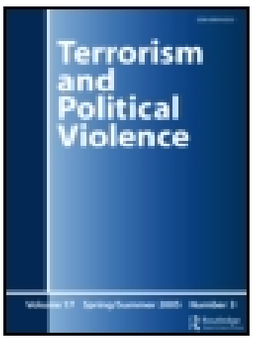

Terrorism and Political Violence

ISSN: 0954-6553 (Print) 1556-1836 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ftpv20

Religion, state, and terrorism: A global analysis

Nilay Saiya

To cite this article: Nilay Saiya (2016): Religion, state, and terrorism: A global analysis, Terrorism and Political Violence, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2016.1211525

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2016.1211525

Published online: 18 Aug 2016.

TERRORISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2016.1211525

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Religion, state, and terrorism: A global analysis

Nilay Saiya

Department of Political Science, State University of New York, Brockport, Brockport, New York, USA

ABSTRACT

This article investigates two ways in which state involvement in religion—minority and majority restriction—generates terrorism. Using a time-series, cross-national negative binomial analysis of 174 countries from 1991–2009, this study finds that when religiously devout people find themselves marginalized through either form of religious restriction, they are more likely to pursue their aims through violence. The article concludes with recommendations for policymakers.

KEYWORDS

Religion and state; religious majorities; religious minorities; terrorism

Introduction

Recent scholarship has shown that restrictions on religion are associated with higher levels of religiously motivated conflict, including civil wars, terrorism, and mob violence.[1] While not necessarily always the direct proximate cause of conflict, restrictions that inhibit religious belief and practice can contribute to radical theologies and social hostilities that result in aggression towards specific religious communities, the government, or even other countries. The literature, to date, has not empirically tested how specific patterns of governmental restriction of religion work to generate terrorism—the purpose of this study. Yet given the importance of religion in modern conflict, disentangling how different religion-state configurations contribute to faith-based violence is a worthy research question.

In a world where religion is resurging and religious identity is of increasing importance, states which discriminate on the basis of religion are likely to experience instability and violence.[2] Here I survey two forms of restrictions on religion that governments turn to in order to control religion. The first involves restrictions on religious *minorities*—limits on religious practices and institutions which are not placed on majority groups.[3] When states limit the practice of religion by minority groups, they implicitly favor adherents of other religious traditions, either purposely or unintendedly, thereby creating an unbalanced religious playing field. A second type of restriction takes the form of limitations on the practices and institutions of religious *majorities* or all religions. In these settings, the state seeks not to partner with a particular religion, but rather to vigorously monitor, manipulate, or restrict the activities of all religious groups and individuals.

Both types of religious restriction have the potential to lead to faith-based violence, including terrorism. In the case of minority restrictions, members of religious communities may choose to react violently to their disadvantaged position vis-à-vis the group(s)

CONTACT Nilay Saiya nsaiya@brockport.edu Department of Political Science, State University of New York, Brockport, Brockport, NY 14420, USA.

Color versions of one or more of the figures in this article can be found online at www.tandfonline.com/ftpv.

favored by the state, resulting in aggression against either the state and/or the group(s) with which the state has aligned itself. These kinds of integrated states may also foster bloodshed by emboldening extremists associated with the majority religion to attack minorities, sometimes even with the support of the political leadership. States restricting religious majorities, by contrast, do not engage in such collaborative partnerships, but rather promote terrorism by suppressing religious freedom and limiting avenues for peaceful political dissent across the board. Religious terrorists see such states as justifiable targets of violence because they believe them to be corrupt, secular, and consequently, illegitimate.

This article proceeds in five parts. The first presents a brief overview of the literature on religious restrictions and violence. The second section identifies different pathways by which both minority and majority religious restrictions increase the likelihood of terrorism, providing examples of each. The third section discusses the data, methods, and variable operationalization used in this study. The fourth presents the results. A concluding section situates the argument and findings within the context of national security policy.

Religious freedom and violent religious extremism

Recent scholarship has shown a positive relationship between the restriction of religion and violence. These studies find that religiously free states experience fewer incidents of violent religious extremism than their religiously restrictive counterparts. Religious liberty, it is argued, curbs religious extremism in two general ways: a) by allowing people of faith to carry out practices central to their religion and b) by allowing them to bring their ideas into the public arena, including politics.[4]

First, restrictions on religious rights involve straightforward limitations on the free practice of faith. Because religious beliefs have proven to be both "ineradicable" and "natural" in human history, attempts to repress religion constitute a "denial of the very essence of what it means to be human," thus leading to major injustices against people of faith.[5] Violations of religious expression are thus likely to be interpreted by religious groups and individuals as an affront to their very existence. As Saiya and Scime note, governments that impede religious liberty deny the "timeless and inborn pursuit of purpose, meaning and destiny," and, in the minds of believers, these faith restrictions "run counter to the will of God."[6] Such violations are especially problematic in a world characterized by a global religious resurgence.[7]

Because governmental restriction of religion inhibits or prevents people altogether from fulfilling their quintessentially human pursuit of meaning and purpose—to understand and achieve harmony with transcendent reality—restrictions on religion serve to radicalize some religious groups, undermine moderates, and increase popular support for extremists in a way that other forms of repression may not, permitting faith-based terrorists to overcome barriers to terrorist activity prevalent in repressive countries. It is one thing to restrict materialist conceptions of liberty; it is quite another to deny the natural and powerful yearning to pursue answers to the ultimate questions of existence in this life and in the hereafter. This plausibly means that similar types of political or economic restrictions that work to deter secular forms of terrorism may not always have the same effect when it comes to religious terrorism.[8] When this sense of religious disillusionment becomes widespread enough, certain faith-based actors may turn to the gun against

those perceived to be responsible for their marginalized and suppressed status.[9] Targets of violence may include state officials, members or holy sites of other religious groups, or the population at large.

By contrast, religious freedom, it is argued, has the effect of weakening the narrative of religious extremists that their faith is under attack by the state, thus making violence less likely. Whereas religiously restrictive settings do not allow for the exposing of logical inconsistencies and incorrect construal of the radical narrative by allowing diverse perspectives to be heard, religiously free environments impede the development of radical theologies by fostering open debate about the proper interpretation of religion.[10] In religiously free settings, radicals will have their views challenged and critiqued in the marketplace of ideas and have to defend them, thus dampening the impetus towards violence. For this reason, religious actors who do not find themselves sidelined through laws or violent suppression, therefore, are much less likely to pursue their aims through violence than groups which are not rendered the capacity to carry out activities central to their faith and bring those ideas to bear in the public realm.

