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Table of Contents

Announcements

Words of Welcome from the Editors

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to announce the release of Volume XIV, Issue 5 (October 2020) of Perspectives on Terrorism (ISSN 2334-3745). Our independent online journal is an Open Access publication of the Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), Vienna, and the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) of Leiden University's Campus in The Hague. All past and recent issues are freely available online at URL: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/perspectives-on-terrorism .

Perspectives on Terrorism (PoT) is indexed by JSTOR, SCOPUS, and Google Scholar. Now in its fourteenth year, it has more than 9,100 registered subscribers and many more occasional readers and website visitors in academia, government and civil society. The Articles of its six annual issues are fully peer-reviewed by external referees while its Research Notes and other content are subject to internal editorial quality control.

The current issue features seven Articles. The opening article by Brigitte Nacos, Robert Y. Shapiro, and Yaeli Bloch-Elkon takes a closer look at the relationship between aggressive rhetoric and political violence, based on a study of U.S. President Trump's Twitter messages and their repercussions in America's polarized society. The second article by Håvard Haugstvedt and Jan Otto Jacobsen provides a systematic analysis of the use of armed drones by terrorists, based on their study of more than 400 attacks worldwide. The third article by Adesoji Adelaja and Justin George is also quantitative in nature, identifying a positive relationship between high levels of youth unemployment and domestic terrorism. The fourth article by Niyazi Ekici and Huseyin Akdogan, using advanced statistical techniques, looks at the formation of perceptions about terrorism among Turkish students. Next, Shandon Harris-Hogan, Lorne L. Dawson and Amarnath Amarasingam compare the experiences of Australia and Canada with terrorism in the present century and find remarkable parallels. In a sixth article, Michael Shkolnik explores why some militant groups manage to wage sustained insurgencies while other do not, based on regression analyses of 246 militant groups operating between 1970 and 2007. Finally, Anouar Boukhars explores why some extremist groups in Africa target mainly government forces while others show a preference for killing civilians.

These articles are followed by a remarkable Research Note from the hands of Ari Ben-Am and Gabriel Weimann. They show how secular far-right extremists have also begun a cult of martyrs and saints, emulating how religious terrorist groups instrumentalize and glorify murderers to stimulate vulnerable individual actors to follow them in order to achieve some 'holy' status among 'true believers'.

Our Resources section open with the CT-Bookshelf wherein our Book Reviews Editor Joshua Sinai provides abbreviated reviews of 19 new publications. This is followed by a detailed review of Aaron Zelin's volume *Your Sons are at Your Service: Tunisia's Missionaries of Jihad* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020) by Fabio Merone, and Aaron Zelin's review of *The ISIS Reader: Milestone Texts of the Islamic State Movement,* edited by Haroro J. Ingram, Craig Whiteside, and Charlie Winter (Hurst Publishers, 2020).. The section includes an extensive bibliography on Democracy and Terrorism by Information Resources Editor Judith Tinnes, the product of browsing manually more than 200 sources in the field of Terrorism Studies. The reader will also find in this issue the regular overview of new web-based resources on terrorism and related subjects by Associate Editor Berto Jongman as well as a Conference Calendar by Editorial Assistant Olivia Kearney.

The articles and other texts of the current issue of Perspectives on Terrorism have been edited by James Forest and Alex Schmid, the journal's principal editors. Associate Editor Aaron Zelin and John Morrison have supervised peer reviews since the previous issue. Editorial Assistant Jodi Moore handled proof-reading, while the technical online launch of the October 2020 issue of our journal has been in the hands of Associate Editor for IT Christine Boelema Robertus.

Donald Trump: Aggressive Rhetoric and Political Violence

by Brigitte L. Nacos, Robert Y. Shapiro, and Yaeli Bloch-Elkon

Abstract

During Donald Trump's presidential candidacy and presidency political discourse in the United States became more hateful and divisive. Threats and actual violence against groups and individuals singled out and demonized by Trump increased. The targets of his verbal attacks were most of all racial, ethnic, and religious minorities, the news media collectively and individual journalists, and well-known politicians, mostly Democrats. There was a rise in bullying incidents in schools against minority students. Assuming that aggressive rhetoric by influential political leaders affect their supporters' words and deeds, we examined Trump's online and offline hate speech, the rhetorical reactions of his followers, and the violent consequences suffered by their declared enemies. We found that contrary to an old children's rhyme ("Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me") Trump's aggressive, divisive, and dehumanizing language was seconded by his followers and inflicted directly or indirectly psychological and physical harm to Trump's declared enemies.

Keywords: violent speech, leaders, political violence, demagoguery, bullying, media

Introduction

On September 29, 2019, with his impeachment looming, President Donald Trump (@realDonaldTrump) retweeted a warning by the Evangelical Pastor Robert Jeffress, "If the Democrats are successful in removing the President from office it will cause a Civil War like fracture in this Nation from which our Country will never heal." Two days later, U.S. Representative Louie Gohmert, a Republican of Texas, warned Democrats that their "coup" was "pushing America into a civil war."[1] On far-right websites Trump supporters suggested drastic and even violent actions against the "enemy" within. Some warned that they may need to exercise their Second Amendment rights—in other words, take up arms against the traitors. Responding to one of Trump's daily Twitter attacks on Adam Schiff, the leading U.S. Representative in the impeachment inquiry, his followers seconded the President's rhetorical assaults. One male commenter attacked Schiff as "a co-conspiratory [sic] in a coup attempt. This is treason." That same day, a 52-year old man in Tucson, Arizona, left a death threat on Schiff's voice mail. "I'm gonna f_ing blow your brains out," he warned.[2] The would-be attacker told police officers that "he watches Fox News and likely was upset at something that he saw on the news." He also stated that "he strongly dislikes the Democrats, and feels they are to blame for the country's political issues."[3] In his residence, the police found an AR-15 assault rifle, two pistols, and 700 rounds of ammunition.[4]

Although these examples of hate speech and threats of violence seemed shocking, they were merely iterations of Trumpian rhetoric and signposts for significant increases in right-extreme violence and school bullying in the United States**.** Our research found that Trump's online and off-line hate speech corresponded with his followers' aggressive rhetoric, violent threats, and actual violence against Trump's declared "enemies," most of all, minorities, the news media, and oppositional politicians.

Trump's Divisive and Violent Demagoguery

Donald Trump has been characterized and criticized as populist and autocrat. He certainly is first of all a demagogue who, like all demagogues, has distinguished between his loyal ingroup on the one hand and the disloyal outgroup(s) on the other hand. This polarization allows demagogues to stir "hatred of the outgroup(s)…through scapegoating."[5] Trump has proven a master in scapegoating others for all kinds of political, social, and cultural problems with Barack Obama, Democrats, the liberal "deep state", immigrants and refugees high on his lists of scapegoats. For example, when asked whether he would take responsibility for his

administration's failure to provide an efficient COVID-19 system, he first blamed his predecessor Obama and a set of circumstances. Then he said emphatically, "I don't take responsibility at all."[6]

According to one expert in the field, "demagoguery may be described as the process whereby skilled speakers and writers seek to influence public opinion by employing the traditional tools of rhetoric with complete indifference to truth."[7] This supports Patricia Robert-Miller's suggestion that "demagoguery is a subset of propaganda."[8] While demagogues love mass rallies to unleash their usually divisive rants and relish the waves of applause of "their" people, they also utilize the most effective communication technologies to carry their propaganda.

Media scholars distinguish between communication-as-transmission, the technical dimension devoted to disseminate information farther and faster, and communication-as-ritual, the most persuasive content of media. According to James Carey, ritual communication refers to the "sacred ceremony that draws persons together in fellowship and communality."[9] This assumes that at particular times, especially, during natural or human-caused disasters, whole communities, whole nations, can be drawn together by ritual communication, such as invoking shared values, patriotic sentiments, showing of the flag. It is telling that the U.S. flag was by far the most often (33.2%) posted emoji in President Trump's tweets and his followers' responses (29%).[10]

However, as Carey noted, there are also "rituals of excommunication" that pit groups against each other.[11] Trump has used his spoken and tweeted words ceaselessly to draw his loyal followers together in perceived communality while excluding outgroups from those representing "we, the people." During the 2016 presidential campaign he said, "the only important thing is unification of the people - because the other people don't mean anything."[12] In June 2020, he gave a televised speech in Tulsa, Oklahoma, that was labeled as the opening salvo of his reelection campaign. The following excerpts from this speech demonstrate how Trump celebrated his base as good Americans while simultaneously excommunicating evil "others" from the community of real patriots:

> You are warriors, thank you.
>
> We had some very bad people outside; they were doing bad things. They got rid of a lot of bad people that were there for a long time [they were in fact peaceful "Black Lives Matter" protesters]. Sort of like me in Washington, draining the swamp. I never knew it was so deep. But it's happening. It's happening, I never knew it was so deep. It's deep and thick and a lot of bad characters.
>
> I stand before you today to declare the silent majority is stronger than ever before.
>
> They want to demolish our heritage.
>
> And when you see those lunatics all over the streets, it's damn nice to have arms. Damn nice. …The right to keep and bear arms, we'll protect your second amendment. Above all, we will never stop fighting for the sacred values that bind us together as one America, we will support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.
>
> Our incredible success in rebuilding America stands in stark contrast to the extremism and destruction and violence of the radical left.
>
> We are one movement, one people, one family, and one glorious nation under God… Together we will make America wealthy again, we will make America strong again, we will make America proud again, we will make America safe again, and we will make America great again.[13]

This was textbook demagoguery. By bringing up the right to bear arms Trump issued a thinly veiled call to arms against the enemy within. As one student of rhetoric noted, "violence manifests itself in pinning labels on others and marking political, ethnic, racial, confessional, subcultural, sexist words. Violent speech emphasizes alienating differences between persons, social groups, or communities. Violent speech demarcates."[14]

An old children's rhyme claims, "sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me!" The

rhyme's message is misleading because certain spoken and written words can have psychological and physical effects. As Justice Oliver Wendel Holmes Jr. wrote in a Supreme Court opinion about 100 years ago, "falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic" would not be covered by free speech rights.[15] Sociologist Mary R. Jackman concluded that "verbal and written actions that derogate, defame, or humiliate an individual or group may inflict substantial psychological, social, or material injuries without being as conspicuous or flagrant as physical violence."[16] Legal scholar Mari Matsuda speaks of "violence of the word" that in the extreme can inflict physical injury in that "victims of vicious hate propaganda have experienced physiological symptoms and emotional distress ranging from fear in the gut, rapid pulse rate and difficulty in breathing, nightmares, post-traumatic stress disorder, hypertension, psychosis, and suicide."[17]

One form of such aggressive behavior is bullying which is committed so often in American schools, workplaces, homes, and elsewhere that experts more recently began to warn of a bullying epidemic.[18] Bullying occurs in real and virtual spaces. Perpetrators and victims of verbal (and sometimes physical) bullying are children, adolescents, and adults with the bully typically targeting weaker victims. When influential persons, such as political and religious leaders, engage in demagoguery that vilifies political opponents, ethnic, racial, and religious groups, journalists and whole news organizations, the consequences transcend by far the hate speech of the bully next door and on social media platforms. It is ironic that Donald Trump inspired bullying, whereas First Lady Melania Trump championed an anti-bullying campaign. Targets of hate speech are particularly vulnerable, when the aggressive rhetoricians are powerful individuals in the public sphere with fanatical followers. As one scholar noted, "The linguistic violence executed by power is particularly dangerous and is manifested in purposeful confusion and temptation based on supremacy and predominance."[19]

An important device in the demagogue's linguistic toolbox blemishes the humanity of groups that do not belong to the ingroup. The goal is to reduce "an entire segment of the population into profligate, pernicious, and dastardly subhumans."[20] Trump called unwelcomed immigrants repeatedly "animals"—not only when he singled out Latinos in the criminal MS-13 gang. Demanding tougher immigration laws President Trump said at one occasion, "We have people coming into the country or trying to come in, we're stopping a lot of them... You wouldn't believe how bad these people are. These aren't people. These are animals."[21] He called "Never Trump" Republicans, Democrats, alleged members of "the deep state," and journalists repeatedly "human scum" or "scum".[22] As Albert Bandura noted, "dehumanized persons are treated much more punitively than persons who have not been divested of their human qualities." Thus, by calling Hillary Clinton "the devil" Trump made it easier for his supporters to join forces in chanting, "Lock Her Up!" "Lock Her Up." By attacking Adam Schiff as "human scum" President Trump disengaged from moral norms and influenced some of his fanatical followers. When Trump unleashed tweet attacks on "Black Lives Matter" protesters and threatened with "law and order" measures, he was echoed by devoted supporters with responses like these:

> @realDonaldTrump I don't say this lightly, Mr. President: But, people are acting like wild animals, victimizing whomever they please. And, wild animals only respect strength. It's time to be strong. Send in the military. Anyone being violent, make an example of them, with lead (June 3, 2020).
>
> @realDonaldTrump Please just deploy the military and take control of these animals who are ruining our cities! (June 3, 2020).
>
> @realDonaldTrump Please use the army against these treasonous animals (June 3, 2020).
>
> @realDonaldTrump please Mister kill all that's [sic] animals please (June 4, 2020).
>
> @realDonaldTrump So sad! These animals have no respect for human life and not fooling around (June 4, 2020).[23]

In fall 2020, during a campaign stop in Minnesota, President Trump invoked the pseudo-scientific eugenics saga of white genetic superiority. "You have good genes. A lot of it is about the genes, isn't it, don't you believe? The racehorse theory. You think we're so different? You have good genes in Minnesota," he told his almost all-white audience. He warned his supporters that in case of his rival Joe Biden's election victory their state would

become "a refugee camp" filled with "Islamic extremists"—an insult directed at Minnesota's more than 50,000 Somalian immigrants.[24]

Trump's branding slogan "Make America Great Again" was a metaphor for a return to White Christian dominance of earlier times and the subjugation of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities. This was the ultimate division between "good" and "bad" groups. His promise to build a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico and the rallying screams of his followers, "Build the Wall! Build the Wall!" stood for stopping non-Whites from coming into the country. White Nationalists understood Trump's dog whistles from the outset. One sure sign was that White Supremacists and Neo-Nazis like David Duke, a former Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard, and Andrew Anglin, the creator of the racist website "Daily Stormer," endorsed Trump early on in his run for the presidency.

Red Meat for Anti-Semites and Other Racists

On October 13, 2016, three weeks before Election Day, Trump gave a speech in West Palm Beach that reiterated his major campaign topics. While never mentioning the Republican Party that nominated him, he did invoke the "movement" nine times. Twice he repeated the familiar campaign theme, "We will take back this country for you and we will make America great again." He attacked "immigration," "illegal immigration," and, not surprisingly, the "corrupt" political establishment, the news media in general, the "failing" *New York Times* in particular, and, reminiscent of Joe McCarthy, the State Department for engaging "in a massive coverup of widespread criminal activity."[25]

But whereas the above was a rehash of earlier campaign rants, at this particular rally Trump threw red meat in the direction of racists as he had not done before in passages as the following:

> Hillary Clinton meets in secret with international banks to plot the destruction of U.S. sovereignty in order to enrich these global financial powers, her special-interest friends and her donors.
>
> This election will determine whether we are a free nation or whether we have only the illusion of democracy, but are in fact controlled by a small handful of global special interests rigging the system… The establishment and their media enablers will control over this nation through means that are very well known. Anyone who challenges their control is deemed a sexist, a racist, a xenophobe, and morally deformed.

While many Americans may not have decoded these sentences, the White Supremacy/Neo-Nazi community heard Trump's messages clearly. After all, his allegations smacked of these circles' doctrine, namely, that global banking and media elites, both controlled by Jews, are in cahoots with non-patriotic liberals like Hillary Clinton to destroy White American and Western civilization under the guise of multiculturalism. The *Daily Stormer*'s Andrew Anglin, whose website signals its racist content with dashboard categories like "Jewish Problem" and "Race War," was euphoric. After announcing in the headline of his post that "Donald Trump is literally Hitler," he ended with a one sentence summary of Trump's speech, "He said a lot of bad things about globalism, the media, the banks, and lobbyists, and those are all very J---Sheeeeit."[26] The responses by readers reflected Anglin's racism. A female commenter wrote, "They've tried and tried to break the bonds of white unity all over the globe, and they had us cornered for a few decades, but we see, every day, signs that our racial solidarity is coming back with a vengeance." Posting a swastika under his comment one man rejoiced, "I was like, literally, tearing my eyes out watching Trump's speech! I literally exploded. It was like literally 1933. He's literally Hitler!"[27]

School bullies picked up on the rise of White Supremacy voices and slogans. A teacher in Colorado reported that after Trump's election victory "seventh-grade white boys [were] yelling, 'Heil Trump.'" Another teacher witnessed for the first time in fifteen years of teaching that swastikas were "appearing all over school furniture."[28] These incidents did not fade away during Trump's presidency. In the fall of 2018, a teacher in the state of Washington reported, "Student taped a piece of paper with a swastika on my classroom wall. This was a couple of days after

the shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue, and I am Jewish." An elementary student in New York said, "I'm a fan of Hitler! God sent Hitler down to kill the Jews because they nailed Jesus to the cross."[29] In the days, months, and years following Trump's election victory, the words school bullies used most often were according to one report, "the 'n-word,' various versions of 'build the wall' and 'go back to [insert foreign country name here, usually Mexico].' The most common hate symbol: swastikas."[30]

In August 2017, White nationalist leaders organized a two-day "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in an effort to amalgamate various right-extreme groups under a strong Alt-Right umbrella. Bearing arms, waving confederate flags, and displaying Nazi symbols, the marchers chanted "Jews will not replace us!" and "blood and soil" (the translation of the racist Nazi slogan "Blut und Boden"). In his speech, David Duke summarized American Neo-Nazis' core belief. "The truth is," he said, "the American media, and the American political system, and the American Federal Reserve, is dominated by a tiny minority: the Jewish Zionist cause."[31]

After clashes between "Unite the Right" crowds and counter-protesters, among them Antifa [for anti-fascist] members, one White Supremacist drove his car deliberately in high speed into a crowd of peaceful protesters killing one woman and injuring 19 other persons. Two days later, reading from a teleprompter President Trump condemned racism as evil and called out the KKK, neo-Nazis, and White Supremacists. But a day later, during a press conference, he said unscripted, "You had some very bad people in that group, but you also had people that were very fine people, on both sides."[32] He added that "there was a group on one side that was bad, and you had a group on the other side that was also very violent." Alt-Right leaders and followers liked what they heard.

For Neo-Nazis the American billionaire investor and philanthropist George Soros exemplified members of the alleged Jewish cabal poised to dominate U.S and global financial and political interests. Soros's generous donations to liberal causes at home and pro-democracy forces abroad put him center stage in numerous conspiracy theories. In the weeks before the 2018 mid-term elections, when President Trump warned voters of [non-existent] huge caravans of Central American migrants moving toward America's Southern border, conspiracy theorists claimed that Soros's Open Society Foundation paid migrants to join the caravans. During a reception for young Black conservatives in the White House, Trump attacked globalists for "cheating American workers." When his guests shouted "Soros" and "lock him up," the President responded, "lock him up!"[33] And at the heights of the 2020 "Black Lives Matter" protests that demanded the defunding of police departments, online conspiracy theories accused Soros once again of financing the mass protests—again without any evidence.

President Trump retweeted anti-Soros claims, among them this item published originally by Breitbart.com:

> RT @BreitbartNews REVEALED: An anti-deportation group partnering with George Soros's Open Society Foundation is one of the groups behind the "defund the police" movement.

Trump's followers seconded the allegation with a multitude of tweet responses, such as:

> #AntifaAreFascist #AntifaTerrorists #SorosForPrison #NoPurpleRevolution #noNWO #SorosForPrison #NoPurpleRevolution #noNWO
>
> Is the call for the arrest of George Soros and freezing of all his assets coming up next?
>
> No mercy for terrorists! #Antifaterrorists #ArrestGeorgeSoros

Neo-Nazi and White Supremacy dogma were openly at home on the U.S. president's Twitter page. Around the same time, Trump posted a video of supporters in Florida shouting "White Power!" with the approving comment, "Thank you to the great people of The Villages. The Radical Left Do Nothing Democrats will Fall in the Fall. Corrupt Joe is shot. See you soon!!!"[34]

Vilifying President Obama and Other Blacks

After Barack Obama won the presidential election in 2008, White Supremacists were devastated. A Black man in the Oval Office meant for them the end of "their" America. The Aryan Nation's website displayed a tombstone with the inscription: United States of America. Born: July 4, 1776. Died: Nov. 4, 2008. During Obama's two terms in office and thereafter White Supremacists' racist attacks against the first Black American president never subsided; they vilified and dehumanized him. And nobody poured publicly more oil onto the flames of racist hate against Blacks than Donald Trump. First, he became the public face of the so-called birther conspiracy theory that depicted Obama as illegitimate president because he was allegedly not born in the United States but in Kenya; secondly, as presidential candidate and president, he accused Obama to be in bed with Islamic terrorists—an allusion to many birthers' belief that Obama was not a Christian but a Muslim.

The fact that a Black man was the president of the United States of America was unacceptable for racists and motivated them to invent reasons to attack and dehumanize him as illegitimate imposter. White Nationalists' rhetorical assaults against President Obama were also metaphorical bouts against the Black race in general. And Donald Trump led the public charge as the head birther conspiracy theorist.

From late 2011, when he began to question Obama's birthplace, through mid-September 2015, when he was a declared presidential candidate, Trump devoted 116 tweets to promote the absurd birther conspiracy theory. In addition to his tweet wave he made this accusation in numerous appearances on cable television. Along the way, he also indicated that President Obama was a Muslim by calling him Barack Hussein Obama or tweeting, "When I was 18, people called me Donald Trump. When he was 18, @BarackObama was Barry Soweto." In another tweet @realDonaldTrump wrote, "Attention all hackers: You are hacking everything else so please hack Obama's college records (destroyed?) and check "place of birth." The indication was that Obama had applied to college and law school as a foreign student. Trump's followers responded with tweeted comments like, "we all know he's hiding from the truth! He's a communist," "This Barry is one shady individual," or worse. In late 2015, when on the campaign trail in New Hampshire, Trump said, "right," when a supporter screamed "We have a problem in this country. It's called Muslims. We know our current president is one."[35] And during a campaign stop in the summer of 2016, Trump told the crowd, "In many respects, you know, they [terrorists] honor President Obama. He is the founder of ISIS."[36]

After the death of Anthony Scalia in 2015, President Obama and the First Lady attended a memorial service for the Supreme Court judge but not his funeral. For Trump, it was an opportunity to once again question Obama's religion. "I wonder whether President Obama would have attended the funeral of Justice Scalia if it were held in a Mosque?" he tweeted. One of his followers answered his question, "Yes he would have attended if Judge Scalia's name was Mohammad Scalia."

Trump's obsession with attacking and denigrating Obama as president and ex-president is documented in his tweet history. Before Trump announced his candidacy, 10 percent of his tweets were about or mentioned Obama; during his presidency (up to May 1, 2020) 2.7 percent were of the anti-Obama variety. Even during the presidential campaign, when Hillary Clinton was his rival and targeted in 2.8 percent of all his tweets, Obama remained Trump's number one personal target with 3 percent of all his tweets. In the spring of 2020, when polls signaled growing public dissatisfaction with Trump as the nation faced a deadly COVID-19 pandemic and a looming great recession the President invented a fake Obamagate scandal in an effort to distract the masses. The sitting president accused his predecessor of criminal wrongdoing. "OBAMAGATE makes Watergate look small time!" he tweeted. Trump-supporting #Obamagate tweeted a video showing America's first Black president being arrested by a smiling U.S. Attorney General William Barr with President Trump walking along as Obama is led to jail.

Perhaps all of this was not surprising since Trump left for years signposts that he equated Blacks with thugs and criminals. In 1989, after five teenagers of color were arrested for the brutal rape of a white woman in New York's Central Park, the then private businessman Trump took out full-page ads in four New York newspapers demanding the reinstatement of the death penalty. Even when another prison inmate confessed to the crime and the Central Park Five were exonerated, Trump attacked them as guilty. And after a documentary about the

case was aired, the by then birther-in-chief Trump tweeted, "The Central Park Five documentary was a one sided [sic] piece of garbage that didn't explain the horrific crimes of these young men while in park."

Several weeks later he upped the ante by claiming that almost all crimes in New York City were committed by Blacks, tweeting, "According to Bill O'Reilly, 80% of all the shootings in New York City are blacks-if you add Hispanics, that figure goes to 98%. 1% white." A few minutes later, he generalized the "statistics" from New York City, tweeting, "Sadly, the overwhelming amount of violent crime in our major cities is committed by blacks and hispanics-a tough subject-must be discussed." These false numbers were propagated by White Supremacists who also claimed that most crimes in America were committed by criminals of color and that almost all victims were white. In 2015, when a riot broke out in Baltimore in response to the violent death of a Black man in police custody, Trump tweeted, "Our great African American President hasn't exactly had a positive impact on the thugs who are so happily and openly destroying Baltimore!"

Nothing changed for the better during Trump's presidency. In early 2018, a day after he had received the Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg in the White House, President Trump met with Republican and Democratic U.S. Senators to discuss the fate of young undocumented immigrants or so-called dreamers. At this occasion he left no doubt about his distaste for Blacks and other people of color. Referring to Africa and countries like Haiti and El Salvador the President asked, "Why are we having all those people from shitholes coming here? Why couldn't we just take in immigrants, say, from Norway?"[37]

When cities, towns, and counties all over America and in many other parts of the world experienced "Black Lives Matter" demonstrations, most of them peaceful, President Trump called the protesters killers, terrorists, arsonists, anarchists, thugs, hoodlums, looters, and ANTIFA in his Twitter feeds.

Three years into Donald Trump's presidency, 65 percent of African Americans told pollsters, "It is a bad time to be a black person in America."[38] According to the same survey 80 percent of Black Americans believed that Trump is a racist. One poll respondent said, "He has taken hatred against people of color, in general, from the closet to the front porch."

Even the youngest African Americans suffered from the increase of upfront racism. An elementary school teacher in Georgia recounted her experiences after Trump's election victory in sorrow. "This is my 21st year of teaching. This is the first time I've had a student call another student the n-word, she reported. "This incident occurred the day after a conference with the offender's mother. During the conference, the mother made her support of Trump known and expressed her hope that 'the blacks' would soon 'know their place again.'"[39]

Hate Speech and Hispanics

Among the groups that Donald Trump singled out as being existential threats to America's public safety and to "America as we know it" were Mexican Americans and others of Latino descent. He also badgered Latinos abroad who according to Trump needed to be stopped from "invading" the country. Announcing his candidacy for the U.S. Presidency in June 2016 Trump immediately went on the offensive. Aware that his announcement was reported as "breaking news," Trump wasted no time to attacking the undesirable "others," when he intoned:

> When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people."[40]

If elected president, he promised, "I would build a great wall, and nobody builds walls better than me, believe me, and I'll build them very inexpensively, I will build a great, great wall on our southern border. And I will have Mexico pay for that wall." These words were just the opening salvo in an election campaign and presidency full of vitriolic propaganda against Mexicans and other Latinos, including the people on the island of Puerto Rico who—seemingly unbeknown to Trump—are U.S. citizens.

While aggressive written and spoken words fueled among Hispanics the perception of being ostracized and disrespected, the hateful discourse was accompanied by government actions and policies harmful to Latinos in America and those trying to seek asylum in the United States. After the unspeakable images of little Latino children held in caged areas in camps near the U.S.-Mexican border were reported in the news, President Trump defended his policy of separating asylum-seeking parents from their children as deterrent to further border crossings. When asked by a White House reporter about the fate of "undocumented" children waiting in vain to be reunited with their parents, the president showed no compassion; instead, he warned, "Tell people not to come to our country illegally. That's the solution...We have laws. We have borders. Don't come to our country illegally. It's not a good thing."[41]

Writing about anti-immigrant rhetoric in Europe at the end of the 20th century, one scholar of violent discourse explained:

> The increasingly overt but "merely verbal" aggression against immigrants, refugees and minorities in political and media discourse may effectively curb immigration, encourage discrimination, legitimize inequality and generally violate the human rights of millions of people.[42]

In Trump-speak, and the perception of his followers, the terms Mexico and Mexican(s) became synonymous with undesirable people from and in Central America and the Caribbean. Thus, when a White high school teacher in New Jersey told his High School class of mostly Hispanic students "he agreed with Donald Trump that Mexicans are bad for the country calling them 'pigs' and 'lazy' the day after the election in 2016," a student from the Dominican Republic "took the teachers' remarks on Mexicans as derogatory for all Latinos."[43] Similarly, words like wall, border, deportation, invasion, and caravan stood metaphorically for White Americans forcing illegal "intruders" back "behind the wall" and prevent the invasion of "illegals" across the border into "our" country.

While Donald Trump voiced his negative views about Hispanic immigrants before he entered the political arena as a presidential candidate, he amplified his often derogatory on- and off-line remarks during the presidential campaign and as U.S. president. In a typical tweet of this kind, he summarized his obsession with building a border wall to stop illegal immigrants (in reality they were asylum seekers), "More troops being sent to the Southern Border to stop the attempted Invasion of Illegals, through large Caravans, into our Country. We have stopped the previous Caravans, and we will stop these also. With a Wall it would be soooo much easier and less expensive. Being Built." In another tweet he wrote, "There are a lot of CRIMINALS in the Caravan. We will stop them. Catch and Detain!" One female supporter responded, "Thank you, Mr. President! It's comforting to know that we have a president with America in mind and the people in his heart! May God bless you and keep you safe!" Others simply wrote, "Build the Wall!"

In the first three years in the White House, Trump mentioned the terms "border," "wall," and "border security" in 10.5 percent of his total tweet production and "Mexican(s)," "Mexico," "caravan" and "invasion" in additional 2.1 percent of his Twitter posts for a total of 12.6 percent of all his posts.[44] After more than two years in office, Trump expressed ever more extreme ideas for stopping "aliens" from crossing the Southern border. In one meeting he demanded that his aides completely closed the 2,000-mile border with Mexico by the next day. According to reports he suggested illegal and inhumane measures, such as:

- Fortification of the border wall with a water-filled trench, stocked with snakes or alligators;
- Electrification of the border wall "with spikes on to top that could pierce human flesh;
- Soldier shooting migrants if they were throwing rocks; or
- Soldiers shooting migrants in their legs to slow them down.[45]

Whether made online or off-line, Trump's relentless verbal attacks had consequences in the daily life of Hispanics in America regardless whether they had legal or illegal status.[46] Teachers across the country reported that, following Trump's election victory, elementary, middle, and high school students used the terms "deportation"

and "wall" more often than any other words when they taunted their Latino peers and other minority students. Thus, according to one teacher, "White high school students interlocked arms and walked together, chanting, "Build a wall! Build a wall!" while making eye contact with students of color. Colleagues heard children saying, "Trump won, you're going back to Mexico...," one student going around asking, "Are you legal?" and other telling a teacher they no longer needed Spanish since Trump was sending all the Mexicans back."[47]

For many Latinos verbal aggression and harsh government actions and policies against them and their ethnic brethren affected how members of the largest ethnic minority perceived their place in the country and the threat of being deported. Shortly after Donald Trump's election victory, two in five (41 percent) Latinos in the U.S. told pollsters that they were concerned "about their place in America."[48] Nearly two years into Trump's presidency more than half of ethnic Hispanics (55 percent) in the U.S. feared that they themselves, a family member, or a friend could be deported. Not surprisingly, a strong majority of illegal Latinos (78 percent) had those worries; it was startling, however, that 65 percent of *foreign-born legal* residents and 58 percent of *foreign-born U.S. citizens* of Hispanic descent shared those concerns.[49] In mid-2019, 58 percent of Latinos in the U.S. said they had personally experienced discrimination based on their ethnicity or race; 30% of those told pollsters that they had "feared for their personal safety."[50]

Anti-Muslim Rhetoric and Policies

Similarly, Muslims in America were constantly attacked in Trump's tweets, at rallies, and in off-the-cuff remarks during ad hoc exchanges with the press. He repeatedly claimed that thousands of Muslim Americans living in New Jersey across from the World Trade Center in Manhattan celebrated the destruction of the famous twin towers on September 11, 2001—although there was no evidence. Trump retweeted several followers' claims that they saw militant Muslims celebrating the 9/11 attacks right here in America. By keeping his false accusations alive, Trump and his followers tagged Muslim Americans as traitors with allegiances to foreign enemies.

In late 2015, Trump called for excluding Muslims from traveling into the United States. In a "Statement on Preventing Muslim Immigration", posted on his official campaign website, he called for "a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States." The aggressive treatise claimed, "There is great hatred towards Americans by large segments of the Muslim population." Citing a survey of [American] Muslims conducted by a far-right organization, Trump's statement continued:

> 25% of those polled agreed that violence against Americans here in the United States is justified as a part of the global jihad and 51% of those polled 'agreed that Muslims in America should have the choice of being governed according to Shariah'. Shariah authorizes such atrocities as murder against nonbelievers who won't convert, beheadings and more unthinkable acts that pose great harm to Americans, especially women.[51]

The Trump-led anti-Muslim propaganda campaign was reminiscent of the verbal attacks on Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the months and years following the Pearl Harbor attacks in 1941. According to Lynn Thiesmeyer, resident Japanese were "linguistically designated [by government officials] as 'enemy aliens,' although such labels or laws were never applied to resident Germans or Italians."[52] Many of them were incarcerated or deported. One U.S. General wrote at the time, "The Japanese race is an enemy race." He claimed that second- and third-generation "Japanese" may have become Americanized but that "the racial strains are undiluted."[53]

When under fire because of his "Statement", Trump defended his proposed Muslim ban to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's internment of Japanese Americans. In a television interview Trump said, "What I'm doing is no different than FDR. I mean, take a look at what FDR did many years ago and he's one of the most highly respected presidents. I mean respected by most people. They named highways after him."[54]

Trump compared Muslim Americans and Muslims abroad to the depiction Japanese Americans and Japanese in general after the Pearl Harbor attack—they all were "enemy aliens." In this view, being Muslim disqualified

a person from enjoying the same rights other Americans were granted.

As for Trump's regular anti-Muslim rants, he threatened more than once that he was considering closing down all mosques in the United States. After several suicide attacks by jihadists in Brussels, Belgium, he recommended the surveillance of mosques in America because we "have to deal with the mosques, whether we like it or not, I mean, you know, these attacks aren't coming out of—they're not done by Swedish people."[55] At another occasion he said that "Islam hates us," making no distinction between Islam as religion and extremist Islamic groups.[56] During Trump's election campaign the conspiracy theorist and Trump propagandist Alex Jones and his Infowars team produced an anti-Muslim video that contained the following statement:

> After every single Islamist terror attack we're subjected to the same BS from the media and the regressive left. "This is just a tiny minority of radical extremists. This has nothing to do with Islam." There's no such thing as moderate Islam. Islam is a violent, intolerant religion which, in its current form, has no place in supposedly liberal western democracies.[57]

Appearing on Jones's radio show a few days later Trump told the host, "Your reputation is amazing."[58] Many of the most outrageous rumors and conspiracy theories invented by Jones became part of Trump's propaganda and policy agenda.

One of his first acts as president was an executive order that banned citizens from seven Muslim majority countries from entering the United States. Officially called "travel ban" a Muslim American lawyer described the measure more accurately as "Muslim ban" and cause of great suffering by Muslims in the U.S. and abroad. She wrote:

> This ban has split parents from children, wives from husbands, and extended family from each other and interrupted the lives of students, medical patients, and working professionals who cannot enter. There is fear that the ruling could create loopholes that our ruthless administration could use to re-define citizenship for all who are Muslim or perceived to be Muslim.[59]

When Trump's move was widely criticized, his administration reworked the plan by singling out six Muslim countries plus Venezuela and North Korea and renaming it "Foreign Terrorist Entry Act." Trump called it a watered-down, p.c. [for 'political correctness'] policy. In her dissent from the 5-4 Supreme Court decision in favor of the Trump administration Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote:

> The First Amendment stands as a bulwark against official religious prejudice and embodies our Nation's deep commitment to religious plurality and tolerance…Instead of vindicating those principles, today's decision tosses them aside. In holding that the First Amendment gives way to an executive policy that a reasonable observer would view as motivated by animus against Muslims, the majority opinion upends this Court's precedent, repeats tragic mistakes of the past, and denies countless individuals the fundamental right of religious liberty.[60]

Trump's disregard for the civil and human rights of Muslim Americans was shared and applauded by his core supporters whose responses to @realDonaldTrump tweets mirrored his "Islamophobia". When President Trump attacked Minnesota Governor Gretchen for her refusal to loosen restrictions in the fight against COVID-19 and joined heavily armed militias in their demand to "Liberate Minnesota," his supporters, well informed by Trump of Muslim communities in Minnesota and their Muslim representatives, reacted to @realDonaldTrump tweets with divisive demands like these, "Too many muslims ! #StopImmigration;" "Americanize minnesota, too many muslims [sic];" "Make an ex. order so muslims can't hold office in our country."

The frequent verbal attacks on Islam and Muslims and the anti-Muslim measures implemented by Trump and blessed by a U.S. Supreme Court majority had psychological effects on Muslim Americans—not only because of the travel ban. A few months after Trump's inauguration, 38 percent of Muslim Americans feared that their or their family members' safety was threatened by White Supremacy groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan and Neo-Nazis.[61] Muslim communities were aware of Trump's hate speech against Muslims and his anti-Muslim

policy proposals once he took office. At least Muslim American leaders knew, too, that Trump's campaign chief and White House advisor was Stephen Bannon, the former chief of Breitbart, a popular, right-wing online media outfit. In his earlier position, Bannon had declared his site home of the racist Alt-Right.

There was an increase in bullying incidents against Muslim boys and girls in schools across the country. According to one survey, "Teachers reported hearing Muslim students—or those perceived as Muslim—being called names such as 'terrorist,' 'bomber,' 'Osama' or 'ISIS.' One educator told us of classmates pressuring a student to translate the phrase 'Death of America' into Arabic.'"[62] A 10-year old Muslim girl in a school in Massachusetts found a message in the cubby with the warning, "You are a terrorist. I will kill you."[63]

Open Season on the News Media

In Minneapolis, police arrested a CNN reporter and hit a Swedish journalist with a rubber bullet in the thigh while they reported on protesters in the aftermath of the brutal killing of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man at the end of May 2020. As peaceful and violent demonstrations spread like a wildfire through the U.S., reporters seemed to be singled out by police officers in a host of cities, even when they were in compliance with police orders. In Louisville, a female reporter and her cameraman were targeted by police and hit by pepper balls. "I'm getting shot," screamed the reporter repeatedly. She suffered an eye injury. Two Australian journalists were assaulted near the White House by U.S. Park Police as they covered a peaceful "Black Lives Matter" demonstration that was dispersed when the military shot rubber bullets and released tear gas. Elsewhere, similar media hostility was displayed by police. During a three-day weekend of protests there were at least 100 incidents of reporters being arrested, pushed around, shot at with pepper or rubber bullets, or buried in clouds of tear gas. According to the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker:

> We're now investigating over **100** press freedom violations at the many #GeorgeFloyd protests around the country from the last few days. These include reporters arrested, pepper sprayed, tear gassed, hit with rubber bullets, and assaulted. Many of the attacks have been targeted.[64]

If all of this felt like open season on the press, it was not difficult to link frequent police interferences and violent attacks against the free press to President Trump's regular declarations of war against news organizations and individual journalists—except for his praises for his propagandists at far-right news organizations, such as FOX News and One America News Network (OANN). In response to a documented jump of anti-media incidents at the height of this civil unrest, the President laid once again into what he frequently called the "enemy of the people". On May 31, 2020 he tweeted:

> The Lamestream Media is doing everything within their power to foment hatred and anarchy. As long as everybody understands what they are doing, that they are FAKE NEWS and truly bad people with a sick agenda, we can easily work through them to GREATNESS!

In his book *Time to Get Tough: Make America Great Again,* Donald Trump wrote, "Politics and television are nasty businesses. When the two collide, things get even nastier."[65] This statement foreshadowed the hostile relationship between President Trump and the independent news media. He completely ignored that the country's leading print and TV media covered him far more extensively and, in fact, more positively than his GOP primary rivals and Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton during the pre-primary season (January 1, 2015–December 31, 2015) and primary months (January 1, 2016–June 7, 2016).[66] Nearly three decades before he became a presidential candidate, Trump wrote, "If you are a little different, or a little outrageous, or if you do things that are bold or controversial, the press is going to write about you."[67] In this, he was right. The more despicable his statements and behavior were, the more media attention he got. It was far less important, whether the coverage criticized or praised him. As a businessman Trump had embraced both positive and negative news about him as a net gain,[68] but as GOP nominee and as president he attacked any journalistic criticism and the refusal of reporters to validate his and the administration's constant diet of "alternative facts" and "alternative truth."

The most often used adjectives and nouns in his tweet bombs dropped regularly on news organizations and individual reporters were: unhinged, distorted, unethical, unpatriotic, failing, corrupt, dishonest, dumb, crazy, low-rated, nasty, obnoxious, lightweight, loser, and psycho. His favorite put-downs of female journalists included the terms stupid, loser, bimbo, unattractive, low IQ, and third-rate.

His obsession with the media was reflected in his tweet production. Of the 1,845 Trump tweets we hand-coded as attacking particular targets during his presidency (January 20, 2017 to September 20, 2020), 27.5 percent were derogatory statements about "fake" or "lying" news organizations and individual journalists or hosts of political talk shows.

Toward the end of his term Trump changed the cable network MSNBC's name to MSDNC with the last three letters standing for Democratic National Committee and supposedly indicating that this cable channel was synonymous with the Democratic Party.

It seems that Trump borrowed his anti-press tactics from past and present dictators by sowing doubts about the truthfulness of news organizations and media workers. Just as Hitler and his propagandists attacked the independent German news media as "Lügenpresse" (lying press) before turning the press into a propaganda arm of the government, Trump set out to systematically undermine the American public's trust in the credibility of the mainstream media. Following his election victory in 2016, Trump had a telling encounter with the well-known TV reporter Lesley Stahl that she described eighteen months later during a journalism award event this way:

> At one point, he started to attack the press. There were no cameras in there. I said, "You know, this is getting tired. Why are you doing it over and over? It's boring and it's time to end that. You know, you've won ... why do you keep hammering at this?" And he said: "You know why I do it? I do it to discredit you all and demean you all so that when you write negative stories about me no one will believe you."[69]

Trump's supporters shared his obsession with the "bad, bad" news media. Comparing the president's tweets in the @realDonaldTrump account and responses by his followers during a five-week period (March, 27, 2020–May 1, 2020), we found the strongest word correlations for "news" and "fake" with "media" right behind "house" (for the U.S. House of Representative) in fourth place.

