

IMAGINING TERRORISM: TERRORISM AND ANTI-TERRORISM

TERRORISM, TWO WAYS OF DOING EVIL

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Implicit in the idea of terrorism is the contrast with what is seen as normal patterns of war hinged with the notion that terrorism itself has become the major justification for war. The conventional notion of terrorism carries with it a simple dualism of violence:

The West	The Other
Rational	Irrational
Justified	Hysterical
Focused	Wanton
Response	Provocation
Defensive	Offensive
Generating	Inspiring Terror
Security	
Modernity	Anti-Modernity

Such a binary of violence is – all the more so in the context of the conflicts in the Middle East – reminiscent of Edward Said's (1978) notion of Orientalism. In Said's formulation, Orientalism is a discourse about the East which carries with it notions of the chaotic, the violent, the disorderly, the treacherous, and the irrational. It creates an Other in a binary mode which, by contrast, serves to define the West, the Occident. It is an 'imaginary geography' wherein 'The Orient ... seems to be not an unlimited extension beyond the familiar European world but rather a closed field, a theoretical stage affixed to Europe' (1978, p.63). Such a discourse is a legitimation of power, it can be seen as a rationale for intervention, for resolving the 'clash of civilisations' (see Huntington, 1993).

Against this, Said stresses the imaginary notions of the discourse around Orient and Occident: '[they] correspond to no stable reality that exist as a natural fact. Moreover, all such geographical designations are an odd combination of the empirical and the imaginative.' (2003, p.331). Instead, 'rather than the manufactured clash of civilisations, we need to concentrate on the slow working together of cultures that overlap, borrow from each other, and live together in far more interesting ways than abridged or inauthentic mode of understanding can allow' (*ibid.*, p.xxix).

It is apparent that the dualistic conception of violence carries with it:

- (a) A denigration/beatification which ignores blurred lines and similarities in the use of violence;
- (b) A justification for violence on the part of a counter terrorism even though this may be wildly disproportionate and mis-targeted;
- (c) A rationale for military and/or economic intervention which evokes Western modernity as delivering democracy, rationality and the rule of law.

It is when one comes to look at Western definitions of terrorism that suspicions as to their objectivity and the distinctive nature of such violence immediately arise. There are two institutions which seek to define terrorism: law and social science. A fairly typical legal definition is that of the US Code and the FBI, here terrorism is: 'unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives' (FBI, 1998, p.ii).

Of course, if one removed the word 'unlawful', such a definition would easily fit, say, Dresden or Hiroshima in the Second World War. The word 'unlawful' merely allows a tautology to be perpetrated. Nor do social scientific definitions come off any better. In search of the positivistic, the scientific, social scientists would eschew words like 'unlawful' for they make the pretence of focusing on the

'objective', the behavioural: that to be discovered out there, outside of fiat or law. Thus Holmes and Holmes in their standard text, *Murder in America*, define terrorism as: 'premeditated, politically motivated violence, perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine stage agents usually to influence an audience.' (1994, p.130).

What country, one might ask, does not utilise clandestine state agents, commit premeditated politically motivated violence, and in late twentieth century wars inflict violence on non-combatants? (see Kaldor, 2003). What could be more terrifying than an AC-130 gunship at the siege of Falluja going backwards and forwards in what they call a 'lazy arc' with its 105mm cannons blazing? Is this not wanton in its savagery, collateral in its civilian casualties let alone property damage and terrifying in its impact? Here again the use of 'subnational' in the text facilitates tautology. Or to take these authors definition of the 'serial killer': 'someone who murders at least three persons in more than a 30-day period' (*ibid.*, p.92). They are surely not talking of a sniper in the Marine Corps on active duty?

Indeed, Martin Shaw in his *War and Genocide* traces the change in the nature of warfare from the notion of violence being targeted specifically at combatants and the rules of war being applicable in such struggles to what he calls the "degenerate" warfare of modern times where the definition of the enemy is extended to civilians as well as the military, where the civilian population is deliberately targeted and where the means of destruction are immensely augmented and killing is increasingly indiscriminate (See 2003, p23-6). In this light one might point to one major distinction between conventional warfare and terrorism as being the more limited aspirations of the latter.

The truth is that there is little to objectively distinguish between normal warfare and terrorism except for the level of power and legitimacy which state agents

have over their less powerful opponents: the worry is that it is the imaginary difference that is used to justify 'normal' warfare.

