



Canadian Institute for Jewish Research  
Prof. Frederick Krantz, Director

## ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING

[cijr@isranet.org](mailto:cijr@isranet.org)   [www.isranet.org](http://www.isranet.org)   514-486-5544

Tuesday Oct. 1, 2013   Volume XI, No. 3,150   Yom Shlishi 27 Tishrei 5774

P.O. Box 175 • Station H Montreal • Quebec • H3G 2K7   514-486-5544   [cijr@isranet.org](mailto:cijr@isranet.org)   [www.isranet.org](http://www.isranet.org)

### **ISLAMISTS: KENYA & NIGERIA**

## **AL-SHABAAB: MURDER AND MUTILATION AT THE MALL; BOKO HARAM: WAR AGAINST ISLAMIC GHOSTS**

### **Contents:**

**Al-Shabaab Breaks new Ground with Complex Nairobi Attack:** Paul Cruickshank and Tim Lister, *CNN*, Sept. 23, 2013—The Al-Shabaab assault on a mall in Nairobi, Kenya, is alarming for its audacity, its scale and the sophisticated planning that went into it. Both the choice of target and method of attack exactly fit the new al Qaeda playbook.

**Al-Shabaab Backed by Money from U.S.:** Peter Bergen and David Sterman, *CNN*, Sept. 29, 2013—After the attack on the Westgate mall in Nairobi, Kenya, substantial attention was given to the some 40 Americans who have traveled to fight for Al-Shabaab in Somalia during the past several years. But much less attention has focused on Al-Shabaab's supporters in the United States who have helped to fund the terrorist group.

**Jihadist Ritual Murder & Mutilation at the Mall:** Dawn Perlmutter, *Front Page Magazine*, Oct. 1, 2013—During the four-day siege in Kenya's Westgate shopping Mall, al-Shabaab jihadists raped, tortured, beheaded, dismembered, castrated, gouged out eyes, amputated fingers and hung hostages on hooks from the roof.

**Nigeria is at War with Islamist Ghosts:** Peter Dörrie, *Medium*, Sept. 10, 2013—A war rages in northeastern Nigeria. Three months into a government-declared state of emergency, an army division of 8,000 men and a joint task force of other military and civilian security forces are trying to wrest control of large swathes of land from a fundamentalist insurgent group known as Boko Haram.

**Psychology: Why Islam Creates Monsters :** Nicolai Sennels, *Jihad Watch*, Sept. 27, 2013—Psychopathic people and behaviour are found within all cultures and religions. But one tops them all -- by many lengths. The daily mass killings, terror, persecutions and family executions committed by the followers of Islam are nauseating, and the ingenuity behind the attacks -- always looking for new and more effective ways of killing and terrorising people -- is astonishing.

### **On Topic Links**

**Pretending the Problem is not There:** Douglas Murray, *Gatestone Institute*, Oct. 1, 2013

**Al-Shabaab and Obama's Family Push For Islamic Kenya:** Theodore Shoebat, *Front Page Magazine*, Sept. 30, 2013

---

## **AL-SHABAAB BREAKS NEW GROUND WITH COMPLEX NAIROBI ATTACK**

***Paul Cruickshank and Tim Lister***

*[CNN](http://www.cnn.com), Sept. 23, 2013*

The Al-Shabaab assault on a mall in Nairobi, Kenya, is alarming for its audacity, its scale and the sophisticated planning that went into it. Both the choice of target and method of attack exactly fit the new al Qaeda playbook.

Few counterterrorism experts are surprised that the Somali group launched another attack in the Kenyan capital. It has threatened to take revenge ever since Kenyan forces entered Al-Shabaab's heartland in southern Somalia. Small-scale attacks, frequently with hand grenades, have already brought bloodshed to Nairobi's streets. Back in September of last year, Kenyan authorities said they had disrupted a major plot to

attack public spaces in Nairobi in its final stages of planning. Authorities also broke up a plot by the group against Western tourists in the city in late 2007.

But the scope of the assault on the Westgate Mall -- and especially its eerie similarities to the attack in Mumbai, India, in 2008 -- show that Al-Shabaab has taken its ability to strike outside Somalia to a new level. Only once before has the group caused such carnage in East Africa, when bombers attacked bars and restaurants in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, on the night of the World Cup Final in 2010. More than 60 people were killed. Al-Shabaab said the attacks were in retaliation for Uganda's leading role in the African Union force supporting Somalia's weak government in Mogadishu.

But the attack on the Westgate Mall is very different, involving perhaps 10 or more heavily armed assailants, using multiple entrance points to lay siege to a high-profile venue in an upscale neighborhood. The assault then evolved into a hostage-taking to garner maximum publicity. Al-Shabaab says the attack took months of planning and training, and as it unfolded the group kept up a running commentary on its Twitter feed. "The Mujahideen entered #Westgate Mall today at around noon and are still inside the mall, fighting the #Kenyan Kuffar (infidels) inside their own turf," it said.

The operation ticks the boxes that al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri listed in a message published just over a week ago.