Trump supporters internalized his obsession with, and war against, all media that did not carry his propaganda. When their idol was confronted with the COVID-19 crisis and the concurrent "Black Lives Matter" uprising, his followers' verbal attacks on the media became more ferocious. There were a multitude of responses to Trump's anti-media tweets like the following:

> @nytimes @washingtonpost They're animals Trump, those newspapers, that is. Cheap rant fake media. Keep your iron hand work on many issues the country faces due to Obama mishandling of his responsibility with the country.

> President Trump is by far the best President this Nation has ever had, you scumbaggs [sic] are absolutely the dumbest group I have ever seen!

> They are the scum on top of the swamp protecting the creatures swimming just beneath the surface.

Besides selling his "fake news" scheme the President appealed in tweets and speeches repeatedly for measures to curb press freedom and often followed up with actions. Thus, he called for changes in libel law to make it easier for public officials to win defamation lawsuits. On September 5, 2018, for example, he tweeted in reaction to Bob Woodward's newly published book "Fear" and related articles:

> Isn't it a shame that someone can write an article or book, totally make up stories and form a picture of a person that is literally the exact opposite of the fact, and get away with it without retribution or cost. Don't know why Washington politicians don't change libel laws?

There was no change in libel law. However, in early 2020 the Trump campaign filed libel suits against the *New*

York Times, *Washington Post*, and CNN. The plaintiffs probably knew that they would ultimately lose those legal actions but were content to burden the three news organizations with substantial legal costs.

The President also threatened television networks with the withdrawal of their licenses. In a tweet from October 11, 2017 Trump wrote, "Network news has become so partisan, distorted and fake that licenses must be challenged and, if appropriate, revoked. Not fair to public!" While no broadcast licenses were rescinded, the President called repeatedly for the firing of TV executives. At one occasion (August 28, 2019), he even called for a boycott against Fox News because a few reporters did not support him fully. In one of his tweets he complained, "We have to start looking for a new News Outlet. Fox isn't working for us anymore." Yet, the morning show Fox & Friends and FOX's prime time programs remained the President's favorites.

Opinion polls reflected the effectiveness of Trump's war against individual reporters and news organizations that did not slavishly praise his words and deeds. In late 2019, the vast majority of Conservatives had most trust in Fox News (75 percent), the network that was most distrusted by Liberals (77 percent); Liberals on the other hand had most trust in CNN (70 percent), the cable network most distrusted by Conservatives (67 percent).[70] When pollsters asked respondents in March 2017 whether or not they agreed with Trump calling journalists and the media "the enemy of the American people," 34 percent agreed, 59 percent disagreed, and 7 percent were undecided.[71] In other words, one-third of the public viewed the media as enemy of the people. When Trump was not mentioned, between 21 percent and 26 percent of survey respondents said they considered the news media the public's enemy.[72]

Even more disconcerting was Trump's constant flogging of the press during his mass rallies before and after he became president. This angered his supporters so that they inevitably hurled insults and threats toward the press section. As he explained to Lesley Stahl of CBS, that was exactly what Trump's anti-media strategy and tactics were supposed to achieve.

Rhetorical Attacks against Political Opponents

At the end of May 2020 some 100,000 Americans had succumbed to the COVID-19 pandemic and cities across the country dealt with social unrest in the wake of a Black man's brutal murder by police in Minneapolis. In the midst of this dual crisis, President Trump took the leisure to retweet a repugnant video posted by Cowboys for Trump @RideWithC4T that ended with one Trump supporter's exclamation, "The only good Democrat is a dead Democrat!"[73] This endorsement summed up Donald Trump's bellicose speech and behavior toward political opponents. While America's partisan and ideological polarization was deep before Trump came to power, he made sure that it got much worse during his presidency. In their research on lethal partisanship, Kalmoe and Mason mention the influence of opinion leadership and the example of Donald Trump "who violates the norms of appropriate social and political behavior and frequently espouses views hostile to democracy, including the endorsement of low-level political violence at his campaign rallies."[74]

Democrats were collectively and individually the most often attacked targets in Trump's total tweet output (before his candidacy, during the campaign months, and during his presidency) with 44 percent surpassing the 23 percent tweet total directed at the media. As president, he devoted 46 percent of his tweets to Democrats compared to media in second place with 25 percent, and merely 3 percent for the GOP that he totally controlled. The sole exception is the campaign period, when Republicans were addressed in 33 percent of his tweets and Democrats in 32 percent. This high total for Republicans was the result of Trump's relentless and ruthless attacks on his GOP competitors during the primary season.[75]

In tweets and during his mass rallies or White House appearances Trump vilified Democrats regularly. Bemoaning his impeachment in December 2019, the President tweeted, "The Radical Left, Do Nothing Democrats have become the Party of Hate. They are so bad for our Country!" Three months earlier, he wrote @realDonaldTrump, "I am so tired of hearing the rationalization of the Left in the country because they hate Donald Trump. Inexplicably and without foundation, they choose to hate America…" These statements

synthesized his attacks on Democrats as not loving but hating their country; as individually and collectively threatening the constitutional rights of patriotic Americans; and as "Radical Left" harboring Socialist and Communist designs for this country. Thus, his tweeted assurance, "We will never be a Socialist or Communist Country." At a rally in Louisiana in late 2019 Trump said, "Democrats are becoming increasingly totalitarian," and are "trying to overthrow American democracy to impose their socialism agenda." He accused Democrats of "trying to rip our nation apart."[76]

During the 2016 campaign, "Lock Her Up" became for Donald Trump and his supporters a rallying cry against Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton. Whenever Trump or one of his prominent supporters mentioned "Crooked Hillary," the "Make America Great Again" crowd demanded "Lock Her Up". But eventually, this slogan borrowed from Banana Republic strongmen, was used against other GOP "enemies" as well. After President Trump complained that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had mumbled behind him during his 2020 State of the Union address, the crowd at his New Hampshire rally chanted, "Lock her up, lock her up…"[77] At a rally in Iowa Trump attacked U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein for her role during the confirmation hearing for Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh and provoked the crowd to demand, "Lock her up!"[78]

As noted above, no other individual was as often and maliciously attacked as Barack Obama. Other male Democrats were on Trump's rhetorical hit list as well, among them "incompetent & corrupt" Adam "Shifty" Schiff (422 tweets). "Sleepy" Joe Biden (42 tweets), "Cry'n" Chuck Schumer (65 tweets), "Do Nothing Democrat Savages" like [Jerry] Nadler" (49 tweets) and "Crazy Bernie" Sanders (39 tweets).[79]

However, just as Trump singled out female reporters for his insults, he was particularly nasty in his rhetorical attacks on female politicians. He called Hillary Clinton a "total train wreck," Nancy Pelosi "crazy" and "an inherently dumb person," Dianne Feinstein "another beauty." His most vicious attacks were reserved for a quartet of progressive congresswomen of color, Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts and Rashida Tlaib of Michigan. After the four, nicknamed "Squad," criticized his policies, Trump tweeted (July 14, 2019):

> So interesting to see "Progressive" Democrat Congresswomen, who originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe, the worst, most corrupt and inept anywhere in the world (if they even have a functioning government at all), now loudly..... and viciously telling the people of the United States, the greatest and most powerful Nation on earth, how our government is to be run. Why don't they go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came….

A female supporter tweeted her agreement. "The notion that you can't criticize these Anti-America fools by virtue of the amount of melanin they have in skin is utterly ridiculous."

Ironically, three of the four politicians were born in the United States, only Ilhan Omar came in her youth (she was eight years old) as legal immigrant from Somalia. These rhetorical attacks had consequences. Representative Omar received death threats as did her three colleagues. The owner of a gun shop in North Carolina, a Trump supporter, put headshots of the four congresswomen on a billboard with the message, "The 4 Horsemen Cometh" changing the words after protests into "The 4 Horsemen are Idiots".[80]

After Senator Kamala Harris was nominated as the Democratic Party's vice-presidential candidate, Trump attacked her in tweets and public statements as "mean," "horrible," "disrespectful," "awkward," and "a monster" claiming that "she doesn't meet the requirements [for vice president]" and "is going to be a big failure."

Praising and Encouraging Violence

Before and during his presidency Donald Trump's preferred words were those that project strength, toughness, and most of all wins. In his tweets he used "win" and "won" 1,136 times; also prominent were the terms "strong" (551 times), "tough" (326 times), "fight" (279 times), and "attack" (226 times). He degraded his opponents as

"failing" 234 times, "weak" 199 times, and "loser" 128 times.[81] According to his own account, Trump showed his dominant traits already as a child. "Even in elementary school, I was a very assertive kid," he wrote in one of his books. "In the second grade I actually gave a teacher a black eye - I punched my music teacher because I didn't think he knew anything about music….It's clear evidence that even early on I had a tendency to stand up and make my opinion known in a very forceful way."[82]

On the campaign trail and during his presidency Trump did not merely attack his opponents and "enemies" with aggressive and degrading language, he condoned, praised, and even encouraged physical violence against various "enemies."

On August 9, 2016, at a campaign rally in Wilmington, North Carolina, Trump attacked Hillary Clinton and warned his supporters of the terrible things she would do, if she were to win in November. Implying that she would end their constitutional right to bear arms, he warned:

> Hillary wants to abolish—essentially abolish the Second Amendment. By the way, and if she gets to pick (CROWD BOOING) If she gets to pick her judges, nothing you can do, folks. Although the Second Amendment people, maybe there is. I don't know. But—but I'll tell you what. That will be a horrible day. If—if Hillary gets to put her judges—right now, we're tied. You see what's going on.[83]

Many observers understood Trump's remarks as instigating violence in case of a Clinton victory. In response, Hillary Clinton said, "If you are running to be president, or you are president of the United States, words can have tremendous consequences."[84]

In October 2018, after congressional GOP candidate Greg Gianforte of Montana body slammed and injured a reporter of *The Guardian* because he did not like to be questioned about his healthcare policy. President Trump praised Gianforte during a rally and mimicked a body slamming motion. "Greg is smart," he said. "And by the way, never wrestle him. Never. Any guy that can do a body slam is my kind of guy. My kind. I shouldn't say that, but this is nothing to be embarrassed by."[85]

When his supporters roughed up protesters at his rallies, candidate and President Trump often supported these violent actions. Here are but a few examples of such incidents:

- After a "Black Lives Matter" protester at one of Trump's rallies in 2015 was kicked and punched by his supporters, candidate Trump supported the violent incident. "The man that was—I don't know, you say 'roughed up'—he was so obnoxious and so loud, he was screaming," he said. "He should have been, maybe he should have been roughed up."
- Allegedly informed by his security team that protesters were going to throw tomatoes at one of his 2016 campaign events, Trump told his supporters, "If you see somebody getting ready to throw a tomato, knock the crap out of them, would you? Seriously. Okay? Just knock the hell. I promise you I will pay for the legal fees. I promise."
- When another 2016 campaign rally was interrupted by protesters, Trump told his supporters, "I love the old days. You know what they used to do to guys like that when they were in a place like this? They'd be carried out on a stretcher, folks. It's true. … I'd like to punch him in the face, I'll tell you."
- President Trump encouraged police violence before police brutality resulted in social unrest in 2020. Addressing police officers in 2017 he told them, "When you see thugs being thrown into the back of a paddy wagon, you just see them thrown in; rough. I said, please don't be too nice. Like when you guys put somebody in the car and you're protecting their head, you know, the way you put your hand over it. Like, don't hit their head, and they've just killed somebody. I said, you can take the hand away, O.K.?"[86]
- Four months after MSNBC anchor Ali Velshi covered a peaceful "Black Lives Matter" demonstration and was hit by a rubber bullet, Donald Trump recalled the incident at a campaign rally in September 2020 as he promoted a tough law and order stand. "They [law enforcement officers] threw him aside like he was a

> little bag of popcorn," the President said. "But I mean honestly, when you watch the crap that we've all had to take so long…when you see it, it's actually a beautiful sight."[87]

The Rise of Political Violence in the Trump Era

Ultimately, the question is whether Donald Trump's frequent verbal attacks on minorities and implicit and explicit calls to violence against singled-out groups and individuals resulted in political violence or what by definition would be acts of domestic terrorism.

An early study by the American Psychological Association concluded that "viewing [TV] violence increases viewers' appetites for becoming involved with violence or exposing themselves to violence."[88] To be sure, news consumers react differently to interpersonal and mass-mediated violent text and images. Thus, more recent survey experiments found that "citizens with aggressive personality traits expressed significantly greater support for political violence, and their support doubled when they were exposed to political messages infused with violent metaphors."[89]

Donald Trump declared his candidacy for the GOP presidential nomination on June 16, 2015. One day later, 19-year-old White Supremacist Dylann Roof shot to death nine African-American worshippers at the Emanuel African Methodist Church in Charleston, South Carolina. In a "manifesto" Roof explained that he was radicalized by [right-extreme] online sites and their [false] information about the high number of incidents in which Blacks were killing Whites. While then-candidate Trump did not cause Roof's violence, he had publicized the falsity that most violent crimes in the U.S. were committed by Blacks, the very same rumor that had motivated Roof to kill. Obviously, Roof was guided by aggressive personality traits. "We have no skinheads, no real KKK, no one doing anything but talking on the internet," he wrote. "Well someone has to have the bravery to take it to the real world, and I guess that has to be me." He added mysteriously, "I am in a great hurry."

One year later, ahead of the first anniversary of the Charleston massacre, South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley was the first public official to connect Trump's rhetoric and Roof's terrorist attack. According to a South Carolina newspaper:

> Nikki Haley said Thursday she wishes Donald Trump communicated differently because bad things result from divisive rhetoric, as evidenced by last June's massacre in Charleston. The Republican governor said divisive speech motivated Dylann Roof to gun down nine black parishioners at historic Emanuel AME Church.[90]

Indeed, Trump's racist speech before and during his presidential campaign and as president seemed to affect a significant number of like-minded individuals to commit what the authorities labeled hate crimes. When asked by a reporter whether his rhetoric was dividing Americans, Trump answered, "I don't think my rhetoric does at all. My rhetoric is very—it brings people together." Obviously, he counted only his, the real people united and once again excluded the rest of the nation.

Examining whether correlations existed between counties that were venues of Donald Trump's 275 campaign rallies in 2016 and subsequent hate crimes, three political scientists found that "counties that had hosted a 2016 Trump campaign rally saw a 226 percent increase in reported hate crimes over comparable counties that did not host such a rally." While cautioning that this "analysis cannot be certain it was Trump's campaign rally rhetoric that caused people to commit more crime in the host county," the researchers also found it "hard to discount a 'Trump effect' since data of the Anti-Defamation League showed "a considerable number of these reported hate crimes referenced Trump."[91]

Moreover, investigative reporting identified 41 cases of domestic terrorism/hate crimes or threats thereof, in which the perpetrators invoked Trump favorably in manifestos, social media posts, police interrogations, or court documents. Almost all of this violence was committed by White males against minorities or politicians

singled out frequently by Trump for rhetorical attacks, and journalists.[92]

The U.S. Press Freedom Tracker recorded a total of 202 attacks on U.S. journalists from 2017, Trump's first year in office, through mid-2020.[93]

White Supremacy and The Great Replacement

The three most lethal terrorist attacks during the Trump presidency, the mass shootings in the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, and in a Walmart supermarket in El Paso, Texas, were carried out by White Supremacists who embraced racist "Great Replacement" conspiracy theories popular in their circles. The term "The Great Replacement" was coined by the French author Renaud Camus, when he described the coming substitution of the native French majority by non-Western immigrants, many of them Muslims. Right-extreme conspiracy theorists expanded the alleged threat to Whites in Western Europe and North America. Besides, there was a multitude of similarly motivated attacks in the United States and elsewhere plus foiled plots.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On the morning of October 27, 2018, 46-year-old Robert Bowers shot his way into the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburg, killing six worshippers and injuring six more. During his shooting spree and a stand-off with police he screamed, "They have committed genocide to my people. I just want to kill Jews." Only minutes before rushing into the building Bowers logged onto his account on the Gab social media platform telling his followers, "I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered." Bowers left a long trail of social media posts that revealed his admiration for Hitler, denial of the Holocaust, and extreme hate of African Americans, Muslims, and most of all Jews whom he called "children of Satan." He posted conspiracy theories about George Soros and other globalists. He blamed the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, a Jewish pro-refugee organization, for bringing "invaders in that kill our people."[94]

Five days before the Pittsburg massacre and less than three weeks before the mid-term elections in early November, President Trump threw White Supremacists the red meat they craved. At a campaign rally for U.S. Senator Ted Cruz in Houston he said, "You know what a globalist is, right? A globalist is a person who wants the globe to do well, frankly, not caring about our country so much. You know what? I'm a nationalist. Use that word."[95] Some right-extremists rejoiced publicly. "Raise your hands if you are an American nationalist like Trump," tweeted a columnist for One America News. "Trump sounds like Breitbart," Ann Coulter posted on her Twitter feed.

Robert Bowers seemed not appeased. He tweeted that he was not a Trump supporter, complaining that the president was "a globalist, not a nationalist." And, yet, his social media posts reflected Trump's divisive and hateful rhetoric towards minorities with terms like "caravan," "invaders," and "infestation." These similarities did not mean that Trump caused the bloody attack; however, they underscored that political rhetoric matters and that a leader like the president of the United States sets the tone.

Christchurch, New Zealand: On March 15, 2019, a 28-year-old Australian man entered first Al Noor Mosque and about 12 minutes later the Linwood Islamic Centre in Christchurch during Friday Prayers killing 51 and injuring 49 worshipping Muslim men, women, and children with automatic weapons. With a camera mounted on his hat Brenton Tarrant streamed the massacre live on a social media account.

> In his lengthy manifesto titled "The Great Replacement" the mass killer wrote, "We must crush immigration and deport those invaders already living on our soil. It is not just a matter of our prosperity, but the very survival of our people."
>
> He warned that the first such replacement in the U.S. would occur in and change Texas. "Soon the replacement of the whites within Texas will hit its apogee and with the non-white political and social control of Texas"; he wrote. "And with this control, the electoral college will be heavily stacked in favor of

a democratic victory so that every electoral cycle will be a certainty."

He paid tribute to Donald Trump as "a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose", emphasizing the importance of these words by underlining them in his text.

El Paso, Texas: On August 3, 2019, a lone gunman, armed with a semi-automatic civilian version of the AK-47, shot and killed 23 persons and injured 23 at a Walmart supermarket in El Paso. 21-year-old Patrick Crusius from Allen, Texas, selected this particular Walmart store at the U.S.-Mexican border because he wanted to kill Mexicans and other Latinos. He was arrested shortly after the massacre.

"I support the Christchurch shooter and his manifesto," was the opening sentence in his own manifesto that he posted online shortly before the horrific killing spree. "This attack is a response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas," he explained. "They are the instigators, not me. I am simply defending my country from cultural and ethnic replacement brought on by an invasion."

Repeating Tarrant's warning that the White race's replacement in Texas would cause a disastrous electoral shift, the El Paso terrorist wrote, "The heavy Hispanic population in Texas will make us a Democrat stronghold. Losing Texas and a few other states with heavy Hispanic population to the Democrats is all it would take for them to win nearly every presidential election."

Crusius's social media posts attested to his support of Donald Trump. Aware that the president's critics questioned Trump's attitudes towards White nationalists, the mass shooter tried to spare Trump such accusations. "Thus, at the end of his declaration he wrote that his ideology did not change "for several years" and "predate[d] Trump and his campaign for president." Like Trump, he attacked the "fake" media and predicted, "I know that the media will probably call me a white supremacist anyway and blame Trump's rhetoric."

Failed and Foiled Violence

Homemade IEDs: In the second half of October 2018, 16 homemade pipe bombs were mailed to Barack Obama, Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton, George Soros, actor Robert De Niro, a number of other prominent Democrats, and the CNN headquarters in Atlanta. None of the improvised explosive devices detonated. Cesar Savoc (54) was arrested and eventually received a 20-year prison term for building and mailing the devices. During his trial defense lawyers described their client as a loner who "found light in Donald J. Trump," supported his idol "on social media and at rallies," and thereby found "the sense of community that he had been missing for so many years." Before his sentencing, Savoc himself compared his obsession with Trump to an addiction.

Foiled Plot of Political Violence: In early 2019, Coast Guard Lieutenant Christopher Hasson (49) was arrested and charged with plotting terror attacks against a multitude of prominent Democrats in public offices and liberals in the news media. Police found seven rifles, two shotguns, four pistols, two revolvers, and two silencers, along with magazines and ammunition in his home. The search of his computers revealed that Hasson was a self-described White supremacist who idolized the Norwegian terrorist mass shooter Anders Breivik, believed in the white genocide or great replacement conspiracy theory, and had compiled a list of targets. Shortly before his arrest his computer searches focused on the following topics:

- what if trump illegally impeached;
- best place in dc to see congress people;
- where in dc to congress live;
- civil war if trump impeached.

Threats of Political Violence Are Violence

Many definitions of terrorism include threats of this sort of political violence and confirm John Galtung's categorical statement that "*threats* [emphasis added] of violence are also violence."[96] While there were dozens of serious threats of violence against prominent Democrats, TV hosts, reporters, and members of minorities with references to Trump, here are just three examples:

In the summer of 2019, police arrested Eric Lin of Maryland for harassing a female Floridian with 150 pages worth of Facebook messages that threatened her with kidnapping and deadly attacks on her, her family, and other Latinos. According to the arrest warrant, the White Supremacist threatened with the "extermination" of all Latinos. In one post he wrote, "I thank God everyday President Donald Trump is President and that he will launch a Racial War and Crusade to keep [derogatory names for African Americans and Latinos), Muslims, and any dangerous Ethnically or Culturally foreign group 'In Line." He spelled out that "In Line" meant concentration camps or forced military service.

In early 2019, the U.S Capitol Police arrested Stephen Taubert, a 61-year-old veteran from Syracuse, New York, for threatening to kill two prominent Democrats, former President Barack Obama and Congresswoman Maxine Waters, both African Americans. According to prosecutors, Taubert used "overtly bigoted, hateful language" in his phone calls. After threatening to "hang" Obama in 2018, he called Representative Waters' Los Angeles office warning that he would find her at public events and kill her and her staff. During his trial he explained that he got "riled up" when seeing negative comments about President Trump on social media and the news.

In August 2018, the *Boston Globe* published an editorial on its front page, declaring "We are not the enemy of the people" and asked other news organizations to join the resistance against President Trump's rhetorical assaults. In 14 phone calls 68-year-old Californian Robert Chain repeated Trump's label "fake media" and "the media is the enemy of the people." He warned he would continue his threats as long as they were attacking President Trump. In one call he told a Globe staffer, "I'm going to shoot you in the f…head later today."

Conclusion: Violent Rhetoric and Violent Consequences

Whereas the well-known children's rhyme mentioned above claims that unlike physical violence "words will never hurt me," our research demonstrates the opposite. Donald Trump's hate speech and demonization of non-Whites, mainstream media, and oppositional politicians, and his implicit and explicit praise of violence resulted in many verbal and corporal attacks against members of the denigrated groups. School bullying increased with many young bullies using Trumpian hateful terminology and/or referring to his discriminatory policies. Particularly in minority communities, there was heightened anxiety and fear. Just as important, Trump stirred fear, hate, and anger among his core supporters by warning them of dangerous "others" threatening "America as we know it" in terms of history, culture, values, and racial dominance. Whether by dog whistle or bullhorn, he spread online and off-line a divisive propaganda that in many respects resembled right-extremists' ideology and glorification of violence.

Donald Trump did not invent racist and nativist hate speech. Racism and nativism are as American as apple pie. The reaction of right-extremists to the 2008 election victory of Barack Obama, America's first black president, set off the latest wave of white nationalism and related hate speech and violence. Trump, then best known as star of his own TV reality show, became the de facto spokesman of the anti-Obama birther conspiracy theory embracing its racism along with anti-immigration nationalism as core component of his presidential campaign and presidency. Trump became the first U.S. president who in public statements expressed sympathy and support for violent right-extremists and thereby pulled them into mainstream politics.

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Taking Fourth-Generation Warfare to the Skies? An Empirical Exploration of Non-State Actors' Use of Weaponized Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs—'Drones')

by Håvard Haugstvedt and Jan Otto Jacobsen

Abstract

Recent events in and outside of conflict zones have raised apprehensions about the threat that Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) might pose to modern societies. There have been reports of organizations like the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) weaponizing their UAVs. However, scholarly literature exploring this topic is scarce. This article brings forth findings from empirical evidence systematically collected and complied from open sources and databases (n = 440). Our findings demonstrate that non-state actors, especially in the Middle East, have acquired weaponized UAV capabilities. We have also found that non-state actors choose targets discriminately, preferring hard targets over soft targets, and that their UAV attacks have so far not led to mass casualties. However, the latter may change if target preferences change. These findings should further raise awareness of the threat posed by weaponized UAVs in non-state hands while acknowledging a disturbing implication for counterterrorism efforts—their bombs might become harder to stop.

Keywords: UAV, drone, non-state actors, fourth-generation warfare, Islamic State, Houthi

Introduction

Airpower has traditionally been a tool wielded by rich industrialised nations while terrorists were bombers without an air force. However, the last decade has shown that smaller entities, militias, and organizations defined as terrorist groups have evolved and expanded their operations to the air space by their use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) with the potential to deploy explosives on targets. This threat became a reality to the general public in late 2018. Though not a direct attack, a UAV sighting near Gatwick Airport in the United Kingdom effectively shut down hundreds of flights and delayed thousands of passengers.[1] A similar incident in Norway delayed flights when a UAV was spotted over Bodø Airport in 2019.[2] While these incidents, to our knowledge, had no hostile characteristics, the mere presence of a UAV close to, or on the grounds of, an airport still prompted authorities to take action. The most dramatic and internationally known incident to date was the attack on Saudi oil facilities in September 2019.[3] The attack has raised international concerns about security measures against the threat of weaponized UAVs used by non-state actors. The Houthis, who claimed responsibility for the attack, are known to be supported by Iran.[4] However, investigations into that particular incident have found that technical specifications found at the site, as well as the direction the attack came from, point toward the direct involvement of Iran.[5] This event, and others, have caused security experts to deem the threat of UAVs in hands of non-state actors, such as terrorist groups, as a likely future threat to Western and non-Western countries.[6]

In '*The Transformation of War*', Martin van Creveld hypothesized that future warfare would have different characteristics than those presented 150 years earlier by the classical military author Carl von Clausewitz.[7] In Clausewitz's time, wars were primarily fought between empires and nations, but van Creveld hypothesized that this would change, and he appears to have been right. While opposing groups, also before Clausewitz's time, adapted irregular methods of warfare, current armed conflicts are characterized by private security companies, various militias, and religious and ideological actors that use both conventional and guerrilla tactics in their armed operations.[8]

Contemporary conflicts are also increasingly nonnational or transnational in nature, involving networked guerrilla-like tactics where psychological warfare, such as manipulation of the media and public opinion, are just as important tools as rockets and rifles.[9] Lind et al. (1989) proposed that conventional armies would not stand a chance of decisive victories if these and other strategies were used in combination, and he coined this new phenomenon fourth-generation warfare (4GW).[10] The term has since been adapted and used by other military scholars, such as Hammes (2004), who added that *causes* rather than *nations* will command loyalty.[11] Non-state actors, such as terrorist and insurgent groups, have adapted 4GW strategies.[12] This has led scholars to urge nation-led armies to similarly adapt their strategies, rather than preparing for a short high-tech war.[13]

Study Aim

Until recently, airpower has primarily been at the disposal of conventional armies. Today, non-state actors play a larger role in contemporary armed conflicts than ever before, and at the same time, various UAVs are now widely available on commercial markets. While a number of articles and reports have provided insights into non-state actors' UAV operations, to the best of our knowledge, no scholarly work has provided broad and systematically collected empirical evidence of weaponized UAVs, nor have scholars applied statistical analysis to the use of armed UAVs by non-state actors.[14] The full effects of 4GW, which now also includes aerial attacks from non-state actors, are hard to measure. While it is tempting to draw conclusions based on what we think these effects are, our research focuses on the actions themselves. This requires a brief look back in time.

First, terrorists have long preferred soft targets, as they provide an opportunity to maximize casualties, spread fear, and increase publicity.[15] There is no uniform definition of what a soft target is, but it is commonly understood as a poorly defended position where there are possibly many vulnerable targets, such as a marketplace, a bus station, or an educational institution—places where many civilians are present.[16] Also, assaults against soft targets have previously been found to be motivated by ideology, specifically religion.[17] Second, some terrorists are also identified as being discriminate in their target selection, meaning they do not choose targets randomly.[18] Third, Islamist extremists have been found to aim and plan for mass casualties in some of their attacks. [19] While our research does not focus specifically on militant Islamist actors, we build on previous findings, especially those by Hemmingby, and apply the *warning triangle* of these groups' lethality by asking the following questions: (i) do they target indiscriminately? (ii) do they have a mass casualty focus? and (iii) do they prefer soft targets?[20] Our initial assumption, as well as a first look at our data, suggested that weaponized UAVs are mainly deployed in the Middle East by militant Islamists. This article aims to fill a major research gap and hopefully will provide civilian governments, security services, and national military establishments with more insight into non-state actors' use of weaponized UAVs.

Research Question

What characterizes non-state actors' use of weaponized UAVs in their operations?

The authors utilize partially exclusive data to explore different non-state actors' target selection, the number of casualties and injuries from their attack, and explores whether soft targets are preferred over hard targets.

Literature and Reporting on Non-State Actors' UAV Operations and Capabilities

UAVs have been of interest to non-state actors for many years, and the earliest recordings of their offensive use go back to the year 2006 and the Palestinian Hamas organization.[21] Later have other groups, including Hezbollah, Jabhat al-Sham, al-Qaeda and ISIS, added UAVs to their operational toolbox.[22] Since 2016, news reports have revealed that ISIS has used UAVs in offensive operations, while US-supported forces have located and attacked the Islamic State's UAV factories.[23] Reports indicate that these UAVs are commercial products,

costing under US $1,000 to acquire before being redesigned to have offensive capabilities.[24] The advantages of an aerial combat platform are many, including surveillance as well as defensive and offensive operations.[25] UAVs have been used for years by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries for these and other reasons, including that they offer users the safety due to the distance from the area of actual deployment. The obvious benefit of this for the remote operator is that it reduces human losses on one side of the conflict dyad while, at the same time, offering the capability to deploy a variety of explosives to the other side.[26]

According to Bunker (2015), non-state actors have mainly used UAVs for surveillance and reconnaissance, but they are generally far less technically advanced than the UAVs operated by the United States or other NATO countries.[27] This is, however, changing, as some non-state actors have, in recent years, procured UAVs with long-range capabilities that move at high speeds and have multiple deployment capabilities.[28] This includes dropping or placing explosives or merely being flown into the target.[29] In addition, some images and news reports have presented ISIS as having UAVs with missile-firing capabilities.[30] It has been hypothesized that some of these advancements may be the result of reverse engineering from NATO coalition UAVs.[31] In the case of the Houthis in Yemen, the technology appears to have been provided directly by Iran.[32]

Whether simple or advanced in their design, UAVs offer some of the same advantages: distance from the area of operation and their targets, tactical and operational overview, and safety for the operators. The threat of ISIS's weaponized UAVs was deemed by US Gen. Raymond Thomas to be the most daunting problem of 2016.[33] In addition to tactical and operational advantages, the mere presence of UAVs on the battlefield has also caused distress. In an exploration of the widely held belief that UAVs strike with "surgical precision", researchers found that a Pakistani population living under UAVs was constantly worrying about the possibility of being harmed by a deadly strike.[34] Others have claimed that the use of UAVs flying over civilian areas and communities violates the inhabitants' right to peace.[35] As the weapon of choice in the "war on terror" through much of the last decade, UAVs have been found to cause serious harm to civilians in those areas where they were deployed.[36] For instance, a recent Lancet publication found that Gaza inhabitants who had been struck by UAV attacks suffered more severe injuries and needed significantly more surgical operations to treat their amputation injuries than those injured by other weapons.[37] Thus, UAVs provide both tactical and operational advantages for attackers, but psychologically, they create a sense of fear in those living in their shadow, affecting military forces and civilians alike.

Theoretical Framework

This article builds on Hemmingby's work on operations of militant Islamists and utilizes three features of lethality by asking whether or not non-state actors choose targets discriminately, have a mass casualty focus, and prefer soft targets when using weaponized UAVs.[38] This analytical framework incorporates key features of intent in terrorist attacks, namely their impact and targets. Hence, it enables this article to break down the data in a pragmatic manner. It also can serve as a useful tool for comparison in future studies of strategies by non-state actors.

Target discrimination is defined by the US Department of Defense as "the ability of a surveillance or guidance system to identify or engage any one target when multiple targets are present".[39] In this context, and in accordance with Hemmingby's work, target discrimination refers to whether attacks are carried out on random or specifically chosen targets. Mass casualties are not defined through a fixed number of casualties or injuries; the term instead refers to several casualties that demand extraordinary efforts from local emergency services.[40] Lastly, soft targets are vulnerable and difficult to protect and are characterized by the high likelihood of mass casualties in the event of a successful attack.[41] Still, the line between hard and soft targets is difficult to draw. For example, a military base is a defended target and one that is hard to reach, but a small infantry patrol in the streets may be considered a soft target. Similarly, airports are sometimes defined as soft targets.[42] Others classify airports as more secure, and potentially hardened against terrorist attacks.[43] As such, we perform a case-by-case assessment of whether each specific target should be considered soft or hard.

We utilize these three features as hypotheses in combination with the notion of strategic bombing.[44] The Italian military officer and strategist Giulio Douhet wrote in 1929 the seminal study '*The Command of Air*' in which he claimed that superiority in the sky is decisive and will bring victory by destroying the enemy's morale, infrastructure, economy, or all of these. This theory, called the theory of strategic bombing, hypothesizes that a population exposed to the terror of bombing will demand that their own government change its policy to make the threat of bombing go away. Hence, it is a theory that assumes that the people will put pressure on their government, thereby indirectly influencing political decision-making. This theory has been found to be wrong many times in recent history, and it has been criticized by others, including Seldon, Buruma, and Gentile.[45]

Strategic bombing did not work in Hitler's *Blitzkrieg* against Great Britain, and it did not work in the way Douhet predicted when the United States and Great Britain bombed Germany.[46] Britain spent more on its strategic bombing campaign against Germany than Germany lost in damages and disruption.[47] Israel has bombed Palestinian targets many times without decisive results, and Palestinian suicide bombers in Israel have not strengthened the peace movement in Israel but rather have weakened it. While there is little historical evidence that strategic bombing by conventional military powers itself leads to victory, the theory has not been applied in research on non-state actors. As acts of terrorism have a potentially significant influence on public opinion, we argue that this new dimension of airpower might influence the outcome of contemporary conflicts.[48] We aim to explore the notion of strategic bombing by non-state actors by specifically focusing on target discrimination, mass casualties, and soft targets.

Methodology

To obtain information about incidents in which non-state actors have used UAVs in offensive operations, a four-stage process was followed. First, the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) from the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism [START] at the University of Maryland was searched for incidents.[49] This resulted in 48 incidents extracted from the latest GTD update. Second, several automatic Google alert search strings were set up to search news providers daily for relevant incidents. Third, a daily review was conducted of incidents reported on the LiveUAMap. Fourth, a broad online search for articles, news reports, and research about non-state actors' use of UAVs was carried out on a weekly basis. This resulted in 189 unique incidents. Additionally, we recently also were given access to Bellingcat analyst Nick Waters' collection of ISIS UAV attacks, accompanied by some photographic evidence from the UAVs themselves.[50] This provided 203 additional incidents.

A key challenge in the use of open sources like news reports is the possibility of inaccurate information being either mistakenly posted or posted in a deliberate attempt to mislead the reader and thus influence public opinion. This can also possibly be a part of the 4GW strategy.[51] We tried to reduce the risk of this by seeking several sources for the same incidents and checking the sources for bias through online services that provide bias checks and reviews of media sources. The data were managed using IBM SPSS version 25 and utilized to perform descriptive statistics, chi-square test of association, and binomial one-sample testing.

Results

The result of our data collection is a set of 440 unique cases where weaponized UAVs were used in attacks by non-state actors. The largest number of incidents (98.9% of all) occurred between August 2016 and March 2020. We start by presenting two of these events:

- On 10 January 2019, the Houthis launched a UAV attack directed at a Yemeni government military parade in southern Yemen, inside a military base. The attack resulted in six fatalities and 25 wounded military and intelligence personnel. It took place at a time when the United Nations tried to facilitate peace talks between the Houthis and the internationally recognized Yemeni government led by Hadi.[52]

- In another attack, in January 2017, an ISIS UAV dropped an explosive device on a civilian residential area in Diyala, Iraq, causing three injuries.[53]

These incidents are very different, both in terms of targets of the attacks, and their impact on human victims. In the following, descriptive statistics will present the full data set from our collection of incidents.

Geographic Location of Non-State Actors' UAV Attacks

Most strikingly, 433 of the 440 incidents occurred in the Middle East, four in Eastern Europe, two in South America, and one in Southeast Asia. Also, Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia suffered the most attacks by non-state actors' UAVs—398 in total (90.4% of all attacks). See Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Number of Attacks by Region

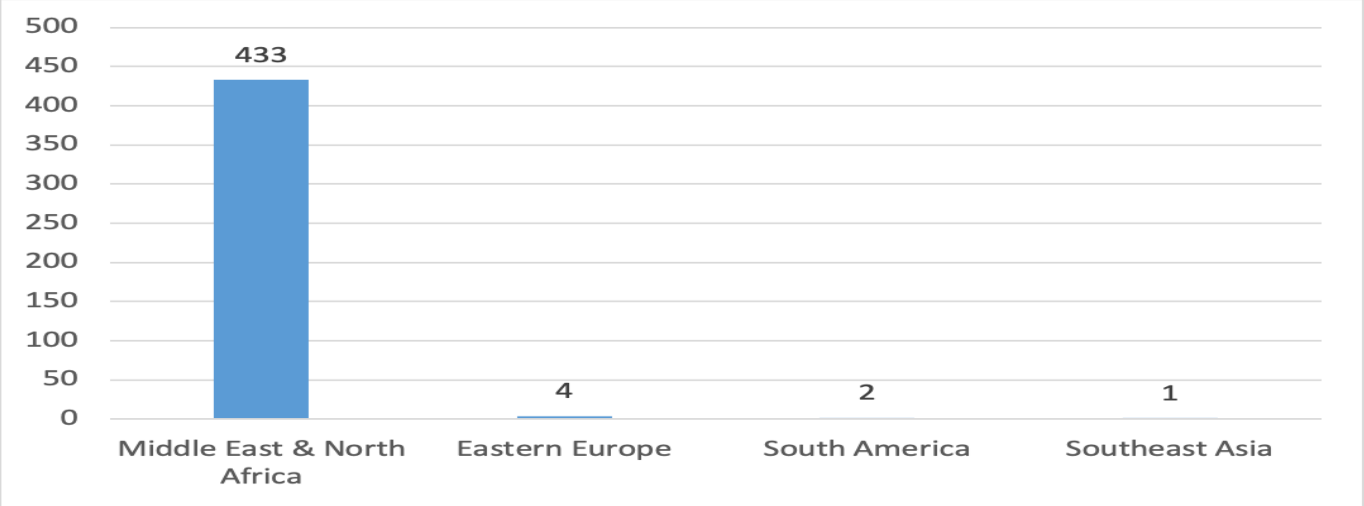
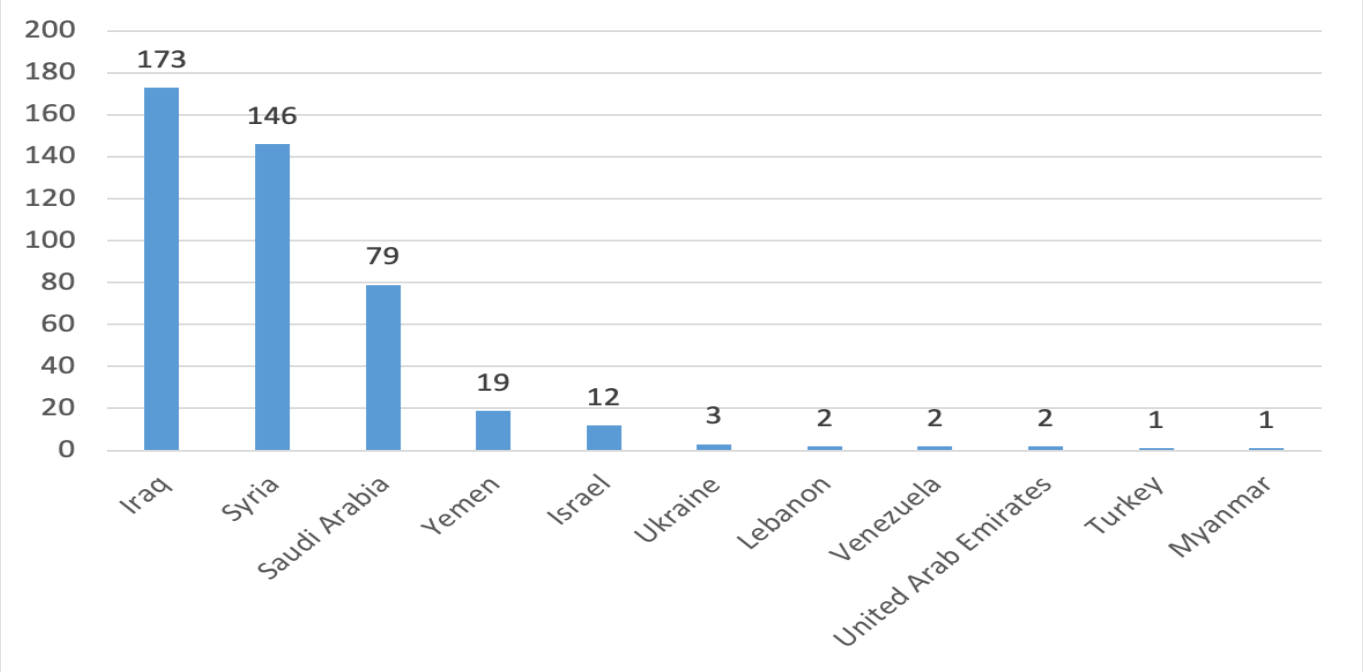


Figure 2: Targets of UAV Attacks



The targets of non-state actors' UAV attacks were mainly military (57.0%), private citizens or private property (10.5%), and civilian airports (8.2%). More details are given in Figure 3. Also, targets were assessed for their status as either being soft or hard by reviewing the incident descriptions from media sources, or picture or video when available. In 34 cases, this information was insufficient to properly assess the nature of the targets. Our assessment of the cases produced 314 cases of hard targets and 92 soft targets being targeted by weaponized UAVs. In Figure 4, the number of hard and soft targets of UAV attacks are presented.

