Identity, Allegiance and Death: *Inspire* and the Case of Anwar al Awlaki

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

Peter Garrard Beck

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OFARTS

Giovanna Dell'Orto, Adviser

December, 2013

© Peter Garrard Beck 2013

Acknowledgements

The road to this thesis began with my talking to Prof. Brian Southwell in 2010. I was very unsure if the University of Minnesota would allow me to enroll after four decades. He assured me that it was possible, provided my GRE and other application requirements were met. I want to thank Prof. Al Tims and others who opened the door at Murphy Hall. One year later, I enrolled in the SJMC and began work toward a MA in mass communications.

I want to express my gratitude to all of the professors and staff that helped me reorient to life at the university and taught with keen interest in their subjects and students. I am especially grateful to Prof. Catherine Squires and Prof. Shayla Thiel-Stern for making their classes so engaging. To my fellow graduate students, thank you so much for making me feel 30 years younger. I am very grateful for your friendship and advice.

I want to especially thank my advisor, Prof Giovanna Dell'Orto, for her willingness to patiently listen to my reasons for returning to school and for her encouragement and advice along the way. Writing my thesis would have been far less rewarding without her advice and support. Her enthusiasm and full engagement in the classroom was a pleasure to behold. I could not have had a better mentor.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my wife, Maureen, for her patience, support and love.

Abstract

This thesis argues that Anwar al Awlaki created *Inspire* magazine in an effort to promote and justify violent jihad. Based on a thorough review of ten issues of the magazine, research provides evidence that Awlaki and Samir Khan sought to shape the identity of young male Muslims to imagine themselves as jihadis. This thesis argues that Awlaki used text and photographs to subtly embellish his personal power in an effort to enhance the credibility of his arguments. This thesis provides evidence that Awlaki through *Inspire* sought to normalize violent jihad and to suggest that an imagined "community of loners" existed and was motivated to fight, despite an asymmetric battlefield and a withering history of strategic military challenges. Evidence is provided that Awlaki sought to assure jihadis that their efforts would be rewarded in paradise. Research demonstrates Awlaki's efforts to use the magazine to convince willing jihadis that their efforts, though obligatory, were essential in the "defense of Islam." This thesis documents through the media the lethal intertwining of identity and allegiance to an imagined community.

The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind. The most messianic nationalists do not dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation in the way it was possible, in certain epochs, for, say, Christians to dream of a wholly Christian planet.

Benedict Anderson
Imagined Communities

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Awlaki in Context

1.1 Introduction…1

1.2 Engineering Student to Salafi Jihadist…4

1.3 *Inspire* Magazine: Militarizing Media in the Digital Age…7

1.4 Awlaki and al Qaeda Nexus: Issues Proliferate…10

1.5 Awalki: Evolving Identity and Continuing Influence…11

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Terrorism and Media…13

2.2 Framing "The War on Terror"…17

2.3 Anwar al Awlaki: Frame Analysis…19

2.4 Anwar al Awlaki: *Inspire* Magazine…22

2.5 Identities: Singular and Plural…24

2.6 Anwar al Awlaki: Shaping Identity and Allegiance…26

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework and Methodology

3.1 Theoretical Framework…32

3.2 Methodology…35

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

4.1 The Ideological Context of the Primary Source Material…39

4.2 The Primary Source Material: An Overview…41

4.2a Format and Principal Content…42

4.2b Martyrdom…44

4.2c Strategy and Implementation of Jihad…46

4.2d Target Justification…50

4.2e Audience Profile…53

4.3 The Primary Source Material: Shaping Individual Identity…54

4.3a Reviewing Awlaki's Personal Transformation…58

4.3b Shaping Core Identity…59

4.3c Constructing Identity: Role Model Jihadis…61

4.3d Visualizations of Jihadis and Paradise…63

4.3e Anointing Abu Mus'ab al Suri as Jihad Strategist…64

4.3f Al Suri and Jihad: Pragmatism and Perseverance…65

4.3g Awlaki and al Suri: An Alliance for Jihad…71

4.3h Awlaki Adds Other Voices of Jihad…75

4.3i Identity and Authenticity: Grounded in Islam…79

4.4 The Primary Source Material: Shaping Group Identities…82

4.5 Awlaki's "Quest for Meaning" and Embrace of Islam…84

4.6 Discussion and Limitations…85

Chapter Five: Conclusion…88

Endnotes and References…90

List of Figures…vii

Appendix…134

List of Figures

Inspire Magazine Illustration 1...105
Inspire Magazine Illustration 2...106
Inspire Magazine Illustration 3...107
Inspire Magazine Illustration 4…108
Inspire Magazine Illustration 5…109
Inspire Magazine Illustration 6…110
Inspire Magazine Illustration 7…111
Inspire Magazine Illustration 8…112
Inspire Magazine Illustration 9…113
Inspire Magazine Illustration 10…114
Inspire Magazine Illustration 11…115
Inspire Magazine Illustration 12…116
Inspire Magazine Illustration 13…117
Inspire Magazine Illustration 14…118
Inspire Magazine Illustration 15…119
Inspire Magazine Illustration 16…120
Inspire Magazine Illustration 17a…121
Inspire Magazine Illustration 17b…122
Inspire Magazine Illustration 18a…123
Inspire Magazine Illustration 18b…124
Inspire Magazine Illustration 19…125
Inspire Magazine Illustration 20…126
Inspire Magazine Illustration 21…127
Inspire Magazine Illustration 22…128
Inspire Magazine Illustration 23…129
Inspire Magazine Illustration 24…130
Inspire Magazine Illustration 25…131
Inspire Magazine Illustration 26…132
Inspire Magazine Illustration 27…133

Chapter One: Awlaki in Context

1.1 Introduction

A primary function of media, viewed in historical terms, has been to connect individuals, groups and nations. In varying degrees, media constitute part of the connective tissue which link the multifaceted identities of individuals within and across communities. The dawning and continuing expansion of the digital age has provided fertile ground for the proliferation of many communities, eliminating or significantly reducing dependence on close geographic proximity. Most of these new communities are generally considered benign. There are exceptions.

This paper's epigraph from Benedict Anderson's seminal Imagined Communities, first published in 1983, was selected to refocus a lens on the emergence of contemporary "messianic nationalists," their expressed objectives, adherents and coalitions. Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen and ephemeral former leader of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP,) is the central figure of this thesis.[1] After bin Laden's death during the raid on his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan on May 2, 2011, Ayman al Zawahiri became the presumptive leader of al Qaeda.[2] A telling quotation from Zawahiri in 2005 foreshadowed Awlaki's rise to prominence: "We are in a battle, and more than half this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. We are in a race for [the] hearts and minds of our *ummah*, a global Islamic nation."[3] Awlaki's efforts to locate, cultivate and indoctrinate a community of Salafi jihadists centered on Inspire, an English-language online

hybrid magazine which he created with Samir Khan.[4] The technical production of *Inspire* fell under the guidance of Khan, Awlaki's collaborator and lead graphic designer.[5] The magazine's target audience, a Western transnational Islamic community, is primarily based in the U.S. and Britain.

The central focus of the research for this thesis involves Awlaki's use of contemporary web-based media--that is, *Inspire* magazine--to shape individual and group identity in order to construct a militant jihadi community. Two central questions will be raised. First, how did Awlaki structure *Inspire* articles as part of a process to influence identity formation in his target audience? Second, within the magazine, what discourses are strongly suggestive of Awlaki's intent to shape individual and group identity? Awlaki recognized jihad required committed fighters. An objective of this research is to contribute to a better understanding of Anwar al Awlaki's legacy, especially his efforts to influence identity development of young, male Muslims living in the West. By creating *Inspire* magazine and promoting writers under the aegis of AQAP, Awlaki provided evidence that he sought to position himself as an Islamic scholar, a historian, military strategist, and a Salafi jihadist. Awlaki sought to shape the beliefs of jihadis and shape their identities around a core of radical Islam. He wanted them to see themselves as "defenders of Islam." The first step in understanding Awlaki requires reviewing his remarkable transformation, his own identity metamorphosis, from his role as a U.S. born moderate ideologue, teacher and imam into a jihadist leader of AQAP. The effort here to evaluate his transformation and shifting identity requires viewing Awlaki, a key figure behind *Inspire*, in broad context.

The transformational surprise attacks in the U.S. on September 11, 2001 spawned a massive flow of media reports and analysis within the U.S. and globally. Uncovering the

buried and intertwined roots of that series of attacks is well beyond the scope of this thesis, though an illuminating tangent is available. Steve Coll's Ghost Wars, winner of the 1990 Pulitzer Prize for explanatory journalism, offers a rich and detailed account of the alliance between the CIA, Osama bin Laden and multiple Afghan tribal warlords in efforts to push the Soviets from Afghanistan. Reading it demystifies bin Laden's pre-September 11 identity and profile, bringing him well out of the shadows. Coll's book also chronicles the treachery and duplicity of Pakistan's powerful Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI,) another U.S. partner in efforts to unseat the Soviets.[6]

The 2001 attacks, initially considered improbable, and the chaotic first months which followed, spawned articles that tended to stimulate within the U.S. overwhelming support for the Bush administration's early efforts to identify and engage those responsible.[7] Not since Pearl Harbor had so many Americans coalesced, their cohesion reinforced by a mutual passage through shock, confusion, fear, anger and a desire for a response grounded in a collective expression of national will. Media attention was clearly a primary intent of the attackers who sought to terrorize Americans and focus a magnifying spotlight on the death and destruction they unleashed. Gradually, media reports shed light on al Qaeda leadership, evolving tactical strategies and expressed justifications.[8] Anwar al Awlaki emerges on this landscape and eventually evolves into a key figure within al Qaeda. The U.S. assessed him as a grave threat, adding him to a "targeted kill" list, believing he had "shifted from encouraging attacks on the United States to directly participating in them."[9] He was killed by a U.S. drone strike in northern Yemen on September 30, 2011.[10] An overview of his background and a look at the main core of his work follows.

1.2 Born in the U.S.A.: From Engineering Student to Salafi Jihadist

Anwar al Awlaki was born in Las Cruces, New Mexico in 1971. He was the son of Nasser al Awlaki, who earned advanced degrees in agricultural management in the U.S. and eventually became Minister of Agriculture in Yemen under President Ali Abdullah Saleh, recently deposed during the Arab uprisings that swept across the Middle East and North Africa. Anwar al Awlaki spent his early years in the U.S. and returned with his family to Yemen when he was 11 years old. There he became fluent in Arabic before returning at 18 to the U.S. to begin college. His early years exposed him to both Arab and American culture, which later would help him in addressing Western Muslims.

Justification for the study of Awlaki's emergence, teaching and corpus of work can be linked to his prominence and his efforts to radicalize Western Muslims by espousing Salafi jihadism.[11] On this terrain, identity and allegiance can become decidedly toxic. The potency of Awlaki's message derives from his connecting Islamic fundamentalism and assurances of eternal salvation in the next world with political upheaval and revolution here on earth. Awlaki preached that an individual's allegiance, as a member of the *ummah,* the global Islamic "nation," was solely to Allah. Chris Heffelfinger writes, "The modern day followers of Salafism, especially those in the West, seek affirmation of their identity in a period where Islam is estranged from the predominant culture of society. Currently, English-speaking ideologues increasingly provide an avenue into the movement [Salafi jihadism,] with clerics such as the Yemini-American Anwar al Awlaki showing their influence via connections to a number of terrorist acts against the U.S."[12] It should be emphasized that "jihad" in this thesis refers to violent struggle, reflective of its widely held meaning in the present American lexicon and adopting the general view of Awlaki and the perspective of *Inspire*. It is well beyond the

scope of this thesis to explore the Koranic meaning of "jihad," but certainly a majority of Muslims do not equate "jihad" categorically with violence. John L. Esposito, a leading scholar, introduces a 40-page chapter on jihad with the following insightful and cautionary short paragraph:

> *If you were watching a television special on jihad, with four Muslim speakers, you might well hear four different responses to the question, "What is jihad?" One might say that jihad is striving to lead a good Muslim life, praying and fasting regularly, being an attentive spouse and parent. Another might identify jihad as working hard to spread the message of Islam. For a third, it might be supporting the struggle of oppressed Muslim peoples in Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, or Kosovo. And for the final speaker, as for Osama bin Laden, jihad could mean working to overthrow governments in the Muslim world and attacking America. However different these interpretations are, all testify to the centrality of jihad for Muslims today. Jihad is a defining concept or belief in Islam, a key element in what it means to be a believer and follower of God's will*.[13]

Awlaki shifted from collegiate studies at Colorado State University in civil engineering to preaching Islam. He "theorized that the scholarship he was given was part of a U.S. plot to recruit students from around the world as agents for America… I wasn't suited for that role anymore. I was a fundamentalist now."[14] Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, a leading scholar and analyst with the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR,) writes that Awlaki began his career as a moderate imam and observer but took a pronounced turn toward violent prescriptions from 2003 through 2011. Awlaki described the invasion of Iraq in 2003 as the pivotal event triggering his move toward Salafi jihadism. In brief overview, he lived in Britain and Yemen during 2002 and 2003, developing a reputation for his impassioned views in promoting Islam. He traveled to Saudi Arabia to study. He then returned to Yemen and lived with his parents in the capital, but he immediately came under the surveillance of the country's intelligence agency. He was imprisoned in Yemen for seventeen months in 2006. The reason, in brief summary, Scahill believes was that U.S. intelligence regarded Awlaki as

a threat. Scahill quotes John Negroponte, National Intelligence Director at that time, stating, "It is very nice that you locked Anwar in prison. It is good. Because what bothers us is [his] preaching and his sermons, and we are afraid he will influence young people in the West."[15] In 2007, he went into hiding in Yemen. He made contact with AQAP and created *Inspire* with Samir Khan, posting the magazine online in 2010.[16] The U.S. closely watched and occasionally interrogated Awlaki for nearly a decade before launching the drone strike that killed him in Yemen on September 30, 2011. His operational involvement with the attempt to detonate a bomb aboard a U.S. flight from Amsterdam to Detroit on Christmas Day sealed his fate. The bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab confessed Awlaki "approved him for a suicide mission, helped him prepare a martyrdom video and directed him to detonate his bomb over U.S. territory."[17] Meleagrou-Hitchens writes "Awlaki's main focus [in this latter period] has been to convince Western Muslims that their governments are actively engaged in a multi-faceted war against Islam and Muslims."[18] Meleagrou-Hitchens adds, "[Awlaki] must convince Western Muslims to not only disavow the ways of their non-Muslim compatriots on an individual level, but also to fight and kill them in Western countries."[19] He continues, "The most effective delivery of Awlaki's message has thus far been through the internet—a medium which has been expertly harnessed by al Qaeda and its sympathizers over the last decade to achieve maximum penetration of, and impact within, Western societies."[20] Sherry Turkle, writing on the subject of identity in the digital age, observes, "Engagement with computational technology facilitates a series of 'second chances' for adults to work and rework unresolved personal issues and more generally, to think through questions about the nature of self…" Turkle writes, "There is an unparalleled opportunity to play with one's identity and to 'try out' new ones."[21] The relatively

anonymous online world offers opportunities for individuals to reimagine themselves. Turkle writes, "Our dangerous world—with crime, terrorism, drugs and AIDS—offers little in the way of safe spaces. Online worlds can provide valuable spaces for identity play."[22]

1.3 "Inspire" Magazine: Militarizing Media in the Digital Age

Awlaki's creation of *Inspire* magazine offers an abundant array of material worthy of analysis. Ten issues of the magazine are the primary source material on which this thesis will focus. The issues carry very general dates with no monthly designations. The first issue is labeled, "Summer 1431/2010." The tenth issue is labeled "Spring 1434/2013." The ten issues contain 585 pages and 231 articles. As of this writing, all ten issues are available online. See Appendix for URLs. The magazines have a consistent graphic format with articles extolling obligatory jihad, strategic and military tactics, detailed instructions on DIY bomb-making and use of firearms, specific target suggestions, frequent writings by al Qaeda leaders including bin Laden and al Zawahiri, tributes to deceased, "martyred" jihadis and multiple articles which argue that violent jihad is justified. Issues 9 and 10 were included in this research as they appeared with no apparent time delay following the killing of Awlaki and Khan. While it is impossible to prove, it is probable that most of the content in the 9th and 10th issues was selected by Awlaki and Khan, as it is wholly consistent with the first eight issues. As of this writing, the magazine has posted only a single additional issue, bearing the same AQAP al Malahem Media logo.

Awlaki's continuing influence was spotlighted as recently as the April 15, 2013, Boston Marathon attack, via the conduit of bomb-making instructions within an early

issue of *Inspire*.[23] The surviving Boston Marathon suspect, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, admitted being influenced by Awlaki's *Inspire* magazine and, specifically, referencing the 7-page article within it entitled, "How to Build a Bomb in Your Mother's Kitchen." See Illustration 1 on page 105. Meleagrou-Hitchens characterized Awlaki's "role in the global jihad against the West [as] twofold: operational and ideological."[24] As media scholar Susan Sivek put it, "Inspire is a fascinating representation of multiple phenomena: the fragmentation in al Qaeda's structure and message, the magazine medium's ability to form communities around specific interests and promote opportunities for self-actualization, and the strategic use of digital media to encourage self-radicalization."[25]

Awlaki's ideological posture is presented in his own words in the first issue of the magazine in an article entitled, "Shaykh Anwar's Message to the American People and Muslims in the West."[26] Here are a few excerpts from that article: "We seek to remove the tyrannical and parasitical rulers of the Muslim world…we are against evil and America has turned into a nation of evil…[addressing an ultimatum to Muslims living in the West] you have two choices: you either leave or you fight."[27] Examples of Awlaki's operational efforts within the magazine include articles specifically describing homemade bomb construction, encryption of written communications and a continuing series of articles under the heading, "Open Source Jihad," which offer "security measures, guerilla tactics and weapons training."[28] *Inspire* synthesizes these ideological and operational facets, creating a hybrid digital media, in form very much resembling a contemporary online version of a traditional print magazine.[29] However, in content, *Inspire* is patently militaristic. In many respects, it resembles a DIY manual of suggested military actions sandwiched between triumphal theological justifications and articles praising suicide bomber martyrs.[30]

In what might at first appear to be benign language, Awlaki has been described as a "media innovator" by journalist and scholar Peter Bergen, Director of National Security Studies at the New America Foundation."[31] This description refers to his use of the web to spread and market his ideas, many of them packaged as sets of sermons, but especially the creation of *Inspire*.[32] While the vehicle can be described as a magazine, it is immediately clear to a reader that *Inspire* is a good deal more. The magazine is a vehicle to recruit, encourage and train aspiring jihadis. It is clearly not solely a magazine devoted to propaganda. Awlaki militarized his media creation by delivering a volatile mixture of articles for building weapons, especially those designed to deliver lethal force almost indiscriminately, as well as justification for their use couched in Islamist rhetoric. Indeed, the first issue of *Inspire* offers a "Letter from the Editor" which opens with "Allah says, "And *inspire* (italics added) the believers to fight."[33] "And to die" might be added, because of dozens of instances encouraging "martyrs" or suicide bombers. Awlaki makes frequent references to martyrdom in *Inspire*, as will be documented in the findings section of this thesis. He used *Inspire* to influence his readers to construct an identity which elevates martyrdom, even their own, to a lofty goal. In the safe anonymity of the magazine's online world, Awlaki could argue the merits of jihad in a simplistic binary world of good and evil, while readers could imagine themselves as daring "white knights" defending Islam. Homages to deceased jihadis offered tantalizing conduits from the secular to the divine.[34] *Inspire* encouraged readers to reimagine themselves as heroic fighters, in essence, immune to even death's finality with assurances of paradise. How he accomplished this embrace of death through shaping readers' identities is the central focus of this thesis. Placing Awlaki within al Qaeda raises a number of peripheral and

controversial issues that are worth noting briefly here, as they significantly increased his media prominence.

1.4 Awlaki and al Qaeda Nexus: Issues Proliferate

Awlaki's case involves many challenging issues deserving a prefatory catalog, including the explosive collision of contemporary and decidedly acrimonious political groups, whose adherents' views range from the myriad clarities of religious fundamentalism to those publicly tacking toward a secular and egalitarian humanism. Thus far, genuine dialogue appears nearly absent between parties seeking a theocracy led by a caliphate and those less inclined to celestial guidance.[35] Awlaki's case has spawned other controversies involving identity, national allegiance, combatant status, due process and governmental extra-judicial killing. Additional flash points have arisen as free speech and due process rights of American citizens, specifically Awlaki and Khan, have been weighed against accusations of inciting, aiding and abetting treason and homicide.

In addition to the issues just listed, the Awlaki case deserves analysis for its potential effect on a critical but less obvious plane. The case threatens to undermine the maintenance and durability of American soft power assets, specifically, the long standing protection of individual rights within a government in which a balance of power is shared by the executive, legislative and judicial branches.[36] There is little question that Awlaki's identification with al Qaeda may tend to first elevate hard power issues. For example, in the following events attention was focused on a military response: the 1996 Khobar Towers attack in Saudi Arabia, which killed 19 service personnel and wounded nearly 400 other multinationals; the simultaneous 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya, which killed several hundred; the bombing of the U.S.S. Cole in Yemen, which

killed 17 sailors and wounded 39; and finally the hallmark September 11 attacks in 2001. But media articles, spanning Awlaki's life in the U.S. and his government-directed killing on September 30, 2011 in Yemen, reveal well-publicized circumventions of prohibitions against torture and assassination.[37] The extent to which U.S. influence may have been eroded in the intense pursuit of Awlaki, bin Laden and other al Qaeda members is worth weighing, though that subject is far too complex to be addressed in this thesis.

In this thesis, text, photography and graphics from *Inspire* will be analyzed as primary source material in evaluating the magazine's expressed purpose, hybrid character, subjects and themes, as well as its probable sphere of influence. Material from multiple news media sources will be referenced. In an effort to provide elite, widely syndicated and credible reportage on both Awlaki and the historical context surrounding him, articles from the New York Times are frequently cited in this thesis.

1.5 Evolving Identity and Continuing Influence

Anwar al Awlaki's case--his evolving identity, allegiances and ascent to jihadist leader and "media innovator," and his death in Yemen in a U.S. drone attack--forms a narrative which is infused with digital elements. Much of his influence arose from his utilization of digital communication technologies, not only as a teacher, imam and initially moderate Islamic spokesperson but, also, in his terminal efforts to locate and inculcate "lone wolf" jihadists, especially in North America and Western Europe. A central objective explicitly stated in the magazine was to construct a digital, Salafi jihadi "community," though that word seems distinctly at odds with its militant intent and with its emphasis on acts by anonymous individuals, instructed to not communicate directly with each other. Abu Mus'ab al Suri writes in "The Jihadi Experience," "What we now need to establish in the

minds of the mujahidin, who are determined to fight, is the true sense of belonging and commitment."[38] The content of the magazine was culled from multiple sources, assembled with digital software and posted online under the guidance of Samir Khan, *Inspire's* lead graphic designer. The magazine's availability and notoriety on the web has provided a global reach, continuing well after its introduction. Episodic but intense media coverage has been associated with *Inspire*. The most recent example occurred in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombings on April 15, 2013. Entering the keywords, "Awlaki Inspire magazine" generates literally thousands of hits on popular search engines.[39] That coverage is no doubt a function of its association with the al Qaeda brand, high profile incidents like the Boston Marathon Bombing on April 15, 2013 and the magazine's atypical hybrid character.[40]

In overview, Awlaki's life reveals major transformations. As a young man, he evolves initially from an engineering student to Islamic teacher to an early Islamic spokesperson following 9/11 and then to an imam with U.S. congregations.[41] "What unfolded between Awlaki and the U.S. government behind closed doors in the months after 9/11 and what played out publicly between Awlaki and the U.S. media at the same time is a bizarre tale, filled with contradictions."[42] He is described as a "media star" appreciated for his "interfaith outreach, civic engagement, and tolerance."[43] His evolution later to a Salafi jihadist, key figure in AQAP, driving creative force behind *Inspire* and ultimately onto the U.S. government's list of individuals targeted for killing underscores his legacy as a prominent al Qaeda leader.[44] After the following literature review, the focus of this thesis will return to Awlaki's use of contemporary web-based media, *Inspire* magazine, to shape individual and group identity in order to construct a militant jihadi community.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The case of Anwar al Awlaki involves multiple provocative subjects which are relevant and worthy of inclusion in this paper. They are presented after foundational literature relating to terrorism and the media. The intersection of radical Islam with politics is explosive, of course. There is evidence the belief that Salafi jihadists' actions can be attributed to irrational and largely emotional zealotry is misplaced. Literature was selected that offered material and theoretical concepts which taken together could offer insights into Awlaki's identity and his efforts through Inspire magazine to shape the identity of his target audience. Concepts involving "pragmatic radicalism" and theories demonstrating rational choice mechanisms offer unexpected insights into how he attempted to influence identity formation in his audience.

2.1 Terrorism and Media

When considering contemporary terrorism and the media, the case of Anwar al Awlaki has received significant media attention.[45] Viewing him within the wider context of

contemporary terrorism and the media situates him as both a prominent subject of media narratives and eventually as an active producer of counter-narratives exemplified by *Inspire*, the primary source material of this thesis. A look first at dominant media narratives offers a starting point. Kimberly Powell writes that a paradigm of "Us versus Them, or the United States versus Islam…created animosity between East and West and sustained a climate of fear of terrorism that is linked repeatedly to Muslims."[46] She references Maslog in describing how media frames influence the construction of "lasting images and stereotypes about groups, religions, and peoples."[47] Language is exceedingly influential and at times laden with meaning. To describe an actor as a "terrorist" is to render a damning judgment, while "freedom fighter" or even "insurgent" usually suggests a noble objective, often directed at a regime judged to be autocratic or repressive. Powell seeks to clarify "terrorism" and offers a definition by A. P. Schmid, "a U. N. advisor, who studied a variety of definitions, finding 22 similarities that he used to produce the following definition:

> Terrorism is an anxiety inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by a (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby—in contrast to assassination—the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative of symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperiled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience[s]), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.[48]

Powell favors the definition above as it underscores the "communication intent of terrorism."[49] The original terrorist action is then given a second life through repeated news reports and analyzes, which are very familiar to any regular viewer of 24/7 news networks. It is hardly surprising that a large segment of the general public, even one

sympathetic to regime change, finds the often indiscriminate carnage repugnant. If Schmid's strategic calculus makes sense in an abstract cerebral analysis, watching news video of bloodied innocents triggers an opposing emotional rejection of such tactics.

Powell references Abraham Miller's insights regarding the "inexorable, symbiotic relationship" that exists between media and terrorism.[50] Both the terrorists and the media recognize a shared prize in the production and display of a dramatic event. The raw truth of the newsroom adage, "If it bleeds, it leads" is time-honored.[51] The roots of the relationship sink deeply in Western culture, tapping corporate motives in garnering audience-share.[52] When confronted with both cerebral and emotional challenges, "overload" may be most accurate, it is not surprising to see the appeal of arguments reduced to simplistic rhetoric by the media and by the warring parties. Arguments and appraisals rendered in shades of gray lack impact and clarity. Good and evil provides bold contrast and leads in fairly short order to other convenient binary divisions.[53]

An exceptional reprieve from this polarized discourse came in the cascading popular uprisings in the Middle East, frequently described as the "Arab Spring" in Western media. The "Arab awakening" initiated in western media a positive narrative, linking "Arab" with "popular democratic uprisings." While this may seem a tangent unrelated to terrorism and media, it is not. Tariq Ramadan writes of Edward Said's classic, Orientalism, and offers insights into the remarkable and still unfolding democratic movements in North Africa and the Middle East.[54] Ramadan writes, "the construction of the other, at whose heart lies Islam (as both religion and civilization,) establishes not only a self-identity but the alterity of the other…"[55] Ramadan describes Western media as interpreting the democratic uprisings to be directed toward achieving "*Western* [emphasis added] values of freedom, justice and democracy." In the context of this Orientalist

Western narrative, Ramadan sees those participating in the uprisings as stripped of "their religious beliefs and practices, their culture and even their history."[56] Orientalism, according to Ramadan, is alive and well, though it is most clearly visible when terrorism and the media are in focus. East and West become distinct, nearly palpable in Western media, where "Arab," "terrorist," and "Islam" seem to frequently interlock.[57]

The question of how al Qaeda, certainly the highest profile radical Islamist group, perceives the West arises. Sinfree Makoni writes at great length about how recently obtained material, text and videotapes, reveals how al Qaeda envisions the West.[58] Awlaki employs in his magazine the same binary worldview expressed in the seized material to motivate his target audience to form their identity in direct opposition to "the disbelievers."[59] Awlaki attempts to convince his readers that they are defending "true believers."[60] Makoni writes, "The U.S. government has accumulated a library of hundreds of thousands of documents captured from terrorist adversaries, such as al Qaeda, in the course of military operations over the last several years."[61] Makoni cites scholars employing critical discourse analysis. Al Qaeda refers to the U.S. and its allies as "true enemies, apostates and disbelievers," underscoring the role of Islamic theology in defining the enemy. In the same vein, Makoni goes on to provide evidence that "what Westerners perceive as suicide bombers" are viewed by al Qaeda as martyrs. Makoni writes, "The jihadists view death not as a sign of defeat but as the pathway to martyrdom. In addition, what Westerners see as suicide is seen by al Qaeda as life affirming."[62] *Inspire* argues repeatedly that individual readers, who shape their identities to model those of the jihadis presented in multiple narratives within the magazine, will be eternally rewarded by Allah. This point is driven home in both text and photographic illustrations in tributes to "martyred" jihadis in the sixth and eighth issues of *Inspire*.[63] Photographs

depict the deceased against a background of billowing, celestial clouds. See Illustrations 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 11 on pages 108-111, 113, and page 115 respectively.