1. Ensure the target is Western. The Westgate Mall has several Israeli establishments and is popular with expatriates. Those killed include three British citizens, two French nationals and two Canadians, their governments said. In his September 13 message, al-Zawahiri warned against attacks on non-Western states unless the regime was part of "the American forces." Kenya, with its long tradition of pro-Western governments and close relationships with Western militaries, fits that bill.
2. Take hostages where possible. Al-Zawahiri recommended taking "the citizens of the countries that are participating in the invasion of Muslim countries as hostages so that our prisoners may be freed in exchange."
3. Try to avoid Muslim casualties. Al-Shabaab claimed on its Twitter feed that the gunmen escorted Muslims out of the mall, before turning on the "disbelievers" inside. Witnesses said the gunmen at the Westgate tried to identify Muslims by asking shoppers the name of Mohammed's mother. They shot those who didn't know.

Nairobi is vulnerable to Al-Shabaab attacks not least because of the large Somali community, many of them refugees from the country's long-running clan warfare, that lives in the Eastleigh district. Known as "little Mogadishu," Eastleigh is now home to an estimated 250,000 Somalis. And Al-Shabaab is well established there, raising money, finding recruits and setting up safe houses.

Al-Shabaab also has an ally in the militant Kenyan group al Hijra, formerly the Muslim Youth Center, which has a strong presence in Eastleigh and in the coastal city of Mombasa. Investigators will be examining whether al Hijra played a role in the attack on the Westgate mall. Kenyan al Hijra militants are suspected to have been responsible for several of the small-scale terrorist attacks that have hit the country.

This is a worrying trend, analysts say. While Al-Shabaab's Somali fighters are not used to operating abroad, non-Somali East Africans have been training with the group in southern Somalia. Al Hijra is the most potent outgrowth of that training. Founded in an Eastleigh mosque in 2008, al Hijra took advantage of growing radicalization among a minority of Kenya's 4.3 million Muslims to build a significant presence in Nairobi and Mombasa. Investigators established the group had close links to the attacks in Kampala in July 2010. According to the U.N. Monitoring Group on Somalia, most of the operatives who conspired in the attack were Kenyan and close to al Hijra leaders.

A crackdown against al Hijra by Kenyan authorities, helped by the United States, has weakened the group. According to a 2013 United Nations report, "Al Hijra members were plagued by unexplained killings, disappearances, continuous 'catch and release' arrest raids and operational disruptions." But al Hijra is far

from defeated. According to the U.N. report, it has established links with Al-Shabaab affiliates elsewhere in East Africa and is enlisting the services of fighters returning from Somalia "to conduct new and more complex operations." Its leadership has become closer to al Qaeda through figures such as Abubakar Shariff Ahmed, known as "Makaburi," who is said to favor large-scale attacks in Kenya in support of Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab has other valuable alliances in the region, including the government of Eritrea, which sees it as a useful ally against its arch-enemy Ethiopia. A United Nations Monitoring Group reported in 2011 that financial records and shipping movements indicated Eritrea's support for Al-Shabaab went far beyond the humanitarian. In a 400-page report, it concluded that Eritrea's relationship with Al-Shabaab seemed designed to "legitimize and embolden the group rather than to curb its extremist orientation or encourage its participation in a political process."

Al-Shabaab has also established a relationship with al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen, from which it obtains weapons and training, according to counterterrorism officials and former members of both AQAP and Al-Shabaab. One former jihadist tells CNN the relationship began in 2008 when he linked up a senior figure in Al-Shabaab, Ahmed Warsame, with the Yemeni cleric Anwar al-Awlaki.

In September 2011, the U.S. Africa Command warned that Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram in Nigeria and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb were trying to synchronize their efforts to launch attacks on U.S and Western interests. The Kenyan capital became much more vulnerable to retaliation when Kenyan troops and tanks, supported by airstrikes, moved into Somalia in October 2011 in response to growing cross-border violence. Al-Shabaab immediately warned that the incursion would have "cataclysmic consequences."

What was meant to be a limited engagement dragged on. It took a year for Kenyan forces to capture the port of Kismayo, but in doing so they dramatically raised the stakes for Al-Shabaab. According to the U.N., Al-Shabaab used to collect an estimated \$35 million to \$50 million annually in custom tolls and taxes on businesses in Kismayo and two secondary ports higher up the coast -- about half its entire estimated annual income.

Its expulsion from Kismayo changed the dynamics for Al-Shabaab. Previously the group held off plotting large-scale attacks in Kenya because of Kenya's importance for recruitment, logistics and fund-raising. Al-Shabaab commanders realized a crackdown by law enforcement on Somali interests in Kenya would be devastating to the Somali business community, creating a backlash against it in Somalia. But after they lost control of Kismayo, the gloves came off.

In March, Al-Shabaab warned Kenyans they would not "sleep safely" in Nairobi as long as their soldiers were in Somalia. And in the midst of the siege, the group tweeted: "For long we have waged war against the Kenyans in our land, now it's time to shift the battleground and take the war to their land." "The attack at #WestgateMall is just a very tiny fraction of what Muslims in Somalia experience at the hands of Kenyan invaders," another tweet said.