PROXY WARS AND THE DEFEAT OF THE SOVIET UNION

The line between conventional warfare that is and terrorism is further irrevocably blurred by the advent of proxy wars as a common mode of armed intervention for political reasons during the Cold War. Both the United States and the Soviet Union rather than face the nuclear dangers of direct confrontation or the political embarrassment of overt intervention funded guerrilla groups in every major conflict zone of the globe. An illustration of this was the covert US funding of the Contras in Nicaragua in order to overturn the leftwing administration, conducted interestingly via the Saudis, which led to the well known 'contra scandal'. But undoubtedly the climax of proxy warfare was the funding of the Taliban in order to overthrow the communist government of Afghanistan. This was the most successful covert programme in the whole of the CIA's history, it was ridiculously cheap costing \$3billion of American taxpayer's money and hardly any US casualties. The low cost both in money and men was the great attraction of the proxy war – the allure of terrorism to the Western powers. The support for the fundamentalist, Mujahideen was intended to not merely overthrow Afghan Communism but, more importantly, to draw the Soviet Union into the conflict – to give them 'their Vietnam' as it was put by Zbigniew Brzezinski the US national security advisor and to ultimately hasten the disintegration of their empire. By the end of December 1979 the Soviets had taken the bait and the consequences are well known history. The money was funded through Saudi Arabia with Saudis matching the US contribution dollar for dollar but also providing the stream of recruits to the Mujahideen including a man of high rank in Saudi society, soon to be their front line leader, Osama Bin Laden. "Those were the prettiest days of our lives" he wrote "What I lived in two years there, I could not have lived in a hundred years elsewhere" (cited in Unger, 2004, p106) and again "One day in Afghanistan counted for more than a thousand days praying in a

mosque” (*Ibid*, p106). Afghanistan hardened bin Laden, at first he praised the Americans for helping “us get rid of the secularist, atheist Soviets” (*Ibid*, p102) but later the penny must have dropped. For if such methods of unconventional warfare worked at getting rid of the Soviets could they be used against the other wing of Western modernity, the United States? The Taliban armed by the West became the major centre for terrorism and began systematically to inspire, if you want, proxy terrorism in so many countries across the world.

We have seen how the line between conventional warfare is blurred, that the similarities outweigh the differences, and, further more, that terrorism is a very useful adjunct to conventional warfare and politics in the form of proxy wars. But let us note now how the individuals involved in acts of terrorism against the West are far from alien or distant from Western contacts or ideas. Indeed it is their very closeness that is the wellspring of their repugnance and the psychodynamic of their action.

Of course there are differences between terrorism and conventional warfare, much – although of course not all – terrorism is committed by those that are less powerful than those who conduct conventional warfare. But the similarities are much greater – at least from the perspective of the civilian population that such activities impact upon. That is, what is a world of difference from the point of view of the military and the élites which control them, is very similar from the standpoint of the civilian. There can be little doubt as to whose perspective one should rate the most highly.

Occidentalism

Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit in their book, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (2004), point to how the Japanese Kamikaze pilots, the first suicide bombers in recent history, were not distant from Western culture and ideas. Far from it, a surprising number were from the humanities departments of top universities. Their letters reveal that they had read widely in German

philosophy and French literature, quite a few were Marxists, whilst Nietzsche and the existentialists were of great interest. They were not distant from Western culture, but immersed in it. But it was this immersion that led to the rejection of the West as individualistic, decadent, corrupt, soft – all of the attributes of Occidentalism. So, as the West creates a discourse of Orientalism to depict the other, those othered create an Occidentalist discourse to reject that which denigrates and humiliates them. Thus, Buruma and Margalit describe the youth of the Third World:

‘consumers at the lowest rungs of the new global economy: pirated DVDs showing Hollywood action films, cheap US-style leisure wear, and a twentyfour-hour din of American pop music as its local spin-offs. To idle youths living in these cultural wastelands, globalization, as the closest manifestation of the Western metropole, can be an endless seduction and constant humiliation. To the more highly educated ones, globalization has become a new word for imperialism.’ (2004, p.36)

There is a seduction of a culture which at once attracts yet undermines all sense of one’s own worth and identity, there is the denigration of being outside of the global realm of wealth and opportunity. Thus:

‘The West in general, and America in particular, provokes envy and resentment more among those who consume its images, and its goods, than among those who can barely imagine what the West is like. The killers who brought the towers down were well-educated young men who had spent considerable time living in the West, training for their mission. Mohammed Atta received a university degree in architecture in Cairo before writing a thesis on modernism and tradition in city planning at the Technical University in Hamburg. Bin Laden himself was once a civil engineer. If nothing else, the Twin Towers exemplified the technological hubris of modern engineers. Its destruction was plotted by one of their own.’ (2004, p.15)