2.2 Framing "The War on Terror"

An analysis of Anwar al Awlaki requires placing him in perspective on the U.S. post-9/11 landscape. A fundamental background element was what has come to be known as "The War on Terror." The phrase was used by President G.W. Bush as an over-arching, vague, but concise reference to describe and to frame the U.S. response to the 9/11 attacks. The phrase, "War on Terror," offered little or no specific reference to an ideology or even a recognizable group of adversaries. It was dismissive of al Qaeda's and later Awlaki's position that the hostilities were rooted in religion. Lewis writes, "As a central facet of political communication, frames define the terms of the debate; shape public opinion through the pervasive use of symbols; and, when most effective, lead to public policy change."[64] Reese describes the "War on Terror" as a "loaded and elastic frame" that "took on ideological dimensions, …providing linguistic cover for widespread political change in the name of national security…"[65] Reese encapsulates the effect of the frame, "In short, framing is an exercise of power."[66] Robert Entman adds another dimension from his seminal work on framing. He writes, "Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described."[67] Awlaki frames the obligatory nature of violent jihad as a battle between "believers" and "disbelievers" in the defense of Islam.

Alexander Melagrou-Hitchens, a scholar who has written extensively on Awlaki, quotes Erving Goffman, an early framing theorist, "frames are a 'schemata of interpretation' that assist people 'to locate, perceive, identify and label' events both within their immediate surroundings and on the world stage."[68] This is precisely what Awlaki seeks to do within the pages of *Inspire*. He came to believe that his vision of Islam was the most accurate interpretation of the religion. As will be documented in the findings section of this thesis, Awlaki used the magazine as a platform to encourage readers to self-identify as a Salafi jihadist, above all else. It is useful to briefly revisit the genesis of Awlaki's thinking, as reflected in his comments immediately following the 9/11 attacks and his gradual turn to radical Islam.

Awlaki emerged on the national stage shortly after the 9/11 attacks, while serving as an imam at the Dar al Hijrah Mosque in northern Virginia. It is remarkable that Awlaki initially was used by U.S. media outlets to help frame the attacks and even to provide some justification for a U.S. military response.[69] Ample evidence is provided by Jeremy Scahill. But first a few important details are worth noting. He reports that Awlaki "counseled families and helped new immigrants find apartments and employment."[70] Scahill writes that Awlaki "became a media star, called upon by scores of media outlets to represent a 'moderate' Muslim point of view."[71] Scahill reports "the leadership of the mosque described him as a man known for his 'interfaith outreach, civic engagement, and tolerance.' Scahill continues, "the Associated Press reported that, among those who attended his sermons, 'Most said they did not find him to be overtly political or radical."[72] Finally, Scahill writes, "Although Awlaki delivered stinging indictments of U.S. foreign policy, he also condemned the attacks in strong terms. Initially, he even

indicated that the U.S. would be justified in waging an 'armed struggle' against those responsible for the attacks."[73]

2.3 Anwar al Awlaki: Frame Analysis

Melagrou-Hitchens analyzes how Awlaki's transformation from a moderate imam to a Salafi jihadist reveals Awlaki's own dexterity in framing by "offering a simplified, easy to consume version of Salafi-jihadi ideology for Western Muslims."[74] The author introduces the concept of the "master frame," which he defines as "unspecific, broad, multifaceted and associated with a variety of separate, and often rival, social movements."[75] He writes that al Qaeda's master frame unfolds as, "since Islam was first introduced to the world, non-Muslims have waged a physical and ideological war on the religion and its followers, which at present is being carried out by a combination of secularists, Christian crusaders and Jews. This grievance-based injustice frame is the most effective tool used by all Islamist movements to mobilize their adherents."[76] "Three collective action sub-frames (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational) offer an identification of the problem, solutions and motivations for collective action."[77]

Awlaki's diagnosis of the problems faced by Muslims gradually evolved as did his prognosis. In his early years teaching and later as an imam in northern Virginia, he generally adhered to a moderate appraisal of an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance of Muslims in the West. That changed with the invasion of Iraq in the 2003 Gulf War. Awlaki moved from favoring political Islamic activism to "calling for violence against non-Muslims around the world."[78]

A major focus of any group, which clearly identifies an opposing force, is the

preservation of group solidarity and cohesion. Awlaki's transformation to a jihadist added challenges associated with recruiting new members. "One of the most crucial aspects of a recruiter's message is the creation and cultivation of a collective identity."[79] Indeed, research for this thesis also suggests that Awlaki recognized his primary mission was identical. Very briefly, *Inspire's* message removes allegiance to any traditional notion of a land-based nation. According to the magazine's narratives, identity and allegiance are to Allah, solely.

A key objective for Awlaki was creating a tightknit ideological perimeter around his followers, which is identified as "boundary activation" in social movement literature. Chung and Roemer offer another perspective on Muslim Americans "at the boundary of insider and outsider."[80] They focus their analysis on Faisal Shadzad, also known as the "Times Square Bomber," whose unsuccessful attempt to blow up a vehicle parked in Times Square on May 1, 2010, nevertheless received widespread media coverage.[81] Shahzad "was inspired by the violent rhetoric of Mr. Awlaki."[82]

In their analysis Chuang and Roemer credit Edward Said's Orientalist paradigm and further argue persuasively that "insiders who resemble groups in power are represented with cultural codes that imply that insiders are safe, normal and rational, whereas outsider 'Others' are represented with Orientalist stereotypes that imply they are alien and dangerous."[83] The authors refer to Deepa Kumar's writing which evidenced Orientalist associations leading to the conclusion, "the West spreads democracy, whereas Islam spawns terrorism."[84] Chuang and Roemer's analysis notes "persistent use of 'explanatory frames which associate Muslims and Islam with terrorism, violence, and anti-Americanism." The authors reference the case of Major Nidal Malik Hasan, the Ft. Hood

U.S. Army psychiatrist who killed 13, as ultimately associating Islam with terrorism, which "sets up a discourse that places loyalty to Islam and loyalty to the United States in inherent conflict."[85]

It is fascinating to note that this oppositional framework is equally visible in Awlaki's argumentation. He seizes on the supposed conflict between loyalty to Islam and to America. He then embraces it and offers justifications for it, which will be fully presented in this paper's analysis of his *Inspire* magazine. Pointed examples arise in Awlaki's comments on Hasan's Ft. Hood attack. Awlaki and Hasan had communicated via email over a long period as documented by Scahill.[86] One year before the Ft. Hood shootings, Hasan "asked whether killing American soldiers is lawful or not."[87] A New York Times article by Scott Shane quotes Awlaki in reference to Major Hasan's impending deployment to Afghanistan, "What kind of twisted fight is this?" On the subject of a Muslim soldier being ordered by the U.S. to kill Muslims in Afghanistan, Awlaki says such a soldier would be "a heartless beast, bent of [sic] evil, who sells his religion for a few dollars."[88] Shane reports, "Awlaki called Major Hasan a hero and quotes the cleric, "The only way a Muslim could Islamically (sic) justify serving as a soldier in the U.S. Army is if his intention is to follow the footsteps of men like Nidal."[89] Awlaki's role in this matter would seem to straddle a thin line between ideological involvement with radical Islam and operational complicity in criminal acts. A U.S. Department of Justice white paper leaked to MSNBC's National Investigative Correspondent, Michael Isikoff provides legalistic details into deliberations leading to the placing of Awlaki on the targeted kill list.[90]

2.4 Anwar al Awlaki: *Inspire* Magazine

Produced by AQAP and largely fashioned by Awlaki and Samir Khan, the magazine is an example of new hybrid media in two respects. First, unlike the vast majority of other magazines, *Inspire* exists exclusively as an online magazine or webzine. Unless an individual reader prints a hard copy, the magazine has no print media version.[91] Second, the magazine's objectives at first appear to promote jihad in tactical and strategic military terms. Those objectives are immediately evident. It is at once a recruitment vehicle for jihadists, a military training manual, a primer for those attempting covert actions, including encrypted communications in hostile environments, and a resource for those seeking theological justification for indiscriminate attacks against unarmed non-combatants. After reading several issues of the magazine, it becomes clear that *Inspire* is equally vehement in promoting heroic jihadis as role models. All of which strongly suggests that Awlaki's primary objective in the magazine is to encourage identity construction, a reordering of facets of identity, intertwined with efforts to build a virtual community around the touchstone of *Inspire*. Evidence supporting this argument will be presented in the findings section of this paper.

Inspire reflects the thinking of radical Islamists, which can be blindingly inflammatory to many U.S. citizens, especially during first exposure. Briefly, notions of diversity, equality and pluralism, especially in the realm of religion, collide with a philosophy adhering to rigid doctrine, strict moral codes and the imposition of religious authority over civil. These issues can obviously raise intellectual objections but pale in comparison to confronting the jihadist's acceptance, by some accounts, embrace of suicide, allegedly in "defense of Islam." Within the pages of *Inspire*, Awlaki attempted to provide a resource for group validation, support and the reinforcement of common bonds.

Inspire's text and imagery plant seeds of religious zealotry that do have an internal logic, which to some individuals is clearly appealing and influential. An analysis of "rational choice" alternatives can present credibility questions to individuals whose worldviews reflect profoundly different orientations. Quintan Wiktorowicz and Karl Kaltenthaler offer insights into the rationality of radical Islam and, by extension, Awlaki's efforts to influence the construction of a Salafi jihadist identity within his target audience.[92] The authors state their analysis is based on individuals who "take spirituality seriously." "Movement ideologies offer strategies for fulfilling divine duties and maximizing the prospects of salvation on judgment day. Where individuals believe that the spiritual payoffs outweigh the negative consequences of strategies in the here and now, high-cost/risk activism is intelligible as a rational choice." The authors argue that if the premises for fulfilling the duties of jihad are accepted, "a refusal to engage in high-cost/risk activism [would be] tantamount to violating self-interest, because it [would mean] they would go to Hell."[93] The writers also point to the research of Michael Doran, who "conceptualizes al Qaeda as a rational actor…" Doran traces the roots of al Qaeda's actions, including 9/11, as solidly anchored in pragmatism and the "principle of real politik."[94] Awlaki follows that tradition, creating narratives within "Inspire" which weave themes of identity and allegiance with the strategic and pragmatic application of power. Virtually all of the articles lionizing heroic jihadis follow that pattern.[95] Weapons are ubiquitous symbols of jihadi power in Illustrations 2, 3, 5, 8, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, and 23 on pages 106, 107, 109, 112, 118, 119, 121, 123, 126, 127 and 129 respectively.

Before concentrating on Awlaki's efforts to shape identity and allegiance through *Inspire* magazine, a brief acknowledgment of the conceptual complexity of identity,

particularly Islamic identity, may be useful. In addition, a broad overview of media and identity interactions will provide some context and contrast before assessing Anwar al Awlaki's unorthodox, and frequently toxic, efforts in shaping identity through online media.

2.5 Identities: Singular and Plural

Most individuals in contemporary society have plural identities, the vast majority of which are entirely benign. That is, an individual usually is a member of a nuclear family, an extended family, a community, perhaps a trade or profession, a religious group or political party. An individual may "order" his identity, especially in certain contexts or when pointedly asked to do so. Identity is at once a relatively straightforward and simple concept, yet one that can become increasingly complex in certain contexts. One such context involves immigrant experience, in which an individual may have familial and cultural attachments to a nation of birth as well as similar developing roots in an adoptive nation. Jillian Schwedler writes, "Much of the scholarly literature on 'identity' is conceptually murky, leaving the term entirely undefined or treating it as synonymous with other elements of culture, such as beliefs, ideas, norms and practices." However, in an article focusing on Islamic identity, the author writes, "At the simplest level, identity is how individuals and groups define themselves and their relations to others."[96]

Bernard Lewis, an expert on the Middle East, describes three kinds of "primary identities: The first is blood, that is to say, in ascending order, the family, the clan, the tribe, developing into the ethnic nation. The second is by place…the village, province or city. The third is the religious community… For many, religion is the only loyalty that

transcends local and immediate bonds." Lewis believes that in the Middle East, "membership in a religious community is the ultimate determinant of identity."[97]

Schwedler focuses on how identities are formed, especially Islamic identity. She describes the process as dynamic, citing situational and frequently changing factors. She writes, identity is "not a fixed set of characteristics; it is instead the product of historical processes and experiences through which individuals and groups come to see themselves, their place in the world, and their relationship with those around them." She continues, "Islamism," or political Islam, refers to a wide variety of often competing political movements that treat Islam as the central tenet of a political project."[98] Schwedler's perspective in summary attests to an exceedingly diverse and complex "Islamic identity, a product of modern geopolitical, economic, and social struggles that have crossed, blurred and reconstituted boundaries between 'West' and 'East.'[99] A frequent arena for these struggles is in diasporic immigrant communities.

Garbi Schmidt, a Danish scholar and researcher, writes of transnational Islamic identity formation among young Muslims in Scandinavia and the U.S. She observes that many young Muslims use the internet to find answers to religious questions, frequently before consulting an imam.[100] In fact, the internet itself facilitates a sense of community, providing ready links to a dispersed and diverse groups of Muslims. She writes, "The idea(l) of the ummah, whether imagined or upheld by the speed of Internet communication and travel, is not a materialized homeland that one may look up on a map. Rather, we are dealing with a mythological homeland that is both nowhere and everywhere, hereby offering membership across national borders. On this imaginary level ethnicity and geography do not matter. What matters is religious identity, or rather the thematic framework for identity formation that this transnational space offers, beside

the internal solidarity of diaspora members." Schmidt writes, "Young Muslims' use of the Internet tells us about new strategies for knowledge formation, new roads to authority, and new ways of establishing and maintaining Islamic networks…"[101]

Another scholar and researcher of ethnic media and immigrant communities, Karim H. Karim, notes "Diasporic connections are becoming increasingly significant in the light of what is viewed as the diminishing importance of national borders and the growing global linkages of non-state actors."[102] Karim observes, "The role of ethnic media in global communication flows is steadily growing in importance. Sociologists and communication scholars have viewed ethnic media as serving what may appear to be two contradictory purposes—to contribute to ethnic cohesion and cultural maintenance as well as to help members of minorities integrate into the larger [host] society."[103] Karim writes, "The impact of media use by minorities on identity formation also needs to be studied…" He notes very different appetites for content by age. He continues, "The hybridity of cultural production and of multi-layered identities have major implications for [media policies.]"[104]

The insights of Schwedler, Schmidt and Karim reveal a media environment that Anwar al Awlaki clearly recognized as propitious for the introduction of his online magazine and for his efforts to shape the identity of his target audience. If any media is "militarized," Inspire certainly qualifies. It is replete with articles on munitions, weapons use, targeting and encryption suggestions. Now the focus turns to evidence from *Inspire* which may be suggestive of Awlaki's intent.

2.6 Anwar al Awlaki: Shaping Identity and Allegiance

It is the lone-wolf strategy that I think we have to pay attention

to as the main threat to this country.
Leon Panetta, CIA Director, February 2010

Coming almost nine years after the 2001 attacks, Panetta's statement implies some confidence that al Qaeda's ability to coordinate large scale, complex attacks within the U.S. had been seriously eroded.[105] However, he identifies a new "main threat" in the form of individual "lone wolf" terrorists. Not surprisingly, articles within Anwar al Awlaki's *Inspire,* published under the aegis of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP,) forcefully propose precisely that which Panetta identified.[106] In fact, Panetta's assessment, in a very real sense, amounts to an unintended confirmation that al Qaeda's lone wolf strategy unites al Qaeda power with a pragmatic system for its delivery.

A principal reason for al Qaeda's shift in strategies may well be the effectiveness of the secretive drone strike program, which is reported to have begun in June of 2004.[107] Many targeted drone strikes against specific al Qaeda leaders have seriously degraded the command and control effectiveness of the previously hierarchical organization. The list of those on the targeted kill list remains secret, as is the estimate of al Qaeda or related operatives who have been confirmed as killed.[108] In 2013, Mark Mazzetti reports, "The C.I.A. has since conducted hundreds of drone strikes in Pakistan that have killed thousands of people, Pakistanis and Arabs, militants and civilians alike."[109]

Articles within *Inspire* reflect Awlaki's understanding that death remains a probable outcome for lone wolf operatives. These articles invariably begin with various references to verses in the Koran, which are intended to provide justification for the following article's militancy. Awlaki's strategy within *Inspire* involves encouraging fighters to focus on assurances of a heroic afterlife as a martyr and to exchange traditional notions of

nationality for a coming triumphant, borderless *ummah*, a transnational global Islamic community under a caliphate.[110] Individual identity and allegiance are redefined under the aegis of Islam.

In his analysis of lone wolf Islamist terrorists, Raffaello Pantucci writes that "terrorism is commonly viewed as essentially a collective, organized activity and, as a consequence, scholars focus predominantly on group dynamics and collective socialization to explain individual pathways to terrorism."[111] He sees a shift in focus taking place. There has been a pronounced trend to "individual jihadists" and events that are generally small in scale. See Illustration 21 on page 127 for *Inspire's* depiction of a lone wolf assassin. Yet, there is a very real question as to whether lone wolves can be legitimately described as "loners." Pantucci writes "The observation runs that the nature of the Lone Wolf means he or she will not be in any contact with others, is unlikely to have gone abroad for training and is unlikely to be actively seeking to purchase any weaponry—all of which would be the trip-wires for security services to become switched on to a terrorist cell or individual." However, he refers to "the appeal of the al Qaedist ideology to what might paradoxically be termed the 'community of loners' and the increasing prevalence of the internet as a vehicle through which to disseminate jihadist ideology." That statement accurately describes a target audience of Awlaki's magazine. Pantucci notes, "According to prominent terrorism analyst Bruce Hoffman, al Qaeda's new strategy is to empower and motivate individuals to commit acts of violence completely outside any terrorist chain of command."[112] It is entirely possible that the functionality of "group dynamics and collective socialization" Pantucci describes above is likely manifest at some level when "Inspire" readers envision their fellow readers, an "imagined community" of "true

believers."

Susan Currie Sivek's analysis of Awlaki's magazine offers insights. She writes "researchers emphasize magazines' abilities to unify audiences through the construction of communities around topics and the medium's distinctive mode of address." Sivek refers to David Abrahamson's phrase "magazine exceptionalism," to describe the power of "the lack of journalistic distance among editors, authors and readers due to their shared personal interest in a topic."[113] When the "topic" involves religion, identity, martyrdom and mortality, the potency of the magazine medium would seem likely to increase.

Sivek writes the "magazine format's simple familiarity may normalize [*Inspire's*] challenging content through its representation as just another routine magazine topic in an everyday pop culture milieu." She continues, *Inspire's* use of the familiar Western magazine format may help initiate the reader's acceptance of the jihadi identity." Photography and graphics fit well within current style parameters. The magazine even uses the rap poetry form in an apparent effort to seem "less foreign and more cool," according to the author.[114] She adds, "Even the word choice in the ads—such as 'diss' and 'LOL'—reflects youthful pop culture language." Awlaki's adaptation of Western cultural elements suggests a very pragmatic communication philosophy: deliver the message in a style with which the target audiences are familiar.

Sivek states, "The primary identity promoted to *Inspire's* readers is the model of the individual jihadi undertaking violence (primarily against Westerners) on behalf of Islam and its people toward the goal of the establishment of a global Islamic nation."[115] While broadly accurate, Sivek's article understates the essential foundational efforts Awlaki

employs throughout "Inspire" to prepare a reader to be receptive to him as a credible figurehead and to his strict and violent views on Salafi Islam, which will be discussed in the findings section. Awlaki deliberately positions himself in the magazine as a teacher, Islamic scholar and a Salafi jihadist. Sivek refers to Scott Helfstein's paradigm of self-radicalization stages. Helfstein identifies four stages which he identifies as "awareness, interest, acceptance and implementation."[116] He emphasizes "progression through these different stages is not uniform" and the "patterns and effects of social ties vary as people build their experience of radicalism." Helfstein writes, "Social relationships become increasingly important with the progression from awareness to interest and peak in the acceptance stage."[117] An increased desire for social relationships may well present opportunities for counterterrorism personnel to interdict communications or recognize patterns of association.

It is important to recognize that Awlaki's creation of *Inspire* is on its face evidence of his awareness that those seeking to become Salafi jihadists do need some semblance of social relationships and to remain aware that they are not alone, but are, as Pantucci argues, "a community of loners."[118] The magazine's articles seem to seek an *esprit de corps*. Awlaki uses the magazine to praise not only those that die in their jihadi actions but even those who try but fail. In the magazine's first issue, an article entitled "The Operation of Umar al Faruq al Nigiri In Response to the American Aggression in Yemen," praises the failed efforts of what the U.S. media dubbed the "underwear bomber," who sought to bring down a Christmas Day, 2009, U.S. carrier flight from Amsterdam to Detroit.[119] The bomber's "operation" added a measure of fear in the U.S. and no doubt a measure in al Faruq al Nigri, who sustained burn wounds to his groin.

The article attributed these accomplishments to "direct coordination with the grace of Allah" and with contributions from *mujahidin* in Yemen, America, Saudi Arabia and a number of neighboring countries." In the article, the unidentified writer saw fit to also praise the "heroic *mujahid* brother, Nidal Hassan."[120] See Illustration 14 on page 118, which praises Hasan's attack, accompanied by a large photograph.[121]

If Helfstein's observation is correct, what constitutes "social relationships" in the context of Islamic radicalism in the digital age may warrant a measure of judicious isolation and caution. The identity of transmitters and receivers of information is extremely difficult to verify over the web. Awlaki clearly believed that to be true, as articles in the magazine recommend and provide detailed information to accomplish encrypted digital and analog communications.[122] The internet may presently have the capacity to provide anonymity and community simultaneously, though secure and private exchanges would seem exceedingly rare. It is on this contested digital landscape that Awlaki's *Inspire* magazine exists. An approach to analyzing it now follows.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework and Methodology

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The central focus of this thesis is on identity formation. In *Inspire* Awlaki seeks to influence the formation of individual identity, emphasizing lone wolf jihadists, and group identity, a "community of loners," as Pantucci characterizes it.[123] The foundation of the theoretical framework relies on Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities," the complex intersection of individual and group identities.[124] Catarina Kinnvall notes, "As individuals feel vulnerable and experience existential anxiety, it is not uncommon for them to wish to reaffirm a threatened self-identity. Any collective identity that can provide such security is a potential pole of attraction." She continues, "nationalism and religion supply particularly powerful stories and beliefs because of their ability

to convey a picture of security, stability, and simple answers."[125] Jessica Stern's research on the motivations of violent religious zealots describes "a life in which good and evil, victims and oppressors, were clearly defined, and martyrdom provided escape from life's dilemmas and difficulties."[126] She writes in her own words, "To be crystal clear about one's identity, to know that one's group is superior to all others, to make purity one's motto, and purification of the world one's life work—this is kind of a bliss."[127] Awlaki's *Inspire* magazine targets an audience which Kinnvall and Stern describe. As will be documented in the findings section of this thesis, Awlaki seeks within *Inspire* to influence group identity formation around a de-territorialized nationalism, an imagined global Islamic community, the *ummah*.

The primary source material for this thesis are ten issues of *Inspire* magazine produced by AQAP under the guidance of Anwar al Awlaki and Samir Khan, which can be readily accessed through URLs listed in Appendix of this thesis.[128] In the digital era there clearly exists abundant opportunities for individual alienation despite nearly bottomless wells of data being transmitted, sometimes targeted and, at other times, scattershot. Arjun Appadurai describes these frayed connections, writing "the world we live in now [calls] for theories of rootlessness, alienation, and psychological distance between individuals and groups on the one hand, and fantasies (or nightmares) of electronic propinquity on the other." His phrase "electronic propinquity" perfectly captures the hollow and emotionally barren character of many digital exchanges, where touch and other physical cues are either absent or teasing, two-dimensional representations. When he wrote, "One man's imagined community is another man's political prison," Appadurai crystalizes "the central problem of today's global interactions…the tension between cultural

homogenization and heterogenization."[129] Awlaki recognized the potential for lone wolves to feel alienated and in the "What to Expect in Jihad" series offers suggestions for combating it. That series opens with the cautionary sentence, "Knowing what to expect in jihad is vital in order to avoid confusion, shock and even depres-sion."[130] Themes of esprit de corps and a "brotherhood" of jihadis repeat often in articles that pay tribute to deceased jihadis.[131] See Illustration 8 on page 112 for group photo.

That strange alternating magnetism of attraction and rejection is easily accessed when paging through *Inspire*. The "Taliban effect," described by Norris and Inglehart, as "traditional societies consciously attempt[ing] to distance themselves and to protect their cultures from the foreign values, ideas and images commonly conveyed by Western and American media" is buried in the discourse.[132] Awlaki and Khan repeatedly packaged their Islamic fundamentalism under layers of contemporary Western text and imagery. That packaging reveals a pragmatic use of language and imagery that they elected to use. Nowhere is this more obvious than in Awlaki's use of the iconic American advertising symbol of the "Energizer bunny," when attempting to convey the eternal character of paradise.[133] Norris writes, "The tensions between convergence and polarization have been popularized by Benjamin Barber as the rivalry between McWorld and Jihad."[134] Awlaki seems fearlessly adept at leaping between American culture and the cultural context of Salafi jihadism. *Inspire's* target audience of Muslims living in the West is well versed in the lingua franca of bold headlines laced with a bit of humor, as well as narratives illustrated with graphic and arresting visuals. An example of the former is a DIY article, cited by the surviving Boston Marathon Bomber, entitled "Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom" with a byline reading "the AQ Chef."[135] See Illustration 1 on

page 105. The cover of the fourth issue of *Inspire* exemplifies the style of many Western ads by presenting an out-of-focus, presumed jihadist looking down a foreshortened gun barrel, which is pointing directly at the viewer. The viewer's eye, finding the rifle's peep sight in focus, visually decodes the ambiguous image.[136] See Illustration 2 on page 106.

3.2 Methodology

Text and visual elements within *Inspire* join to create narratives, juxtaposing good and evil, "us" and "them," martyrs and killers, "true believers" and apostates and other oppositional terms. At first glance, encountering thematic subtleties in the magazine would seem as unlikely as encountering a patchwork quilt of editorial intent. However, the hybridity and inflammatory content of *Inspire* can complicate its study. The term "hybridity" is used to indicate that the magazine is atypical and reflects the conjoining of a magazine format with military manuals. It resembles a typical magazine in overall style. A reader recognizes a cover masthead, contents, article titles, a mixture of graphics with text to create attention to a given subject or theme, an editor's column, grainy photographs suggesting photo-journalist origin and a dominant logo mark of the magazine's publisher. But in reviewing an issue of *Inspire*, the first, as an example, a reader encounters a toxic stew of subjects consistent with a military recruitment brochure, an explicit tactical military manual, a proselytizing sermon invoking Islam, endorsements of martyrdom, and contributions in the form of opinion articles and interviews with leading figures of al Qaeda. An argument will be made that *Inspire* requires active decoding rather than normal, largely passive, reading. Discourse analysis, "a methodology that seeks to uncover the hidden motivations or ideology embedded within text or mass media content" will be employed in analyzing ten issues of *Inspire*.[137]

Particular attention was paid to how Awlaki positioned himself as a jihadi, an authority on Islam, as well as strategic and military tactics, all in an effort to bolster his credibility and that of the selected contributors. See Illustrations 18a and 18b on pages 123 and 124. The research involved a close reading of all ten issues of the magazine, which contained 231 articles, spanning 585 pages. The issues were heavily illustrated with photographs, 27 of which were placed in the List of Figures on page vii and are cited in this thesis.

Selected photographs used in the magazine will be analyzed for their communicative power. Awlaki and Khan elected to replicate the familiar form of a contemporary magazine, when they created *Inspire*. That format is replete with photographs, as is *Inspire*. The "complex relationship between photography and reality" is noted and explored at length by Howells and Negreiros. Howells writes photography is "a meeting of the actual and the imaginary." The inherent ambiguity of photographs, "both reality and representation at the same time," invites varied and imaginative interpretations.[138] In the findings section of this thesis, evidence will be presented that Awlaki and Khan use photographs to both document reality and also to convey conceptualizations through imaginative digital composites. For example, documentary photographs of young jihadis, revealing little more than their eyes, present mysterious and visually arresting personas to impressionable young male readers of *Inspire*. See Illustrations 17a and 17b on pages 121 and 122.

My research questions centered on how Awlaki and Khan used digital media (*Inspire*) to help create and synthesize political and theological objectives in efforts to shape micro-communities within an over-arching global *ummah* or "supra-national" Islamic community. From Awlaki's perspective, a salient benefit of the magazine's digital existence is widespread availability to a massive audience. Of course, given the N.S.A.'s

signals intelligence abilities, reading the magazine online may well leave a traceable, digital "fingerprint," a subject which will be addressed in the conclusion of this thesis. "Signals intelligence" refers to the military's efforts to track, interdict and interpret radio or digital electronic communications. In any case, there are two main research questions. First, how did Anwar al Awlaki structure *Inspire* magazine articles as part of a process to influence identity formation in his target audience? Evidence will be presented to indicate that Awlaki sought to influence the formation of an individual's identity and how individuals could envision themselves as part of a community of jihadists. Second, within the magazine, what discourses are strongly suggestive of Awlaki's intent in shaping reader opinions and actions? Evidence will be presented that indicates Awlaki recognized critical foundational elements necessary to underpinning a lone wolf jihadist's identity, as well as the need to provide an operational toolbox of skill sets.

