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A Theory of Terrorist Leadership (and its Consequences for Leadership Targeting)

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States often target terrorist leaders with the belief that the leader's death or capture will cause the terrorist organization to collapse. Yet the history of this strategy of "leadership targeting" provides a mixed record—for every example of effectiveness, there are similar examples of ineffectiveness. The central question of this article is: what makes a terrorist leader important? Specifically, what does a terrorist leader do that no one else can do (or do as well) for the organization? To answer this question, I develop a theory of terrorist leadership that argues that leaders might potentially perform two main functions: they can provide inspiration and/or operational direction (or not for both). I also theorize as to how and why the provision of these functions changes over time as the organization itself changes. The consequences for leadership targeting flow naturally from this theory—when leaders provide these functions to the organization, leadership targeting is most likely to be effective. Case studies of Algeria, Peru, and Japan offer insights into why some cases of leadership targeting were effective and why others were not. The conclusion extends this model with an analysis of al-Qaeda's prospects after the death of bin Laden.

Keywords Algeria, al-Qaeda, Aum shinrikyo, bin laden, decapitation, leadership targeting, Shining Path, terrorism

States often target terrorist leaders with the belief that the leader's death or capture will cause the terrorist organization to collapse.¹ Yet the history of this strategy of "leadership targeting" provides a mixed record—for every example of effectiveness, there are similar examples of ineffectiveness.² These varied outcomes have led many scholars to question whether or not leadership targeting is, in fact, an effective strategy.

"Optimists" point to cases like the PKK, the Real IRA, the Black Panthers, Action Directe, the Red Army Faction, and many others, where the death or capture of the terrorist group's leader resulted in the demise of the group or at least some reduction in levels of violence.³ Alternatively, "pessimists" argue that leadership targeting is ineffective and sometimes even counterproductive. For example, Israel's

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operations against Hamas leaders, some argue, were inconsequential and might even have led to an increase in violence.⁴ Likewise, Russia's targeting operations against Chechen insurgent leaders did not result in any diminishment of that conflict, nor did the killing of Abbas al-Musawi in 1992 hinder Hezbollah's ability to target Israel.⁵

More data-driven approaches observe that the effectiveness of leadership targeting varies.⁶ Recent studies find that leadership targeting can increase the effectiveness of counterterrorism efforts.⁷ These studies are valuable for providing general theories and assessments about why leadership targeting might be effective. However, their findings, because they are based on large-n analysis, tell us more about what to expect *on average* from a decapitation strategy, than why a single, particular group has been or might be susceptible to leadership targeting. These studies also, surprisingly, barely look at the leader himself.⁸ For studies that do look at the leader himself, the arguments tend to be more observational than theoretical, and do not offer rigorous models, frameworks, or theories, and do not test their claims with data.⁹

All of this literature leaves the most fundamental question unanswered—and which forms the central question of this article: what makes a leader important? Specifically, what does a terrorist leader do that no one else can do (or do as well) for the organization? To answer this question, I develop a theory of terrorist leadership and explore the heuristic value of this theory with three detailed case studies of leadership targeting of terrorist groups in Japan, Peru, and Algeria. The conclusion offers a provisional prediction for how Osama bin Laden's death will affect al-Qaeda.

A Theory of Terrorist Leadership

Terrorist leaders, like leaders of other organizations, perform numerous tasks. By drawing from work in organizational theory, I argue that leaders potentially perform two large aggregated functions: they inspire members of the organization and/or they manage that organization by providing operational direction.¹⁰ Importantly, I also theorize as to how and why the provision of these functions changes over time as the organization itself changes to the point that leaders in some types of organizations may not provide either function. The consequences for leadership targeting flow naturally from this theory—when leaders provide these functions to the organization, leadership targeting is most likely to be effective.

Inspiration

Terrorist organizations face a collective action problem in which their struggle creates collective benefits, but individual costs.¹¹ One way organizations overcome this is with a charismatic leader, who motivates individuals to sacrifice for the good of the leader and his vision, rather than for the individual's benefit.¹² According to Max Weber, charismatic leaders hold "specific gifts of the body and spirit" that must be "proven in life. If he wants to be a prophet, he must perform miracles; if he wants to be a war lord, he must perform heroic deeds."¹³ Beyond the supernatural component, charisma may also be used to describe secular individuals who possess a "'magnetic' political personality," the specifics of which vary across cultures and time.¹⁴ Scholars from psychology, sociology, and business have defined charismatic

individuals as having: “an unusual capacity to experience passion, extraordinary self-confidence, persistence, determination, and optimism”;¹⁵ “a contagious faith and confidence in the community’s capacity to overcome, under their leadership, its distress”;¹⁶ the ability to invoke “enthusiasm and awe” from followers;¹⁷ and the capacity to “provide vision and a sense of mission, instill pride in and among the group, and gain respect and trust.”¹⁸

There must also be a resonance between a charismatic leader and his followers.¹⁹ This leads to a “fervent devotion in a cult of the leader’s personality.”²⁰ Social psychology finds that “leaders’ capacity to engender active followership is contingent on their ability to promote collective interests associated with a shared, in-group identity.”²¹ This link or resonance between leaders and followers allows charismatic leadership to overcome the initial collective action problem. Followers will act in what would otherwise be individually irrational ways because the charismatic leader has, through his charisma, inspired them to act on *his* behalf rather than for simply the expected benefits. The followers’ inspiration “derives from the followers’ faith in the charismatic figure, and not from the rational likelihood of success.”²² In effect, the leader creates zealots.²³

A second way a leader can inspire followers, and overcome the collective action problem, is through the articulation of an ideological vision.²⁴ The “transformational” leader (in organizational theory terms) “articulates a vision” and “raises the aspirations of his or her followers such that the leader’s and the followers’ aspirations are fused.”²⁵ The leader’s vision (or articulation of an ideology) and charisma are often inexorably tied to each other. As Spencer notes, “his charisma thus flows from *his mastery of the revolutionary dream*. . . [He convinces] his followers that *his vision of the future will come to pass*.”²⁶ Because of the leader’s vision and conviction (coupled with his charisma), followers “buy” into his dream and his vision and the collective action problem can be overcome. A *collective* identity based on a shared understanding of the various issues the ideology addresses (described below) is created, which allows individuals to calculate costs and benefits in terms of what is good or bad for the group, rather than for themselves.²⁷

In general, an ideology is a mental framework that is descriptive and normative—it explains the “world as it is and as it ought to be.”²⁸ At the most basic level, every terrorist ideology provides the answers to five essential questions: what is the problem, who is the enemy, what is the solution, what are the legitimate means to achieve the desired ends, and how does the current fight fit into a larger context?²⁹ The *problem* ranges from capitalism and foreign occupation to secularism and globalization, to name a few. The *enemy* is the source of this problem. In identifying the enemy, the ideology also makes distinctions of us-versus-them.³⁰ The *solution* is the intended end-state, and can range from concessions to the outright destruction of the state. The *means* are the tactics that are justified according to notions of legitimacy and can range from peaceful political protests to mass civilian casualties from weapons of mass destruction. The *context* provides “a sense of continuity between [the current] mission and [the] legendary heroes and missions.”³¹ The context can be one of Islam versus the Christian West, for example, or the 400-year struggle to unite Ireland under Irish Catholic rule.

Whether or not a leader is responsible for the ideological inspiration can vary. Some leaders provide different or innovative answers to these questions, while other leaders continue with the ideological vision of their predecessors or follow a well-known ideology. For example, it did not take an ideologically innovative leader

to convince Irish Catholics that British occupation needed to be resisted after the “Rape of the Falls” in 1970. On the other hand, al-Qaeda’s shift from a focus on the near enemy to a far enemy was quite innovative.³²

Even when leaders do inspire either through their charisma or ideology, their importance in providing inspiration can diminish over time. As organizations grow, new members will have ever-decreasing access to the inspirational leader. In response, the leader’s inspiration needs to become what Weber calls “routinized,” which “involves the creation and maintenance of symbols, myths, rites, rituals and ceremonies which reflect the values inherent in the vision [of the leader].”³³ Likewise, this can occur through the promulgation of texts and other media that describe his vision.³⁴ For example, bin Laden’s version of Salafist ideology—in particular, the focus of attacking the West as the far enemy—became widespread through his writings, videos, and internet postings. This allowed jihadis to act on behalf of al-Qaeda without ever having met any actual al-Qaeda members.³⁵ Without the routinization of inspiration, inspirational leadership is an “unstable”³⁶ or “fragile base for the establishment of a movement.”³⁷ Organizations that have failed to routinize the inspiration of the leader (i.e., when the leader himself is still important for inspiring members) will be more vulnerable to leadership targeting.