It's notable that Al-Shabaab was able to plan and train for such a sophisticated attack despite losing much territory in southern Somalia and around the capital, Mogadishu. As it has lost ground, the group has resorted to suicide bombings. Earlier this month it carried out a bomb attack against a restaurant popular with Westerners in Mogadishu, killing more than a dozen people. A U.N. report issued in July noted that Al-Shabaab "has shifted its strategic posture to asymmetrical warfare in both urban centres and the countryside" but added that it "continues to control most of southern and central Somalia." The report estimated the military strength of Al-Shabaab at about 5,000 fighters, with a functioning chain of command, and said it had "preserved the core of its fighting force and resources."

After years of infighting and feuds, the Nairobi attack may also confirm the ascendancy of Al-Shabaab's most militant faction and its leader Mukhtar Abu al Zubayr (aka Ahmed Abdi Godane). Zubayr attended a madrassa in Pakistan as a young man and merged the group with al Qaeda in February 2012. He sees Al-Shabaab as part of al Qaeda's global jihad.

Dissenters have defected or been killed. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys of Al-Shabaab's old guard surrendered to Somali authorities. And earlier this month Zubayr reportedly ordered the killing of two Western militants who were critical of his leadership style and had aligned themselves with Aweys -- Omar Hammami and Osama al Britrani. Hammami was an American from Alabama who had become a prominent mouthpiece for Al-Shabaab before publicly criticizing Zubayr last year.

Zubayr's increasingly tight grip on Al-Shabaab -- thanks to his ruthless use of the group's intelligence wing in hunting down opponents -- appears to have forestalled the collapse of Al-Shabaab, and may have made it more dangerous. Zubayr has threatened a direct attack on the United States, and last year the U.S. offered a \$7 million reward for information locating him. It would be very surprising if the attack in Nairobi did not receive his blessing, and it may be a sign of things to come as Al-Shabaab takes its war to other parts of East Africa. Of more immediate concern to Kenyan authorities, in a country where political violence can explode quickly, is a likely backlash against Somali and Kenyan Muslims, which could create a new cycle of radicalization and unrest.

### [Contents](#)

---

## **AL-SHABAAB BACKED BY MONEY FROM U.S.**

*Peter Bergen and David Sterman*

[CNN](#), September 29, 2013

After the attack on the Westgate mall in Nairobi, Kenya, substantial attention was given to the some 40 Americans who have traveled to fight for Al-Shabaab in Somalia during the past several years. But much less attention has focused on Al-Shabaab's supporters in the United States who have helped to fund the terrorist group. Those supporters have funneled tens of thousands of dollars via money transfer businesses to the terrorist organization and have often maintained direct contact with Al-Shabaab leaders and fighters in Somalia.

After the 9/11 attacks, when it became clear to investigators that al Qaeda's deadly assaults on New York and Washington had cost as much as \$500,000 to mount, the U.S. government became far more aggressive about trying to block funds going to terrorist organizations. Part of that process involved a determined effort to sort through which groups were terrorist organizations. On 9/11 there were only 26 terrorist groups on the State Department's list of designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Today there are 51, among them Al-Shabaab, which was designated in March 2008.

The result of that designation was that it was now illegal for a person in the United States to knowingly provide Al-Shabaab with money, training, expertise, false documentation, communications equipment, weapons or explosives, or to join the group. On that basis, a number of cases have emerged:

- In Rochester, Minnesota, two women from Somalia who had become naturalized U.S. citizens helped organize funding for Al-Shabaab. Hawo Hassan, a 64-year-old adult day care worker, and Amina Farah Ali, 35, set up a dedicated teleconference line to raise funds for Al-Shabaab. Hundreds of interested individuals called in to these teleconferences, and after each one Hassan and Ali recorded pledges of funds from the callers. After a teleconference on October 26, 2008, the two women received pledges from 21 individuals totaling \$2,100 in funds for Al-Shabaab.

These teleconferences often featured Al-Shabaab figures. In one teleconference, an Al-Shabaab female leader exhorted the listening audience to send funds. In another, Mahad Karate, the head of Al-Shabaab's intelligence wing, told the members of the listening audience that jihad "is waged financially" and that their help was needed. The two female Al-Shabaab fund-raisers also went door to door in Minnesota to raise contributions, often under false pretenses claiming contributions were for war orphans in Somalia. During a phone call with her Al-Shabaab financial contact, Ali stated, "I tell the people to collect money in the name of the poor. Nobody is aware of the money I send to you."

Prosecutors said it was clear from the phone conversations that they monitored that the two women knew that they were raising money for Al-Shabaab, a group that had been designated a terrorist organization by

the U.S. State Department. Both women were convicted of providing funds to Al-Shabaab and were sentenced to lengthy prison terms this year.