Figure 3: Number of Attacks in Each Target Category

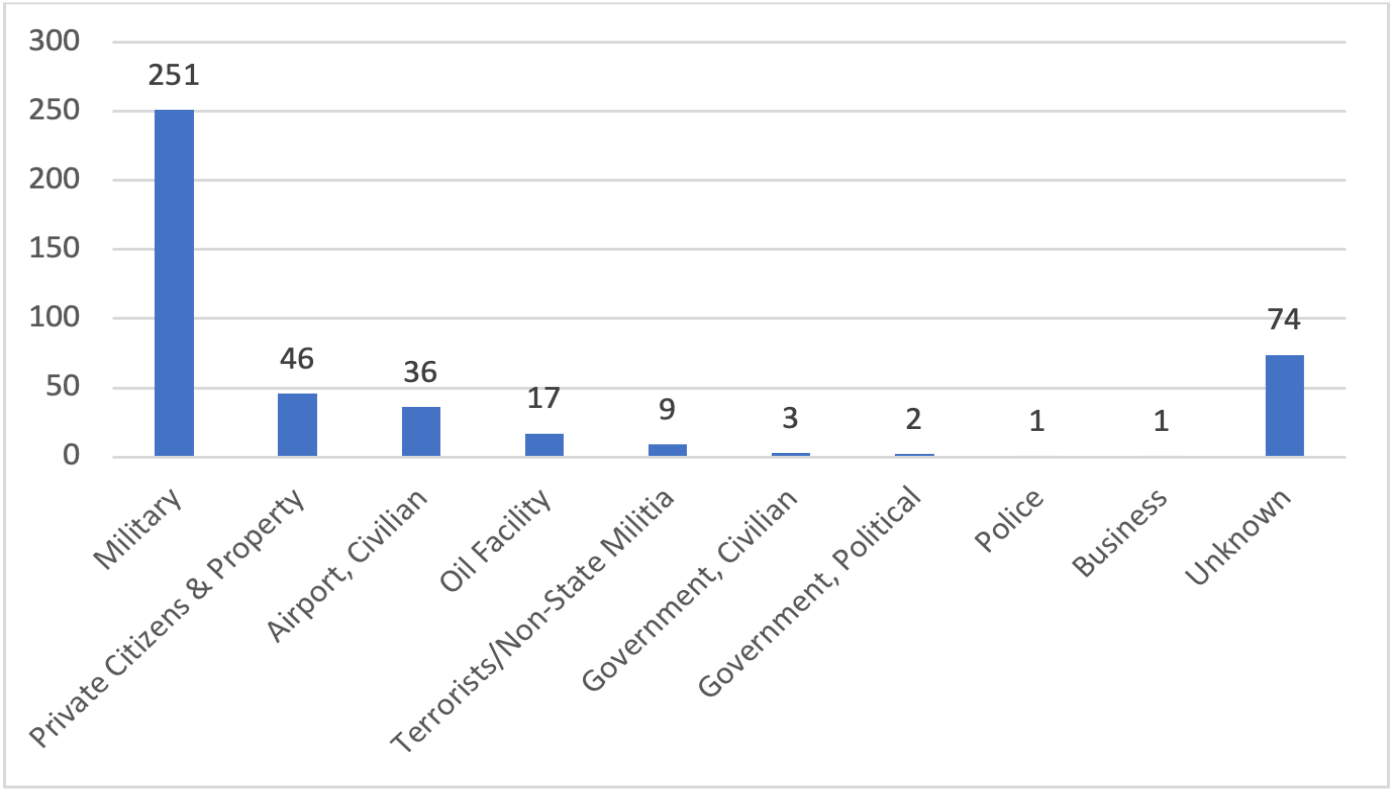
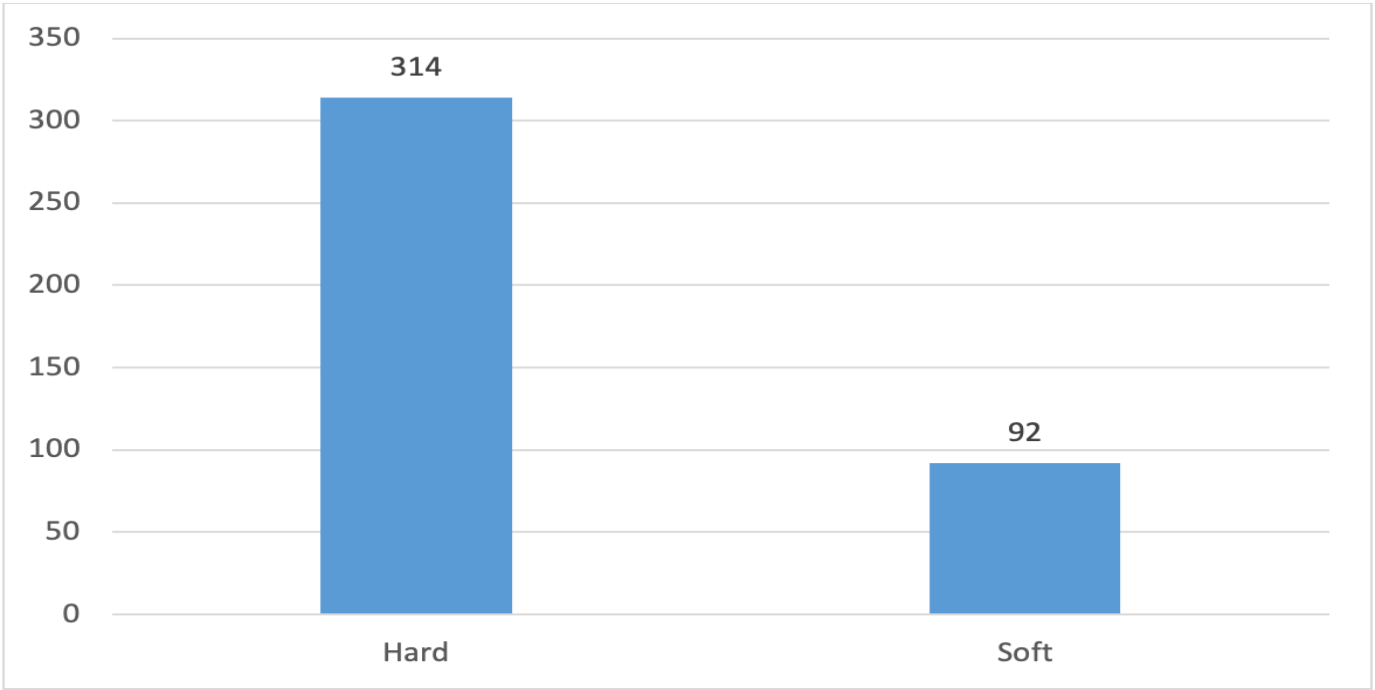


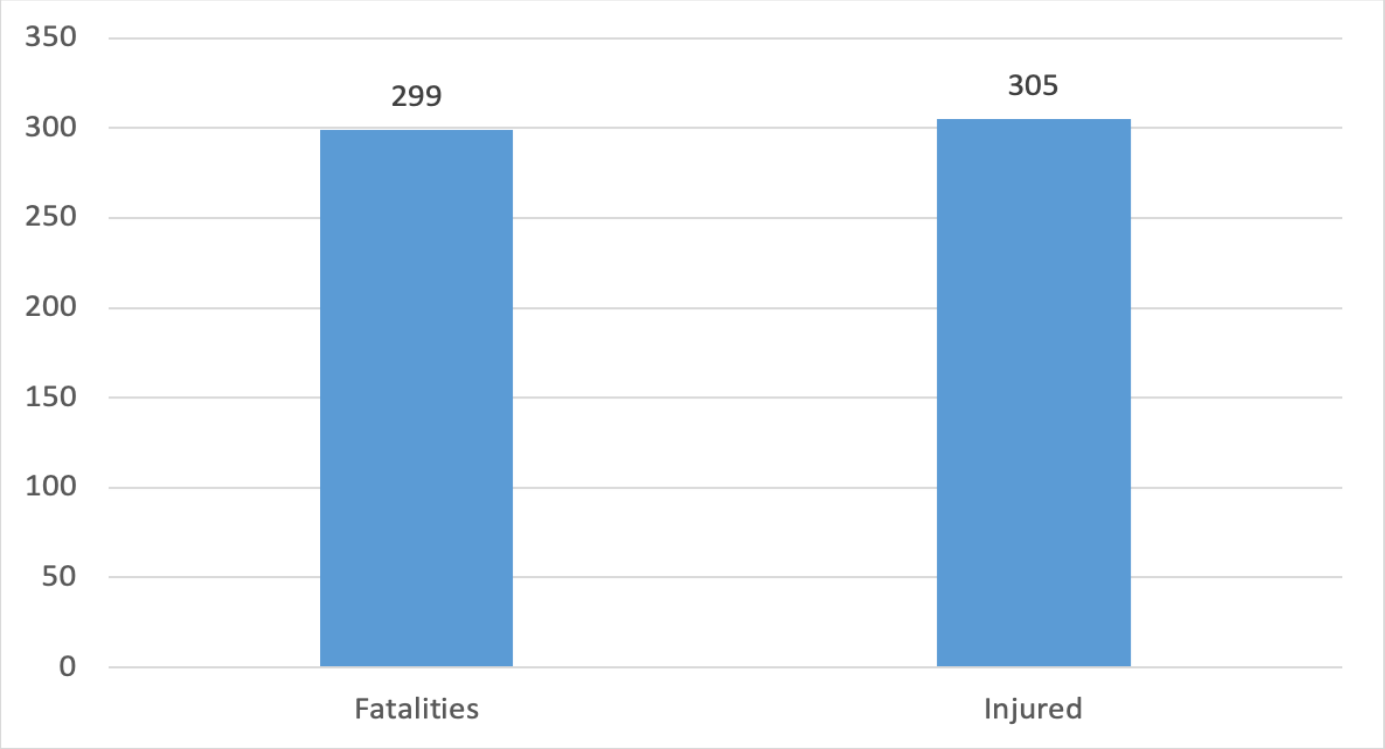
Figure 4: Number of Attacks on Hard and Soft Targets



Injuries and Fatalities from UAV Attacks

Fatalities and/or injuries from non-state actors' UAV attacks were frequently un- or under-reported. Many reports of incidents either did not mention them specifically, or were phrased in a way that did not give a clear picture of how the attack impacted human beings (59% of all cases). The data on fatalities and injuries were not cleaned for outliers, as they were not used in statistical analysis beyond mere description. Analysis of incidents where impact on human beings was available found a total number of 299 fatalities (mean 1.67 fatalities per attack) and 305 injured (mean 1.70 injured per attack).

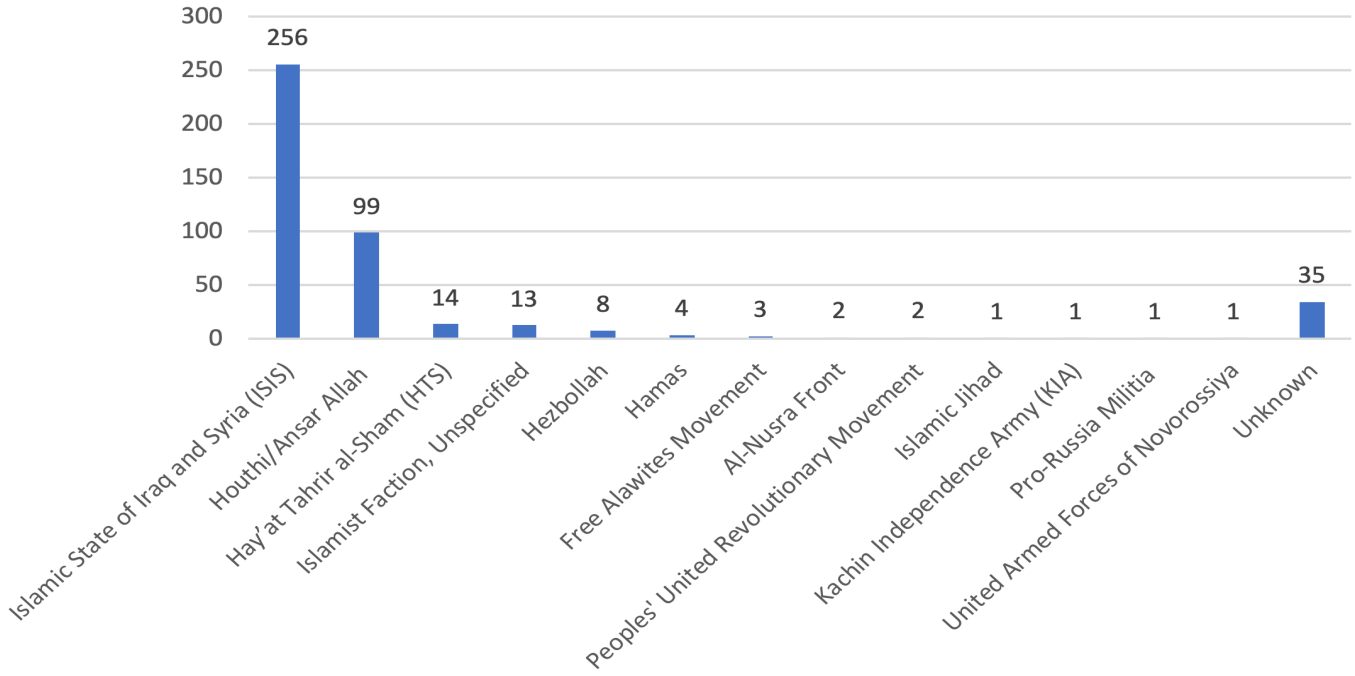
Figure 5: Number of Fatalities and Injuries from UAV Attacks.



Non-State Actors Responsible for Carrying Out UAV Attacks

The two main non-state actors that have used UAVs in offensive operations are ISIS and the Houthi/Ansar Allah movement in Yemen. In total, these two actors were responsible for 80.7% of all non-state actors' offensive uses of UAVs.

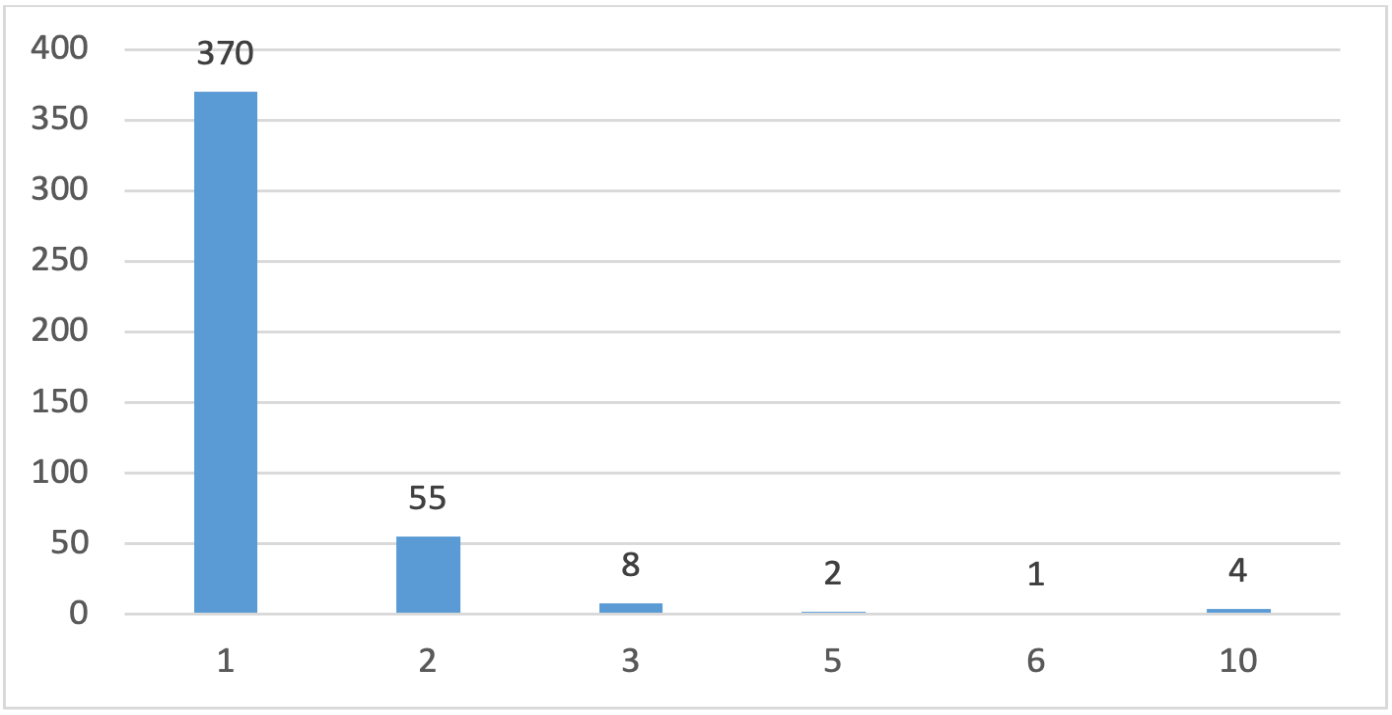
Figure 6: Number of UAV Attacks by Various Non-State Actors



Number of UAVs in Use

In 84.1% of incidents where UAVs were used in offensive operations, only a single UAV was operated. When we recorded incidents in our data set, we registered that two UAVs were used in operations when the reports of the incident described UAVs in plural without giving a specific number. Thus, reports of "several" and "many" UAVs were recorded as two, but the real number may have been higher. Figure 7 clearly shows that, in the majority of incidents, only a single UAV was used.

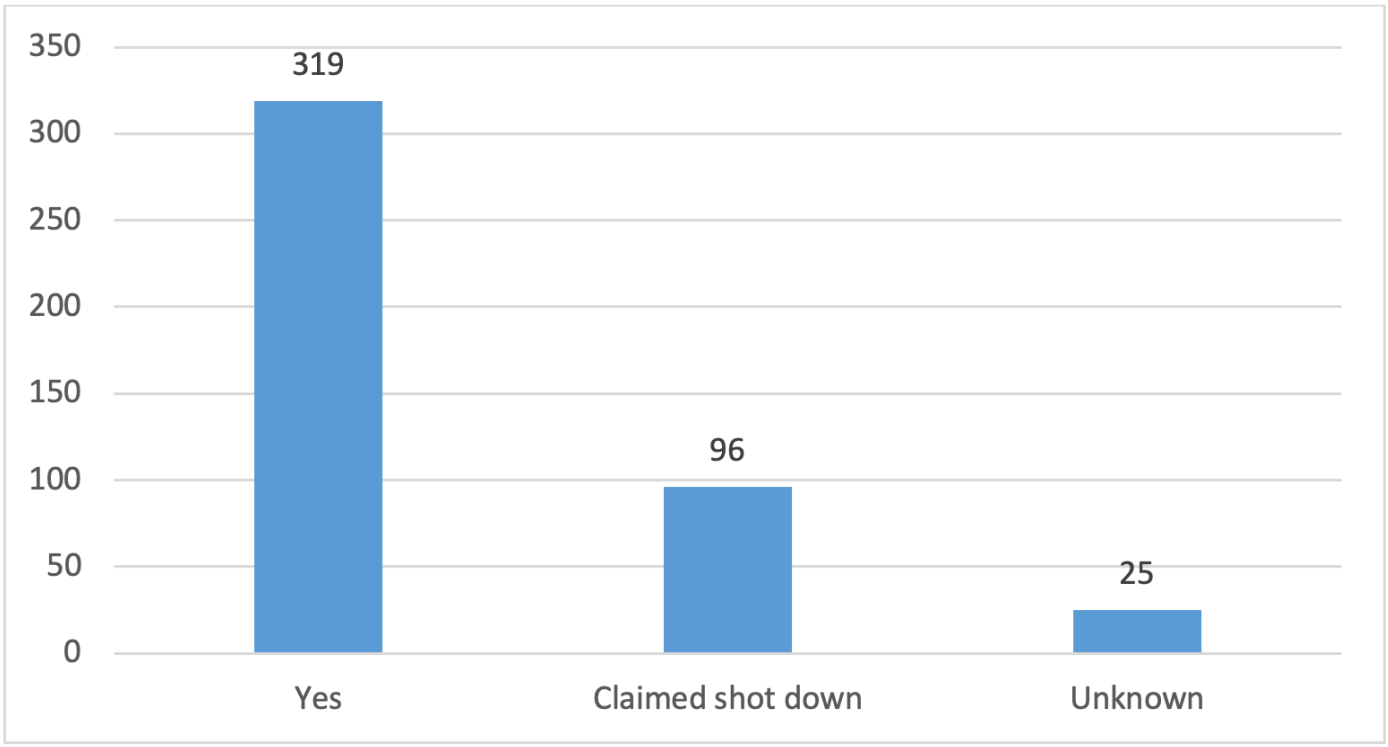
Figure 7: Number of UAVs Used in an Attack



Successful Attacks

For this variable, 'success' was used to indicate whether a UAV reached its target and deployed munitions (e.g., placing explosives, dropping grenades, or firing missiles). Our findings indicate that 72.5% of the attacks were successful. 21.8% of the other armed UAVs were claimed to have been shot down by air defenses. In 5.7% of the cases we were unable to determine the result of the attack from the data at hand.

Figure 8: Number of Successful, Claimed Shot Down, and Unknown-Result Attacks



Target Discrimination, Mass Casualties, and Soft or Hard Targets?

The descriptive statistics provide some insight into which targets non-state actors choose for their weaponized UAVs. However, to determine if there is an association between groups and target types, a chi-square test of association was calculated. A significant association was found ($\chi^2(117, N = 440) = 360{,}878$; $p = 0.000$) with an effect size of 0.302, which can be interpreted as strong.[54] This finding indicates that target selection is dependent on the non-state actor, meaning that targets are chosen discriminately. Also, a binomial test indicated that the 0.77 proportion of hard targets was higher than the expected 0.50, $p = 0.000$ (1-sided). This finding indicates that non-state actors prefer hard targets over soft targets when using weaponized UAVs.

With the help of the above statistical analysis, we have determined that non-state actors choose targets discriminately, and that hard targets are chosen over soft targets. However, as no fixed number exists to indicate mass casualties, our analysis relies on our own interpretation. The mean numbers for fatalities and injuries were 1.67 and 1.70, respectively, indicating low numbers. Additionally, as mentioned in the descriptive results, this mean value was not cleaned for outliers, and only cases with information about fatalities and injuries were included. Taking into account that one incident had 111 casualties and that this particular attack in Yemen was carried out by both UAVs and missiles, the mean number is in fact much lower. Hence, we found that non-state actors' weaponized UAVs do not cause mass casualties or injuries.

Summary of Findings

First, we have demonstrated that one of three hypotheses still stands: various non-state actors choose targets discriminately when using weaponized UAVs. They do, however, not cause mass casualties or injuries, and they choose hard over soft targets. Non-state actors, such as ISIS and the Houthis, may aim to cause mass casualties, but our findings have demonstrated that they fail to do so by using weaponized UAVs.

Secondly, and outside the main scope of this article, the larger body of incidents (98.9% of all) occurred between August 2016 and March 2020, making non-state actors' offensive use of UAVs a highly recent phenomenon in international conflict and warfare. Non-state actors' use of weaponized UAVs has been found almost exclusively in the Middle East (98.4% of cases)—mainly in Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia (90.5% of cases). As such, we demonstrated that non-state actors operating in the Middle East have adapted weaponized UAVs for their operations. It's worth stressing that ISIS and the Houthis are responsible for the majority of cases and that our findings are not necessarily transferable to other non-state actors in the region.

Evolution of 4GW Aerial Attacks

Non-state actors have previously been found to be innovative and adaptive regarding available technology and incorporating some tactics of fourth-generation warfare (4GW).[55] Now, they have also widened their repertoire to include the use of air power. Although the adoption of weaponized UAVs can be seen as a natural evolution of 4GW being carried out by smaller and more flexible entities, uncertainty exists regarding the effects that may have on the conflicts in which they appear. We demonstrated that non-state actors preferred hard rather than soft targets, such as military bases and airports. However, the impact on these targets has yet to include mass casualties, particularly among the civilian population. Our statistical findings indicate that these weaponized UAV operations do not appear widespread or destructive enough to impel the targeted population to demand political change from their rulers to ensure survival. Hence, based on our limited empirical data, the theory of strategic bombing has been disproven once more—this time for non-state actors.

Limitations

Conflicting information was obviously a great challenge in this research. Where there was conflicting information about whether a UAV was shot down or managed to reach and strike its target, the label "claimed shot down" was given. Where information with pictures, video, or overwhelming news coverage about the results of an attack was available, the label "yes" was given even if there were some conflicting statements. Additionally, in the case of some incidents where the information was conflicting and inconsistent, the label "unknown" was used. The same uncertainty about target, or perpetrator, resulted in "unknown". Also, we cannot say with 100% certainty that what ended up as targets of weaponized UAVs were in fact the intended targets. The findings in this article rely on the accuracy and trustworthiness of the reports on non-state actors' offensive use of UAVs. This is widely known as a problem with using open sources in terrorism research, specifically regarding the validity and reliability of data. Also, incidents that cause substantial damage or many casualties receive more media attention than other attacks.[56] This might cause a skewed reporting in media, and thereby influence research such as ours. As the majority of the incidents included in our analysis are from the Middle East, our findings may not necessarily be transferable to other conflict zones. However, as 43% of cases were collected and reviewed by the first author, and 46% were from the Bellingcat data set, we are confident that we have done what we can to ensure the trustworthiness of both data set and analysis. Regardless, the risk of skewed reporting from some countries, while incidents in other countries go 'under the radar' must be taken into consideration when assessing this article's findings.

Implications and Concluding Remarks

What is, or at least has been, the weapon of choice in the war *on* terror is now available on the commercial market to non-state actors, turning drones into yet another weapon *of* terror.[57] While there are still vast differences between the UAVs operated by the United States, Russia, and other major powers and those used by non-state actors, the practical difference might be shrinking, making UAVs a hard nut to crack for ground forces and those charged with protecting military installations and civilian infrastructures in conflict and non-conflict zones. Non-state actors, such as terrorist organizations, have in the past used explosive devices that were thrown at their targets, or improvised explosive devices that were rigged to go off by various means.[58] Fourth-generation warfare has now evolved providing "David" fighting "Goliath" with air power to influence the target country's government, economy, and citizens' resilience, resulting in new uncertainties and fear. While our findings indicate that non-state actors are still some steps away from significantly influencing public opinion with their weaponized UAVs, this may change if their target selection changes toward softer targets with large groups of civilians becoming victims.

The evolution of combat, whether conventional or not, is most certainly not in its final stages, and the ability to both conquer and remain dominant in the air, will, by all expectations, still serve as a vital element in future armed conflicts. Military establishments and counterterrorism agencies, face, however, a new challenge: how to stop UAVs armed with explosives? As the low price and wide availability of UAVs gives the general population easy access to this new technology, it will increasingly also be adapted for malicious purposes. In retrospect, the "innocent" incidents at Gatwick Airport in 2018 and Bodø Airport in 2019 give us an idea just how powerful and generally available a tool this can be. Their destructive and psychological impacts have been emerging in recent years, first in the form of UAVs used by the United States in Afghanistan and Pakistan and, more recently, by their deployment by non-state actors, such as ISIS and the Houthis. While weaponized UAVs are a new tool for terrorist groups in conflict theatres, they may still be shunned for some time in non-conflict zones where less sophisticated everyday instruments like trucks can be used. [59]

We have found that weaponized UAVs have been acquired and used by non-state actors and that they choose targets discriminately, prefer hard over soft targets, but cause few casualties and injuries. What we cannot say with equal certainty is how the adoption of weaponized UAVs by these non-state actors have had an impact on the conflicts they have appeared in. The task of isolating one specific factor in a complex situation like armed conflict and irregular warfare has not been the aim of this article. Our findings also raise more questions, such as: how will UAVs contribute to shaping the future 4GW?; and, how will state actors be able to defend hard and soft targets against UAVs, both in and out of active conflict zones?; and, at what cost? Continued efforts to explore and analyze this phenomenon should provide knowledge that can strengthen our societies' preparedness for, and resilience to, this new threat from the air.

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Note on Ethical Considerations

All information was procured through open sources, with none originating from social media postings. As such, no information about individuals other than those who wrote the newspaper articles cited can be traced back to our data set. Therefore, this research has not been submitted for ethical evaluation to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD).

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Is Youth Unemployment Related to Domestic Terrorism?

by Adesoji Adelaja and Justin George

Abstract

The growing youth unemployment rate and population (youth bulge) in many countries raises concerns about their potential contributions to unrest and instability. In this article, we investigate the possible contributions of youth unemployment to domestic terrorism using a cross-country panel database. Our results show a positive relationship between youth unemployment and domestic terrorism, conditional upon different development factors, including corruption, government ineffectiveness and the absence of the rule of law. However, as expected, across countries, youth unemployment is not a significant predictor of transnational terrorism. We conclude by highlighting the need for deeper consideration of the role of unemployed youth in terrorism prevention strategies.

Keywords: grievances, recruitment, terrorism, youth, unemployment

Introduction

The youth bulge, a common phenomenon in many developing countries, is often attributed to a stage of development where a country's success in reducing infant mortality inadequately compensates for its persistently high fertility rate.[1] Without adequate development and job opportunities, a consequence of the youth bulge is high unemployment among youth who constitute a high percentage of the population.[2] Consequently, young workers are more likely than adults to be underemployed and living in poverty.[3] Youth unemployment potentially leads to despair, nonproductive labor-market trajectories, and stunted economic growth.[4]

The dire youth unemployment situation in less-developed countries (LDCs) is particularly troubling, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) which faces the highest level (70 percent) of youth working poverty rate globally.[5] On average, of the 10 to 12 million youth entering the workforce, only 3.1 million jobs are created annually, leaving the vast majority unemployed.[6] For example, in Nigeria and Ghana, respectively 43 and 48 percent of youth aged 15–24 are unemployed or underemployed. Youth unemployment may also fuel youth out-migration from Africa, dependencies and stresses on adults, unrealized growth opportunities, youth restiveness and greater potential for radicalization and conflict.[7]

Many of the countries which are prone to political violence, especially terrorism, feature higher employment rates among the youth population than their adult population. For example, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, which hosted around 40 percent of the total incidence of terrorist attacks in the 2011–2015 period, experienced a youth unemployment rate of 30 percent in 2019, double the global average.[8] The coincident increases in unrest and youth unemployment have raised questions about the possible link between youth unemployment, on the one hand, and conflict, political violence and even terrorism. Beehner (2007) contends that youth unemployment creates a large pool of disaffected youth who are more susceptible to recruitment into rebel or terrorist groups.[9] He also argued that countries with weak political institutions are most vulnerable to youth-bulge-related violence and social unrest.

Key global development organizations have highlighted these concerns, often with little empirical evidence. For example, the United Nations Security Council (2015), in a unanimous adoption of the resolution on threats posed by the radicalization of young people, identified the lack of employment among youth as a key driver of radicalization.[10] This claim was echoed by a World Bank study on ISIS, which found that even though 85% of the recruits had finished secondary school education, many of them were young, with low access to resources or employment.[11]

The limited credible empirical evidence on the link between youth unemployment (YU) and conflict, political violence or terrorism suggests the need for deeper empirical investigation. Several studies argue that a link

exists, but without empirical evidence. For example, Ajaegbu (2012) argues that because youth are less employed, they are more susceptible to a number of violent crimes in Nigeria.[12] In a study of fragile states by Okafor and Piesse (2018), they found that, in general, the youth unemployment rate is positively related to terrorism. However, they did not make a distinction between domestic terrorism (DT) and transnational terrorism (TT).[13]

We argue that a connection between youth unemployment and domestic terrorism makes more sense than with transnational terrorism. Because youth unemployment is a local issue, the expression of associated grievances is not likely to have transnational spillover effects. However, we do not discount the possibility that transnational terrorist groups and their local affiliates may exploit the local grievances to recruit operatives. Also, Okafor and Piesse (2018) did not empirically explore the interplay between youth unemployment and various other potential causal factors in terrorism that are alluded to in the literature, especially those that would seem to accentuate the grievances harbored by youth.[14] We also argue that evidence that adequately ties youth unemployment to domestic terrorism through the aggravating or moderating effect of grievances is potentially more useful in understanding the role of youth unemployment, in meeting the information needs of policies and programs directed at youth employment and in identifying potential hot spots of terrorism recruitment and activity.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the association between Youth Unemployment (YU) and Terrorism (T) across countries, with a focus on Domestic Terrorism (DT). We provide some rationale for this association by highlighting the role of youth unemployment in escalating grievances and facilitating the recruitment of young operatives, and explain how youth unemployment interacts with various institutional factors which the literature suggests are relevant, including corruption, government effectiveness and the rule of law. Using a cross-country panel data covering the 1996–2015 period, we also explore various forms of relationships between youth unemployment and domestic terrorism.

Review of Literature

In this section, we present preliminaries on youth population and unemployment issues in developing countries, review the literature which connects these two to conflict through the recruitment activities of terrorists, and highlight the distinction between domestic and transnational terrorism.

The United Nations defines "youth" as persons aged 15 to 24 years and "adults" as persons aged 25 years and over.[15] The UN defines the youth unemployment rate as the percentage of the youth population that is in the labor force (not as the percentage of the total population) [16] and states that its definition is only for statistical purposes and is without prejudice to other definitions.[17] Indeed, the definition of youth varies widely. For example, the African Union (AU) defines youth as persons aged 15–35.[18] However, for the purpose of this article, we adopt the UN and ILO definition of youth as persons in the age range of 15 and 24.

According to the United Nations (UN) Department of Economics and Social Affairs (DESA), there are 1.2 billion youth between 15 and 24 years worldwide, some of whom are in the labor force.[19] Most are largely concentrated in developing countries, with 226 million (19%) located in Africa alone. The African Development Bank (AfDB) projects that the population of youth in Africa will grow by 42 percent by 2030 and that by 2050, one in three of the world's youth between the ages of 10 and 24 will live in Africa.[20] The ILO also reports 64 million unemployed worldwide, and that 145 million working youth live in poverty.[21] By all definitions, both youth numbers and the youth unemployment rate are rising in most developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, making tackling the youth bulge a key policy issue.

Some characteristics of youth and conditions in developing countries help explain the limited youth employment opportunities. From the standpoint of the supply-side of the youth labor market, on average, compared to the general population, youth in developing countries possess lower skills and education, have more-limited experience and are more dependent on their families for survival. A large proportion of employed youth are

engaged in the informal sector, which accounts for about 80 percent of jobs in some countries in Africa.[22] The above suggests a more serious and growing youth unemployment problem in Africa if adequate efforts are not implemented to increase the opportunities facing youth.

The general literature on youth and violence directly links youth unemployment to terrorism. It suggests that unemployed youth are typically more inclined to engage in such activities as cybercrime, armed robbery, kidnapping, hustling, petty theft, drugs (selling and using), prostitution and political violence.[23] Ajaegbu (2012) supports this notion by presenting similar reasons why youth are less employed and more susceptible to a number of violent crimes in Nigeria.[24] On average, youth are more energetic, rebellious, exploratory in nature, easily frustrated and have greater need to belong. Young people in developing countries today are more technologically advanced and use more modern methods of communication than youth in the past and other age groups in the present. For terrorist groups, this increases the number of ways in which radicalization and coercion can be achieved. For instance, al-Qaida's exploitation of the popularity of social media in the western world to indoctrinate youth is well documented.[25] These may suggest that they are easier to influence than other age groups and are more attractive to terrorist organizations.[26] The low opportunity cost from gainful employment in developing countries may imply greater ease of coopting unemployed or underemployed youth into terrorist activities. The combination of youth characteristics and the alarming statistics about youth above help to explain the growing global concern about the connection between youth unemployment and terrorism.

Some evidence from the literature indirectly support the notion that youth unemployment plays a role in terrorism. First, there is a growing indication that terrorist groups are targeting underserved youth for enlistment.[27] The relatively rapid growth in the youth population, especially in parts of Asia, Middle East and Africa, and the fact that the labor markets have not been able to fully absorb them, could present terrorist organizations with a growing potential recruitment pool. Second, previous studies have connected the unemployment rate with terrorism via the opportunity cost argument. Piazza (2006) provides empirical evidence to suggest that the stress caused by unfulfilled economic expectations could lead unemployed people to adopt political violence.[28] If this is true, the link between unemployment and political violence will be stronger for the youth. Finally, the growing economic and social inequality in developing countries is expected to lead to frustrations among young people. This collective anger can lead to terrorism in the presence of a terrorist organization, radical leadership, or a triggering incident. Political opportunists tend to exploit identity schisms and grievances to mobilize violent campaigns such as terrorism.

Because terrorism is motivated by political and ideological factors, grievances against social and political institutions which create unfavorable economic conditions could be catalysts for most forms of political violence. Especially, for youth who are 'outsiders' to the governance structures, their grievances may include holding those who they believe are responsible for their problems accountable. Terrorist organizations tend to exploit such resentment among young people by providing a violent platform to express their angst.[29] Young people who hold the political belief that their ethnicity, race or religion have roles to play in their current plight are particularly vulnerable to terrorist recruitments. For example, the revolts of the Arab Spring in 2011 were initiated by the frustrated angry youth who orchestrated them as a protest against political oppression and lack of economic opportunities.[30] While many of these protests did not directly lead to terrorism, they may have increased the likelihood of violent uprisings. If issues leading to mass grievances remain unsolved, some form of triggering incidents could turn it into violence. For instance, Boko Haram, one of the largest terrorist organisations in the world which was formed around 2002, was motivated by the economic and social backwardness of the northeastern region of Nigeria and the anger of people in that region against government corruption. The organization remained largely dormant in terms of violent activities until 2009, when security forces killed their leader, Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf.

In addition to youth-related factors, other economic factors have been shown to be related to terrorism. However, evidence on the role of economic factors in terrorism is unclear. For example, empirical studies investigating terrorism are divided in their findings regarding its relationship with economic variables. Krueger and Maleckova (2003) argue that economic conditions are not significant predictors of terrorist mobilizations.[31] However, Piazza (2011) argued that economic discrimination, especially among minority groups, will

lead to domestic terrorism.[32] Both studies were focused on domestic terrorism. No studies have compared the effects of youth unemployment on domestic and transnational terrorism. Because of the nature of youth, they are likely to perceive chronic unemployment as a form of economic and social discrimination, which are mostly domestic issues. The role of youth unemployment must therefore be examined in the context of other economic and social problems. It is also plausible that the role of youth unemployment is conditional on such factors.

Finally, we explore the few previous empirical investigations into the relationship between youth unemployment and conflict, unrest or terrorism. Using 1980–2014 data from 24 developing countries, Azeng and Yogo (2013) show that youth unemployment is significantly and positively related to the risk of political instability, but their study did not specifically address terrorism.[33] In investigating the relationship between the youth bulge and ethnic and nonethnic civil wars, Yair and Miodownic (2016) found that it contributes to the onset of nonethnic wars, but not ethnic wars. Again, this study did not directly evaluate terrorism.[34]

Caruso and Gavrilova (2012) suggest that the growth rate of youth unemployment positively affects the brutality and incidence of violence in the Palestinian context. However, their study did not explore terrorism specifically.[35] Urdal (2006) posits that the interaction between youth bulges, economic decline and expansion in higher education increases the risk of terrorism.[36] However, it too did not distinguish between domestic and transnational terrorism. In domestic terrorism, the victim and the perpetrator are both from the venue country. However, in transnational incidents, the nationality of one or more of the victims or perpetrators are not from the same country. For example, a terrorist attack in Iraq, by Iraqi terrorists, but on a British citizen, would be classified as a transnational event. Domestic terrorist incidents significantly outnumber transnational terrorist incidents. As argued above, youth unemployment seems more relevant in domestic terrorism, vis-à-vis, transnational. However, no study has directly examined the role of youth unemployment in terrorism, leaving a major gap in the literature on terrorism.

Conceptual Framework and Key Hypothesis

The standard economic modeling approach to explaining terrorism involves the opportunity cost argument. From this perspective, we argue that an unemployed young person faces a relatively lower opportunity cost of joining a terrorist organization, compared to his employed counterparts. Hence, marginal economic benefits provided by terrorist organizations could prove to be attractive for the unemployed youth. In a study of former al-Shabaab members, one-third of them revealed that the terrorist activities were a form of employment for them. According to them, the organization paid them well, with a salary ranging from $50 to $150, monthly, depending on the work.[37] On the contrary, an abundance of employment opportunities for potential recruits will imply more difficulties for terrorist organizations to recruit operatives. In this study, we argue that grievances held by unemployed youth are sufficient to escalate to terroristic violence, thereby increasing the incidence of terrorism in a country.

To formalize our empirical approach, we present the following conceptual model of the YU-T pathway based on the literature review above. From the supply side perspective of a terrorist organization, the production of terrorism can be generally represented as follows:

$$A = f(T, K) \quad (1)$$

where A is the total amount of terrorism produced (e.g., the number of attacks and number of fatalities), T is the youth recruitment pool available to the terrorist organization and K represents all other inputs such as financial resources, weapons, other strategic resources, adult operatives etc. Assume that A is increasing in both T and K. Given the amorphous nature of terrorist groups such as ISIS and Boko Haram, the relative ease of radicalization in recent times and the increase in 'lone-wolf terrorism' motivated by terror groups, T is entered directly into the production function. For example, many terrorist groups are comprised largely of young operatives, including suicide bombers. They also follow a decentralized, nonhierarchical structure to counter

anti-terrorism measures adopted by governments to ward off their recruitment activities. These include hidden cells which make their recruitment efforts very flexible. We assume that the effect of youth unemployment on terrorism production enters through *T*. In the rest of this section, we explain how decisions made by individual youth aggregate to form *T*, the recruitment pool, by building on the work of de Mesquita (2005).

Consider the case of the i^{th} youth in a given country with *n* similar youth between the ages of 15 and 24 (*i* = 1, 2, …, n). Assume that a terrorist group already exists which has a visible anti-government propaganda, capacity to meet some of the economic and ideological needs of the youth and the recruitment structure to lure the youth. The youth, therefore, has to decide between participating in normal productive economic activities, albeit dismal, and joining a terrorist group, which will apply his/her otherwise underutilized skills in destructive terrorism-related activities.

Each individual youth *i* possesses a utility function from engaging in the normal economic activities, represented by

$$U_i^e = f(\theta_i, \gamma), i = 1, 2, \dots, n \qquad (2)$$

where i denotes personal characteristics, and is the parameter that accounts for the general socioeconomic environment of the youth, such as youth employment. Note that i may include education, skills and experience. Also, note that it may include such factors as societal attitudes about youth, the general state of the economy, and the functioning of government. Now, we assume that *f(.)* is increasing and concave in $_i$ so that the utility derived from engaging in productive employment is increasing in personal skills. Finally, $\frac{\delta f}{\delta \gamma} > 0$ for those conditions which improve the economy while $\frac{\delta f}{\delta \gamma} < 0$ for such conditions that reduce people's economic welfare.