While the importance of the leader in providing inspiration generally diminishes over time, there are also cases of what might be called “resurgent” leaders. In these cases, a new leader with a high level of personal charisma or with a new vision of the organization’s ideology arises. Gerry Adams, for example, was not only highly charismatic, he also shifted the PIRA’s ideology, accepting the legitimacy of political means by utilizing hunger strikes in addition to, and eventually instead of, violence.³⁸

Operational Guidance

Besides inspiring followers, leaders also command their organizations to do certain things, specifically by designing and executing strategies to achieve the groups’ objectives, while also building the organization itself and developing external alliances.³⁹ This kind of operational guidance is characterized here as the control over strategy, tactics, and organizational issues.⁴⁰

While the ideology itself may identify the desired ends, operationally important leaders make strategic decisions as to what means should be used to achieve those ends. For terrorist leaders, in particular, these decisions often revolve around the role of violence. Should the organization use violence, engage in the political process, do some combination of both, or something else? In Northern Ireland, for example, the hunger strikes in the early 1980s showed the Provisional leaders that the political process was a powerful weapon with which to mobilize the population and put pressure on the British and Protestant forces.

If violence is to be utilized, how should it be used? Against whom? Within the jihadi movement, for instance, al-Qaeda shifted the target of its violence from the near enemy to the far enemy for strategic reasons in addition to ideological ones.⁴¹ Likewise, there is considerable strategic debate over al-Qaeda in Iraq’s use of violence against fellow Muslims.⁴² Sometimes leaders are responsible for these strategic decisions while in other cases these decisions are made by consensus or by lower level operatives.

Tactically, the leader might also decide what specific targets should be attacked, when, and how. Is there a time when the attack will be the most likely to cause the

desired level of carnage (whether high or low)? How should the target be attacked? Terrorists have a range of options to choose from: assassinations, car bombs, suicide bombs, airplane hijackings, hostage taking, the use of weapons of mass destruction, and so on. As with the choice of targets, a leader may be responsible for these decisions, or they may be made by others within the organization.

Besides deciding how the organization acts against its enemies, leaders of terrorist organizations also might make decisions about how the organization operates internally and with allies. Internal issues include organizational structure, recruitment, finances, logistics, training, and relations with other organizations or state entities. Some leaders, like bin Laden, sought wide-ranging alliances with various levels of connectivity; others, like Guzman of the Shining Path, attacked potentially supportive political parties and never garnered international support; others still, like Abu Nidal, successfully negotiated with various state sponsors for support.⁴³

When an organization is first formed, the leader is able to exercise direct and personal control over his immediate followers. If the organization is to be *successful*, though, it must grow in size.⁴⁴ This is problematic when the size of the organization exceeds the leader's span of control.⁴⁵ One way organizations cope with growth is by bureaucratizing its operational functions whereby a leader divides the operational control of the organization among several other individuals based on function and/or geography.⁴⁶ Even terrorist groups bureaucratize; Hezbollah, for instance, has a Secretary General and a Shura Council, as well as function-specific divisions that oversee militant operations, social programs, and political activities.⁴⁷ An alternative, and often overlapping, way of dealing with the growth of an organization is to decentralize, by pushing down operational decision-making into the lower levels of the organization. Many experts have argued that al-Qaeda's periphery was decentralized, with essentially independent cells forming and operating on their own without any ties (command and control, logistics, training, financing) to the leadership in Pakistan.⁴⁸ Other groups, such as the Animal Liberation Front, also preach the concept of leaderless resistance.⁴⁹ Decentralization marginalizes the importance of the individual leader even more so than bureaucratization because in a completely decentralized organization, operational decisions are made at the lowest levels. In a bureaucratized organization, in contrast, a central authority still exerts control over the organization; that central authority, however, is composed of multiple individuals, none of whom is of critical importance.

Because of the decentralization and/or bureaucratization that generally accompany an organization's growth, usually leaders will become increasingly less operationally important over time. In some cases, however, this process may be resisted by the leader because, out of ego or other reasons, the founding leader is reluctant to cede control to subordinates or to independent cells.⁵⁰ As with inspirational leadership, there may also be a resurgent operational leader. A leader may decide to try to centralize a networked organization, or to exert more control over tactics, timing, and targets in a large, hierarchical organization.

Visualizing Leadership

In the following graphic (Figure 1), operational guidance is on the X-axis, and inspiration is on the Y-axis. Both are composite variables that are unified as one concept for the sake of visual simplicity. At the top right (I), the leader provides both inspiration and operational guidance. At the top left (II), the leader provides

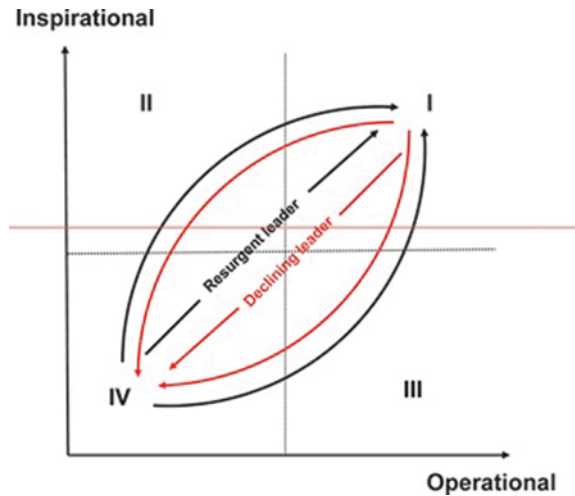


Figure 1. The importance of individual leaders (color figure available online).

inspiration, but not operational guidance. At the bottom right (III), the leader is important operationally but not inspirationally. At the bottom left (IV), the leader is neither important inspirationally nor operationally.

The lines show the changing role of leadership over time. However, any particular case may have fluctuations, backtracking, and zig-zags rather than a simple, inevitable movement in one direction.

Leadership Targeting

For leadership targeting to be effective, it must at a minimum remove a leader providing either inspirational or operational value. When an inspirational leader is removed, the group can suffer in several ways. First, without the leader's articulation of an ideology, the group may lose focus as others' visions are advocated. This could lead to a shift in the group's ideology (more moderate or more extreme), to a splintering of the group into smaller organizations, or to members disengaging from the group altogether. Second, without a charismatic or visionary leader, the group may face a renewed collective action problem. Potential and existing members may be less willing to fight and possibly die for less inspiring or charismatic leaders.

When an operational leader is removed, the group also might suffer in several ways. First, the group may miss the departed leader's strategic decision making. Follow-on leaders may not make the same choices. Second, the removal of a leader responsible for making tactical decisions can also harm the group. Without the leader's expertise, attacks might be less likely to be successfully executed and less likely to have their desired consequences. Third, without an organizationally important leader, recruitment, fundraising, logistics, training, and alliances with other groups may all suffer, all to the detriment of the terrorist organization.

Overall, the greatest expected utility for leadership targeting should occur when the leader provides both inspiration and operational guidance (Cell I). Organizations with leaders in Cell I are similar to cults in the early stages of formation. As Galanter and Forest claim, they are "particularly susceptible to dissolution. Members may

disaffiliate at any time, since the ties that bind them together have yet to be woven into the stable network of a social structure.”⁵¹ The case where leadership targeting would have the lowest expectations for success would be Cell IV, where inspiration and operational guidance have become institutionalized. Even repeated strikes against the leadership would be unlikely to be effective since the organization does not look to its leaders for inspiration or operational guidance. In Cells II and III, where the leader provides inspiration or operational guidance, but not both, organizations would be somewhat vulnerable to leadership targeting, depending on which function the leader still performs, and in a manner discussed above.