It is widely acknowledged that a withering campaign of drone strikes against al Qaeda leaders and their associates combined with intense efforts to interdict their communications impacted the organization's military planning. An asymmetric battlefield remains but al Qaeda has encountered major fractures in internal communications. Analysis will also include magazine treatment of al Qaeda leadership in the context of this altered battlefield. Is there evidence that one role of the magazine was to become an imperfect surrogate for command and control functions? From the perspective of the target jihadi audience, analysis will identify how the magazine delivered general religious, ideological and tactical advice, as well as specific instructions for attacks calculated to inflict equal measures of lethality and fear.

It should be noted that a question of pedigree arose briefly regarding the authenticity of *Inspire* magazine, the primary source material of this thesis. On July 1, 2010, Max

Fisher, at that time a writer at the Atlantic Monthly, wrote an article entitled, "5 Reasons to Doubt Al-Qaeda Magazine's Authenticity." In concise terms, the doubts referenced: the secretive behavior of bin Laden and Zawahiri, the originality of an article on bomb-making, the incarceration of a frequent contributor to the magazine, the inability to trace the online source and suspicion regarding the existence of a "web-based online jihadi community." After outlining the five reasons, Fisher writes, "none of these doubts are definitive and it remains a significant possibility that the publication is authentic."[139] Fisher has since moved to the Washington Post and co-wrote an article with Caitlin Dewey on the 11th issue of "Inspire," which "devotes almost all of its 40 pages to glorifying what it calls the 'BBB,' the blessed Boston bombings."[140]

It is not possible to prove conclusively that the magazine is published by its listed creators and writers. However, U.S. media and scholars have largely disregarded other theories of authorship. Research for this thesis uncovered no credible material which suggests "Inspire" is an elaborate "Trojan horse" developed by intelligence agencies.[141] A blog by Jennifer Lai for Slate, quoting the Washington Post, reports that "U.S. intelligence operatives hacked an online (sic) al Qaeda magazine last month in order to confuse the group's followers." Another excerpt reads, "It's unclear how the hacking occurred, although U.S. intelligence agencies, including the N.S.A. and the C.I.A., have invested heavily in cyber capabilities in recent years. Security officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the recent operation was only the latest U.S. attempt to disrupt al Qaeda's online propaganda.[142] As of this writing, no one has provided any evidence that Awlaki, Khan or any others linked to al Qaeda or its affiliates have denied their role in the creation and online posting of the magazine. The absence of such a denial may be the strongest evidence of the magazine's authenticity.

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

This chapter will be divided into six main sections, in an effort to present findings and analysis in a coherent manner. (Please see the Table of Contents on pages 7 and 8.) The first, brief section relates to the conservative and bounded nature of Salafi jihadism as an ideology. The second section provides a broad overview of the magazine, intended to provide a sense of the form and style of the media, as well as an introduction to key themes and the magazine's most inflammatory content. The third part focuses on subtle aspects of Awlaki's discourse, which weaves a safety net of Islamic doctrine to undergird his attempts to shape individual identity. The fourth section explores how the magazine identifies and supports group identities, both "the community of loners" and the ummah, reinvigorating historic notions through a contemporary narrative of urgent and obligatory resistance. The latter part of this chapter offers evidence of "a quest for meaning," which Awlaki saw as culminating in an embrace of Islam. Awlaki suggests in *Inspire* that this foundational religious searching was a motivating factor in shaping his own identity and those of young jihadis. The last section of this chapter contains the Discussion and Limitations.

4.1 The Ideological Context of the Primary Source Material

Anwar al Awlaki and Samir Khan created *Inspire* magazine and electronically published at least eight issues before they were both killed in a U.S. drone strike in a remote and sparsely populated region of Yemen on September 30, 2011. Awlaki's death came after a two-year effort to locate him, marked by multiple but failed ground and missile attacks.[143] The first ten issues form the primary source material of this thesis, as it is probable that Awlaki prepared and oversaw the selection and presentation of the majority of material released in the ninth and tenth issues.[144] (All ten issues are readily accessible in full color by accessing their URL's in Appendix.) Though he produced many sermons, which were reproduced on digital media and remain available online, his notoriety in the West is largely attributed to his role in the magazine. The following excerpt from the New York Times confirms the Awlaki/*Inspire* linkage and conveys a measure of the intense animosity between the adversaries: "After several days of surveillance of Mr. Awlaki, armed drones operated by the C.I.A. took off from a new, secret American base in the Arabian Peninsula, crossed into Yemen and unleashed a barrage of Hellfire missiles at a car carrying him and other top operatives from al Qaeda's branch in Yemen, including another American militant (Samir Khan) who had run the group's English-language internet magazine."[145] That animosity is also captured in photographic illustrations in *Inspire*, in which the symbolism of America's Wild West is borrowed to depict 11 of al Qaeda's "Most Wanted" for "Crimes against Islam."[146] See Illustrations 15 and 16 on pages 119 and 120.

The magazine reflects the worldview of Anwar al Awlaki, a leader of al Qaeda's affiliate branch based in Yemen, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP.) He has been consistently identified with Salafi jihadism, one subgroup of Sunni Islam. Like other world religions, Islam reflects a wide constellation of religious beliefs and schools

of thought. Mark Stout writes, "an adherence to the ideas of Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) and a personal commitment to action are the two best markers of a Salafi jihadist." It would be difficult to overstate Qutb's literalist view of Islam and its sole primacy in all matters of religious thought.[147] Lina Khatib writes, "Qutb has been quoted as saying that a "Muslim's nationality is his religion."[148] Qutb's statement de-territorializes traditional notions of nationality. Stout identifies two principal goals of Salafi jihadists, which "are 'restoring' a caliphate stretching from Spain to Indonesia and spreading Salafi jihadism to all the billion and a half people who, as AQA (al Qaeda and affiliates) sees it, mistakenly call themselves 'Muslims' today." While religion occupies Islam's core, its wide ideological scope encompasses political, social, and military doctrines. Again, Stout notes *this form* of Salafi Islam, "contains all the answers that humanity needs and [rigidly proposes] all other ideologies are oppressive and corrupt," an appraisal which certainly achieves clarity.[149]

4.2 The Primary Source Material: An Overview

The magazine contains a wide range of articles. Some cautionary notes are warranted. The variety of subjects covered and especially the inflammatory emotional character of many present challenges. Many articles lack subtlety. "France, The Imbecile Invader" is assuredly neither balanced nor objective.[150] Other articles are less strident and are not lacking some nuance. The sixth issue's cover story, entitled "Sadness, Contentment & Aspiration" about Osama bin Laden's killing, which was written by Samir Khan, is such.[151] The article asked rhetorically, "Was it really his time?" But then continues on, mixing poetry with text and expressing "contentment" that "the light of hope" had "achieved" martyrdom.[152] Browsing issues of the magazine

reveals a mélange of material, including some surprising content and placement. The first issue contains an unlikely article by bin Laden focusing on global environmental problems but predictably blaming Western corporate greed.[153] In *Inspire's* sixth issue, a full-page parody of former NY congressman Anthony Weiner occupies the left side of a double truck, which introduces the aforementioned Samir Khan article reflecting on bin Laden's death. Some *Inspire* articles elicit a strong emotional response, triggering a rise in saliency, which can mask less obvious editorial intent. See Illustrations 7 and 10 on pages 111 and 114 respectively of deceased jihadis.[154]

4.2a Format and Principal Content

A survey of *Inspire's* content will follow. The objective is to reflect key themes, patterns of discourse, and probable editorial intent. Representative excerpts will be included. Some articles promote direct actions, while others attempt to indirectly create an emotional and psychological foundation upon which readers might envision themselves as Salafi jihadists. The content of the magazine provides direct and indirect evidence as to how Awlaki influenced a process of identity formation in his target audience, the central focus of this thesis.

No doubt Awlaki choose the magazine format for its familiarity to readers living in the West. The format also acts to normalize material and to imply that the topics presented serve a community of readers. Implicit in this concept of a community of willing jihadis, Awlaki's discourse masks a concerted effort to suggest an esprit de corps among righteous "true believers." See Illustration 8 (uppermost photograph) on page 112. The use of article headings like "News Flash, Hear the World, Government and Media Responses," as well as a large number of grainy, photo-journalistic pictures, suggests that

Inspire is representative of news magazines. Two juxtaposed article headings, "*Inspire* Feedback" and "*Inspire* Reactions," which are included in most of the magazine's issues, provide a format for the editors to selectively list commentary from supporters and detractors. Awlaki's motivation to include commentary from detractors is related to his probable intent to provide evidence, through the eyes of adversaries, of *Inspire's* functionality and power to inform and influence readers. The "Feedback" section creates and encourages email communication between reader and editor. This section was another way that Awlaki could embellish his authority. See Illustration 18b on page 124. Also, it provided an avenue for direct interaction with individual readers. Awlaki was considered a teacher and for many a scholar of Islam, though he had no formal training as such. Within *Inspire*, Awlaki was referred to by the title "Sheikh" (leader or elder.) Many assumed he was also the magazine's editor. Readers were naturally inclined to treat him with the deference afforded a mentor and to see themselves as "followers," which is evidenced in the following excerpts. These sample emails are typical, "May Allah bless you, and reward you with goodness for the fantastic job you did in publishing the so much needed Islamic magazine, to guide the English speaking young Muslims around the world, and to communicate with them." In a similar vein, another reads, "Thank you for your work of 'inspiration.' My friends and I have been devouring every word, as if it were the last morsel of food on a plate. You are truly the mujahidin of the future and we hope to help you in any way possible. Allahu Akbar!"[155] Another email in the same section reads, "Thank you, my dear brothers, for giving me a purpose. I wish to sacrifice myself, to embrace *Jannah* (paradise) and all that it has to offer. I seek nothing in this life except martyrdom."[156] That email bears witness to a segment of the target

audience that is clearly receptive to the magazine's frequent endorsements of suicide missions.

The "Feedback" page is immediately followed by the "*Inspire* Reaction" page. There is a perverse, almost gloating, self-conscious undertone to the listing of detractors' comments. Awlaki selected the emails intentionally. For example, the following email, "It was an unfortunately well-done magazine and a virtual how-to-guide for becoming a terrorist," which was attributed to U.S. Representative Peter Hoekstra (R-Michigan,) who serves on the House intelligence committee. Another, from the Anti-Defamation League, reads, "In its latest effort to reach Western audiences, al Qaeda has released its first-ever English language magazine that provides detailed bomb-making instructions and calls on followers to 'destroy' America." And finally, attributed to Rick Levanthal of Fox News, an email states, "During a lengthy presentation about al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) for members of the security industry in NYC, an Intelligence Research Specialist with the NYPD's Counterterrorism Division today called Anwar al Awlaki the most dangerous man in the world."[157] The intended inference readers are apparently to draw is confidence that Awlaki is successfully threatening and frightening or, minimally, getting the attention of government and media figures in the U.S. A reader might reasonably conclude that "the most dangerous man in the world" must certainly possess significant power and influence. To underscore this point, Awlaki elected to picture himself armed in a handful of the magazine's articles. See Illustration 18a on page 123. This represents another example of *Inspire's* hidden discourse, Awlaki's using the magazine to raise his profile, document his elite status and imply his capacity to lead a campaign of Salafi jihadism. The final act of many Salafi jihadists is regarded by them as noble self-sacrifice and warrants a short explanatory tangent.

4.2b Martyrdom

Martyrdom is frequently referenced in Awlaki's magazine. The very first issue's lede cover callout reads, "May Our Souls Be Sacrificed For You" with Awlaki's byline. Within that inaugural issue under the heading "Guidance of Quran Series," Awlaki offers seven excerpts from the Koran, purportedly supporting his viewpoint that violent, Salafi jihadism is sanctioned by Allah. Here is a brief excerpt, transliterated in Roman-alphabet Arabic in the magazine, followed by Awlaki's explanation. From the Koran, "Respond to Allah and to the Messenger (Mohammed) when he calls you to that which gives you life." Awlaki's interpretation reads, "Jihad is life since it is the cause of life. This is because if you do not attack the enemy, the enemy would attack you, and that would lead to your demise and death (sic.)" Awlaki casts himself as a religious scholar and interpreter of Islamic justifications for jihad. His discourse is intended to provide religious justification and support for numerous *Inspire* articles, which provide ideo-logical and operational material, as well as specific tactical instructions for jihad.

Should jihad result in death, what awaits a martyr? Mohammed M. Hafez, writing about al Qaeda and Salafi jihadism, explains that jihadis believe "martyrdom is a gateway to another life, not an end to life. Dying in the path of God will achieve for the martyrs all the rewards of martyrdom, including:

> Remission of one's sins at the moment the martyr's blood is shed
>
> Immediate admission into heaven, so martyrs do not suffer the punishment of the tomb
>
> The privilege of accompanying prophets, saints, and righteous believers
>
> Marriage to multiple heavenly maidens

The right to intercede with God on behalf of seventy relatives

Protection against the pain of death

Entry into the highest gardens of heaven."[158]

Similar to Hafez's views above, Awlaki authored a single page article, "The Prize Awaiting the Shadid (Muslim Martyrs,)" published in the second issue of *Inspire*.[159] In it he mixes his exegesis on martyrdom, including "the people of Paradise are free to do what they like, whenever they like and for as long as they like," with a bit of American pop culture. In attempting to convey the concept of infinity, he writes, "it never stops, it keeps on going. The Energizer bunny would die and you're still alive in *jannah* (paradise.)"[160] This reference to an iconic American ad illustrates willingness to utilize American pop culture elements in his effort to characterize the eternal nature of paradise. The objectives of the U.S. government and, perhaps at some level, those of jihadist Anwar al Awlaki coalesced in the form of multiple drone strikes in northern Yemen on September 30, 2011.[161]

4.2c Strategy and Implementation of Jihad

Inspire issues continue to exist online and have not been published in a print media version.[162] It is atypical of popular magazines in that and many other respects. The magazine was created to reach an audience of Muslims living in the West, principally in North America and the United Kingdom. It was created to locate, cultivate and indoctrinate a community of Salafi jihadists. The design, text, graphics and photographic elements coalesce in a style many would identify with magazine media. The media's veneer is familiar to individuals living in North America or Western cultures. Each issue has a traditional cover page with masthead and callouts of dominant articles, while the

following two interior pages function much like a table of contents. Articles are listed under sub-heads labeled "Stories, Open Source Jihad, History and Strategy" along with miscellanea, including, for example, "The Cartoon Crusade, The Operation of Umar al Faruq, News Flash, Questions to Ask, and O Martyr, You Have Illuminated" and the pragmatic, familiar "Contact Us." However, when readers engage with the magazine's content, the familiar format delivers material nothing like any magazine. Looking at the cover stories of several issues of *Inspire* will illustrate that point.

The first issue of *Inspire* leads with articles reading, "What to Expect in Jihad" and the oft-cited "Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom." The DIY bomb-making piece is perhaps the magazine's most frequently cited article in U.S. media.[163] (Previously cited as Illustration 1 on page 113.) The second issue offers the article, "I Am Proud to Be a Traitor to America" by Samir Khan. Khan's article identified the U.S. as "raping and murdering" in Yemen, while the U.S. supported Yemeni President Saleh's "donkey puppet" regime, which "went around capturing, killing and torturing."[164] Another article in the second issue, "The Ultimate Mowing Machine," suggests attaching large protruding blades on a pick-up truck and driving it into a dense group of unsuspecting pedestrians. The author, Yahya Ibrahim, offers various tips to inflict "maximum carnage."[165] The third issue lists "The Objectives of Operation Hemorrhage," an article which explains in some detail how AQAP sought to transport explosives, which were acknowledged as intended for use in destroying Jewish synagogues. The fourth issue includes the articles, "Which is Better: Martyrdom or Victory?" and "Know that Jihad is Your Duty, and "Roshonara & Taimour: Followers of the Borderless Loyalty." All of these articles relate to the obligatory aspect of jihad, according to *Inspire's* editors. In fact, every issue of *Inspire,* except the shortened third and seventh "Special Issues,"

feature articles specifically encouraging individuals toward jihad. In the third article, Roshonara Choudry, a Muslim woman is praised for her unsuccessful effort on May 14, 2010, to assassinate a British MP, Stephen Timms, with a small kitchen knife.[166] Choudry was inspired to kill by watching You Tube videos of Awlaki, containing the same themes Awlaki repeats in *Inspire* magazine.[167] The *Inspire* article about Choudry's attempted murder of Timms repeats the theme that jihad is a step toward the achievement of a "borderless" global Islamic nation. The magazine's discourse here again implies a "true believer" owes allegiance solely to Allah and, by extension, Islam. As Hafez observes, "Nationalism fosters narrow identifications with language, land, and borders, not a broader unity among the community of faithful and brotherhood of Muslims."[168]

Many of the magazine's more inflammatory articles either explicitly or implicitly connect violent jihadist actions with broad themes, such as the defense of Islam and the prophet Mohammed, the defense of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, the establishment of Shariah (especially, strictly literal versions of Islamic law,) and the creation of the Muslim *ummah*. Two of the most provocative articles have already been referenced in this thesis, the DIY pressure-cooker bomb instructions and the conversion of a pick-up truck to a "mowing machine."[169] They are not anomalies. A brief review of four other *Inspire* articles will illustrate a wide range of targets and tactical approaches endorsed by the magazine.

All four, sample articles are part of an "Open Source Jihad" section, which can be found in every full-size issue of *Inspire*.[170] The opening page is styled after a dictionary page with text that varies slightly from issue to issue. The following is from the ninth issue and reads, "A resource manual for those who loathe the tyrants; includes bomb-making techniques, security measures, guerilla tactics, weapons training and all other

jihad related activities. [The manual is] a disaster for the repressive imperialistic nations: The open source jihad is the Anglo-American-Israeli's worst nightmare. It allows Muslims to train at home instead of risking a dangerous travel abroad: Look no further, the open source jihad is now at hand's reach."[171] The author is identified as "the al Qaeda Chef," (sic) who proclaims, "It is of your freedom (sic) to ignite a firebomb." Six pages of specific instructions, with DIY text and photographs, open with "The objective of this workshop is to communicate with those [who] seek martyrdom operations or those who want to execute a slaughter to (sic) the enemies of Islam." See Illustration 12 on page 116. The article that follows details how to create random conflagrations, noting, "It is difficult to choose a better place than in the valleys of Montana where the population increases rapidly." The instructions offer advice on building timers and detonators, as well as considerations relating to weather issues and escape strategies for the jihadists.[172]

Another article with the straightforward title, "Destroying Buildings," runs three pages and encourages jihadis to "rent an apartment on the lower floor that occupies a corner of a building." The "AQ Chef" suggests creating a gas or propane explosion sufficient to cause the building to collapse. See Illustration 19 on page 125. Caution is advised: "If it is suspicious to bring in gas canisters into the apartment, try concealing them in boxes or garbage cans or however you see appropriate (sic.) Small photos are included, identifying a BBQ propane tank and another featuring an illustration of a cash transaction, apparently to discourage laying down too many cookie crumbs for arson investigators. Consistent with other suggestions for jihadist attacks, inflicting mass casualties in random acts of terror appears to be a paramount objective.[173]

"Making Acetone Peroxide" is the title of a six-page article with text and 23 photographs to guide interested readers in the DIY construction of chemical bombs. See Illustration 27 on page 133. The pages accessible on the U.S. sites of Public Intelligence fortunately are heavily redacted, making proportions of ingredients unreadable. The article does report, "Many of the martyrdom bombers in Palestine use acetone peroxide not as the primer but as the main charge for the explosion." Adjacent to that text, an accompanying photo depicts a deceased jihadi, his head uncovered, being carried aloft by a small crowd of unidentified people. This article and other similar pieces are certainly intended to normalize, as much as possible, jihadi's life-ending "self-sacrifices."[174]

4.2d Target Justification

A repeating theme in *Inspire* articles is largely buried in the magazine's discourse. Jihadists are encouraged to lash out randomly at "soft targets," accessible and unsuspecting civilian populations. Yahya Ibrahim extolls the benefits of "a random hit at a crowded restaurant in Washington, D.C. at lunch hour." He continues, "For those mujahid brothers with degrees in microbiology or chemistry…we encourage them to develop a weapon of mass destruction, i.e. an effective poison with the proper delivery method."[175] Awlaki argues the rationale for such attacks is "the defense of the Messenger of Allah, [which] is the main focus of the [first *Inspire*] issue."[176] Methods of attack may include firearms, various explosives, incendiaries and even adapting vehicles to be used as blunt-force weapons. Awlaki writes, "It is not enough to have the intention of doing good. One must do good in the proper way. So what is the proper solution to this growing campaign of defamation? The medicine prescribed by the Messenger of Allah is the execution of those involved… Their proper abode is Hellfire."[177] It is worth

noting, the term "Hellfire," invoked here by Awlaki, is also the name of the U.S. drone-mounted missiles, which killed Awlaki and Khan.[178] The coincidence of the term reaffirms the role of religion, however distorted, in the continuing conflict. In any case, another voice supports Awlaki's view. Shayk Abu Basir, identified in 2010 as "head" of AQAP, is quoted in a separate "exclusive interview" article in the same inaugural issue, "O Muslims rise up in defense of your Messenger: a man with his knife, a man with his gun, a man with his rifle, a man with his bomb, by learning how to design explosive devices, by burning down forests and buildings, or by running over them with your cars or trucks."[179]

Justification for "targeting non-Muslim civilians" is offered in the magazine, though the religious explanations can be abstruse. One article by Shaykh Adil al Abbab explains, "the disbeliever who is in a state of war with the Muslims is killed because of his disbelief. The evidence [justification] for that is in the Book of Allah such as the verse, 'And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them." Abbab continues, "when we look at the state of the Americans and Europeans, we see that they are in a state of war with us because of their participation in elections that choose governments that wage war against Muslims." He concludes, "it is legitimate to target the people of the West and we have no doubts about its legitimacy." A rambling, highlighted section of text within Abbab's article is more direct and explicit: "The Jews and the Christians have attacked the Muslim nation in order to suppress their identity, uproot them, violate their honor and steal their wealth. When the Muslims stood up to defend themselves, to protect their holy places, and to establish the rule of Allah on land, the armies of the tyrants fought against them in the name of the war on terror which

is in reality a war on Islam. So can one say these armies cannot be targeted?"[180]

Another article attempting to explain justifications for targeting non-Muslims and non-combatants is the cover story in the eighth issue of *Inspire*, which carries Awlaki's byline. He acknowledges in the first paragraph of the eight-page article that the issue is "surrounded with confusion." He states, "if women, the elderly, and [other non-combatants] participate in the war effort against Muslims…by financial contribution or opinion, they become legitimate targets." The poisonous qualifiers, "financial contribution or opinion," would seem to cast a very wide net of complicity, through normal processes of taxation and financing an army. He continues, "women and children should not be singled out for killing. But in no way does it mean that Islam prohibits the fighting against the disbelievers if their men, women and children are intermingled." Awlaki goes on to explain, "During the time of the Messenger of Allah, there was a form of fighting called *bayat*. This is when the enemy would be attacked at night under the cover of darkness. The attackers would ambush the enemy in their tents and houses and engage them in fighting. This would lead to the deaths of men, women and children… So is this form of fighting allowed in Islam? The answer is yes." Highlighted text in the article clarifies the killing of non-combatants, "Just as the swords of the companions [of Mohammed] and those who followed them could not distinguish between man, woman and child and yet were allowed to engage in *bayat*, why should we [Salafi jihadists] ban bombings of populated areas in disbelieving countries?"[181]

Articles addressing justifications of targets and specific tactical articles can be placed a few pages apart. For example, in the eighth issue, articles about using handguns and building chemical bombs precede an article which addresses attacking non-combatant

civilians.[182] Multiple articles in several issues of "Inspire" offer home firearms training through text and photographs. Handgun instructions illustrate proper grip and firing positions, as well as disassembly and maintenance protocols.[183] The Russian-designed AK 47 is trumpeted as a reliable and widely available long rifle.[184] As well as the bomb-making articles already cited, the magazine offered a detailed, heavily illustrated eight-page, DIY article explaining detonator construction and use. The bomb maker, identified as Dr. Khateer, suggests using materials such as duct tape, 9V batteries and washing machine timers, which are commonly available at retail home improvement centers. In a special "Advice" sidebar, he warns, "Follow the instructions carefully in the explosives field. The first mistake can be the last."[185] That admonition could also serve as a warning to "Inspire" readers weighing the magazine's inducements to Salafi jihadism.

4.2e Audience Profile

Awlaki directly offers no such warnings in the magazine, of course. On the contrary, his efforts to heroically portray martyrs assert assurances of *jannah* (paradise) awaiting them in the afterlife. Analysis of text and photographic elements within *Inspire* is revealing. The main target audience of "Inspire" consists of young males living in North America or Western Europe. All photographs in the ten issues which depict actual jihadis or illustrate weapons in use show male jihadis. In his study of radical Islam in America, Chris Heffelfinger provides additional evidence that Awlaki's target audience is predominantly young males. He lists a representative sample of 73 individuals from "hundreds of terrorism-related arrests in the U.S." All but one are male and 77% are 35 or younger.[186] Research for this thesis was unable to find any estimates for total readership numbers. There is no print media circulation, of course. As issues exist online, no

public estimates have been made as to issues accessed from popular websites. Issues can be downloaded in PDF format and passed easily between individuals via email, blogs or similar digital communications.

Text in the form of poetry is included to mimic rap lyrics in "And inspire the believers," an article in the fourth issue. A mercifully short sample runs,

> "Inspiring the believers to jihad
> Has become the newest fad
> Paradise is beneath the sword's shade
> Makin' 'em kafirs (a non-Muslim) fade in a raid"[187]

Other evidence of the target audience is supported by the magazine's featuring photographic portraits of young, role-model jihadis referred to as "brothers," which often include accompanying narratives in praise of their actions. In the magazine's first issue, Faisal Shahzad, 34 years old, also known as "the Times Square bomber," is pictured. He is quoted as saying, "It is with no doubt that we today Muslims, (sic) followers of Islam, are attacked and occupied by foreign infidel forces. The Crusade has already started against Islam and Muslims with cartoons about our beloved Prophet as war drums."[188] Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, 27 years old, also known as the "Underwear Bomber," is feature in the same issue. His photographic portrait shows a beaming young man in front of an al Qaeda flag. Text describes him with an awkward string of adjectives, the "heroic martyrdom bomber brother (sic.)"[189]

4.3 The Primary Source Material: Shaping Individual Identity

Anwar al Awlaki and Samir Khan worked deliberately to locate, cultivate and indoc-

trinate predominantly young, male Salafi jihadists. To that end, Awlaki positioned himself within the magazine as a teacher and scholar of Islam, though he had no formal, academic training in religious studies. *Inspire* was the chief instrument Awlaki used to shape the identity of jihadis. He created the magazine and clearly intended to establish himself as an authority on an array of subjects and as a conduit to critical information pertaining to jihad. Evidence abounds in an agglomeration of *Inspire* articles with his imprimatur or direct byline: proclaiming Islam as the one true religion, detailing the wonders of paradise, fielding questions from readers on justifications for jihad, defining martyrdom and assuring readers that it offers an assured path to paradise, creating media with explicit instructions for use of firearms, explosives and assorted weaponry, explaining verses from the Koran, establishing the concept of a de-territorialized global Islamic nation, identifying specific Western governments and autocratic regimes in North Africa and the Middle East as enemies of Islam, providing a media platform for al Qaeda leaders like Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri, providing encryption protocols, blessing a short list of Islamic scholars and dismissing others, endorsing 'lone wolf,' violent initiatives and lionizing living, captured and deceased jihadists.[190]

Inspire was designed by Awlaki and Khan to instigate action. This intentionality is accurately described by scholars employing media effects theory. David Abrahamson has written about a concept he terms "magazine exceptionalism." He sees magazines as "a product of [a] social and cultural moment and as a catalyst for social change." He writes of "special-interest magazines" playing "a special role in their readers' lives, constructing a community or affinity group in which the readers feel they are members." His article accurately describes Awlaki's hybrid magazine. Abrahamson continues, "In most cases, the editors and writers of magazines share a direct community of interest with

their readers. They are often, indeed literally, the same people. There is no journalistic distance." The author adds, "…the editorial content of magazines is specifically designed by its editors and looked to by its readers as something that will lead to action. It is not information for information's sake."[191]

Kenneth Thompson writes of media use within immigrant communities. He writes, "New technologies may be utilized to negotiate new, hybrid cultures among diasporic communities." Awlaki's magazine fits within that description, though its intent is exceedingly atypical and characterized by militant resistance. Awlaki's ideal community members are 'wolves in sheeps' clothing,' seeking no supportive role in a democratic or pluralistic community. Nevertheless, Thompson's observations still ring true in many respects, though the author was not addressing Awlaki's magazine of resistance. Thompson concludes, "We may be entering a new, postmodern epoch in which the idea of a single, nation-state based identity is giving way to a more fragmented and hybridized spectrum of cultural identities. The new media—cable satellite, video, and the Internet—offer rich sources for constructing these diasporic and hybrid identities."[192]

Lori Peek writes of identity development among Muslims in the U.S. and describes some individuals who feel "forced to choose between identities."[193] Peek writes of "ascribed, chosen and declared" religious identities. She writes that "most of the participants" in her study "stated that religion was just one of the many aspects that defined who they were during their formative years." That perspective would likely parallel the views of a majority of young people from various faith communities in America. Peek interviewed 127 Muslim students in her study and some responses were memorable and poignant. Peek describes young people in her study becoming more introspective as they aged and more conscious of choosing to believe in Islam. The author writes of "religion

as declared identity" as occurring "in response to a crisis." That crisis was the 9/11 attacks. She continues, "The overwhelming magnitude of the events of September 11 led many students to pray more often and increased their need for a spiritual anchor, just as the events did for numerous other Americans of various faiths." Peek writes, "Much of the discourse surrounding September 11 involved dualities such as "good and evil" and "us and them." Indeed, the author observed participants sensing other forced choices. "Just as the students were aware that they had been cast as "the Other" immediately following September 11, they also believed that there was some expectation for them to choose between their American and Muslim identities." The author quotes, Natasha, a second-generation immigrant of Egyptian descent: "I think September 11 made me feel forced to choose between identities. It was big. You've got to choose one or the other, and they're not going to accept you at all." Natasha continued, "If they're not going to accept me as an American, if they're going to tell me I don't deserve to be here, when I am an American, if they're going to try to make me feel that way, then, hey, I'm going to be a Muslim… If I have to choose, I choose to be a Muslim."[194]

The same dualities Peek describes above are also part of *Inspire's* discourse. Evidence of Awlaki's desire to make Islam the central core of individual identity can be found in the article, "Blended Duality: Muslim and American?"[195] The article carries Samir Khan's byline and argues that an individual cannot be Muslim and American. Khan writes, "To be a Muslim is one thing while to be an American is another. To be the latter is to undertake what Allah detests and to overlook the religious texts…" A photograph accompanying the article suggests an invasive and dominant secular authority. See Illustration 26 on page 140. Khan writes, "To say one is proud of being American is not merely a cultural declaration but one of allegiance."[196] In this worldview, allegiance is to

Islam only, as interpreted by exclusively male figureheads employing the conservative dogma of sharia law. The concept of a singular, primary, exclusionary and encompassing Islamic identity starkly contrasts with an American identity, which, in the ideal, promotes tolerance and welcomes diversity.