- Similarly, Ahmed Hussein Mahamud, a 27-year-old man, raised money from the Minnesota Somali community under the pretense that the money was going to a local mosque or to help orphans in Somalia. Instead he transferred the funds to fellow conspirators who had traveled from Minnesota to fight in Somalia to help them buy weapons. He and his co-conspirators transferred \$1,500 to help Al-Shabaab. Mahamud pleaded guilty last year.
- Nima Ali Yusuf, a 25-year-old San Diego woman, who pleaded guilty in December 2011 to sending \$1,450 to help fund Al-Shabaab, was in telephone contact with some of the Somali-American men fighting in Somalia for Al-Shabaab.
- In 2007, Aden Hashi Ayrow, a Al-Shabaab leader, contacted Basaaly Saeed Moalin, a cabdriver in San Diego, asking him to fund his group. In January 2008, Ayrow told Moalin that he needed to know how much money was being sent monthly to his group, even if it was only \$100, because even relatively small amounts of money could make a big difference in Somalia, which is one of the poorest countries in the world. To keep an Al-Shabaab foot soldier in the field only cost a dollar a day. At Ayrow's request, Moalin organized other members of the Somali-American community to help provide funding. Moalin recruited three others members of the Somali-American community and together they sent \$8,500 to Al-Shabaab between 2007 and 2008. All four were later convicted of providing support to Al-Shabaab.
- Another Al-Shabaab supporter in St Louis, cabdriver Mohamud Abdi Yusuf, was part of a group of men that sent \$21,000 to Kenya and Somalia for Al-Shabaab. Yusuf pleaded guilty to giving support to the terrorist group. Since Al-Shabaab was designated as a terrorist organization, the U.S. Justice Department has mounted "Operation Rhino" to combat Al-Shabaab's support network in the States and has convicted 12 individuals for providing funds to Al-Shabaab, according to a count by the New America Foundation.

This seems to have had a real deterrent effect. As a result of the publicity these cases have had in the Somali-American community, indictments for Al-Shabaab fund-raising have slowed considerably. And the last time a Somali-American was indicted for raising money for Al-Shabaab was 2011.

### [Contents](#)

---

## **JIHADIST RITUAL MURDER & MUTILATION AT THE MALL**

**Dawn Perlmutter**

[Front Page Magazine](#), Oct. 1, 2013

During the four-day siege in Kenya's Westgate shopping Mall, al-Shabaab jihadists raped, tortured, beheaded, dismembered, castrated, gouged out eyes, amputated fingers and hung hostages on hooks from the roof. According to a forensic medical doctor, "They [the al-Shabaab attackers] removed eyes, ears, noses. Fingers are cut by pliers, noses ripped by pliers"... "Those are not allegations. Those are f\*\*\*\*\* truths,"... "They removed balls, eyes, ears, nose. They get your hand and sharpen it like a pencil then they tell you to write your name with the blood. They drive knives inside a child's body. Actually, if you look at all the bodies, unless those ones that were escaping, fingers are cut by pliers, the noses are ripped by pliers." There were also reports that hostages were beheaded and their heads thrown out of the windows.

This inexplicable savage violence is typically attributed to psychological warfare, military tactics or individual acts of brutality but for Jihadists they are justifiable sacred acts against the enemies of Islam. They are ritual murders that are consistent with a growing global Jihadist method of operation [MO]. Similar acts of torture, rape, beheading and mutilation regularly occur in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Egypt, Syria and other countries. The Westgate Mall massacre is comparable to the mass murder of 166 people by members of the Islamist Jihadist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, in ten coordinated shooting and bombing attacks

across Mumbai, India on November 26 -29, 2008. During their siege operation the LeT Jihadists also took the time to sexually humiliate, torture and mutilate some of the victims before shooting them dead.

The Jihadist M.O. is also evident in murders, honor killings and war crimes. On June 20, 2006 in al-Yusufiyah outside of Baghdad, Iraq, the bodies of American soldiers Pfc. Kristian Menchaca, 23, and Pfc. Thomas L. Tucker, 25, members of the 101st Airborne division, were found mutilated beyond recognition. Like the hostages in the Westgate shopping Mall there were reports that their eyes were gouged out, they were castrated, their ears and noses were cut off and they were beheaded. Jihadist murders that involved throat slashing, multiple stabbings and body desecration also occurred in London and in Waltham, Massachusetts. On May 22, 2013 on the streets of London two jihadists used meat cleavers to publicly behead and disembowel a British soldier while shouting "Allahu Akbar". On September 11, 2011 in Waltham, MA the suspects in the Boston Bombings and their Chechen friend are suspected of ritually murdering three men by slitting their throats from ear to ear with such force that they were nearly decapitated and of desecrating their mutilated corpses. [Read the entire case at Prelude to the Boston Bombing <http://www.meforum.org/3618/boston-bombings-prelude>]. These are just a few examples of dozens of Islamist ritual murders that involve torture, dismemberment and mutilation.