The conceptualization of leadership developed here is a “necessary, but not sufficient” argument. For leadership targeting to be effective, it is necessary for leaders to be important, but just because leaders are important, this is not sufficient for targeting to be effective. For policymakers and those involved in specific operations, other considerations should and will play an important role. Analysts and decision-makers should ask questions like: How capable and dedicated will subsequent leaders be? Will future leaders be deterred by the threat of being targeted? Will organizations take defensive measures that force them to lose some of the initiative? Will decapitation lead to internal turmoil and uncertainty that make the organization less effective for some period of time? How will the international community view decapitation? Will the terrorist group retaliate? Will sympathizers join the group in response?⁵² Theorizing as to how all of these factors weight into the effects of leadership targeting is beyond the scope of this paper, which instead focuses just on the independent effect of the leader’s role within the organization.

Case Studies

The following section looks at three cases of leadership targeting. Case studies are used because they allow for process tracing and for exploring the causal relationship in the most nuanced way. Also, case studies can hold other factors as constant as possible when comparing variation *within* cases over time, as will be done with the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and Shining Path. These cases do not “prove” or “disprove” the theory, but are offered as plausibility probes that provide detailed examples of the dynamics of the conceptualized framework described above.⁵³

Assessing the value of leaders is difficult, but necessary if the results are to be verifiable, reliable, and replicable. However, creating a numeric scale of these measures would impose an unwelcome degree of artificiality to the analysis. Instead, the discussion and analysis of the case studies will assess the variables in the following ways. Charisma, by definition, is a subjective concept, and so if leaders are commonly seen or described by their followers as charismatic, then they are so. The ideological innovation of the leader will be assessed by comparing the leader’s particular innovations to the ideology of the terrorist group to what it had been previously. For the operational variables (strategy, tactics, organization), the leader’s role in managing these decisions will be assessed by first- and secondhand accounts that describe the extent of the leader’s engagement with these activities. Generally, these accounts, as will be seen in the case studies, are sufficient to determine whether a leader should be classified as “high” or “low” on these measures.⁵⁴ Importantly, assessing these variables must be done separately from assessing leadership targeting outcomes. In other words, ex-post facts about the effects of leadership targeting cannot be used as evidence of the importance of the leadership.

In assessing the causal effects of successful leadership targeting on a terrorist group's capacity to inflict violence, the cases will use process tracing methodology to show how the removal of the leader independently affected the group. This variable will be assessed by looking at the size and activity levels of the group before and after the leadership was killed or captured. The cases do not form a set of "perfect" cases where the only variation occurs within the leadership variable. While this would be the ideal for John Stuart Mill's "method of difference," the real world offers few cases that fit perfectly. Consequently, when other factors beyond leadership targeting operations affected the prospects for the terrorist group, these factors will be addressed within the case study.

The cases (see Figure 2) were chosen based on their variation in the independent variable (the importance of the leader at the time of the decapitation operation) out of a universe of cases that numbers in the hundreds.⁵⁵ The placement of each case on the figure was determined by the analysis that follows in greater detail in the subsequent sections. As a case in Cell I, Shoko Asahara, the leader of Aum Shinrikyo, was both operationally and inspirationally important. Abimael Guzman, the leader of the Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso), is an example of Cell II. While Guzman was both inspirationally and operationally critical in the early years of Sendero, he was only inspirationally important when he was captured in 1992. The multiple leaders of the GIA are example of cases in Cells I, III, and IV. The leadership of the GIA moved from Cell IV to Cell III to Cell I, all the while overcoming multiple decapitations of its leaders. The case studies will be followed by some preliminary analysis of how the death of bin Laden will affect al-Qaeda.

Aum Shinrikyo in Japan

Aum Shinrikyo (or Supreme Truth) was a cult founded in 1984 by Shoko Asahara in Japan and is best known as the perpetrator of the 1995 sarin gas bombings in the Tokyo subway system. Aum grew from around 1,500 members in 1987 to possibly up to 50,000 by 1994, including tens of thousands in Russia.⁵⁶



Figure 2. Case studies (color figure available online).

In 1988, Aum Shinrikyo built a complex among the foothills of Mount Fuji⁵⁷ and began experimenting with various chemical and biological agents in its Mount Fuji complex.⁵⁸ Aum's activities began to draw unwanted attention from the police, who planned a simultaneous raid on all the group's facilities on March 21 or 22, 1995. Asahara decided to pre-empt the raid by launching the planned attack on the Tokyo subway; these attacks killed twelve people and injured 5,500.⁵⁹

For Aum, Shoko Asahara (born Chizuo Matsumoto) was its leader, founder, and central figure. In fact, "Asahara regarded himself as an enlightened being with the *unique* power and ability to save the world"⁶⁰ (emphasis added). Asahara was extremely charismatic, and developed a cult of personality around himself in which he was infallible, all-powerful, and all-knowing.⁶¹ According to Metraux, "Aum publications do make one factor abundantly clear: Asahara is portrayed as an 'enlightened super-human' with divine powers at the level of Buddha and Jesus. Any Asahara devotee can improve his position in life (emancipation and enlightenment) and escape rebirth in human form only at the behest of Asahara himself—through his touch or blessing."⁶²

In terms of ideology, Asahara himself determined the problem, enemy, solution, means, and context. "Asahara created this belief system [ideology] for the express purpose of recruiting and manipulating a membership that truly wanted to believe they could be part of something greater."⁶³ According to the preaching of Asahara, the corruption and materialism of modern Japan was the *problem*. He exhorted his followers to leave "this filthy world of desires" and live at his compound on Mount Fuji to achieve spiritual enlightenment.⁶⁴ The *enemy* was the modern, outside world of Japanese society, the Japanese government, and the United States—all of whom were viewed as legitimate targets of violence.⁶⁵

The *solution* was the destruction of the known world and the creation of a new order, which he would lead.⁶⁶ For *context*, Asahara blended concepts from Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Judaism with his own worldview. He took the concepts of Armageddon and the apocalypse and mixed them together with the prophecies of Nostradamus to predict that the end of the world was approaching and that only those who had achieved a state of enlightenment (i.e., his followers) would be able to survive.⁶⁷

The means of achieving these goals included drugs, meditation, blood rituals, and violence. The ultimate experience for Aum members was the "Blood Initiation," in which they would pay \$7,000 to drink a small glass of Asahara's blood. Aum also used violence, severely beating disciples in the compound for even minor "transgressions"; more serious offenders were placed in isolation cells in which a video of Asahara played on a continuous loop; some disobedient members and even non-members were killed. Violence was also seen as a legitimate way of speeding up the coming of the apocalypse.⁶⁸

Operationally, Asahara made strategic, tactical, and organizational decisions for Aum Shinrikyo, maintaining direct control over almost all aspects of the group's activities. Strategically, he decided how Aum would achieve its goals, the mix of means to do so, and the targets to attack to achieve the desired results. Asahara was responsible for the shift from religious preaching to politics and then to violence.⁶⁹

Tactically, Asahara was involved with the detailed planning of many operations, choosing the timing, method or tactic, and specific target for the operation. When Aum members tried to leave the organization, Asahara gave direct orders that they

be killed.⁷⁰ Asahara himself directly ordered several attacks on Aum's enemies, including a sarin attack prior to the subway operation. He often hand-selected the members who would participate in an operation. When the police began suspecting Aum of producing sarin, Asahara gave the order to stop production and destroy the facilities. (Production was later resumed.) Asahara explicitly targeted those subway lines that converged on Kasumigaseki station for the sarin attacks in 1995. Even though the sarin was not yet as pure as it could have been, Asahara gave the order to launch the attack.⁷¹

Organizationally, Asahara was central to Aum's recruitment, internal structure, and financing. Aum was "highly centralized around the figure of Shoko Asahara... Aum's structure was cohesive and extremely hierarchical."⁷² Asahara was involved with internal discipline by "dictating penalties for various transgressions."⁷³ Besides the possibility of being killed if they disobeyed Asahara, many members also thought they would go to eternal hell.⁷⁴ He was intimately involved with many of the initiation rituals, further boosting his cult of personality. Asahara was also critical to Aum's internal organization. In 1994, "Asahara ordered a sweeping reorganization, setting up the cult as a shadow government."⁷⁵ Financially, Asahara was involved in nearly every money-making scheme, whether it involved selling his bathwater or hair, or hooking disciples to electrodes connected to his brainwaves.