4.3a Reviewing Awlaki's Personal Transformation

Though lacking academic training in Islamic studies, Awlaki's transformation is worth briefly revisiting. He experienced a metamorphosis of his own identity, which, in some measure, informed and fueled his efforts to shape the identity of "Inspire" readers. Judging by the arc of Awlaki's life and the content of his magazine, the bedrock of his identity was Islam. Awlaki "admitted that when he first went to the U.S. for college, he 'was not a fully practicing' Muslim."[197] As a college student in Colorado, he occasionally visited an Islamic center and was asked now and then to speak. Eventually, he served as an imam at the Denver Islamic Society and the Masjid al Ribat al Islami in San Diego, as well as chaplain at Dar al Hijrah Islamic Center in northern Virginia. Those experiences allowed him to gain confidence interacting with young people and influenced his decision to move from a career in civil engineering to a vocation preaching Islam.[198]

Given his transformation to a leader of AQAP, it is worth recalling that his comments to national news media, immediately following the September 11 attacks, revealed a moderate perspective on Islam. Jeremy Scahill writes, "Listening to Anwar's sermons from this era [pre-2001] there is no hint that he had any affinity for al Qaeda. However, he clearly had a desire to teach, recording CD's of his sermons and selling them in boxed sets. As the New York Times put it, the recordings appear free of obvious radicalism.

Scahill quotes Awlaki commenting after 9/11, "We came here to build, not to destroy… We are the bridge between America and 1 billion Muslims worldwide." Memorably, Awlaki "is held up as a new generation of Muslim leader capable of merging East and West."[199] In retrospect, nothing could have proven further from the truth.

4.3b Shaping Core Identity

Research on the role of religiosity on identity formation by Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman offers valuable insights.[200] The authors recognize ten other noteworthy components of identity: "race, nation, caste, political affiliation, town, age, gender, occupation, education and class." However, for many the power and importance of religious identity is of another order, especially religiosity rooted in fundamentalism. The authors observe, "Some group memberships are especially central to self-concept and might be particularly salient under distressing circumstances. In this regard, religious identity may be especially important when an individual's sense of safety and security has been undermined." Ysseldyk et al point out, "One of the tenets that may empower religious identity is the steadfast belief that one's own religion is *the truth.*" They note that no other component of identity affects world-view like religiosity, which is capable of "fostering the prospect of an *eternal* group membership." The authors make clear, "religion serves the unique function of explicating the 'ultimate issues in life'." Ysseldyk et al write, "Several factors are thought to feed into (Abrahamic) fundamentalist ideology, including *dualism* (i.e., absolute evaluations of good and evil,) *authority* (e.g., of a sacred book or leader,) *selectivity* (choosing certain beliefs or practices over others,) and *millennialism* (i.e., confidence in eschatology as God's will; however, one facet is

thought to be vital—reactivity, that is, hostility toward the secular modern world."[201] It is as though the authors were writing about Salafi jihadism.

The main thrust of Awlaki's efforts to shape the identity of young Muslims living in the West centered on his instilling a foundational, core identity. Awlaki sought to establish Islam at its molten center. He writes, "This Islamic magazine [*Inspire*] is geared towards making the Muslim a *mujahid* (a jihadi, a defender of Islam) in Allah's path. We survive through jihad and perish without it."[202] Awlaki is simultaneously addressing an existential and pragmatic imperative. For him identity was no mere abstraction or intellectual puzzle. Within the magazine, he is attempting to lead his readers to find answers to existential questions: "Why am I here? What is the purpose of my life? What happens when I die? Is there a God? Is there one true religion?"

To be able to answer such questions, in simple terms and especially with complete confidence and certainty, would no doubt be exhilarating and empowering to his target audience. To that end, evidence for the euphoria experienced by jihadis is contained in articles which reflect on their lives. The following excerpts are illustrative. "He [Abu Hurairah] had no fear of the enemy and eagerly wanted to die in the path of Allah. He [Ammar al Wa'ili] had no fear of death. He was active, persistent, courageous and kept a very good temper under the worst of circumstances." Just before being killed by a sniper, Fawaz al Ma'ribi declared to his compatriots, "I swear by Allah, my beloved brothers! I just witnessed a dream of jannah (paradise.)"[203] The magazine presents readers with confrontations of good and evil, narratives of life and death, in terms which reflect a stark, often violent, drama. A reader asks, "Can I join these jihadis?" For those that answer in the affirmative, *Inspire's* narrative suggests power, fame, and adventure lie ahead. Shaykh Abu Basir, the head of AQAP declares, "Wherever there are mujahidin,

there is danger awaiting the disbelievers. The mujahidin are one body and if one of them is somewhere you would find fear and terror spreading in that place."[204] And should death come? Paradise awaits. "The martyr who fights and dies in the path of Allah, undoubtedly has the greatest chance of meeting his Lord as a victor."[205]

4.3c Constructing Identity: Role Model Jihadis

If there is a single, central, repeating theme within *Inspire*, it is the necessity of waging jihad. Awlaki made every effort to portray jihadis as heroic but also did not hesitate to warn readers that jihad is essentially obligatory for able-bodied Muslims. A two-page article in the sixth issue of the magazine is entitled, "It is either Jihad or Disgrace. So Choose." That article closes with "some [scholars] considered jihad as a pillar for the religion of Islam."[206] (Islam is considered by most to have five pillars, acts such as ritual prayers, fasting, and the once in a lifetime pilgrimage to Mecca.) Pointedly, another article repeats the discourse of disgrace, "Men soar to great levels in Allah's eyes for their qualities of action as opposed to inaction. So why do you continue to rush to your homes and not to the palaces of Paradise?"[207] Yet another article also suggests jihad is essentially on-going, "Jihad will continue throughout the generations of Muslims."[208] An article in the magazine's eighth issue entitled, "The Martyrdom of the Commander Abu Ayman," recounts the bravery and generosity of this jihadi, describes his death by helicopter machine gun fire, and closes with "May Allah shower him with His mercy and grant him paradise."[209]

Inspire presents readers with jihadi narratives which suggest that power, fame and adventure will be theirs. The magazine is replete with these pointedly masculine, gender-based inducements to jihad. The best single example occurs in the magazine's sixth issue

with a special 18-page tribute to deceased jihadis.[210] A similar 8-page article appears in the magazine's eighth issue.[211] A close reading of these two series of articles illustrates themes Awlaki favored, as well as a photographic approach, which is consistently applied across the magazine's issues. The articles' texts incorporate themes of bravery in combat, devotion to Islam, love for compatriots, unfailing humor under pressure and, of course, thirst for martyrdom. All photographs are of males. There is a clear effort made to include photographs of the deceased jihadis which reflect their normalcy, their humanity, as well as other pictures that show them with weapons, suggesting their power and lethality as militants, or as they saw themselves, "defenders of Islam." These articles also contain raw pictures of them after being killed. (When no post mortem picture is included, invariably the text reveals a missile strike left no recognizable remains.) The post mortem pictures serve multiple purposes. They document their death, perhaps providing a stark reminder of their martyrdom, ostensible passage to paradise, and their joining an "elite" fraternity of "heroic" jihadis. Illustrations 4 through 10 on pages 108 through 114 depict four different jihadis as martyrs and heroes. Abu Ali al Harithi's portrait is composited into the heavens with billowing clouds in Illustration 4 on page 116. The same background motif follows in Illustration 5 on page 117, in which he is shown aiming and cradling semi-automatic weapons. Al Harithi "had no fear of the enemy and eagerly wanted to die in the path of Allah. He got what he desired…a missile from an American drone."[212] In Illustration 6 on page 118, Ammar al Wa'ili's portrait shows him smiling down from the heavens. He also died in a U.S. drone strike. Illustration 7 on page 119 depicts a deceased Fawaz al Ma'ribi, reclining against a background of billowing clouds. Accompanying text reads, "Around his brothers, he was like anyone else. He was normal, humorous, brilliant and kind-hearted. [He was] a man

with a gaze as dangerous as a lion's. His determination was made of iron and steel."[213] Illustration 8 on page 120 documents esprit de corps with his compatriots, as well as other illustrations supporting the narrative's homage to him. Abu Ayman appears in portraits in Illustration 9 on page 121, a composite of serene clouds and a neutral background. Abu Ayman was an Egyptian jihadi, and "was a generous brother with an outstanding character…[who] would not turn down a request from his brothers. He was courageous and known for asking his brothers to allow him to perform a martyrdom operation."[214] Abu Ayman was credited with participating in the attack against the U.S.S. Cole, which killed 17 U.S. service members and wounded 39 others, and various unnamed operations. Illustration 10 on page 122 displays a post mortem picture, documenting his death by helicopter gunfire.

4.3d Visualizations of Jihadis and Paradise

Awlaki and Khan chose to select photographs for various *Inspire* articles from very different stylistic and narrative traditions. Both the advertising and journalistic styles sharply contrast with the cold, blunt, almost forensic, documentary post mortem images. The photography reveals a disjunctive but pragmatic visual aesthetic, driven by communicative impact far more than stylistic consistency. The articles, which are essentially tributes to deceased jihadis, juxtapose somewhat dreamy, cloud-filled Photoshop composites with a mixture of grainy, narrative photojournalistic images. This photographic mixture strongly suggests an effort to link representative secular documentation with assurances of a promised paradise. The opening page of the sixth issue's special tribute to jihadis, entitled Shuhada' (testimony) Exclusive, features a Photoshop composite of a white, spotless staircase, floating in the heavens toward a door with bright, radiating,

white light. See Illustration 11 on page 115. The following quote from the Prophet Muhammed shimmers above heaven's gate with key lines of text highlighted. "In the name of whom Muhammed's soul is in His hand, I wish I could fight in the cause of Allah *and then be killed* and then fight *and then be killed* and then fight *and then be killed*."[215] The overall style of the page closely resembles the soft- sell cliché of paradise encountered in literature the U.S. funeral industry concocts. On that introductory page, Awlaki is using both visual and textual elements to help readers imagine themselves and shape their own identities on earth to follow in the jihadis' footsteps. The message delivers God's assurances of glorious rewards and an afterlife of heavenly serenity. It also conveniently serves to deliver Awlaki's chosen, obligatory jihad discourse, while strongly suggesting Allah's endorsement. The discourse subtly underwrites Awlaki's personal status and power. A reader might well infer that *Inspire*, bearing Awlaki's imprimatur, is reflective of Allah's teachings. This and other evidence in this thesis strongly suggest Awlaki intended readers to link himself, *Inspire* narratives and Allah's teachings. Embellishing his personal power would very likely add to the potency and perceived credibility of his pronouncements.

4.3e Anointing Abu Mus'ab al Suri as Jihad Strategist

While waging jihad is the magazine's most dominant theme, Awlaki elected to have Abu Mus'ab Al Suri present military strategic theory to *Inspire* readers. Awlaki had no direct military combat experience, though he certainly recognized that battling the U.S. and other Western nations presented immense challenges, especially in tactical military strategy. It is important to examine al Suri's strategic thinking in detail, which he expressed in all regular issues of *Inspire*, as waging jihad is the central tactical subject of

the magazine. Awlaki's credibility in large measure rests on convincing the magazine's audience of the feasibility of jihad.

Al Suri authored eight *Inspire* articles under "The Jihadi Experiences" or "The Schools of Jihad," which were essentially excerpts from his book, The Global Islamic Resistance Call, a 1,600 page tome, which outlined "a broad strategy for al Qaeda's younger generation to follow and described practical ways to implement the theories and tactics of jihadi guerilla warfare."[216] Al Suri's repeated byline in the magazine clearly indicated Awlaki's endorsement of his perspective. Al Suri's articles also represented an effort by Awlaki to expand his own sphere of influence, his personal power base. Awlaki's role in presenting al Suri's incitements further blurred the line between his own ideological and operational complicity in multiple terror strikes, eventually leading the U.S. D.O.J. to conclude that Awlaki was a legitimate enemy combatant.[217] Awlaki's credibility and the magazine's efforts to shape the identity of individual jihadis, to assure them of the efficacy of their mission, ultimately rested on the feasibility of al Suri's expressed strategy. Al Suri was a critical link in the chain connecting Awlaki to effective jihad. Furthermore, *Inspire* proposed it could be a critical conduit to 'lone wolf' individual jihadis, to a "community of loners," providing them with support, tactical advice, targeting options and Islamic justifications for their operations. A close analysis of al Suri and then of his *Inspire* articles follows.

4.3f Al Suri and Jihad: Pragmatism and Perseverance

Abu Mus'Ab al Suri, also known as Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, "served in the days before 9/11 as the facilitator who took Western reporters to meet with Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan."[218] Al Suri's jihad strategies reflect a dogged perseverance, clear admis-

sions of failures and a preference for pragmatism in small operations.[219] Samuels reports al Suri "held Osama bin Laden personally responsible for sticking to outmoded methods of organization and warfare that made al Qaeda easy prey for Western armies and intelligence services."[220] Al Suri urged al Qaeda and the Islamic resistance movement at large to "abandon its hierarchical structure or face annihilation by the West." Alan Cullison, a reporter for the WSJ, in 2001 recovered a hard drive obtained in Kabul, Afghanistan, which contained material written by al Suri directly to bin Laden. Al Suri wrote, "We are in a ship that you are burning on false and mistaken grounds," accusing bin Laden of having "caught the disease of screens, flashes, fans and applause."[221] Brynjar Lia writes, al Suri "first came to prominence in the West in late 2004 when Spanish investigators referred to him as a possible mastermind of the Madrid train bombings. A Syrian militant with Spanish citizenship, al Suri served as a military instructor and lecturer in the Arab-Afghan training camps [during the Soviet occupation] from 1987 to 1992."[222] William Roggio reports, al Suri was "a prolific writer on strategy, and has been the main advocate of so-called 'leaderless jihad,' which urges Muslims to establish their own cells without linking up with al Qaeda's global network, in order to escape detection. Al Suri advocated that jihadists use the Internet and other methods to gather their information to conduct attacks."[223] He worked as a military trainer at al Qaeda's notorious Darunta camp, where the terror group experimented with chemical weapons. "In 2004, the U.S. State Department issued a $5 million reward for information leading to his capture, and said that al Suri trained terrorists in poisons and chemicals."[224]

The most recently published credible information on al Suri is contained in an article by Michael Hirsh with a dateline of November 16, 2013.[225] Al Suri's whereabouts are unknown as of this writing. Hirsh explains, "al Suri urges the creation of self-generating

cells of lone terrorists." In his article Hirsh writes "Anwar al Awlaki is said to have developed his ideas from al Suri's. Hirsh believes [al Suri's] "ideas don't involve complex, ongoing, multinational plans developed for long periods over international phone and email lines," which provide far more opportunities for penetration by U.S. and allied intelligence agencies. Al Suri's ideas are far less vulnerable to interdiction by signals intelligence, NSA's forte. Hirsh concludes, "the world of omnipresent terror [numerous small scale attacks] that Abu Mus'ab al Suri wants to create could become a far more perilous one for Americans."[226]

Before looking closely at al Suri's *Inspire* articles, it should be noted that their publication represented a gambit for Awlaki. Though Awlaki's magazine treated Osama bin Laden and his pronouncements with great deference, the promotion of al Suri's military doctrine was clearly in opposition to bin Laden's known military strategy, exemplified in the 9/11 attacks. Even though bin Laden was living incognito in Abbottabad, Pakistan, essentially prevented from engaging in traditional command and control, his name had become nearly synonymous with al Qaeda's history, power and influence. He was a dominant figure on one hand, but also clearly crippled by a relentless, intense American surveillance campaign and an omnipresent threat of elimination, should his hiding place become known. Of course, no obvious benefit could be gained from advertising a rift within al Qaeda. Yet al Suri's criticisms had obviously resonated not only with Awlaki but very probably within a widening circle of al Qaeda affiliates, especially AQAP with whom Awlaki regularly communicated. He published al Suri's articles repeatedly and encouraged his readers to engage him (Awlaki) with any questions they may have. *Inspire* articles reveal no questions or challenges were brought forth that addressed al Suri's divergent strategies. Awlaki may have come to the conclusion that *Inspire* readers

did not disagree with al Suri. In the absence of legitimate "Inspire" reader research, a highly unlikely prospect, it is not possible at this point to know if "benign neglect" of bin Laden's tactics may have been a factor. Certainly, no *Inspire* articles argued in favor of large-scale attacks like those on 9/11. In any case, Awlaki gained influence in his successful inclusion of al Suri's strategies for jihad, which were claimed to be highly resistant to interdiction and, in a word, offered hope. A close look at al Suri's articles now follows.

The "Inspire" articles, which Abu Mus'ab al Suri authored, are excerpted from his treatise, The Global Islamic Resistance Call. These articles are critically important, as they provide the foundational, tactical and strategic rationale supporting Awlaki's central mission: inspiring Muslims, especially those living in the North America and Britain, to imagine themselves as Salafi jihadis. Awlaki recognized his work to shape their individual identities could not succeed, unless jihad was seen by his readers as credible, justifiable and feasible. Al Suri's articles provided a framework to build reader confidence in jihad by providing: a historical framework from an experienced jihadi, an analysis of multiple, military strategies or "schools of jihad" with a candid appraisal of failures and documented achievements, identification of contemporary battlefields, a pragmatic plan for instigating systematic, widespread attacks and, finally, securing support from an awakened, de-territorialized, global Islamic ummah.

Al Suri's articles begin by his laying out his credentials as a widely experienced jihadi and also a mature, reflective strategist and author. His articles are accompanied by small portraits, which suggest his age (presently thought to be 55 years.) He cites his fighting in Afghanistan against the Soviets, and later, the Americans, as well as his combat experience in Algeria and Syria. He underscores his pragmatism, that he was not concerned

with technicalities, "doctrines or laws about what is *haram* (forbidden) or *halal* (permissible.)[227] Rather, his judgments were "based on lessons drawn from experience with the issues of opinion, war and stratagem." He lays out three, encompassing "schools of jihad." He identifies them as: "The school of secret military organizations (regional-secret-hierarchical,) the school of open fronts and overt confrontations, and the school of individual jihad and small cell terrorism."[228] Compared with deceased jihadis that are profiled in many of the magazines issues, al Suri, while a deeply religious Muslim fighter, does not appear to be enamored with the concept of martyrdom. His analysis of the three jihad strategies and his brief imprisonments suggests he is focused on living to fight another day.

Al Suri concludes that the first school, characterized by regional, secret, and hierarchial organizations was largely ineffective. These were attempted in Egypt and Syria and resulted in "military failure, disbandment of the secret organizations, inability to mobilize the Islamic ummah, educational failure [engendering popular support,] political failure [toppling the government in power.]" Al Suri's appraisal of the school of open fronts and overt confrontations yielded mixed results. He writes this school is exemplified by "well-known…recent experiences in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Chechnya." He judged this school to achieve "military success, security success in curtailing the role of the intelligence [agencies,] the successful mobilization of the Islamic ummah, partial educational success in the military camps and at the fronts" but "political failure except in the case of Afghanistan, where an Islamic state was established [the ephemeral rule of the Taliban.]"[229]

His initial appraisal of the "school of individual jihad and small cell terrorism," which appears in the magazine's first issue, reveals guarded optimism. He offers several exam-

ples, all of which involve the slaying of one or several victims. The most high-profile case was the 1990 murder of an Orthodox rabbi, Meir Kahane, in NYC. In other examples, he praises "a Jordanian soldier from the Border Guards [who] boldly opened fire at a number of female Jewish students, who were making movements that were mocking the Muslim prayer" and lauds "the heroic [Egyptian] Suleyman Khatir [who] opened fire, by independent decision, at a number of Jews at the Egyptian-Israeli border." He also was impressed, "During the days of the Gulf War, [when] an old Moroccan stabbed ten French tourists."[230] The intense hatred that apparently fuels al Suri's accolades is frightening to contemplate. In any case, he summarizes and cites "military success, security success because these are operations that do not lead to the failure of establishing new cells, success [in mobilizing] the Islamic ummah, educational failure due to the absence of a [systematic program,] and political failure due to the absence of a program [to promote the widespread expansion of such slayings.]"[231] Al Suri makes ominous reference to the "New World Order," a conspiracy theory, which for him amounted to a nearly global cabal of anti-Islamic forces with ill-defined but generally murderous intentions. He defends the open front jihad strategy in specific countries and under certain conditions but recognizes America's "stunning technological superiority…and complete control over [air] space and the electronic world [an apparent reference to signals intelligence.]"[232]

By the end of the second *Inspire* article, it becomes clear that al Suri sees individual and small cell terrorism as the most likely to succeed under conditions present at the beginning of the 21st century. But he chooses to emphasize a critical component necessary for the success of even limited, small cell jihad, "the idea of belonging to the whole Islamic nation, the larger homeland," the ummah. His writings as a whole suggest

he recognizes a psychological and motivational benefit in the conceptualized ummah. In his own words, "What we now need to establish in the minds of the mujahidin who are determined to fight is a true sense of belonging and commitment."[233] On a digital landscape, Awlaki uses *Inspire* in an effort to instill a sense of community in his target audience and repeatedly seeks "to restore the Islamic caliphate which extends from China in the East to Andalusia (Spain) in the West…indeed beyond that according to capability until the land of the kuffar (disbelievers) is conquered."[234]

4.3g An Alliance for Jihad: Awlaki and al Suri

To briefly recap, Awlaki's efforts in the magazine are focused on the promotion of jihad, a specific and feasible individual jihad or what has been termed "small cell terrorism." The chief spokesman, theorist and strategist is Abu Mus'ab al Suri. He sees this form of jihad as an essential phase, ultimately leading to open front jihad, which encompasses the "seizure of land," the critical "strategic goal for the resistance project."[235] While both Awlaki and al Suri envision a de-territorialized global Islamic ummah, there is a clear realization that many Islamic nations with traditional territorial boundaries must first exist, coalescing into a powerful union at some future date. Al Suri unequivocally states that America's overwhelming technological superiority has created a dramatic battlefield imbalance, which requires a response of stinging, random terror strikes, eventually "exhausting the enemy and causing him to collapse and withdraw." According to al Suri, the conditions and timing to achieve fruition is dependent on regional, "geographical, population, and political factors."[236] In advance of that fruition, the question arises, is there evidence that one role of the magazine was to become an imperfect surrogate for command and control functions? As has been documented, al Suri states unequivocally

that the present battlefield is exceedingly asymmetric.[237] The NSA's massive signals intelligence capacity, combined with relentless U.S. drone strikes, without question has complicated al Qaeda's hierarchical command and control. As has been documented in this thesis, *Inspire* includes articles on military strategy, specific targeting, tactical techniques, encryption protocols and use and construction of multiple explosive devices. Though clearly imperfect and broadcast in scattershot, the magazine definitely attempted to direct and, to a limited extent, control the actions of individual jihadis.

Al Suri addresses the semantics of terrorism, as he approaches a full-blown campaign to promote "lone-wolf" attacks, a useful descriptor not in the magazine's approved lexi-con. In concise terms, al Suri describes "blameworthy terrorism," which he sees as based on "falsehood" and which can be "defined as every action, speech or behavior that inflicts harm and fear among the innocent without true cause." The "perpetrator is a 'criminal terrorist' who deserves to be punished." On the other hand, al Suri argues for "praiseworthy terrorism," seeing it as "terrorism by the righteous that have been unjustly treated." It "is the terrorism of those who resist occupation and of people defending themselves."[238] The power of language is nowhere more apparent in the magazine. The Salafi jihadists confidently proclaim, "terrorizing the enemies is a religious duty" and, for good measure, "assassinating their leaders is a Prophetic tradition!" See Illustrations 15 and 16 on pages 119 and 120 for the magazine's "Wanted Dead or Alive" photographic spread.[239] The exclamation point is followed in al Suri's fifth article by paragraphs of Koranic justifications, which are accompanied by photographic illustrations of jihadis aiming rifles at the reader.[240] Here, again, the magazine uses photographs of jihadis with weapons to drive home concepts of power and lethality.

Lest readers miss the linkage to Awlaki's personal power, he elected to periodically

picture himself as a well-armed mujahid. See Illustration 18a on page 123. (The photograph in the upper left quadrant of Illustration 18 is a rather crude composite in which Awlaki's head is placed on the shoulders of another mujahid.) This visual communication is nowhere accompanied by any claims of actual jihadi combat anywhere other than the mediascape. It is fascinating to remember that Awlaki was perceived as a threat by the U.S. in both ideological and operational spheres. Without question, the U.S. saw him as a far greater threat armed with a "pen," as opposed to a "sword."[241] Awlaki may have believed the 'pen is mightier than the sword,' but he clearly concluded his readers needed to envision him as a traditionally armed jihadist. Issues of the magazine are replete with weaponry. Firearms and small weapons appear 205 times in the magazines eight standard editions.[242] See Illustrations 3, 14, 15, 20, 21, 23, and 25 (on pages 107, 118, 119, 126, 127, 129 and 131 respectively) for a small sampling of weaponry visuals in the magazine. These pictures are always associated with males. These photographs convey personal power, suggest significant and varied weaponry, seek to illustrate esprit de corps and convey an aura of mysterious identity in all except the picture "documenting" Awlaki's jihadi credentials.