Islamist mutilation entails a specific kind of ritualistic crime; a collective, provocative and incendiary desecration of the enemy. Mujahideen throughout the world expend extra effort brutalizing the enemies of Islam including women and children. To understand the significance of these violent ritualistic acts they have to be analyzed in the context of Islamist honor and shame. The primary motivations of Islamist atrocity is an irrepressible impulse to alleviate shame and a sacred duty to restore honor, serve vengeance, preserve purity, maintain tradition and save face. For Islamists honor is signified by stereotypical male characteristics such as courage, bravery, heroism, power, virility, and strength; dishonor is signified by stereotypical female characteristics such as weakness, vulnerability, helplessness and submissiveness.

Honor is what defines Islamists as men and psychologically is experienced as dignity and pride; conversely dishonor is indicated by female traits of weakness experienced as humiliation and shame. Islamists are in a constant struggle with fear of disgrace and maintaining manhood particularly those that are living in countries that they consider to be occupied or run by 'un-Islamic regimes'. Emotions of weakness, helplessness, shame are always just below the surface triggered by a hypersensitivity to any real or perceived act of humiliation. Even a sideways glance can be misinterpreted as a questioning of manhood. Islamist recruitment and indoctrination functions to cultivate the honor-shame paradigm so that boys will grow to be ruthless soldiers that require blood vengeance to restore honor and maintain power.

The fear of even the appearance of weakness or vulnerability provides one explanation for the torture of men, women and children. For Mujahedeen mercy, compassion, sympathy and kindness symbolize weakness; cruelty, brutality, violence and atrocity symbolize strength. This explains incomprehensible cruel violent acts. Jihadists want to evince their strength and alleviate feelings of shame. Through murder and mutilation these Islamist jihadists experience relief from a sense of humiliation. Psychologically they equate their relief with violent atrocity. Symbolically blood cleanses their impurity. Culturally the violence is sanctioned and they are viewed as heroic. It becomes natural and moral to punish disrespect with torture, mutilation and ritual murder. Strategically it sends a message that there is no mercy for infidel unbelievers.

From a Western behavioral science perspective torture, murder and mutilation are categorized as pathological acts of violence. However, from the jihadist worldview these seemingly inexplicable acts of violence are neither random nor pathological. Atrocity has historical and theological precedents in Islam, is a socially acceptable punishment for infidels and significantly is a projection of cultural taboos. For Islamists the blood of enemies washes away dishonor, disrespect and the Western impurities that have polluted Islam. A symbolic analysis of the types of mutilation reveals jihadists motivations. Mutilating the body is a deliberate act of defilement, impurity and stigmatization. Islamists torture hostages to humiliate and shame them. Cutting off fingers, hacking off noses, cutting out tongues, castration, and dismemberment

represent power and control of the body at the moment of death. The slow destruction of the body prevents the person from having any dignity in death.

Rape and gang rapes are a common form of Islamist punishment including men raping other men. The symbolic meaning of male on male rape is that the victims are being turned into women, which in a machismo and homophobia culture is one of the worst forms of humiliation. Similar to prison culture the victims become their bitch. For the same reason castration is the archetypal sign of dishonor and signifies that the victim is no longer a man. Another common form of Jihadist mutilation is gouging out eyes and/or chopping off parts of a person's face such as lips, ears and most often the nose. It was reported that all of these atrocities were inflicted on the hostages in the Westgate Mall.

Disfigurement has historical, symbolic and theological meaning in the context of Islamism. In fact mutilation is a form of judicial corporal punishment that occurs in many Islamic countries and includes among other things amputations, floggings, beheadings and stoning to death. In Saudi Arabia and Iran eye gouging is considered a legitimate judicial punishment. Surgically removing one or both eyes is based on the literal interpretation of *lex talionis*, the law of retaliation or best known from the formulation "an eye for an eye". There are hundreds of women in Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Turkey and other countries who are mutilated for dishonoring their families and men accused of being traitors, spies or simply designated as infidel unbelievers who are victims of similar atrocities.

Victims of torture and mutilations are always potential witnesses to jihadists unspoken and often imagined shame. The Somali jihadists had to gouge out the hostages eyes so they could not mock them, cut out their tongues so they could not talk about them and cut off their ears so they could not hear of their offenses. They were indoctrinated to believe that non-Muslims disregard them and think of them as less than human. This imagined disrespect is experienced as shame that originates and resides in the eyes of the innocent people who unfortunately went to the mall that day. Killing the hostages kills shame, without witnesses shame no longer exists. Honor, purity and respect is restored. Torture felt good.

Simply shooting the hostages would have demonstrated weakness and sympathy. Similar to gang initiations and narco-cults the Somali jihadists earned their status by brutalizing victims. Dismemberment, eye gouging, castration, beheadings, and body desecration are marks of jihad, what genteel people use to refer to as unspeakable acts. The members of al Shabaab were able to torture and mutilate because Sharia law sanctions atrocities committed against infidel enemies of Islam. Ritualizing violence legitimizes it as acceptable punishment allowing the Somali jihadists to murder in the name of Islam. According to Sharia Law mutilation is not a barbaric act, the violence is prescribed so brutality is transformed into a sacred ritual that cleanses impurities through bloodshed. For the al Shabaab jihadists torture and murder was not immoral but righteous blood vengeance that restored honor to Somali Muslims. Through murder and mutilation the jihadists acquire strength, alleviate dishonor and achieve heroic status as ruthless Mujahideen warriors. Torturing and killing the hostages transformed them from men ashamed of their status in life into badass Mujahideen, soldiers of Allah, respected by Islamists all over the world.