After the subway attack, the police increased their focus on Aum Shinrikyo. They raided Aum's compound on March 22 and began searching for Asahara, who was captured two months later. By the end of April, 150 Aum members had been arrested, although none of these arrests was for sarin related crimes. Finally, on May 6, the police found Asahara hiding in one of the buildings in the Mount Fuji complex. Asahara and the entire leadership group of Aum were imprisoned. By the end of 1995, 350 members had been detained and half of them were charged with crimes.⁷⁶ Asahara was found guilty and sentenced to death on February 27, 2004, joining eleven other Aum members who had already received death sentences.⁷⁷ Since 1995, what remained of Aum "evolved into a small and peaceful sect whose members live quietly in small communities across Japan."⁷⁸ Renamed Aleph, and under the leadership of Fumihiko Joyu, the group has renounced violence and even apologized for its past actions.⁷⁹

The results of this case demonstrate the plausibility of the model developed earlier. Asahara was both inspirationally and operationally critical to Aum Shinrikyo and so one would expect the organization to have a difficult time replacing him as a leader. Joyu and others who tried to replace Asahara could not provide the same ideological inspiration as Asahara. The group lost focus, turned to non-violence, and many members left the organization. Also, without Asahara's charismatic inspiration, members were unwilling to risk their lives for the greater good of the group (especially once violence was renounced). Operationally, it is difficult to assess the impact of Asahara's removal from the organization. Because the group's ideology changed, it is hard to know if subsequent leaders would have been more or less capable of making the best strategic, tactical, and organizational decisions for Aum if it had continued as a terrorist group. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that subsequent leaders would have made the *same* (for good or bad) decisions, for example, regarding the use of biological and chemical weapons. Ultimately, while Asahara's cult of personality aided in the growth of the organization, it also made the group especially vulnerable to decapitation because, to a large extent, Asahara *was* Aum.

Sendero Luminoso in Peru

Sendero Luminoso (the Shining Path) of Peru was a radical Marxist group that was most active in the 1980s and early 1990s.⁸⁰ Its activities led to a climate of violence that resulted in nearly 70,000 deaths on all sides, \$20 billion in economic damage, and widespread human rights abuses.⁸¹ Sendero grew from a few hundred original members to between 10,000 and 20,000 militants, and enjoyed the support of 20,000 to 30,000 more individuals and the sympathy of perhaps millions more.⁸²

Abimael Guzman, the founder of Sendero, played a critical role—especially inspirationally—throughout Sendero’s history. In terms of charisma, he intentionally and explicitly developed a cult of personality around himself, and his followers worshipped him almost as a deity.⁸³ Ideologically, it was his vision of Marxism that became the irrefutable ideology of Sendero. His (i.e., Sendero’s) ideology was essentially classic Marxism, but adapted to the realities of Peru. Guzman’s vision identified class inequality as the *problem*; the Peruvian state, its exploitive upper class, and its imperial partners as the *enemy*; a socialist state as the *solution*; violence as the only *means* of achieving these goals; and the *context* as one of timeless class struggle.⁸⁴

Operationally, Guzman became less critical as time went on. Strategically, he created what he believed to be the blueprint for success, which began by creating situations where Sendero power structures would replace those of the state.⁸⁵ Sendero would provoke violence from the state, which would then increase support among the population.⁸⁶ Eventually, Guzman hoped to control the mountain areas, cut off Lima, and then eventually operate in Lima and overthrow the government of Peru.⁸⁷ As the organization grew both in size and geographic reach, Guzman devolved much of the tactical control to his regional commanders. While Guzman set this larger strategic vision for the organization, others made the local tactical decisions regarding who or what to attack, as well as how and when.⁸⁸ As the leader of the Sendero Luminoso, Guzman moved from Cell I in the early years to Cell II as the organization grew in size and geographic scope.

Guzman was captured by the National Counterterrorism Directorate (DINCOTE) of the Peruvian National Police on September 12, 1992. Besides capturing Guzman, DINCOTE also seized several of his high ranking lieutenants and a computer with information on thousands of Shining Path members (23,430). This intelligence and information coup allowed the police to roll up almost the entire organization by capturing 200 *Senderistas* within a few days, over 1,000 in a few weeks, 3,600 in eighteen months, and 7,000 in two years. Of the nineteen central committee members, twelve were captured in just the three months or so following Guzman’s arrest.⁸⁹ In addition, Guzman called for a period of peace while in prison, which led to the surrender of more than 3,000 *Senderistas*.⁹⁰ These surrenders and arrests, coupled with military defeats at the hands of armed peasant communities (*rondas*), devastated the organization and contributed to the widespread decline in its operations and the overall level of violence.⁹¹

How does this case fit the model? Guzman, through his charisma and ideology, provided the inspiration for the group. He developed a robust cult of personality; however, when Peruvian forces captured him, “Guzman’s heroic, mythical image was virtually destroyed.”⁹² After his capture, Guzman was shown on television dressed in unflattering prison garb while being held in a cage like a circus animal.⁹³ Ideologically, Guzman was seen by *Senderistas* as personally responsible for the

ideology of the Shining Path; Sendero's ideology was Guzman's ideology, even though to outsiders it looked much like standard revolutionary Marxism. Operationally, while Guzman set the strategic vision for the organization, practically all of the day-to-day operations were conducted by local or regional commanders. In sum, then, at the time of his capture, Guzman was in Cell II: important inspirationally but unimportant operationally.

According to the theory developed in the earlier sections, Shining Path should have had a difficult time replacing Guzman's inspirational leadership, and this was, in fact, the case. His successor, Oscar Ramirez Durand, never developed a charismatic cult of personality as Guzman did and so could not inspire members to join for his benefit. Ideologically as well, Ramirez could not compete with Guzman. When Guzman essentially shifted Sendero's ideology by calling for peace talks from his prison cell, Sendero split into two factions. One supported a peace deal, while the second, led by Ramirez, chose to continue the armed struggle.⁹⁴ This split, in and of itself, demonstrates Ramirez's inability to convince others to sacrifice themselves for the greater collective good as identified by his ideological vision. When Ramirez was captured in 1999, the group further splintered along ideological and geographical grounds, with numerous individuals claiming the mantle of leadership, none of whom were able to unify the potential groups under their operational guidance as Guzman had.⁹⁵

Algeria and the Emirs of the GIA

The Algerian GIA (*Group Islamique Armé* or Armed Islamic Group) formed in 1992.⁹⁶ When the government arrested more than 40,000 political Islamists from the FIS (Front Islamique du Salut or Islamic Salvation Front), "the initiative gradually passed to more violent groups" like the GIA.⁹⁷ The GIA grew in size and achieved its peak strength somewhere around 1996 or 1997, when it consisted of approximately 5,000–10,000 militants. Membership dropped to approximately 2,000 in 1999 after the split with the GSPC (*Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat* or Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat); further widespread defections in the late 1990s reduced the GIA to an estimated 100 militants in 2003. Overall, from 1992 to 2005, GIA-related violence was likely responsible for 150,000–200,000 deaths on all sides.⁹⁸

During its short-lived existence, the GIA went through a steady succession of leaders, with probably eleven different leaders over a twelve-year span. At least eight of the GIA emirs were killed—by the government or by their rivals—and two were captured or arrested. See Table 1 for a chronology of leadership within the GIA from 1992–2004.⁹⁹

The GIA began as a highly decentralized organization composed of dispersed semi-autonomous "roaming armed bands."¹⁰⁰ The GIA's first emir, Layada, formed the GIA in September 1992 when he united three different factions from within the jihadi movement.¹⁰¹ Even as a unified umbrella organization, the GIA under Layada and Djafar "operated in urban areas without overall direction . . . [and] the growth of the GIA between 1993 and 1994 did not signify greater coordination and control . . . The GIA operated as a conglomeration of armed militias."¹⁰² Gousmi completed the unification and centralization of the jihad movement when leaders from rival groups formally announced their unity with the GIA on May 13, 1994.¹⁰³