A second general pathway linking governmental restrictions on religion to violence involves the denial of political rights attendant to religious freedom. Several studies on democracy and terrorism reveal an inverse relationship between political freedom and the likelihood of terrorism.[11] Authoritarian states, which do not allow participation in political decision-making and freedom of expression, increase the likelihood of terrorism occurring in that they leave violence as the only means by which aggrieved persons can try to change the system.[12] Curbing political participation for people of faith makes it easier for extremist ideas and factions to dominate otherwise moderate religious groups.[13] Furthermore, when these kinds of regimes harshly crack down on more peaceful forms of dissent such as protests, they invite retaliatory violence against governmental brutality.[14]

Conversely, the political rights part and parcel of religious liberty present otherwise militant-minded individuals and groups with the ability to exact change through legitimate institutional mechanisms through which they can influence the character of the state and its religious identity by means other than violence.[15] In religiously free countries, religious elites routinely encourage their followers to make their voices heard by engaging in electoral processes, grassroots activism, and other forms of civic engagement. In doing so, they help ensconce the legitimacy of the political apparatus.[16] Political engagement also helps induce moderation and the formation of cross-cutting cleavages, as politically active religious groups have to compete with each other for votes and must appeal to the political center in order to capture the widest proportion of the electorate.[17] Participation in the political process by religious groups, therefore, encourages peaceful forms of competition between and within religious groups, thus lessening the likelihood of violence. None of this is to suggest, of course, that religiously free countries *never* experience religious terrorism or that radicals will not take advantage of periods of transition from authoritarianism towards liberty, only that religiously free countries tend not to experience faith-based terrorism at the same levels that their religiously-restrictive counterparts do.

Two patterns of religious discrimination

The research summarized above has revealed that religious tolerance may be conducive to more peaceful societies. This work, however, has not attempted to explain or analyze how

different forms of governmental religious restrictions work to generate terrorism—a gap which this article hopes to fill. Governments can restrict religious rights via two types of restrictions—those on religious majorities (or all religions) and those on religious minorities. While the specific policies and actions part and parcel of minority and majority religious restriction may appear similar, the distinction in motivation is crucial, and the implications for resultant violence can be markedly different. This means that both forms of restrictions are qualitatively different from each other and encourage violence in different ways. Distinguishing between limitations placed on majority religions from those placed only on minority faith traditions provides a clearer understanding of the different ways in which distinctive forms of restrictions can help produce terrorist violence. The following section discusses these dynamics.

Minority restrictions

The contemporary realities of global migration and the consequent increasing of religious diversity require states to design policies for dealing with their religious minorities, but the ways that countries handle this task can differ markedly. In some cases, governments have been successful at integrating and protecting minorities and heterodox believers in the majority faith who depart from the conventional religious belief and practice. At other times, people belonging to minority religious communities suffer from an institutional bias against new or historically repressed religious communities in the form of legal discrimination—laws or official policies which inhibit or prevent members of certain or all minority religious communities from carrying out practices central to their faith-based commitments but that do not apply to the majority religion.[18] Examples of these violations include, but are not limited to, onerous restrictions on building and maintaining houses of worship, arbitrary confiscation of property, prohibitions on the wearing of religious garb, mandatory religious identification on legal documents, restrictions on proselytizing, discriminatory school curricula, and laws prohibiting blasphemy or apostasy.[19] Official laws and policies such as these serve to create an unbalanced playing field in the state's religious economy. This results in minorities facing discrimination in a way that other groups in society do not. Minority religious restriction says less about a country's general attitude towards religion and more about how it treats specific religious communities.[20]

The plight of religious minorities is commonly worsened by the fact that religiously restrictive states usually also have policies in place that favor religious majorities, including special legal privileges or the ability to regulate religious or political life at the expense of others.[21] The state itself need not be religious in its makeup in order to ally with religious groups in society. In some cases, the regime may take on the religious character of the group it has partnered with as in Iran, Nigeria, and pre-war Afghanistan; in others, the secular state has found it politically expedient to extend patronage to certain religious factions but not to others. This is the case in countries like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Governments may justify their partnership with majority religions on the grounds that it is necessary for fostering a common identity, social stability, and national security, which they believe are under threat by religious outsiders.[22] Often these policies are supported by the religious majority, which, in turn, legitimates the authority of the government.

The idea that discrimination, which fosters grievances, can lead to violence has a long pedigree in the contentious politics literature, including the study of terrorism.[23] According to the "relative deprivation" theory first laid out by Ted R. Gurr, groups in society feel "deprived" when they experience some form of political, economic, or cultural exclusion compared to similarly situated groups.[24] This discontent leads to frustration, anger, a sense of injustice, the hardening of in-group solidarity, and an atmosphere of distrust and intolerance; if severe enough, eventually deprivation results in armed opposition against the state by those attempting to redress their grievances.[25] There is no reason to believe that this logic would not also apply to religious minorities who experience discriminatory policies at the hands of the state.[26] In such settings, religious discrimination leads to the generation of resentment on the part of minorities and heightens the likelihood that such groups will take up the gun against governments deemed to be acting unfairly towards them.[27] As explained by Akbaba and Taydas:

> Members of the religious minority perceive discriminatory policies as fundamental threats to their moral framework and develop antagonistic feelings towards the perpetrators of such policies. Acts of discrimination are perceived by the victims as evidence of the government's intolerance and lack of respect for other belief systems. Rebels who feel subordinate stop perceiving the state as a neutral entity but rather identify the state as an agent responsible for promoting the identity of the dominant group.[28]

At other times, official state laws and policies codifying minority discrimination can embolden extremists associated with the majority faith tradition to carry out violence against religious minorities, knowing that punishment by the government will be either weak or nonexistent.[29] The state may turn a blind eye to violence carried out by adherents of the religion with which it has partnered in order to retain its good standing with that particular religious group. Preferential treatment of religion can also give rise to transnational religious terrorism against other states that have allied with a different religion or restrict the rights of their own religious minorities.[30] In short, in states characterized by minority religious discrimination, religious violence may be supported by the state itself or arise from embattled minority communities.

India vividly demonstrates the connection between minority religious discrimination and violence carried out by religious groups favored by the state. Religious violence in India increased markedly after the coming to power of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1998—a party that sought to integrate religion and politics at both the national and state levels by promoting the notion of *Hindutva*: India as a land for Hindus, to the exclusion of other religious groups in the country like Muslims and Christians. What followed were several years of religious conflict involving the politically empowered Hindu majority which sought to impose its will on and restrict the rights of India's Muslim and Christian minorities, seen most vividly in the terrorism, riots, and pogroms that took place in the fiercely Hindu nationalist state of Gujarat at the behest of Hindu Right politicians.[31] Similar increases in minority religious persecution and violent extremism could be detected after the BJP retook power in 2014.