*Dawn Perlmutter, Director and founder of Symbol & Ritual Intelligence and Associate Fellow at the Middle East Forum, is considered one of the leading subject matter experts (SME) in the areas of symbols, unfamiliar customs, ritual murder and religious violence.*

---

[Contents](#)

## NIGERIA IS AT WAR WITH ISLAMIST GHOSTS

**Peter Dörrie**

[Medium](#), Sept. 10, 2013

A war rages in northeastern Nigeria. Three months into a government-declared state of emergency, an army division of 8,000 men and a joint task force of other military and civilian security forces are trying to wrest control of large swathes of land from a fundamentalist insurgent group known as Boko Haram. The

government has deployed helicopter gunships, fighter jets and armored vehicles—and battles regularly result in dozens of soldiers, insurgents and civilians being killed. It's one of the most intense conflicts of present times and yet we know practically nothing about the enemy, its organization, goals and real developments on the ground.

For people following the various conflicts in Africa, Boko Haram has been a household word for some time now. The group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2001 and 2002 in the Nigerian town of Maiduguri and for at least several years remained a non-violent, if radical, sect of orthodox Muslims opposing the perceived corruption and mismanagement of the Nigerian state.

At some point before 2009, members of the group began arming themselves and preparing for a violent uprising against the government, with the goal to introduce their interpretation of Islamic law to the north of Nigeria. The security services sprang into action and confronted members of the sect in a series of engagements that resulted in the deaths of at least 700 people, among them Yusuf, who died almost without a doubt as a result of police brutality while in custody.

In what was to become a recurring pattern, Boko Haram emerged strengthened and even more violent from this confrontation. The group began to systematically attack representatives of the state, security forces, prisons and civilians. Wikipedia has collated some of the largest attacks in a well-sourced timeline, but probably hundreds of smaller attacks have not been recorded by international media. All in all, at least 4,000 people have been killed by Boko Haram and the counter-violence by security forces. A Nigerian police officer serving with a Formed Police Unit (FPU) of the African Union

For being such a formidable enemy, practically nothing is known with certainty about the group itself. Various splinter groups exist, but their respective organization and chains of command are opaque. Regularly, individuals emerge who claim to speak for Boko Haram, only to have that claim refuted convincingly by other people linked to the group. Outsiders—no matter if coming from the international community or Nigeria itself—are often at loss at how to observe and analyze the inner workings of the group, which in contrast to other jihadist entities like Al Qaeda does little in the way of propaganda and media outreach.

This ignorance includes the exact meaning of the group's name. While "Boko Haram" is often translated as "Western education is a sin," researcher Alex Thurston has convincingly argued that the seemingly simple term is much more complex than that, to say nothing of the group's official Arabic name, "Ahl Al Sunna Li Al Da'wa Wa Al Jihad."

Probably not even most members of Boko Haram have a firm knowledge of who belongs to them and what goals the different parts of the organization, if it can even be called that, pursue. This theory is supported by frequent reports of powerful regional politicians handing cash to people associated with Boko Haram, even though the dead leader Yusuf expressly forbade his followers to cooperate with the secular government of Nigeria. Also, bank robberies are frequently blamed on Boko Haram, even though at least some of these incidents are almost certainly the work of regular criminals.

For the group itself, this apparent disorganization has proved to be quite effective. Repeated attempts by the government to crack down on Boko Haram after 2009 failed, because the security services couldn't identify any vital parts of the organization to take out. The Nigerian army and police resorted to heavy-handed tactics of repression, putting up roadblocks, shutting down markets and on occasion flattening whole town quarters with heavy weaponry, if a Boko Haram cell was suspected to be inside.

Military operations were frequently followed by impressive body counts of dozens of "terrorists" killed, but given the indiscriminate nature of the attacks and the resilience of Boko Haram itself, it is safe to assume that many of those "terrorists" were actually innocent bystanders or non-violent sympathizers. The brutal counter-violence by the state of course helps the recruiting effort of Boko Haram. In between offensives, the

federal government or prominent religious figures tried their hand at negotiations, but all efforts to broker a compromise failed in the end due to the impossibility to identify someone, who could actually exert some influence over all parts of the jihadist group.

These cycles of violence have so far largely served to strengthen Boko Haram. By the beginning of this year, large swathes of Borno, Yowe and Adamawa states in the country's northeast were essentially out of government control. In May, Nigeria's president Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in these states and called out the big guns. In a first phase, operations of the joint task force, a cooperation between the military, intelligence services and police, intensified operations in the area and civilians were encouraged to assist the security services, essentially creating vigilante groups in many areas.

In a second phase, which started last week, a regular army division of over 8,000 soldiers took over the responsibility of fighting Boko Haram. A thousand of these soldiers just returned from Mali, where they took part in an operation against other jihadist groups challenging the state's secular government. The newly created 7th Division brings armored vehicles, artillery and air support.