Table 1. Emirs of the GIA

Time	Emir	Ending
September 1992 to May 1993	Abdellhaq Layada	Arrested in Morocco
May to August 1993	Period of indecision	al-Afghani became emir
August 1993 to February 26, 1994	Djafar al-Afghani (also known as Mourad Si Ahmed or Seif Allah Djafar)	Killed, probably based on information from an insider
March 10, 1994 to September 26, 1994	Cherif Gousmi (also known as Abu Abdallah Ahmed)	Killed in action
October 6 to October 27, 1994	Mahfoud Tajine	Deposed
October 27, 1994 to July 16, 1996	Djamel Zitouni	Killed by rivals
July 1996 to December 1996	Period of indecision	Abu Selman became emir
December 1996 to January 1997	Abu Selman (also known as Farid Hamani)	Killed
Early 1997 to February 8, 2002	Antar Zouabri	Killed by Algerian security forces, possibly based on a tip from Hassan Hattab, the GSPC leader
February 2002 to July 2004	al-Rashid Abu Turab (also known as Rashid Oukali)	Killed by Boudiafi
July 2004 to November 2004	Nourredine Boudiafi	Captured
November 2004 to (probably) December 2004	Guechniti Redouane	Killed by Algerian security forces
December 2004	Chaâbane Younes	Killed by Algerian security forces

Initially, the inspirational leadership of the GIA was relatively unimportant. Its ideology was based on the relatively widespread Salafi/Wahhabi interpretation of Islam, and was not particularly tied to one leader's ideological innovation or interpretation.¹⁰⁴ In terms of charismatic leadership, the charisma of individual leaders aided their own rise to power and, to some degree, was required for their assumption of top leadership. However, the GIA leaders as a whole never exhibited extraordinary charisma, especially in comparison to Asahara or Guzman.¹⁰⁵

Over time, however, and particularly under the emirships of Zitouni and Zouabri, the ideological leadership of the GIA became more important. These leaders pushed the GIA towards greater extremism, especially in their conceptions of the enemy and the amount of violence that was justified. Zitouni began to consider

all those opposed to them as apostate or infidels and worthy of being attacked.¹⁰⁶ Zouabri continued and even escalated the policies of his mentor, with “a strategy of ever-increasing violence and redoubled purges within the GIA.”¹⁰⁷ The level of violence in Algeria peaked in 1997, with “horrific massacres of civilians” in January and February and “bloodbaths” in August and September.¹⁰⁸

These ideological shifts came directly from the leadership. Previous emirs had not gone in this direction, and external circumstances did not dictate this escalation into a more extreme ideology. Not only did the leaders push the ideology to its extreme, they also were successful in taking many of the followers with them, at least initially. Over time, these inspirationally (specifically ideologically) important leaders proved to be powerful, yet destructive to the fortunes of the GIA. As the atrocities committed by the GIA mounted, many members saw the shift to extremism as unjustified and even abhorrent.¹⁰⁹ During the emirship of Zitouni, a group led by Hassan Hattab split off and formed the GSPC. Over time, most members of the GIA shifted to the GSPC (now called al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)).¹¹⁰ The ideological shift within the GIA, led by Zitouni and Zouabri, and the resultant defection of the “moderates,” show how the leaders of the GIA were inspirationally important, but detrimental to the organization.

This case highlights the plausibility of the many propositions developed in the theory sections. When the early leaders of the GIA were in Cell IV, one would expect decapitation to have been the least effective. Even though Layada was arrested and Djafar was killed in action, the organization maintained its tempo and focus because these leaders provided very little inspiration or operational direction across the semi-independent, decentralized group. Gousmi successfully completed the centralization begun by Layada, shifting the GIA into Cell III. At this stage, the leaders were slightly more important, but only in terms of coordinating operations, and not for any inspirational guidance, and therefore relatively easy to replace. Gousmi’s successors—Zitouni and Zouabri—provided more inspiration with their ideological innovations, and so the leadership of the GIA shifted into Cell I, where they were the most vulnerable to decapitation. After Zouabri was killed in 2002, the GIA further disintegrated, with successive leaders incapable of justifying the extreme levels of violence. Additionally, several leaders were killed in quick succession in 2004. Without strong leaders capable of inspiring their followers with their apocalyptic visions, increasing numbers of GIA members left for the GSPC, leaving the GIA with around one hundred fighters dispersed across Algeria.¹¹¹

Conclusion: Extending the Model to al-Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden

What does all this mean for current and future cases of leadership targeting? The theoretical framework developed above should be useful in understanding how al-Qaeda will fare after the death of bin Laden. As the theory section articulated, the fundamental question is, what did bin Laden do inspirationally and/or operationally as the leader of al-Qaeda, and how did this change until the time of his death? Initially, bin Laden was important in inspiring al-Qaeda members. His great ideological innovation was to focus the attention of jihadis on their common “far enemy,” the West, rather than on their individual “near enemies.”¹¹² Additionally, he was, by all accounts, highly charismatic, a characteristic that was enhanced by his ascetic lifestyle and by his reputation (perhaps apocryphal) for fighting bravely during the 1980s in Afghanistan.¹¹³ Over time, though, his inspiration had been

institutionalized. His message of a global jihad was picked up by other ideologues, and is readily available through texts, the Internet, and videos. By the end of the 1990s, bin Laden had grown increasingly less important as the catalyst for al-Qaeda's ideology.¹¹⁴ In the 2000s, his inspirational guidance began to further diminish as "franchises" of al-Qaeda, like al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) under al-Zarqawi, had already strayed from bin Laden's core ideological principles by redefining who was a legitimate enemy (Iraqi Shia for Zarqawi) and what methods were acceptable in the waging of their fight. Bin Laden, according to internal al-Qaeda documents, was struggling to keep affiliated organizations true to their original vision up until the time of his death.¹¹⁵

Operationally, bin Laden reportedly initially controlled many of the strategic, tactical, and organizational decisions. Strategically, attacking the far enemy had to be justified because many felt that attacking the West would prove counterproductive.¹¹⁶ This strategic focus on the West remains controversial, as seen by recent debates within al-Qaeda over whether to focus on Pakistan or the United States. Nevertheless, the existence of this recent strategic debate and bin Laden's silence of several years highlight that he has been operationally marginalized, perhaps intentionally, by his own organization.¹¹⁷ Tactically, bin Laden was responsible for several early operations, especially the 1998 embassy attacks in Kenya and Tanzania. Since then, bin Laden has acted more like a venture capitalist; individuals and groups come to him with a plan or an idea, and he decides whether to finance and support their operations.¹¹⁸ Bin Laden appears to have exerted almost no tactical control over al-Qaeda attacks since 2001, when anyone subscribing to its ideology can conduct attacks in its name or for its cause.¹¹⁹ The attacks on Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005 are examples of this. According to internal al-Qaeda documents, "Bin Laden was burdened by what he viewed as the incompetence of the 'affiliates,' including their lack of political acumen to win public support, their media campaigns, and their poorly planned operations which resulted in the unnecessary deaths of thousands of Muslims."¹²⁰ Organizationally, bin Laden was important in the creation of al-Qaeda in the 1990s, especially in setting up training bases in Afghanistan and forging alliances with other terrorist groups and the Taliban government. Since 2001 and the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan, however, bin Laden's ability to provide these functions has been severely curtailed.¹²¹

Overall, bin Laden's importance to al-Qaeda has shifted from Cell I through Cell II to Cell IV. In the late 1990s, he began to relinquish operational control, but remained an inspirational figure to many jihadis.¹²² By the early 2000s, his inspiration had been institutionalized and some elements of his ideology abandoned, and his organization decentralized to the point that al-Qaeda is now more of a movement or ideology than a coherent organization. The death of bin Laden, therefore, will likely have little independent effect on the organization of al-Qaeda because he was no longer important to it as a leader.¹²³

Notes

1. For more on the moral and legal basis of decapitation, which is not the subject of this essay, see Nils Melzer, *Targeted Killings in International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Catherine Lotrionte, "When to Target Leaders," *The Washington Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (Summer 2003): 73–86; and Avery Plaw, *Targeting Terrorists: A License to Kill* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008).