The partnership between Hinduism and the state has also served to provoke a violent reaction on the part of embattled groups. In the Punjab, the militant wing of the Sikh resistance movement arose in response to brutal repression over centuries by successive national governments stemming back to the time of the Mughal Empire. The most vivid

example of anti-Sikh discrimination and the roots of modern Sikh terrorism occurred on June 4, 1984, when a government-orchestrated massacre took place in the Sikhs' central place of worship, the Golden Temple (*Harmandir Sahib*) complex in Amritsar, Punjab as well as 41 other houses of worship (*gudwaras*). Operation Blue Star, as it was called, commenced a spiral of Sikh terrorism and violent state reaction that would define India's relationship with its Sikh minority in the coming years. Following the attack on the Golden Temple, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was killed by two of her Sikh bodyguards in Delhi on October 31, 1984. The assassination, in turn, led to a hardening of religious identities and sparked a widespread pogrom against Sikhs and their property in northern Indian cities with significant Sikh populations.[32]

H1: As a country's level of minority religious discrimination increases, so does the number of terrorist attacks perpetrated by religious terrorist organizations it experiences.

Majority restrictions

It is important to examine majority restrictions on religion separately from minority restrictions as the two are qualitatively different from each other. In the case of minority restrictions, the state singles out particular religious groups for unfair treatment.[33] Majority religious restriction says less about how a country treats specific religious communities (though the state may still single out a particular faith tradition for especially harsh treatment) and more about its general attitude or approach towards religion. These states do not merely separate religion and state in the way that liberal-democratic countries do; instead, they want to put religion under state control due to their fear or suspicion of religion, even if this entails some degree of outward support for religion in certain cases.[34] Nevertheless, the goal here is not to advance some idealized vision of a proper religious society, but instead to perpetuate the state's authority by subjugating or co-opting religion, with the result being the primacy of *nonreligious* principles in the political realm to the largest extent possible.[35]

Why might states restrict the religious majority? Sometimes such restrictions owe to guiding ideologies which are anti-religion in nature and take the form of outright hostility towards religion with the goal of eradicating independent religious expression in society. Communist states like the former Soviet Union, North Korea, and China under Chairman Mao fall into this category. After the end of the Cold War and the waning of communism, this form of religious regulation is becoming increasingly rare.

A far more common form of majority restrictions involves religious co-optation. In contrast to states which are hostile to any form of religious expression, other states which restrict religious majorities may allow certain forms of religiosity to exist so long as they are subservient to the state. Political elites in these countries may not necessarily be hostile towards religion and may even support the private practice of religion. In fact, religion may even serve a legitimating function in these states if it can be properly controlled in the service of boosting nationalism, helping to pacify citizens, or preventing disorder. Instead, the restrictions on religion that exist in these states seek to prevent religion from acquiring an independent power base from which it can challenge or otherwise constrain the regime.[36]

Paradoxically, many state leaders believe that the best way to keep religion's public power in check is to support a moderate strain of the predominant faith tradition within their countries, making it dependent on or beholden to the government.[37] Jonathan Fox explains that political elites do this "because supporting religion is among the most effective strategies to make religious institutions dependent on the government, and thereby more subject to its control."[38] He finds that "no state regulates, controls, or restricts religion without also supporting it in at least some small way."[39] In other words, the support given to these religious institutions and actors comes with strings attached; the sustenance ends if religion begins to encroach on the territory of those in power. According to Fox, religious regulation is simultaneously intertwined with government support for religion.[40]

For example, Middle Eastern states in which secular nationalism took root, unlike communist states, sought not to eliminate religion but to manage it in such a way so as to help entrench the power of secular dictators, usually by co-opting a particular strain of Islam believed to be conducive to their political objectives, while banning those which did not faithfully adhere to their ideology and policies.[41] One might point to Jordan—a country where all mosques are controlled by the state and Muslim clergy draw their salaries from the government—or Turkey—a secular republic that has generally been repressive of religious freedoms throughout its history in order to uphold the secularist legacy of its founder, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, and where the Directorate of Religious Affairs manages mosques and religious schools and oversees all Islamic leaders. These are classic ways in which secular regimes have attempted to control religion within their borders. In short, if states restrictive of religious minorities impede religious liberty through the politicization of religion, states restrictive of majorities hinder it through the principle of secularism, seeking to manage rather than support religiosity, even if this means adopting a veneer of support for religion.

Like minority restrictive states, states which restrict majority religious bodies through a state-controlled religious climate may also be the target of religious violence. This is particularly true in the Middle East where the failures of secular nationalism have given rise to an assertive, confrontational, and sometimes violent religion.[42] For example, the extremist Sunni group Turkish Hezbollah, though initially supported clandestinely by the Turkish state to counter the activities of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, eventually turned against the government itself in response to a worsening context of religious marginalization in the 1990s.[43] The overarching goal of the terrorist group is to establish an Islamic state by the force of arms. Sometimes militant movements were forced underground and operated under the radar of the state. In places where religion was (and continues to be) suppressed in parts of the Middle East, religious institutions often became the only social venue available for like-minded individuals to vent their frustration against the state and served as a space for group coalescence and the dissemination of radical ideologies.[44] Restricted from public life and driven underground, these banned movements gave rise to the most feared transnational terrorist networks in history. In some places, disillusionment with the state exploded into full-blown religious civil wars as in Algeria and Syria. Outside of the Middle East, secularist states like China have also experienced religious terrorism. In that country, the restriction of religion has helped foment a violent form of political resistance among Muslim Uyghurs in the Western Xinjiang region.[45]

In sum, in such states, religion can become an attractive medium to challenge the authority of the secular state, even for those who might otherwise be moderates. The political leadership in these countries risks alienating the large masses of people in the middle who support neither the state nor the agenda of the radicals.

H2: As a country's level of majority religious discrimination increases, so does the number of terrorist attacks perpetrated by religious terrorist organizations it experiences.

At this point, it is important to stress the probabilistic but not deterministic nature of the argument. A well-informed reader will have quickly recognized aberrant cases that do not fit well with the theory: Christians today in the Middle East, religious minorities under communist or fascist rule, Bahá'ís in Iran, and so forth. Furthermore, cases exist in which religious terrorists have carried out attacks against religiously free countries. In the former case, though pervasive religious restrictions may be present, religious groups rarely turn to the gun; in the latter case, they do. Why?