The individual youth *i*'s utility function from engaging in terrorist activities can be represented by

$$U_i^t = g(\theta_i, a_i(e_i, \gamma)) \qquad (3)$$

where a_i is the total level of angst or grievances felt by the youth. We assume that these grievances are a function of mainly two factors. First factor, e_i, constitutes various religious, ethnic and ideological aspects unique to the individual while the second factor, γ arises from country-level socioeconomic conditions as previously discussed. These components will act independently and interactively to aggravate angst. Note that *g(.)* is the utility from devoting full attention to terrorism. U_i^t, therefore, depends on θ_i, e_i, and γ.

We assume that $\frac{\delta g}{\delta \theta_i} > 0$. This means that the expected utility from success as a terrorist is an increasing function of his personal skills. One would expect $\frac{\delta g}{\delta a_i} > 0$, meaning that as a youth feels more angst, his utility from terrorism increases. We also assume that $\frac{\delta a_i}{\delta e_i} > 0$, implying that the level of angst increases with negative feelings about marginalization on the basis of ethnicity, religion or any other sense of belonging. Hence, as the productive skill level of the i^{th} youth increases, the utility derived from both economic and terrorist activities increase. This assumes that terrorists prefer skilled youth to under-skilled youth, ceteris paribus. The only difference is that terrorists apply the skills of youth differently than the economy does. Finally, we assume that $\frac{\delta a_i}{\delta \gamma} < 0$ for such economic conditions which improve the well-being of citizens while $\frac{\delta a_i}{\delta \gamma} > 0$ for conditions which reduce economic welfare.

Given the utility functions in equations (2) and (3), a young person will choose to join a terrorist organization when $U_i^t > U_i^e$. That is,

$$g(\theta_i, a_i(e_i, \gamma) > f(\theta_i, \gamma) \qquad (4)$$

In other words, the youth's net payoff, T_i, if he decides to get involved in terrorist activities, is

$$T_i = g(\theta_i, a_i(e_i,\gamma) - f(\theta_i,\gamma) > 0 \quad (5)$$

For the sake of simplicity and to motivate the ensuing empirical analysis, we assume that γ denotes the youth unemployment rate. Taking the derivative of T_i with respect to youth unemployment rate (γ) yields:

$$\frac{\delta T_i}{\delta \gamma} = \frac{\delta g}{\delta a_i} \cdot \frac{\delta a_i}{\delta \gamma} - \frac{\delta f}{\delta \gamma} \quad (6)$$

Equation (6) suggests that a change in youth unemployment rate affects a potential recruit's payoff via two components: $\frac{\delta g}{\delta a_i} \cdot \frac{\delta a_i}{\delta \gamma}$ and $\frac{\delta f}{\delta \gamma}$. The first term represents how an increase in youth unemployment rate affects terrorist payoff through grievances against the authorities. The second term shows how an increase in youth unemployment rate affects potential terrorist payoff through a reduction in the opportunity cost involved. Both terms have positive signs based on the discussions above. Hence, the net effect of an increase in youth unemployment rate on the payoff from terrorist activities is positive.

Whether a given youth makes himself available to a terrorist organization, or not, is expressed as follows:

$$\alpha_i = \begin{cases} 1, if\ g(\theta_i, a_i\ (e_i,\gamma) - f(\theta_i,\gamma) > 0 \\ 0, otherwise \end{cases} \quad (7)$$

where α_i is a binary choice variable (α_i=1 if available, and α_i= 0 if not available). The total number of potential recruits available to a terrorist organization is therefore:

$$T = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \alpha_i = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \alpha_i\ (\theta_i, e_i, \gamma) = T\ (\bar{\theta}, \bar{e}, \gamma). \quad (8)$$

where $\bar{\theta}$ and $\bar{e}$ represents average values of θ_i and e_i of the recruit pool. From Equation (7) and (8), an implication of growing youth unemployment is that more youth are likely to choose terrorism. In empirical analysis, potential measures of *A* include indicators of terrorism activities such as terrorist attacks and fatalities, while potential measures of youth unemployment include youth unemployment numbers and youth unemployment rates (see Equations 1 and 8). From the above, we hypothesize that increased youth unemployment results in greater incidence of terrorism and that the impact is enhanced by increases in the level of angst.

Empirical Framework

In this article, our goal is to explain how variations across countries in different factors, including youth unemployment, may explain variations in measures of terrorism, especially domestic terrorism. We use data from 126 countries from the period 1996 to 2015, based on the availability of data on independent variables (see Appendix for the list of countries). The dependent variables include the number of terrorist attacks and the number of casualties. Because these variables are count measures, which take on nonnegative integer values, a natural choice of modeling would be a Poisson regression technique. However, a Poisson regression model assumes that the mean and the variance are equal for the dependent variable, which is an implausible assumption to make in our case. On the other hand, negative binomial regression techniques provide more flexibility in modeling by allowing separate parameters for the mean and the variance. Hence, we adopt a more flexible negative binomial model, which is a popular technique in studying the determinants of terrorism.[38]

It is standard to use country level fixed effects to control for the unobserved heterogeneity between countries. However, given the nature of our analysis, we avoid using country fixed effects and instead use regional and time dummies. The two main reasons for the omission of country fixed effects are as follows. First, for our primary independent variable, the youth unemployment rate, between-country variance accounts for a significant proportion of the total variation (70 percent), compared to the within-country variance. As in most large sample cross-country studies, between-country variation is very important and hence applying country level fixed effects would mean ignoring a large amount of variation in the analysis. Second, we use time invariant variables such as ethnic fractionalization which are important for our analysis. Applying fixed effects would mean dropping those variables from the analysis. However, we use both regional and time dummies to control for spatial and temporal heterogeneity. We also use country-clustered standard errors which are robust to autocorrelation and heteroskedasticity. The inclusion of per capita income controls for the varying income levels across countries, vis-à-vis others.

Our empirical model is as follows:

$$Terrorist\ attacks_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 (Youth\ U)_{it} + \beta_2 (governance)_{it} + \beta_3 (Youth\ U * governance)_{it} + \gamma X_{it} + \tau_t + \mu_r + \epsilon_{it}, \quad (9)$$

where *i* denotes i^{th} country; τ_t represents year dummies; μ_r represents regional dummies; and ϵ_{it} represents the error term. $Youth\ U$ represents the youth unemployment rate or the absolute number of unemployed youth. γ represents the coefficient vector of control variables and X_{it} denotes the vector of control variables. To operationalize the model, the key dependent variable, $Terrorist\ attacks_{it}$ is the annual number of terrorist attacks for a given country in each year. In addition, we use the number of attacks with casualties ($Attacks\ with\ casualties_{it}$) and the total number of casualties ($Casualties_{it}$) as dependent variables to measure incidence and virulence. For the three above-mentioned dependent variables, we make a domestic-transnational distinction in our analysis. For transnational attacks, one can construct the dependent variables based on venue, victim or terrorist nationality. However, we restrict our analysis to attacks based on country venue, as they are more relevant to our conceptual discussion.

We use the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) from the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) in this study.[39] The GTD codes information compiled from media articles into variables such as incidents location, target/victim information, terrorist group information and casualty. However, GTD does not record information about the perpetrator. Hence, a straightforward classification of terrorist incidents into domestic and transnational incidents is not possible. To correct for this deficiency, we use Enders et al. (2011) classification of GTD incidents. They categorize terrorist incidents into domestic, transnational and ambiguous events, based on victim's nationalities, target entities and some other factors.[40]

The primary explanatory variable, the youth unemployment rate, is the ILO estimate of the total number of unemployed people aged 15–24 as a percentage of total labor force in the same age category. Note that the ILO as well as other agencies of UN defines youth as persons between the age of 15–24. So, our definition of youth is consistent with definitions used by most international agencies. We also consider the absolute number of total unemployed youth as an alternative measure of youth unemployment. The approaches to the measure of youth unemployment rate variable vary across countries and hence, cross-country comparisons involving the variable are not free from flaws. However, ILO estimates are the best available cross-country measure of youth unemployment used in the literature. The ILO coordinates with national statistical systems, especially central statistical agencies and ministries responsible for labor issues, and with statistics offices of other international organizations in producing these statistics.

Based on our review of literature, we hypothesize that the role of youth unemployment on terrorism is amplified by the level of angst felt among groups due to ineffective governance. To measure quality of governance, we use *Govt. effectiveness*, *Rule of law*, and *Corruption* variables taken from Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) of the World Bank. WGI compiles country-level information about the nature of governance from 32 existing

data sources, which record perspectives of a representative sample of citizens, entrepreneurs, and experts from various sectors. The *Govt. effectiveness* variable is an assessment of the quality of the government institutions and consistency in implementation of policy decisions. The *Rule of law* variable represents independence of judicial system and corruption variable is the measure of red tapism and the likelihood of encountering corrupt officials.[41]

We use standard controls, including GDP per capita and population. Both are obtained from World Development Indicators (WDI) of the World Bank.[42] Terrorists seek attention and publicity for their activities through media coverage and, hence, we include a variable measuring *Freedom of Press* in the regressions. We try to control for the influence of *international war*s by including a dummy variable for whether the country was experiencing an international war during that given year. Regime characteristics are likely to influence incidents of terrorism. Hence, *polity* scores are also included as controls. The *polity score*, which is an aggregate index measuring the democratic nature of governments, varies from -10 for strongly autocratic to +10 for strongly democratic.[43] The index of *ethnic fractionalization* is included to reflect the probability that two randomly selected individuals from a given country will not belong to the same ethnic group.[44] This index ranges between 0 and 1, with higher values reflecting greater fractionalization.

Empirical Results

Tables 1 to 4 [see Appendix] present the negative binomial regression results for the different measures of domestic terrorism. Tables 5 and 6 [also in Appendix] show the results for transnational terrorism and total terrorism, respectively. Table 1 reports the parameter estimates associated with six different models relating the number of domestic terrorist attacks to hypothesized explanatory variables. These different regressions allow the exploration of multiple relationship structures and the concept that angst factors amplify the effects of unemployment among the youth on terrorism.

The coefficients of the YU rate and the log number of unemployed youth are statistically significant and have the expected positive signs in all relevant models. This suggests that youth unemployment contributes to terrorism. The coefficients of the corruption, rule of law, and government effectiveness variables are significant, but only when regressed along with the log of youth unemployment. The interpretation of the main effects of these variables, when interacted with other continuous variables as we did, are not straightforward and will be discussed in more detail below. All interaction terms are statistically significant and have the expected negative signs. Since high values of the WGI variables represent low levels of angst, a critical finding of our analysis is that the effect of youth unemployment on domestic terrorism is amplified at high levels of angst or grievances. This basic result is consistent with our expectations and lends support to current thinking in policy circles that youth unemployment contributes to terrorism attacks. As we will discuss next, it further highlights the aggravating roles of angst factors in the YU-T pathway.

Now, we examine the coefficients of the control variables. In all the models except 4, the coefficients of the population variable are statistically significant and have the expected positive signs. Enders et al. (2016) suggest a nonlinear relationship between country's national income and the amount of terrorism produced. Hence, we include a quadratic GDP per capita term.[45] A negative sign for the linear term and a positive sign for the quadratic term in models 4 to 6 indicate that as absolute level of GDP per capita increases, the negative effect of GDP on domestic terrorism diminishes. The estimated positive coefficients of the polity variable across all six models in table 1 indicate that domestic terrorism increases with improved polity scores. This result suggests that autocratic societies are better at containing terrorist activities gaining a large audience because of government-controlled media and other forms of oppression. Such countries have strong control over media and use other forms of control and oppression to make sure the terrorists do not get a large audience.

In regressions involving interaction terms, note that the coefficients of the youth unemployment rate show the impacts on terrorism when the values of WGI indicators equal zero. Since these indicators range from -2.5 to 2.5 in value (higher values indicate better governance), a zero value does not mean much. Therefore, we

generate Table 2, which shows the effect of the youth unemployment rate on terrorism at different levels of WGI indicators. We divide each WGI indicators into percentiles, and for values corresponding to each percentile, we report the effect of youth unemployment rate on domestic terrorism and their associated significance levels. As evident from the table, youth unemployment is estimated to have a significant impact on domestic terrorism when corruption is high, government effectiveness is low, and people's confidence in the judiciary is low. This result provides evidence to support our initial argument that grievances against government and authorities aggravate the impact of youth unemployment on terrorism.

Youth unemployment rate and WGI indicators could be endogenous in the empirical model because these variables, being indicators of economic and social well-being, are also influenced by the extent of terrorism in a host country. To test for the endogeneity of these variables, we use a version of the Hausman test utilized in some previous terrorism studies.[46] This method requires two major steps. First, we estimate a reduced-form equation for both endogenous variables using the exogenous variables used in the original regression model used to predict terrorism. Second, the residuals obtained from the first step are included as a control variable in the negative binomial model predicting terrorism to mitigate the endogeneity bias. As shown in Appendix tables C and D, our main results hold when we control for the endogeneity bias. The extent of human casualties from terrorist attacks show the lethality of terrorist organizations and recklessness of involved operatives. For transnational terrorist incidents, after 1997, there has been a significant increase in the number of casualties, indicating the lethal nature of religious fundamentalist terrorists, compared to left-wing extremists.[47] Also, certain terrorist attacks are more aimed at generating resources for future operations than to inflict casualties (e.g., hostage-taking for ransoms, attacks on agricultural land and warehouses). Hence, to capture the deadliness of attacks, we use two other dependent variables: the total number of terrorist attacks with casualties (Table 3), and the total number of casualties (Table 4).

In Table 3, the absolute number of unemployed youth remains a significant predictor of terrorism casualties. The youth unemployment rate is insignificant in all models except in model 3, where it is significant only at the 10% level. For models 4–6, GDP per capita is significant with a negative sign for the linear term and a positive sign for the quadratic term. This suggests that as the GDP increases, the number of attacks with casualties decreases at a slowing rate. The estimated positive polity score coefficient reiterates results from Table 1 regressions that it is harder for domestic terrorism to flourish in relatively autocratic societies. The population variable maintains the expected positive signs.

Now, we examine the results related to the total number of casualties (Table 4). The results are similar to attacks with casualties and attacks in general. The youth unemployment level maintains its positive effect on the total number of casualties whereas there is no evidence of the youth unemployment rate affecting the number of casualties. The GDP per capita and population variables follow similar patterns as in Table 3.

In Table 5, we explain the results pertaining to transnational terrorist attacks from a location perspective. In these models, we did not account for the effects of youth unemployment on terrorism related to the WGIs. The youth unemployment rate and number of unemployment youth are not statistically significant, except for model 2 where it is positively related. These results demand some explanation. Transnational terrorist attacks involve different nationalities vis-à-vis location, victims and the perpetrators. Hence, economic and political factors corresponding to the venue country may not explain the underlying root causes. So, it is not surprising that transnational terrorist incidents are not explained by youth unemployment rate in the venue country. The coefficients of other control variables are similar to the ones for domestic attacks.

Finally, we examine the association between all terrorist attacks and youth unemployment (Table 6). The results are similar to those of domestic terrorism, with both youth unemployment rate and youth unemployment levels significant across all models. Statistically significant, negative coefficients for interaction terms, including WGI variables, indicate that the effect of youth unemployment on total terrorism is amplified at high levels of angst or grievances. These results are not surprising given the fact that in our sample, domestic terrorist attacks accounts for around 80% of total attacks.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

Globally, youth unemployment is growing both in rate and levels. Along with many other social and economic consequences, these increases have been largely interpreted by policy makers as security threats. Several programs and initiatives around the globe have therefore focused on addressing the potential impacts of the youth bulge and the growing youth unemployment rates on the likelihoods of unrest. Examples include youth skills acquisition programs, youth employment and entrepreneurial schemes and other policy interventions designed to counter violent extremism and curb unrest through youth development and empowerment.

The literature on terrorism has long recognized the important role of grievances in spurring violence and in luring people to violence and unrest. The literature has also recognized the role of adverse economic conditions in terrorism, violence and unrest. Young people tend to possess low skills, earn lower incomes and face fewer employment opportunities than their adult counterparts. We expect unemployed, underserved, low-income youth to be particularly vulnerable to terrorism, especially those that have high levels of angst.

Knowing that young people are particularly vulnerable, significant attention to curbing youth unemployment may be justified, especially considering the growing incidence around the globe. Our analysis suggests that youth unemployment may contribute positively to the incidence of terrorism as we look across countries. This contribution is expected to be channeled by facilitating the recruitment of young operatives. However, we also find that the role of youth unemployment is further amplified by greater incidence of corruption, public perceptions of government ineffectiveness and absence of a strong rule of law. The finding that the impact of youth unemployment on terrorism increases with the level of grievances suggests that countries facing significant unemployed youth population and ineffective governance are more prone to terrorist activities. Given the increasing proportion of youth in the population of Africa, we expect that this factor alone will result in increased security problems. Hence, efforts to better manage youth unemployment should be considered alongside other policies to address national security problems such as improved governance, deradicalization, socioeconomic inclusion and improved transparency. The recent emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has further worsened the unemployment rates in many parts of the world, including many countries in Africa. This means that managing grievances of disgruntled populations will remain a challenging task in years to come.

Our contribution is noteworthy for the following reasons. First, we expand on the rationale for expecting youth unemployment to lead to a surge in domestic terrorist activities by highlighting its role in escalating grievances and facilitating the recruitment of young operatives. Second, in our empirical analysis, we make a distinction between domestic and transnational terrorism. Third, our empirical analysis allows us to explain how youth unemployment interacts with various institutional factors which the literature suggests are relevant, including corruption, government effectiveness and the rule of law. Finally, we use a variety of dependent variable measures such as number of attacks, number of attacks with casualties and number of casualties, allowing us to look at both the frequency and lethality of terrorism and its relationship with youth unemployment.

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Appendix: Tables 1 – 6

Table 1: Negative Binomial Regression Results for Domestic Attacks

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Total number of domestic attacks					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Youth unemp. rate	0.025**	0.024**	0.036***			
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)			
Log (Unemp. youth)				0.627***	0.444**	0.599***
				(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.19)
Corruption	0.038			2.138**		
	(0.30)			(1.03)		
Rule of law		-0.360			3.312***	
		(0.28)			(1.07)	
Govt. effectiveness			0.394			4.391***
			(0.33)			(1.16)
Youth Unemp. Rate × Corruption	-0.028**					
	(0.01)					
Youth unemp. rate × Rule of law		-0.026**				
		(0.01)				
Youth unemp. rate × Govt. effect			-0.032**			
			(0.02)			
Log (Unemp. youth) × Corruption				-0.253***		
				(0.09)		
Log (Unemp. youth) × Rule of law					-0.363***	
					(0.09)	
Log (Unemp. youth) × Govt. effect						-0.408***
						(0.10)
Log Population	1.029***	1.026***	1.103***	0.308	0.534***	0.497**
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.21)
Log GDP per capita	-1.696	-2.342	-2.397	-5.333***	-5.413***	-5.488***
	(1.53)	(1.59)	(1.59)	(1.89)	(1.84)	(1.88)
(Log GDP per capita)^2	0.104	0.152*	0.131	0.324***	0.332***	0.316***
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.10)

Table 1 (Continued): Negative Binomial Regression Results for Domestic Attacks

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Total number of domestic attacks					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ethnic frac.	0.530	0.285	0.793	-1.729***	-1.706***	-1.167*
	(0.62)	(0.60)	(0.62)	(0.66)	(0.61)	(0.65)
Polity	0.101***	0.112***	0.098***	0.113***	0.134***	0.112***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Freedom of press	0.327	0.532*	0.276	-0.076	-0.012	-0.271
	(0.32)	(0.31)	(0.32)	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.34)
International wars	-0.312	-0.392	-0.325	-20.986***	-18.916***	-15.207***
	(0.56)	(0.54)	(0.57)	(0.70)	(0.70)	(0.71)
Constant	-11.572*	-9.764	-9.082	8.305	6.589	7.450
	(6.48)	(6.74)	(6.73)	(8.28)	(7.98)	(7.99)
Wald χ^2	851.565	1004.147	827.445	2551.116	2395.581	1703.916

Table 2: Marginal Effects of Youth Unemployment Rate on Domestic Terrorism
(at varying levels of WGIs)

Percentile	*Corruption*	*Rule of law*	*Government effectiveness*
Tenth	5.206**	5.953***	5.796**
	(2.16)	(2.28)	(2.32)
Twentieth	4.324**	4.636***	5.034**
	(1.81)	(1.78)	(2.02)
Thirtieth	3.678**	3.808**	4.577**
	(1.57)	(1.49)	(1.85)
Fortieth	3.012**	2.972**	4.067**
	(1.34)	(1.20)	(1.68)
Fiftieth	2.419**	2.345**	3.558**
	(1.16)	(0.99)	(1.52)
Sixtieth	1.840*	1.357**	3.022**
	(1.01)	(0.68)	(1.38)
Seventieth	1.085	0.660	2.025
	(0.90)	(0.50)	(1.23)
Eightieth	0.038	0.009	0.193
	(1.04)	(0.45)	(1.68)
Ninetieth	-0.843	-0.330	-1.594
	(1.52)	(0.51)	(2.97)

Table 3: Negative Binomial Regression Results for Domestic Attacks with Casualties

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Total number of domestic attacks with casualties					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Youth unemp. rate	0.007	0.001	0.020*			
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)			
Log (Unemp. youth)				0.555***	0.236	0.518**
				(0.19)	(0.20)	(0.20)
Corruption	0.833**			3.463***		
	(0.38)			(1.32)		
Rule of law		-0.049			4.488***	
		(0.33)			(1.18)	
Govt. effectiveness			1.043***			5.329***
			(0.38)			(1.43)
Youth Unemp. Rate × Corruption	-0.067***					
	(0.02)					
Youth unemp. rate × Rule of law		-0.052***				
		(0.01)				
Youth unemp. rate × Govt. effect			-0.069***			
			(0.02)			
Log (Unemp. youth) × Corruption				-0.333***		
				(0.11)		
Log (Unemp. youth) × Rule of law					-0.461***	
					(0.10)	
Log (Unemp. youth) × Govt. effect						-0.470***
						(0.12)
Log Population	1.156***	1.038***	1.182***	0.438*	0.737***	0.591**
	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.22)	(0.23)	(0.24)
Log GDP per capita	-0.317	-0.691	-1.647	-3.435**	-3.339**	-3.712**
	(1.84)	(1.77)	(1.75)	(1.75)	(1.69)	(1.83)

Table 3 (Continued): Negative Binomial Regression Results for Domestic Attacks with Casualties

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Total number of domestic attacks with casualties					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(Log GDP per capita)^2	0.022	0.062	0.085	0.196**	0.205**	0.201**
	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.10)
Ethnic frac.	0.959	0.272	0.758	-1.290*	-1.702***	-1.055
	(0.67)	(0.60)	(0.64)	(0.72)	(0.64)	(0.67)
Polity	0.081***	0.090***	0.080***	0.087***	0.115***	0.087***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Freedom of press	-0.637*	-0.258	-0.657*	-0.906***	-0.769**	-1.163***
	(0.36)	(0.33)	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.35)
International wars	-17.945***	-17.986***	-18.847***	-17.981***	-19.440***	-20.740***
	(0.87)	(0.90)	(0.90)	(0.89)	(0.87)	(0.88)
Constant	-20.080***	-17.839**	-13.935*	-0.654	-3.336	-0.235
	(7.62)	(7.48)	(7.33)	(7.62)	(7.46)	(7.82)
Wald χ^2	1383.038	1577.660	1401.788	1673.258	2087.502	1932.942

Table 4: Negative Binomial Regression Results for Total Number of Casualties in Domestic Attacks

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Total number of casualties in domestic attacks					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Youth unemp. rate	0.015	0.002	0.026*			
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)			
Log (Unemp. youth)				1.150***	0.623**	1.066***
				(0.24)	(0.26)	(0.24)
Corruption	1.642***			6.574***		
	(0.45)			(1.72)		
Rule of law		0.718*			8.922***	
		(0.43)			(1.63)	
Govt. effectiveness			1.865***			9.259***
			(0.46)			(1.82)
Youth Unemp. Rate × Corruption	-0.100***					
	(0.02)					
Youth unemp. rate × Rule of law		-0.097***				
		(0.02)				
Youth unemp. rate × Govt. effect			-0.117***			
			(0.02)			
Log (Unemp. youth) × Corruption				-0.583***		
				(0.15)		
Log (Unemp. youth) × Rule of law					-0.830***	
					(0.14)	
Log (Unemp. youth) × Govt. effect						-0.797***
						(0.16)
Log Population	1.624***	1.514***	1.627***	0.315	0.729***	0.540**
	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.25)	(0.26)	(0.25)
Log GDP per capita	-2.980	-3.630	-4.248**	-10.731***	-10.754***	-10.962***
	(2.07)	(2.23)	(2.00)	(2.67)	(2.43)	(2.37)

Table 4 (Continued): Negative Binomial Regression Results for Total Number of Casualties in Domestic Attacks

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Total number of casualties in domestic attacks					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(Log GDP per capita)^2	0.176	0.231*	0.232**	0.622***	0.641***	0.631***
	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.16)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Ethnic frac.	-0.059	-1.246	-0.877	-2.868***	-3.539***	-2.948***
	(0.91)	(0.79)	(0.80)	(0.92)	(0.80)	(0.86)
Polity	0.026	0.046	0.036	0.036	0.073**	0.031
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Freedom of press	-0.448	0.147	-0.200	-1.567**	-1.704***	-1.899***
	(0.63)	(0.55)	(0.56)	(0.65)	(0.63)	(0.67)
International wars	-17.813***	-20.420***	-21.933***	-17.917***	-19.241***	-19.024***
	(0.90)	(0.98)	(1.04)	(0.90)	(0.87)	(0.89)
Constant	-15.753*	-12.360	-9.224	26.044**	25.041**	25.325**
	(8.30)	(9.63)	(8.27)	(12.15)	(10.97)	(10.41)
Wald χ^2	1292.348	1471.142	1422.315	1521.794	1784.551	1702.017

Table 5: Negative Binomial Regression Results for Transnational Terrorism: Total Number of Attacks, Attacks with Casualties, and Casualties

Independent variables	*Attacks* (1)	*Attacks* (2)	*Attacks with casualties* (3)	*Attacks with casualties* (4)	*No. of casualties* (5)	*No. of casualties* (6)
Youth unemp. rate	0.010		-0.002		-0.008	
	(0.01)		(0.01)		(0.01)	
Log (Unemp. youth)		0.420***		0.182		0.189
		(0.14)		(0.17)		(0.24)
Log Population	0.678***	0.188	0.690***	0.454**	1.219***	1.059***
	(0.06)	(0.15)	(0.07)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.24)
Log GDP per capita	-1.897	-3.192**	-0.780	-1.606	1.476	-0.174
	(1.18)	(1.27)	(1.22)	(1.36)	(1.74)	(2.02)
(Log GDP per capita)^2	0.106*	0.185***	0.046	0.096	-0.052	0.049
	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.11)
Ethnic frac.	0.656	0.273	1.193**	1.495**	1.977***	2.378***
	(0.45)	(0.52)	(0.54)	(0.71)	(0.68)	(0.78)
Polity	0.075***	0.075***	0.052***	0.046***	0.086***	0.064**
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Freedom of press	-0.163	-0.326	-0.882***	-0.858***	-1.634***	-1.765***
	(0.22)	(0.25)	(0.22)	(0.25)	(0.36)	(0.43)
International wars	-2.371***	-2.340***	-2.207***	-2.289***	-4.042***	-4.649***
	(0.41)	(0.39)	(0.37)	(0.39)	(0.65)	(0.74)
Constant	-3.432	5.066	-10.242*	-4.890	-30.511***	-23.634**
	(5.10)	(5.92)	(5.28)	(6.56)	(7.49)	(9.33)
Wald χ^2	551.450	496.806	460.359	475.232	494.925	437.497

Table 6: Negative Binomial Regression Results for All Terrorist Attacks (Domestic + Transnational)

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Total number of attacks (domestic + transnational)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Youth unemp. rate	0.027***	0.026***	0.035***			
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)			
Log (Unemp. youth)				0.664***	0.527***	0.623***
				(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.18)
Corruption	-0.068			1.585		
	(0.29)			(1.03)		
Rule of law		-0.473*			2.243**	
		(0.27)			(1.05)	
Govt. effectiveness			0.173			3.233***
			(0.31)			(1.17)
Youth Unemp. Rate × Corruption	-0.023*					
	(0.01)					
Youth unemp. rate × Rule of law		-0.020*				
		(0.01)				
Youth unemp. rate × Govt. effect			-0.026*			
			(0.01)			
Log (Unemp. youth) × Corruption				-0.207**		
				(0.09)		
Log (Unemp. youth) × Rule of law					-0.275***	
					(0.09)	
Log (Unemp. youth) × Govt. effect						-0.317***
						(0.10)
Log Population	0.996***	1.001***	1.065***	0.239	0.427**	0.421**
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.20)
Log GDP per capita	-2.113	-2.559*	-2.754*	-5.535***	-5.443***	-5.531***
	(1.52)	(1.55)	(1.59)	(1.87)	(1.81)	(1.88)

Table 6 (Continued): Negative Binomial Regression Results for All Terrorist Attacks (Domestic + Transnational)

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Total number of attacks (domestic + transnational)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(Log GDP per capita)²	0.176	0.231*	0.232**	0.622***	0.641***	0.631***
	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.16)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Ethnic frac.	-0.059	-1.246	-0.877	-2.868***	-3.539***	-2.948***
	(0.91)	(0.79)	(0.80)	(0.92)	(0.80)	(0.86)
Polity	0.026	0.046	0.036	0.036	0.073**	0.031
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Freedom of press	-0.448	0.147	-0.200	-1.567**	-1.704***	-1.899***
	(0.63)	(0.55)	(0.56)	(0.65)	(0.63)	(0.67)
International wars	-17.813***	-20.420***	-21.933***	-17.917***	-19.241***	-19.024***
	(0.90)	(0.98)	(1.04)	(0.90)	(0.87)	(0.89)
Constant	-15.753*	-12.360	-9.224	26.044**	25.041**	25.325**
	(8.30)	(9.63)	(8.27)	(12.15)	(10.97)	(10.41)
Wald χ^2	869.131	1034.951	853.241	2224.94	2309.016	1485.155

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Structural Equation Modeling of Terrorism Perception: New Correlates of Perception Formation

by Niyazi Ekici and Huseyin Akdogan

Abstract

Terrorism perceptions are significant factors in determining social and political policy responses. It has been shown by previous research that most perceptions become cognitive in individuals at an early age. This article describes an empirical study testing potential correlates of the formation of terrorism perceptions on a large sample size of high school students from Turkey. Using advanced statistical techniques, we found a structural equation model of which external powers and religion are the major factors in the formation of terrorism perceptions. These findings confirm previous perception control variables and extend them with new contributing factors. Replications in other countries are suggested.

Keywords: Turkey, terrorism perception, religion, risk perception, external powers

Previous Research

Psychological roots and potential impacts of terrorism have driven the research of many terrorism scholars in the field, especially after the tragic attacks in the United States and Europe in the last two decades. Despite the difficulties in collecting individual-level incident-based terrorism data, [1] public opinion polls and other surveys about the detrimental psychological effects of terrorism [2] began to be widely utilized.[3] Perceptions of the public in general, and politicians in particular are important factors for counterterrorism policy making. Therefore, fear of terrorism has been frequently explored by terrorism researchers and psychologists.[4] The literature provides extensive research about exposure to terrorist incidents and the resulting fear that often causes post-traumatic stress disorders and other psychological effects.[5] The relevant literature indicates that individuals who are vulnerable to terrorism have a higher likelihood of detrimental effects on their life activities compared to less exposed groups.[6] While some of the research indicates negative effects on everyday life activities such as work,[7] other research findings interestingly found that exposure to terrorism can be a less likely predictor of reactive distress.[8]

Many factors seem to have an impact on terrorism perception, one of which is gender differences. Nellis [9] found that females are more likely to have a fear of terrorism, sensitizing behaviors, and a higher tendency to look for information regarding responding to terrorism. An empirical study conducted in Pakistan found statistically significant results indicating that females experience more anxiety of death in comparison to males. [10] Goodwin, Willson, and Stanley's study [11] conducted in London, UK, found that women with high benevolence values and those with concerned family and friends were more likely to perceive a higher terrorism threat. In Aricak, Bekici, Siyahhan, and Martinez's study, [12] almost all females believed that terrorism could be eradicated; however, only 58.2% of their male counterparts shared this belief. Women perceived terrorism as posing a greater threat to themselves and fellow Canadians than did men in Lemyre's study.[13] Women reported worrying more frequently about terrorism and thought more frequently about all types of terrorism scenarios, with the exception of hostage situations and bombings. Abdullah, Sukma, Jamhari, and Musa [14] determined that males tend to be more aggressive in their attitudes toward terrorism than females. Overall, studies predominantly confirm higher levels of fear of terrorism existing among females.[15]

Education also proved to be a determinant factor in how terrorism is perceived. Lemyre and her colleagues [16] reported that respondents with a higher level of educational attainment more often turned for information to university scientists, and less to friends and relatives. Shen and Liu's study [17] concluded that respondents who were older and more knowledgeable of terrorism also relied more heavily on traditional sources of

information. Similarly, Farner and Notaro [18] evaluated the effectiveness of a college course about terrorist attacks and preparedness activities. The study found that students' awareness of the potential of terrorist attacks increased following the course, as well as their knowledge of the procedures put in place by the state to deal with terrorist attacks. It was further found that students became more willing to abide by the rules set down by their university in the event of a terrorist incident. Those with a lower level of education perceive a higher threat of terrorism and are more likely to fear terrorism than those with a higher educational background.[19] With regard to consequences, those with higher education levels reported thinking more about a lowered sense of security and economic loss; those with a lower level of education thought more about the loss of a loved one or their job. In addition to education, race and occupation also play a role in determining how acts of terrorism are perceived.[20]

In addition to the role of age and knowledge of terrorism as relevant factors in perceptions, [21] it was found that perceptions of terrorism *change over time*. Lemyre, Turner, Lee, and Krewski's study in Canada [22] illustrated that younger respondents are more frequently worried about computer viruses and hostage situations, while older respondents were more frequently concerned with dirty bombs. Compared with younger respondents, older respondents also perceived terrorism as a greater threat. As a study of Turkish elementary students revealed, the perception of terrorism is at the lowest level at an early age, and even then only covers basic knowledge of terrorist attacks.[23]

Terror incidents have many adverse effects on civilian populations; however, the most vulnerable groups are children and older youth who are perceived as at-risk groups. Research on children who were exposed to terrorism indicates severe psychological deficits in later years of their lives.[24] For example, Malik and his colleagues [25] found, based on a study of two Pakistani youth groups from two different cities, that exposure to terrorism or the perceived risk of terrorism affects the lives of young people. Governments and policy makers' efforts to eliminate or lessen such risks are critical not only for the prevention of post-traumatic disorders and other psychological consequences, but also for averting potential recruitment into terrorist organizations. In this regard, Yayla's work [26] pointed out several governmental programs that aim to reach out to vulnerable Turkish youth who were on the brink of joining terrorist organizations at an early age.

Based on the literature referred to above, one major question emerges: *what are the correlates of terrorism perceptions among youth?* Focusing on early ages, which are critical in the formation of terrorism perceptions, many studies have been conducted about the formation of terrorism perceptions of high school and university population. Shen and Liu [27] conducted a study that evaluated the perceptions of terrorism among Chinese students, centered upon how students gained knowledge about terrorism, their evaluation of terrorist organizations, Chinese foreign policy, and the United States. The students' perceptions of terrorism were examined along three different dimensions: cognitive, affective and evaluative, and foreign policy dimensions. This study revealed that what Chinese students knew about terrorism came from official media. Abdullah, Sukma, Jamhari, and Musa [28] conducted a similar study in Malaysia, examining support for terrorism and their government's policy. Factors that were found to be correlated with higher support for terrorism and aggressive attitudes were *deeper interest in politics, higher level of religiosity, dissatisfaction with the government, and media reporting*. With regard to foreign policy, it was concluded that the majority of the respondents were favorable toward their country's national and foreign policies and exhibited a positive perception of the United States. Al-Ameri's survey [29] on college students found that the vast majority of them agreed with the United States government's response to terrorism. Al-Ameri also reported that university students recognize "terrorism as a problem"; but the students did not believe action on their part was necessary to eradicate terrorism. Similarly, Chen and Noriega's [30] study on students, faculty, and staff from the University of Tennessee indicated that *faculty and staff are more likely* to fear terrorist attacks than students. On the other hand, students tended to feel *less* comfortable at security check-points in airports as a result of measures introduced since the 9/11 attacks. In a study comparing perceptions of terrorism of American versus international students, Scorzelli [31] found that the majority of students believed that terrorism (in general) could be resolved; however, only 32.7% of respondents were American students. The reasons for this disbelief in the possibility of conflict resolution were lack of tolerance (either in themselves or the other party) and the strength of religious convictions. International

students were found to be more optimistic about resolving terrorism-related conflicts.

Apparently, each terrorist attack leaves many *negative memories in the minds of the public*.[32] Research conducted by Pelletier and Drozda-Senkowska [33] investigated the relationship between terrorist threat perception, behavioral changes, and the social sharing of emotions in the aftermath of the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack in France. The extent of the social sharing of emotions decreased from the initial time of the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack in France to the next attack. More interestingly, this research revealed that terrorist threat perception has not decreased across time at the personal or collective level. As for changes in behavior, 64.4% of participants reported some change one week following the attack, and 81.5% one month later. Denovan, Dagnall, Drinkwater, Parker, and Clough [34] assessed the perception of risk and levels of terrorism-related behavior change with regard to people's thinking style and found that scores on probabilistic reasoning tasks most strongly predicted perception of risk. An intuitive thinking style was the best explanation for terrorism-related behavioral change. Behavior change in this study was found to be in connection to travel habits (i.e., using public transportation or airplanes) and avoidance of cities. Rubaltelli and colleagues [35] investigated the impact of exposure to terrorism-related pictures on psychological processes and studied whether media exposure interacts with environmental sensitivity and psychophysiological reactivity to explain people's risk perception. Their research indicated that some people were more affected by exposure to terrorism-related pictures than others, depending on individual differences in environmental sensitivity and stress response. Further findings from Pelletier and Drezda-Senkowska [36] suggest that terrorist threat perception remains stable at both the collective and personal level for up to *two months* following an attack. Peleg and Mass-Friedman's study [37], based on a large sample of high school and university students from Israel, revealed that terrorism perception is significantly related to post-traumatic stress and some exogenous variables such as *media viewing*. Their research found that younger respondents were more likely to have higher levels of stress due to exposure to terrorist events coverage in the *media*.

Method

Despite such findings in the existing literature, there is, in fact, little in-depth research on the formation of terrorism perception. Most studies rely on few control variables except those relating to foreign policy reactions or perceptions of other states (external powers). There are, however, many other factors that might affect one's understanding and perception of terrorism, one of which is *religion*. To our knowledge, this vital element of perception formation is unfortunately not empirically tested *prospectively*. In addition, assessing *risks* and states' *foreign policies* in regard to future terrorist attacks are other significant factors on perceptions. Thus, central to the research resulting in this article was the question: *what are the correlates of terrorism perception at a person's early age?* This main research question has three sub-categories: *religion, perceived risks, and external powers,* wherby the latter is related to a state's foreign policies and perceptions of hostile states towards the homeland of respondents. To this end, a survey instrument for high school students was developed and tested on a large sample of young people from Turkey, to determine empirically supported modeling of terror perception formation.

Participants

The sample included a total of 1,088 participants from 9th grade (54.7%) and 12th grade (45.3%) high school students, consisting of 58.4% males and 41.6% females. The survey was conducted in five different types of high schools in Ankara; Anatolian High Schools (31.6%), Industrial High Schools (12.5%), Religious Vocational High Schools (27.9%), Vocational High Schools (7.3%) and Private High Schools (20.7%). Most of the respondents were born in Ankara (63.4%), while 36.5% of them were born in other cities of Turkey. In terms of geographical allocation of the respondents' birthplaces, only 10.5% of the respondents were born in the East or Southeast of Turkey, where terrorism events have been more intense than in other parts of the country. Most of the respondents had 2 or 3 siblings (34.7% for each), while 17.2% had four or more siblings.

Slightly more than half of the respondents (51.1%) said they did not play violent games. However, almost 4/5 of them (79.6%) sometimes or frequently watched violent movies. Most of the students (78.3%) also sometimes or frequently watched news about terrorism. More than half of the respondents (61.2%) talked sometimes or frequently about terrorism with their friends. Similarly, 72.9% of the respondents talked about terrorism with their family members. A closer percentage (78.2%) of the respondents said they took advice from their families about terrorism. Slightly more than half of the respondents (56.9%) did not receive any education about terrorism at school.

Instruments

The questionnaire was constructed specifically for this study. The *religion-terrorism perception questionnaire* was constructed to evaluate the extent of the perception of religion and terrorism. Participants were asked to report the extent of their perception on a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = Totally disagree to 5 = Totally agree). Thus, the higher score means that the respondents thought that there is no place for terrorism in religion, or that religions do not support terrorism. We can also conceptualize this score using the famous saying, "terrorism has no religion".

The *external powers-terrorism perception questionnaire* was constructed for this study to evaluate the perception of students about the role of external powers and terrorism. External power references are used by government elites in Turkey when confronted with terrorism, corruption, as well as other scandals. A three-item questionnaire was adapted for the present study to evaluate the perceptions of students about external powers and terrorism. This questionnaire asked respondents to indicate to what degree they believe that external powers feed terrorism (e.g., external powers support terrorism, protect terrorists, and finance terrorist organizations). Participants responded on a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = Totally disagree to 5 = Totally agree). Lower scores represented a low level of perception about the role of external powers in support of terrorism.

The questionnaire on risk perception related to terrorism was also constructed specifically for the present study. Participants were again asked to report on the basis of a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 5, regarding the degree they perceive risk of a terrorist attack in the near future (1 = Totally disagree to 5 = Totally agree). Thus, the higher the score, the greater was the extent of risk perception related to an act of terrorism.

Procedures

The study was conducted in 2015 in Ankara, Turkey's capital city. A formal request to conduct the study was submitted to the District Directorate of the Ministry of Education, and, following receipt of official approval, purposive sampling of schools was initiated. Then, in coordination with each school, one 9th grade class and one 12th grade class were surveyed. All the participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality in writing and by verbal communication. All questionnaires were filled out in Turkish. We collected the data from students at five high schools (N = 1088). More than half of the students (54.7%) were junior, and 45.3% of them were senior high school students at the time of data collection. The response percentage of samples was 83.70 (1088 out of 1300).