2. *Leaders* are defined as the singular person generally recognized as the person at the top of the organization. *Leadership targeting* describes operations designed to capture, arrest, or kill the enemy leader. *Effective leadership targeting* is defined as a notable decrease in violence by the terrorist organization that results from the loss of the leader. Effective operations are distinguished from *successful* operations, in which the leader is successfully killed or captured. For generally similar approaches to defining these terms, see Bryan Price, "Targeting Top Terrorists: How Leadership Decapitation Contributes to Counterterrorism," *International Security* 36, no. 4 (Spring 2012): 9–46; Jenna Jordan, "When Heads Roll: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Decapitation," *Security Studies*, 18 (2009): 719–755; Patrick Johnston, "Does Decapitation Work? Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Targeting in Counterinsurgency Campaigns," *International Security* 36, no. 4 (Spring 2012): 47–79.

3. For a longer list of effective decapitations, see Martha Crenshaw, "How Terrorism Declines," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 69–87; Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (Summer 2006): 7–48; Daniel Byman, "Do Targeted Killings Work?," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 2 (March/April 2006): 95–111; Graham H. Turbiville, Jr., "Hunting Leadership Targets in Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorist Operations," *Joint Special Operations University Report* (June 2007); and Price, "Targeting Top Terrorists" (see note 2 above).

4. Steven David, "Israel's Policy of Targeted Killing," *Ethics and International Affairs* 17, no. 1 (2003): 111–126; Mohammed M. Hafez and Joseph M. Hatfield, "Do Targeted Assassinations Work? A Multivariate Analysis of Israel's Controversial Tactic during the Al-Aqsa Uprising," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, no. 4 (June 2006): 362.

5. Turbiville, "Hunting Leadership Targets" (see note 3 above), 74, 77.

6. Lisa Langdon, Alexander J. Sarapu, and Matthew Wells, "Targeting the Leadership of Terrorist and Insurgent Movements: Historical Lessons for Contemporary Policy Makers," *Journal of Public and International Affairs* 15 (Spring 2004): 59–78; Alex Wilner, "Targeted Killings in Afghanistan: Measuring Coercion and Deterrence in Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 33, no. 4 (April 2010): 307–329; Jordan, "When Heads Roll" (see note 2 above).

7. Jordan, "When Heads Roll" (see note 2 above); Johnston, "Does Decapitation Work?" (see note 2 above); Price, "Targeting Top Terrorists" (see note 2 above); and Aaron Mannes, "Testing the Snake Head Strategy: Does Killing or Capturing its Leader Reduce a Terrorist Group's Activity," *The Journal of International Policy Solutions* 9 (Spring 2008): 40–49.

8. See Price, "Targeting Top Terrorists" (note 2 above), 14–23.

9. Stephen T. Hosmer, *Operations Against Enemy Leaders* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001); and Brian Michael Jenkins, *Should Our Arsenal Against Terrorism Include Assassination?* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1987).

10. John Kotter, "What Leaders Really Do," *Harvard Business Review*, December 2001, 3–11, uses different language but makes the distinction between leaders (what I call inspirational figures) and managers, both of which I semantically consider as leaders. Using different language, Henry Mintzberg, in "The Manager's Job: Folklore and Fact," *Harvard Business Review*, July–August 1975, uses different language to describe ten roles of a manager, one of which is a "leader."

11. Martha Crenshaw, "The Logic of Terrorism: Terrorist Behavior as a Product of Strategic Choice," in Walter Reich, ed., *The Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1998), 7–24. For more on selective incentives and the collective action problem, see Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965); Samuel Popkin, *The Rational Peasant: The Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); Mark Irving Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); and Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

12. The following discussion draws directly from Gordon H. McCormick's unpublished manuscript, "The Revolutionary Hero: Charismatic Authority and Rebel Organization"

(Monterey, CA: Department of Defense Analysis, Naval Postgraduate School, June 2003). Used with permission of the author. For further information on this source contact Michael Freeman at mefreema@nps.edu.

13. Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and eds., H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 245, 249. See also Arthur Schweitzer, "Theory and Political Charisma," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16, no. 2 (March 1974): 150–181; Bernard Bass, *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership* (New York: The Free Press, 1981), 152; Gary Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*, 4th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998), 298–300; Arthur J. Deikman, "The Psychological Power of Charismatic Leaders in Cults and Terrorist Organizations," in James J. F. Forest, ed., *The Making of a Terrorist: Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 71–83; Robert C. Tucker, "Personality and Political Leadership," *Political Science Quarterly* 92, no. 3 (Fall 1997): 388.

14. Martin E. Spencer, "What Is Charisma?," *The British Journal of Sociology* 24, no. 3 (September 1973): 342. Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 358 (March 1965): 77 and 83.

15. Chanoch Jacobsen and Robert House, "The Rise and Decline of Charismatic Leadership," unpublished manuscript (1999), 11.

16. Tucker, "Personality and Political Leadership" (see note 13 above), 388.

17. Spencer, "What Is Charisma?" (see note 14 above): 346.

18. John H. Humphreys and Walter O. Einstein, "Nothing New Under the Sun: Transformational Leadership from a Historical Perspective," *Management Decision* 41, no. 1 (2003): 86.

19. Willner and Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders" (see note 14 above): 77, 79; Reinhard Bendix, "Reflections on Charismatic Leadership," *Asian Survey* 7, no. 6 (June 1967): 341–352, 344; Spencer, "What is Charisma?" (see note 14 above): 348. While Weber does note that the leader's "charismatic claim breaks down if his mission is not recognized by those to whom he feels he has been sent," Weber also argues that "he does not derive his 'right' from their will . . . rather, it is the *duty* of those to whom he addresses his mission to recognize him as their charismatically qualified leader" (Weber, *From Max Weber*, see note 13 above, 246, 247). Spencer argues that Weber understates this connection, that "the leader in part earns his charisma because of the responsiveness of his followers to his ideas . . . Charisma Charisma always involves a *relationship* between the group and the leader" (Spencer, 347, 348).

20. Tucker, "Personality and Political Leadership" (see note 13 above): 389. Charismatic leaders unite the "ideal-hungry" followers with the "mirror-hungry" leader, according to Jerrold Post (Jerrold Post, "Narcissism and the Charismatic Leader-Follower Relationship," *Political Psychology* 7, no. 4 (December 1986): 675–688.)

21. This falls under the contingency approach to leadership. S. Alexander Haslam and Michael J. Platow, "The Link Between Leadership and Followership: How Affirming Social Identity Translates Vision Into Action," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 27, no. 11 (November 2001): 1469.

22. Thomas E. Dow, Jr., "The Theory of Charisma," *The Sociological Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (Summer 1969): 308. Dow calls this an "irrational bond."

23. Haslam and Platow, "The Link Between Leadership and Followership" (see note 21 above): 1469; Willner and Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders" (see note 14 above): 79; Dow, "The Theory of Charisma" (see note 22 above): 308 calls this an "irrational bond"; Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (see note 11 above), 168 and 162.

24. Alan Bryman, "Leadership in Organizations," in Stewart R. Clegg, Cynthia Hardy, and Walter R. Nord, eds., *Handbook of Organization Studies* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 281–282 cites the work of Burns and Bass on transformational leadership. See also Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (note 11 above), 36–37.

25. Bryman, "Leadership in Organizations" (see note 24 above): 280, referring to the work of Burns.

26. Spencer, "What is Charisma?" (see note 14 above): 346.

27. Crenshaw, "The Logic of Terrorism" (see note 11 above): 8–9. See also Haslam and Platow, "The Link Between Leadership and Followership" (note 21 above): 1470; Elisabeth

Jean Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 19; and Bryman, "Leadership in Organizations" (note 24 above): 277.

28. Willner and Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders" (see note 14 above): 79.

29. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (see note 11 above), 92–93 uses essentially similar concepts.

30. Haslam and Platow, "The Link Between Leadership and Followership" (see note 21 above); Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (see note 11 above), 124–125.