Indeed Osama Bin Laden is a member of a family who spend much time in the West, owning mansions, staying in the best hotels, investing widely – he himself reputedly at one time something of a playboy. Hardly a person to whom the West was unknown. Indeed it was the knowledge of the West that spurred his

loathing of it. As the English journalist, Nick Cohen, put it: 'The clash of civilisations is inside people as well as between them. Osama bin Laden was as Westernized as Omar Sharif ... although bin Laden probably wouldn't thank you for explaining this to him.' (2003, p.3) And for others living in the West, experiencing cultural denigration, prejudice and (unlike bin Laden) impoverishment, the experience of alienation must be even greater. If one thinks of the Moroccan group around the Madrid 3/11 bombing, or the IRA volunteers in the pubs of Kilburn in North London in the 1980s, one can see how such alienation can emerge as well as a level of support from fellow immigrants. Paul Berman makes a similar point noting "The 9/11 terrorists most of them, likewise, turn out to have been people with claims to both the Arab past and the Western present" (2004, p18).

The Two Contradictions: Inside and Outside the First World

Let us put the phenomena of Orientalism and Occidentalism in a more systematic sociological context. As was argued elsewhere (Young, 2003), the forces of economic and cultural globalisation impact in very similar ways in both the First and Third Worlds. They result in contradictions *within* the First World and *between* the First and Third Worlds.

In the case of the First World, increased levels of income inequality, coupled with job insecurity, breakdown of community and endemic marital instability, create a society where there is both widespread relative deprivation and sense of social injustice, coupled with ontological insecurity and crises of identity. If relative deprivation generates a diffuse feeling of anger, the crisis of identity focuses it. For a common solution to ontological insecurity is to insist on some essential and highly valorised characteristics of oneself (be it through nationalism, religion, ethnicity, or machismo) and to substantiate this by contrasting this with a dehumanised 'other' who lacks these qualities. In the case of the First World, this is seen as an othering of those in the lowest part of the social structure (the underclass, single mothers, etc. See Mooney, 1997) and a hostility and

xenophobia abound. In the United States such a process can be seen in widespread religious fundamentalism, excessive patriotism and flag-waving (see Welch, 2000), punitive penal policies and the build up of a Gulag-sized prison population, highly racialised in its focus (see Wacquant, 2000), and support for foreign wars which seek to punish enemies and export American values. It is on this basis that the populist base for Orientalism is generated.

In the Third World the impact of cultural globalisation cannot be overestimated. The Western media, permeating every part of the globe, spread images of the good life, material comfort and abundance, together with a stress on meritocracy and equality of opportunity which is, of course, strikingly absent in reality. Whereas harsh – and increasing – economic differences (half the world live on less than \$2 a day) can be concealed in a world which is hermetically separated, this is no longer true in a world of cultural globalisation. Merton, in his classic 1938 article ‘Social Structure and Anomie’, sought to explain the reason for the high crime rate in the wealthy United States in contrast to the low crime rate in Italy. His explanation, well known to every sociology student, was that in the United States the universalistic, meritocratic cultural ideal of the American Dream contradicted with the actual structural limitations of success, and generated a situation of anomie which in turn led to crime. No such belief systems occurred in the Italy of that time, so that discontent, despite widespread grinding poverty, was less than in a much wealthier nation, such as the United States. Nowadays we may talk of a ‘Global Merton’, a widespread situation of anomie where widespread aspirations have been generated by the forces of globalisation and massive relative deprivation engendered in the Third World concomitant with a discontent which is unlikely to be allayed. For how conceivably can one justify on a meritocratic basis such disparities of income which occur merely because of the arbitrary factor of place of birth? Indeed, massive movements of immigration spurred on by precisely such concerns only serve to magnify this sense of unfairness – as it is precisely such populations which form a large, badly paid service class at the bottom of the class structure of the West. But it is not relative

deprivation alone which foments discontent, for the hubris of Western culture, its world dominance, challenges the traditional and local, the political and economic power of the First World sidelines and denigrates the 'developing' nations. They are backward and insignificant, they have to be cajoled by IMF, their markets have to be opened to Western goods and competition, they must be advised on everything from birth control to criminal justice. In an uncanny echo of the First World's attitude to its own poor, they are blamed for their poverty – they are poor because they lack the sensibilities and rationalities of the West. Such an Orientalist discourse denigrates one the level of identity and ontology: so that it is not simply injustice experienced on the levels of material goods and resources, it is a much more combustible combination of poverty and indignity.