Returning to al Suri's promotion of individual jihad, he offers an explanation linking religious duty to terrorist action. In this article, al Suri offers a clear example of what Wiktorowicz identified as "rational choice" behavior, "how spiritual incentives inspire Islamic radicalism."[243] Al Suri writes, "Yes, we are terrorists towards Allah's enemies. From this it follows that terrorism has been commanded in Allah's book, and in situations where the mujahidin are repelling their enemy and the enemy's terror through a defensive jihad. This is one of the most important religious duties. In fact there is no duty more obligatory than this, except believing that Allah is One, as has been established by

Islamic jurists and clerics." Wiktorowicz explains, "For those who accepted the movement ideology and sought salvation, a refusal to engage in high-cost/risk activism was tantamount to violating self-interest, because it meant that they would go to Hell."[244] Al Suri continues with Koranic references, observing "So the most important of the jihadi actions is the liquidation of leaders by murder and assassination." In an effort to link contemporary conflict with historic conflicts dating back to the time of the Prophet Muhammed, al Suri writes, "This was confirmed in a number of separate events when Muhammed sent mujahidin units to assassinate leaders of disbelief of his time."[245] Al Suri expresses concern that individual jihad actions must be "part of a program…and a strategic operational method."[246] In his next article, he writes of "spreading the culture of resistance" and "directing the Resistance fighters to areas of operation suitable for Individual Terrorism." His use of "resistance" is likely an attempt to carry on the theme of defensive jihad. His capitalizations are apparently intended to add linguistic stature and a measure of authority. He also advises "instructing the youth in the armed operational method" and "building the cells of Resistance units as a 'system of action,' not as 'a secret organization' [or penetrable network,] which enemy "security agencies [could] abort."[247]

The ninth and tenth issues of the magazine contain al Suri's last arguments in favor of individual or small cell jihad. He identifies a principal goal "to inflict as many human and material losses as possible upon the interests of America and her allies, and to make them feel that the Resistance has transformed into a phenomenon of popular [widespread] uprising against them." He seeks to move the public to believe that America is under a continuing barrage of attacks, not merely sporadic or random strikes. He encourages prospective jihadis living in America to stay put and fight in locations with

which they are intimately familiar. Al Suri believes "lone wolf" operations are the least likely to be penetrated and interdicted by intelligence and law enforcement agencies. He suggests specific targets, including "main political figures, such as heads of state, military and security leaders." He favors attacks against "large strategic economic [centers], the NYSE, power and oil installations, airports, harbors, railroad systems, bridges and highway tunnels." While he generally favors "soft" targets, such as places where tourists or civilians congregate, he encourages carefully planned attacks against hardened targets like "military bases and barracks." He favors "mass slaughter, targeting crowds in order to inflict maximum losses." Al Suri is especially drawn to "easy" targets like "crowded sports arenas, large international exhibitions, crowded marketplaces and buildings."[248] In the magazine's tenth issue, al Suri opens the article with some religious justifications for jihad, praises the "blessed operation" of the 2004 Madrid subway system bombing, which killed 200 and injured 1,700, and describes "good targets" as "places where Muslims should not be such as places of sin, night clubs as in Bali, mardi gras, and financial centers like the Twin Towers [destroyed on 9/11.]"[249]

Awlaki, of course, seeks to use *Inspire* to repeatedly promote individual and small cell jihadism, to normalize al Suri's theoretical imperative, to provide multiple articles with very similar streams of information, all converging to propel impressionable, often young, jihadis to take up arms. Many photographs are also used in the magazine to augment the text. Examples of such articles follow, along with references to relevant photographs. Articles under the headings of "What to Expect in Jihad" and "My Life in Jihad" act to "spread the culture of resistance" by presenting role model jihadis and providing an avenue for aspiring jihadis to imagine themselves engaged in "noble" and exciting adventures. See Illustrations 24 and 25 on pages 130 and 131.[250]

4.3h Awlaki Adds Other Voices of Jihad

Two of the first three articles, written explicitly to encourage and embolden prospective young jihadis, carry the byline of Mukhtar Hassan, an experienced jihadi. The page layouts of the introductory article are composites of images intended to show a literal desktop of a jihadi living in the U.S. Picture elements include scraps of notebook paper, maps and pen, U.S. coins, a semi-automatic handgun with random bullets, pictures of jihadist compatriots, as well as snapshots of street scenes with architecture suggesting the Middle East. See Illustrations 24 and 25 on pages 130 and 131. The text is cautionary and nearly avuncular. "Knowing what to expect in jihad is vital in order to avoid confusion, shock and even depression." Other suggestions relate to packing "bodily cleansing items and "flexible boots." Tedium is described as a serious liability to psychological health. "Transition in mindset" is essential, as young jihadis attempt to shed their old identities for a new carapace as a "defender of Islam."[251] A genuine affection for budding com-

rades can easily be inferred from the text.

In "My Life in Jihad," Commander Uthman al Ghamidi writes about his frustration with secular life and "the day when Allah guided me to the true path." The merging of the mundane and divine is a repeating theme in Awlaki's *Inspire*. Similar to Hassan's approach, Ghamidi writes reassuringly, "I was impressed with the organization of the brothers [radical Islamists,] their transportation, communication network, their coordination, and [their provision of] new [fake] passports." The article suggests professsionalism coupled with genuine, almost familial, warmth. "During our ride to the guesthouse, the brother was taking every opportunity to welcome me…I saw men of dif-

ferent nationalities and they were all welcoming me with smiles on their faces. The Amir of the guesthouse offered me [a phone] to call my family to let them know I arrived safely." Ghamidi's narrative repeats the theme of a higher calling, "All of these brothers came together for one purpose: to serve Islam."[252] He writes of the joy among the new recruits when they were introduced to Osama bin Laden at a training camp in Afghanistan and told of a large, imminent operation against America. "A few hours later the world was struck with the news of September 11. We couldn't believe it at first. We had humiliated America and struck it on its own soil, using its own planes as weapons."

Photographs illustrate "defenders of Islam" in the vestments of anonymity, masks with eyeholes removed, preceding wide-angle shots of the WTC burning. See Illustrations 17a and 17b on pages 121 and 122. Ghamidi writes of a nearly intoxicating euphoria, tempered by a training instructor's blunt wake-up call, "What we expect from you in this place [the training camp] is blind obedience." After a sobering description of fighting in Afghanistan, Ghamidi concludes with a call for "steadfastness" in jihad. His closing lines link individual jihad with the very real possibility of martyrdom, "where you will see things which an eye has never seen, an ear has never heard and a mind has never imagined."[253] Another "What to Expect in Jihad" article in the fourth issue of *Inspire* contains a full-page bleed photograph, which focuses on an AK-47 cradled by a jihadi. See Illustration 23 on page 129. The accompanying text describes violent jihad as a "pillar and foundation" of Islam. The final sentence, the text paralleling the gun barrel, is explicit with the last word printed in blood red, "The religion can neither be established nor can Islam gain a foothold without jihad—period."[254]

Mukhtar Hassan authors the final article in the "What to Expect in Jihad" series. It begins with, "Our vision in training is to make every mujahid an army by himself that

roams the earth, knowing what to do in many situations and has the ability to devastate the enemy like a thousand-man army." That sentence clearly encourages "lone wolf" jihadism. Hassan encourages new jihadis to absorb articles on "weaponry, chemistry and fighting styles…that are widely available on the internet." "Inspire" is itself an example of weaponized media, as has been documented in this thesis, offering DIY instructions for firearms training, explosive and incendiary bomb construction, creation of IEDs, multiple adaptations of vehicles as weapons and selection of "soft" targets. Hassan states raw physical strength is less important than "stamina training."[255] The series' article titles change but the focus of the content remains the same.

"It is either Jihad or Disgrace, So Choose" is the article title in the sixth issue of the magazine. Shaykh Abu Yahya al Libi is the author. It essentially defends violent jihad by referencing many verses from the Koran and the Prophet Muhammed's teachings. The killings of Osama bin Laden on May 2, 2011 and Anwar al Awlaki on November 30, 2011, heavily influenced the content of the magazine's latter issues. Al Libi authored the article, "Take from their guidance for there is no refuge from jihad," which appeared in the fall of 2011. Like his previous article on jihad, al Libi expresses the belief that jihad is obligatory and martyrdom assures "paradise, eternal life and provision."

Awlaki's focus within the magazine centers on shaping the identity of young jihadis, without whom various forms of jihad, or "defense of Islam," would allegedly wither. Awlaki strongly believes in Salafi jihadism, which obviously could not manifest without the active participation of fighters. Thus far in this thesis, analysis has concentrated on articles bearing on justifications for violent jihad, as well as logistical and strategic efforts to train, psychologically prepare and otherwise encourage and reassure jihadis. Evidence has been presented that suggests the efficacy of individual and small cell attacks. An

analysis follows of other *Inspire* articles which provide evidence as to how Awlaki influenced a process of identity formation in his target audience.

4.3i Identity and Authenticity: Grounded in Islam

Awlaki included an article in the eighth issue of the magazine entitled, "Blended duality: Muslim and American?" The question mark, which follows the article's title, is the first indication that the concept of merging "Muslim" and "American" is immediately suspect. The article carries Samir Khan's byline. It specifically addresses identity and allegiance in conceptual terms. In the article's first paragraph, Khan suggests that in America a Muslim cannot be a practicing "true believer." He writes, "the much reformed Muslim identity continues to search for itself in an unbalanced world. It is a world that says faith and country should coalesce into a culturally accepted manifestation of religion." Not surprisingly, Khan sees religion in America as subordinate to citizenship. Conceiving of religion and nationality as separate spheres, "apples and oranges," is apparently problematic, as he makes clear in the following lines. He concludes this is "a secular world that most Muslim Americans feel obliged to be enslaved in."[256] Khan demeans Muslim Americans, calling them "an inexperienced and impressionable community," which finds itself in "an identity predicament much like a midlife crisis." He writes, "To say one is proud of being American is not merely a cultural declaration but one of allegiance." Khan's article supports Awlaki's position that a Muslim's identity is first and foremost grounded in Islam. Allegiance is exclusively to Allah, not to any secular national entity. He concludes in the last paragraph, "To be a Muslim is one thing while to be an American is another." To accompany the article, a stock photo was selected of a blurred figure, perhaps in a subway station, walking past a poster adapted

from the classic Uncle Sam U.S. Army original, reading "We Want You!"[257] The poster, created by "ClearanceJobs.com," advertises openings in the "defense and security" industry, many of which may have materialized after the 9/11 attacks. The posters typography is readable, if enlarged in a web browser. See Illustration 26 on page 132. To identify the stock photo and its message as "appropriate," would be to seriously understate its resonance.

An article authored by Yahya Ibrahim entitled, "The West should ban the Niqab covering its Real Face," encourages Muslim women to wear modest traditional Islamic clothing, including the niqab. Ibrahim is very critical of French efforts to ban the wearing of the head garment in public. He rails at French statements about the niqab serving "as a symbol of subservience and abasement" and its alleged capacity to imprison a woman" and "deprive her of her identity." Ibrahim dismisses "the Western myth that Muslim women need to be emancipated."[258] Though Ibrahim does not address the well known young Pakistani woman in *Inspire*, a question arises as to his perspective on the education of Malala Yousafzai and her near assassination at the hands of the Taliban. Nor does he address the murder of Sushmita Banerjee of Kabul, Afghanistan, "author of a popular memoir of life under the Taliban," who was shot dead September 4, 2013, after "militant [Taliban] leaders sentenced her to death after she refused to wear a burqa in public."[259] Ibrahim's article opens a window on Awlaki's and AQAP's worldview, especially relating to human rights. The article is highly suggestive of Awlaki's promotion of Sharia law and his desire to influence reader opinions and activities to conform with conservative interpretations of it. As evidence, the very next article, spanning five pages in the same *Inspire* inaugural issue, entitled, "The Dust Will Never Settle Down Campaign," rails against "the Cartoon Crusade," which was seen to be "criminally"

disrespectful to the Prophet Muhammad.[260]

Awlaki authors an article in the fifth edition of the magazine entitled, "The Tsunami of Change." In it he identifies "the first large-scale operation by the modern jihad movement," which is the assassination of Anwar Sadat.[261] In the article, Awlaki attempts to make a case that the "collective mind of the ummah" helped bring down Mubarak's government. Awlaki did not see the government changes in Tunisia, Egypt, or Libya as outgrowths of a repressed desire for democratic systems. In a "Jihadisphere" section of the eighth issue of the magazine, Awlaki promotes articles which rhetorically ask, "Are we witnessing the tyrannical kingship phase [passing] and the return of Islamic rule?" The "kingship phase" refers to the autocratic regimes of Ben Ali Said in Tunisia, Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, and Moammar Gadhafi in Libya.[262] In Pakistan, Awlaki endorses Ahmad Farooq's book, which, according to Awlaki, does not merely argue in favor of jihad to replace the current regime of Mamnoon Hussain in Pakistan but rather to "uproot the structure as a whole, along with all of its institutions and infrastructure." In these articles, Awlaki is attempting to suggest a progression, albeit slowly advancing, toward the realization of a cohesive global Muslim community. The concept of ummah is an essential, endgame component of Salafi jihadism. It represents a supposedly attainable caliphate for which young jihadis must fight and die in the present era.

Questions have been raised about *Inspire's* pedigree, its authenticity and linkage to Awlaki, Khan and AQAP. The magazine exists online with no print media edition. In many respects, it is a mysterious publication not linked to a physical address of any sort. However, its online manifestation is very real. The surviving alleged perpetrator of the Boston Marathon bombing admitted using the magazine for bomb-making instructions.[263] *Inspire* is accessible in the U.S. to nearly anyone with even rudimentary computer

literacy. In the United Kingdom, it is illegal to possess in any form, unless for official use or authorized, academic purpose.[264]

4.4 The Primary Source Material: Shaping Group Identities

In the pages of *Inspire*, Awlaki promoted Salafi jihadism, a form of radical Islam, which argues that violent jihad is required to "defend" the religion from dilution and attrition. He worked to shape the identities of two communities: individual jihadis and the much broader, unified, global community of Muslims, the ummah. While he saw autocratic regimes in the Middle East and North Africa as enemies or, in his terms "apostate" governments, his wrath was especially pronounced for a select number of Western powers. The U.S., Britain and France were "infidels" and condemned in the strongest terms. Evidence has been presented that Awlaki saw individual jihadis as building blocks with which a global wall of resistance could be erected. Awlaki recognized that individual jihadis, or small cells, required moral support, strategic and tactical advice, and ongoing spiritual reassurances that they were on the right path and not alone. He saw the magazine as an important tool to communicate with his "community of loners," to use Raffaello Pantucci's phrase.

Part of Awlaki's shaping of group identity relied on the magazine to normalize a discourse of radical Islam. That discourse was presented to incent individual jihadis to accept and often seek martyrdom in their "defense of Islam." The discourse was also intended to characterize Salafi jihadism as a necessary stage along the path to uniting a global Muslim community, the ummah. Describing the magazine's discourse in objective terms has presented significant challenges in this thesis. In preface to the coming summary, I concede bias and admit efforts to veil it have been unproductive. Even the placing of quotation marks exposes a perspective. With that acknowledgement, pillars of

Awlaki's discourse include: lionizing jihadis, praising their "obligatory" resistance, delivering assurances of "paradise" should "martyrdom" result, offering Koranic justifications for atrocities of war, attempting to instill an esprit de corps among jihadi "brothers," excoriating religious pluralism and promoting a patriarchal and antiquarian social order, where females are deemed unworthy of equal educational opportunities.[265] His passionate and genuine belief in Salafi jihadism is reflected in the magazine's content. He sought to not only provide intellectual and psychological food for his readers but, more importantly, to instill a visceral and simultaneously spiritual impetus toward violent jihad.

Another part of Awlaki's shaping of group identity has been a wide-ranging but subtle campaign to convince readers of his own knowledge, power and capacity to educate his target audience of Muslims living in the West. An example of his campaign's shrouded discourse is referenced and documented in Chapter Four, section 4.3d, pages 51-53 of this thesis. In those pages the random slaughter of non-combatants is encouraged and then "justified" by Awlaki's interpretations of the Koran. His titles of Shaykh and imam were potent appellations, intended to authenticate his opinions and pronouncements in the magazine. Photographs depict Awlaki as a sage teacher. See Illustration 18b on page 124. Martyrdom was frequently cited as an objective. With death as an endgame, Awlaki's arguments demanded his narrative be emotionally compelling. Young "martyred" jihadis were pictured, often smiling, floating in the heavens. See Illustration 22 on page 128.

Inspire has been attributed to AQAP, an affiliate of al Qaeda. Awlaki published an article authored by Fazul Abdallah entitled, "What is al Qaeda?" It is little more than a half page in length, and its first sentence answers the question succinctly, "Al Qaeda is an

Islamic group which raises the flag of jihad to espouse and support the Haqq (truth of Islam) wherever it is found." Abdallah states al Qaeda's "long term goal is to re-establish the Islamic Caliphate through Jihad in the cause of Allah and to implement Shariah." The article closes with the following statements, revealing delusions braided with steely certitude: "We [presumably the magazine's staff] are proud that every muslim (sic) believes in the Islamic unity and waging jihad against kuffar (disbelievers or infidels) who occupy our lands. And every muslim (sic) has the same ideology as that of al Qaeda's."[266]

4.5 Awlaki's "Quest for Meaning" and Embrace of Islam

An overview of Anwar al Awlaki's life traces many years living in the very different worlds of late 20th century America and the small, developing nation of Yemen in the Middle East. He was exposed to radically different influences. In America, a permissive culture was encountered. By his father's account, educational opportunities were abundant, though America's widespread tolerance of religious diversity clearly did not implant in the younger Awlaki.[267] On a youthful path to a career in civil engineering, Scahill reports that Awlaki was diverted by a taste of teaching and sharing a growing interest in Islam at an Islamic center in Ft. Collins, Colorado. He experienced as a Muslim-American the rising tide of confusion and hostility toward Muslims, which followed the 9/11 attacks. He was sought after by the media and expressed criticism for the attackers, forcefully stating, "There is no way that the people who did this could be Muslim, if they claim to be Muslim, then they have perverted their religion."[268] The record reveals Awlaki's transformation gradually from a moderate Muslim to a Salafi jihadist, ultimately becoming a leader of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

There is no question that Awlaki found in radical Islam clear and compelling solutions for Maslow's classic "hierarchy of needs."[269] In Islam Awlaki found self-actualization, self-esteem, a sense of belonging, a sense of safety in this world and a belief in eternal security in paradise. Research for this thesis consistently indicated Awlaki displayed a sincere and passionate belief in the religion of Islam as the one and true path to Allah. He saw the religion as worthy of his primary focus, as the foundation of his identity in secular and spiritual terms, and perhaps most importantly, saw it as worthy of his allegiance to the exclusion of all else. In the magazine Awlaki encourages young jihadis to follow his example and those of other lionized jihadis. "Allegiance" is not a word normally encountered in analysis of religious conviction. For Awlaki Islam served to fulfill a sense of belonging normally reserved for one's homeland. Awlaki portrayed himself as a jihadi. He is quoted in the magazine as stating, "We will fight for him [Prophet Mohammed,] we will instigate, we will bomb and we will assassinate, and may our mothers be bereaved of us if we do not rise in his defense."[270] See Illustration 13 on page 117. According to Shaykh Abu Hurairah as Sana'ani's eulogy in the magazine, "Al Awlaki was killed and this was an end he wanted and was searching for." In the end, his identity, his allegiance and his death intertwined.

4.6 Discussion and Limitations

I approached the research and analysis for this thesis as an American academic. Though I certainly am not part of what might be described as *Inspire's* first tier target audience, Muslims living in the West, I am indeed personally linked to the conflict. My link is rooted in my U.S. citizenship and my recognition that I am one fragment of what al Qaeda deems to be the enemy population on an exceedingly asymmetric and global

battlefield. In a spirit of full disclosure, I will state that the morning of the 9/11 attacks was the most emotionally searing in my memory. Recalling that day, my focus was, "Who did this and why?" While I confess bias, the intervening twelve years have left me with a residual intellectual curiosity about al Qaeda, in general, and Anwar al Awlaki, specifically, which has fueled my research for this thesis. I do not speak Arabic and my study of Islam was undertaken as a necessary part of contextualizing the relevant material for this thesis. Awlaki's embrace of Salafi jihadism has forced me to focus on the unavoidable relevance in my research of this conservative branch of Islam. Reading Tariq Ramadan has provided relief from Salafism-induced myopia and provided insight into "the quest for meaning" that underpins much of Awlaki's argumentation. My analysis of *Inspire* is based on a thorough and wide-ranging consideration of the text, graphics, photography, themes and overall content presented by its creators. My central focus involves Awlaki's efforts to influence identity formation in his target audience.

Anwar al Awlaki is dead but may well live on through his sermons, writings and the issues of *Inspire* that he created with Samir Khan. His relative importance in historic terms may depend largely on how the present conflict between the West and radical Islamists ebbs and flows. In the veiled and, at times, impossibly opaque world of violent extremists, clarity and certainty about individuals and their motives is in short supply. It is unfortunate that a few dedicated individuals can create remarkable carnage and terror in this world. The Boston Marathon Bombing was a stark reminder of Awlaki's continuing influence. Awlaki preached violent jihad and with Abu Mus'ab al Suri may have convinced a significant number of young, impressionable jihadis that the ummah, the imagined, global Islamic nation, can manifest itself from the ashes of destruction. Terrorists seek to instill fear and, if that is the measure, they are presently very powerful.

Awlaki and his colleagues within al Qaeda and its affiliates deserve to be studied, taken seriously, not merely in military terms, as significant adversaries.

To that end, and admittedly against long odds, further productive research would include thorough, open-ended, non-confrontational interviews with Awlaki's remaining family and inner circle. Understanding his life and his thinking from the perspective of those closest to him would no doubt yield insights. Creating opportunities for young American Muslims to express their frustrations with America and to describe what they find appealing about the U.S. would be a valuable exercise. Defusing the threat of terrorism within the Muslim community in the U.S. may ultimately rest largely on working deliberately to establish mundane common bonds through education, employment, interfaith and community interaction.

Individuals like Maajid Nawaz, author of Radical, My Journey Out of Islamist Extremism, may be remarkably powerful in influencing young Muslims. His memoir is written in a young man's voice. But in the preface to the U.S. edition, his scholarship is evident: "…extremists on both sides seek to perpetuate an illusory dichotomy; they falsely juxtapose a highly charged and politicized Muslim religious identity with an incomparable Western one."[271] The quest for meaning is an integral part of life, exposing young minds to available pathways would seem to be key. One of America's powerful soft power assets remains an abiding belief in and respect for diversity and pluralism. If the battle is ultimately about hearts and minds, continuing educational research is essential.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The case of Anwar al Awlaki centers on the transformation of a U.S. citizen from a moderate teacher and imam to a leader of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and on the principal product of his life, *Inspire* magazine. The magazine promoted an ideological and religiously based nationalism, which was de-territorialized, and which focused on ultimately achieving an ummah, an imagined global Islamic community under a caliph. The mechanism for achieving this imagined community was to be violent jihad. My research did not reveal any semblance of the formation of a caliphate.

The research did attempt to illuminate the discourses Awlaki employed in his efforts to shape the identity of young jihadis, without whom triumphal battles would be impossible. This thesis argues that Awlaki subtly worked to embellish his personal power, in order to enhance the perceived credibility of his military campaign and his interpretations of Islam. This thesis provided evidence of how the magazine, which Awlaki helped to create, served to justify jihad in religious terms, lionized jihadis and offered assurances of an eternal paradise awaiting fallen fighters. The power and capacity of digital online media is evidenced in this thesis by the inclusion within *Inspire* of a revealing statement attributed to al Qaeda's current presumptive leader, Ayman al Zawahiri, "We are in a battle and more than half this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. We are in a race for [the] hearts and minds of our *ummah*."[272] Additional evidence supporting the potency of digital media is reflected in the NYPD's Counterterrorism Division's assessment of Awlaki as "the most dangerous man in the world."[273]

Research for this thesis documented Awlaki's subtle efforts in the magazine to create an online resource which promoted the efficacy of various stages of jihad and which sought to instill a sense of esprit de corps and community for lone jihadis. Most importantly, *Inspire's* very existence worked to normalize jihad and to imply the presence of a significant, if unknown, number of potential jihadis. The magazine was created for a target audience of Muslims living chiefly in the U.S. and Britain. One testament to its potency is reflected in the British government's decision to make possession of the magazine a crime under the United Kingdom's Terrorism Act.[274]

Awlaki's obvious endorsement of Abu Mus'ab al Suri's strategy of individual "lone wolf" jihad clearly challenges U.S. interdiction efforts. As Leon Panetta, the former CIA director said, "It is the lone-wolf strategy that I think we have to pay attention to as the main threat to this country."[275] Though the NSA has without doubt massive capacity to track digital communications of all sorts, individual jihadis who do not communicate electronically, pose a serious threat. The very existence of *Inspire* may well suggest to a potential jihadi that his views and objectives are held by many others.

To return to a point made in the introduction to this thesis, a fundamental effect of media is to unite communities. Research for this thesis provides evidence that media can also fuel divisive communities. It is no accident that Awlaki promoted in the magazine the concept of allegiance solely to Allah. Awlaki framed jihad as obligatory and expressed his identity as a Muslim first and foremost. The notion of allegiance to a religion is exceedingly uncommon in the pluralistic cultures of the West, especially in the U.S. Individual human rights and multiple freedoms of expression are sacrosanct in American culture, including, of course, freedom of religion, as well as the separation of church and state. Concepts of egalitarianism and unfettered self-actualization widely accepted in the

West are directly contrary to the dictates of Awlaki's expressed Salafism. The case of Anwar al Awlaki illustrates the explosive collision of opposing worldviews and belief systems on media platforms and dispersed traditional battlefields.

Endnotes and Reference

---

[1] The biographical material relating to Awlaki in this paper is drawn from articles in the New York Times, as well as from cross-referencing profiles by Mark Mazzetti in *The Way of the Knife* and Jeremy Scahill in *Dirty Wars*.

[2] See Scott Shane "Qaeda Selection of Its Chief Is Said to Reflect Its Flaws," *New York*

[2] See Scott Shane "Qaeda Selection of Its Chief Is Said to Reflect Its Flaws," *New York* *Times*, June 16, 2011.

[3] See John Hughes, "Winning the War of Words in the Campaign Against Terrorism," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 17, 2006 "Ummah" translates to "global Islamic nation," an imagined and borderless union of Muslims under a caliphate.

[4] "Salafism refers to the Salaf al-Salihin, the original group of Mohammed's followers, along with the two generations that followed them, and is now a multifaceted global Islamic movement which seeks to re-implement their way of life." Definition provided in glossary of terms by the ICSR "*The International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence*."

[5] It is worth noting that "Khan is widely believed by all serious scholars to be the editor of *Inspire* magazine." The quote is attributed to Aaron Zelin by Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, (New York: Nation Books, 2013), p 380-381. Regardless of roles or titles at the magazine, both Awlaki and Khan were the two principal creative forces.

[6] As valuable as it is, reading the book while trying to retain the cast of leading actors and their motives could be compared to simultaneously playing multiple chessboards.

[7] The following excerpt is from "Threats and Responses: Excerpts from report on intelligence actions and the Sept. 11 attacks, (Congressional Intelligence Commitees)" *The New York Times*, July 25, 2003. "Central to the Sept. 11 plot was bin Laden's determination to carry out a terrorist operation inside the United States. The Joint Inquiry therefore reviewed information the intelligence community held before Sept. 11 that suggested that an attack within the United States was a *possibility*. Our review confirmed that, shortly after bin Laden's May 1998 press conference, the community began to acquire intelligence that bin Laden's network intended to strike within the United States. Many of these reports were disseminated throughout the community and to senior U.S. policy makers. *These intelligence reports should be understood in their proper context. First, they generally did not contain specific information as to where, when, and how a terrorist attack might occur, and, generally, they were not corroborated.* Second, *these reports represented a small percentage of the threat information that the intelligence community obtained during this period, most of which pointed to the possibility of attacks against U.S. interests overseas.* Nonetheless, there was a modest, but relatively steady stream of intelligence indicating the possibility of terrorist attacks inside the United States. Third, *the credibility of the sources providing this information was sometimes questionable."* [Italics added.]

[8] Bin Laden viewed himself as a "holy warrior," whose actions were directed toward removing the "infidels" from Muslim lands, pointedly Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the birth-place of the prophet Muhammad. See "Bin Laden chose 9/11 Targets, Qaeda agent says," *The New York Times*, March 20, 2003. Also, see "Threats and Responses: Excerpts from report on intelligence actions and the Sept. 11 attacks, (Congressional Intelligence Commitees)" *The New York Times*, July 25, 2003.
[9] Scott Shane, "U.S. Approves Targeted Killing of American Cleric," *New York Times*, April 6, 2010.
[10] Mark Mazzetti et al, *New York Times* September 30, 2011. Samir Khan was not targeted but died as a result of the same missile strike.
[11] In concise contemporary terms, Salafi jihadism combines a return focus to fundament-alist Islamic religious practices with violent militant political change, often associated with the Prophet Muhammed and the first three generations to follow him. For an expanded explanation of contemporary Salafism, see Chris Heffelfinger, Radical Islam in America, (Washington,D.C.: Potomac Books, 2011), p 123-128.
[12] Ibid p. 124.
[13] See John L. Esposito, *Unholy War, Terror in the Name of Islam*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p 26-70. Esposito is University Professor of Religion and International Affairs and Founding Director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Under-standing, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University.
[14] Jeremy Scahill, Dirty Wars, (New York: Nation Books, 2013), p 34
[15] Ibid. See p 184-90 for full explanation. In concise terms, his imprisonment was apparently on a technicality that he "intervened in a tribal dispute." Scahill believes his imprisonment was requested by the U.S., which viewed him as a significant threat.
[16] Ibid. The most comprehensive information about Awlaki's life can be found in Scahill's book. See Chapters 2, 4, 5, and 18.
[17] Mark Mazetti, Charlie Savage, Scott Shane "How a U.S. Citizen Came to Be in America's Cross Hairs," *New York Times*, March 9, 2013.
[18] See "As American as Apple Pie: How Anwar al Awlaki Became the Face of Western Jihad," A Policy Report by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR) by Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, p 6.
[19] Ibid p 19.
[20] Ibid p 10.
[21] Sherry Turkle, "Constructions and Reconstructions of Self in Virtual Reality: Playing in the MUDs," *Mind, Culture and Activity*, Vol 1, No. 3 Summer 1994.
[22] Sherry Turkle, "How Computers Change the Way We Think," *Chronicle of Higher Education,* Vol 50, Issue 21, 2004.
[23] See "Boston suspects are seen as self-taught and fueled by web," The New York Times, April 23, 2013. The surviving suspect, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, admitted being influenced by Awlaki's *Inspire* magazine and, specifically, referencing the 7 page article within it entitled, "How to Build a Bomb in Your Mother's Kitchen," *Inspire*, Summer, 2010, p. 33-40. The bomb used employed a home pressure-cooker, as in the *Inspire* article.
[24] See Scott Shane "Qaeda Selection of Its Chief Is Said to Reflect Its Flaws," *New York Times*, June 16, 2011, p 10.