31. Willner and Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders" (see note 14 above): 83.

32. Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

33. Werner Stark, "The Routinization of Charisma," *Sociological Analysis* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1965): 206; Michael A. Toth, "Toward a Theory of the Routinization of Charisma," *Rocky Mountain Social Science Journal* 9, no. 2 (April 1972): 93–98; Dow, "The Theory of Charisma" (see note 22 above): 307; Willner and Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders" (see note 14 above): 80; Jacobsen and House, "The Rise and Decline of Charismatic Leadership" (see note 15 above), 6.

34. Stark, "The Routinization of Charisma" (see note 22 above): 207.

35. See Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003); Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2008).

36. Weber, *From Max Weber* (see note 13 above), 248.

37. Geoffrey Nelson, *Cults, New Religions and Religious Creativity* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), 117.

38. Rogelio Alonso, "The Modernization in Irish Republican Thinking Toward the Utility of Violence," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24, no. 2 (2001): 131–144.

39. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion* (see note 11 above).

40. The organizational literature typically refers to this role as "management." See Mintzberg, "The Manager's Job" (note 10 above); and Kotter, "What Leaders Really Do" (note 10 above).

41. Steven Brooke, "Strategic Fissures: The Near and Far Enemy Debate," in Assaf Moghadam and Brian Fishman, eds., *Self Inflicted Wounds: Debates and Divisions within al-Qa'ida and its Periphery* (West Point, NY: Harmony Project, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2010).

42. Brynjar Lia, "Jihadi Strategists and Doctrinaires," in Assaf Moghadam and Brian Fishman, eds., *Self Inflicted Wounds: Debates and Divisions within al-Qa'ida and its Periphery* (West Point: Harmony Project, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2010).

43. For more on the Abu Nidal example, see Patrick Seale, *Abu Nidal: A Gun for Hire* (New York: Random House, 1992).

44. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion* (see note 11 above), 128–129.

45. Gerald D. Bell, "Determinants of Span of Control," *The American Journal of Sociology* 73, no. 1 (July 1967): 100. The original concept was developed by V. A. Graicunas along with Lyndall Urwick, according to Fred Nickols, *The Span of Control and the Formulas of V. A. Graicunas*, home.att.net/~nickols/graicunas.htm.

46. Weber is the foundational author for the study of bureaucracy and bureaucratization, see Weber, *From Max Weber* (note 13 above), 196–244.

47. A. Nizar Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: From Islamic Revolution to Parliamentary Accommodation," *Third World Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (1993): 326.

48. Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad* (see note 35 above), and Marc Sageman, "The Next Generation of Terror," *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2008): 37–42.

49. Ori Brafman and Rod Beckstrom, *The Starfish and the Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations* (New York: Portfolio, 2006), 135–140.

50. See McCormick, "The Revolutionary Hero" (note 12 above); Willner and Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders" (note 14 above): 87; and Jean C. Robinson, "Institutionalizing Charisma: Leadership, Faith & Rationality in Three Societies," *Polity* 18, no. 2 (Winter 1985): 184.

51. Marc Galanter and James J. F. Forest, "Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems: Understanding the Transformation of Terrorist Recruits," in James J. F. Forest, ed., *The Making of a Terrorist: Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 51–70.

52. For more on these questions, see David, "Israel's Policy of Targeted Killing" (note 4 above); Byman, "Do Targeted Killings Work?" (note 3 above); Lotrionte, "When to Target Leaders" (note 1 above); Hafez and Hatfield, "Do Targeted Assassinations Work?" (note 4 above); Wilner, "Targeted Killings in Afghanistan" (note 6 above); and Babak Dehganpisheh and Christopher Dickey, "The Real Nasrallah," *Newsweek*, August 21/28, 2006.

53. Harry Eckstein, "Case Studies and Theory in Political Science," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, eds., *Handbook of Political Science, vol. 7. Political Science: Scope and Theory* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975), 79–138.

54. Gary Goertz, *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006) discusses how sub-components of a single variable should be combined into composite variables. Is each component necessary and added together to come with a score? Or are they sufficient and therefore replaceable so that we take the highest score of any of the dimensions? The first is an "essentialist approach" and the second is a "family-resemblance approach." In this article, I take a hybrid approach of "diminishing marginal returns." For example, I could assign 0.5 for any single component that is high, and 0.2 for the second, 0.1 for the third, and so on for a composite variable like "inspiration."

55. For the largest set, see Jordan, "When Heads Roll" (note 2 above): 13, who identifies 298 cases of leadership targeting against 96 organizations.

56. For more on Aum's origins and growth, see Daniel A. Metraux, *Aum Shinrikyo's Impact on Japanese Society* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2000); John Parachini, "Aum Shinrikyo," in Brian A. Jackson, John C. Baker, Kim Cragin, John Parachini, Horacio R. Trujillo, and Peter Clark, eds., *Aptitude for Destruction: Volume 2, Case Studies of Organizational Learning in Five Terrorist Groups* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2005), 11–36; Robert Jay Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It: Aum Shinrikyo, Apocalyptic Violence, and the New Global Terrorism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1999); Galanter and Forest, "Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems" (note 51 above); David E. Kaplan and Andrew Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World: The Terrifying Story of the Aum Doomsday Cult, from the Subways of Tokyo to the Nuclear Arsenal of Russia* (New York: Crown, 1996); D. W. Brackett, *Holy Terror: Armageddon in Tokyo* (New York: Weatherhill, 1996); and Ian Reader, "Spectres and Shadows: Aum Shinrikyo and the Road to Megiddo," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 14, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 147–186.

57. Gavin Cameron, "Multi-track Microproliferation: Lessons from Aum Shinrikyo and Al Qaida," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 22, no. 4 (1999): 284; Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 21–22, 77, 89–90; Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It* (see note 56 above), 31–33, 36.

58. For more on their weapons programs, see William Rosenau, "Aum Shinrikyo's Biological Weapons Program: Why Did it Fail?," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24, no. 4 (2001): 289–301; Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 51, 58, 85, 94, 96, 119–122, 124, 216; Parachini, "Aum Shinrikyo" (see note 56 above): 19–25; Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, rev. and expanded ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 124; Brackett, *Holy Terror* (see note 56 above), 109.

59. Brackett, *Holy Terror* (see note 56 above), 1–7, 121–142; Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 236; Tim Ballard, Jason Pate, Gary Ackerman, Diana McCauley, and Sean Lawson, *Chronology of Aum Shinrikyo's CBW Activities* (Monterey, CA: Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute for International Studies, 2001).

60. Metraux, *Aum Shinrikyo's Impact on Japanese Society* (see note 56 above), 36.

61. Cameron, "Multi-track Microproliferation" (see note 57 above): 280 refers to Asahara's leadership as "autocratic mysticism." See also Reader, "Spectres and Shadows" (see note 56 above): 149; Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 3, 67, 101; Angus M. Muir, "Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Case of Aum Shinrikyo (A Review Article)," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 22, no. 1 (1999): 81; Kyle Olson, "Aum Shinrikyo: Once and Future Threat?" *Emerging Infectious*

Diseases 5, no. 4 (July–August 1999): 515; James K. Campbell, *Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism* (Seminole, FL: Interpact Press, 1997), 63; Galanter and Forest, “Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems” (see note 51 above): 62–67.

62. Metraux, *Aum Shinrikyo's Impact on Japanese Society* (see note 56 above), 21.

63. Campbell, *Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism* (see note 61 above), 64.

64. Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 21, 59; Cameron, “Multi-track Microproliferation” (see note 57 above): 280; Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It* (see note 56 above), 24.

65. Reader, “Spectres and Shadows” (see note 56 above): 151.

66. Metraux, *Aum Shinrikyo's Impact on Japanese Society* (see note 56 above), 19, 49–53; Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It* (see note 56 above), 59.

67. Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 17; Metraux, *Aum Shinrikyo's Impact on Japanese Society* (see note 56 above), iii; Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It* (see note 56 above), 4–6, 8, 45.

68. Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 17, 18, 23, 36–43, 113–118, 162, 173, 212, 228; Metraux, *Aum Shinrikyo's Impact on Japanese Society* (see note 56 above), iv, 12, 18–20, 32, 45; Campbell, *Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism* (see note 61 above), 64–65; and Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It* (see note 56 above), 26–27, 36–41, 179–193; Brackett, *Holy Terror* (see note 56 above), 9–10, 19; Parachini, “Aum Shinrikyo” (see note 56 above): 13; Cameron, “Multi-track Microproliferation” (see note 57 above): 285–287; According to Ballard et al., “Chronology of Aum” (see note 59 above), Aum launched 17 CBW attacks between 1990 and 1995.

69. See Parachini, “Aum Shinrikyo” (see note 56 above).

70. Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 36, 41, 227.

71. Brackett, *Holy Terror* (see note 56 above), 29, 32, 125; Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 215, 238, 242; Brackett, *Holy Terror*, 125; Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It* (see note 56 above), 175.

72. Cameron, “Multi-track Microproliferation” (see note 57 above): 283; Reader, “Spectres and Shadows” (see note 56 above): 157. Parachini, “Aum Shinrikyo” (see note 56 above): 17.

73. Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (see note 56 above), 23.

74. John V. Parachini and Kutsuhisa Furukawa, “Japan and Aum Shinrikyo,” in Robert J. Art and Louise Richardson, eds., *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2007), 535.

75. See Campbell, *Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism* (note 61 above), 54 and Brackett, *Holy Terror* (note 56 above), 104; Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (note 56 above), 157.

76. See Parachini and Furukawa, “Japan and Aum Shinrikyo” (note 74 above): 544–549; Kaplan and Marshall, *The Cult at the End of the World* (note 56 above), 256–257, 277, 280, 285; Metraux, *Aum Shinrikyo's Impact on Japanese Society* (note 56 above), 20.

77. Norimitsu Onishi, “After 8-Year Trial in Japan, Cultist Is Sentenced to Death,” *New York Times*, February 28, 2004.

78. Metraux, *Aum Shinrikyo's Impact on Japanese Society* (see note 56 above), i.

79. Parachini and Furukawa, “Japan and Aum Shinrikyo” (see note 74 above): 547.

80. For a concise background, see David Scott Palmer, “Countering Terrorism in Latin America: The Case of Shining Path in Peru,” in James J. F. Forest, ed., *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century, Volume III* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007), 292–309; and Gordon McCormick, “The Shining Path and Peruvian Terrorism,” in David Rapoport, ed., *Inside Terrorist Organizations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 106–126. For more detailed accounts, see David Scott Palmer, ed., *The Shining Path of Peru* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN and Peru's Shining Path* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1998); and Philip Mauceri, *State Under Siege: Development and Policy Making in Peru* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996).

81. Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Final Report* 2003, <http://www.cverdad.org.pe/ingles/ifinal/conclusiones.php>; Palmer, “Countering Terrorism in Latin America” (see note 80 above).

82. Michael Freeman, *Freedom or Security: The Consequences for Democracies Using Emergency Powers to Fight Terror* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 160. Guzman's computer at the time of his capture showed 23,430 members according to Turbiville, "Hunting Leadership Targets" (see note 3 above): 32.

83. Palmer, "Countering Terrorism in Latin America" (see note 80 above): 297; also see the video *State of Fear: The Truth About Terrorism* (Skylight Pictures, 2005).

84. William Hazleton and Sandra Woy-Hazleton, "Sendero Luminoso: A Communist Party Crosses a River of Blood," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 4, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 69.

85. Mauceri, *State Under Siege* (see note 80 above), 122.

86. Gustavo Gorriti, *The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru*, trans Robin Kirk. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 104.

87. Freeman, *Freedom or Security* (see note 82 above), 148.

88. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion* (see note 11 above), 84, 85, 87, 150.

89. Turbiville, "Hunting Leadership Targets" (see note 3 above): 31–34; Freeman, *Freedom or Security* (see note 82 above), 164.

90. Richard Clutterbuck, "Peru: Cocaine, Terrorism and Corruption," *International Relations* 12 (1995): 86–87.

91. Turbiville, "Hunting Leadership Targets" (see note 3 above): 34.

92. McCormick, "Shining Path and Peruvian Terrorism" (see note 80 above): 123; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America* (see note 80 above), 92.

93. See *State of Fear* (note 83 above) and Turbiville, "Hunting Leadership Targets" (note 3 above): 33.

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97. Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 258–259; Evans and Phillips, *Algeria* (see note 96 above), 165, 190.

98. Mohammed M. Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements and Political Violence in Algeria," *Middle East Journal* 4 (Fall 2000): 575; Evans and Phillips, *Algeria* (see note 96 above), xiv, 221; "Groupe Islamique Arme (GIA)," *Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre*, accessed October 28, 2008, citing U.S. State Department estimates; Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 254.

99. There are frequent discrepancies between sources. Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 259, 262–267, 271; Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel* (see note 96 above), 79, 119, 129, 168; Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements" (see note 98 above): 575, 577–578; Evans and Phillips, *Algeria* (see note 96 above), 206, 222; "GIA," *Jane's* (see note 98 above).

100. Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel* (see note 96 above), 115; Evans and Phillips, *Algeria* (see note 96 above), 186; Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements" (see note 98 above): 576.

101. Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 259–260.

102. Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel* (see note 96 above), 115.

103. Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 264–265.

104. Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 254.

105. See Omar Ashour, "Islamist De-Radicalization in Algeria: Successes and Failures," *The Middle East Institute Policy Brief* 21 (November 2008), 1–10.

106. Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements" (see note 98 above): 587. See also Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel* (note 96 above), 167–168; Evans and Phillips, *Algeria* (note 96 above), 219.

107. Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 272.

108. Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 272–273.

109. Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements" (see note 98 above): 588.

110. Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements" (see note 98 above): 589; Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel* (see note 96 above), 119; Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above), 270. For a background on the GSPC, see Jean-Luc Marret, "Al-Qaeda in Islamic Magrev: A 'Glocal' Organization," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31, no. 6 (June 2008): 541–552.

111. The demise of the GIA was a result of several factors besides the decapitation of its leadership. Beginning in the mid-1990s, the Algerian security forces became more aggressive in their counter-insurgency operations, while also offering clemency to militants, according to Evans and Phillips, *Algeria* (see note 96 above), 218–219, 279. Another serious blow was struck by the round-up of over 400 members in late 2004, according to Lauren Vriens, "Armed Islamic Group (Algeria)," *Council on Foreign Relations*, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/9154/>.

112. Osama bin Laden, *Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places*, 1996, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html. For more on the ideological and strategic divides within the jihadi movement, see *Cracks in the Foundation: Leadership Schisms in Al Qaeda 1989–2006* (West Point, NY: Harmony Project, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, September 2007), http://ctc.usma.edu/aq/pdf/Harmony_3_Schism.pdf; Kepel, *Jihad* (see note 32 above); and Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

113. Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003); Sageman (see note 35 above), 75.

114. Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad* (see note 35 above).

115. Nelly Lahoud, Stuart Caudill, Liam Collins, Gabriel Koehler-Derrick, Don Rassler, and Muhammad al-Übaydi, *Letters from Abbottabad: Bin Laden Sidelined?* (West Point, NY: Harmony Program at The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, May 3, 2012).

116. Gerges, *The Far Enemy* (see note 112 above).

117. Sami Yousafzai and Ron Moreau, "Al Qaeda's Feuds and Fears," *Newsweek*, October 1, 2007.

118. Burke, *Al-Qaeda* (see note 113 above), 208.

119. Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad* (see note 35 above).

120. Lahoud et al., *Letters from Abbottabad* (see note 115 above), 2.

121. Evan Thomas, "Into Thin Air," *Newsweek*, September 3, 2007, p. 33.

122. Bruce Hoffman, "Redefining Counterterrorism: The Terrorist Leader as CEO," *RAND Review* (Spring 2004) refers to bin Laden as a combination of a CEO and venture capitalist.

123. Abu Yahya al-Libi is seen by some as the "heir apparent" to bin Laden, according to Michael Moss and Souad Mekhennet, "Rising Leader for Next Phase of Al Qaeda's War," *New York Times*, April 4, 2008.