And the army is eager to show its worth: on Thursday, the army claimed to have eradicated a Boko Haram camp with 50 fighters in it. The soldiers followed the insurgents through aerial surveillance after they ambushed a group of pro-government vigilantes, killing at least 24 of them. The camp was surrounded and pounded by helicopter gunships. Apart from making clear the scale and intensity of the conflict, these reports also give an impression of the capabilities of the Nigerian armed forces....

Nigeria's government and its generals hope that the new strategy of recognizing Boko Haram as a formidable fighting force and deploying a massive amount of troops and weaponry will force the most important parts of the group to the negotiation table. The result could be an amnesty for Boko Haram fighters and some form of political compromise, an approach that Nigeria has some experience with from its other insurgency, in the Niger Delta.

But if history is any guide, this hope seems to be unreasonable. Boko Haram is probably too splintered to be engaged in a meaningful dialogue as an organization. It is also unclear what the government could have to offer, apart from an amnesty. Other than the rebellion in the Niger Delta with its focus on economic participation, Boko Haram's fighters are at least partly motivated by a religious, social and anti-government agenda. The Nigerian government can't make any meaningful concessions on these issues.

The optimal way to go would of course be to address the underlying reasons for the insurgent's disenchantment with the state, namely the pervasive poverty and corruption that cripples any economic opportunity for most Nigerians. But realpolitik will probably prevail and the Nigerian government will rely on its armed forces and security services to suppress any armed resistance. For this, Nigeria certainly has the capability and the will. It will just mean a lot more suffering for the people caught between the front lines.

### [Contents](#)

---

## **PSYCHOLOGY: WHY ISLAM CREATES MONSTERS**

*Nicolai Sennels*

*[Jihad Watch](#), Sept. 27, 2013*

Psychopathic people and behaviour are found within all cultures and religions. But one tops them all -- by many lengths. The daily mass killings, terror, persecutions and family executions committed by the followers of Islam are nauseating, and the ingenuity behind the attacks -- always looking for new and more effective ways of killing and terrorising people -- is astonishing: hijacking jumbo jets and flying them into skyscrapers, hunting unarmed and innocent people with grenades and automatic rifles in shopping malls, planting bombs in one's own body, using model airplanes as drones, attaching large rotating blades to pickup trucks and using them as human lawn movers, killing family members with acid or fire, hanging people publicly from cranes in front of cheering crowds, etc. It makes one ask oneself: what creates such lack of empathy and almost playful and creative attitude towards murdering perceived enemies? This is a

question for psychologists like me.

Nobody is born a mass murderer, a rapist or a violent criminal. So what is it in the Muslim culture that influence their children in a way that make so relatively many Muslims harm other people? As a psychologist in a Danish youth prison, I had a unique chance to study the mentality of Muslims. 70 percent of youth offenders in Denmark have a Muslim background. I was able to compare them with non-Muslim clients from the same age group with more or less the same social background. I came to the conclusion that Islam and Muslim culture have certain psychological mechanisms that harm people's development and increase criminal behaviour.

I am, of course, aware that Muslims are different, and not all Muslims follow the Quran's violent and perverted message and their prophet's equally embarrassing example. But as with all other religions, Islam also influences its followers and the culture they live in.

One could talk about two groups of psychological mechanisms, that both singly and combined increase violent behaviour. One group is mainly connected with religion, which aims at indoctrinating Islamic values in children as early as possible and with whatever means necessary, including violence and intimidation. One can understand a Muslim parent's concern about his offspring's religious choices, because the sharia orders the death penalty for their children, should they pick another religion than their parents. The other group of mechanisms are more cultural and psychological. These cultural psychological mechanisms are a natural consequence of being influenced by a religion like Islam and stemming from a 1,400 year old tribal society with very limited freedom to develop beyond what the religion allows.

Brainwashing people into believing or doing things against their own human nature -- such as hating or even killing innocents they do not even know -- is traditionally done by combining two things: pain and repetition. The conscious infliction of psychological and physical suffering breaks down the person's resistance to the constantly repeated message. Totalitarian regimes use this method to reform political dissidents. Armies in less civilized countries use it to create ruthless soldiers, and religious sects all over the world use it to fanaticize their followers.

During numerous sessions with more than a hundred Muslim clients, I found that violence and repetition of religious messages are prevalent in Muslim families. Muslim culture simply does not have the same degree of understanding of human development as in civilized societies, and physical pain and threats are therefore often the preferred tool to raise children. This is why so many Muslim girls grow up to accept violence in their marriage, and why Muslim boys grow up to learn that violence is acceptable. And it is the main reason why nine out of ten children removed from their parents by authorities in Copenhagen are from immigrant families. The Muslim tradition of using pain and intimidation as part of disciplining children are also widely used in Muslim schools -- also in the West.