Two important caveats are worth mentioning. First, situations of either form of restriction do not always result in widespread terrorism. A good deal depends on the nature of the religious actors involved. Political scientist Daniel Philpott notes that where non-privileged or suppressed actors accept the political status quo or hold political theologies of non-violence, we would not expect them to embrace terrorism.[46] For example, sometimes challenges to the state resulted in peaceable revolutions like the one led by the Solidarity movement in Poland to oppose communist rule. Similarly, governmental maltreatment of Christians in Ethiopia or Buddhists in Tibet did not spark a violent backlash from beleaguered groups. At other times, extreme persecution of the faithful served to eradicate the targeted religious groups, thus precluding the possibility of faith-based violence as was the case with the seventh-century church in North Africa and the seventeenth-century church in Japan.[47] Commonly, though, governmental repression of religion drove marginalized religious groups underground where they operated illegally and sometimes (though certainly not always) formed militant clandestine organizations to fight back against the state.

Second, religiously free countries are not immune to faith-based violence. The United States, for instance, has suffered from religious terrorism. However, homegrown religious terrorists in the U.S. tend to be (rarely effective) "lone wolf" vigilantes who do not act on behalf of an overarching organization.[48] Moreover, the threats the U.S. faces from transnational religious terrorism all stem from religiously repressive places and have little to do with the American structural context. Finally, even in the U.S., terrorists may be reacting to what they believe to be the government encroaching on religious freedoms. Timothy McVeigh, the perpetrator of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, cited the 1993 government siege of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas as one reason for his actions.[49] These caveats notwithstanding, the likelihood of religious terrorism tends to increase in states which succumb to the temptation of restricting the rights of minority, majority, or all religious groups.

Data and methods

The present section turns attention to testing these claims using a unique dataset on terrorism. Data for the dependent variable of interest—terrorist attacks—are derived and

coded from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) hosted at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), an open-source database of over 150,000 terrorist attacks, which includes descriptions of terrorist incidents between the years 1970 and 2015.[50] Because it is logical that religion-state arrangements would most likely be directly connected to faith-based forms of violence, only identifiable religious terrorist attacks are included.[51] The unit of observation is the state and how many religious terrorist attacks it experienced each year between 1991 and 2009, as this timeframe corresponds to available data for the measures used for religious restrictions. Importantly, this study includes both domestic and transnational terrorist attacks. It is important to include transnational attacks since globalization and the revolution in communications technologies has made it possible for people of faith in one country to be aware of acts of discrimination against their co-religionists in another and come to their defense.[52] In addition to information on terrorist attacks, the dataset also includes various data drawn from a number of sources on the political, economic, social, and religious characteristics of the countries included in the study in order to test alternative explanations for religious terrorism.

Operationalization for the concepts of minority and majority religious restrictions is taken from Round 2 of the Religion and State (RAS) Project.[53] Run by Jonathan Fox of Bar Ilan University, the RAS dataset measures the extent to which the state involves itself in religious affairs. The project codes 147 primary variables for 175 countries which in 2003 had a population of at least 250,000 (and some additional Western countries with lower populations) on a yearly basis from 1990 to 2008. This study uses two categories of variables found in the dataset: religious discrimination against minority religions (religious discrimination) and religious discrimination against majority or all religions (religious restrictions).

The first set of variables examines 30 specific types of restrictions placed by the state on the practice of religion by some or all minority religious groups that are not placed on the majority group. This category of restrictions attempts to gauge if and to what extent governments single out some or all minorities for unequal treatment vis-à-vis the majority group. These policies include restrictions on minority practices, restrictions on minority institutions, restrictions on conversions and missionary activity, and other forms of restrictions (see Appendix A for a complete list of each restriction). For each year, the scores for all 30 components of minority regulation were combined to create a composite measure of minority religious discrimination which theoretically ranges from 0–90, though, in reality, no country scores higher than 56 on this measure in a single year.

The second set of variables examines 29 specific types of restrictions placed by the state on the majority religion or all religions (see Appendix B for a complete list of each restriction). This category of restriction attempts to gauge if and to what extent the government restricts, regulates, or controls religion *in general*, rather than looking at government treatment of specific religious communities. These policies include restrictions on religion's political role, restrictions on religious institutions and clergy, restrictions on religious practices, and other forms of regulation, control, and restrictions. For each year, the scores for all 29 components of majority regulation were combined to create a composite measure of majority religious discrimination which theoretically ranges from 0–87, though, in reality, no country scores higher than 71 on this measure in a single year.

Each item in both categories is coded on the following scale:

(1) Not significantly restricted
(2) The activity is slightly restricted
(3) The activity is slightly restricted for most/all *or* sharply restricted for some
(4) The activity is prohibited or sharply restricted for most/all

This study also includes a number of control variables past scholarship has found to be related to the onset of terrorism:

Number of Past Terrorism Incidents is a variable that controls for the number of attacks in the immediately preceding year. I include this variable to account for the possibility that terrorist attacks in 1 year might predict attacks in the following year.

Logged Population, Logged GDP/capita, and *Logged Area* are measures of population, wealth, and countries' geographic size, respectively, to control for the idea that poor, highly populated, or geographically large countries face a higher proportion of terrorist attacks.[54] The data for population and wealth are derived from the World Bank's Development Indicators.[55] The data for country area come from the *CIA World Factbook*.[56]

Foreign Occupation is a dummy variable that takes the value of "1" if a country was under foreign occupation during a particular year and "0" otherwise. Including this variable controls for the finding that occupation has a strong effect on the occurrence of terrorism.[57] Data are taken from the list of foreign occupations put together by Collard-Wexler, Pischedda, and Smith.[58]

The idea that weak or collapsed states are especially prone to violence including terrorism has a long pedigree in the contentious politics literature.[59] *State Fragility* is an interval measure that rates each country according to its level of fragility in both effectiveness and legitimacy across four development dimensions: security, political, economic, and social. Data on state fragility are taken from the State Fragility Index hosted at the Center for Systemic Peace. This source provides annual state fragility, effectiveness, and legitimacy indices for the world's 167 countries with populations greater than 500,000 in 2013.[60]

Taken from the Minorities at Risk Dataset, the number of *Minority Religions* measures the number of minority religious groups in a country with at least five percent of the overall population.[61] This variable is included to test for the possibility that more minority religious groups in a country make religious conflict more likely.