[25] See Susan Curie Sivek "Packaging Inspiration: Al Qaeda's Digital Magazine *Inspire* in the Self-Radicalization Process" *International Journal of Communication* Issue 7, 2013, p 584-606.
[26] *Inspire* 1431 (2010) p. 2. As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, reference: *Inspire Volume 1*: http://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2010/06/aqap-inspire-magazine-volume-1-uncorrupted.pdf
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Excellent resource URLs for reviewing the variety of available online magazines are : http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/magazines/ and http://magazine-directory.com
[30] See articles "O Hesitant One: It's an Obligation!" followed by "What to Expect in Jihad," both in *Inspire*, Fall 1431, 2010.
[31] That descriptor chiefly refers to Awlaki's creating *Inspire* magazine. Of course, Bergen and other scholars at The New America Foundation have written extensively about Awlaki in the context of al Qaeda actions. Additionally, Bergen is widely known as a leading CNN contributor and analyst on matters relating to Osama bin Laden, al Qaeda and its various affiliates, as well as other Islamic extremist groups. He is the author of *Holy War, Inc, Manhunt, The Osama bin Laden I Know, The Longest War and Assessing the Terrorist Threat*.
[32] See John F. Burns, Miguel Helft "You Tube Withdraws Cleric's Videos" *New York Times*, Nov 3, 2010. The article reports pressure from U.S. and British authorities to remove Awlaki's videos, which purported to espouse "dangerous or illegal activities such as bomb-making, hate speech, and incitement to commit violent acts."
[33] *Inspire,* Issue 1*,* 1431 (2010) p 56-58. As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, reference: *Inspire,* Volume 1: http://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2010/06/aqap-inspire-magazine-volume-1-uncorrupted.pdf
[34] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 16-34, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[35] See Anthony Shadid, David Kirkpatrick, "Promise of Arab Uprisings Is Threatened by Divisions," *New York Times*, May 21, 2011. The recent removal by the Egyptian military of the Muslim Brotherhood's first democratically elected government in Egypt is further evidence of deep divisions within the Arab world.
[36] See Charlie Savage, "U.S. Law May Allow Killings, Holder Says" *New York Times*, March 5, 2012. Also, see ACLU suit *Al-Aulaqi vs Panetta* at: https://www.aclu.org/national-security/al-aulaqi-v-panetta
[37] See Scott Shane, "U.S. Engaged in Torture After 9/11, Review Concludes," *New York Times*, April 16 2013; Scott Shane, "Interrogations Effectiveness May Prove Elusive," *New York Times*, April 22, 2009; Michiko Kakutani, "Following a Paper Trail to the Roots of Torture," *New York Times*, February 8, 2005.
[38] In the findings section of this thesis, evidence will presented to support this statement. Briefly, Abu Mus'ab al Suri's articles, "The Jihadi Experiences," argue that maintaining morale amongst individual 'lone wolf' jihadis is essential, though problematic. Al Suri warns of the capacity of Western intelligence agencies to intercept digital communi-cations, leading to capture or killing. As no print media versions were produced by the

publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, p 21, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.

[39] Searching Google with the keywords generated more than 60,000 references, while Yahoo linked to more than 30,000.

[40] Briefly, the surviving alleged perpetrator of the Boston incident, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, referenced *Inspire* as his source for bomb making information. See "A Homemade Style of Terror: Jihadists Push New Tactics," *The New York Times*, May 5, 2013. While "Inspire" resembles popular magazines in rough format, it has no print media version. Its core tactical mission is to recruit 'lone wolf' jihadists, provide technical advice, moral support and religious justification for lethal militant actions against non-Muslim combatants and non-combatants. See "U.S.-Born Cleric Justifies the Killing of Civilians" *The New York Times*, May 23, 2010.

[41] See Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars* (New York: Nation Books, 2013), p 34, 35-38, 41-44.

[42] Ibid, p 41.

[43] Ibid.

[44] See Scott Shane, "U.S. Approves Targeted Killing of American Cleric," *New York Times*, April 6, 2010. Awlaki was ultimately targeted and killed in a drone strike in Yemen on September 20, 2011. Samir Khan was not targeted but died as a result of the same missile strike.

[45] Awlaki's massive media exposure is revealed by simply using his name on the New York Times search engine. As of this writing, 814 articles are offered on a wide array of topics, a brief sample of which include: biography, nationality, religious affiliations, educational background, ideological orientation, criminal associations, al Qaeda affiliation, appearance on "targeted kill" list, death by U.S. drone strike, and his continuing influence via digital sermons and issues of his *Inspire* magazine.

[46] Kimberly A. Powell "Framing Islam: An Analysis of U.S. Media Coverage of Terrorism Since 9/11," *Communication Studies*, Vol. 62, No. 1, 2011, p 90.

[47] Ibid, p 93.

[48] Schmid, Alex P., and Albert J. Jongman. *Political terrorism: A research guide to concepts, theories, data bases and literature*. North-Holland, 1984.

[49] Ibid, p 91.

[50] Ibid, p 92.

[51] See Brendan Maguire et al, "Network News Coverage of School Shootings, *The Social Science Journal*, Vol 39, Issue 3, p 465-470.

[52] John H. McManus, "Who's Responsible for Journalism," Journal of Mass Media Ethics, Vol. 12 No. 1 p 5-17.

[53] Lee Switzer, Michael Ryan, "Reflections on religion, media and the marketing of America's Wars," *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics,* Vol. 1, No. 1

[54] See Tariq Ramadan, Islam and the Arab Awakening, Oxford University Press, 2012

[55] Ibid, p 16.

[56] Ibid, p 18.

[57] See Kimberly A. Powell "Framing Islam: An Analysis of U.S. Media Coverage of Terrorism Since 9/11," *Communication Studies*, Vol. 62, No 1, p 94.

[58] Sinfree Makoni, "Discourses of Terror: The U.S. from the Viewpoint of the Other," Applied Linguistics Review, 2013, 4:1: p 23-42.

[59] See "The New Mardin Declaration," by Anwar al Awlaki for explicit renunciations of "disbelievers." As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, p 32-40, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[60] See "Guidance of Quran Series," authored by Shaykh Umar Hussain. As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, p 61, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[61] Ibid, p. 32. Also, see Flagg Miller, "Insights from Bin Laden's Audiocassette Library in Kandahar," (the home raided by U.S. Navy Seals in Abbottabad, Pakistan,) *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, Vol. 4, Issue 10, Oct, 2011.
[62] Ibid, p. 36.
[63] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 16-30, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix. Also, as no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 12-17, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[64] Seth C. Lewis, Stephen D. Reese, "What is the War on Terror? Framing Through the Eyes of Journalists," Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly, Vol. 86, No. 1 Spring, 2009, p 85.
[65] Ibid, p 85.
[66] Ibid, p 86.
[67] Robert M. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm," Journal of Communication, Vol 43, No. 4, p 51-58.
[68] Alexander Melagrou-Hitchens, "As American as Apple Pie: How Anwar al Awlaki Became the Face of Western Jihad," *The International Center for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence*, A Report, 2011.
[69] It is ironic that in so doing, he was unknowingly preparing a rationale for his own death one decade later by U.S. drone strike.
[70] Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars* (New York: Nation Books, 2013) p 40.
[71] Ibid, p 41.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Alexander Melagrou-Hitchens, "As American as Apple Pie: How Anwar al Awlaki Became the Face of Western Jihad," *The International Center for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence*, A Report, 2011.
[75] Ibid, p. 13. (D.A. Snow and others have written extensively on master frames. See "Framing Processes, Ideology and Discursive Fields," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Blackwell Publishing, 2004.)
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid, p. 14 On the subject of Awlaki's growing sense that "The War on Terrorism" was, in fact, "a war against Muslims and Islam," see also Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, (New York: Nation Books, 2013) p 47.
[79] Ibid, p 16. (See also C. Tilly "Social Boundary Mechanisms," *Philosophy of the the Social Sciences*, 34:2, 2004, p 211-236.
[80] Angie Chuang, Robin Chin Roemer, "The Immigrant Muslim American at the Boundary of Insider and Outsider: Representations of Faisal Shahzad as 'Homegrown' Terrorist," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 90:89, 2013.

[81] See Scott Shane, Mark Mazzetti "Times Square Bomb Suspect Is Linked to Militant Cleric," *New York Times*, May 6, 2010.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Angie Chuang, Robin Chin Roemer, "The Immigrant Muslim American at the Boundary of Insider and Outsider: Representations of Faisal Shahzad as 'Homegrown' Terrorist," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 90:89, 2013, p 92
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid, p 93.
[86] Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, (New York: Nation Books, 2013), p 315-16.
[87] Ibid. "Lawful" is used in reference to an interpretation of Islamic law, of course.
[88] Scott Shane, "Born in U.S., a Radical Cleric Inspires Terror," *New York Times*, Nov. 19, 2009
[89] Ibid.
[90] See: http://investigations.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/02/04/16843014-justice-department-memo-reveals-legal-case-for-drone-strikes-on-americans?lite
[91] It is worth noting that possession of *Inspire* on computers or even zip drives in Britain and Australia has resulted in arrest, prosecution and, in some cases, imprisonment. See "London teen jailed over al Qaeda terror guide on memory stick," The Guardian. Retrieved from http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-05-11/london-teen-jailed-over-al-Qaeda-terror-guide-on-memory-stick.
[92] Q. Wiktorowicz, K. Kaltenthaler "The Rationality of Radical Islam," Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 121, Issue 2, 2006, p 295-319. The authors use al Muhajiroun in their case study, a group that mirrors the same radical Islamist doctrines expressed by Awlaki in *Inspire*.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Michael Doran, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of al Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in Middle Eastern Politics," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol 117, Issue 2, 2002, p 177-190.
[95] The following tributes to deceased jihadis exemplify the weaving of themes of identity and allegiance with the pragmatic application of power: As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 17-30, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[96] Jillian Schwedler, "Islamic Identity: Myth, Menace or Mobilizer? SAIS Review, Vol 21, No. 2, 2001
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Garbi Schmidt, "Islamic identity formation among young Muslims: the case of Denmark, Sweden and the United States," Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 24:1, 2007, p 31-45.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Karim, Karim H. From Ethnic Media to Global Media: Transnational Communication Networks Among Diasporic Communities. University of Oxford. Transnational Communities Programme, 1998.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.

[105] Panetta's statement appears in preface to Raffaello Pantucci. "A Typology of Lone Wolves: Preliminary Analysis of Lone Wolf Islamist Terrorists," *Developments in Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR,)* March, 2011. It should be noted that the historical record would also support Panetta's assessment.
[106] See Abu Mus'ab al Suri, "The Jihadi Experiences: The Open Fronts and Individual Initiative," As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 48-53, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix. In this article, al Suri admits that large scale, coordinated attacks (after 9/11) "failed completely on all levels." He argues for lone wolf "individual operations." Many other articles from *Inspire*, which propose lone wolf strategies, will be cited in the findings chapter of this thesis.
[107] Mark Mazzetti, "A Secret Deal on Drones, Sealed in Blood" *The New York Times*, April 6, 2013.
[108] See William Roggio, "Charting the data for US airstrikes in Pakistan, 2004-2013," The Long War Journal, for seven charts and graphs at URL: http://www.longwarjournal.org/pakistan-strikes.php
[109] Mark Mazzetti, "A Secret Deal on Drones, Sealed in Blood" *The New York Times*, April 6, 2013.
[110] A few examples of such "Inspire" articles are "May Our Souls Be Sacrificed for You" from Issue 1, "The New Mardan Declaration" from Issue 2, "The Objectives of Operation Hemorrhage" from Issue 3 and "Which is Better: Martyrdom or Victory" from Issue 4.
[111] Raffaello Pantucci. "A Typology of Lone Wolves: Preliminary Analysis of Lone Wolf Islamist Terrorists," *Developments in Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR,)* March, 2011.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Susan Curie Sivek "Packaging Inspiration: Al Qaeda's Digital Magazine Inspire in the Self-Radicalization Process" *International Journal of Communication* Issue 7, 2013, p 584-606
[114] See "And Inspire the Believers," Inspire, Issue 4 Winter 2010 p 62.
[115] Susan Curie Sivek, "Packaging Inspiration: Al Qaeda's Digital Magazine Inspire in the Self-Radicalization Process" *International Journal of Communication* Issue 7, 2013.
[116] Scott Helfstein, "Edges of Radicalization: Individuals, Networks and Ideas in Violent Extremism," a report from The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, Feb, 2012
[117] Ibid.
[118] Raffaello Pantucci. "A Typology of Lone Wolves: Preliminary Analysis of Lone Wolf Islamist Terrorists," *Developments in Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR,)* March, 2011.
[119] See Kenneth Chang, "Explosive on Flight 253 is Among the Most Powerful," *New York Times*, Dec 27, 2009. Chang's article identifies the explosive Mr. al Faruq al Nigri (aka Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab) attempted to detonate as PETN, pentaerythritol tetranitrate, a plastic explosive in the same chemical family as nitroglycerin. The bomber attempted to detonate the explosive by chemical reaction, which was unsuccessful but apparently did result in causing the assailant's pants to catch fire.
[120] See "The Operation of Umar al Faruq al Nigri in Response to the American Aggression on Yemen," I*nspire*, Issue 1,Summer, 2010 p 5. Nidal Malik Hassan was the

U.S. Army Major recently convicted of the murder of 13 soldiers and wounding of 30 others at the Ft Hood Army base.

[121] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 7, p 30, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.

[122] See "How to Use Asrar al Mujahideen: Sending and Receiving Encrypted Messages," *Inspire*, Summer, 2010 p. 41-44. That such DIY material would prevent NSA and similar U.S. government cryptographers from decoding seems unlikely.

[123] Raffaello Pantucci. "A Typology of Lone Wolves: Preliminary Analysis of Lone Wolf Islamist Terrorists," *Developments in Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR,)* March, 2011.

[124] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (London/NewYork: Verso, 2006.)

[125] Catarina Kinnvall, "Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for Ontological Security," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 25, No. 5, 2004, p 741-767.

[126] Israela Silberman, E. Tory Higgins and Carol S. Dweck, "Religion and World Change: Violence and Terrorism versus Peace," Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 61, No. 4, 2005 p 761-784. This article summarizes and provides excerpts from Jessica Stern's book, Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill, Harper Collins, New York 2003

[127] Ibid.

[128] See Appendix for URLs to each of the issues as made available by the Public Intelligence and Wordpress websites.

[129] Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Public Culture*, 2:2, 1990, p 583-600.

[130] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 45, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.

[131] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 12-17, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.

[132] Pippa Norris, Ronald Inglehart, Cosmopolitan Communications, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, 2009 p 17-19.

[133] Please see Chapter 4.2b, p 47 of this thesis for an extended reference to this bizarre cultural adaptation.

[134] Pippa Norris, Ronald Inglehart, *Cosmopolitan Communications*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p 17-19.

[135] "AQ" refers to al Qaeda, of course. See "Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom," *Inspire*, Summer, 2010, p. 33-40. Also, see Illustration 1 on page 106, as well as *Inspire*, Issue 1 URL in Appendix.

[136] See *Inspire* cover, Issue 4, Winter, 2010. Also, Illustration 2 on page 107.

[137] Definition from David Demers' *Dictionary of Mass Communication and Media Research*, (Spokane: Marquette Books, 2005, p 85.

[138] Richard Howells, Joaquim Negreiros, *Visual Culture*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), p 183-206.

[139] Max Fisher, "5 Reasons to Doubt Al-Qaeda Magazine's Authenticity," *The Atlantic Monthly*, July 1, 2010.

[140] See Max Fisher and the Washington Post Foreign Staff, *Washington Post* WorldViews "Al-Qaeda's *Inspire* magazine celebrates Boston Bombings," May 31, 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/05/31/al-qaedas-inspire-magazine-celebrates-boston-bombings/

[141] If *Inspire* is a ruse to garner the interest of would-be jihadis in an effort to track email and other communications between them and the magazine or unknown others, the confession of the surviving Tsarnaev brother in the Boston bombing case would seem to eliminate any admission by the government. The inclusion of bomb-making instructions is a critical element from which a case might be made that the agencies were criminally liable in whole or in part for the deaths and injuries in Boston. A similar case exists. The botched ATF "Fast and Furious" operation remains an embarrassing precedent for the Obama administration. In that fiasco, guns were sold to suspected gun smugglers so that the arms could be traced to the upper echelons of Mexican drug cartels. Many of the guns have been linked to crimes, including the murder of U.S. border patrol agent Brian Terry in 2010.

[142] See Jennifer Lai, *Slate*, June 11, 2013: http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2013/06/11/al_qaida_s_online_magazine_inspire_hacked_by_u_s_tntelligence_operatives.html

[143] Mark Mazzetti, Eric Schmitt , Robert F. Worth, "Two Year Manhunt Led to Killing of Awlaki in Yemen," *The New York Times*, Sept 30, 2011.

[144] Those two issues are fully consistent in style and content with the previous eight. All ten issues can be viewed in full color by accessing their URL's in the Appendix of this thesis.

[145] The "other operative" is a reference to Samir Khan. See Mazzetti, Schmitt, Worth above.

[146] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire,* Issue 10, Fall, 2010 p 14-15 by accessing the issue's URL in Appendix.

[147] See Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones*, (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, 2001.)

[148] Linda Khatib, "Communicating Islamic Fundamentalism as Global Citizenship," *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, Vol. 27, 2003, p 393.

[149] Mark Stout, "In Search of Salafi Jihadist Strategic Thought: Mining the Words of the Terrorists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 32:10, Oct. 2013, p 876-892.

[150] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire,* Issue 10, p. 17 by accessing the issue's URL in Appendix.

[151] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire,* Issue 10, p. 47-50 by accessing the issue's URL in Appendix.

[152] Ibid.

[153] See *Inspire*, Issue 1, p. 8-10.

[154] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 20, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix. And as no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 15, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.

[155] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire,* Issue 4, p. 10 by accessing the issue's URL in Appendix.

[156] Ibid.

[157] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Volume 4, Winter, 2010 p 11 in Appendix for these and other emails.

[158] Mohammed M. Hafez, "Martyrdom Mythology in Iraq: How Jihadists Frame Suicide Terrorism in Videos and Biographies," Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 19, 2007, p 107.
[159] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire,* Issue 2, Fall, 2010 p. 64 by accessing the issue's URL in Appendix.
[160] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, p. 64 which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[161] Mark Mazzetti, Eric Schmitt , Robert F. Worth, "Two Year Manhunt Led to Killing of Awlaki in Yemen," *The New York Times*, Sept 30, 2011.
[162] Following the simultaneous deaths of Awlaki and Khan, the magazine has become less visible now in 2013. However, accessing the issues that Awlaki and Khan created remains relatively straightforward through the websites of Public Intelligence and Wordpress.
[163] See "Boston suspects are seen as self-taught and fueled by web," The New York Times, April 23, 2013. The surviving suspect, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, admitted being influenced by Awlaki's *Inspire* magazine and, specifically, referencing the 7 page article within it entitled, "How to Build a Bomb in Your Mother's Kitchen," *Inspire*, Summer, 2010, p. 33-40. The bomb used employed a home pressure-cooker, as in the *Inspire* article. See page 106 for sample page from bomb-making article.
[164] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire,* Issue 2, Fall, 2010 p. 45-49 by accessing the issue's URL in Appendix.
[165] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, Fall, 2010, p 53-54 by accessing the issue URL in Appendix.
[166] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issues 1, 2, 3, and 4, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs listed in Appendix.
[167] Ravi Somaiya, "U.S. Islamic Web Site is Taken Down," New York Times, Nov. 5, 2010.
[168] Mohammed M. Hafez, "Martyrdom Mythology in Iraq: How Jihadists Frame Suicide Terrorism in Videos and Biographies," Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 19, 2007, p 99.
[169] See "How to Build a Bomb in Your Mother's Kitchen," *Inspire*, Summer, 2010, p. 33-40 and "The Ultimate Mowing Machine," *Inspire* Volume 2, Fall, 2010, p. 53-54.
[170] The section is not present in the abbreviated third and seventh "Special Issue" editions of *Inspire*.
[171] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire,* Issue 9, p. 27-36.
[172] Ibid.
[173] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 4, p 39-41, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[174] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 39-45, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[175] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, p 56-57, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix .
[176] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 26, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[177] Ibid.

[178] Mark Mazzetti, Eric Schmitt , Robert F. Worth, "Two Year Manhunt Led to Killing of Awlaki in Yemen," *The New York Times*, Sept 30, 2011.
[179] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 17, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[180] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 4, p 20-23, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[181] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 40-48, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[182] Ibid. See p 31-39 and 40-48.
[183] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 29-31, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[184] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 4, p. 42-43, Issue 5, p. 24-25, and Issue 6, p. 37-38, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[185] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 32-40, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[186] Chris Heffelfinger*, Radical Islam in America,* Potomac Books, Dulles, VA, 2011 p 128-132.
[187] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 4, p 62, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[188] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 3, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[189] Ibid, p 4.
[190] References follow within *Inspire* issues in the sequence topics are listed. These references reflect only a partial list: Islam as one, true religion, see Issue 1, p 5, Issue 4, p 63, Issue 5, p 13-15; Wonders of paradise*,* see Issue 2 p 60-62, 64; Justification for jihad*,* see Issue 1, p 13-17, p 26-28, 30, 54, 59; Issue 4, p 12-16, 17-19, 21-23, 29-30; Issue 5, p 29-32; Issue 8, p 40-47; Defining martyrdom as path to paradise, Issue 1, p 30; Issue 6 p 55-57; Issue 8, p 12-17; Firearms, Explosives and constructing varied weaponry, Issue 1 p 33-40; Issue 2 p 57; Issue 5, p 24-25; Issue 8, p 29-31, 32-40; Explaining verses from Koran, Issue 2, p 64; Issue 4, p 26, 55-60; Establishing concept of ummah, Issue 1, p 2; Issue 2, p 9, 11, 39; Issue 4 p 10, 45; Issue 5, p 5, 21, 28, 34, 35; Issue 6, p 51-53; America, Western and apostate governments as enemies, Issue 1, p 13-17, p 26-28, 56-58, 66; Issue 2, p 8, 42-44; Issue 4, p 5, 12-16; Issue 5, p 47-53; Issue 8, p 18-19; Providing media platform for bin Laden and al Zwahiri, Issue 1, p 8, 11-12; Issue 5, p 33-35, 37-42; Issue 6, p 47-50, 51-53; Issue 8, p 56; Encryption instructions, Issue 1 p 41-44; Issue 2 p 58-59; Lionizing jihadis, Issue 1 p 5, 29, 48-53, 60-64; Issue 2, p 42-44, 45-49, 64-65; Issue 4, p 24, 45-48, 52-54; Issue 5, p 26-28; Issue 6, p 16-34; Issue 8, p 12-17; Firearms, Explosives and Constructing varied Weaponry, Issue 1 p 33-40; Issue 2 p 57; Issue 3, p 13; Issue 4, p 39-41, 42-43; Blessing a short list of Islamic scholars, Issue 2, 33-40; Endorsing lone wolf jihadism, Issue 2, p 55-57; Issue 4, p 31-34; Issue 5, p 9-12, 29-32.
[191] David Abrahamson, "Magazine Exceptionalism," *Journalism Studies*, Vol. 8:4, July, 2007, p 667-670.

[192] Kenneth Thompson, "Border Crossings and Diasporic Identities: Media Use and Leisure Practices of an Ethnic Minority," *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Fall, 2002, p 409-418.
[193] Lori Peek, "Becoming Muslim: The Development of a Religious Identity," *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 66, No. 3, Autumn, 2005, p 215-242.
[194] Ibid.
[195] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 3 and 9, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, (New York: Nation Books, 2013), p 32-49.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Renate Ysseldyk, Kimberly Matheson, Hymie Anisman "Religiosity as Identity: Toward an Understanding of Religion from a Social Identity Perspective," *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol 14, 2010, p 60-71.
[201] Ibid.
[202] From Awlaki's "Letter from the Editor," introducing the first issue of *Inspire*. As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 2, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[203] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 16-34, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[204] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 14, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[205] Ibid, p 30.
[206] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 56, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[207] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 24, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[208] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 13, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[209] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 12-15, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[210] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 16-34, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[211] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 12-15, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[212] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 18, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[213] Ibid, p 20.
[214] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 12-15, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[215] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 16, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[216] Abu Mus'ab al Suri, *The Global Islamic Resistance Call*, published in Arabic with excerpts available in translation on the web. Excerpts also available in *Inspire* magazine's first ten issues, excluding the third and seventh "Special Editions." Also, see

Brynjar Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of Al Qaeda Strategist Abu Mus'ab Al Suri*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.)
[217] See Scott Shane, "U.S. Approves Targeted Killing of American Cleric," *New York Times*, April 6, 2010. Also see Michael Isikoff, "Justice Department memo reveals legal case for drone strikes on Americans," National Investigative Correspondent, NBC News. DOJ White paper URL: http://msnbcmedia.msn.com/i/msnbc/sections/news/020413_DOJ_White_Paper.pdf
[218] See David Samuels, "The New Mastermind of Jihad," Wall Street Journal, April 6, 2012.
[219] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 48-53, and Issue 4, p 31-35, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[220] See David Samuels, "The New Mastermind of Jihad," Wall Street Journal, April 6, 2012.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Brynjar Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of Al Qaeda Strategist Abu Mus'ab Al Suri,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.)
[223] William Roggio, "Abu Mus'ab al Suri released from Syrian custody: Report," *The Long War Journal* (A Project for the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies,) Feb 6, 2012.
[224] Ibid
[225] Michael Hirsh, "The Next Bin Laden," The National Journal, Nov. 16, 2013. Also available at: http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/the-next-bin-laden-20131114
[226] Ibid.
[227] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 48-53, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Ibid.
[230] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, p 17-21, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[231] Ibid.
[232] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, p 17-21, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[233] Ibid.
[234] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 33, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[235] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 4, p 31-35, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[236] Ibid. A lengthy explication can be accessed in the magazines fourth issue.
[237] Ibid.
[238] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 5, p 29-32, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[239] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 10, p 15-16 , which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[240] Ibid. See Illustration 17 on page 122.

[241] See Scott Shane, "U.S. Approves Targeted Killing of American Cleric," *New York Times*, April 6, 2010. Also see Michael Isikoff, "Justice Department memo reveals legal case for drone strikes on Americans," National Investigative Correspondent, NBC News. DOJ White paper URL: http://msnbcmedia.msn.com/i/msnbc/sections/news/020413_DOJ_White_Paper.pdf
[242] This does not include small arms weaponry in the possession of enemies. Of course, many other visuals appear illustrating bombs, incendiary devices, detonators, and IEDs.
[243] Q. Wiktorowicz, K. Kaltenthaler "The Rationality of Radical Islam," Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 121, Issue 2, 2006, p 295-319.
[244] Ibid.
[245] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 5, p 32, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[246] Ibid.
[247] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 6, p 16, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[248] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 9, p 23-24, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[249] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 10, p 22-24, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[250] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 45-46, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[251] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 48-53, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[252] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 2, p 11-16, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[253] Ibid.
[254] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 4, p 31-35, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[255] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 5, p 65-66, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[256] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 3, 9, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[257] Ibid.
[258] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 19-20, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[259] See Alissa J. Rubin, "Woman Who Wrote About Life Under the Taliban Is Killed," *New York Times*, September 5, 2013. Rubin's article provides extensive background, including her connections to popular culture and the viciousness of her murder.
[260] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 1, p 21-25, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.
[261] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 5, p 50-53, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[262] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 8, p 10, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.
[263] See "Boston suspects are seen as self-taught and fueled by web," The New York Times, April 23, 2013. The surviving suspect, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, admitted being

influenced by Awlaki's *Inspire* magazine and, specifically, referencing the 7 page article within it entitled, "How to Build a Bomb in Your Mother's Kitchen," *Inspire*, Summer, 2010, p. 33-40. The bomb used employed a home pressure-cooker, as in the *Inspire* article.

[264] See http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/united-kingdom/130508/al-qaeda-magazine-inspire-terrorist-crime An article, "When information is a crime," datelined May 9, 2013 by Corinne Purtill explains in detail British law relating to possession of *Inspire* magazine. For wide-ranging information pertaining to Salafi jihadists, as well as *Inspire*, see: Aaron Y. Zelin, *Jihadology*, A Clearinghouse for Jihadi Primary Source Material, URL: www.jihadology.net Zelin is a Richard Borrow Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

[265] Salafi jihadists in my research appear to have much in common with Taliban Islamists. Mercifully, *Inspire* contains no articles on the case of Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani education activist who was shot in the head and neck in an assassination attempt. See Adam B. Ellick, "Documenting a Pakistani Girl's Transformation," *New York Times*, October 7, 2013.

[266] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 10, p 35, which can be accessed via the issues' URLs in Appendix.

[267] Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, (New York: Nation Books, 2013), p 31-47.

[268] Ibid, p 42.

[269] Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1970.)

[270] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Issue 7, p 26-27, which can be accessed via the issue's URL in Appendix.

[271] Maajid Nawaz, *Radical*, *My Journey out of Islamist Extremism*, (Guilford, CT, Globe Pequot Press, 2013.)