The response to the predicament of denigration can be manifold and exactly parallels the strategies of subordinate – and other racialised – groups within the First World. The stereotypical other can be accepted, assimilated, and acted out. But the othering can be met by a counter-essentialisation, an elevation of the perceived virtues of the oppressed as a counterpoint to the denigrating stereotypes. And to achieve such a construction of a substantial and valued essence, precisely such a tit for tat othering occurs. Thus, in response to Orientalism, a discourse of Occidentalism occurs which defines itself over against the supposed defects of Western culture and behaviour. Such a counterpart othering thus brings about familiar contrasts:

Economic success	Materialism
Individualism	Collectivism
Female emancipation	Female exploitation
Sexual freedom	Decadence
Rule of law	Hypocrisy

Such is the populist basis for Occidentalism, items which could well be part of a reasoned (and reasonable) critique become, instead, understood in terms of essences, of the positing of essential differences between the two worlds. And such differences are constructed on the basis of a parallel process of dehumanisation of the other. That is, in Orientalism, the East is the essence lacking in the human virtues of rationality, of controlling the impulse to violence, of orderly social behaviour, of dispassionate bureaucracies, whether of politics and business or civil service relatively immune to corruption and self-serving behaviour. Whereas, in contrast, Occidentalism evokes the West as lacking in the most important of human virtues, honour, respect for tradition and community, sexual propriety and family values. Such essentialism alone, on either side, does not lead inevitably to violence, what it does is facilitate it. For, to the extent that dehumanisation allows the actor to render the other as outside, or on the periphery of humanity, it *permits* violence. None of this leads immediately to violence, but it sets up its precursor. It is when dehumanisation is linked to some perceived threat of actual harm, when the other is seen as the cause of the problem, that essentialisation gives place to denigration and outright violence is likely. And, of course, when war – whether conventional or terrorist – occurs, that a spiral of such demonisation occurs and each side experiences clear evidence of the inhumanity of the other. For once the battle is on, the furies of dehumanisation are constantly stirred into being and all stereotypes reinforced. It is war, of all human institutions, which both facilitates dehumanisation and, as Chris Hedges has so brilliantly analysed, served to provide the most seductively secure identities and gripping narratives. Hence, the title of his book, *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning* (2002).

Finally, in this discussion of the fundamental symmetry of conventional war and terrorism, let us detail the actors themselves. It is an irony that the combatants in such conflicts are strikingly similar in their social characteristics. Young men, the dispossessed, those at the bottom of the structure provide the recruits for both war and terrorism. In the First World, recruits are disproportionately from ethnic

minorities, the lower working class – those who join because of lack of work, a desire for educational advancement

Symmetry and Differences

We have talked about the symmetry of violence both in terrorism and in what one might call anti-terrorism terrorism which is how modern conventional warfare has been recast. But there are significant differences – or at least there are significant differences in the *imaginaries* that each opponent has of itself. For just as the West's imaginary of the East (Orientalism) differs from the East's imaginary of the West (Occidentalism) the process of othering, so the stereotypes of self – particularly in relation to violence – vary.

The recent Western image of warfare, particularly that of the United States, is that it is an instrument of modernity; it brings democracy instead of dictatorship, the rule of law rather than oppression, order rather than chaos, equality rather than ethnic rivalry and female subservience, the Free Market rather than corruption, or state subsidy. Yet if we examine the discourses of terrorism and counter-terrorism terrorism, that of the Orient and the Occident, there are clear differences in their declension of the rules of violence.

We have argued that, in order to do evil, to act with excessive violence towards other human beings, a discourse must be developed which allows for the moral release of the perpetrators from the normal human values which deeply eschew interpersonal violence. We have seen how the process of essentialisation of the other can give rise to a dehumanisation that permits violence. But violence itself occurs when such dehumanised others are seen as a source of harm to oneself: particularly agents of violence. In this fashion 'illicit' violence begets 'legitimate' violence. Furthermore, such a process of othering is mutual, each side generates images of dehumanisation and enacts violent acts which confirm the stereotypes of inhumanity. In a war situation, such a process spirals rapidly,

mutually reinforcing the discourses of either side. And indeed the 'metaphor of war' *permits* violence.