Two measures of violence are incorporated to control for the effect of other forms of conflict on terrorism. The first is a measure of *Religious Civil War*, taken from political scientist Monica Toft's data on civil wars. These are wars explicitly rooted in religious or ethnic identity.[62] The second measure, *Militarized Interstate Disputes*, accounts for countries involved in international disputes in which some military force is used short of full-scale war.[63] The variable is taken from the Correlates of War Database.[64] Countries involved in either a religious civil war or a militarized interstate dispute were coded with a "1" or "0" otherwise (see Table 1).

The data for all variables were arranged into a longitudinal panel setup, with the country-year as the unit of observation. 174 countries were analyzed. Because the dependent variable, number of terrorist attacks on a yearly basis, is an event count, negative binomial regression (with robust standard errors clustered on countries) is the most appropriate statistical technique to gauge the relative import of the independent and

Table 1. Summary statistics.

Variable	Observations	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
Terrorism Incidents	3138	1.70	10.11	0	172
Minority Restriction	3107	8.23	10.47	0	56
Majority Restriction	3105	10.24	13.23	0	71
Population (logged)	3096	8.90	1.76	3.37	14.09
Area (logged)	3096	11.83	2.14	5.08	16.61
GDP (logged)	2870	7.67	1.65	4.38	11.69
State Fragility	2268	9.77	6.69	0	25
Foreign Occupation	3150	0.06	0.24	0	1
Religious Minorities	3060	1.63	1.81	0	11
Religious Civil War	3150	0.06	0.24	0	1
Militarized Dispute	2980	0.31	0.46	0	1

control variables on religious terrorism. Negative binomial regression is best suited for event count models in which there is over-dispersed data (i.e., when the conditional variance exceeds the conditional mean). This would likely be the case with most quantitative analyses of terrorism, as it is here.[65] The independent variables are lagged 1 year, within country-case, to account for the possibility of an endogenous relationship between religious restrictions and terrorism, thereby helping in determining the direction of causality.

Results

Table 2 shows the results for regressions using terrorist attacks on a yearly basis as the dependent variable. The results reveal that, by and large, countries that engage in either minority or majority religious discrimination tend to experience higher levels of terrorism than countries that do not.[66]

Model 1 includes a measure for minority restrictions but does not test for the effect of majority restrictions. Model 2 does the opposite. In both models, the restriction variable emerges as statistically significant and signed in the expected positive direction when tested against alternative explanations for terrorism. Also significant in both models are past terrorism incidents, the log of population, the log of Area, the log of GDP/capita, state fragility, religious civil wars, and militarized interstate disputes.

Using post-estimation margins statistics for predicted probabilities of terrorist incidents, Figures 1 and 2 show the substantive effect for both minority and majority restrictions on terrorism when controlling for other variables. As the level of restrictions rises, so too does the number of terrorist attacks countries tend to experience. Countries on the high end of minority restrictions experience about 17 attacks per year, while similarly situated countries with respect to majority restrictions suffer slightly less than that.

Model 3 incorporates both minority and majority restrictions into the same regression. In this model, the coefficient for majority restrictions remains significant. However, the coefficient for minority restrictions fails to reach the level of significance. This indicates that while both types of discrimination matter, majority restrictions are a comparably stronger predictor of terrorist incidents than minority restrictions. Perhaps this suggests that states which restrict majority or all religions create a broader base of grievance than states that restrict only minority faiths, or that countries which restrict minority rights are

Table 2. Types of restrictions and terrorism, 1991–2009.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Past Terrorism Incidents	0.09***	0.08***	0.08***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Minority Restrictions	0.03**		0.00
	(0.01)		(0.12)
Majority Restrictions		0.03***	0.02**
		(0.01)	(0.01)
Population (logged)	1.09***	1.14***	1.12***
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Area (logged)	−0.46***	−0.49***	−0.49***
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
GDP/capita (logged)	0.86***	0.77***	0.79***
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.11)
State Fragility	0.26***	0.24***	0.24***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Foreign Occupation	−0.55	−0.50	−0.51
	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.34)
Religious Minorities	0.07	0.02	0.03
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Religious Civil War	1.47***	1.67***	1.63***
	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.32)
Militarized Disputes	1.07***	1.14***	1.13***
	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.19)
Observations	2203	2203	2199
Constant	−16.72***	−15.88***	−15.94***
	(1.43)	(1.43)	(1.43)

Note. Robust standard errors in parentheses.
*$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$, ***$p \leq .001$.

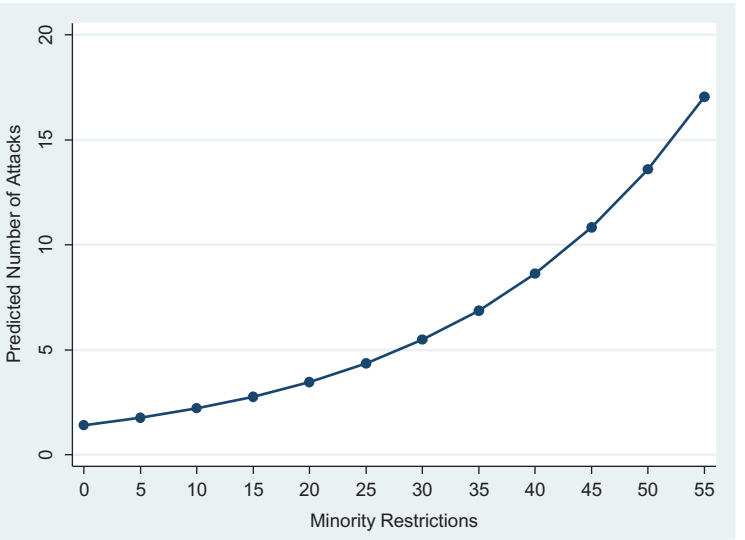

Figure 1. Predicted probabilities (minority restrictions).

better able to police those communities. Still, both restriction variables remain signed in the expected positive direction.