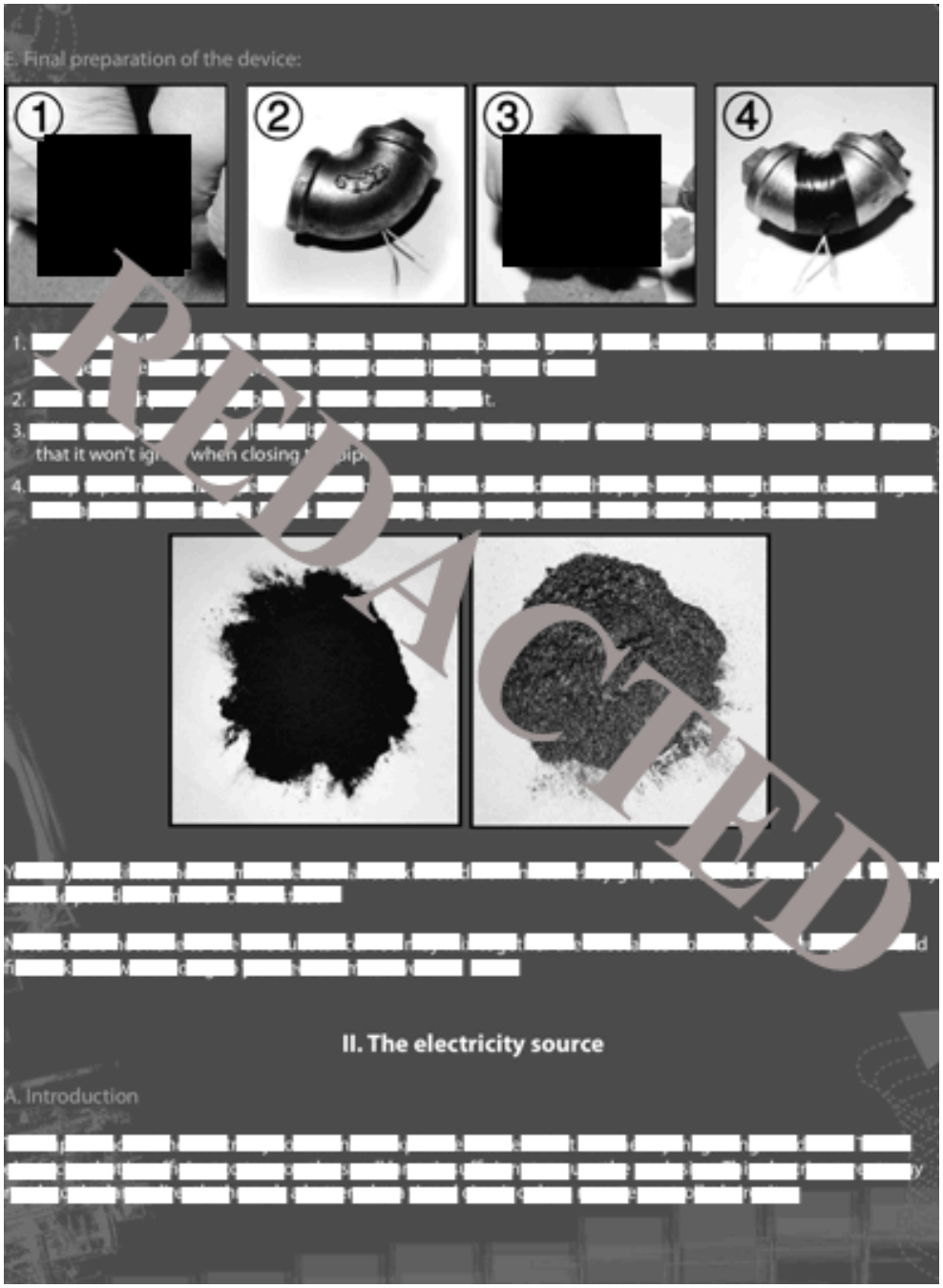
[272] See John Hughes, "Winning the War of Words in the Campaign Against Terrorism," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 17, 2006. "Ummah" translates to "global Islamic nation," an imagined and borderless union of Muslims under a caliphate.

[273] As no print media versions were produced by the publishers, see *Inspire* Volume 4, Winter, 2010 p 11 in Appendix for these and other emails.

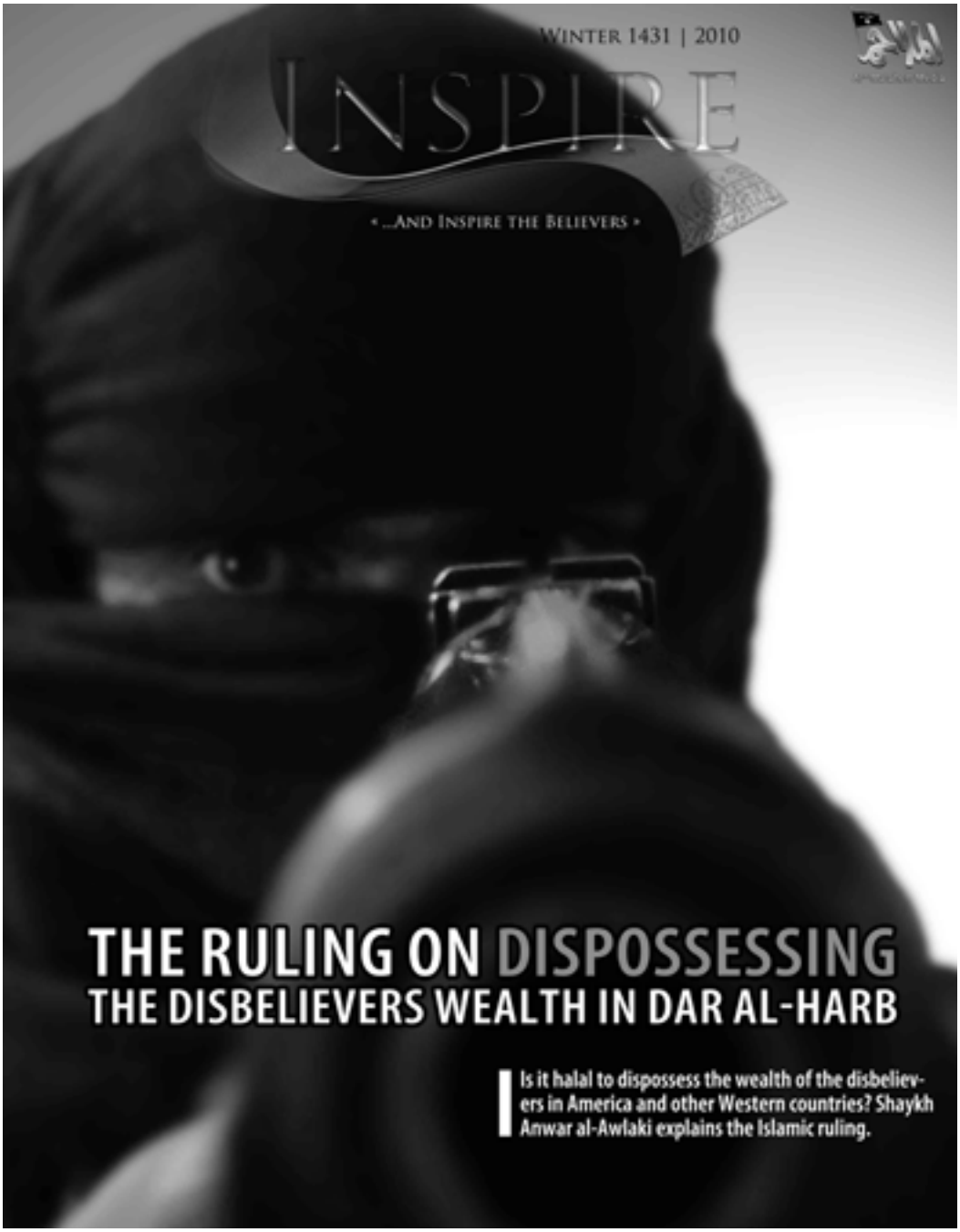
[274] Corinne Purtill, Global Post, (London) May 20, 2013. Also, see: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/section/41

[275] Panetta's statement appears in preface to Raffaello Pantucci. "A Typology of Lone Wolves: Preliminary Analysis of Lone Wolf Islamist Terrorists," *Developments in Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR,)* March, 2011. It should be noted that the historical record would also support Panetta's assessment.

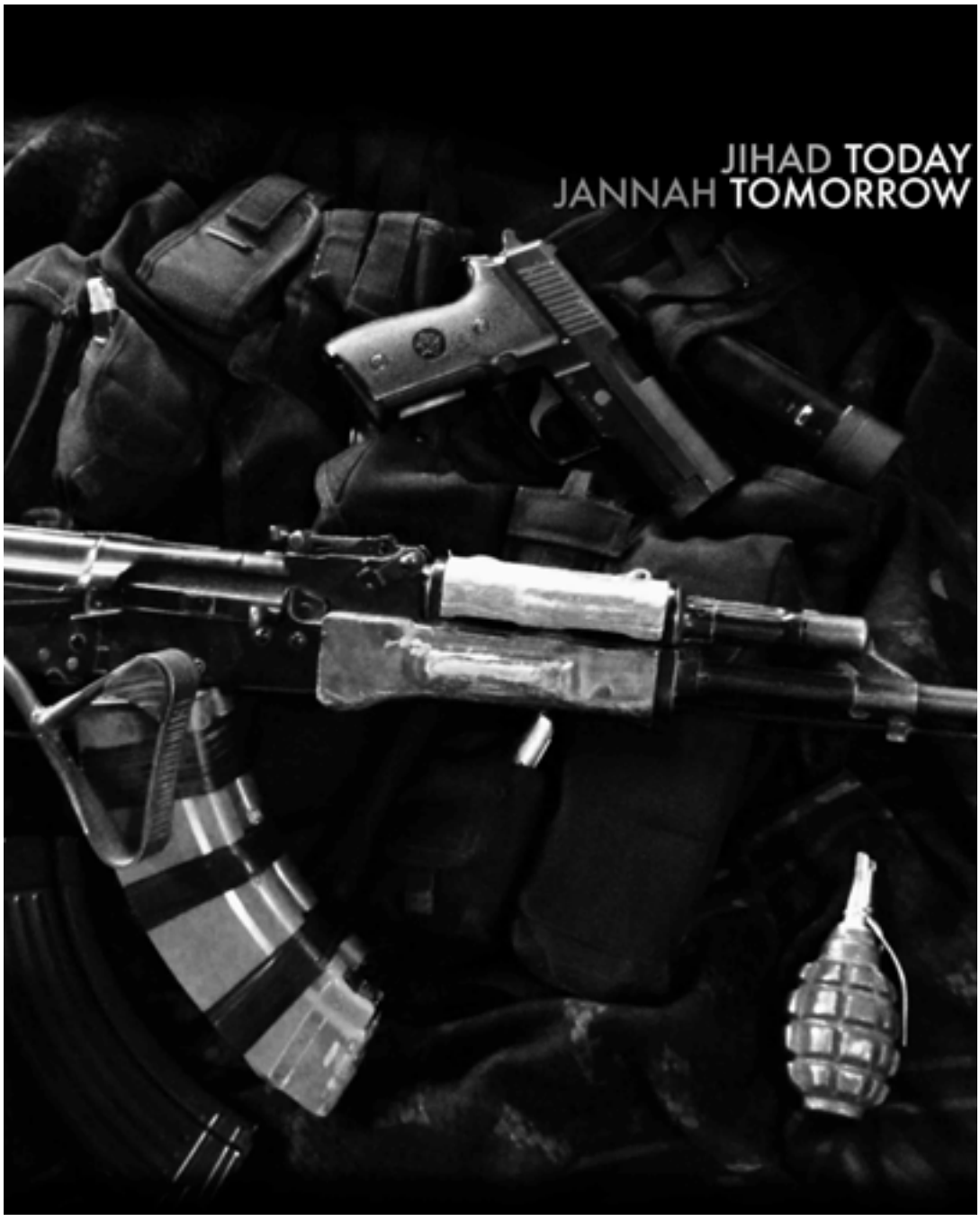
***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 1**
(from How to Build a Bomb in Your Mother's Kitchen)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 2**
(Cover Graphics of Inspire 4th Issue)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 3**
(Jihad Today, Jannah Tomorrow)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 4**
(Abu Ali al Harithi: Martyrs as Heroes)

ABU ALI AL-HARITHI: THE VETERAN LION

Muhannad

Rushing to Paradise was your daily job,
as soon as the morning Sun awoken you.

You complained about the taste in your throat,
it lacking life without the greeting of martyrdom.

He, may Allah have mercy upon him, was a unique commander in the army of Aden-Abyan. He had the spirit of a lion. In the face of the enemies of Allah, his presence was that of a storm. Among his mujahidin brothers, it was always a cheerful day. His vast knowledge and experience of guerilla warfare tactics, first aid, and security matters quickly made him valuable. His humbleness coupled with a sense of humor made him greatly loved by those around him. Due to the responsibilities given to him, he was always busy working for the establishment of shari'ah against the will of the apostates.

He was Abu Ali al-Harithi. He came from Shabwa, an area where the mountains and deserts carve a man's honor.

Abu Ali al-Harithi couldn't sleep or rest when he saw the American army rolling into Iraq. So he packed his bag and went to Syria and from there was smuggled into Iraq. His bravery was exemplary and he became a role model and encouragement for his brothers in the battlefield. He had interest in weapons and whenever the medium and heavy weapons of the brothers needed service, it was Abu Ali who would do the job.

Abu Ali was sent back to Yemen by the leadership of the mujahidin in Iraq to carry on operations in Yemen. He was arrested in Yemen and spent a few years in jail. He was firm with his guards and steadfast in his rejection of cooperation with investigators. He was very kind with his brothers and would stand up for them which led him to suffer greatly under the hands of his guards where he was severely beaten and tortured.

Abu Ali would wrestle with his brothers in jail and they say that up to his release he was unbeaten. Abu Hurairah al-Sana'ani – the military commander of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula – said, "I heard of his wrestling skills and joked with the brothers and told them: 'He is just a walking barrel' and that 'if you just knew how to handle him, you would easily defeat him'." On hearing this Abu Ali thought that finally there would be someone who could defeat him. So he avoided wrestling with Abu Hurairah for a long time until one day

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 5**
(Abu Ali al Harithi: Martyrs as Heroes)

he took him out to the desert where no one could see and challenged the brother to a wrestling match. Abu Hurairah said, "Within less than 10 seconds, I was lying on the ground defeated."

Another story Abu Hurairah mentioned about Abu Ali is that he did not allow him to participate in any military operations because he was needed in his area. Abu Ali was very persistent in asking for permission to fight and was very upset whenever his requests were being turned down. One day he was sent to Marib and arrived there when a military convoy was attacking the house of brother Aaidh al-Shabwani. Because it was a sudden attack and was an emergency situation that did not demand permission for participation in the fight, Abu Ali took advantage of the situation and rushed into battle where he fought very hard and single handedly played an important role in the defeat of the convoy. Abu Hurairah said, "When he met me after battle, he was laughing and saying that even though you wouldn't have wanted it and it was against your wishes, I did join the battle and got a chance to fight."

The enemy's soldiers seek excuses to avoid fighting while the mujahidin are looking for excuses to join the fight.

Abu Ali had a very soft heart. Sometimes he would be talking to you about a situation where a brother suffered and went through difficulties and suddenly he would start crying. He was very merciful towards his brothers and his generosity was without bounds. When he would receive guests, you could feel how happy he would be and when his guest would leave you could feel his sorrow. Sometimes brothers would see tears rolling down his cheeks when they were leaving his house.

Abu Ali was actually so brave that there were occasions were his brothers would have to restrain him and hold him back against his will. He had no fear of the enemy and eagerly wanted to die in the path of Allah.

He got what he desired. While fighting in Abyan, his vehicle was struck by a missile from an American drone. Nothing remained from him except small pieces of flesh scattered around. That was the death Abu Ali waited for.

May Allah have mercy on you and raise your status in Paradise, Abu Ali!

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 6**
(Ammar al Wa'ili: Martyr's as Heroes)

AMMAR AL-WA'ILI: A FIRM WILL

Ibrahim

Ammar al-Wa'ili started out on the path of jihad very early on in his life. His father was a leader of the mujahidin in Yemen who was appointed by Shaykh Usama to open a training camp in the area of Saada. This was where the young boy spent his early years. He traveled to Afghanistan as a young boy and spent years fighting and training with his brothers.

Ammar grew up around weapons and was considered by his brothers to be the best in using and maintaining weapons. In the battlefield he was a lion. He had no fear of death. He would work the weapon he was entrusted with until you would feel that the hardened steel of the grenade launcher, mortar, or anti-aircraft machine gun was crying for help.

He was given the responsibility of weakening the enemy in the area surrounding Zinjibar as a preparation for the storming of the city. He would pound the enemy with mortars, shower them with machine gun fire, and slam them with RPGs, going out in four or five operations per day. Ammar was an army on his own. He singlehandedly broke apart the defenses of the government's army and prepared the city for attack. He was active, persistent, courageous and kept a very good temper under the worst of circumstances.

In the front line, Ammar was shot by a bullet that grazed his throat. The brothers asked him to rest until his injury healed, but he refused. He was losing his voice and his wound was becoming infected and it could be seen that it was getting worse. The brothers told him that he must rest and seek medical assistance but he refused. A few days later while firing artillery shells on an advancing army column coming out of Aden in the direction of Zinjibar, an American drone fired a missile at him killing him along with his companion Abu Jafar al-Adeni.

Ammar died young. But in the few years he lived, he has done what others would do in decades.

May Allah have mercy on Ammar and forgive him and join him with the martyrs.

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 7**
(Fawaz al Ma'ribi: Martyrs as Heroes)

FAWAZ AL-MA'RIBI: KNOW THIS MAN

Samir Khan

He was Hassan al-Aqili. Harsh against the *kuffār* and apostates, humble with his brothers. The role model of toughness, robustness, fearlessness and bravery. A man who never looked back in the face of bullets and tank shells. A knight of the desert. A feared assassin. A one man army. A great risk taker. A marked sniper. An embodiment of Umar and Khalid, may Allah be pleased with them. Intelligent and swift off of his feet. A man with a gaze as dangerous as a lion's. A backbone for the mujahidin leadership. A man in preference of sacrifice over sitting. His determination was made of iron and steel. Words can't do justice to the man behind Fawaz al-Ma'ribi.

How can we forget his lines of poetry:

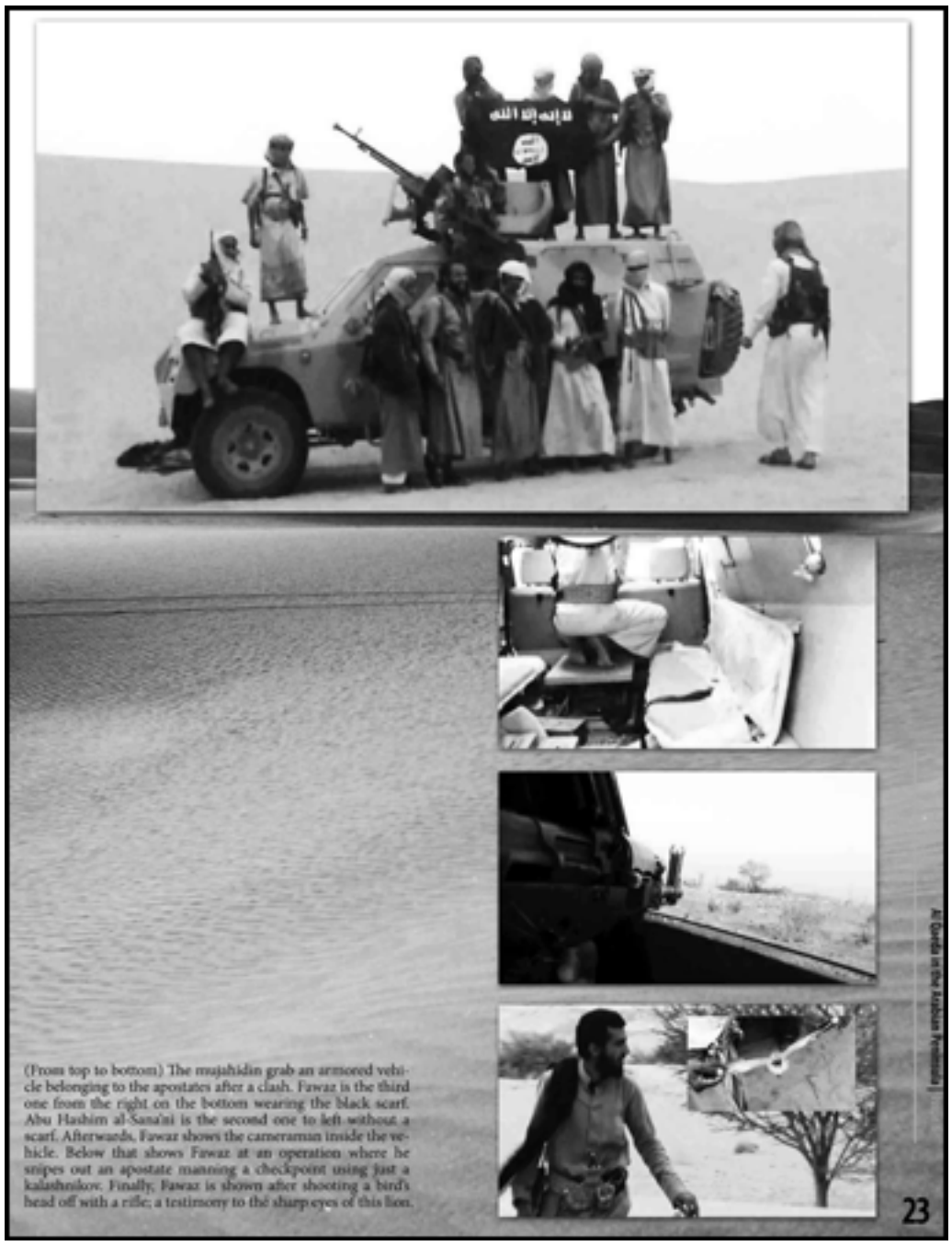
March forth in the path of Allah,
For the people of 'aqidah,
Raise the banner of tawhid,
In every valley.

He grew up in the harsh desert environment of Marib. After Amir Abu Basir, may Allah preserve him, and his brothers broke out of prison from Sana'a in 2006, Fawaz soon joined the caravan of jihad and quickly became a trustworthy transporter.

He wasn't just a transporter. He was a passionate fighter. He was known for traveling with heavy ammunition, even by himself. In no time, the apostate Yemeni army feared him, adding him to their honorable wanted list. Fawaz laughed at their wanted list like a lionhearted soldier. It meant nothing to him but evidence that he has come closer to Allah, *'Azza wa Jall*. The apostates attacked and destroyed his house, even though nobody was home. Little did they know that Fawaz lived in jihad, never in a house - even though he was married with three adorable children.

Around his brothers, he was like anyone else. He was normal, humorous, brilliant and kindhearted. Respect for him went as far as the mountains in height. He was constantly busy, moving across the entire country nearly every day, giving support to the religion of Allah. He never isolated himself from his brothers; he loved serving them, pleasing them, and conversing with them. He took great interest in them and by Allah, it showed. Those who barely knew him and got to meet him, fell in love with him. His presence was awe-inspiring.

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 8**
(Fawas al Ma'ribi: Martyrs as Heroes)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 9**
(Abu Ayman: Martyrs as Heroes)

The martyrdom of the Commander Abu Ayman

Shaykh Ibrahim al-Banna

Praise be to the One who said: ﴿And do not say about those who are killed in the way of Allah, "They are dead." Rather, they are alive, but you perceive [it] not﴾ [2: 154]. And may peace and blessings be upon His Messenger ﷺ who said: "*In the name of whom the soul of Muhammad is in His hands, I wish I could fight in the path of Allah and then be killed and then fight and be killed and then fight and be killed.*"

Today we say our farewells to Abu Ayman al-Masri, Bakr bin Sa`eed Muhammad Numaan, a hero of our ummah and one of its knights, who passed away in the land of Aden-Abyan. A man who has stood against the tyrants of the Arabian Peninsula and whom the apostate media has announced his death several times after every failed operation led by their armies, and yet Allah would protect his servant Abu Ayman and expose the lies of the government media. But now Abu Ayman had an appointment with martyrdom, a status that he'd strive to reach for a long time.

Abu Ayman was one of the members of the Jihad Movement in the city of Bani Suwaif in Egypt. He left Egypt to flee the persecution of the tyrant Hosni Mubarak spending some time in Sudan and Jordan before settling in Yemen where he worked with his brothers including Abu al-Hassan al-Mihdar, may Allah have mercy upon him.

He stayed in Marib, in Husun Âl Jalâl and was a companion of Shaykh Abu Ali al-Harithi, may Allah have mercy on him[1]. He was with Abu Ali when the military sent forces from the Republican Guard to Marib in order to capture the mujahidin. The Republican Guard forces were defeated and their commander was killed and a few of their armored vehicles were destroyed. Then he and Abu Ali al-Harithi moved to al-Jawf. During a trip with Shaykh Abu Ali between Marib and Shabwa, a U.S. drone fired a missile on the vehicle killing Abu Ali and some of his brothers. Abu Ayman and a few other brothers were not harmed as they were in another vehicle.

In the following stage of the jihad of Abu Ayman, he helped with the travel arrangements for those brothers that wanted to join the mujahidin in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and Algeria.

When the twenty three brothers broke out of the Political Security Prison in Sana'a, he hosted a group of them in his house becoming a *muhâjir* and an *anṣârî*

1 The Abu Ali al-Harithi mentioned here is not the same as the one who was killed recently by a U.S. drone strike in Abyan. Rather, this is in reference to Abu Ali al-Harithi who was the head of al Qaeda at the time and was martyred in 2002.

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 10**
(Abu Ayman: Martyrs as Heroes)

to prevent the fall of Aden from the hands of the mujahidin. The mujahidin brothers succeeded in turning back five attacks by the army, killing many soldiers in the process and taking huge caches of booty. The support of Allah for the mujahidin was clear. During one attack, six mujahidin armed only with their AK-47s succeeded in disabling 2 tanks and a few vehicles and single-handedly turned back the military convey after Allah struck fear into their hearts. The soldiers fled the battleground leaving their weapons behind them. Allah says: ﴿You did not kill them but it was Allah who killed them﴾ [8: 17]. And Allah says: ﴿And how many of a small band defeated a large band by the will of Allah﴾ [2: 249]. And Allah says: ﴿If Allah grants you victory no one can defeat you﴾ [3: 160]. Allah is with His mujahidin servants: ﴿And those who strive in Us, We will guide them to our paths and Allah is with the good doers﴾ [29: 69].

I met Abu Ayman in the front line of Dawfas in Abyan and spent a few days with him. He was dishevelled and covered in dust. He would take shade under thorny trees in the very hot summer of the Yemeni coast. He would plan with his brothers and organize his soldiers. I found him teaching the brothers how to use the artillery guns that were taken as booty from the army. He was continuously moving from place to place and whenever I would head somewhere I would find him ahead of me. Even though he was gentle and kind, in the battlefield he was strict and firm. In his home I knew him to be very kind and humble and in the service of his brothers, and I saw him in the battlefield as a lion of courage with a presence that radiates steadfastness in whoever is around him.

An American-Saudi-Yemeni coalition force launched a land, air and sea attack in which Abu Ayman fought them courageously. I met with Shaykh Ibrahim al-Rubaish and he told me that he met Abu Ayman two hours before his martyrdom. Abu Ayman was smiling and he asked some brothers to join him in going to the front line. One of the brothers had a white T-shirt on so Abu Ayman told him to stay back because the color of his T-shirt would stand out and give away their location. Instead of staying back, the brother took off his T-shirt and joined. In the battle, Abu Ayman was struck by machine gun fire from a helicopter. May Allah shower him with His mercy and grant him paradise.

Abu Ayman was a *shûrâ'* member of the al Qaeda Organization in the Arabian Peninsula. He was one of those brothers who were carrying the organization on their shoulders with patience and sincerity.