Results

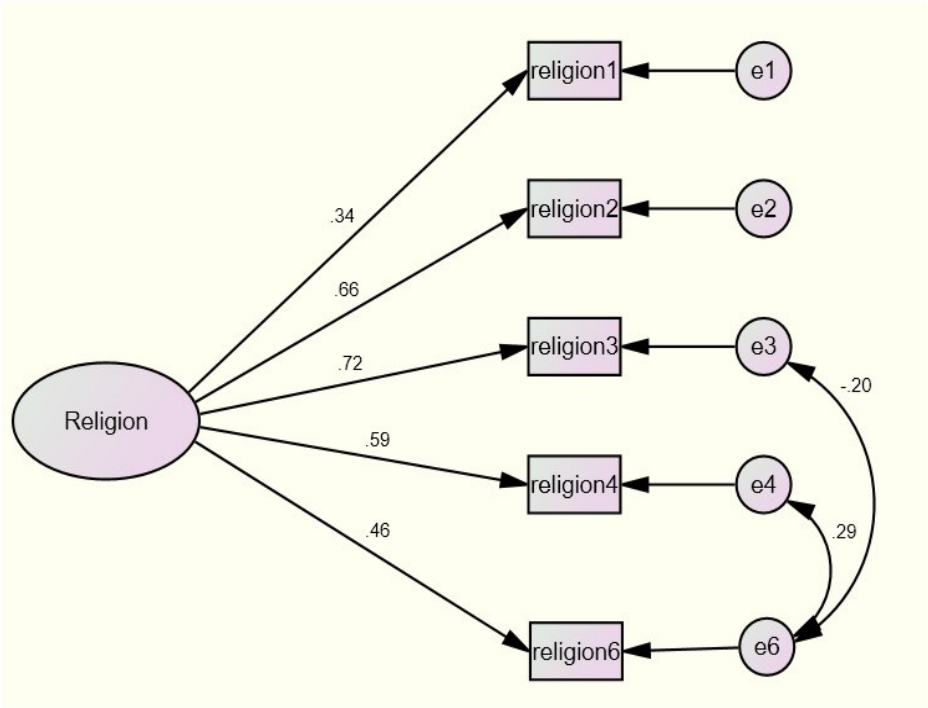
Factor Analysis

We conducted an explanatory factor analysis (EFA) for the analysis of 15 questions about terrorism. The results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) analysis yielded that the sample is large enough for this type of analysis (KMO = 0.737; χ^2 = 2625.718, p < 0,001). Based on the eigenvalues, only three components have eigenvalues higher than one; these four components explain 53.47% of the variation. These three components were labeled:

perception about religion, perception about external powers, and risk perception. Then, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the hypothesized factor structure of these three components.

As indicated above, using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from "totally disagree" to "totally agree," respondents were asked to indicate their perception about religion and terrorism. The figure below shows the CFA model to validate the measurement model of this latent construct for the perception of religion and terrorism, using AMOS 18 statistical software.

Figure 1. CFA Model for Religion Perception

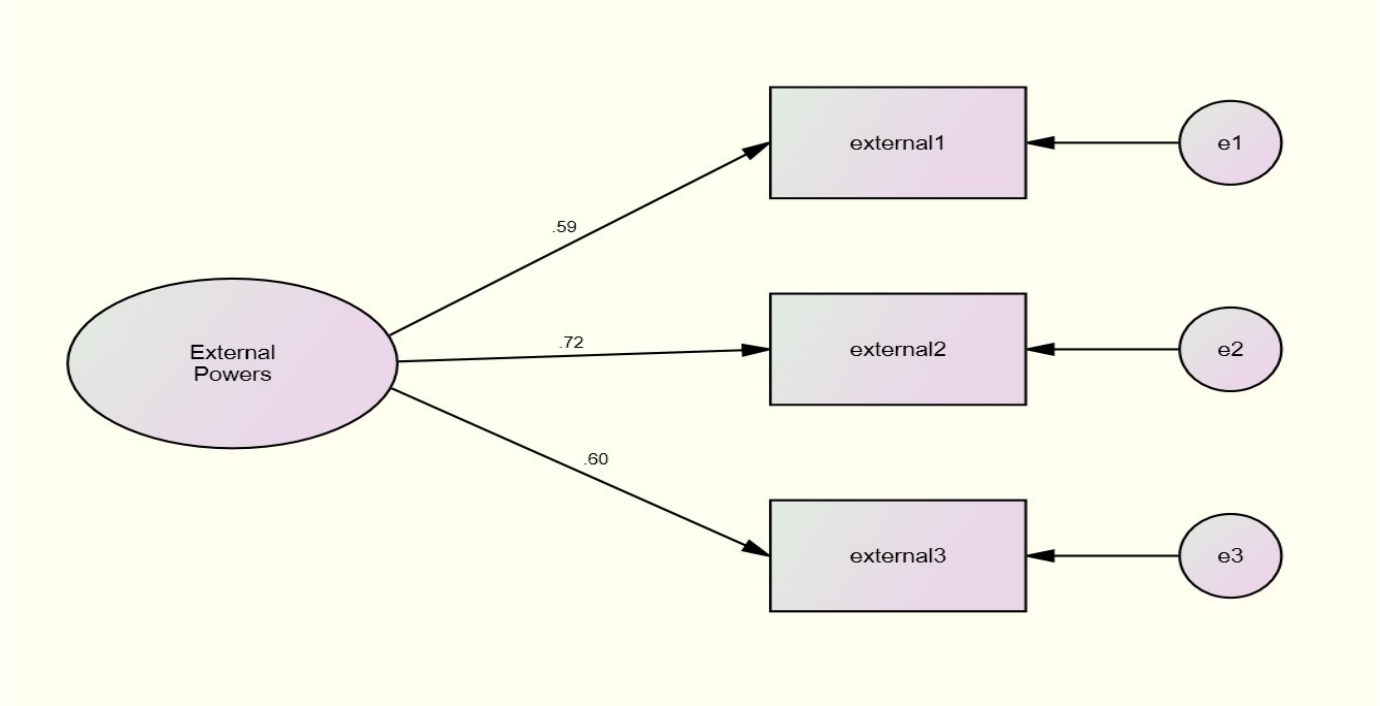


Critical ratios that help us identify statistically significant and insignificant items in the model were examined. The fifth factor, "religion5," had a lower ratio than 1.96, which indicated a statistically insignificant relationship at .05 level. The factor loading for this indicator was also lower than the threshold level of Malthouse's cutoff value of 0.3. Thus, indicator-5 was removed from the model (Figure 1.).

The goodness of fit statistics for the revised model for religion indicated excellent fit of the measurement model ($\chi 2 = 7.075$; x2/df = 2.358; SRMR = .015; RMSEA = .035; CFI =.99; NFI = .99).

External powers were conceptualized as a latent construct to measure the respondents' perception of the role of external powers in terrorism (Figure 2). It has three indicators and all of them were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale from "totally agree" to "totally disagree." The model below was subjected to confirmatory factor analysis. Fit statistics for the model indicated excellent fit of the measurement model to the data ($\chi 2 = 9.332$; x2/df = 4.666; SRMR = .025; RMSEA = .058; CFI = .98; NFI = .98). All the factor loadings for the indicators were higher than the level of Malthouse's cutoff value of 0.3.

Figure 2. CFA Model for External Powers



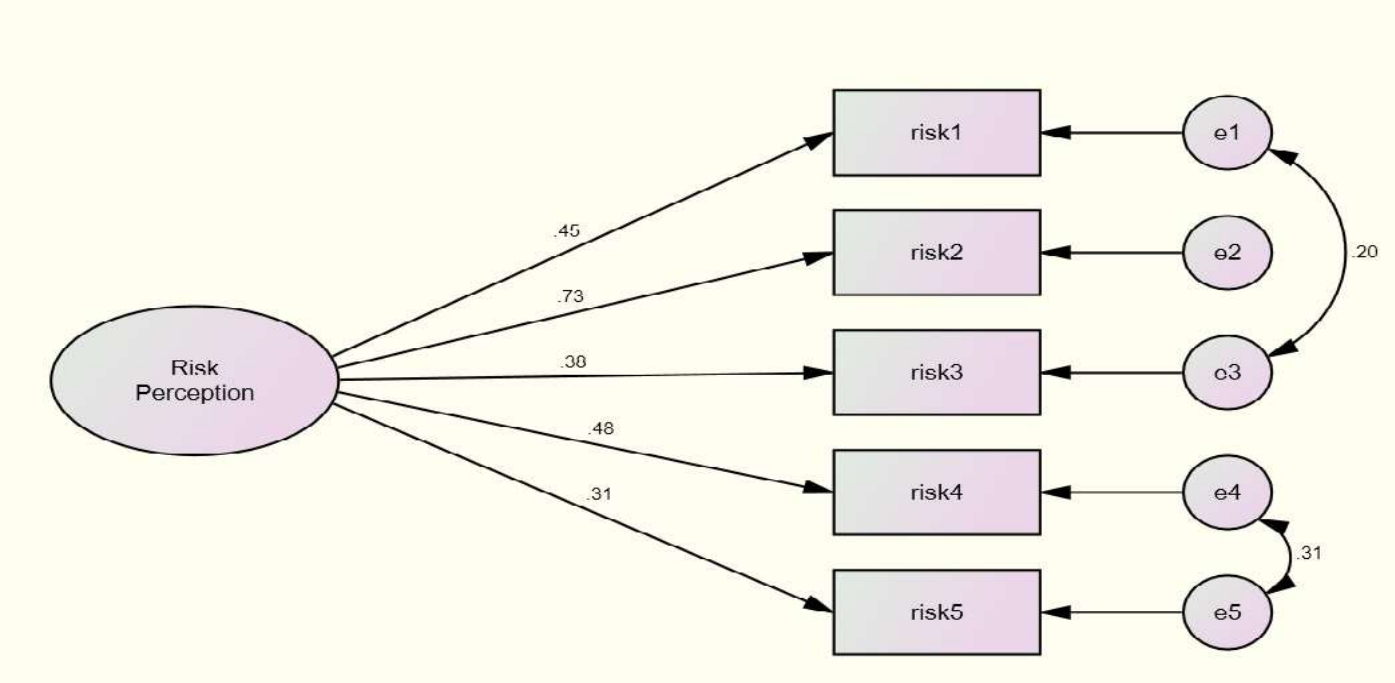
Risk perception was conceptualized as a latent construct to measure the respondents' perception of being under a potential terrorism risk. It has five indicators, and all of them were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale from "totally agree" to "totally disagree." The model below (Figure 3.) was subjected to confirmatory factor analysis. Fit statistics for the model indicated excellent fit of the measurement model to the data ($\chi 2$ = 5.178; x2/df = 1.726; SRMR = .013; RMSEA = .026; CFI = .99; NFI = .99). All the factor loadings for the indicators were higher than the level of Malthouse's cutoff value of 0.3.

Variance Analysis

The data consist of some demographic characteristics of the respondents, which will not be included in the SEM analysis because of being structured as groups. Variance analysis is considered to measure the differences between these groups. Grade, gender, place of birth and geographic district have two groups and was examined in t-test analysis. School type has five groups and was examined in ANOVA analysis.

t-test analysis for grade yielded as result that there were no significant differences between 9th grade and 12th grade students in terms of their risk perception regarding terrorism. The risk perception average score for both grades were 3.31 and 3.33 on the five-point Likert-type scale. However, the analysis yielded two significant results: the perception of students about religion and terrorism significantly differed according to their grades (p = 0.000). Students in the 12th grade had higher mean scores than the 9th grade students. The higher score about religion and terrorism means that religions were perceived as not approving terrorism. The second significant difference based on the t-test results was the perception of the role of external powers in terrorism (p = 0.000). A higher score means that external powers were perceived as supporting terrorism. While students in the 9th grade showed few perceptions regarding the negative role of external powers, students in the 12th grade agreed more with the idea that external powers were supporting terrorism.

Figure 3. CFA Model for Risk Perception



The perception of high school students on religion and terrorism and their perception of risk did not significantly differ based on the respondents' gender. However, their perception of external powers differed ($p = 0.001$). Male students had higher mean scores than female students when it came to the perceived support of external powers in terrorism. *t*-test analysis revealed that the perception of high school students on the issues discussed here did not significantly differ based on their place of birth and their hometown.

As mentioned earlier, this study was conducted in five different types of schools in Ankara: Anatolian High Schools, Industrial High Schools, Religious Vocational High Schools, Vocational High Schools, and Private High Schools. To determine the mean score differences of students from these schools about religion, external powers and risk perceptions, a one-way ANOVA analysis was conducted. Depending on the results, there was at least one statistically significant difference in the religion and external powers scales ($F_{4/1083} = 7.911$, $p < 0.001$ and $F_{4/1083} = 7.889$, $p < 0.001$ respectively). Games Howell post hoc test results showed that the mean score for Anatolian High School students' score on the religion scale was significantly lower than the Religious Vocational High School and Private High School students' mean scores. The highest mean score on the religion scale belonged to students at Religious Vocational Schools. This means that students at the Religious High Schools believe more strongly that terrorism has no religion.

In terms of the external powers scale, the highest mean score also belonged to students of Religious Vocational High Schools, while the lowest mean score belonged to Vocational High Schools for girls. While the students of Religious High Schools mostly agreed with the notion that external powers were feeding terrorism, the students of Vocational High Schools for girls had generally no idea about the possible role of external powers and terrorism.

Structural Equation Model

For the conceptual model, the estimated structural equation model is presented in the figure below (Figure 4.). The hypothesized structural equation model was developed after confirming the measurement models of the latent variables in the first step. Two exogenous latent variables (*perception about religion* and *perception about external powers*) and an endogenous variable (*risk perception*) were used to establish a generic structural equation model. This generic model also included a number of control variables: demographic characteristics of the respondents and others; grade, gender, number of siblings, dummy coded violent games, dummy coded

violent movies, dummy coded terror news, dummy coded chat in family, dummy coded chat about terrorism, dummy coded advice, and dummy coded in-class briefing.

The initial SEM analysis model did not fit well. Modification indices were examined to improve the model's fit. Modification indices required to correlate error terms to improve the model fit further. One path at a time between error terms was added to a model based on logical and theoretical considerations, and the modification indices reexamined again until reaching the best fitting model. The revised model yielded considerable improvement at the goodness of fit statistics. Results show that the revised model provided a good fit to the data ($\chi 2/df = 1.994$, SRMR = .015, RMSEA = .030, CFI = .958, NFI = .922, TLI = .933). Table 1 provides the parameter estimates for the revised model. It shows the parameter estimates of risk perception and the mediating variables, perception about religion, and perception about external powers.

Table 1. Parameter Estimates for Structural Equation Model

			S.R.W.	S.E.	C.R.	P.
Religion	<	Gender	-0.009	0.036	-0.232	0.817
Religion	<	Violent Games D	-0.023	0.037	-0.587	0.557
Religion	<	Number of Siblings	0.162	0.015	4.286	***
Religion	<	Grade	0.116	0.012	3.028	0.002
Religion	<	Violent Movies D	-0.036	0.043	-0.974	0.33
Religion	<	Terror News D	0.023	0.052	0.603	0.546
Religion	<	Chat in Family D	0.09	0.043	2.198	0.028
Religion	<	Chat about Terrorism D	0.03	0.039	0.736	0.462
Religion	<	Advice D	0.029	0.042	0.777	0.437
Religion	<	In-Class Briefing D	0.056	0.035	1.519	0.129
External Powers	<	Grade	0.139	0.015	3.773	***
External Powers	<	Gender	0.095	0.046	2.546	0.011
External Powers	<	Number of Siblings	0.016	0.017	0.471	0.638
External Powers	<	Terror News D	0.066	0.066	1.812	0.07
External Powers	<	Chat about Terrorism D	0.169	0.05	4.182	***
External Powers	<	Chat in Family D	0.078	0.053	2.001	0.045
External Powers	<	Violent Games D	0.063	0.046	1.643	0.1
External Powers	<	Violent Movies D	-0.044	0.054	-1.239	0.215
External Powers	<	Advice D	0.012	0.052	0.345	0.73
External Powers	<	In-Class Briefing D	-0.011	0.043	-0.304	0.761
External Powers	<	Religion	0.396	0.04	5.255	***
Risk Perception	<	Grade	-0.067	0.014	-1.714	0.087
Risk Perception	<	Number of Siblings	-0.063	0.017	-1.727	0.084
Risk Perception	<	Gender	0.023	0.044	0.587	0.557
Risk Perception	<	Violent Games D	-0.004	0.045	-0.1	0.921
Risk Perception	<	Violent Movies D	0.027	0.053	0.711	0.477
Risk Perception	<	Terror News D	0.081	0.065	2.086	0.037
Risk Perception	<	Chat in Family D	-0.002	0.051	-0.049	0.961
Risk Perception	<	Chat about Terrorism D	0.059	0.048	1.372	0.17
Risk Perception	<	Advice D	0.002	0.051	0.059	0.953
Risk Perception	<	In-Class Briefing D	0.001	0.042	0.032	0.975
Risk Perception	<	Religion	0.144	0.04	5.255	***
Risk Perception	<	External Powers	0.321	0.04	5.255	***

Note: ***Correlation significant @ $p \leq .001$, **Correlation significant @ $p \leq .05$. R.W. = Regression Weights, S.R.W. = Standardized Regression Weights, S.E. = Standard Error, C.R. = Critical Ratio.

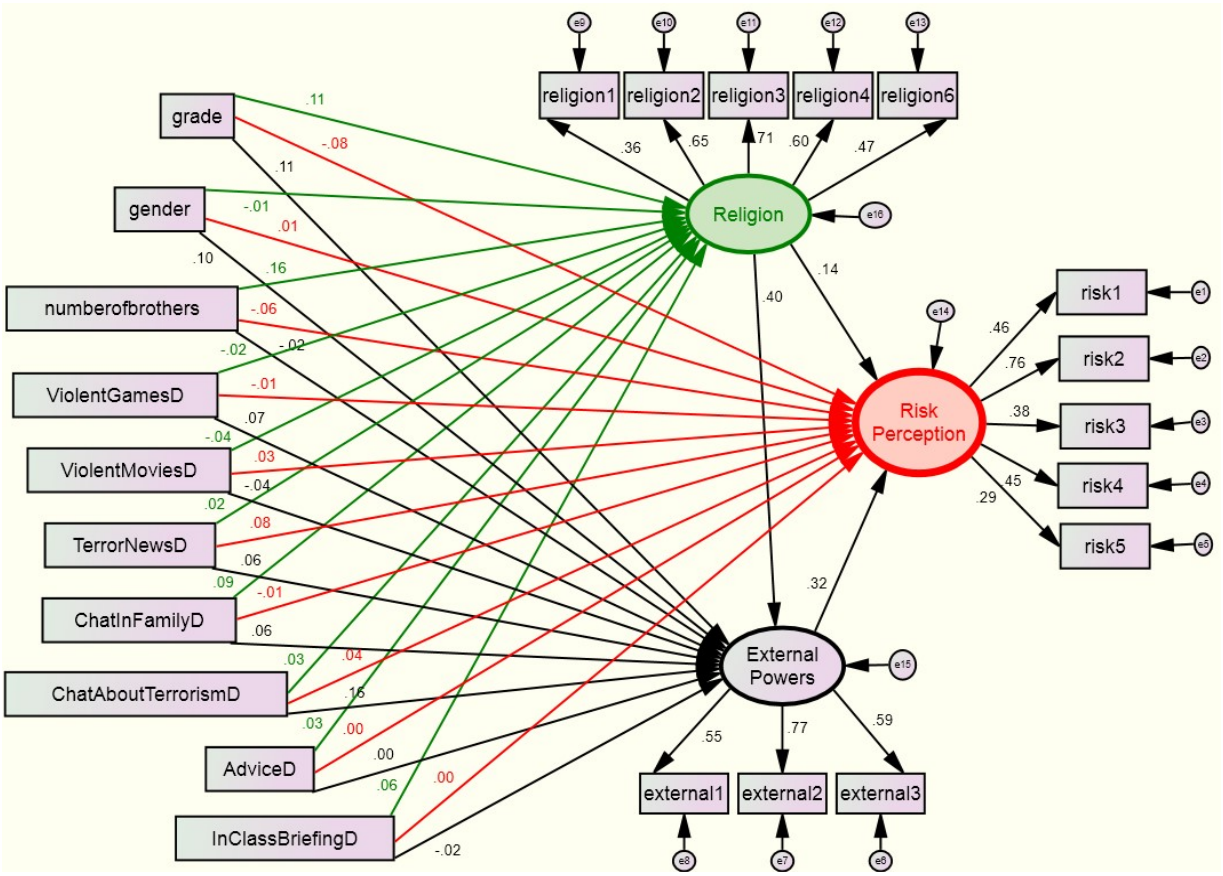
The number of siblings in the family has a significant positive relationship with perception about religion ($\beta = 0.162$, $p \leq .001$). The more siblings the respondents have, the more they have a positive perception of religion. These respondents think that terrorism has no religion and that religions do not support terrorism. The other significant variable related to religion was the grade ($\beta = 0.116$, $p \leq .05$). The grade is a variable that has two categories: 9th grade and 12th grade. Based on these categories, students from the 12th grade had more positive perceptions than 9th grade students regarding the role of religion. The last significant result for the religion dimension was chat in family about terrorism issues ($\beta = 0.09$, $p \leq .05$). Students who talked about terrorism in their family had more positive perceptions of the (non-)role of religion than students who never talked about terrorism in their family circle. It can be inferred that family chats about terrorism created a more positive perception of religion. These students believe that religion does not feed terrorism, and that there is no place for terrorism in religion (Islam).

The other latent variable in this study was the perception of external powers and feeding terrorism. The grade is the common significant variable for both religion and external powers ($\beta = 0.139$, $p \leq .001$). Students from the 12th grade have a more positive perception than the 9th grade students about a causal relationship between external powers involvement and terrorism. They did think that external powers support terrorism. Gender is another significant variable ($\beta = 0.095$, $p \leq .05$). Male students have a more positive perception than female students. Male students thought that external powers feed terrorism. Talking about terrorism with friends and family also had a positive effect on attributing a negative role to external powers. ($\beta = 0.169$, $p \leq .001$; $\beta = 0.078$, $p \leq .05$ respectively). Additionally, talking about terrorism with friends and family members was also affecting students' perception of external powers as a source of terrorism. These kinds of perceptions—blaming external powers for varying cosmic evils are also reflecting the propaganda of the Turkish government and mainstream media.

The two external latent variables in this study were religion and external powers. These two external variables showed a significant relationship ($\beta = 0.396$, $p \leq .001$). Students who were of the opinion that religion does not support terrorism also held that external powers were supporting terrorism.

The endogenous variable in this study was risk perception. Average risk perception related to terrorism among high school students was 3.33 over 5 (5 indicating the highest point for terrorism-related risk). Based on the results of the SEM analysis, students who watched news about terrorism have higher risk perceptions than students who did not watch the news. This relationship is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.081$, $p \leq .05$). The other variables that significantly affected the risk perception were perceptions about religion and the role of external powers ($\beta = 0.144$, $p \leq .001$; $\beta = 0.321$, $p \leq .001$ respectively). The more students in the sample had positive perceptions of religion and the negative role of external powers, the higher these students perceived risks related to terrorism. In other words, students who thought there was no place for terrorism in religion perceived a high level of risk related to terrorism. Moreover, students who thought that external powers were the sources of terrorism perceived a high level of risk related to terrorism. Figure 4 depicts the structural equation model.

Figure 4. Structural Equation Model of Perception of Terrorism



Discussion and Conclusions

This empirical study found several statistically significant correlates of terrorism perception among junior and senior high school students in Turkey's capital. In sum, this research concludes with the four findings related to the previous studies.

First, as mentioned in the literature, there is a change of perception of terrorism over time.[38] Age was found to be a significant variable when it comes to terrorism perception. Older students score higher averages of terrorism disapproval in line with their religion. Simultaneously, senior students were found to have a more powerful notion of the impact of foreign policy on terrorism compared to juniors. This finding also confirms results of previous research.[39]

Second, unlike previous research, we found that gender is *not* a statistically significant correlate of terrorism perception, the exception being that male students believed more strongly in foreign (external) powers' support for terrorism inside Turkey. Despite the predominantly supportive evidence regarding female fear and anxiety of terrorism,[40] the present study found no statistically significant differences between males and females. We grant that many respondents in our study may not have had a full understanding of international relations, the interests of other states, as well as the role of their own country and other factors related to this variable. This is likely due to their level of education and their young age. However, it is equally likely that the government and the media's use of external powers as a scapegoat for 'explaining' failures in internal and external politics has a statistically significant impact on terrorism perceptions of Turkish people, including the young.[41]

Third, religion has a statistically significant impact on terrorism perception. Youth from parochial high schools have a better understanding of the relationship between ideology (Islamic belief system) and terrorism. These students, however, become more conservative in their view of the state's foreign policies. Older students have

more positive terrorism perception of 'no place of terrorism in my religion (Islam).' This finding contradicts with Abdullah and his colleagues' study that was conducted in another Muslim country, Malaysia.[42] Youth in Turkey seem to be more moderate and less aggressive regarding foreign power perceptions. Chatting with family members at home and the number of siblings in the family were statistically positively correlated with religion and terrorism perception.

Fourth, viewing violent games and movies does not have a statistically significant impact on the perception of terrorism; [43] however, watching the news about terrorism increases the risk perception of future terror attacks/incidents. This is a clear confirmation of Peleg and Mass-Friedman's study [44] conducted in Israel. Though our study did not directly test exposure to terrorist attacks, Turkish students' perceived risk of future attacks was not found to be an issue. Considering Turkey is a country with one of the highest risk and number of terror incidents in the world, this finding conflicts with some of the previous research.[45]

Despite holding limitations of survey research and limitations of our convenience samples that may not represent the general population of the study country, this research contributes largely to the previous implications that speak out on the psychology of terrorism and their communication with the targeted populations.[46] Perceptions—the focus of this study—are important factors in combatting violent extremism and radicalization since these perceptions become cognitive at an early age, and later impact our decisions and behaviors. Therefore, large-scale tests on larger samples can give insights for effective policy implications in the future. This study also strongly suggests replications in other countries for more generalizable findings. Not only general public perceptions, but also the perceptions of law enforcement officials can be tested for broader policy implications. Considering that publicity is one of the primary purposes of terrorists,[47] it is also becoming a major factor in forming our/one's perceptions. Thus, variables tested in this study, such as news about terrorism, chat about terrorism in class or in a family setting, potential terror attacks from other countries, and religious views on terrorism are proven to be statistically significant contributors to our perception formations. Terrorism is a form of psychological warfare—a means to an end. Thus, risk awareness to prevent future attacks, increasing citizen vigilance, and religion need to be earnestly considered by the policy makers and other stakeholders.

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A Comparative Analysis of the Nature and Evolution of the Domestic Jihadist Threat to Australia and Canada (2000–2020)

by Shandon Harris-Hogan, Lorne L. Dawson and Amarnath Amarasingam

Abstract

This article traces the evolution of the jihadist threat to Australia and Canada across the first 20 years of this century. First, this study examines and compares the incidents of jihadist terrorist violence that have occurred. Second, it analyses disrupted and failed terrorist plots that occurred during this period, documenting the full scale of the threat to each country. Finally, it examines and compares the characteristics of all jihadists arrested for, or killed committing, domestic terrorism offenses. Findings reveal a marked similarity in the numbers of incidents, disrupted plots, and characteristics of the individuals arrested across Canada and Australia, but also some key differences with important implications for understanding the diverse local manifestations of the global threat, even in highly similar societal contexts. The identification of these patterns has implications for theorizing about the factors influencing the process of radicalization leading to violence in each national context and generally, as well as the local adaptation of strategies for countering violent extremism.

Keywords: Australia, Canada, jihadism, terrorist incidents

Introduction

Previous studies of the jihadist threat to Australia and Canada have documented lower rates of terrorism than has occurred in Western Europe, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Yet, they have also stressed that each country still faces significant challenges, ones often in line with global trends.[1] Accordingly, the governments of Australia and Canada have made substantial investments into improving their counter terrorism capabilities, and have developed specialised programs intended to counter and prevent violent extremism. Operating within the "five eyes" relationship for sharing intelligence (a long-standing strategic arrangement between the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand), much of these efforts have been coordinated. However, the level of threat, and the policies and practices required to respond to that threat, differ in small, but significant ways according to local circumstances. While the media has called attention to the nature of this threat, and how it has evolved across time, this information is episodic, scattered, and sometimes unreliable. More nuanced analysis regarding jihadist activity in Australia and Canada is available in a handful of published academic studies. However, most of these studies are case specific,[2] while only a few provide empirical data on the overall nature of the threat in Australia and Canada.[3] Many of these studies also are restricted in scope, and conflate data on foreign fighters with those involved in domestic acts of terrorism. Importantly, studies that do provide an overview are now almost a decade old. As such, they largely document the turn from the threat of international terrorism posed by al Qaeda and its affiliates, to that posed by the more autonomous local networks of jihadists characteristic of "homegrown terrorism".[4] Consequently, most do not take into consideration the dramatic escalation in the jihadist threat that occurred with the rise of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS).[5] Of the three specific studies that do touch on this emerging threat,[6] each only calls on very preliminary data, and in most instances, provides only a discussion regarding future possibilities.

The following collects and organises contemporary data on jihadist attacks and plots, and their perpetrators, to update the information publicly available and further examine the evolving nature of the threat to Australia and Canada across the last 20 years. It builds upon previous studies documenting local activities by studying domestic jihadists, including those inspired by the Islamic State, and the ways they have posed a threat to Australians and Canadians.

Between 2012 and 2018, foreign fighters became an ever-expanding segment of jihadist networks in Australia and Canada, and in some instances of domestic jihadist terrorism there are significant links with these foreign fighters.[7] Some Australian and Canadian foreign fighters have played a role in encouraging, or even helping to orchestrate, domestic plots and attacks. Other individuals prevented from traveling have reverted to domestic actions, and some returnees, whether successful in reaching a conflict zone or not, have been prosecuted for terrorism offenses.[8] However, there are potentially significant differences between the backgrounds and motivations of domestic jihadists and foreign fighters.[9] Creating a dataset including foreign fighters involves considering a number of alternative variables (e.g., details on their departure, travel, involvement in the foreign conflict, and ultimate fate or post-conflict status). Therefore, this analysis focuses exclusively on developing a comprehensive picture of the domestic jihadist threat.[10] Australian and Canadian foreign fighters, and their connections to domestic jihadist networks, will be the focus of a second comparative study, aimed at detecting any appreciable differences and their possible significance.

Too often in the global effort to counter jihadism, actions are taken before sufficient information is available to make considered and informed decisions. Much the same holds true for the explanatory efforts of academics as they seek to support measures to counter violent extremism (CVE).[11] The influence of the "hermeneutic of crisis management"[12] on the field is understandable, if regrettable. As we are starting to learn, even in the West there appear to be significant regional and national variations in the manifestations of jihadism.[13] Developing a more complete understanding of those jihadists committing domestic terrorism offenses in Australia and Canada will assist us to better grasp the real threat, enhance counter-terrorism policies and practices, and help to design more effective CVE programs.

There are five main parts to the following analysis. First, following a brief further discussion of the rationale for comparing jihadist terrorism in Australia and Canada, we delineate the methodology employed. Second, we examine and compare successful acts of domestic jihadist terrorism that have occurred in Australia and Canada between 2000 and the beginning of 2020. Third, we also examine and compare the disrupted and failed terrorist plots that have occurred during this period to document the full scale of the threat posed by jihadists in each country. Examining completed and failed plots allows us to investigate how a variety of factors, including attack modality and other localized tendencies, may have affected outcomes in these two countries, which has direct implications for counter-terrorism planning. Fourth, we examine and compare some characteristics of the jihadists killed or arrested for domestic terrorism offenses in each country. We also discuss arrests made for other kinds of terrorism offenses, rates of conviction and repeat offenders, and basic demographic factors. The demographic factors analysed are age, gender, education, region, family connections to extremism, and mental health issues. Fifth and finally, we reflect on the similarities between the jihadist threat faced by each nation, and a number of noteworthy differences. We consider the implications for understanding the evolution of the jihadist threat, the localization of global patterns, and consequent adaptation of counter-terrorism measures and efforts to counter and prevent violent extremism.

Methodology

As Sam Mullins concludes in his comprehensive analysis of Islamist terrorism in Australia:

> There is a great deal to be said for adopting an exhaustive chronological approach to understanding Islamist terrorism in any given country. It avoids relying on assumptions based on more general observations that do not take into account the unique context of the country in question. It enables analysis of changes over time. It allows comparison of particular contexts with general trends, and as more country case studies emerge will enable cross-comparison not only of emerging patterns of terrorist activity but of counter-terrorism efforts as well.[14]

The following extends this chronological analysis of jihadist terrorism in two countries, and initiates a cross-comparison of terrorism patterns and counter-terrorism outcomes. Many studies in the field of terrorism have

a comparative aspect, contrasting specific data from one sample or context with information from another, and there are numerous cross-national comparisons of the causes, characteristics, and consequences of terrorism based on large international datasets. Detailed comparisons of countries, based on comprehensive national datasets, however, are rare.[15]

But why compare Australia and Canada? The answer lies, in part, in the pragmatic desire for allies to understand their affinities better, especially relative to the more dominant partners in the "five eyes" network. While the situation in the United States and the United Kingdom has been the subject of exhaustive study, as indicated, the overall patterns of terrorist activity in Australia and Canada have received far less systematic attention. A comparison of such similar countries has other benefits as well. Some insight into the global spread of jihadism, and the relative resilience of societies to this threat, can be gleaned from the comparison of starkly contrasting situations, say between Russia and the United Kingdom, or France and the United States. However, such comparisons are burdened with many complexities rooted in the contrasting histories and cultures of these nations, differences that introduce an array of largely uncontrollable variables that skew the analyses in multiple ways. The comparison of similar societies facilitates a more controlled comparison of variables that are under at least the partial influence of their respective governments. In seeking to grasp the global-local dynamic in this context, identifying the similarities and differences between roughly comparable situations may prove more enlightening than merely substantiating the more obvious differences between disparate situations.

Australia and Canada share a common British colonial heritage, and their citizens have long felt a strong sense of cultural affinity. Their populations are very similar, in size and makeup, as are their economies. Both countries are multicultural liberal democracies. They share a strong and transparent commitment to the rule of law and nonauthoritarian policing, and they offer a wide array of social services to their citizens. The countries also share similar recent political histories, and as noted are members of the geo-strategically important "five eyes" intelligence-sharing network.[16] While both are strong allies of the United States, and both have participated in the "war on terror," neither is on the front line of that war. Both countries are culturally similar to the United States in many respects, but neither shares the American preoccupation with gun rights, or their tolerance for higher levels of general violence. Unlike the United Kingdom, both countries are geographically distant from Europe, and thus more disconnected from many of the larger international jihadist networks and groups. Both countries have a much larger population than New Zealand, and have experienced vastly higher levels of political violence. In terms of their response to terrorism, both Australia and Canada have emphasized the use of a mixture of hard and soft power, utilising broadly similar legal frameworks and policies. They have also actively fostered the emergence of a federally funded and overseen CVE capability, implemented in different ways across the states and provinces.[17] As such, Canada and Australia are uniquely comparable societies for studying the emergence, manifestation and evolution of jihadist terrorism in the twenty-first century.

The following identifies and analyzes Australian and Canadian jihadists issued arrest warrants for terrorism offenses committed domestically. Jihadists refers to those acting in the name of the Salafi–jihadi strand of Sunni Islamism,[18] with Islamism referring to "activism justified with primary reference to Islam."[19] More specifically, this study will analyse those arrested and charged with a terrorism offense committed in Australia or Canada between 1 January 2000 and 1 January 2020. Domestic terrorism offenses include acts in preparation to commit a terrorist attack, and other terrorism specific charges such as creating or disseminating propaganda, fundraising or being a member of a terrorist organization. Those who were arrested or killed while committing an act of jihadist terrorism have also been included.

In order to analyze the scale of the threat faced by Australia and Canada, we created a database containing the details of all arrested domestic jihadists, along with their terrorism related activities. In general, databases remain an underutilised resource in terrorism studies,[20] and such repositories have the potential to generate valuable insights by aggregating data and tracking trends across time. This is even more the case with nation-specific databases.[21] The information on 139 Australian and Canadian domestic actors was organised across four broad categories: personal information (age, education, mental health concerns, etc.), ideology (group affiliation, connections to other known jihadists, etc.), arrest details (charges, planned target, etc.), and incident details (date, number of casualties, etc.). Twenty-six variables were coded for each individual, though it was not

always possible to find the required information.

Traditionally, access to detailed information about counterterrorism investigations is very limited.[22] Fortunately, for 70% of the sample (97/139) we were able to draw much of the required information from primary sources, such as court documents or coronial inquest documents. These documents are considered more reliable and authoritative as they contain the testimony of law enforcement officials, the sentencing comments of judges, and even telephone intercepts and listening device transcripts presented in court. The data has also undergone the scrutiny of a well-regulated adversarial system. When information was not available in official sources, we extracted additional details from publicly available media. Whenever possible, we used and compared multiple media sources, to maximize the limited reliability of such sources.

Nevertheless, some limitations to the study should be acknowledged. As the database was built using open sources of information, this study may have missed some arrests and incidents altogether. While the high-profile nature of terrorism means this is unlikely, it is possible that individuals have been overlooked. Moreover, while court documents and other official sources are considered the 'gold standard' for information,[23] details regarding individuals, arrests and incidents may still be missing. This is an unfortunate limitation of analysing any illicit network. Moreover, while a number of the individuals included are now deceased or convicted of terrorism-related offenses, several cases remain before the Australian and Canadian judicial systems. As such, sentencing or coronial documents are not yet available. Consequently, sections of this study may require future revision as more detailed information becomes available. Finally, as noted, some details included in the dataset come from media sources, which are of a lower quality than the primary sources discussed. Media accounts of arrests or plots can often selectively exaggerate specific aspects of what happened, and such reports can differ significantly from the final, corroborated version of events found in court documents. Therefore, there may be mistakes in the database. As the following analysis has been created using such accounts, and the threshold for inclusion was that an individual was charged with an offense, this work should have absolutely no bearing on the guilt or innocence of any individuals. As such, all individuals who have not yet had their court cases heard, or who have been acquitted have been de-identified. Any conclusions drawn from this analysis should bear these limitations in mind.

Terrorist Incidents: Successful Attacks

Between 2000 and the beginning of 2020, 13 domestic jihadist-inspired acts of violence were perpetrated in Australia (7) and Canada (6). While recognising that 13 incidents is an extremely small sample, there is remarkable similarity between these Canadian and Australian incidents and offenders.

The Islamic State of Syria and Iraq (ISIS) inspired all 13 incidents, and all occurred within the same four-year period between late 2014 and late 2018. Specifically, all occurred in the months and years following the September 2014 call by the group's external operations emir instructing Western-based supporters of ISIS to carry out attacks in the West. Two months after the establishment of the 'Caliphate,' ISIS spokesperson Muhammad al-Adnani, in a speech entitled "Indeed Your Lord is Ever Watchful," stated: "If you can kill a disbelieving American or European – especially the spiteful and filthy French – or an Australian, or a Canadian … kill him in any manner or way however it may be. Do not ask for anyone's advice and do not seek anyone's verdict."[24] This message was repeated on least three subsequent occasions, each accompanied by increasingly specific instructions.[25] This declaration appears to have empowered unaffiliated ISIS sympathisers in Australia and Canada to act in the group's name, and to do so on their own. Indeed, lone actors subsequently perpetrated all 13 incidents. This shift in activity is comparable to the evolution noted in earlier studies, with the increase in homegrown terrorism in Australia and Canada following the American invasion of Iraq in 2003.[26]

Notably, Abu Musab al Suri had previously called upon jihadist movements to engage in "individual terrorism jihad" in the 1990s.[27] The current al Qaeda leader, Ayman al Zawahiri, also encouraged jihadists to undertake lone attacks as far back as 2001,[28] and in the late 2000s al Qaeda's affiliate in Yemen (al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula) led a campaign, through *Inspire* magazine, to encourage solo terrorism.[29] However, only ISIS has

thus far been effective in triggering successful lone-actor attacks in Australia and Canada.

Among the seven Australian lone actors, six were male and one was female. The Canadian group was remarkably similar, also with one female lone actor and five males. The average age also was almost identical, with the seven Australians averaging 27 years old and the Canadian group averaging 28. However, the Australian group did cover a wider spectrum of ages, with two teenagers (the youngest just 15) and one lone actor in his 50s. By contrast, each of the Canadian lone actors were aged between 24 and 32 when they committed their attacks.

While all 13 actors perpetrated their attacks alone, each had varying levels of engagement with domestic jihadist networks. Some, such as Abdul Numan Haider, emerged from well-established domestic jihadist networks, and Farhad Jabar Khalil Mohammed was even supported in the planning of his attack by at least four locally based jihadists. Other lone actors operated by themselves, but were related to jihadists who had perpetrated attacks internationally (Momena Shoma), or had attempted to commit an act domestically (Hassan Khalif Shire Ali). A small number of cases fit the stricter understanding of the so-called 'lone wolf', in that they appear to have radicalised alone (Ihsas Khan) or planned their attack alone (Man Haron Monis). Notably, while the ISIS message inspired all 13 lone actors, none had any known connection to ISIS command and control.

Calling on Hegghammer and Nesser's typology of ISIS attacks, these 13 plots fit the category of "sympathy, no contact" attacks, where "the attacker expresses ideological support for the group … but does not communicate bilaterally with anyone in the organization." [30] Unlike many of the ISIS-inspired lone-actor attacks in Europe, where the vast majority had direct connections to foreign fighters in Iraq and Syria,[31] these 13 lone actors appear to have had little or no contact with ISIS leadership in any form. Thus, it appears that ISIS has been uniquely successful, amongst international jihadist groups, in empowering unaffiliated sympathisers in Australia and Canada to act on their own.

The success that ISIS has had in mobilising unaffiliated Australian and Canadian sympathisers is attributable, at least partially, to the specific type of attacks the group has encouraged. Despite these 13 incidents occurring across a range of different Australian and Canadian locations, the overwhelming majority of attacks were simplistic, employed low resources, and were unambitious in their scope. While Aaron Driver stands out because of his 'success' in assembling homemade explosives,[32] the majority of lone actors (8) conducted their attacks primarily using only edged weapons (four also used low-caliber firearms). Moreover, no attacker had undertaken any form of prior training, and none had military backgrounds. The solitary nature, simple planning and basic weaponry used in these 13 attacks meant that (as with other international lone-actor incidents)[33] these acts were also extremely difficult for security services to detect and disrupt.