The models also reveal three other interesting findings. First, the coefficient for logged area is negative in each model; countries with larger territories are not more likely to experience terrorist attacks than smaller countries. Second, the log of GDP/capita is

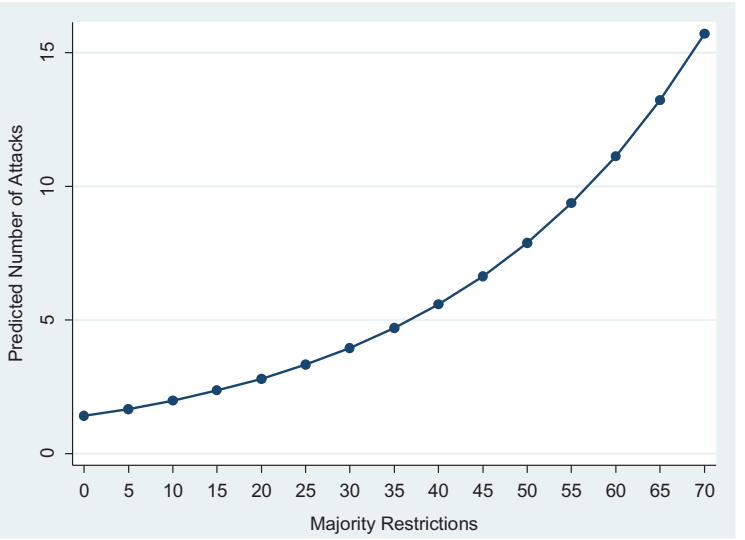

Figure 2. Predicted probabilities (majority restrictions).

strongly and positively associated with terrorist incidents, indicating that wealthier countries are at *greater* risk for attacks. Finally, foreign occupation has a *negative* relationship to terrorism in all three models, though it fails to reach the threshold for significance in each one.

Two robustness tests were also performed to account for factors not included in Models 1 and 2 that might be related to the onset of religious terrorism. Some have suggested, for example, that the religion of Islam breeds more violence than other religions.[67] The first robustness test examined whether states in which Muslims comprise the majority of the population experience more terrorism. After including a dummy variable for Muslim-majority countries, both minority and majority restrictions remain significant as does the newly added dummy variable for Muslim-majority states. Importantly, though, this finding also shows that the deleterious effects of religious restrictions on terrorism are not being channeled through Islamic majority countries. A second robustness test includes a time component to see if terrorism increased significantly as a result of the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent "global war against terrorism." Thus, a dummy variable was included which took the value of "1" if an attack took place after 2001 and "0" otherwise. Including this variable did not change the findings for minority and majority restrictions and the dummy variable itself was not found to be significant.

Conclusion

For decades, many states have been searching for a silver bullet by which they can effectively counter the threat posed by extremist religious groups. Usual counterterrorist approaches include military interventions, police action, targeted assassinations, target hardening, and de-radicalization campaigns. All of these merit consideration. However, that a country's level of religious discrimination might also serve as a kind of bellwether of likely terrorist threats has yet to be given serious attention by national security

practitioners. In fact, especially since the attacks of 9/11, many governments around the world have made the case for the exact opposite policy: the increased restriction of religion, using the threat posed by religious radicalism as a pretext for crackdowns on religious groups of all kinds. Indeed, the conventional wisdom has been that restrictions on a wide range of freedoms—including religious expression—may be a necessary evil in order to realize the goals of stability and security. This article finds that religious discrimination, whether against minority or majority/all groups, works against the creation of stability and peace. If, on the other hand, governments resist the temptation to restrict minority or majority religions in their countries, gradually they can expect to witness a drop-off in terrorism motivated by a religious imperative. States which create an environment of tolerance between religious groups and the state enhance their own national security.

The results of this analysis also suggest that countries should be cautious in their support of religiously illiberal regimes abroad. While some might see the promotion of religious tolerance as a normatively good idea, others view it as an impediment to "more important" foreign policy goals like physical security and regional stability. Yet the domestic conditions in these states contribute to a climate of extremism that produces violent subnational actors who threaten both domestic and international security.

Acknowledgment

The author thanks the anonymous reviewers of this journal for their feedback on a previous draft of this article. The author also thanks Joshua Fidler for valuable research assistance.

Notes on contributor

Nilay Saiya is an Assistant Professor of Political Science and Director of International Studies at the State University of New York, Brockport. His research concerns the intersection of religion and global politics.

Notes

1. Mohammed Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003); Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the 21st Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011); Peter S. Henne, Sarabrynn Hudgins, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *Religious Freedom and Violent Religious Extremism: A Sourcebook of Modern Cases and Analysis* (Washington, DC: Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, 2012); Nil S. Satana, Molly Inman, and Jóhanna Kristin Birnir, "Religion, Government Coalitions and Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25, no. 1 (2013): 29–52; Nilay Saiya, "The Religious Freedom Peace," *International Journal of Human Rights* 19, no. 3 (2015): 369–82; Nilay Saiya and Anthony Scime, "Explaining Religious Terrorism: A Data-Mined Analysis," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32, no. 5 (2015): 487–512.
2. Pew Research Center, "Religious Hostilities Reach Six-Year High," January 2014, http://www.pewforum.org/2014/01/14/religious-hostilities-reach-six-year-high/.
3. Yasemin Akbaba and Jonathan Fox, "The Religion and State-Minorities Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 6 (2011): 807–16.

4. Nilay Saiya, "Explaining Religious Violence Across Countries: An Institutional Perspective," in *Mediating Religion and Government: Political Institutions and the Policy Process*, edited by Kevin R. den Dulk and Elizabeth Oldmixon (New York: Palgrave, 2014), 209–40.
5. Timothy Samuel Shah, *Religious Freedom: Why Now?: Defending an Embattled Human Right* (Princeton, NJ: The Witherspoon Institute, 2012), 15.
6. Saiya and Scime, "Explaining Religious Terrorism," 491 (see note 1 above).
7. See Peter L. Berger, *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B Eerdmans); José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Monica Duffy Toft and Timothy Samuel Shah, "Why God is Winning," *Foreign Policy* 155 (July/August 2006): 39–43; Toft, Philpott, and Shah, *God's Century* (see note 1 above).
8. Saiya and Scime, "Explaining Religious Terrorism," 491–92 (see note 1 above).
9. Grim and Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied* (see note 1 above).
10. Anthony Gill, *The Political Origins of Religious Liberty* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
11. Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970); Ted Robert Gurr and Will H. Moore, "Ethnopolitical Rebellion: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of the 1980s with Risk Assessments for the 1990s," *American Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 4 (1997): 1079–1103; Joe Eyerman, "Terrorism and Democratic States: Soft Targets or Accessible Systems," *International Interactions* 24, no. 2 (1998): 151–70; Patrick Regan and Daniel Norton, "Greed, Grievance, and Mobilization in Civil Wars," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 3 (2005): 319–36; Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
12. Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (1981): 379–99.
13. Johanna Kristin Birnir and Nil S. Satana, "Religion and Coalition Politics," *Comparative Political Studies* 46, no. 1 (2013): 3–30.
14. Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 28–60.
15. Nilay Saiya, "Religion, Democracy and Terrorism," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9, no. 6 (2015): 51–59.
16. Alfred C. Stepan, "Religion, Democracy, and the 'Twin Tolerations,'" *Journal of Democracy* 11, no. 4 (2000): 37–57.
17. Jillian Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
18. Paul Marshall, *Religious Freedom in the World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007).
19. David M. Kirkham, *State Responses to Religious Minorities* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013).
20. Jonathan Fox, *Political Secularism, Religion and the State: A Time Series Analysis of Worldwide Data* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 137.
21. Roger Finke and Jaime D. Harris, "Wars and Rumors of Wars: Explaining Religiously Motivated Violence," in *Religion, Politics, Society, and the State*, edited by Jonathan Fox (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 53–71.
22. Ani Sarkissian, *The Varieties of Repression: Why Governments Restrict Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).
23. Dogo Ergil, "The Kurdish Question in Turkey," *Journal of Democracy* 11, no. 3 (2000): 122–35; Cecile Van de Voorde, "Sri Lankan Terrorism: Assessing and Responding to the Threat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)," *Policy Practice and Research* 6, no. 2 (2005): 181–99; James A. Piazza, "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination and Terrorism," *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 3 (2011): 339–53; James A. Piazza, "Types of Minority Discrimination and Terrorism," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 29, no. 5 (2012): 521–46.
24. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (see note 11 above).
25. Patrick M. Regan and Daniel Norton, "Greed, Grievance, and Mobilization in Civil Wars," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 3 (2005): 319–36; Andreas Wimmer, Lars Erik-Cederman, and Brian Min, "Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of a New Global Dataset," *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 2 (2009): 316–37; Lars-Erik

Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min, "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis," *World Politics* 62, no. 1 (2010): 87–119.

26. Jonathan Fox, "The Effects of Religious Discrimination on Ethno-Religious Protest and Rebellion," *Journal of Conflict Studies* 20, no. 2 (2000): 119–44; Jonathan Fox, *Ethnoreligious Conflict in the Late 20th Century: A General Theory* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002); Jonathan Fox, *Religion, Civilization, and Civil War: 1945 Through the New Millennium* (Oxford, UK: Lexington Books, 2004).
27. David C. Rapoport, "Some General Observations on Religion and Violence," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3, no. 3 (2007): 127–34; Jonathan Fox, "The Influence of Religious Legitimacy on Grievance Formation by Ethnoreligious Minorities," *Journal of Peace Research* 36, no. 3 (1999): 289–307.
28. Yasemin J. Akbaba and Zeynep Taydas, "Does Religious Discrimination Promote Dissent?: A Quantitative Analysis," *Ethnopolitics* 10, no. 3 (2011): 271–95.
29. Nilay Saiya, "Blasphemy and Terrorism in the Muslim World," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2015.1115759.
30. Nilay Saiya, "The Religious Freedom Peace" (see note 1 above).
31. Parvis Gassem-Fachandi, *Pogrom in Gujarat: Hindu Nationalism and Anti-Muslim Violence in India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).
32. Peter Van der Veer, "Religious Nationalism in India and Global Fundamentalism," in *Globalization of Social Movements*, edited by John Guidry, Michael Kennedy, and Mayer Zald (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 315–39.
33. Carl H. Esbeck, "A Typology of Church-State Relations in Current American Thought," *Religion and Public Education* 15, no. 1 (1988): 44–50; Juan J. Linz and Alfred C. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Ahmet T. Kuru, "Passive and Assertive Secularism: Historical Conditions, Ideological Struggles, and State Policies Toward Religion," *World Politics* 59, no. 4 (2007): 568–94.
34. Jonathan Fox, *Political Secularism, Religion, and the State: A Time Series Analysis of Worldwide Data* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
35. Jonathan Fox, *A World Survey of Religion and the State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
36. Ani Sarkissian, "Religious Regulation and the Muslim Democracy Gap," *Politics and Religion* 5, no. 3 (2012): 501–27.
37. N. J. Demerath III and Karen S. Straight, "Religion, Politics, and the State: Cross-Cultural Observations," *Cross Currents* 47, no. 1 (1997): 43–44.
38. Fox, *Political Secularism, Religion, and the State* (see note 35 above), 2.
39. Fox, *Political Secularism, Religion, and the State* (see note 35 above), 105.
40. Fox, *Political Secularism, Religion, and the State* (see note 35 above), 105–106.
41. Daniel Philpott, "Religious Freedom in Islam: A Global Landscape," *Journal of Law, Religion and State* 2, no. 1 (2013): 3–21.
42. Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel* (see note 1 above); Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006).
43. Emrullah Uslu, "From Local Hizbollah to Global Terror: Militant Islam in Turkey," *Middle East Policy* 14, no. 1 (2007): 24–141.
44. Jerrold Post, Ehud Sprinzak, and Laurita Denny, "The Terrorists in Their Own Words: Interviews with 35 Incarcerated Middle Eastern Terrorists," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15, no. 1 (2003): 171–84.
45. Remi Castets, "The Uyghurs in Xinjiang—The Malaise Grows," *China Perspectives* 49, no. 1 (2003): 34–84.
46. Daniel Philpott, "Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion," *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 3 (2007): 505–25.
47. Chris Seiple and Dennis R. Hoover, "Religious Freedom and Global Security," in *The Future of Religious Freedom: Global Challenges*, edited by Allen D. Hertzke (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