The Sanitisation of Evil

The Western image of its own violence is a process of sanitisation. It is a surgical intervention to root out the sources of violence and – in contemporary neo-conservative parlance - to bring about a healthy modern society with all the benefits of democracy, the rule of law, and free markets. Violence is not excessive, it is minimal: the collateral is low, the very use of the word, of course, shields us from torment and suffering. The strikes are 'surgical, the passion of the killing absolutely minimal, it is a video screen with a cross target – on a made image – distant both physically and mentally from the combat. The casualties on our side should be nil (surgeons don't die), the casualties on the other minimal (a few patients die). There are few bodies in sight: body bags are kept out of media sight, images of coffins returning frowned upon, even listing the dead is seen as unpatriotic and distasteful. The returning dead and, even more curiously, the returning wounded are rendered invisible.

Overall this is a remarkably unemotional task, a job to be done: the very distance from the enemy (of which there is very little contact or knowledge) underscores this. There is a hint of what Bauman (1995) calls adiaphorization: the stripping of moral evaluation from human actions. Killing by the mobilisation of the most advanced technology the West can muster, utilizing awesome weaponry that is designed with scientific and engineering skills at the very edge of human endeavour, is to be conducted then without passion and with an eye on precision. It is this distancing and neutralisation which permits acts of extreme violence, it is as if the very technical sophistication of the weaponry enables massive acts of violence whilst occluding the actual pain and torment of killing (see M.Shaw, 2003)

The Beatification of Evil

The discourse of terrorism is almost the reverse of sanitisation, whatever the similarity of the impact. For the suicide bomber, the act of killing is almost intimate, the targets, whether in the bus, the café, the club or checkpoint are in immediate proximity. It is propelled by the visceral feeling of humiliation, it is enacted by the almost epitome of corporeality: the bomb, together with its shrapnel and detonators, is strapped onto the body. Both for the suicide bomber and the assailants who faces almost certain death, their motivation uppermost in their mind is not to avoid death but to embrace martyrdom. If one were to proffer the way that so many people will volunteer for this: martyrdom is, of course, the greatest reason, but martyrdom is also the ideology which facilitates such acts of grievous violence and harm.

Violent Discourses: East and West

EAST

WEST

Violence	Beatification	Sanitisation
Locus	Corporeal	Virtual
Enemy	Known	Unknown
Proximity	Immediacy	Distance
Motive	Humiliation	Humanitarian
Collateral Deaths	Maximised	Minimised
Perpetrators	Many Martyrs	Few Heroes
Discourse	Joy of Martyrdom	Unemotional, Banal
Own Casualties	Celebrated	Concealed

The Logic of the West

The material and political background to sanitised evil is considerable: the end of mass conscription in most Western countries means that substantial losses

cannot be sustained and mass confrontation avoided at all costs. The return of too many body bags is seen as an electoral danger and, most importantly, the public has little stomach either for massive casualties, whether of our own troops, those of the enemy, or of innocent civilians. The moral changes in public tolerance of violence evident domestically within the wider society are extended to warfare. We are now lightyears away from the public willingness to accept massive casualties as in the First World War: even the initial tolerance for the slaughter of Vietnam seems of another era. Lastly, the technical fix: the availability of vastly enhanced delivery vehicles, coupled with sophisticated computer systems with the promise of pinpoint targeting and optimum surveillance, where the epitome of the future is the Predator drone, all hold out the possibility of the surgical attack and the sanitised slaughter (see Shaw, 2003).

The Western case for the use of violence is presented as an item of linear logic: it is fair, reasoned, it justifies the impalatable – the use of violence by the State in a parallel fashion to how the liberal state justifies punishment against its citizens. But the case for war and its presentation is, of course, imaginary; it is how many people fondly imagine warfare today; but it is, of course, not what actually happens. Use of force frequently involves extreme and brutal collateral damage, the smart bombs don't work, the military don't sufficiently care, it is always exceedingly disproportionate to the harm exerted by the enemy, private vested interests (whether, for example, about oil or about minerals) and public interests (the protection of the countries' strategic interests) are thinly concealed. Furthermore, once the troops are on the ground, when they are actually forced to encounter the enemy, a war becomes messy, sanitisation virtually impossible, and concealment of both civilian deaths and troop losses impossible, and the brutal reality of war becomes transparent.

Paul Berman (2004) in his influential book *Terrorism and Liberalism* (2004) points out that there is no linear logic between the grievance of a group of people (which is often legitimate) whether because of resources denied or identity thwarted and its expression. The danger of liberalism, he argues, is that we are looking for a rationality of intention and, because of this, are blind to irrationality: to the distorted logic of the frustrated and the denigrated. The mistake he makes is to assume that the font of irrationality is the East with the West as vantage point of the rational. It is to give way to Orientalism; nothing more could underscore this than the events at Abu Grahیب prison..