The trade-off was that these 13 unambitious attacks only resulted in a total of seven fatalities (excluding the perpetrators themselves). Interestingly, the target selected for each attack does not appear to have influenced the overall number of fatalities. Six lone actors chose military, police or government targets or personnel, while the remainder chose to randomly attack civilian targets with little symbolic value. Despite the fact that discriminate and random targeting was about equally common in this sample, the most fatalities ultimately achieved in any attack was two (excluding the perpetrator). Although 13 is a small sample, this finding supports Spaaj's analysis, which found relatively low lethality in 'lone wolf' attacks,[34] as well as Nesser's study of 'single actor' attacks in Europe, which found that perpetrators were limited in their ability to cause "destruction and fatalities".[35] ISIS consistently urged its followers to carry out attacks of any kind, even minimalist ones that would still carry symbolic weight. As such, many attackers chose edged weapons and low-caliber firearms and needed to get within a very close proximity of their intended targets. This, combined with the limited planning and the low capability of the attackers, means it is not surprising that eight of the 13 perpetrators were killed attempting to commit their attacks.

An additional factor often linked with discussions of lone-actor attacks is the prevalence of mental illness among perpetrators. This topic is discussed later in this analysis.

Terrorist Incidents: Disrupted and Failed Plots

Disrupted and failed plots were also included in this analysis in order to capture the total number of planned jihadist incidents (not just the number of attacks that happened to avoid police detection). A number of previous studies have largely overlooked foiled or failed attacks, leaving us often unable to answer seemingly basic questions about the actual scale and evolution of the jihadist phenomenon.[36] Including disrupted plots also allows for the comparison of successful and failed attacks in order to establish if there are broad correlations between particular operational choices and outcomes. However, as none of these plots ultimately came to fruition, conclusions regarding target selection, attack methodology and the number of planned attackers is based on less complete and concrete information than the above analysis.

Australia

Along with the seven lone-actor attacks detailed above, a further 21 jihadist plots were disrupted in Australia between 2000 and the beginning of 2020. Sixty-two individuals were subsequently charged with terrorism offenses in relation to these planned attacks. The following discussion distinguishes between plots that occurred prior to al-Adnani's declaration in September 2014, and those that occurred after September 2014.

Pre–September 2014

Prior to the al-Adnani declaration, five jihadist plots were disrupted in Australia, resulting in 30 arrests. Therefore, while the pre-2014 cohort accounts for almost half of the arrests related to the 21 disrupted Australian plots, these arrests only occurred across a small number of planned attacks. The first two plots involved small groups planning a series of attacks under the command and control of international jihadist organizations, including al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Taiba. Both plots discussed attacking a range of civilian targets using explosives. Two subsequent homegrown plots (Operations Pendennis in 2005 and Operation Neath in 2009) accounted for the overwhelming majority of these pre-2014 arrests. While both plots involved large groups of potential attackers, the Pendennis group was investigating the use of explosives against civilian targets,[37] while the Neath group planned to procure firearms and attack Australian military personnel in a *fida'iyya* (self-sacrifice) style attack.[38] One lone actor also was arrested in relation to a plot targeting Australian government officials using a firearm.[39]

Post–September 2014

Post September 2014, Australia has seen a dramatic escalation in the number of jihadist plots. Along with the seven lone-actor attacks detailed above, there were 16 disrupted or failed jihadist plots.[40] Significantly, 100% of the jihadist plots that have occurred post–September 2014 have been linked to ISIS. While 14 of the 16 planned attacks involved unaffiliated sympathisers inspired by the group,[41] members of the remaining two plots were in communication with ISIS command, who oversaw the actions of those involved. This is what Hegghammer and Nesser categorize as "remote contact with directives." Here, those planning the attack communicate "remotely (typically by telephone, email, or social media) and bilaterally with cadres of the organization and receive personal instructions."[42]

While these 16 post-2014 plots were ultimately disrupted by law enforcement (and thus never finalised), these plots appear to be equally divided between eight lone actor and eight group actor planned attacks. There also was a relatively even mix of targets and attack methodologies. Fifty percent of the lone-actor plots planned to attack random civilian targets, while the other 50% intended to target police, military or government personnel. Four lone actors planned to conduct attacks primarily using edged weapons, three intended to use firearms and one explosives. By contrast, 75% of group actors planned to attack civilian targets (including one plot targeting airlines), while only 25% planned to attack police, military or government targets. This again involved a mix of primary attack methodologies, with four group actors planning to use firearms, three edged weapons, and one explosives. Overall, in the post-2014 period, ISIS has clearly been quite successful in encouraging both group and lone actors to attack a mix of civilian and military targets, using a wide range of attack methodologies. However, it is worth noting that these 16 plots resulted in only 33 arrests, making these plots substantially

smaller in size than those seen previously. Moreover, with the exception of Operation Silves (that targeted aircraft using explosives), each of these ISIS-inspired or -directed plots has been far less resource intensive and ambitious in scope than the non-ISIS plots disrupted pre-2014.

Overall

When these 21 disrupted plots are combined with the seven lone-actor attacks, 28 jihadist-planned or -perpetrated plots targeting Australia have been identified by this study. Sixty-four percent (18) targeted civilians (including one targeting aviation), while 36% (10) were more discriminate in their targeting, focusing on police, government or military targets. The overwhelming majority of Australian plots chose only basic weaponry. Forty-seven percent (13) planned to primarily use firearms and 39% (11) edged weapons. Only 14% (4) planned to use explosives, and no plots intended to use CBRN weapons. Notably, only one of the 21 ISIS-inspired attacks involving unaffiliated sympathisers, planned to use explosives as their primary weapon. This highlights that attacks involving limited planning and unsophisticated methodologies were a phenomenon facilitated by the emergence of ISIS.

Among these 28 Australian plots, there was not a significant difference between the overall number of lone-actor and group plots. While the lone actors were not more likely to choose one type of target over another, group actors targeted civilians at a much higher rate of three (civilian) to one (police/military/government). Regarding attack methodology, group actors were much more likely to plan coordinated attacks with explosives (three of 12) when compared to lone actors (one of 16). While group actors may prefer softer targets, they are clearly more ambitious in the style and scale of their attack plans. However, this more ambitious choice of attack methodology may have contributed to group actors being far less successful in carrying out their attacks. Indeed, every single group-based plot either failed or was disrupted by law enforcement. By contrast, lone actors were much more likely than group actors to use edged weapons, limiting the size and scale of their attacks. However, 44% (7) of lone-actor plots were ultimately 'successful' in executing their attacks. This finding supports previous studies noting that low-resource, unsophisticated attacks conducted by lone actors are much more difficult for security services to identify and disrupt.

The overwhelming majority of Australian plots (82%) have been either connected to, or inspired by, ISIS. While only 9% of these plots were overseen by ISIS command and control (with 91% involving homegrown, unaffiliated sympathisers), by contrast 40% of the non-ISIS plots were guided by international jihadist organizations such as al Qaeda or Lashkar-e-Taiba. An additional plot had extensive contact with al Shabaab (including training several group members and granting permission for the attack). Therefore, while ISIS has been able to guide a small number of highly ambitious group plots aimed at Australian targets, the group's real success has been its ability to inspire 21 separate plots by unaffiliated Australian sympathisers across a five-year period. Indeed, the most significant changes in jihadist activity witnessed in Australia over the last 20 years appear to stem directly from the 2014 call to action by the Islamic State.

Canada

Along with the six lone-actor attacks that occurred in Canada discussed above, between 2000 and the beginning of 2020, a further eight planned attacks were disrupted. Thirty individuals were subsequently charged with terrorism offenses in relation to these plots. Once again, the plots are divided between those occurring prior to Islamic State's declaration in September 2014 and after. Unfortunately, the court documents available for Canadian cases are far less detailed than those available for Australia, thus findings for the following Canadian plots rely on far less complete and specific information.

Pre–September 2014

Prior to 2014, five jihadist plots were disrupted in Canada, resulting in 25 arrests. Notably, 18 of these arrests came in late 2005 and early 2006 in association with the 'Toronto 18' plot. The Toronto 18 planned the first jihadist attack in Canada, and although some members had contact with a British recruiter for terrorist groups in Pakistan,[43] the group was quintessentially homegrown, involving young people born or raised in Canada.

Although the intentions of this group were somewhat diffuse, there was an "inner core of perhaps six or seven [individuals]… [who were] fully committed to the cause,"[44] and had begun preparations for two large truck bombs. Other disrupted group plots included the VIA Rail plot, in which two men planned to derail a passenger train operating between New York and Toronto,[45] and three jihadists arrested under Project Samossa, who were attempting to assemble improvised explosive devices. Two were also charged with conspiracy to "murder persons for the benefit or at the direction of a terrorist group."[46] They had placed several bombs on the grounds of the legislature of the province of British Columbia on Canada Day. One other lone actor planned to target a military base with explosive materials. Notably, with the exception of the VIA Rail plot (where the intended attack method is unclear), all these pre-2014 plots in Canada planned to use explosives and sought to cause mass casualties.

Post–September 2014

Post–September 2014, only three jihadist plots have been disrupted in Canada, resulting in the arrest of four individuals. Two teenagers were arrested for planning separate lone-actor attacks (in 2015 and 2019), while a couple was charged with "committing an offense for the benefit of a terrorist group" and "possessing an explosive substance with the intent to endanger life or cause damage."[47] As the two lone actors were juveniles, comparatively little information is available on these plots. Consequently, it is difficult to draw many firm conclusions regarding the plots. However, it is worth noting that these three plots do not appear to have any connection to ISIS command and control, with each seemingly undertaken by unaffiliated sympathisers inspired by ISIS.

Overall

When these eight disrupted plots are combined with the six lone-actor attacks detailed previously, we have 14 planned or perpetrated jihadist attacks in Canada. While these numbers are small, there are some notable trends in this sample. Almost double the number of plots emerged post-2014 (nine) compared to the years prior (five). There was also almost double the number of lone-actor attacks (nine) overall, compared to group attacks (five), with all lone-actor plots (excluding one) occurring post-2014. Of these 14 planned and perpetrated plots, only 21% (three) targeted civilians. This indicates a clear preference among Canadian jihadists for targeting the police, military or the government. Of the 11 plots where an attack methodology can be determined, 55% (six) planned to use explosives. Hence, the Canadian jihadists were particularly ambitious, both in terms of the targets selected and the comparatively sophisticated methodologies planned for the attacks.

Interestingly, the 2018 *Public Report on the Terrorism Threat to Canada* states: "more sophisticated tactics, such as the use of improvised explosive devices … are less common in Western attacks, including Canada."[48] This may be true for the jihadist attacks in Canada, where four used edged weapons, one a low-caliber firearm, and only one explosives. However, with more than half the 'plots' in Canada involving the use of explosives, the statement appears misleading. Finally, it is worth noting that every single Canadian plot involving the selection of edged weapons or firearms as the primary weapon was ultimately 'successful.' Therefore, when Canadian jihadists intended to cause mass casualties, using more sophisticated weaponry, their plots were always detected. However, Canadian security services were unable to disrupt any of the lone-actor attacks involving limited preparation.

Comparing Canada and Australia

Prior to September 2014, the size and scale of the jihadist threat to Australia and Canada was almost identical. Each country faced five plots between 2000 and 2014, arresting 25 and 30 jihadists respectively. Notably, the overwhelming majority of these arrests occurred because of just one plot in each country, with 22 individuals arrested in Operation Pendennis (Australia), and 18 jihadists arrested in the Toronto 18 plot (Canada). The security services disrupted both plots in late 2005/early 2006, following months of investigations, and both groups were at similar stages in their attack planning. The arrests in both cases were what Dawson and Amarasingam call "watershed moment[s]" for their respective societies, when Canadians and Australians first realized that homegrown jihadist terrorists posed a serious threat to them.[49]

Both countries also faced a series of very similar jihadist attacks post-2014, both in terms of the number of incidents and scale of the attacks. However, when analysing the overall jihadist threat faced by Australia and Canada post-2014, the first clear point of divergence emerges. Since that time, Australia has disrupted 16 separate jihadist plots (arresting 33 individuals), while Canadian security services intercepted only three plots (arresting only four jihadists). Clearly the Islamic State has had much more success motivating unaffiliated sympathisers in Australia (as well as at facilitating plots in Australia), than the organisation has had in Canada. As noted above, two of the post-2014 plots did have remote contact with, and directives given by, the Islamic State. However, none of the post-2014 ISIS-inspired or -directed plots in Australia or Canada involved returned foreign fighters. This is contrary to well-stoked fears of the inclinations and abilities of such fighters, but in line with recent research reviewed in the discussion and conclusions section of this article. Finally, the rise in the overall number of jihadists in Australia correlates with a difference in the two countries' counter-terrorism interception rates. In Australia, one in every four planned attacks has avoided detection and been carried out (seven successfully, 21 disrupted). By contrast, 43% of identified Canadian plots were carried out successfully, or close to one in every two planned attacks (6 successful, 8 disrupted). While the numbers are again small, this suggests that Australia has perhaps been more effective in building an increased counter-terrorism capacity and capability (in response to an increasing jihadist threat) across the past 5 years.

Combining Canada and Australia

Given the broad similarities between Canada and Australia, both in terms of their respective societies and the threat faced by jihadists, combining the two sets of findings may also provide further insights into the phenomenon of domestic jihadism. Looking across the full set of 42 planned or perpetrated domestic jihadist plots, they are divided almost equally between those targeting civilians (21) and those targeting police, military or government (18) – with three cases where we could not determine the target. There is also a relatively even distribution of primary attack methodologies, with 15 plots aiming to use edged weapons, 14 firearms, and 10 attempts to construct and detonate explosives. In three cases, the attack methodologies were again unclear, including the Canadian plot to derail a passenger train. Notably, this plot appears to be the only example of Australian or Canadian jihadists thinking 'outside the box' in their attack methodology.

Sixty percent of planned or perpetrated plots (25) involved lone actors, almost equally divided between the 52% (13) successfully carried out, and the 48% (12) disrupted. While the type of target selected for the attack made almost no difference to the plot's success, the attack methodology did. Plots using edged weapons were much more likely to be successful (8 of 15) than those intending to use firearms (4 of 14). Almost all of the plots attempting to use explosives were disrupted (9 of 10). Interestingly, no pre-2014 plots planned to use edged weapons. Thus, while the rise of ISIS has also seen a sharp rise in the overall success rate of plots, this increase is likely the result of the simultaneous decrease in the intended scale and sophistication of many of the planned attacks.

Seventeen group plots were also identified. Regardless of the target, the primary attack methodology, or whether the plotters had connections with an international terrorist organisation, every single group plot in Australia and Canada was disrupted by security services.

Australian and Canadian Jihadists

Arrests for other kinds of Terrorism Offenses

Australia

This study identified a total of 89 domestic actors in Australia since 2000. Eighty-two percent (73) were arrested or killed as part of the 28 plots detailed above. An additional 16 jihadists were arrested on a range of other terrorism charges. This included seven individuals charged with offenses related to funding and/or supporting a terrorist organisation, and four arrested for creating or disseminating jihadist propaganda. Three jihadists were charged with breaching control orders related to their suspected terrorist activities (or were placed on a

control order after more serious terrorism charges were dropped), while an additional two were also charged with being members of a terrorist organisation (both ISIS).[50]

Thirty-six percent of these Australian jihadists were arrested prior to the ISIS declaration, while 64% emerged in the five or so years post–September 2014. As noted above, this indicates a clear and significant upsurge in the number of Australian domestic jihadists in conjunction with the rise of ISIS. With the exception of Momena Shoma, who traveled to Australia from Bangladesh with the intention of carrying out a terrorist attack, it appears that 99% (88/89) of these identified jihadists radicalised in Australia. Therefore, regardless of where an individual was born, their cultural background, the citizenships they might have held, or where in the world they spent most of their life, the cohort of jihadists in Australia has been uniquely homegrown.

Canada

This study also identified 50 domestic jihadists in Canada since 2000.[51] Seventy-two percent (36) of these were arrested or killed in the 28 plots detailed above. An additional 14 jihadists also were arrested on a range of other terrorism charges. This includes four Canadians arrested in Canada for assisting or facilitating jihadist attacks internationally. Notably, all four of these arrests occurred prior to 2014. Two additional Canadians were arrested in the United States for assisting international jihadist plots. Tahawwur Hussain Rana was arrested, tried, and imprisoned in Chicago, and Abdulrahman el Bahnasawy was arrested, tried, and imprisoned in New York. Sayfildin Tahir Sharif, arrested in Edmonton in 2011 for facilitating a suicide attack in Iraq (that killed five US soldiers), was also extradited to the United States in January 2015.[52] These arrests for assisting international terrorist plots provide a clear point of divergence from Australian jihadists. Post–September 2014, four Canadian jihadists were also arrested on terrorism charges related to threats to harm or inciting fear, while another faced charges related to creating or disseminating jihadist propaganda.

The final three Canadians were included because they had signed Peace Bonds. Peace Bonds are "essentially restraining orders" which allow law enforcement to place certain restrictions on individuals who they fear, on reasonable grounds, may pose a risk to public safety. If the court is persuaded that an individual may pose a risk, the defendant is ordered to "enter into a recognizance…to keep the peace and be of good behaviour" for up to twelve months.[53] Twenty-four Peace Bonds were identified as being issued in Canada to jihadists since 2000. Ten were signed by individuals already included in the sample above, while 11 were excluded from this analysis because they related to foreign fighting activity. The final three cases all signed Peace Bonds between 2015 and 2016. Authorities had "reasonable and probable grounds to believe" that each of these individuals may go on to commit a terrorist offense.[54] Notably, one of these three individuals was communicating with the same British 14-year-old that was involved in the 2015 Anzac Day plot in Australia.[55] This appears to be the only direct connection between the Australian and Canadian domestic jihadist networks, and both were part of a thriving online ISIS-supporter network at the time.[56]

In total, 62% (31) of Canadian jihadists were arrested prior to the ISIS declaration, while 38% (19) emerged in the years post September 2014. As noted above, Canada has not seen the same significant increase in ISIS-inspired and -controlled plots post-2014 that Australia has witnessed. However, members of the domestic Canadian network have facilitated or assisted a number of significant international jihadist plots, a phenomenon not observed in Australia.

Conviction Rates and Repeat Offenders

Australia

Of the 89 Australian jihadists, 73% (65) have so far been convicted of domestic terrorism offenses and received prison sentences. Twelve percent (11) are still awaiting trial or retrial (the majority of whom were arrested post-2018), while 5% (5) were killed committing a terrorist act. Just 10% (9) have been acquitted of the terrorism charges brought against them.

Of the 65 individuals that have been imprisoned, 26% (17) were identified as having been released. Importantly, none of these 17 Australian jihadists have subsequently been arrested for other domestic terrorism related offenses. The only Australian jihadist to have potentially reoffended domestically is Yacqub Khayre. He was arrested as part of Operation Neath in August 2009, although he was ultimately acquitted of "conspiring to do acts in preparation of a terrorist act." However, in June 2017 Khayre was killed committing a lone-actor terrorist attack. Hence, in sections of this analysis, Khayre is counted for both his 2009 arrest and his 2017 lone-actor attack. Three other individuals (Milad Atai, Ahmed Mohamad, and Abdullah Chaarani) were also charged with separate terrorism offenses that occurred on different dates. Each was arrested for the first time in relation to a planned or perpetrated attack, and each was subsequently charged with a separate terrorism offense. However, each individual was arrested only once (because the second offense also occurred prior to their original arrest), and therefore they cannot be considered to have reoffended.[57] While the sample size is small (89), and many individuals are now serving long prison sentences that prevent their reoffending, it is significant that only one domestic jihadist could loosely be considered a "terrorist reoffender" in Australia.

Canada

Of the 50 Canadian jihadists, 54% (27) have been convicted, at this time, of terrorism offenses and received prison sentences. Twenty-eight percent (14) were acquitted of all terrorism charges, while 4% (2) are awaiting trial. Similarly to Australia, 6% (three) were killed in the commission of a terrorist offense. The final 8% of Canadians either signed a Peace Bond (three) or were held on a Security Certificate (one).[58]

Similar to the Australian situation, at this time no Canadian jihadists have been convicted of terrorism offenses, served a prison sentence, and then been subsequently rearrested for domestic terrorism offenses. As previously noted, 10 of the 24 known Canadian Peace Bonds were issued to individuals arrested on domestic terrorism charges.[59] Nine were issued to individuals after their charges were stayed or they were released from prison. However, lone actor Aaron Driver was under the conditions of a Peace Bond when he committed his August 2016 attack.[60] Similar to Yacqub Khayre, Driver is therefore the only Canadian that loosely could be considered to have potentially 'reoffended.'

To date, approximately three in every four jihadists arrested in Australia have been convicted and imprisoned. However, in Canada this number is closer to two in every four. On the other hand, one in 10 of those charged with terrorism offenses in Australia has been acquitted, compared to almost three in 10 in Canada. A series of factors have likely contributed to this difference. However, it is worth noting that the Canadian government plans to establish a new unit specialising in terrorism prosecutions to address what one former Canadian Security Intelligence Service analyst called "an inconsistent track record" of terrorism prosecutions in Canada.[61]

Demographic Factors

Age

The average age of Australian jihadists was 25.4. However, there were significant differences across the period studied. Looking at the 32 individuals arrested prior to 2014, the average age was over 28. However, among the 58 jihadists arrested or killed post–September 2014, the average age drops to just under 24. This finding supports the 2016 Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) assessment that noted "a significant decrease in the age profile of those involved."[62] Most significantly, 31% (18) of jihadists that emerged in Australia post-2014 have been teenagers, compared to 0% prior to 2014.[63] Notably, each of these Australian teenage jihadists has been directly related to ISIS activity. This emergence of teenagers as a significant part of the Australian jihadist network has clear implications for the implementation of counter-terrorism policy and CVE programs.[64]

Among Canadian jihadists, the overall average age of known domestic actors was 26.6.[65] As with the Australian sample, the average age of jihadists dropped from 27.6 in the years pre-2014, to 24.9 following the

ISIS declaration. Although this decrease is not as sharp as among the Australian sample (which is also much larger), this drop in age is still noteworthy. Interestingly, the average age of domestic jihadists in Australia pre-2014 (28) and Canada (27.6) is almost identical to the average age of European jihadists between 2001 and 2010 (27.7).[66] When looking specifically at teenagers, Canada had eight teenagers arrested pre-2014, along with nine post-2014. Thus, unlike Australia, teenage jihadists have been consistently present in the Canadian context.

Gender

Among Australian jihadists, 6% of those arrested (five) were women, while 94% (84) were men. The Canadian jihadists had an identical gender breakdown, with 6% of those arrested (three) being women and 94% (47) men. There are also remarkable similarities between the women identified in both Australia and Canada. Two of these eight women (one from Australia and one from Canada) carried out a non-fatal lone-actor attack against a civilian target using an edged weapon. Notably, both appear completely disconnected from the wider jihadist networks in their respective countries. Five of the remaining six women were arrested for planning violent acts with, or supporting the violent actions of, their partner or another male family member. Two Australian women were also arrested for illicit fundraising activity, conducted to support family members fighting in Syria and Iraq. Finally, one Australian woman was charged with being a member of ISIS, although the judge noted that she was not a "terrorist in the sense of a person who is disposed to planning or committing acts of violence."[67] Overall, outside of a couple of extremely atypical and isolated examples, it would appear that females not already connected by blood or marriage to other jihadists have not presented a violent threat in either the Canadian or Australian context across the past twenty years.

Education

Unfortunately, information regarding educational attainment was only available for 78% of Canadian jihadists (39 of 50) and 58% of the Australian sample (52 of 89). Lack of information on this variable is quite common in studies of jihadists.[68] Of the 52 Australian jihadists where there is data, no individuals had completed or even attempted post-graduate study, and only 8% (four) individuals had completed an undergraduate degree or college course (with one individual also enrolled in university at the time he committed his attack). For 25% of the sample (13), the highest level of educational attainment achieved was high school. This meant that 67% of Australian jihadists did not even complete secondary level education.

By contrast, Canadian jihadists were significantly better educated. Three percent (one individual) had completed a PhD, while 54% (21) had either completed an undergraduate degree or at least enrolled at university. Fitting with previous studies, the overwhelming majority of jihadists studied in areas such as engineering, science, and medicine or computer science. When college is also included, 63% of Canadians had undertaken some form of further education, compared to just 8% in Australia. Almost identically, 26% of Canadian jihadists (and 25% Australian jihadists) had only finished high school. However, while 67% of Australians did not finish high school, just 12% of Canadians were high school dropouts. In summary, approximately two in every three Canadian jihadists had undertaken some form of education beyond high school, while approximately two in every three Australian jihadists did not even complete high school.

Region

Fifty of the 89 Australian jihadists emerged from the state of New South Wales (NSW), while 35 came from Victoria. This meant that 96% of Australian jihadists (85) were concentrated in the areas around Australia's two most populous cities (Sydney and Melbourne). Moreover, in the last three years analyzed, Australian arrests and incidents have overwhelmingly occurred in Victoria (with that State taking over from NSW as the main centre of domestic jihadist activity in Australia). Of the four Australians disconnected from these jihadist networks, two emerged from Queensland and two from South Australia.

In Canada, jihadists were more geographically dispersed. While 68% were arrested in Ontario (34 individuals), this number is significantly skewed by the arrest of 18 individuals in Toronto associated with just one plot. The

remaining 16 Ontarians were from a broad range of cities including Toronto, Ottawa, Waterloo, Kingston and Pembroke. Twelve percent of the remaining Canadian jihadists (six) were from Quebec, while 8% (four) were from British Columbia. These three provinces appear to be the main centres of jihadist activity in Canada. Two jihadists also were arrested in Alberta, one in Manitoba, and one in Prince Edward Island. As noted previously, two Canadian jihadists arrested in the United States were also included.

Family Connections

Among Australian jihadists, 30% (27 individuals) were related by either blood or marriage to at least one other member of the identified community of domestic jihadists (89 individuals). Hence, Australian jihadists form a highly interconnected domestic network, centred around a small number of key families whose involvement covers much of the period analyzed. This dense interconnectivity also helps explain the geographically centralised nature of the Australian sample. By contrast, none of the 50 Canadian jihadists were related by blood, and only four (8%) were related by marriage (two sets of brothers-in-law, who were arrested as part of the Toronto 18).[69] Along with the divergence in the number of disrupted plots post-2014, this contrast in the interconnectivity of the Canadian and Australian domestic networks is perhaps the biggest difference between the two extremely similar samples of jihadists. As some of the Canadian foreign fighters were siblings, however, it will be interesting to see if and to what degree this difference remains significant for the comparative data collected on the foreign fighters.

Mental Health

Despite decades of research into a potential link between mental illness and violence, studies have not found those who experience mental health problems to be more likely to commit serious criminal offenses.[70] While mental illness can be a risk factor for general violence, especially when combined with drug abuse,[71] research regarding a direct link between mental illness and serious crime remains inconclusive.[72] Despite this, many early terrorism studies attempted to identify specific psychological profiles or a prevalence of particular disorders among violent extremists.[73] The limited success in identifying such profiles led to a broad school of thought that terrorists were "surprisingly normal in terms of mental health."[74] However, these conclusions regarding the overall 'psychological normality' of terrorists were likely somewhat premature, with studies potentially underreporting or overlooking mental health issues due to methodological limitations or the absence of information.[75]

Recent research has added a degree of nuance to this field of enquiry. One emerging finding suggests that mental disorders may be more common among lone actors.[76] More specifically, three disorders have been found to have a substantially higher than expected prevalence among lone actors. These include schizophrenia, delusional disorders and autism spectrum disorders.[77] While the sample of Australian and Canadian lone actors is small, this group does appear to support these emerging findings, and given the high prevalence of ISIS-inspired lone-actor attacks in the post-2014 period, this is important.

Four of the 13 successful lone actors identified by this study were reported as suffering schizophrenia. In 2010 (five years prior to the Lindt café siege in Sydney) Man Haron Monis was diagnosed as a chronic schizophrenic, albeit high functioning.[78] He also had a severe and longstanding complex personality disorder, with antisocial and narcissistic features.[79] In Australia, Ihsas Khan was also diagnosed with schizophrenia.[80] In Canada, a psychiatrist determined that one of the male lone actors was suffering from schizophrenia,[81] while a Canadian judge concluded that Canada's only female lone actor's schizophrenia "played a central role in her crimes."[82]

Another four lone actors also appear to have faced a range of mental health challenges related to illicit drug use. From his teenage years, Yacqub Khayre seriously abused drugs and alcohol (completing multiple stints in Australian prisons for both violent and nonviolent offenses), and at the time of his attack Khayre had an addiction to crystal methamphetamine.[83] Canadian Martin Couture-Rouleau had also previously used cocaine, speed, magic mushrooms and acid, but unlike Khayre had stopped using hard drugs years before the attack.[84] He was reported, however, to be smoking up to 25 joints a day,[85] and had been in contact with

mental health workers approximately one year before his attack. Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, who died during an attack on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, was also convicted of a series of drug offenses, and had previously noted that he wanted to go to prison in order to overcome his cocaine addiction.[86] However, there were no drugs or alcohol in his system at the time of his attack.[87] Finally, it was reported that Hassan Khalif Shire Ali used drugs and may have suffered depression in the lead-up to his attack.[88] However, these reports remain unconfirmed, and Victoria Police held "no evidence … that Shire Ali was suffering from mental health issues."[89]

Along with the four lone actors reported as suffering schizophrenia, and the four noted as having substance abuse struggles, three of the five remaining lone actors also had potential mental health issues reported. The Coroner described Haider as "troubled",[90] and those around Jabar were concerned for his mental health prior to his attack.[91] As a preteen, Abdulahi Hasan Sharif was also "hospitalised and medicated for a mental disorder."[92] However, it is not possible to provide further insights into the mental health of these individuals due to the clinical restrictions and the nondisclosure of information for minors.

Whether mental health issues directly contributed towards any of these 13 lone actors deciding to undertake a terrorist attack is unclear, as is the potential impact of such conditions in limiting the social networks of these perpetrators. What is clear is that this sample of 13 Australians and Canadians presents a much higher than expected prevalence of mental disorders (specifically schizophrenia) and substance abuse issues. And while schizophrenia or drug abuse are clearly not "risk factors" for involvement in terrorism, our data suggests that jihadist sympathisers who have mental health or substance abuse issues may be more likely to undertake small scale lone-actor attacks. Overall, this Australian and Canadian group does appear to support emerging research into a link between particular mental health conditions, and lone-actor attacks, especially those inspired by ISIS post September 2014.

However, contrary to speculation that irrationality and spontaneity may be more heavily associated with lone-actor attacks,[93] the 13 lone actors studied overwhelmingly appear to display sufficient rationality to plan and execute an act of violence with clear ideological intent. Hence it is important to distinguish between clinical diagnoses of mental illness and legal judgments about whether individuals are not responsible for their actions,[94] because they were unable to "understand what [they were] doing and why, and to act on the basis of that understanding."[95]

For example, in Australia, Khan's defence claimed that he was "not criminally responsible for the offense" because at the time of the attack "he was suffering from a mental impairment."[96] Ultimately, the NSW Supreme court found Khan responsible for his actions, and sentenced him to 36 years imprisonment for committing a terrorist offense.[97][98] Likewise, a Coronial Inquest found Man Haron Monis was capable of choice and deliberation in his actions.[99] More specifically, findings noted that he "undertook the siege in a controlled, planned and quite methodical manner … and was not suffering from a diagnosable categorical psychiatric disorder that deprived him of the capacity to understand the nature of what he was doing."[100] Canada's female lone actor was also found responsible for committing a terrorist act, despite her mental health issues. However, she did receive a reduced sentence (seven years imprisonment) due to the impact of her illness.[101] To date, only one surviving lone actor has been found "not criminally responsible" for his actions. Here the judge noted that Canadians "would be best protected if he was detained and received psychiatric treatment."[102] While each case has its idiosyncratic aspects (and it should again be noted that the sample is small), there appear to be some differences in how the Australian and Canadian legal systems evaluate the relevance of diagnoses of mental illness in determining the capacity of these offenders to commit acts of terrorism.

Discussion and Conclusions

Given the strong similarities between Australian and Canadian societies, it is unsurprising that our analysis documents a broadly similar pattern of domestic jihadist attacks and plots across the past 20 years. Prior to the emergence of ISIS, these countries had an almost identical experience of jihadist terrorism, both in terms of the number of planned and perpetrated violent incidents, and the type of individuals arrested. As

previous research concluded, the development of jihadism in Australia and Canada during this period was "reflective of worldwide Western trends."[103] The key feature of this period, as this research highlighted, was the emergence of "homegrown terrorism." Only a few of these studies touched on the emergence of a new threat from individuals leaving to fight in Syria and Iraq. As our analysis confirms, there was in fact a second clear shift in the nature of the jihadist threat in both countries with the rise of ISIS, and more specifically the 2014 call for indiscriminate attacks on Western targets.

This shift clearly reflects broader changes in the number and the nature of jihadist plots and attacks throughout the West. Examining the European situation, for example, Petter Nesser states:

> From 2014 onward, nearly all plots in Europe have been linked to the Islamic State … The level of plotting has reached new heights. Never before have there been so many jihadi terrorist plots in Europe as in the period between 2014 and 2018. Never before have so many plots gone undetected and resulted in attacks. Never before have so many Europeans been killed in jihadi terrorist attacks. More people have died from jihadi terrorism in Europe between 2014 and 2018 (at least 345) than in the previous 20 years (at least 267).[104]

Australia and Canada experienced their highest recorded levels of jihadist activity as well. As with Western Europe, the United Kingdom, and the United States, the ISIS inspired incidents that occurred during this period were also predominantly unsophisticated plots and attacks by lone actors.[105]

In the post-2014 period, ISIS did inspire, and even supported, a small number of lethal group attacks as well. Most notably the co-ordinated bombings and mass shootings in Paris on 13 November 2015, the three bombings in Brussels on 22 March 2016, and the lone-actor, but perhaps group-guided, bombing in Manchester on 22 May 2017. No such group attacks occurred in Australia or Canada. Why this might be is not immediately clear from the data available. Although ISIS propaganda specifically called for attacks on Australians and Canadians, neither Australia nor Canada experienced any of these more elaborate and lethal attacks guided by ISIS. Despite advances in communications technology, perhaps ISIS has simply not been able to overcome the substantial logistical challenges that previous jihadist groups have also faced when attempting to coordinate small groups to plan and execute large-scale coordinated attacks, and avoid detection, in such geographically disconnected locations as Australia and Canada. Such difficulties are discussed in detail in a recent analysis of Operation Silves, the remotely directed IS attack which was ultimately foiled, but came close to fruition.[106]

Post–September 2014, Australia also experienced a significant drop in the age of the offenders (driven by the emergence of teenagers as a substantial part of the domestic jihadist networks). This pattern parallels global trends.[107] Canada had a similar experience. But the number of failed plots were far fewer, and the impact less pronounced. While Australia disrupted 16 separate plots and arrested 33 individuals in the post-2014 period, Canada thwarted only three plots, arresting four individuals. The post-2014 activity was therefore significantly lower in Canada than Australia, and markedly lower than in Europe, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This is the first key point of divergence between the two countries. Before discussing additional differences, it is worth noting three other similarities that are reflective of global trends.

The first is the profile of most of the individuals involved in domestic jihadist incidents. In line with expectations, the data shows that terrorism remains "a young man's game." As is the case elsewhere,[108] Australian and Canadian jihadists are largely men in their mid-twenties, or even younger in the post-2014 period. Few women were involved in incidents of domestic jihadist terrorism in Australia and Canada (6% of arrests in both countries), and the vast majority of the women were arrested for supporting men more instrumentally involved in plotting or perpetrating violent attacks. This does not mean that female terrorists are not capable of engaging in similar acts of violence. The data in hand does not speak to this issue. More simply, the data is consistent with findings of other studies reporting only a limited number of women being arrested for jihadist activity in the West.[109]

Second, no post-2014 attacks or plots in either country involved returned foreign fighters, despite the considerable concern expressed about this possibility.[110] A few attacks, notably in Belgium and France,

have involved returnees. For instance, on 24 May 2014 Mehdi Nemmouche, a 29-year-old French national of Algerian origin, opened fire at the Jewish Museum of Belgium in Brussels, killing four. He had fought, it is believed, for Islamist groups in Syria and may have had ties to ISIS. It is also thought that as many as seven of the attackers in Paris on 13 November 2015 were either returnees or agents of ISIS, as well as several of the perpetrators of the bombings in Brussels on 22 March 2016.[111] Otherwise, the anticipated surge in attacks from well trained and war-hardened veterans of the conflict in Syria and Iraq has never materialized. To date, although numerous foreign fighters have encouraged attacks on their homelands, very few foreign fighters have gone on to become domestic terrorists, and none in Australia or Canada.[112]

Third, and again contrary to popular concerns, no Australians or Canadians convicted of terrorism charges, and subsequently released from custody, have been rearrested for domestic terrorism offenses. Recent studies suggest that this finding is in fact in line with the best evidence available. Comparatively low levels of reoffending are the case for jihadist terrorists in other Western jurisdictions as well.[113]

Our analysis also highlights at least six differences in the domestic jihadist threat data for Australia and Canada. The first three differences are about the nature of the jihadist threat itself, while the other three relate to differences in the response to that threat. Documenting these differences is significant in itself, as it provides us with a more refined and locally nuanced conception of the global jihadist threat.

Firstly, while two in every three of the Canadian jihadists had undertaken some form of education beyond secondary school, approximately two in every three Australian jihadists did not even finish secondary school. Is this divergence consequential? With the limited data in hand, it is difficult to say. This finding may seem to make Canada exceptional. It certainly appears to differentiate Canadian domestic jihadists sharply from European jihadists, at least as they are often portrayed. In his comprehensive history of jihadist terrorism in Europe, for example, Nesser notes that the leadership of many cells is often relatively well educated. The vast majority of European jihadists, however, "lacked higher education." In fact, on a case-by-case basis, he documents that many came from relatively poor backgrounds and struggled in school.[114]

Surprisingly, though, robust data on the educational attainments of European jihadists is hard to come by. In his sample of 242 European jihadists, Edwin Bakker could only find data for 48 people, 42 of which finished high school and 15 completed university or college degrees.[115] In their comprehensive study of the patterns of jihadist terrorism across Europe, Angel Rabasa and Cheryl Benard only reported data on the British suspects in their dataset, and then for only 24 of the 31 individuals in their sample. They report that "more than three-quarters (79 percent) had at least begun college, although many never attended for more than one year. Twenty-nine percent received a bachelor's degree."[116] More data is available on the educational background of jihadist foreign fighters from Europe. This information is scattered, however, across dozens of studies with different samples, methodologies, and focal concerns, making clear comparisons and conclusions difficult.[117] Overall, it appears that the majority of European foreign fighters are from the lower to middle strata of society, and correspondingly, they have relatively low levels of education.[118] The data is spotty, however, and our focus is domestic jihadists and not foreign fighters per se.

If we contrast our findings on the educational backgrounds of jihadists with the other partners in the "five eyes" network, it is the Australian jihadists that appear exceptional. While only 8% of the Australian jihadists had completed a college or university degree, Hannah Stuart reports that 26% of Islamist related offenders in the United Kingdom (between 1998 and 2015) had some form of higher education. In an analysis of Islamist-related offenses in the United States (between 1997 and 2011), Robin Simcox and Emily Dyer report that 52% of the offenders "had attended some form of college," and 23% "had been educated to between college graduate and doctorate level." Another study of 217 American jihadists, with educational data for 139 individuals, found that 18.7% had some college education and 41.1% had a college degree or higher.[119] The educational background of jihadists in the United Kingdom and the United States, then, is notably higher than in Europe and Australia. The contrast in the Australian and Canadian data we detected helps to highlight the variable relationship between levels of education and radicalisation. It indicates that we are not simply dealing with a contrast between Europe and the United States. Any possible linkages between education and radicalisation

appear particularly complicated, and we clearly need a better understanding of this dynamic.[120]

The influence of the second difference we detected may be more relevant to explaining the higher rates of Australian jihadist activity post-2014. Despite all the changes noted across 20 years, Australian jihadists have remained a densely interconnected network, linked by blood and marriage. By contrast, Canadian jihadists were not as interconnected and more geographically dispersed. In fact, none of the Canadian jihadists were related by blood, and only four participants in one plot were related by marriage. The role of preexisting social networks and interpersonal bonds in forging commitments in all kinds of social movements, including extremist groups, is well established.[121] Perhaps, then, there is a correlation between the higher levels of connectivity in Australia and the higher levels of jihadist activity there. It would be interesting to explore this link further with more social network analyses, and especially comparative studies of jihadists in Australia, Canada and elsewhere.[122]

Interestingly, a number of Canadian jihadists have been arrested for assisting international jihadist plots from Canada, a phenomenon not observed in Australia. While a small number of Australians have been charged with funding and/or supporting international terrorist organisations, none are known to have directly assisted any international plots. This is the third difference noted. The reasons for this difference, however, are unclear at this time. On the one hand, perhaps the closer proximity of Canadians to jihadist networks in the United Kingdom and the United States encourages them to reach out to like-minded individuals there. On the other hand, the close co-operation, almost integration, of Canadian and American counter-terrorism efforts may be a contributing factor in detecting such international connections. Once again, though, more data would be required to adequately explore these possibilities.

