of the terrorist attacks on American targets.(58) The February 23, 1998 Declaration of War, entitled "Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders," has now become evidence that links the bin Laden network to the September 11 attacks. (To view the document, see http://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/wif.htm .) Osama bin Laden justifies his declaration of war against the US and his terrorist actions as a defensive struggle against enemies who attack and occupy Muslim lands. "Usama bin-Laden does not theorize about jihad, but simply claims that it is part of the Islamic religion, especially relevant in the case of repelling infidel invaders. The stationing of Western military bases on the soil of Muslim states constitutes an occupation by infidels, a clear cause for jihad. In his notorious 'ladinese Espistle' in which he declared jihad against America, he bases himself on Ibn-Taymiyya who stressed the importance of dealing with the greater *kurf* (danger) before dealing with other, lesser dangers. It is a religious duty to repel the greatest danger even if it means ignoring smaller enemies for a while. He identifies the greater *kurf* as America, because of its occupation of the Arabian Peninsula and its support of Israel."(59) The suicide attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon are a form of jihad, as are all the other acts of terrorism attributed to Islamic fundamentalists. Since suicide is religiously prohibited in Islam, suicide attacks have to be viewed as a form of sacred violence. Killing oneself for the glory of Islam is considered by extremist fundamentalists to be a supreme form of jihad and a type of terrorism allowed by the Sharia; it is not suicide, *intihar*, but martyrdom, *istishhad*, one that will procure a special place in Paradise. "Active martyrdom is another area of reinterpretation and implementation. Martyrdom is being actively encouraged and glorified by fundamentalists, and its rewards in the afterlife stressed to induce many to court it. Extreme fundamentalists have revived the khariji and assassin traditions of suicide-killings as a legitimate weapon in their contemporary jihad. . . . Most radicals agree that suicide is a major sin forbidden in Islam. However, they use Quranic verses,

Hadith, and cases from the early history of Islam to prove that the voluntary sacrifice of oneself in the cause of Islam (including blowing oneself up as a living bomb) with the objective of defending Muslims and hurting their enemies, is not considered suicide but is a legitimate fight to the death."(60)

22

Christian Identity groups and Islamic fundamentalists may be surprised to discover that they have many ideological views in common. Both view history as a fundamental cosmic struggle between good and evil. Both justify sacred violence in remarkably similar interpretations of their view of man's relationship to God, both consider the US government to be Satanic, both share anti-Semitism, racial supremacist views, and justifications for terrorism and suicidal missions, which naturally results in their hatred for each other. Hence it is not surprising that there were conspiracy theories claiming that it was white supremacist groups that attacked the World Trade Center or that they are still high on the list of suspects for the anthrax attacks. The two groups also have in common their ability to recruit individuals for their religious cause and their willingness to break government laws in the name of a higher sacred law. Modern terrorists, like white supremacists, understand the nature of sacred violence and know how to manipulate the political situation to incite ordinarily peaceful people to engage in violence as a necessary religious obligation.

Skandalon

The similarities of the religious practices of modern Satanists and terrorists are striking, compelling, and numerous. All of the previously mentioned religions legitimize violence with the principle that the end justifies the means, whether the end is individual gratification or the establishment of an ideal world. This is evident from a brief review of the five sections of this paper. *Personifications* demonstrated that Satanism and terrorism are present in American culture in many forms. *Rivalries* showed that Satanism and terrorism are relative concepts determined by the theological, moral, political, and legal perspectives of each group and intertwined with issues of religious and political freedom. *Models* demonstrated that typologies of Satanism and terrorism are defined by antithetical ideologies and that the concepts are culturally constructed. *Religions* provided insights into the variety of religious practices of six different Satanic and terrorist groups and demonstrated that they do not consider themselves cultists or terrorists. Finally, *Sacred Violence* demonstrated that, regardless of how heinous, irrational, or inexplicable, religious violence is always felt to be justified and never thought of as sacrilege or terrorism by the groups that practice it. Throughout this article it is apparent that both Satanists and terrorists are in continual conflict with opposing ideologies.