48. Risa Brooks, "Muslim 'Homegrown' Terrorism in the United States: How Serious is the Threat?," *International Security* 36, no. 2 (2011): 7–47.
49. Mark S. Hamm, *Apocalypse in Oklahoma: Waco and Ruby Ridge Revenged* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1997).
50. The study uses the GTD's strictest terrorism criteria for an attack to be included: a) the act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal; b) there must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims; and c) the action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities, i.e., the act must be outside the parameters permitted by international humanitarian law (particularly the admonition against deliberately targeting civilians or non-combatants). Because the goal of the article is to ascertain which kinds of countries are most susceptible to terrorist antipathy, unsuccessful attacks are also included.
51. A complete list of 130 terrorist groups used in this project is available from the author.
52. Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler, *Bringing Religion International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 176.
53. The Religion and State Project, "Welcome to the Religion and State Project," 2014, http://www.religionandstate.org/.
54. Jeffrey Ian Ross, "Structural Causes of Oppositional Political Terrorism: A Causal Model," *Journal of Peace Research* 30, no. 3 (1993): 317–29; Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Maleckova, "Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection?," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17, no. 4 (2003): 119–44; Brian Burgoon, "On Welfare and Terror," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 2 (2006): 176–203; Sarah Jackson Wade and Dan Reiter, "Does Democracy Matter?: Regime Type and Suicide Terrorism," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, no. 2 (2007): 329–48.
55. World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2012* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2012).
56. The Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook 2013–14* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2013).
57. Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005).
58. Simon Collard-Wexler, Costantino Pischedda, and Michael G. Smith, "Do Foreign Occupations Cause Suicide Attacks?," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 4 (2014): 625–57.
59. Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); James A. Piazza, "Incubators of Terror: Do Failed and Failing States Promote Transnational Terrorism," *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (2008): 469–88.
60. See Center for Systemic Peace, "Integrated Network for Social Conflict Research," 2014, http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html.
61. The Minorities at Risk Project, "MAR Data" (University of Maryland, January 2014), http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/mar_data.asp.
62. Monica Duffy Toft, *Securing the Peace: The Durable Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); data on religious civil wars taken from Blavatnik School of Government. "Monica Duffy Toft" (University of Oxford, 2016), http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/people/monica-duffy-toft#research.
63. Glen Palmer, Vito D'Orazio, Michael Kenwick, and Matthew Lane, "The MID4 Data Set: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32, no. 2 (2015): 222–42.
64. Data available from The Correlates of War Project, "The Correlates of War Project" (The Correlates of War Project, 2016), http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/folder_listing (accessed February 1, 2016).
65. Patrick Brandt, John T. Williams, Benjamin O. Fordham, and Brian Pollins, "Dynamic Modeling for Persistent Event Count Time Series," *American Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 4 (2000): 823–43.
66. The analysis was re-run using a zero-inflated negative binomial regression. The results of these tests confirm the finding of regular negative binomial models.

67. Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly* (September, 1990): 47–60; Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: Random House, 2003).

Appendix A. Restrictions on minority religions

(1) Restrictions on public observance of religious services, festivals, and/or holidays, including the Sabbath.
(2) Restrictions on the private observance of religious services, festivals, and/or holidays, including the Sabbath.
(3) Restrictions on building, leasing, repairing, and/or maintaining places of worship.
(4) Restrictions on access to existing places of worship.
(5) Forced observance of religious laws of another group.
(6) Restrictions on formal religious organizations.
(7) Restrictions on the running of religious schools and/or religious education in general.
(8) Restrictions on the ability to make and/or obtain materials necessary for religious rites, customs, and/or ceremonies.
(9) Mandatory education in the majority religion.
(10) Arrest, continued detention, or severe official harassment of religious figures, officials, and/or members of religious parties for activities other than proselytizing.
(11) State surveillance of minority religious activities not placed on the activities of the majority.
(12) Restrictions on the ability to write, publish, or disseminate religious publications.
(13) Restrictions on the ability to import religious publications.
(14) Restrictions on access to religious publications for personal use.
(15) Restrictions on the observance of religious laws concerning personal status, including marriage, divorce, and burial.
(16) Restrictions on the wearing of religious symbols or clothing. This includes presence or absence of facial hair.
(17) Restrictions on the ordination of and/or access to clergy.
(18) Restrictions on conversion to minority religions.
(19) Forced renunciation of faith by recent converts to minority religions.
(20) Forced conversions of people who were never members of the majority religion.
(21) Efforts or campaigns to convert members of minority religions to the majority religion which fall short of using force.
(22) Restrictions on proselytizing by permanent residents of state to members of the majority religion.
(23) Restrictions on proselytizing by permanent residents of state to members of minority religions.
(24) Restrictions on proselytizing by foreign clergy or missionaries. (This includes denial of visas if this denial is specifically aimed at missionaries but not if it is the same type of denial that would be applied to any foreigner.)
(25) Requirement for minority religions (as opposed to all religions) to register in order to be legal or receive special tax status.

(26) Custody of children granted to members of majority group solely or in part on the basis of religious affiliation or beliefs.
(27) Restricted access of minority clergy to hospitals, jails, military bases, and other places a chaplain may be needed in comparison to chaplains of the majority religion.
(28) There is a legal provision or policy of declaring some minority religions dangerous or extremist sects.
(29) Anti-religious propaganda in official or semi-official government publications.
(30) Restrictions on other types of observance of religious law.

Appendix B. Restrictions on majority religions

(1) Restrictions on religious political parties.
(2) Restrictions on trade associations or other civil associations being affiliated with a religion.
(3) Restrictions on clergy holding political office.
(4) Arrest, continued detention, or severe official harassment of religious figures, officials, and/or members of religious parties.
(5) The government restricts or harasses members and organizations affiliated with the majority religion but who operate outside of the state-sponsored or recognized ecclesiastical framework.
(6) Restrictions on formal religious organizations other than political parties.
(7) Restrictions on the public observance of religious practices, including religious holidays and the Sabbath.
(8) Restrictions on religious activities outside of recognized religious facilities.
(9) Restrictions on public religious speech.
(10) Restrictions or monitoring of sermons by clergy.
(11) Restrictions on clergy and/or religious organizations engaging in public political speech (other than sermons) or propaganda or on political activity in or by religious institutions.
(12) Restrictions on religious-based hate speech.
(13) Restrictions on access to places of worship.
(14) Restrictions on the publication or dissemination of written religious material.
(15) People are arrested for religious activities.
(16) Restrictions on religious public gatherings that are not placed on other types of public gathering.
(17) Restrictions on the public display by private persons or organizations of religious symbols, including (but not limited to) religious dress, the presence or absence of facial hair, nativity scenes, and icons.
(18) Restrictions on or regulation of religious education in public schools. (This variable represents direct government control of teachers and/or curriculum, not a ban on religious education in public schools.)
(19) Restrictions on or regulation of religious education outside of public schools or general government control of religious education.

(20) Restrictions on or regulation of religious education at the university level.
(21) Foreign religious organizations are required to have a local sponsor or affiliation.
(22) Heads of religious organizations (e.g., Bishops) must be citizens of the state.
(23) All practicing clergy must be citizens of the state.
(24) The government appoints or must approve clerical appointments or somehow takes part in the appointment process.
(25) Other than appointments, the government legislates or otherwise officially influences the internal workings or organization of religious institutions and organizations.
(26) Laws governing the state religion are passed by the government or need the government's approval before being put into effect.
(27) State ownership of some religious property or buildings.
(28) Conscientious objectors to military service are not given other options for national service and are prosecuted.
(29) Other religious restrictions.