Combined with countless repetitions of Quranic verses in Islamic schools and families, all this makes it very difficult for children to defend themselves against being indoctrinated to follow the Quran, even if it is against secular laws, logic, and the most basic understanding of compassion. And as we know from so many psychological studies, whatever a child is strongly influenced by at that age takes an enormous personal effort to change later in life. It is no wonder that Muslims in general, in spite of Islam's inhumane nature and obvious inability to equip its followers with humor, compassion and other attractive qualities, are stronger in their faith than any other religious group.

Not only does a traditional Islamic upbringing resemble classical brainwashing methods, but also, the culture it generates cultivates four psychological characteristics that further enable and increase violent behaviour. These four mental factors are anger, self-confidence, responsibility for oneself and intolerance.

When it comes to anger, Western societies widely agree that it is a sign of weakness. Uncontrolled explosions of this unpleasant feeling are maybe the fastest way of losing face, especially in Northern countries, and though angry people may be feared, they are never respected. In Muslim culture, anger is much more accepted, and being able to intimidate people is seen as strength and source of social status. We

even see ethnic Muslim groups or countries proudly declare whole days of anger, and use expressions such as "holy anger" -- a term that seems contradictory in peaceful cultures.

In Western societies, the ability to handle criticism constructively if it is justified, and with a shrug if it is misguided, is seen as an expression of self-confidence and authenticity. As everyone has noticed, this is not the case among Muslims. Here criticism, no matter how true, is seen as an attack on one's honor, and it is expected that the honor is restored by using whatever means necessary to silence the opponent. Muslims almost never attempt to counter criticism with logical arguments; instead, they try to silence the criticism by pretending to be offended or by name-calling, or by threatening or even killing the messenger.

The third psychological factor concerns responsibility for oneself, and here the psychological phenomenon "locus of control" plays a major role. People raised by Western standards generally have an inner locus of control, meaning that they experience their lives as governed by inner factors, such as one's own choices, world view, ways of handling emotions and situations, etc. Muslims are raised to experience their lives as being controlled from the outside. Everything happens "insha' Allah" -- if Allah wills -- and the many religious laws, traditions and powerful male authorities leave little room for individual responsibility. This is the cause for the embarrassing and world-famous Muslim victim mentality, where everybody else is blamed and to be punished for the Muslims' own self-created situation.

Finally, the fourth psychological factor making Muslims vulnerable to the violent message in the Quran concerns tolerance. While Western societies in general define a good person as being open and tolerant, Muslims are told that they are superior to non-Muslims, destined to dominate non-Muslims, and that they must distance themselves socially and emotionally from non-Muslims. The many hateful and dehumanising verses in the Quran and the Hadiths against non-Muslims closely resemble the psychological propaganda that leaders use against their own people in order to prepare them mentally for fighting and killing the enemy. Killing another person is easier if you hate him and do not perceive him as fully human.

The cultural and psychological cocktail of anger, low self-esteem, victim mentality, a willingness to be blindly guided by outer authorities, and an aggressive and discriminatory view toward non-Muslims, forced upon Muslims through pain, intimidation and mind-numbing repetitions of the Quran's almost countless verses promoting hate and violence against non-Muslims, is the reason why Islam creates monsters.

The problem with Islam and Muslim culture is that there are so many psychological factors pushing its followers towards a violent attitude against non-Muslims that a general violent clash is -- at least from a psychological perspective -- inevitable. With such strong pressure and such strong emotions within such a large group of people -- all pitched against us -- we are facing the perfect storm, and I see no possibilities of turning it around. For people to change, they have to want it, to be allowed to change, and to be able to change -- and only a tiny minority of Muslims have such lucky conditions.

Far too many people underestimate the power of psychology embedded in religion and culture. As we have already seen, no army of social workers, generous welfare states, sweet-talking politicians, politically correct journalists or democracy-promoting soldiers can stop these enormous forces. Sensible laws on immigration and Islamisation in our own countries can limit the amount of suffering, but based on my education and professional experience as a psychologist for Muslims, I estimate that we will not be able to deflect or avoid this many-sided, aggressive movement against our culture.

I do believe that we, as a democratic and educated society can become focused and organised concerning the preservation of our values and constitutions, can win this ongoing conflict started by the often inbred followers of sharia. The big question is how much of our dignity, our civil rights, and our blood, money and tears will we lose in the process.

**Pretending the Problem is not There:** Douglas Murray, *Gatestone Institute*, Oct. 1, 2013—Is it ever acceptable to tell a lie? If you believe the answer is "no" then this is an area in which you disagree with our political class. The recent terror attack in Kenya -- and the reaction to it -- is only the latest evidence. When it comes to the truth about Islamic violence, our politicians evidently believe the truth is something we, the general public, cannot handle.

**Al-Shabaab and Obama's Family Push For Islamic Kenya:** Theodore Shoebat, *Front Page Magazine*, Sept. 30, 2013—Both the al-Shabaab terrorists and the Obama family want the nation of Kenya to be under Sharia code. Al-Arab wrote that Obama's cousin, Musa Obama, "studied Sharia in Medina" and has called "upon the Arab and Islamic states to put more effort toward aiding the Kenyan Muslim brethren, especially since there is much support coming from Western nations and Western churches."