If we look to other approaches to understanding differential rates of jihadism in the era of ISIS, there is some alignment with our findings, but the situation is complicated. In explaining why some European countries have been more afflicted by the surge in Islamic State–inspired jihadism than others have, Nesser focuses on three main reasons: "1) military interventions in Muslim countries; 2) jihadi networks; and 3) terrorist entrepreneurs."[123] Statistically, since 1990, the number of jihadist attacks and plots has increased "with Western interventions in Muslim countries," and in the post-2014 era, the countries "with the heaviest military involvement in the Muslim world—France and the United Kingdom—are most targeted. Conversely, countries with less military involvement such as Italy and Sweden are less targeted."[124] The number of plots and attacks also reflects the relative "capability to operate" in these countries, which "relies strongly on links and interactions between groups in conflict zones … and local networks." These networks, old and new, are stronger in the countries most affected by jihadist terrorism.[125] Lastly, he argues, the success of local jihadist networks has depended heavily on the presence of "terrorist entrepreneurs" who have been crucial in the recruitment of new members and provided some historical continuity to the networks.[126]

Relative to the United States, the United Kingdom, and many European nations, the Australian and Canadian involvement in military interventions in Muslim lands was less. Yet both engaged in the war in Afghanistan and were active members of the coalition against ISIS. Unlike Australia however, Canada refrained from joining in the highly controversial invasion of Iraq. The networks of jihadists in Australia and Canada, and their links with al Qaeda, ISIS and other jihadist groups also appear to have been less strong, yet internally the Australian networks were stronger than the Canadian ones. Finally, while many of the domestic plots in Australia and Canada had clear leaders,[127] none exerted much influence beyond their inner circle of plotters, so it is questionable whether there were any true "entrepreneurs" present. In this regard, it appears little has changed. In 2013, Sam Mullins concluded:

> … when we compare Canadian 'promoters' to others such as Abu Qatada, Abu Hamza, and Abdullah el-Faisal from the U.K. or Anwar al-Awlaki from the U.S., there is a marked difference. Canada has clearly not hosted a globally renowned ideologue with established connections to bona fide militants, nor have its online jihadi promoters been prolific or admired as the likes of Aabid Khan, Younis Tsouli, or Samir Khan. This comparative absence of highly influential individuals dedicated to propagating the ideology helps explain Canada's relatively low rate of

Islamist terrorism.[128]

In his analyses of jihadist terrorism in both Australia and Canada, Mullins also mentions the so-called "immigration-integration hypothesis." Countries such as the United States, Canada, and Australia, relative to the United Kingdom and Europe, have experienced fewer incidents of jihadist terrorism. This may be (at least to a degree) because they are nations of immigrants and have more successfully integrated their Muslim minorities, both socioeconomically and culturally. Whatever the merits of this still largely untested hypothesis,[129] we agree with Mullins when he asserts that this hypothesis "does not by itself offer a compelling, comprehensive explanation of the differential rates of terrorism. Rather, it seems that a number of factors have combined to afford Canada, and to a lesser extent Australia, a degree of protection."[130]

To be sure, one cluster of contributing factors is the nature and efficiency of the counter-terrorism apparatus in place in each nation. Of course, this entails a breadth of considerations spanning policy and practice with regard to policing, intelligence services, the law and judiciary, various ancillary social agencies, and politics, which far exceeds the parameters of this analysis. As indicated, however, our data includes three interesting differences in the response to jihadist terrorism in Australia and Canada that may or may not be significant. First, there are interesting differences in the rates of interception of jihadist plots. One in four Australian plots avoided detection (7 successful, 21 disrupted). In Canada almost one in two avoided detection (6 successful, 8 disrupted). Second, in Australia, three in four terrorists were convicted, and only one in ten were acquitted. In Canada, two in four were convicted, and three in ten were acquitted. Third, in Canada more extensive use was made of Peace Bonds, a kind of control order that is comparatively absent from terrorism prosecutions in Australia.

Overall, does this mean the Australians have been more successful in detecting and prosecuting domestic jihadist terrorists? Given the many relevant variables, it is impossible to say. Moreover, the number of cases is relatively small. Consequently, idiosyncratic factors could largely account for the differences noted. Nevertheless, our findings suggest that some systemic investigation of the contrasting results and approaches in such similar contexts is advisable in order for Canadians to improve their rates of detection and conviction.[131]

It is important to keep tracking global trends and their local manifestations through periodic comparative studies. The study of American, British or European data generates insights that are not necessarily transferable to the Australian and Canadian contexts without some consideration of the unique aspects of those nations, and their experiences with terrorism. It is also important to undertake comparative studies of highly similar nations to document that there are variations in the experience of jihadism, despite an overarching similarity in their histories, social systems, economies, and legal and political institutions and traditions.

As elsewhere, this study does highlight the powerful impact of the ISIS's global call to action in 2014. We need to develop a more complete and precise understanding of this event and why Al-Adnani's admonitions were so successful. To this end, the event itself needs to be documented more fully, more comparative datasets (similar to this one) need to be developed, and more specific research should be undertaken into the enthusiastic reception of Al-Adnani's declarations (e.g., quantitative and qualitative analyses of the online response, and interviews with jihadists and ex-jihadists). In Weberian terms, we need a better grasp of the "elective affinity".[132] between this message and the experience of young Islamists. The charismatic appeal of certain ideologues or entrepreneurs may be an essential factor to understand better, as Nesser and others have stressed,[133] but the words and works of such leaders tend to succeed because they resonate with the real experience of others. What is the basis of that "affinity"? This is a part of the global-local dialectic at the heart of contemporary terrorism and we need to delineate it more fulsomely. More comparative studies could be used to track the possible influence of the presence or absence of local entrepreneurs on the levels of jihadism in countries and regions. Much the same holds true for understanding the similarities and differences in the social networks established by jihadists throughout the West and the rest of the world. Mapping local variations in this key aspect of the global-local dynamic, and seeking to explain them, may be instrumental in understanding the nature and level of the jihadist threat in different national contexts.

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Notes

[1] Pete Lentini, "Antipodal Terrorists? Accounting for Differences in Australian and 'Global' Neojihadists"; in: Richard Devetak and Christopher W. Hughes, Eds., *The Globalization of Political Violence* (New York: Routledege, 2009); Louise E. Porter and Mark R. Kebbell, "Radicalization in Australia: Examining Australia's Convicted Terrorists," *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 18 (2) (2011), pp 212–231; Sam Mullins, "Islamist Terrorism and Australia: An Empirical Examination of the 'Home-Grown' Threat," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23 (2) (2011), pp. 254–285; Sam Mullins, "'Global Jihad': The Canadian Experience," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25 (5) (2013), pp. 734–776; Andrew Zammit, "Explaining a Turning Point in Australian Jihadism," *Studies in Conflict and* Terrorism 36 (9) (2013), pp. 739–755; John McCoy and W. Andy Knight, "Homegrown Terrorism in Canada: Local Patterns, Global Trends," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 38 (4) (2015), pp. 253–274; Shandon Harris-Hogan and Kate Barrelle, "Young Blood: Understanding the Emergence of a New Cohort of Australian Jihadists," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 32 (7) (2020) pp. 1391–1412.

[2] For example, Shandon Harris-Hogan, "Anatomy of a Terrorist Cell: A Study of the Network Uncovered in Sydney in 2005," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political* Aggression 5 (2) (2013), pp. 137–154; Bart Schuurman, Shandon Harris-Hogan, Andrew Zammit and Pete Lentini, "Operation Pendennis: A Case Study of an Australian Terrorist Plot," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8 (4) (2014), pp. 91–99; Lorne L. Dawson, "Trying to Make Sense of Home-Grown Terrorist Radicalization: The Case of the Toronto 18," in Paul Bramadat and Lorne Dawson, Eds., *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), pp. 64–91; Sally Neighbour, "Operation Pendennis in Australia," in Bruce Hoffman and Fernando Reinares, Eds., *The Evolution of the Global Terrorist Threat: From 9/11 to Osama Bin Ladin's Death* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), pp. 163–191; Stewart Bell, "Leadership and the Toronto 18," in Bruce Hofmann and Fernando Reinares, eds., *The Evolution of the Global Terrorist Threat: From 9/11 to Osama Bin Ladin's Death* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), pp. 143–162.

[3] For example, Sam Mullins, 2011, op. cit.; Sam Mullins, 2013, op. cit.; McCoy and W. Andy Knight, 2015, op. cit.; Alex Wilner, "Canadian Terrorists by the Numbers: An Assessment of Canadians Joining and Supporting Terrorists Groups," Ottawa: Macdonald-Laurier Institute (2019), available at: https://macdonaldlaurier.ca/files/pdf/20190205_MLI_Canadian_Terrorists_Wilner_PAPER_WebFinal.pdf; Nicole Tishler, Marie Ouellet, and Joshua Kilberg, "A Survey of Terrorism in Canada: 1960–2015," in Jez Littlewood, Lorne L. Dawson, and Sara K. Thompson, Eds., *Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020), pp. 25–48.

[4] Mullins (op. cit., p. 760), for example, quite typically concludes: "When viewed as a whole, the background variables, operational behaviours, and investigations and outcomes clearly demonstrate the 'home-grown' nature of Canadian Islamist terrorism. In all three areas, the Canadian homeland has taken on greater significance and changes that have occurred are generally in accordance with existing analyses of home-grown Islamist terrorism in the West"; see Manni Crone and Martin Harrow, "Homegrown

Terrorism in the West." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23 (4) (2011): 521–536.

[5] This is true, for example, for the two most comprehensive and meticulously prepared studies available: Sam Mullins, 2011, op. cit. and Sam Mullins, 2013, op. cit.

[6] Andrew Zammit, 2013, op. cit.; John McCoy and W. Andy Knight, 2015, op. cit. and Alex Wilner, 2019, op. cit.

[7] Andrew Zammit, "The Role of Virtual Planners in the 2015 Anzac Day Terror Plot," *Security Challenges* 13 (1) (2017), pp. 41–58.

[8] Amarnath Amarasingam, "What Aaron Told Me," *National Post*, August 12, 2016. URL: https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/what-aaron-told-me-an-expert-on-extremism-shares-his-conversations-with-the-terror-suspect

[9] Thomas Hegghammer, "Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists' Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting," *American Political Science Review* 107 (1) (2013), pp. 1–15.

[10] The most recent study of Canadian jihadist terrorism, Alex Wilner, 2019, op. cit., illustrates the problems we are addressing. It usefully fills a void in the data available, but the sample studied rather ambiguously consists of information from open sources on "95 individuals with a nexus to Canada who have, or are suspected of having, radicalized, mobilized, and/or participated in Islamist terrorist activity between 2006 and 2017."

[11] In their most basic form, CVE programs are initiatives designed to reduce the number of violent extremists (and their supporters) through noncoercive activities (Will McCants & Clint Watts, *U.S. Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism: An Assessment*, Foreign Policy Research Institute E-Notes, December 2012). In this way, CVE augments traditional counter-terrorism efforts by undertaking activities in the pre- and post- criminal space (Matthew Levitt, *Defeating Ideologically Inspired Violent Extremism: A Strategy to Build Strong Communities in the Homeland*, Washington DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2017).

[12] David W. Brannan, Philip F. Esler, and N.T. Anders Strindberg, "Talking to 'Terrorists': Toward an Independent Analytical framework for the Study of Violent Substate Activism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24 (1) (2001), pp. 3–24.

[13] For example, Vidino, Lorenzo and Seamus Hughes (2015). "ISIS in America: From Retweets to Raqqa." Program on Extremism, George Washington University. URL: https://extremism.gwu.edu/isis-america; Angel Rabasa and Cheryl Benard, *Eurojihad: Patterns of Islamist Radicalization and Terrorism in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Sadeq Rahimi and Raissa Graumans, "Reconsidering the Relationship between Integration and Radicalization," *Journal of Deradicalization* (Winter 15/16, Nr. 5, 2015), pp. 28–62; Efraim Benmelech and Esteban F. Klor, "What Explains the Flow of Foreign Fighters to ISIS?" *Terrorism and Political Violence*, first version published online 31 Oct., 2018.

[14] Sam Mullins, 2011, op. cit., p. 268.

[15] Some examples, of cross-national comparisons, but largely with regard to just or a few aspects of terrorism, are: Reem Ahmed and Daniela Pisoiu, "Foreign Fighters: An Overview of Existing Research and a Comparative Study of British and German Foreign Fighters," (2014) Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany; URL: https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/ZEUS-WP-8-Foreign-fighters-Foreign-fighters-%3A-An-of-Ahmed-Pisoiu/8e04f0be7559a36fb78b90e6ee0459173b354b36; Same Mullins, "Re-examining the Involvement of Converts in Islamist Terrorism: A Comparison of the U.S. and U.K." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9 (6) (2015), pp. 72–84; Marion van San, "Lost Souls Searching for Answers? Belgian and Dutch Converts Joining the Islamic State." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9 (5) (2015), pp. 47–56; Angel Rabassa and Cheryl Benard, *Eurojihad: Patterns of Islamist Radicalization and Terrorism in* Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Edwin Bakker and Roel de Bont, "Belgian and Dutch Jihadist Foreign Fighters (2012–2015): Characteristics, Motivations, and Roles in the War in Syria and Iraq." *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 27 (5) (2016), pp. 837–857.

[16] For more information on this arrangement see URL: https://www.dni.gov/index.php/who-we-are/organizations/enterprise-capacity/chco/chco-related-menus/chco-related-links/recruitment-and-outreach/217-about/organization/icig-pages/2660-icig-fiorc

[17] Shandon Harris-Hogan, "How to evaluate a program working with terrorists? Understanding Australia's countering violent extremism early intervention program," *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism* 15 (2) (2020), pp. 97–116.

[18] Petter Nesser, "Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe 1994–2007: Planned, Prepared, and Executed Terrorist Attacks," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31 (10) (2008), p. 924.

[19] Thomas Hegghammer, "Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists' Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting," *American Political Science Review* 107 (2013), pp. 1–15.

[20] Bart Schuurman, "Research on Terrorism, 2007–2016: A Review of Data, Methods, and Authorship," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32 (5) (2020), pp. 1011–1026.

[21] When the Canadian Incident Database was created, for example, it was discovered that Canadian incidents were markedly underrepresented in the Global Terrorism Database and the International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events database,

despite using similar inclusion criteria (see Nicole Tishler, Marie Ouellet, and Joshua Kilberg, 2020, op. cit., pp. 26–28).

[22] Bart Schuurman and Quirine Eijkman, "Moving Terrorism Research Forward: The Crucial Role of Primary Sources," *ICCT Background Note* (2013): 4.

[23] See Aili Malm, Rebecca Nash and Ramin Moghadam, "Social Network Analysis and Terrorism," in Gary LaFree and Joshua D. Freilich, Eds., *The Handbook of the Criminology of Terrorism* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017), pp. 221–231, and Marc Sageman, *The London Bombings* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), pp. 4–6.

[24] Thomas Hegghammer and Petter Nesser, "Assessing the Islamic State's Commitment to Attacking the West," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9 (4) (2015), p. 4.

[25] Petter Nesser, Anne Stenersen and Emilie Oftedal, "Jihadi Terrorism in Europe: The IS-Effect," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 10 (6) (2016), p. 5.

[26] Sam Mullins, 2011, op. cit. and 2013 op. cit.

[27] Brynjar Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of Al-Qaeda Strategist Abu Mus'ab Al-Suri* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

[28] Bruce Hoffman, *Policy Analysis 2842 - Lone Wolf: Passing Fad or Terror Threat of the Future?* (2017) URL: https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/lone-wolf-passing-fad-or-terror-threat-of-the-future

[29] Petter Nesser, "Research Note: Single Actor Terrorism: Scope, Characteristics and Explanations," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 6 (6) (2012), pp. 61–73.

[30] Thomas Hegghammer and Petter Nesser, "Assessing the Islamic State's Commitment to Attacking the West," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9 (4) (2015), p. 22

[31] Petter Nesser, Anne Stenersen and Emilie Oftedal, "Jihadi Terrorism in Europe: The IS-Effect," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 10 (6) (2016), p. 9.

[32] Amarnath Amarasingam, "What Aaron told me: An expert on extremism shares his conversations with the terror suspect," *The National Post* 11 August 2016; URL: https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/what-aaron-told-me-an-expert-on-extremism-shares-his-conversations-with-the-terror-suspect

[33] Raffaello Pantucci, Clare Ellis and Lorien Chaplais, "Lone-Actor Terrorism Literature Review." *Royal United Services Institute Countering Lone Actor Terrorism Series No. 1* (2015), pp. 1–19.

[34] Ramón Spaaij, *Understanding Lone Wolf Terrorism: Global Patterns, Motivations and Prevention* (Dortrecht: Springer, 2012).

[35] Petter Nesser, "Research Note: Single Actor Terrorism: Scope, Characteristics and Explanations," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 6 (6) (2012), p. 70.

[36] Alex P. Schmid, "The Literature on Terrorism," in Alex P. Schmid, Ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research* (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 461.

[37] Shandon Harris-Hogan, "Australian Neo-Jihadist Terrorism: Mapping the Network and Cell Analysis Using Wiretap Evidence," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 35 (4) (2012), pp. 298–314.

[38] Andrew Zammit, "The Holsworthy Barracks Plot: A Case Study of an Al-Shabaab Support Network in Australia," *CTC Sentinel* 5 (2012).

[39] R v Mallah NSWSC 317 (21 April 2005).

[40] These figures are in line the with the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) September 2019 submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security where it notes: "Since September 2014 … there have been seven attacks on people and 16 major counterterrorism disruption operations in response to potential attack planning in Australia (Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, "Review of the Australian Citizenship Act Renunciation by Conduct and Cessation Provisions." ASIO submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security. 13 September 2019: 3).

[41] Along with the seven lone-actor incidents, these 14 plots also broadly fit Hegghammer and Nesser's category of "sympathy, no contact."

[42] Thomas Hegghammer and Petter Nesser, "Assessing the Islamic State's Commitment to Attacking the West," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 9 (4) (2015), p. 22.

[43] Lorne L. Dawson and Amarnath Amarasingam, "Homegrown Terrorist Radicalization: The Toronto 18 Case in Comparative

Perspective,"; in: Michael Nisbett, Kenneth Roach, and David Hofmann, Eds., *The Toronto 18 Terrorism Trials* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Law Review Press, forthcoming), manuscript p. 15.

[44] Ibid.

[45] See R. v Esseghaier, ONSC 5855 (23 September 2015). In this case, both of the accused plead guilty and received life sentences. In August 2019, the Ontario Court of Appeal ordered a new trial because the jury was improperly chosen. On Jan. 1, 2020, the end date for our dataset, the case remained before the courts.

[46] See Public Prosecution Service of Canada, *Guilty Verdicts in Terrorism Trial.* 3 June 2015. In this case, the trial judge overturned the jury conviction and stayed the charges. In Dec. 2018, the British Columbia Appeals Court upheld this decision. Both the trial judge and the Appeal Court found the RCMP had "entrapped" the couple. According to the advice received from two national security law experts, they still fit the criteria for inclusion in our dataset, since they were charged with a terrorism offense and found guilty. The entrapment finding does not mean they are "not guilty"; it simply indicates they were subject to an "abuse of process."

[47] Public Prosecution Service of Canada, *Verdict in Terrorism Case.* 19 December 2017.

[48] Public Safety Canada, *2018 Public Report on the Terrorist threat to Canada* (Ottawa: Public Safety Canada, 2019), p. 15.

[49] Dawson and Amarasingam, "Homegrown Terrorist Radicalization: The Toronto 18 Case in Comparative Perspective," manuscript p. 1.

[50] An additional 40 Australians were arrested for their involvement in domestic Jihadist activity during this period. However, because they were charged with a range of general criminal offenses (and not terrorism specific offenses), they were excluded from this sample. Additionally, Mohamed Nizzadeen and Mohamed Haneef were also excluded from the sample, as within a matter of days of their arrest it was determined that they had been wrongfully detained.

[51] The 2018 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada notes that "since 2001 a total of 55 individuals have been charged with terrorism offenses under the Criminal Code" (Public Safety Canada: 2018, 24). This study identified 49 Canadian Jihadists arrested under domestic terrorism charges during the period noted (an unnamed youth arrested in Kingston was detained in 2019). We excluded five domestic arrests from our sample because the individuals did not have a connection to jihadist ideology. This includes Mouna Diab, who was involved with smuggling weapons to Hezbollah, and Ramanan Mylvaganam, Suresh Sriskandarajah, Piratheepan Nadarajah and Prapaharan Thambaithurai, who were arrested for funding or assisting the Tamil Tigers. We are unable to identify the final domestic actor noted by the Canadian government.

[52] The three Canadians tried in the US were included because they were Canadians arrested on terrorism charges and they do not fit the traditional conceptualisation of a foreign fighter.

[53] "Antiterror Peace Bonds in a Nutshell," National Security Law: Canadian Practice in Comparative Perspective; URL: http://craigforcese.squarespace.com/national-security-law-blog/2016/4/1/antiterror-peace-bonds-in-a-nutshell.html

[54] Douglas Quan and Stuart Bell, "B.C. man targeted by police for terrorism peace bond denies having any involvement in terrorism," *National Post*, 16 December 2016.

[55] The Queen v Sevdet Ramadan Besim VSC 537 (5 September 2016).

[56] Amarasingam, Amarnath, "What Twitter Really Means for Islamic State Supporters." *War on the Rocks* (December 30); URL: https://warontherocks.com/2015/12/what-twitter-really-means-for-islamic-state-supporters/

[57] Two teenagers (both aged just 14) were identified and detained as part of a major terrorism investigation. Each subsequently was released on a form of good behaviour bond. Within 18 months of their original arrest, each, separately, went on to be charged with acts in preparation for a terrorist act.

[58] Individuals may be held, seemingly indefinitely, using a Security Certificate, in accordance with the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act of Canada. These certificates are applied to permanent residents or foreign nationals to remove them from Canada, because they are deemed "inadmissible for reasons of national security, violating human or international rights, or involvement in organized or serious crimes." They are used "in exceptional circumstances where the information to determine the case cannot be disclosed without endangering the safety of a person (for example, by putting a witness' life in danger) or national security (for example, by revealing investigation techniques)" (Public Safety Canada; URL: https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrt/cntr-trrrsm/scrt-crtfcts-en.aspx)

[59] Kevin Omar Mohamed, John Stuart Nuttall and Amanda Marie Korody all had applications for Peace Bonds withdrawn.

[60] Alex Migdal, Kat Eschner and Andrea Woo, "Who was Aaron Driver? The latest updates about the man killed after standoff in Strathroy," *Globe and* Mail, 11 August, 2016.

[61] Douglas Quan, "Can new federal unit address Canada's 'inconsistent track record' in terrorism prosecutions?," *National Post,* 2

January 2020

[62] Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, *ASIO Annual Report 2015–16* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2016).

[63] The Australian Federal Police also identified an additional 109 children 'at risk' of radicalisation (James Renwick, *Report to the Prime Minister: The Prosecution and Sentencing of Children for Terrorism.* (Commonwealth of Australia: Independent National Security Legislation Monitor, 2018), p. 2.

[64] Shandon Harris-Hogan and Kate Barrelle, "Young Blood" (2018).

[65] Information regarding the age of Canadian Jihadists was only available for 46 of the 50 individuals. We do know that the four missing individuals were below the age of 18 at the time of their arrest, but since they are juveniles their specific ages were not released. Overall, the average age of Canadian Jihadists is therefore lower than the average stated.

[66] Edwin Bakker, "Characteristics of Jihadi Terrorists in Europe (2001–2009)"; in: Rik Coolsaet, Ed., *Jihadi Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge*, 2nd ed. (Farnham, Surry: Ashgate, 2011), p. 141.

[67] "Adelaide woman jailed for three years for Isis membership," *The Guardian,* 16 April 2019.

[68] For example, Edwin Bakker, "Characteristics of Jihadi Terrorists in Europe (2001–2009)," p. 140; Lorne L. Dawson summarizes the very mixed and inadequate data available in 32 studies with empirical data on Western foreign fighters in "A Comparative Analysis of the Data on Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq: Who Went and Why?" (Paper presented to the European Consortium for Political Research in 2019).

[69] While John Stuart Nuttall and Amanda Marie Korody, and Sabrine Djermane and El Mahdi Jamali were partners, neither "terrorist couple" was married at the time of their arrest.

[70] Martin Anderson, "Mental illness and criminal behaviour: a literature review," *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* 4 (1997), p. 247.

[71] Paul Heroux, "Are Terrorists Insane?" *The Huffpost,* 29 January 2012.

[72] Martin Anderson, "Mental illness and criminal behaviour: a literature review," *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* 4 (1997), p. 247.

[73] Bryan Bubolz and Pete Simi, "The Problem of Overgeneralization: The Case of Mental Health Problems and U.S. Violent White Supremacists" *American Behavioral Scientist* (2019), p. 2.

[74] Ibid., p. 2.

[75] Ibid, p. 12.

[76] Emily Corner and Paul Gill, "A False Dichotomy? Mental Illness and Lone-Actor Terrorism", *Law and Human Behavior* 39 (1) (2015), p. 24; Ramón Spaaij, *Understanding Lone Wolf Terrorism: Global Patterns, Motivations and Prevention.* (Dortrecht: Springer, 2012), p. 50.

[77] Emily Corner, Paul Gill and Oliver Mason, "Mental Health Disorders and the Terrorist: A Research Note Probing Selection Effects and Disorder Prevalence," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 39 (6) (2016), pp. 560–568.

[78] Commonwealth of Australia, *Martin Place Siege: Joint Commonwealth—New South Wales Review* (Canberra: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2015), p. 70.

[79] Ibid., p. 71.

[80] R v Khan (No 11) {2019] NSWSC 594 (5 June 2019), p. 3.

[81] CBC News, "Man who attacked soldiers in 2016 shouldn't have been acquitted of terror charges: Crown," *CBC News,* 24 June 2019.

[82] Liam Casey, "Woman guilty of terror charges in Canadian Tire attack sentenced to 7 years in prison," *Global News*, 4 February 2019.

[83] Cameron Houston, Chris Vedelago, Rania Spooner, Michael Bachelard and Nino Bucci, "Melbourne terrorist Yacqub Khayre: Long history of drugs, guns and crime." *The Age*, 6 June 2017.

[84] Stewart Bell, "Mental health system failed Quebec man who became infatuated with ISIL and killed a soldier: coroner," *National Post,* 5 May 2017.

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Organizational Capacity and Constituency Dominance: Why Some Militant Groups Wage Sustained Insurgencies

by Michael Shkolnik

Abstract

Why do some militant groups wage sustained insurgencies while other groups do not? To address this puzzle, this study uses a resource mobilization framework and quantitative regression analyses of 246 prominent militant groups featured in the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) from 1970–2007. Findings show that proxies for organizational capacity and constituency dominance are better predictors of sustained insurgencies than traditional measures of group capabilities, diverging from current explanations of insurgency onset and outcomes. An insurrection led by a single group is the strongest determinant of a sustained insurgency, suggesting that rival consolidation plays a key role in the nascent stages of an armed conflict. While rarely achieving ultimate objectives, this study finds that religious militant organizations are associated with a higher likelihood of waging sustained insurgencies. Hub-spoke structured groups, with relatively decentralized command and control, are similarly as likely to sustain insurgencies as hierarchically structured groups. There is no single model that can explain particular militant group trajectories and counterinsurgency campaigns require context-specific analysis. However, this study presents generalizable empirical associations across diverse militant groups to examine an underexplored outcome of interest.

Keywords: militant group; terrorism; insurgency; civil war; armed conflict; organizational structure; resource mobilization

Introduction

Why do some militant groups wage sustained insurgencies while others do not? It is puzzling why some militant groups, who face immense difficulties in garnering material resources and support, are able to eventually fight more powerful militaries. Prominent insurgent groups like Hezbollah and the PKK faced uphill battles to consolidate more established rivals and develop robust organizational structures before launching sustained insurgencies against their target states. Most militant groups, however, fail to survive beyond their first year, let alone wage a full-fledged insurgency. Some groups, like the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood or the Egypt's al-Jamm'a al-Islamiya, engaged in armed insurrections but failed to sustain military operations against their respective target regimes beyond a few years. Among 246 of the most prominent militant groups (groups that have survived beyond their first year and have committed at least 10 attacks during their lifespan) featured in the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) from 1970–2007, this study identifies 77 (~31%) groups that have waged a sustained insurgency with their target state.

Why do some prominent militant groups engage in sustained armed conflicts, while others fail to get an insurgency off the ground or face defeat early on? Using a resource mobilization framework, this study tests key theories from the scholarly literature via quantitative regression analyses and finds that organizational capacity and constituency dominance are key drivers of this puzzle.[1] Overall, findings show that these factors are better predictors of sustained insurgencies than traditional measures of group capabilities (i.e. group size, state sponsorship, multipronged attacks), diverging from current explanations of insurgency onset or outcomes. Posing a serious challenge to a regime is not necessarily a function of how powerful or capable a group may seem—it is also about the competitive environment and capacity to effectively mobilize resources and sustain armed hostilities against government forces.

This study contributes to an emerging research program centered around the militant group-level of analysis. Recent work has been devoted to understanding the terrorism-insurgency nexus, mainly explaining why some insurgent organizations engage in terrorism or civilian victimization.[2] Other research focuses on explaining why some rebel or militant groups control territory or ultimately defeat the states they fight. However, this study

is one of the first to empirically assess why some militant or terrorist groups wage full-fledged insurgencies.

This study also addresses a selection bias in previous research which tends to explore the evolution of full-fledged insurgent groups.[3] Like most large-n research, case studies of insurgency or rebellion tend to look at the most lethal and enduring militant groups. But policymakers and researchers can learn a great deal about armed conflict by comparing militant groups that emerge under similar conditions yet fail to wage sustained campaigns of attrition.

The purpose of this study is to present a generalizable framework identifying indicators for scholars to explore in future work and for practitioners to incorporate in their assessments of potential insurgent threats. Understanding this phenomenon is critical since groups that are capable of launching sustained guerrilla or military operations gain more influence, recruitment, and fundraising capabilities while further weakening the target state.[4] It is far more difficult for states to defeat a full-fledged insurgency than prevent a nascent insurrection from flourishing.

The first two sections of this article offer a brief review of the literature, present this study's theoretical framework, and derive testable hypotheses from scholarly debates on terrorism, insurgency development, and civil war onset. The third section presents the research design and regression results. Subsequent sections discuss the findings, concluding with implications for scholarship. While this study does not identify detailed causal sequences, the quantitative analysis offers empirical associations which differentiate among militant groups that wage sustained insurgencies and those that do not.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

The broader scholarly literature tends to treat civil war, terrorism, and insurgency as analytically distinct phenomenon, despite representing interrelated forms of political violence. Early quantitative literature laid the groundwork for a better understanding of why some countries were more prone to civil war.[5] However, country-level indicators are limited in explaining why some militant groups wage sustained armed conflicts while other similar groups do not. At an aggregate level of analysis, there appears to be strategic logic behind the militant activity preceding sustained armed conflict that warrants further investigation.[6] It is therefore important to assess which types of militant groups are more likely to escalate violence to a full-fledged insurgency.

A separate research program based on the militant group-level of analysis assesses armed organizations largely based on capability indicators such as group strength or control of territory to help determine civil war dynamics and outcomes.[7] Most of this literature evaluates militant groups based on attaining ultimate objectives or maintaining longevity. Previous studies of insurgencies mainly examine militant group dynamics during civil wars or armed conflicts, overlooking militant groups that do not wage insurgencies in the first place.[8] Few scholarly attempts focus on why some militant groups evolve into viable insurgent threats—mainly by explaining group size, organizational cohesion, or territorial control.[9] This study's analytic pursuit, however, centers on a key marker of armed conflict based on battle-related deaths.

Further, this study relies on a resource mobilization theoretical framework and insights from previous research to help identify factors that differentiate among militant groups that are more likely to wage sustained insurgencies and those that do not. Research on social movements stresses that successful organizations need capacity to generate resources, develop robust organizational structures, and mobilize people toward achieving the group's objectives.[10] Daniel Byman (2008) incorporates similar themes to identify key factors that help clandestine militant groups evolve into full-blown insurgent organizations. To facilitate this transition, a group must first establish a salient identity related to a popular cause that resonates with constituents beyond the founding group members.[11] Groups seeking to challenge the target regime also need to consolidate a safe haven to effectively train, evade counterinsurgents, and build a robust organizational capacity to sustain military operations. While preparing for insurgency, militant groups often focus on achieving dominance over rival organizations competing for resources and members.

Motivation: Group Ideology and Objectives

The social movement literature describes the role of entrepreneurs (or militant group leaders in this context) in the strategic framing of a particular ideology, leading a process that promotes allegiance and ideological congruence among the rest of the organization. Exploiting or fueling grievances among a particular population is critical for groups to mobilize for an insurgency.[12] Some militant groups should be more capable of capitalizing on grievances and facilitating collective action than others—particularly religious and ethno-nationalist groups that can draw on support from a well-defined constituency.[13] These types of groups should be more likely to achieve strategic objectives than groups based on specific social or economic agenda, like left-wing or right-wing militant organizations. Regions that host sympathetic ethnic or religious communities also offer important comparative advantages for militant groups seeking opportunities for expansion and refuge from counterinsurgent forces.[14]

Ideology and culture also play a central role in determining varying levels of organizational capacities.[15] Religious groups in particular usually have access to more robust social networks which help them screen recruits more effectively and better address principal-agent problems to ensure compliance among the rank-and-file.[16] Religiously motivated groups also tend to be more lethal and maintain indivisible objectives, making negotiated settlements improbable and armed conflict more likely.[17]

Related to ideology, a group's stated ultimate objectives should also influence its willingness and capacity to mobilize resources for sustained campaigns of attrition. When it comes to group objectives, previous research suggests that groups seeking narrow goals, like secession or territorial independence, are more capable of achieving their ultimate objectives than groups seeking maximalist goals like toppling a regime or taking over the state.[18] Secessionist groups also tend to extract support from a more concentrated constituency that often share similar political and territorial goals.[19] These types of organizations are mainly looking to cultivate support from a more well defined region, making it easier to mobilize resources for insurgency than groups seeking to change a specific policy or make inroads across an entire state.

Hypothesis 1: Militant groups motivated primarily by religious ideologies are more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than other ideologically oriented groups.

Hypothesis 2: Militant groups with territorial objectives, like secession, are more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than groups seeking regime change. Militant groups with either territorial or regime change objectives are more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than other goal-oriented groups.

Organizational Structure

Research on social movements and militant group structures suggests that centralized and formally structured groups should be more effective at mobilizing resources and achieving broader objectives than more decentralized groups.[20] Most militant groups generally maintain poor resource profiles and tend to secure critical sources of resources after solidifying coercive and organizational capacity.[21] Insurgent groups adopt different types of organizational structure depending on their goals and the environment they operate in.[22] Preexisting social networks can help explain the formation of durable institutions that determine whether an insurgent organization is likely to remain cohesive over the course of an armed conflict or fragment.[23] For Staniland (2012), integrated militant organizations based on robust social ties are more capable of allocating resources effectively, keeping lower-ranking members in line with the group's broader objectives, and withstanding government counterinsurgency efforts. Militant groups with hierarchical structures are also associated with increased lethality and a higher likelihood of ultimately defeating the states they fight.[24] On the other hand, decentralized organizations, with relatively autonomous regional commanders, may be more resistant to state infiltrations and could be more flexible when facing rapidly evolving battlefield dynamics. On average, however, hierarchical organizations should be better suited to wage sustained insurgencies than more decentralized groups.

Hypothesis 3: The more hierarchical a militant group is organized, the more likely it will engage in a sustained

armed conflict.

Competitive Environment

Competitive dynamics among constituent and rival organizations play an important role in the trajectory of social movements. Recent work highlights the importance of rival relations and internal movement structure to assess militant dynamics.[25] Different types of militant group splits may also influence the duration of insurgencies or group longevity.[26] Competition for resources and manpower among militant groups is particularly crucial in the early phases of a violent conflict. Violence serves as an important signal of capabilities and resolve among rival groups—similar to the outbidding logic outlined in terrorism literature.[27] Militant groups also seek to consolidate rivals—whether by destructive campaigns or alliance formation—to emerge as the dominant organization.[28]

Young and Dugan (2014) find that higher levels of militant group competition (based on the number of terrorist groups in a country) reduce the likelihood of group survival.[29] The authors also show that the most active militant group in a country—referred to as the "Top Dog" group—was far less likely to cease existing than its competitors. Top Dog status, however, could also proxy for groups that have overshadowed their rivals as the most dominant organization among a wider movement. For a general assessment of competitive environments, the following hypotheses are derived given that a militant group's trajectory can be a function of rival militant groups operating in the host state.

Hypothesis 4a: The more militant groups operating in a state, the less likely a particular militant group will engage in a sustained armed conflict.

Hypothesis 4b: Top Dog militant groups are more likely to engage in a sustained armed conflict than non-Top Dog militant groups.

Research Design

Unit of Analysis: Militant Group

This study's unit of analysis is the militant group, defined as a collective, non-state organization with a designated name that engages in the use of illegal violence to achieve a "political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation."[30] It is important to clarify that this GTD definition of *terrorism* encompasses incidents that some view as civil war–related violence or traditional guerrilla hit-and-run attacks targeting military convoys.[31] The GTD's broader inclusion criteria may exclude certain insurgent or rebel organizations that do not purposefully target civilians in terrorist attacks throughout their lifespan. However, since many prominent militant groups tend to include both civilian and military targets within their attack profiles, this broad conception of a militant group is appropriate for analyzing why some prominent militant or terrorist organizations wage sustained insurgencies.[32]

Data

To test these hypotheses, this study primarily relies on Joshua Kilberg's (2011) dataset featuring militant groups identified in the GTD that committed at least 10 attacks and survived a minimum of one year, between 1970 and 2007. The number of observations (militant groups) for the base model is 228—down from 246 after including control variables to the base model.[33] Roughly 70% of all terrorist groups in the GTD do not survive longer than one year, yet the remaining number of groups account for 94% of attributed attacks.[34] This study focuses on viable militant groups that have already survived their most vulnerable phase and demonstrate the capacity to conduct more than a few attacks.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is *Sustained Armed Conflict* and is coded 1 if a group is identified in the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Armed Conflict Dataset, featuring conflicts characterized by a minimum of

25 battle-related deaths in a given year for at least five consecutive years.[35] The UCDP Armed Conflict Dataset is the most fine-grained global dataset in civil war research, but some conflicts in the data feature broad labels for non-state belligerents, such as *Kashmiri insurgents,* due to coding and data limitations. Secondary academic sources and other prominent datasets on civil war and insurgency were consulted to corroborate and complement initial coding efforts. Of the original 246 militant groups under study, 77 (~31%) are classified as groups that engage in sustained armed conflicts.

Failing to sustain an armed conflict is conceptualized broadly to encompass groups that do not get an insurgency off the ground or are defeated within the first few years after armed conflict onset. Both militant groups and states would prefer to fight and win early, as opposed to sustaining operations for a long time. This study does not explicitly distinguish between the myriad of ways that militant groups cease to exist as violent threats or fail to launch a sustained insurgency. Some groups may achieve their political objectives through negotiations or concessions from the state before widespread hostilities erupt. Other groups could ultimately defeat the target state within a few years and avoid a drawn-out conflict—although this outcome is extremely rare in this study's sample.[36] Many other militant groups fragment and splinter into smaller organizations, merge with other groups, or are swallowed by more powerful groups representing the same constituency.[37] Since the dependent variable is binary, a probit estimating technique is used to test the main independent variables.

Independent Variables

Motivation: Group Ideology and Objectives

Militant group ideology is delineated according to four categories: religious, nationalist, left-wing, and right-wing. While overlapping beliefs often motivate prominent groups, the primary ideology is used for this study.[38] Related to ideology, a group's stated ultimate objectives should also influence its willingness and capacity to mobilize resources for sustained campaigns of attrition. Group objectives are divided according to five types: whether a group has goals focused on territorial control, regime change, social revolution, policy change, or maintaining the status quo. Previous analyses of insurgencies focus only on groups seeking territorial control (i.e. secession) or regime change, but some groups without these overt objectives can still attempt to spark armed conflicts and should not be dismissed.[39]

Organizational Structure

Kilberg (2012) codes four different types of organizational structures: bureaucracy, hub-spoke, all-channel, and market (in descending order of centralization).[40] Bureaucratic structures are the most hierarchical, with clear command-and-control mechanisms emanating from a well-defined leadership to lower-level units, and distinct divisions with particular specializations. Hezbollah's organizational structure is a well-known example of a bureaucracy with centralized command and specialized units, including a political and media wing, a division focused on guerrilla/conventional military operations, and an external terrorist operations unit devoted to striking Jewish and Israeli targets abroad.[41] Like bureaucratic structures, hub-spoke structures have a leader and various units or cells with particular roles or functions, but lack centralized command and control. Without a clear hierarchy, each node of the hub-spoke structure usually needs to report to the central leader to coordinate operations. Examples include Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in Peru and Lashkar-e-Taiba, where units or cells associated with this type of structure tend to have more independence and discretion to prepare and conduct attacks. All-channel structures have a leader but maintain minimal hierarchy, if any, and no explicit functional differentiation among the group's constituent parts. The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood operating in the late 1970s is an example of a militant group with an all-channel structure. Finally, market structures are the most decentralized, with virtually no clear leadership or command and control.

Competitive Environment

To assess the competitive environment hypothesis, this study uses Young and Dugan's (2014) data featuring the "total number of primary terrorist groups that operated in an organisation's primary country in a given year."[42] Less prominent groups that remain outside this study's sample are included in this count, since

active militant groups that fall short of 10 attacks still influence the competitive environment. Since the data is cross-sectional (as opposed to a group-year panel structure), this study uses the average number of groups operating for the entire lifespan of a particular group that never reaches the threshold of sustained armed conflict. For groups that engage in sustained armed conflicts, this study relies on the precise number of active groups operating during the year a particular militant group reaches the threshold of armed conflict, where possible.[43] This distinction should help better explain whether more competitive environments influence the probability that a group engages in a sustained armed conflict.

Young and Dugan (2014) also code a group as Top Dog in a given year if that group committed the most attacks compared to other groups.[44] Incorporating Top Dog status in this study can be viewed as potentially tautological cause since elements of the outcome of interest (sustained armed conflict) may include attributes of the cause. The Top Dog proxy is a function of a particular militant group's attack profile, including civilian and military targets. However, the outcome of interest, sustained armed conflict engagement, is derived from a threshold based on annual battle-related deaths (among all belligerents) during an insurgency. In an effort to address endogeneity, this study classifies a militant group that engaged in sustained insurgencies as Top Dog if it was the most active militant group the year before and/or at the time it challenged the state in an armed conflict. But for groups that never cross my dependent variable threshold, this study codes groups as Top Dog if they held that status for at least half the duration of their lifespan, consecutively or not.[45]

Control Variables

Group Capabilities

Several proxies for militant group capabilities are included here to account for rival plausible explanations. One measure of strength is reflected in the percentage of multiple and coordinated attacks a group conducts out of total attacks in its first year, based on GTD data. Dummy variables are used to denote whether a militant group has a state sponsor (whether a foreign country provides finances, capabilities, weapons, or safe haven) and if a group conducts at least one attack in more than one country.[46] Groups that strike a higher proportion of hard targets, such as military installations or convoys, in their first year should also reflects higher capabilities than groups primarily or solely attacking soft targets (i.e. civilians, public places).

Data Limitations

It is important to note that many notable militant groups are often first identified in the GTD around the time they also begin engaging in sustained armed conflicts. These data limitations are understandable, given the difficulties in tracking a group's early attack profile immediately after their emergence or first violent attack. For example, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was founded in 1976 and civil war in Sri Lanka began in 1983. Virtually none of LTTE's attacks were explicitly registered in the GTD from 1976–1983, though qualitative literature on the organization's history point to significant violent activity against various targets during this early period. Similar issues arise when this study analyzes early attack profiles of prominent insurgent groups including the main Basque militant group, ETA, in Spain and the PKK in Turkey. Nevertheless, relying on these group capability indicators from a group's "first year" helps alleviate issues related to endogeneity and standardizes a baseline for the analysis of factors that may impact a group's willingness and/or ability to engage in a sustained armed conflict.