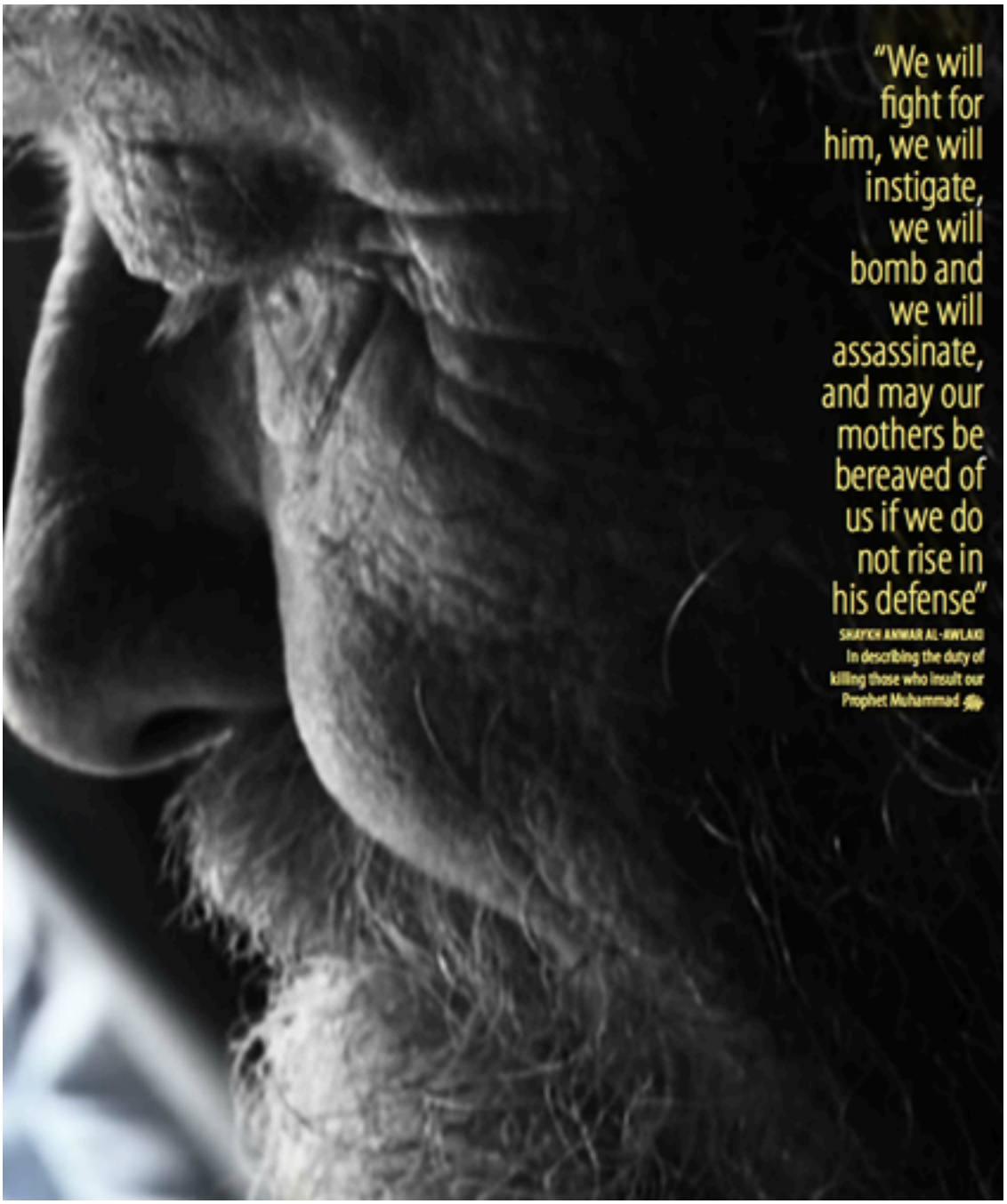
We miss you O Abu Ayman and we only say what pleases Allah. We all belong to Allah and we will all return to Him. We witness that you have fulfilled your duty so sleep comfortably until we meet in Paradise by the will of Allah. May peace be upon your soul amongst the eternal! □

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 11**
(First page of Special Tribute to Fallen Jihadis

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 12**
(Ember bomb instructions)

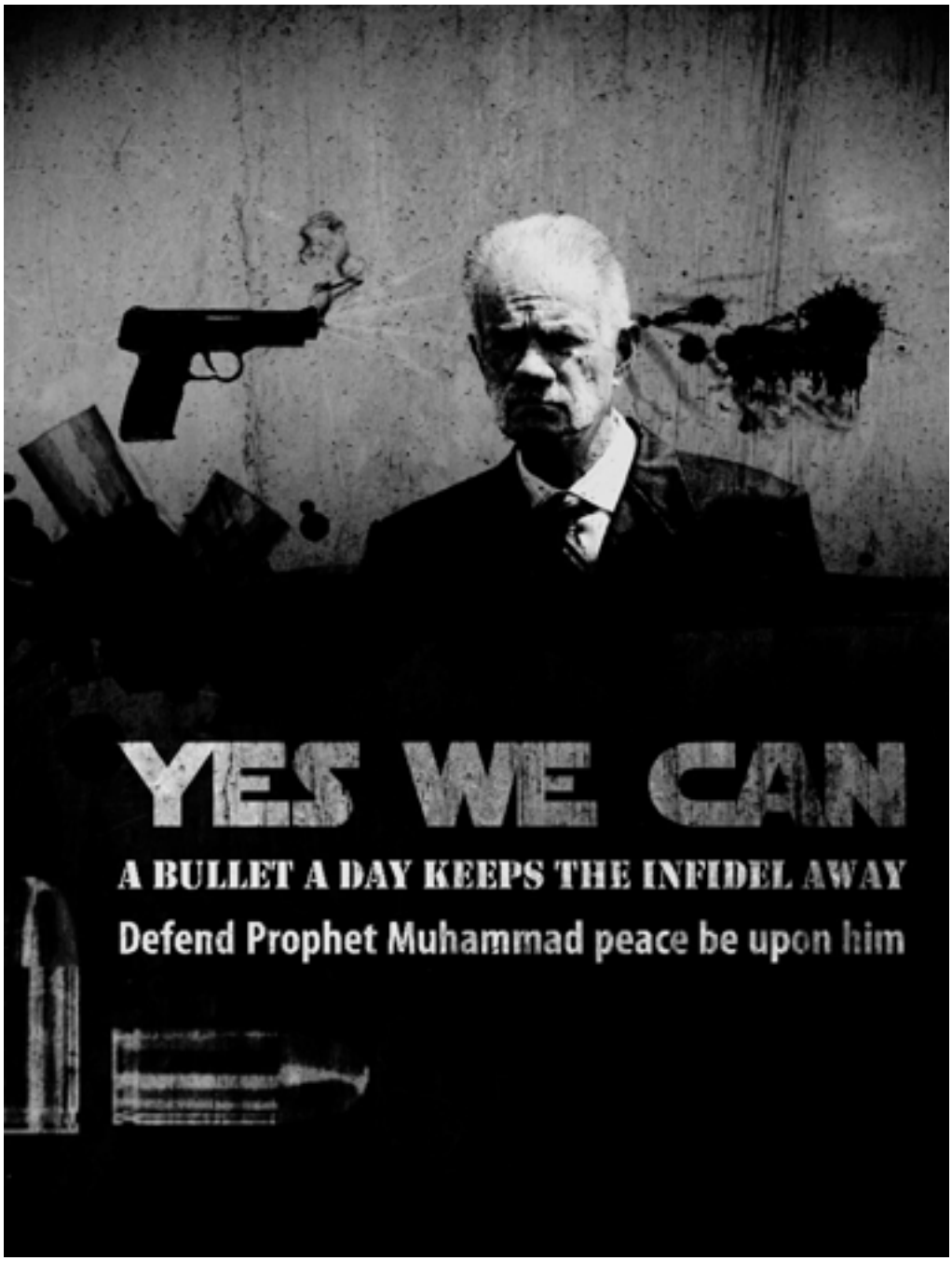
n

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 13**
(Awlaki proclaiming his desire for combatant status)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 14**
(Awlaki's praise for Nidal Hasan's rampage at Ft. Hood)

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 15**
(Graphic page promoting assassination of Christian fanatic Terry Jones)

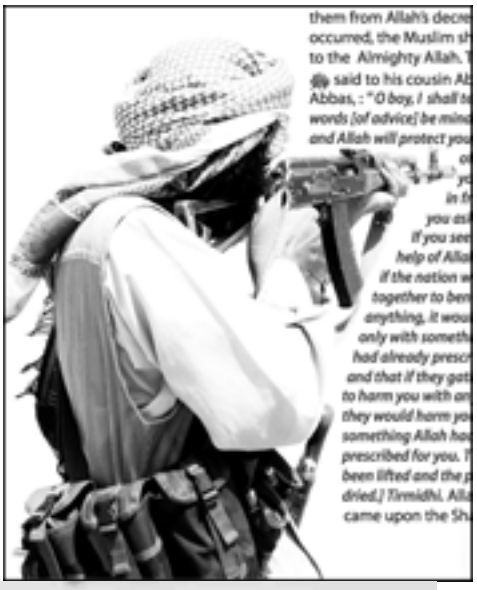


***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 16**
(Page promoting assassination of specific individuals)

Inspire Magazine Illustration 17a
(Wielding Power in the form of rifles in al Suri article)

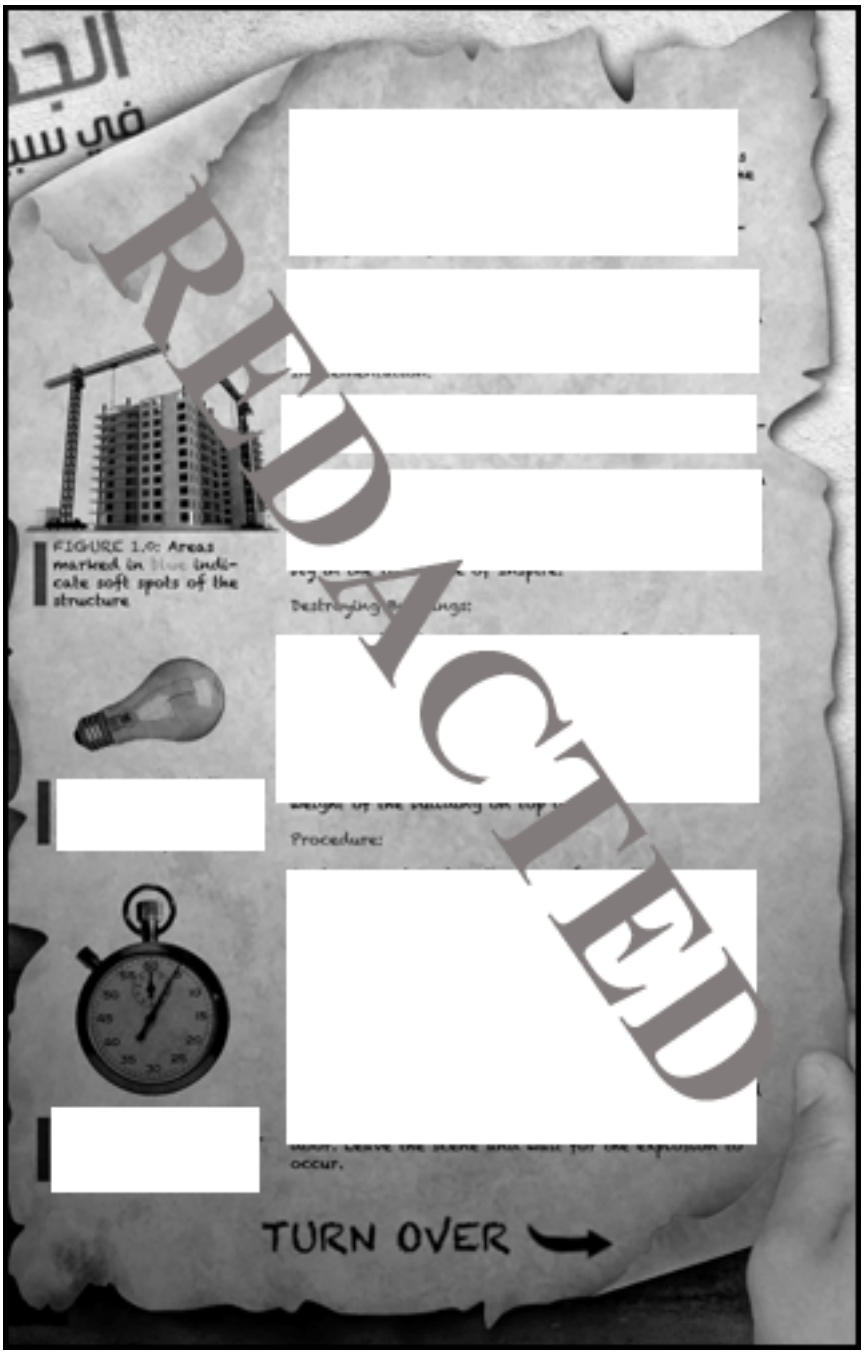
***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 17b**
(Young incognito jihadis with arms)

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 18a**
(Photographs accompanying articles with Awlaki's byline)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 18b**
(Awlaki in role of wise teacher)

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 19**
(Building destruction using bomb placement)

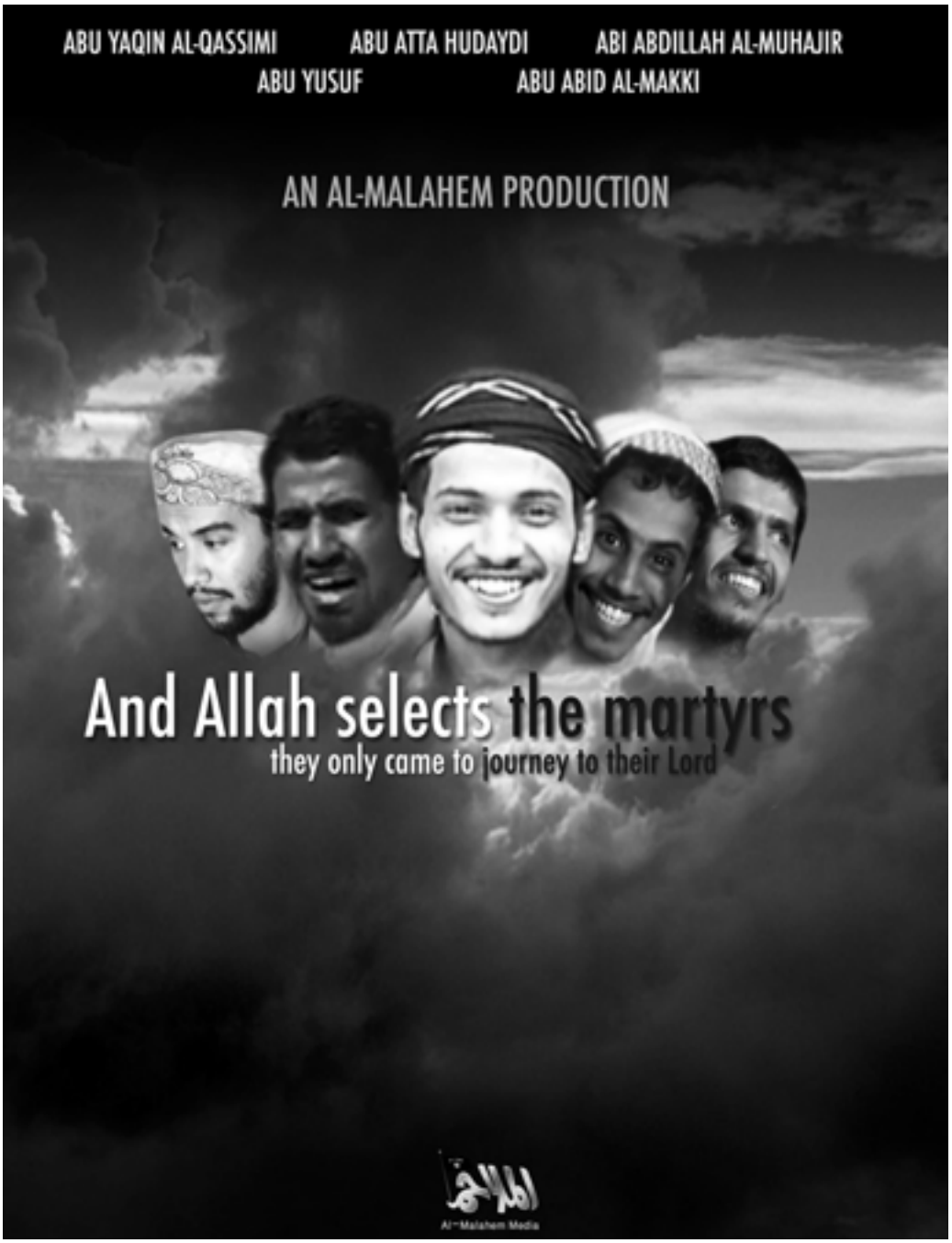


REDACTED

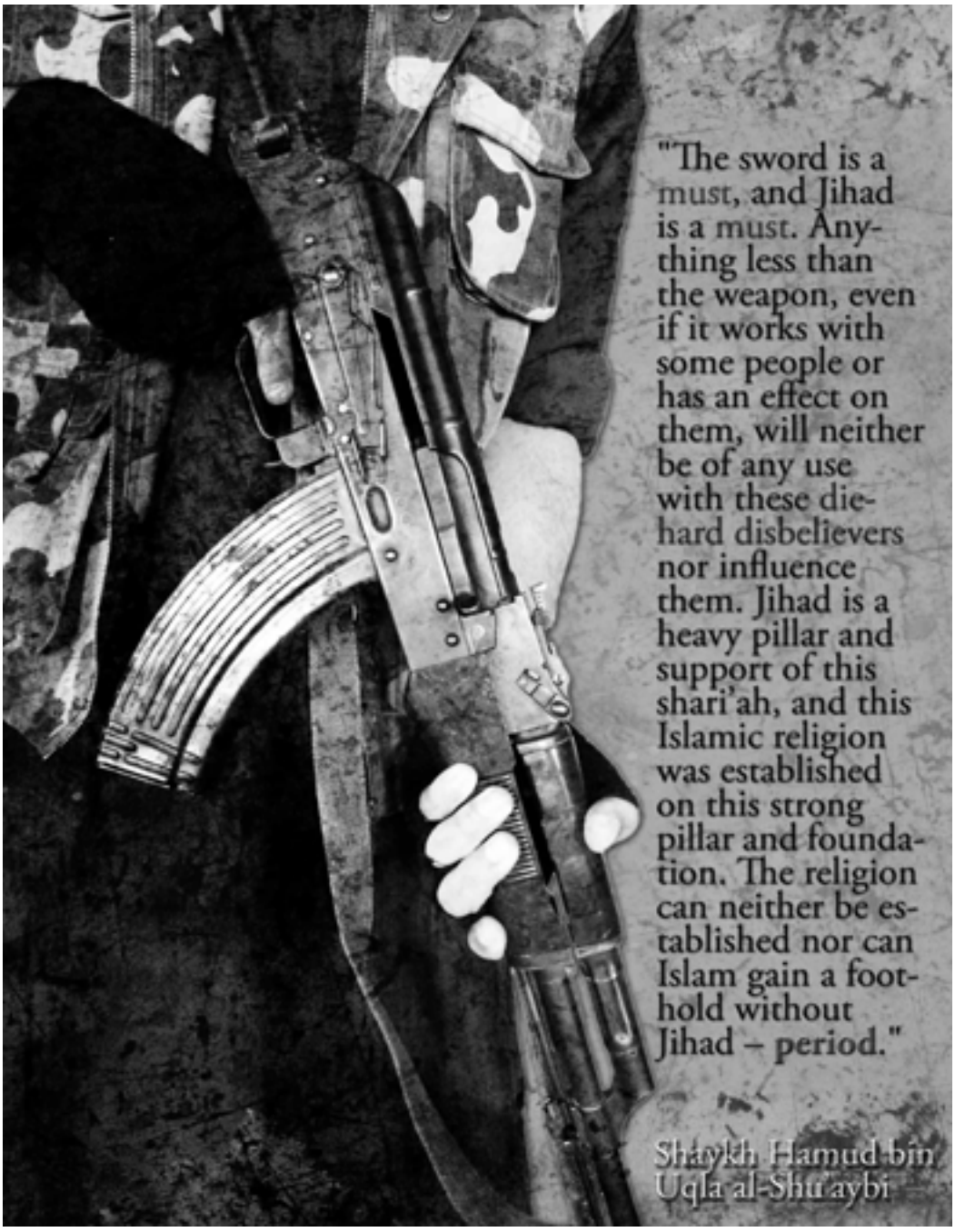
***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 20**
(Weaponry illustrating a variety of articles)

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 21**
(Assassination in contemporary urban context)

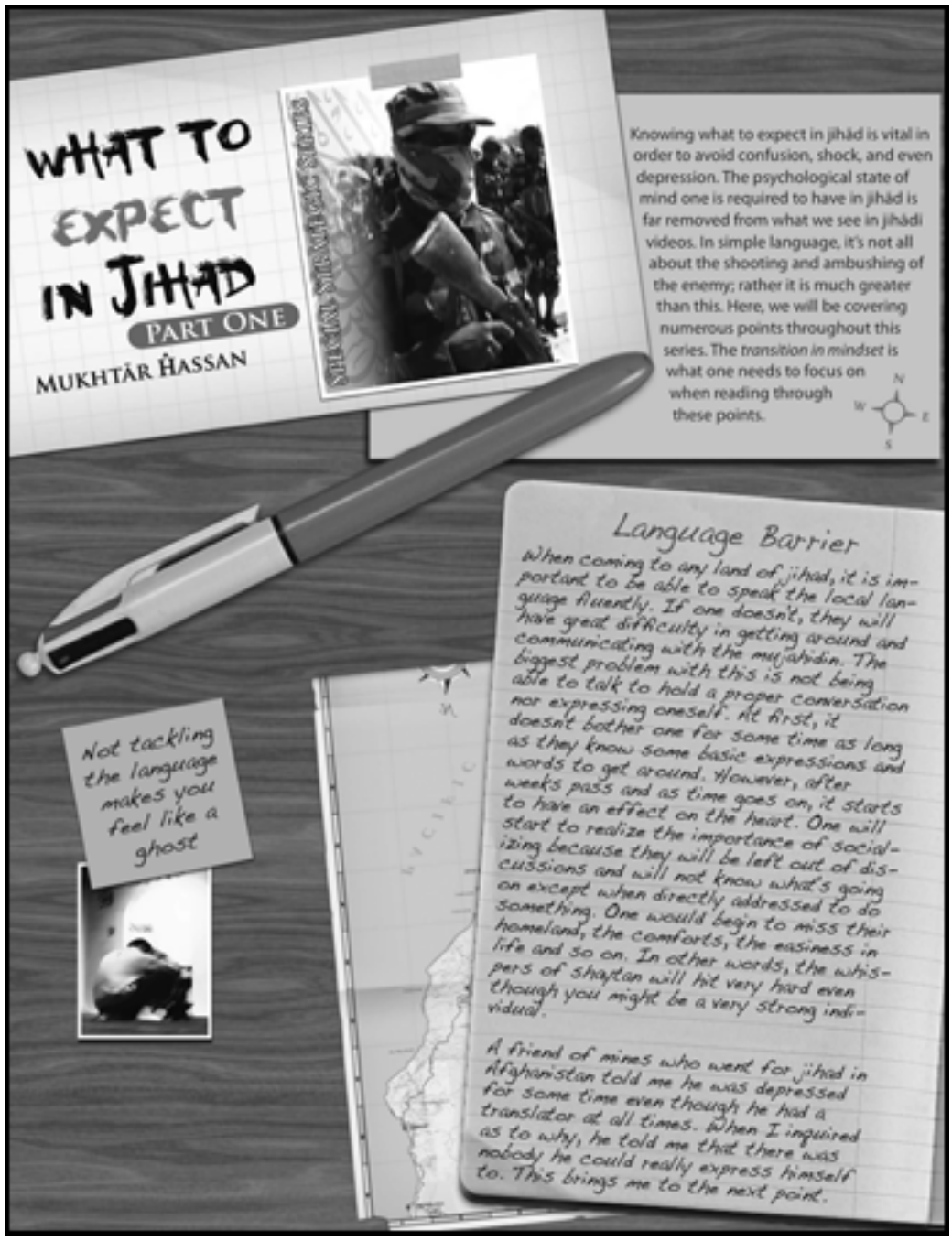
Inspire **Magazine Illustration 22**
(Movie poster depiction of martyrs in paradise)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 23**
(Violent jihad as a religious and tactical imperative)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 24**
(Aids to imagining a life as a young jihadi)



***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 25**
(Aids to imagining a life as a young jihadi)

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 26**
(Accompanying article on Muslim American identity)

***Inspire* Magazine Illustration 27**
(Instructions for making acetone peroxide bomb)

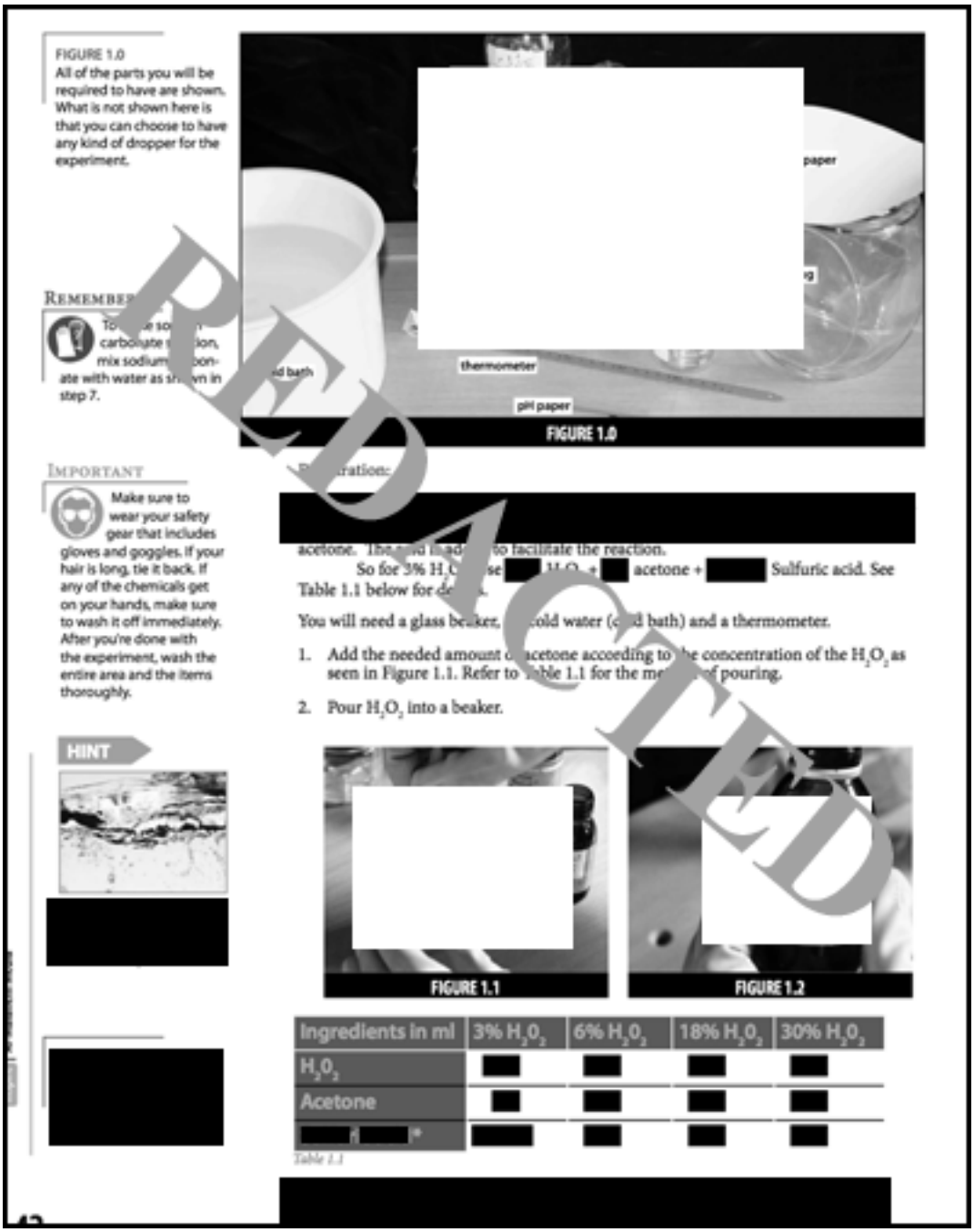


FIGURE 1.0
All of the parts you will be required to have are shown. What is not shown here is that you can choose to have any kind of dropper for the experiment.

[redacted]
paper
thermometer
pH paper
FIGURE 1.0

REMEMBER
To [redacted] carbonate [redacted]ion, mix sodium [redacted]bon-ate with water as [redacted]vn in step 7.

IMPORTANT
Make sure to wear your safety gear that includes gloves and goggles. If your hair is long, tie it back. If any of the chemicals get on your hands, make sure to wash it off immediately. After you're done with the experiment, wash the entire area and the items thoroughly.

[redacted]ration:
[redacted]
acetone. The[redacted] to facilitate the reaction.
So for 3% H_2O_2 use [redacted] H_2O_2 + [redacted] acetone + [redacted] Sulfuric acid. See Table 1.1 below for de[redacted].

You will need a glass be[redacted], [redacted]old water ([redacted]d bath) and a thermometer.

1. Add the needed amount [redacted]acetone according to [redacted]e concentration of the H_2O_2 as seen in Figure 1.1. Refer to [redacted]ble 1.1 for the me[redacted]of pouring.
2. Pour H_2O_2 into a beaker.

HINT
[redacted]

FIGURE 1.1

FIGURE 1.2

Ingredients in ml	3% H_2O_2	6% H_2O_2	18% H_2O_2	30% H_2O_2
H_2O_2	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Acetone	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]*	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

Table 1.1

[redacted]

REDACTED

Appendix

Web URL's for First Ten Issues of *Inspire* Magazine

Issue #1	http://info.publicintelligence.net/CompleteInspire.pdf
Issue #2	http://publicintelligence.net/complete-inspire-al-qaeda-in-the-arabian-peninsula-magazine-issue-2-fall-2010/
Issue #3	http://publicintelligence.net/inspire-al-qaeda-in-the-arabian-peninsula-magazine-november-2010-special-issue/
Issue #4	http://publicintelligence.net/inspire-al-qaeda-in-the-arabian-peninsula-magazine-issue-4-january-2011/
Issue #5	http://info.publicintelligence.net/InspireMarch2011.pdf
Issue #6	http://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2011/09/inspire-magazine-6.pdf
Issue #7	http://publicintelligence.net/inspire-al-qaeda-in-the-arabian-peninsula-magazine-issue-7-september-2011/
Issue #8 & 9	http://publicintelligence.net/inspire-al-qaeda-in-the-arabian-peninsula-magazine-issues-8-and-9-may-2012/
Issue #10	http://publicintelligence.net/aqap-inspire-issue-10/