According to their writings, these groups essentially desire what most individuals and cultures desire: respect, acknowledgment, power, control, and so on. However, their goals are not easily achieved, since their absolutist ideologies are in direct opposition to the absolutist ideologies of mainstream Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, with each accusing the other of worshipping false gods. In Girardian terms, these phenomena are referred to respectively as mimetic desire and mimetic rivalry. The manifestation of these rivalries was visibly evident in the previous sections on Rivalries, Models, and Religions. The section on Sacred Violence demonstrates that these rivalries eventually escalate to reprehensible acts of violence, provoking violent reprisals which then evoke violent retaliation, in an endless cycle of mutual revenge, with each group righteously proclaiming that they are justified. According to Girard, it is at this point that a mimetic crisis has been reached, “the war of all against all.” Girard describes how the mimetic crisis is resolved by a scapegoating process that he refers to as the “single victim mechanism.” The single victim mechanism assigns blame to a single individual so that the community can avoid social chaos and unity can be reestablished. “The resulting violence of all against all would finally annihilate the community if it were not transformed, in the end, into a war of all against one.”(61) The inability to walk away from these mimetic rivalries, escalating violence, assignations of blame, and endless cycles of mutual violence is referred to as skandalon.

To quote Girard, “In order to designate the exasperation of mimetic rivalry, the Gospels have a marvelous word that, at times seems almost synonymous with Satan, skandalon. The idea comes from the Bible and it means the obstacle against which one keeps stumbling . . . The skandalon designates a very common inability to walk away from mimetic rivalry which turns into an addiction . . . The skandalon is all kinds of destructive addiction, drugs, sex, power, and above all morbid competitiveness, professional, sexual, political, intellectual, and spiritual, especially spiritual.”(62) In *The Scandal of the Gospels*, David McCracken refers to skandalon in terms of offense: “A scandal may titillate or outrage us; either way, the titillation or moral indignation effectively prevents any challenge of the sort that offense brings to the assumptions and truths we hold most dear and the idols we cherish most deeply. Offense violates our assumptions about what our world is or what we think it ought to be. Whatever is unofficial, unestablished, or non-normal, deviant or nonstandard, in our view, carries with it the possibility of offense.”(63)McCracken’s concept of skandalon as offense treats scandal as a personal affront that incites one to action. There can be no doubt that most individuals find the religious practices of modern Satanists and terrorists to be a form of scandal that is highly offensive and seriously provocative.

An examination of the religious practices of modern Satanists and terrorists allows us to reduce the fundamental basis for all rivalries, scandals, and violence to one

concept: the transgression of the prohibitions of idolatry. Girard recognizes idolatry as the quintessential scandal in the Old Testament: “idolatry, which means the scapegoat given sacred status in the form of a solid and material object–the obstacle made divine. Idolatry is the quintessential stumbling block.”(64) Girard describes the paradox of scandal, “The words that designate mimetic rivalry and its consequences are the noun skandalon and the verb skandalizein. Like the Hebrew word that it translates, scandal means, not one of those ordinary obstacles that we avoid easily after we run into it the first time, but a paradoxical obstacle that it is almost impossible to avoid: the more the obstacle, or scandal repels us, the more it attracts us.”(65) Modern Satanists indulge in the worst form of idolatry, worship of other gods, and the ultimate offense, the aspiration to *be* God. On the contrary, most extremist fundamentalists desire stricter enforcement of Biblical or Quranic prohibitions. Satanists and terrorists represent two extreme responses to the laws of idolatry, complete indulgence versus austere rejection of all objects of desire, both culminating, ironically, in acts of sacred violence. A primary characteristic of idolatry is the simultaneous attribution of attraction and repulsion also found in the concept of skandalon. The fundamental nature of idolatry entails transgression and taboo. Desiring the transgression creates the need for the prohibition; the transgression essentially defines the taboo, which explains how religious groups with diametrically opposing doctrines can fall into the same trap.

Satanists embrace sin consciously because, in their arrogance, they assume that if they accept scandal they can control it, which is how they are trapped. Modern terrorists embrace prohibitions because, in their self-righteousness, they assume that if they can control scandal they can avoid it, which is how they, too, are trapped. Idolatry is the perfect obstacle; it causes believers to stumble through both sin and righteousness. Skandalon, the personification of Satan, the father of lies, seduces extremist fundamentalists through righteousness and Satanists through sin, trapping them in rivalries that cause accusations leading to scandals and escalating into an endless cycle of reciprocal violence. Although scandal cannot be altogether avoided, we must do our best to recognize the snares it lays for us in these two serious and dangerous contemporary manifestations of idolatry.

Notes

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