The Photographs from Abu Grahیب

Let us look at the pictures from Abu Grahیب. We are immediately struck by their overt nature, their sexuality, the enjoyment on the faces of the guards – the *lack* of furtiveness - the degradation in the corridors, not in the depths of the cell. These pictures are, of course, the very epitome of Occidentalism: the sexuality, the decadence, the immorality, the hypocrisy, the blatant sexuality of the woman involved, the degradation of the human body, a photographic satire on bourgeois individualism worthy of the Marquis de Sade. As Senator Dianne Feinstein remarked to *The New York Times* columnist, Maureen David: ‘They’re disgusting ... If someone wanted to plan a clash of civilisations, this is how they’d do it. these pictures play into every stereotype of America that Arabs have; America as debauched, America as hypocrites.’ (2004, A25)

So, as they serve to confirm Occidentalism, they wantonly destroyed our Orientalist notions of ourselves, for how far from the dispassionate, clean pursuit of progress is these pictures taken in, of all places, Abu Ghraib, Saddam’s notorious torture prison. To some extent, then, paradoxically, the pictures are likely to have more effect in the West rather than the East. They are, of course, a searing commentary on modernity: for it took the most advanced technology in the world, the most sophisticated weaponry, the greatest scientific superiority, to

achieve a stunning victory only to be followed by the long attrition of terrorism and the exposure of decadence and hypocrisy.

The photographs disturbed the West because they violated our conception of ourselves as rational, rule-following, law abiding, progressive, engaging in a war the purpose of which was to bring democracy, modernity and law and order, to bring reason to a dictatorial and arbitrary society. They violated our Orientalist sense of ourselves. To the Arab world, as Jonathan Raban has so stridently put it, the pictures are scarcely a surprise, they were rather confirmation: 'To most of the Arab editorial writers, and perhaps to most Arabs, the digital photos merely confirmed what they had been saying since long before the invasion of Iraq took place: America is on an Orientalist rampage in which Arabs are systematically denatured, dehumanized, stripped of all human complexity, reduced to naked babyhood.' (2004, pp.1-2). And, he adds, 'The pictures appear to be so single-minded in their intent, so artfully directed, so relentlessly Orientalist in their conception, that one looks instinctively for a choreographer – a senior intelligence officer perhaps, who keeps Edward Said on his bedside table, and ransacks the book every night for new ideas.' (*ibid.*, p.5). Similarly, when the New York *Daily News* on the 31st May 2004 greeted the slitting of hostages throats by terrorists in Saudi Arabia with the front page banner headline 'BARBARIC', this was an exclamation of shock but not of surprise. For this was precisely our Orientalist image of them.

It is not our intention here to analyse in depth this incident. Only to point that such regimens of degradation were scarcely limited to Abu Grahیب, they existed in prisons in Afghanistan and at Guantanamo Bay, they occurred in the British as well as the American sectors of Iraq. It also has a resonance at home in the American prison system where such scandals are frequent and where, as in the war abroad, there is the paradox of the proclamation of the rule of law and the incidence of the most extreme lawlessness. As for culpability there is no doubt a chain of command which instigated such humiliation yet must one also note the

level of enjoyment, of pleasure on the guard's part. This is certainly not a procedure which they are being forced into. The seductions of humiliation particularly by those who themselves have been socially subordinate has been noted before in wartime and genocidal situations as well as in violent crime (see Katz, 1988; Sothcott, 2003).

CONCLUSION

We have examined two ways of dehumanization: reciprocal perspectives which feed of each other but which facilitate violence against other human beings. Let us conclude with the poignant comments written by English novelist Ian McEwan just after 9/11. He recalls the last messages made by people in the twin towers or on the planes to their loved one's, in the words of his piece 'Love was all they had to set against their murderers. He writes:

If the hijackers had been able to imagine themselves into the thoughts and feelings of the passengers, they would have been unable to proceed. It is hard to be cruel once you permit yourself to enter the mind of your victim. Imagining what it is like to be someone other than yourself is at the core of our humanity. It is the essence of compassion, and it is, the beginning of morality.

The hijackers used fanatical certainty, misplaced religious faith, and dehumanising hatred to purge themselves of the human instinct for empathy. Among their crimes was a failure of the imagination. As for their victims in the planes and in the towers, in the terror they would not have felt at the time, but those snatched and anguished assertions of love were their defiance. (2001)

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