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al-Qaeda as Insurgency.

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Abstract : The National Strategy for Homeland Security designates al-Qaeda as America's most immediate and serious threat. Despite the lack of consensus in academe and government on what constitutes terrorism, conventional wisdom holds that al-Qaeda is a classic transnational terrorist organization. Recently, however, some scholars have challenged that verdict, arguing instead that al-Qaeda denotes the emergence of a global Islamic insurgency. The distinction between terrorism and insurgency is not merely

theoretical, as the appropriate state responses to the two phenomena are very different. This project employs Michel Wieviorka's inversion theory to analyze al-Qaeda; the results of this methodology suggest that Osama bin Laden's organization represents an incipient insurgency rather than a new strain of terrorism. The study then compares al-Qaeda's strategy to that of doctrinal insurgent templates to determine the likelihood of the movement achieving its revolutionary objectives. Finally, policy prescriptions flowing from the preceding assessments are provided to refine the existing national strategy for the Global War on Terrorism.

Descriptors : *COMPARISON , *TERRORISM , *INSURGENCY , TERRORISTS , STRATEGY , ISLAM , THREATS , COUNTERTERRORISM , COUNTERINSURGENCY

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