State-level Attributes

Numerous country-level variables from civil war literature are included as controls. Scholars often use measures of GDP to proxy for state capacity, counter-terrorism capabilities, or societal development. While the negative relationship between GDP per capita and civil war onset is well established, there is an emerging consensus that economic conditions are poor predictors of terrorist activity outside of armed conflict. This study uses GDP per capita figures from the Penn World Table. Various measures of democracy and regime durability are also included as controls (Freedom House, Polity IV) given ongoing debates concerning the role of regime type on terrorism and insurgency. Following previous research, a measure of ethnic fractionalization—the probability

that two people randomly selected from society are members of different ethnic groups—is taken from Fearon and Laitin (2003) data.[47] This study uses averages of these control variables throughout the entire lifespan for militant groups that never cross the sustained insurgency threshold. For militant groups that cross the dependent variable threshold, this study uses state-level variables from the year immediately prior to when a group launched a sustained armed conflict.

Regression Analysis: Militant Group Determinants of Sustained Insurgency

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Group Objectives					
Territorial Control	1.391** (3.06)	1.653** (2.90)	1.469** (3.18)	1.422** (2.98)	1.806** (3.02)
Regime Change / Social Revolution	0.801* (2.02)	1.184** (2.29)	0.908** (2.26)	0.745 (1.75)	1.127* (2.07)
Group Ideology					
Religious	0.906* (2.72)	0.966** (2.86)	0.786** (2.39)	0.783* (2.28)	0.890* (2.55)
Nationalist	-0.226 (-0.69)	-0.164 (-0.47)	-0.222 (-0.67)	-0.210 (-0.62)	-0.238 (-0.66)
Competitive Environment					
Number of Groups	-0.063*** (-3.18)				
Single Group		2.140*** (4.74)			1.694*** (3.54)
> Five Groups			-0.858*** (-3.66)		
Top Dog				1.196*** (5.02)	0.849** (3.25)
Organizational Structure					
Bureaucracy	1.402** (3.09)	1.215** (2.67)	1.257** (2.86)	1.336** (2.84)	1.225* (2.50)
Hub-Spoke	1.422** (2.95)	1.260* (2.57)	1.353** (2.88)	1.416** (2.80)	1.318* (2.51)
All-Channel	0.852 (1.79)	0.852 (1.79)	0.740 (1.61)	0.877 (1.79)	0.908 (1.79)
Group Capabilities					
State Sponsorship	0.088 (0.36)	-0.0008 (-0.00)	0.024 (0.10)	0.083 (0.33)	0.073 (0.27)
Transnational Targets	0.190 (0.69)	0.279 (0.96)	0.162 (0.59)	0.236 (0.82)	0.395 (1.29)
Hard Targets	-0.025 (-1.50)	-0.025 (-1.32)	-0.025 (-1.51)	-0.018 (-0.96)	-0.022 (-1.03)
Multiple Attacks	-0.034 (-1.69)	-0.024 (-1.49)	-0.036 (-1.67)	-0.029 (-1.28)	-0.022 (-1.11)
State-Level Controls					
Ethnic Fractionalization	1.774*** (4.34)	1.650*** (3.78)	1.657*** (4.05)	1.675*** (3.90)	1.646*** (3.61)
Democracy	-0.065** (-2.19)	-0.065* (-2.11)	-0.065* (-2.17)	-0.070* (-2.24)	-0.055 (-1.68)
Pseudo R2	0.3476	0.4278	0.3632	0.4054	0.4620
N	222	228	228	225	225

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001; The dependent variable is Sustained Armed Conflict.
A Probit estimating technique is used. Numbers in parentheses are Z-values.

Findings

Motivation: Group Ideology and Objectives

Supporting the first hypothesis, results show that groups with primarily religious ideologies are about 34% more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than the base case (militant groups with primarily leftist or rightist ideologies), holding other variables constant at their means.[48] This result is particularly interesting considering previous quantitative work finds that religious groups never achieve their ultimate objectives, given their tendency toward maximalist goals and nonnegotiable demands.[49] But religious groups tend to fare better than others in garnering the necessary resources to launch campaigns of sustained attrition. It is important to note that all but one of the religious groups that waged sustained insurgencies in this study are Islamic militant organizations.[50] Surprisingly, the *Nationalist* measure lacks statistical significance across all model specifications. However, this unexpected result could be reflected in findings concerning group objectives.

This study shows that groups seeking territorial control and groups fighting for regime change or social revolution are about 53% and 34%, respectively, more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than other goal-oriented groups.[51] For the regression analysis, groups fighting for regime change or social revolution are collapsed into one category since both types of organizations generally seek a maximalist goal to replace an existing government. While the results support hypothesis 2, they seem to contradict findings on group ideology, considering that nationalist groups tend to have territorial objectives like secession, while religious groups tend to have broader goals like social revolution or regime change. Group objectives likely follow ideological orientations and therefore both factors, to some extent, reinforce a group's ability to mobilize resources and challenge the state. A more nuanced story emerges when looking beyond motivations and analyzing the role of organizational structure.

Organizational Structure

Results concerning organizational structure do not fully support hypothesis 3. Using market structure as the base case and holding other variables constant, model 2 shows that hub-spoke groups and the most hierarchical groups (*Bureaucracy*) are 44% and about 38%, respectively, more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than the most decentralized organizational structures (*Market*). Even hub-spoke groups without a centralized command and control apparatus can pose a serious challenge to target states, as long as they have a leader and functional differentiation within the organization. Challenging conventional wisdom on organizational structures, groups with well defined specializations and relatively more autonomy among lower-level cells or units could pose a similar threat to the states they fight as groups with highly centralized commands. It could be the case that hub-spoke structured groups, lacking strict centralization, are less likely to credibly commit themselves to negotiations or enforce an agreement with the state prior to full-fledged armed conflict. States may also find it more difficult to infiltrate and disrupt an organization structured in a hub-spoke manner. It is important to note that most religious groups—the ideological category most associated with engagement in sustained insurgencies—tend to also adopt a hub-spoke structure.

Competitive Environment

Previous research shows that in a full-fledged war, governments are more likely to defeat a single-group insurgency compared to a multi-group insurgency.[52] But a nascent insurrection characterized by one primary militant group is a strong predictor for whether that group engages in a sustained campaign of attrition in the first place. Supporting hypothesis 4a, findings show that the more militant groups there are operating in a state, the less likely a particular militant group will engage in a sustained armed conflict. When disaggregating the *Number of Groups* variable, results show that insurrections featuring one prominent militant group are most likely to experience a sustained insurgency between a particular militant group and the state. The *Single Group* variable is the most statistically significant and the largest positive association across all models. Results suggest that a nascent insurrection featuring one primary militant group is about 72% more likely to engage in a sustained campaign of attrition than militant groups operating in more competitive environments. Results

from Model 3 suggest that a militant group operating in an environment with five or more primary militant groups is 24% less likely to engage in sustained armed conflict, holding all other variables constant at their means.

This study finds that the overwhelming majority (85%) of groups that engage in sustained armed conflicts are also the Top Dog militant group in their host state around the time that group successfully challenges the target regime. Models 4 and 5 show that the *Top Dog* coefficient is positive and highly statistically significant. In Model 4, the *Top Dog* coefficient suggests that if a militant group is identified as the most active militant group in its environment, it has a 36% greater likelihood of waging a sustained insurgency than less active militant groups—supporting hypothesis 4b.

In reality, the most active group does not necessarily mean it is the most powerful. However, being the most active militant group in a particular environment is a crude, yet intuitive, proxy for groups that dominate their constituencies before going on to challenge the regime. This proxy for constituency dominance further approximates reality when a particular militant group maintains its Top Dog status throughout the initial stages of the armed conflict. For example, the PKK and LTTE emerged in the mid-1970s and dedicated most of their attacks against rival Kurdish and Tamil groups, respectively, until challenging regime forces in an armed conflict in the mid-1980s. Both groups were the Top Dog groups in their respective countries throughout the early years of their armed conflicts.

With or without the *Top Dog* variable, *Single Group* remains the strongest predictor of sustained insurgency onset. Being the Top Dog considerably improves a militant group's chances of waging a sustained insurgency—but being the only active militant organization remains the most preferable situation for militant groups seeking to fight a target state in an armed conflict. This observation suggests that militant groups in competitive environments often engage in some form of rival consolidation prior to waging a sustained insurgency against the target state.[53] Achieving hegemony over a wider movement is a common organizational objective for militant groups seeking to pursue other strategic goals. For example, Hezbollah first defeated its primary Shi'a rivals in armed confrontations during the late 1980s, before shifting its attention to fighting Israel in a war of attrition throughout the 1990s.

Rival Explanations (Control Variables)

Group Capabilities

Results for proxies of group capabilities suggest that, on aggregate, seemingly more capable groups are not necessarily associated with an increased likelihood of engagement in sustained insurgencies. *State sponsorship*, for example, lacks statistical significance across all model specifications. This does not mean support from an external patron is not important. Though state sponsorship is often cited as a critical factor explaining a militant group's ultimate success against the state they fight, it is likely less important than organizational factors in explaining engagements in armed conflicts. External patrons may also derail their client's trajectories or support a rival group to punish a proxy for deviating from the sponsor's goals. In terms of operational targets, variables *Hard Targets* and *Transnational* lack statistical significance across both models. In the first and third models, *Multiple Attacks* actually has a negative association, but weak statistical significance.

Groups that have conducted attacks outside their primary state are no more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts with their host regime. It may be the case that some nascent groups seeking to launch domestic insurgencies are less inclined to divert resources to strike targets outside the primary state and attract unnecessary interventions. Militant groups seeking to pose a serious challenge may be focused on internal challenges in their early stages, such as building organizational capacity and targeting constituent rivals for dominance before facing the regime in a sustained armed conflict. Groups that seek to provoke state reactions—in the form of ambitious attacks or strikes on fortified targets—before developing the capacity to withstand government responses will likely fail.[54] Irrespective of the precise logics underpinning these broader findings, this study shows that organizational characteristics and constituency dominance are better predictors of armed conflict engagement than traditional proxies of group capabilities.[55]

State-Level Attributes

Across all model specifications, GDP per capita as a proxy for state capacity maintains a negative and statistically significant association with the dependent variable: the higher the level of state capacity (or counter-terrorism effectiveness or level of economic development—however one chooses to primarily interpret the proxy) the less likely a particular militant group will engage in a sustained armed conflict. Since GDP per capita and regime type tend to be closely related, some models (not shown here) relied on only one control at a time. Across several model specifications, coefficients associated with all key measures of democracy and regime durability scores are negative and statistically significant. More democratic, politically free, and stable regimes are more likely to reduce a militant group's willingness and/or ability to engage in a sustained armed conflict. It may be the case that democracies also tend to be more capable and inclusive states that prevent or deter the emergence of sustained armed conflicts, forcing groups to remain clandestine and engage in low-level terrorist attacks.

These results are consistent with similar findings in the literature. Much of the cross-national quantitative literature argues that *greed*-based indicators tend to better explain civil war onset than variables that traditionally proxy *grievance*.[56] This study, however, finds that countries with higher levels of ethnic fractionalization are associated with an increased likelihood of sustained armed conflict. While this study does not code for ethnic fractionalization scores of particular regions where prominent militant groups emerge or escalate violent operations, results suggest that analyzing conflict from a group-level of analysis may challenge findings from some previous cross-national studies.[57] State and regime-level attributes are important controls, but cannot explain variation among different militant groups operating in the same state.

Conclusion

This study has important implications for theory and scholarship, by examining an underexplored outcome of interest from the militant group-level of analysis and addressing a selection bias prevalent across literatures on political violence. Violent intra-state conflicts characterized by lower levels of violence tend to remain dormant and should not be dismissed from analysis.[58] Overall findings show that key variables explaining civil war onset or insurgency outcomes are not necessarily important factors in helping to explain which militant groups engage in insurgencies while other groups do not. Therefore, scholars should continue to study analytically distinct phases of armed conflict and differentiate among various militant group objectives (i.e. organizational vs. strategic) when evaluating outcomes.

It is important to stress that the interpretation of large-n quantitative analysis relies on a variance-based ontological understanding of causation, which focuses on the average mean effects of certain factors over a large set of highly diverse cases. Overcoming selection bias is an important and understandable goal for most variance-based scholars—a goal that motivated the exploration of all prominent militant groups in this study, not just those groups already waging insurgency. Case-based researchers, on the other hand, understandably find limited value in this approach, placing a high value on context including similar temporal or spatial scope. Factors driving militant mobilization and success in 1970s Latin America, for example, likely differ considerably from post-9/11 Islamist insurgencies. However, this study offers generalizable empirical associations across diverse militant groups and highlights interesting factors worth unpacking in subsequent theory-building and case study work.

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Notes

[1] The prominent militant groups under study and most of their characteristics are identified in Joshua Kilberg, "Organizing for Destruction: How Organizational Structure Affects Terrorist Group Behaviour," (PhD dissertation, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, 2011).

[2] Jessica A. Stanton, "Terrorism in the Context of Civil War," *The Journal of Politics* 75, no. 4 (2013): 1009–1022; "Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes," *International Organization* 69, no. 3 (2015): 519–556; Sara M. T. Polo and Belen Gonzalez, "The Power to Resist: Mobilization and the Logic of Terrorist Attacks in Civil War," *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 13 (2020): 2029–2060.

[3] Seth G. Jones, *Waging Insurgent Warfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Charles W. Mahoney, "More Data, New Problems: Audiences, Ahistoricity, and Selection Bias in Terrorism and Insurgency Research," *International Studies Review* 20, no. 4 (2018): 589–614.

[4] Will McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015), 80–81. By launching a sustained armed conflict, organizations also improve their coercive bargaining power vis-à-vis the state.

[5] Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563–595; James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90; Havard Hegre and Nicholas Sambanis, "Sensitivity Analysis of Empirical Results on Civil War Onset," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 4 (2006): 508–535.

[6] Using geo-spatial techniques, Findley and Young (2012) show that there is considerable temporal and spatial overlap between coded terrorist attacks and civil war. The observed concentrations of terrorist attacks occurring during the pre-civil war phase are likely to be concentrated in the same geographic areas later characterized by civil war. Michael G. Findley and Joseph K. Young, "Terrorism and Civil War: A Spatial and Temporal Approach to a Conceptual Problem," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (2012): 285–305, 286.

[7] Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2010); David E. Cunningham, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4 (2009): 570–597; Luis De la Calle and Ignacio Sanchez-Cuenca, "Rebels without a Territory: An Analysis of Nonterritorial Conflicts in the World, 1970–1997," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 4 (2012): 580–603.

[8] Terrorism literature largely overlooks relationships between terrorist attacks and other forms of political violence—mainly insurgency or full-fledged civil war. For example, Cronin (2006) outlines how terrorist groups might end, including transformation toward insurgency, but stops short of analyzing these transitions. Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 7–48. Research on civil war and insurgency also overlooks the transition from lower-levels of political violence to higher-intensity armed conflicts. See Sidney Tarrow, "Inside Insurgencies: Politics and Violence in an Age of Civil War," *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 3 (2007): 587–600, 589.

[9] Charles W. Mahoney, "Hearts and Minds or Blood and Guts? Strategy, Terrorism, and the Growth of Proto-Insurgencies" (PhD diss., University of California, 2011); Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); Jennifer M. Larson and Janet I. Lewis, "Rumors, Kinship Networks, and Rebel Group Formation," *International Organization* 72, no. 4 (2018): 871–903; Janet I. Lewis, "How Rebellion Begins: Insurgent Group Formation and Viability in Uganda" (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2012).

[10] Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1978; J. Craig Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 9 (1983): 527–553. Critics rightly point out that resource mobilization frameworks overlook micro-level decision-making processes and alliance formations. But this type of framework is appropriate for a large-n analysis of militant groups at the organizational-level of analysis.

[11] Daniel Byman, "Understanding Proto-Insurgencies," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no. 2 (2008): 165–200.

[12] Both terrorism and civil war literature point to the role of grievances and relative deprivation arguments. Ted R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970). Crenshaw (1981) argues that militant groups often form and engage in violence after social movements fail to achieve their objectives through peaceful means and discrimination is unaddressed. See Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (1981): 379–399.

[13] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008).

[14] Rem Korteweg, "Black Holes: On Terrorist Sanctuaries and Governmental Weakness," *Civil War* 10, no. 1 (2008): 60–71.

[15] Kate Cox, Stephen Jolly, Simon Van Der Staaij, and Christian Van Stolk, "Understanding the Drivers of Organisational Capacity," *RAND* (2018).

[16] Jacob N. Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma: Managing Violent Covert Organizations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

[17] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Eli Berman, *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009); Monica Duffy Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War," *International Security* 31, no. 4 (2007): 97–131.

[18] Max Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," *International Security* 31, no. 2 (2006): 42–78; Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends"; Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End.*

[19] Toft (2005) demonstrates that concentrated ethnically homogenous regions are more likely to mobilize for conflict than less concentrated, heterogeneous regions. See Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests, and the Indivisibility of Territory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[20] John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *The American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977): 1212–1241.

[21] Lewis, "How Rebellion Begins."

[22] Joshua Kilberg, "A Basic Model Explaining Terrorist Group Organizational Structure," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35, no. 11 (2012): 810–830.

[23] Paul Staniland, *Networks of* Rebellion; Larson and Lewis, "Rumors, Kinship Networks, and Rebel Group Formation."

[24] Lindsay Heger, Danielle Jung, and Wendy H. Wong, "Organizing for Resistance: How Group Structure Impacts the Character of Violence," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 5 (2012): 743–768; Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End;* Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "The Nature of the Beast: Organizational Structures and the Lethality of Terrorist Attacks, *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 2 (2008): 437–449; Joshua Kilberg, "Organizing for Destruction"; Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion.*

[25] Tricia Bacon, "Hurdles to International Terrorist Alliances: Lessons From Al Qaeda's Experience," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 1 (2017): 79–101; Navin Bapat and Kanisha D. Bond, "Alliances Amongst Militant Groups," *British Journal of Political Science* 4, no. 42 (2012): 793–824; Seden Akcinaroglu, "Rebel Interdependencies and Civil War Outcomes," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 5 (2012): 879–903; Hanne Fjelde and Desirée Nilsson, "Rebels Against Rebels: Explaining Violence Between Rebel Groups," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 4 (2012): 604–628; Brian J. Phillips, "Terrorist Group Cooperation and Longevity," *International Studies Quarterly* 2, no. 58 (2014): 336–347; Peter Krause, *Rebel Power: Why National Movements Compete, Fight, and Win* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017).

[26] Charles W. Mahoney, "Splinters and Schisms: Rebel Group Fragmentation and the Durability of Insurgencies," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2017): 1–20.

[27] Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Stephen Nemeth, "The Effect of Competition on Terrorist Group Operations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 2 (2014): 336–362; Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism."

[28] Costantino Pischedda, "Wars Within Wars: Why Windows of Opportunity and Vulnerability Cause Inter-rebel Fighting in Internal Conflicts," *International Security* 43, no. 1 (2018): 138–176; Jannie Lilja and Lisa Hultman, "Intraethnic Dominance and Control: Violence Against Co-Ethnics in the Early Sri Lankan Civil War," *Security Studies,* 20, no. 2 (2011): 171–197; Peter Krause, "The Structure of Success: How the Internal Distribution of Power Drives Armed Group Behavior and National Movement Effectiveness," *International Security* 38, no. 3 (2013/14): 72–116.

[29] Joseph K. Young and Laura Dugan, "Survival of the Fittest: Why Terrorist Groups Endure," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8, no. 2 (2014); URL: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/binaries/content/assets/customsites/perspectives-on-terrorism/2014/issue-2/survival-of-the-fittest-why-terrorist-groups-endure--joseph-k.-young-and-laura-dugan.pdf; Philips (2015), on the other hand, argues that competition among militant groups with divergent ideologies or objectives ("*inter-field rivals*") actually enhances militant group longevity. See Brian J. Phillips, "Enemies with Benefits? Violent Rivalry and Terrorist Group Longevity," *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 1 (2015): 62–75.

[30] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), Global Terrorism Database (GTD) "Codebook: Inclusion Criteria and Variables" (START, University of Maryland, 2016); URL: https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/downloads/Codebook.pdf, at p. 9. Most prominent militant groups rely on nonviolent methods as well; however, my baseline definition binds my unit of analysis to organized groups that engage in political violence in an effort to achieve their objectives.

[31] Some definitions consider incidents an act of terrorism if it was intended to send a psychological message to a wider audience beyond the immediate victim of the violence. Alex P. Schmid, "Frameworks for Conceptualizing Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 2 (2004): 197–221.

[32] Byman, "Understanding Proto-Insurgencies; Ariel Merari, "Terrorism as Strategy of Insurgency," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5, no. 4 (1993): 213–251.

[33] While many quantitative studies use group-year or country-year panel data, most data on group characteristics and state-level variables are largely time invariant (i.e. group ideology, mountainous terrain) or exhibit very gradual temporal variation (i.e. GDP per capita or regime type) and therefore limited in explaining variation year to year. Group ideologies or structures may evolve over the lifespan of a particular group, but much of the existing data relies on coding these variables in a particular snapshot in time. Relying on a group-level unit of analysis is appropriate for this study, which seeks to differentiate between militant groups based on engagement in sustained insurgencies.

[34] Gary LaFree, Laura Dugan, and Erin Miller, *Putting Terrorism in Context: Lessons from the Global Terrorism Database* (New York: Routledge, 2015). This observation is based on the GTD's data from 1970 to the end of 2012.

[35] Therese Pettersson and Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, 1946–2014," *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 4 (2015): 536–550.; UCDP Dataset 2016. The average length of an insurgency is approximately 10 years. See Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*, 27. After presenting my quantitative analysis at various scholarly conferences, the discussants agreed that the five-year mark is an appropriate threshold for this research puzzle. Additional thresholds and extensions can be explored in future iterations of this research.

[36] Only 13 (5%) of the militant groups in my universe of cases ended by achieving victory.

[37] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End;* Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End.*

[38] Data on group ideology and objectives are collected from Kilberg (2011) and Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End.*

[39] For example, the Weather Underground, a 1970s-era terrorist group seeking to battle the US government from within, published a manifesto that clearly suggests it employs targeted violence in a bid to mobilize society against the state. According to its strategy: "At this early state in the armed and clandestine struggle, our forms of combat and confrontation are few and precise…By beginning the armed struggle, the awareness of its necessity will be furthered… Bernardine Dohrn, Billy Ayers, Jeff Jones, and Celia Sojourn "Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism: Political Statement of the Weather Underground," 1974, 1–153, at p. 3. Quoted in Findley and Young, "Terrorism and Civil War," 285.

[40] Joshua Kilberg, "A Basic Model Explaining Terrorist Group Organizational Structure."

[41] Matthew Levitt, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2013).

[42] Young and Dugan, "Survival of the Fittest."

[43] Results hold for estimations including the average number of militant groups in the lifespan of militant groups engaged in sustained armed conflicts as well.

[44] Young and Dugan, "Survival of the Fittest."

[45] For example, the Turkish leftist militant group Devrimci Sol has been active since 1978, yet never crossed my sustained armed conflict threshold. During its initial militant lifespan (1978–mid 1990s), it was classified as the *Top Dog* for only three years. As a result, I assigned the group a 0 in the *Top Dog* category overall. On the other hand, the Turkish People's Liberation Army (TPLA) is assigned a 1 for the overall *Top Dog* category since it was the most active group in its environment for the majority of its militant lifespan (1970–1980), despite never crossing my threshold for engagement in sustained armed conflict.

[46] Data on state sponsorship is coded by Kilberg (2012).

[47] Other state-level controls from civil war literature include whether the host state's territory is contiguous, the extent to which a state relies on oil exports and other primary commodities, country-level religious fractionalization, population size, and the size of a state's Muslim population. Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Dominic Rohner, "Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War"; Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War,"; Young and Dugan, "Survival of the Fittest." None of these controls are statistically significant in any model specification and are omitted here.

[48] Since there are only two right-wing groups that wage sustained insurgencies in my sample, I combine this type of organization with leftist militant groups in the regression analysis. I also collapse left-wing and right-wing groups into one category as the base case, given that both types of groups are largely motivated to facilitate some type of social and/or economic change in society, as opposed to primarily representing a particular ethnic or religious constituency.

[49] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End.*

[50] The non-Islamic religious group that engaged in armed conflict in my sample is Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army. Over the last few decades, religious militant groups—mostly of Islamic persuasion—are responsible for far more attacks and casualties than other types of militant groups worldwide. Berman, *Radical, Religious, and Violent.* Most religious civil wars since 1940 involve belligerents that identify with Islam and religious civil wars are characterized by far higher rates of lethality than other types of civil wars. See Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism,* and Eli Berman, *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism,* Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War.

[51] Most definitions of insurgency refer to armed groups that seek partial territorial control, like secessionist groups, or groups trying to take over an entire state or replace a government. I therefore collapse the remaining group objectives (status quo and policy change-seeking groups) into one category as the base case.

[52] Seth G. Jones, Waging Insurgent Warfare.

[53] A positive-on-outcome (also known as Mill's method-of-agreement) comparative analysis of all militant groups that engaged in sustained armed conflicts in my universe of cases suggests that no single theoretically relevant causal factor can be deemed an individually necessary condition. But compared to other factors, these results suggest that being the *Top Dog* is a key factor explaining engagement in sustained armed conflict. This finding highlights the limits of large-n research, motivating subsequent theory-building and detailed case studies in subsequent work to complement this quantitative analysis.

[54] See Stathis N. Kalyvas and Matthew Adam Kocher, "How "Free" Is Free Riding in Civil Wars? Violence, Insurgency, and the Collective Action Problem," *World Politics* 59, no. 2 (2007): 177–216, at p. 190.

[55] A group's peak size should also reflect strength and capabilities. A group's maximum membership levels (*Peak Size)* are based on Jones and Libicki (2008) data, coded as 1 if a group's peak size features 0–99 operatives, 2 (100–999), 3 (1000–9999), and 4 (10000+). Peak size may be one of the most important variables explaining why some militant groups ultimately defeat the states they fight. However, it was omitted from this model for reasons of endogeneity since a group most likely reaches its maximum membership after its first year. Nevertheless, models including a measure of peak size (not reported here) show that a militant group's engagement in sustained armed conflict does not depend on a group's size. As Fearon and Laitin (2003) note, it may only require a few hundred committed fighters to launch an insurgency.

[56] Christian Davenport, David A. Armstrong II, and Mark I. Lichbach, "From Mountains to Movements: Dissent, Repression and Escalation to Civil War" (Paper presented at the *International Studies Association* annual conference, San Diego, 2006).

[57] Janet Lewis finds that Ugandan rebel groups emerging in ethnically homogenous areas of the country are more likely to become viable organizations than groups emerging in relatively diverse areas. See Lewis, "How Rebellion Begins."

[58] Shivaji Mukherjee, "Why are the Longest Insurgencies Low Violence? Politician Motivations, Sons of the Soil, and Civil War Duration," *Civil Wars* 16, no. 2 (2014): 172–207.

The Logic of Violence in Africa's Extremist Insurgencies

by Anouar Boukhars

Abstract

What factors explain the great variation in the target selection of VE groups in Africa? Some tend to focus their attacks mostly on official targets while others show a relative preference for civilians. Most, however, tend to typically change their target selection over time. This article demonstrates that the logic of violence in Africa's fragile, conflict-prone states is driven by four factors: (1) The degree to which VE groups rely on local support to maintain the insurgency; (2) the dynamics of in-group/out-group differentiation and corresponding hostility; (3) inter-group rivalry and looming power shifts; and (4) the strategies of counterinsurgency employed by governments.

Keywords: Africa, Sahel, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, civilian targets, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, domestic support, targets, terrorism, violent extremism

Introduction

Violent extremism continues to be one of the most significant challenges to peace and security in Africa. Al-Qaeda-linked groups, Islamic State affiliates, and other violent extremist groups continue to attract recruits and financing, shrewdly exploiting opportunities created by state fragility, exclusionary governance, corruption and local conflicts. From the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin to East and Southeast Africa, violent extremist (VE) groups have infiltrated existing local conflicts and aligned themselves with local causes. As these groups establish new footholds and seek to expand their reach, it is critical to assess the factors that shape their behavior and strategies.

Existing studies help explain how extremist insurgencies erupt and evolve, and why some countries are more affected than others.[1] But there are still notable gaps in understanding the choices, tactics and strategies of VE groups. This article focuses in particular on examining VE groups' logic of violence in Africa's fragile and conflict-affected areas. In these contexts, the character of violence is a dynamic process that evolves with changes in the conflict environment. As contexts evolve, the levels, types and choice of targets of violence evolve as well. In other words, the violent strategies of VE groups are not fixed, random or irrational. Rather, they constitute a conscious strategy that aligns with the political, social, and strategic imperatives of the conflict environments that VE actors operate in.

Recent literature on insurgent violence generally agrees that there is a strategic function to the violence that insurgent groups employ,[2] but scholars still disagree about the specific factors that drive insurgent tactics or the conditions under which changes occur in the choice and category of targets. In general, studies tend to emphasize a group's capabilities,[3] material resources,[4] territorial control,[5] domestic support,[6] and organizational characteristics[7] as key factors in prescribing the types of insurgent violence. Organizational ideology also features prominently in understanding insurgent groups' patterns of violent attacks, but unlike earlier studies which conceptualized ideological extremism as an autonomous factor that trumps other perspectives, ideology is increasingly seen as bound to local conditions.[8] In other words, insurgent groups that share similar ideologies may still adopt different violent strategies depending on the contexts they operate in.

Each of these perspectives advances our understanding of insurgent groups' strategies of violence in different environments. But none by itself can explain within and across groups' variations in the use of violence over time. Studies derived from the war economies literature, for example, stress the importance of economic factors and their source in determining insurgent groups' types of violence.[9] Groups with access to natural

resources[10] or external funding[11] are shown to be more prone to targeting civilians than those that depend on local populations for revenue. Such finding is closely related to a second assumption in the theories that attempt to explain anti-civilian violence, namely groups' capabilities.[12] The lack or loss of resources can affect groups' fighting capacities as well as their ability to dole out benefits to the populations they target for support. In these circumstances, groups may resort to the use of violence against civilians "as an inexpensive alternative to supplying positive incentives to (temporarily) expand their resource base."[13]

These explanations help elucidate the patterns of violence in different contexts. But as Aisha Ahmad demonstrated in the cases of Nigeria, Somalia and Pakistan, they cannot account for variations in insurgent violence "over time when economic factors are held constant."[14] Some insurgent groups have changed their strategies of violence even when their material conditions were not altered.[15] Others stayed on the same course as they experienced gains or losses in their access to economic resources.

Other influential accounts face the same challenge of explaining variations in violence tactics across and within insurgent groups and countries. Stathis Kalyvas' argument that territorial control is associated with the type of violence that occurs in intrastate conflicts has explanatory value in a number of contexts.[16] Groups that exercise a higher degree of control over a territory tend to be more likely to be discriminate and selective in the use of violence than those that do not. In Somalia, for example, al Shabaab's pattern of violence changed considerably as the group's territorial control shrank and threats to its organizational survival mounted.[17] But as other cases demonstrate, the loss of territorial control may not always lead to a change in the repertoire of violence of VE groups.[18] For example, VE groups that face high political costs for indiscriminately attacking civilians tend to exercise restraint even as their territorial control weakens. To be sure, political costs, "are not uniform and vary significantly across militant organizations."[19] Groups that are heavily reliant on local support and operate in conflict environments characterized by low out-group hostilities have a stronger incentive to limit their attacks on civilians than those that have high out-group antagonism.

As will be shown in the analysis below, insurgent groups that have ties to their constituent population but high-out group hostility are more prone to target members of the out-group when faced with threats to their organizational survival from the state and rival factions, community armed groups and militias. Indeed, insights in the literature that have made important contributions to existing debates on anti-civilian violence relate to the impact that groups' fragmentation and proliferation of rival armed groups have on the strategies of violence employed by insurgent groups.[20] Recent studies show a close association between multi-actor conflict systems marked by rivalries and attacks on civilians.[21] But while this literature offers compelling arguments into the way competition among rival groups can engender violence, it does little to elucidate the "variations in violence patterns over time."[22] The reason for this is that violence tends to vary over time in reaction to the rise or decrease in the intensity of rivalries between groups. The more intense the competition, the higher the likelihood of violent confrontations between groups, which has serious implications on the levels and types of violence employed by the belligerents.[23]

There are also a number of compelling explanations derived from studies that consider terrorism as a principal-agent problem. According to this view, the lack of leadership control over the fighters' behavior is strongly associated with high levels of violence against civilians.[24] Anecdotal evidence from northern Mali and Iraq shows how renegade local operatives had pursued their own targeting preferences, spurning in the process the advice and rebuke of their organizational hierarchy. Yet, this explanation implies that insurgent groups that do not suffer from the principal-agent problem avoid targeting civilians, which is not always the case.[25] Whether they do or not depends on the characteristics of the competitive environment in which they operate.

The same limitation applies to studies that attribute civilian targeting to "agency problems between terrorist groups when the parent (viz. principal) spawns affiliates (viz. agents)."[26] The core argument of this perspective is that affiliates are more prone to disproportionately target civilians than their parent organization because they tend to emphasize process goals (capture media attention which tends to drive more recruits into their

ranks) over outcome objectives (the stated political ends, such as the establishment of religious law, removal of foreign forces, etc.).[27] This contention, however, does not apply in all conflict environments. For example, the so-called Islamic State (IS) affiliates in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin have shown much more restraint than the parent organization in avoiding large-scale attacks on civilians.[28] The targeting strategies employed by both groups have generally focused on official targets and actors that collaborate with the state, particularly local chiefs. Some notable exceptions apply nonetheless.

In the Sahel where conflict is fueled by inter- and intra-communal rivalries over resources and rights, IS affiliate, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), has targeted its enemies' ethnic constituencies as retribution for a series of militia killings on its local allies, especially the Fulani (also known as Peul), an ethnic group that has contributed several fighters to ISGS. In Niger, for example, ISGS has targeted civilians perceived to be close to Malian Tuareg and Daosahak armed groups. This does not mean that ISGS pursues an ethnic agenda, as the group aspires to be multiethnic and its "influence continues to spread among not only Peul, but also Tuareg, Djerma and Daosahak communities."[29] Who counts as an out-group antagonist depends on the conflict environment, which in the Sahel is highly fluid.

Two implications can be drawn from the relative target preferences of IS affiliates in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin. First, if insurgent groups are dependent on support from local populations, they may exercise restraint in their violence against civilians. Second, in multi-actor conflict environments, locations marked by intense in-group–out-group divides—a dynamic that comes about because of pre-conflict tensions and tensions endogenous to the conflict—tend to be places of violent attacks against civilians, as out-group members are suspected of being sympathizers of VE groups or collaborators with the government and allied ethnic militias.

Building on these assumptions and the important scholarly explanations of civilian victimization in dynamic conflict contexts, this article offers insights into the evolution of violence and targeting preferences of some of the main violent extremist (VE) groups operating in Africa's hotspot environments, namely the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin and the Horn of Africa. In so doing, it identifies four key factors that shape VE groups' violent strategies: (1) The degree to which VE groups rely on local support to maintain the insurgency; (2) the dynamics of in-group/out-group differentiation and corresponding hostility; (3) intergroup rivalry and looming power shifts; and (4) the strategies of counterterrorism employed by governments.

Domestic Constituencies Matter

Groups dependent on local support are generally constrained in targeting civilians lest their actions trigger a popular backlash.[30] Indeed, much of the scholarship on intra-state conflict and insurgency posits that the support of local populations for a belligerent party is fundamental for fighting groups.[31] Unlike groups sustained by significant foreign fighters and external sources of funding, actors who lack access to external manpower and patronage have to tread carefully in wooing, persuading, cajoling, and coercing their target constituency into supporting their organizations and, most crucially, refraining from any engagement with the enemy.[32] In other words, the types of endowments fighting groups possess tend to affect the levels and types of violence targeted at civilians.[33]

This calculus incentivizes VE groups that depend on the local population for support and resources to use violence and restraint strategically. In this case, the attacks that carry the most strategic dividends are those directed at targets associated with the government or at a community/force that locals perceive as their greatest threat. In particular conflict contexts marked by strong in-group, out-group divides, the targeting of enemy constituents can be tolerated and even rewarded by VE groups' constituencies.[34]

In environments characterized by low out-group hostility, VE groups are more prone to attack official targets than indiscriminately target civilians. The targeting activities of African VE groups tend to support this point.

From ambush-style killings of police in Burkina Faso[35] to the recurrent deadly attacks on army camps in Mali[36], Niger[37], Nigeria and Somalia, VE groups intend to damage the morale of the security forces by demonstrating their vulnerability. Attacks against other government officials and supporters are also designed to demoralize the backers of the government.

The assassination of mayors, judges, imams, traditional chiefs, politicians and other symbols of the state undermine state authority and send a strong message that continued support for, and association with, the government comes with huge costs. In Burkina Faso, such attacks constitute about 80% of VE group targets.[38] The same pattern is seen in Central Mali where the Katiba Macina of Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) has focused the bulk of its attacks on state representatives, especially water and forestry, defense and security forces, and magistrates that locals resent for their abuse and racketeering practices. The Katiba Macina has also targeted municipal councilors, village chiefs, imams and "collaborators".[39] For VE groups, attacks on government institutions, personnel and also infrastructure, as the attack that hit the gold mining site in northern Burkina Faso in October 2019,[40] are a win-win strategy. They demoralize the government and intimidate its supporters while crucially minimizing the risks of popular backlash associated with targeting innocent civilians.

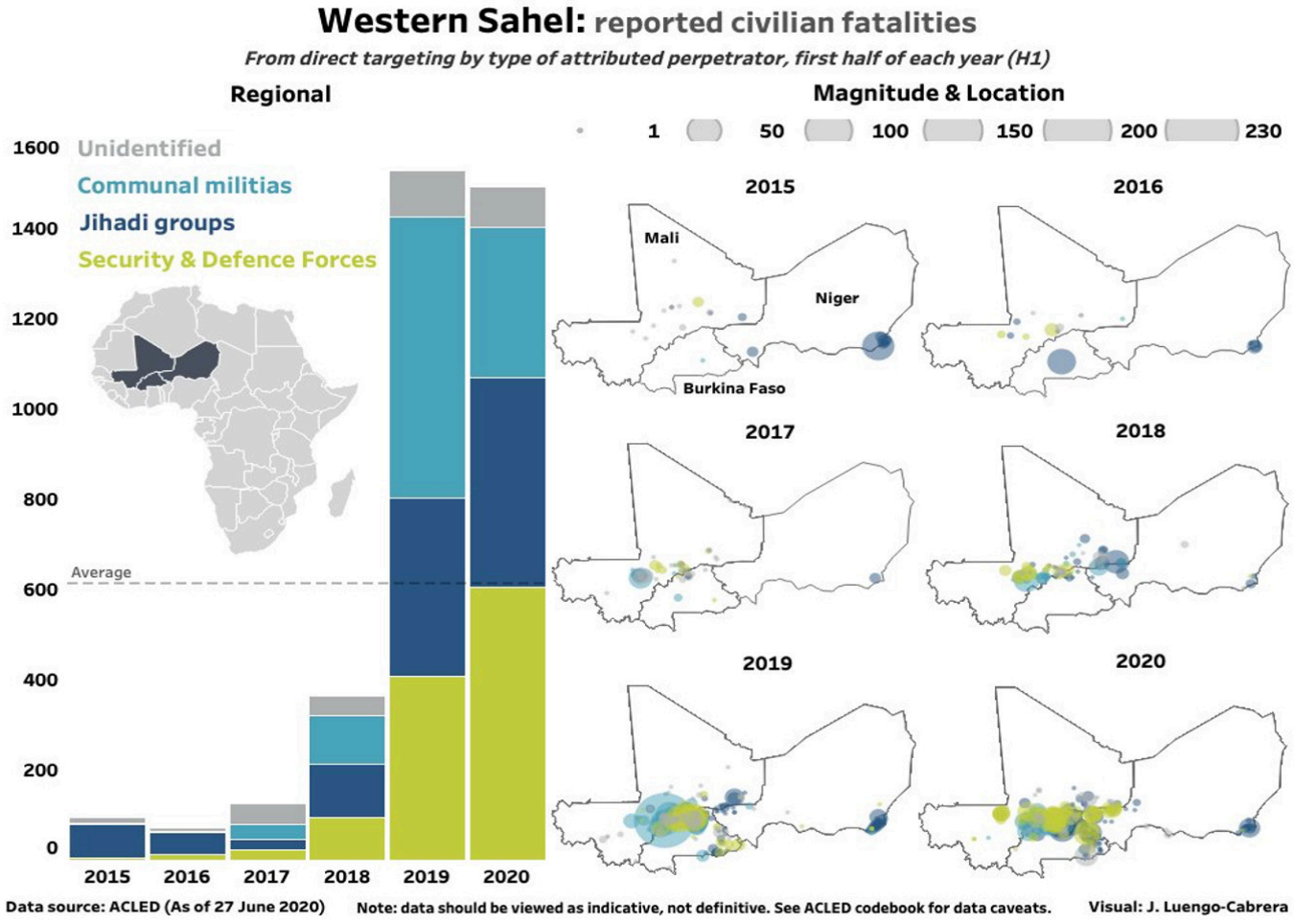
This target choice strategy, however, is subject to great variation. As stated earlier, the existence of a high degree of distrust of out-groups impacts the strategies and target choices of VE groups. The structure of the competitive environment in which violent extremists operate in some parts of Mali, Burkina Faso and other affected fragile African states, greatly shapes their groups' strategies. It is, therefore, not surprising to see Katiba Macina leader and founding member of JNIM, Amadou Kouffa move from urging his supporters in 2016 "not to attack doctors, teachers or even Christians", to publicly threatening in 2018 to take the war to communities who back the myriad self-defense groups opposed to Katiba Macina.[41] Indeed, since mid-2017, the escalation in intercommunal violence in the Sahel has contributed to a dramatic spike in violence. Violent events attributed to JNIM and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) "collectively grew nearly sevenfold" from June 2019 to June 2020.[42] This escalation in violence has also affected the targeting strategy of VE groups with strong ties to their constituencies. Since June 2019, attacks on civilians in the Sahel have increased by 36 percent.[43] As shown in the graph below,[44] posted by Crisis Group Sahel researcher, José Luengo-Cabrera, violence against civilians attributed to state security forces has also spiked, surpassing in the western Sahel that perpetrated by VE groups.

In-group Defense, Out-group Hostility

Not all the groups that are heavily dependent on local support refrain from attacking soft civilian targets. In conflict environments divided by class, race, ethnicity and religion, the level of hostility and antagonism toward out-groups tends be acute.[45] As stated earlier, however, who counts as the "out-group" can change a lot over the course of a conflict, and the question is indeed debated internally among VE groups. In the Sahel, for example, ISGS and JNIM, are multiethnic in their composition. ISGS counts not only Fulani as members but also Tuareg, Djerma and Daosahak. JNIM has also expanded its influence with different ethnic communities, and recently, there are have been several reports of JNIM mid-level leaders trying to broker understandings between the Fulani and the Dogon who in the last few years have seen conflicts between them degenerate into deadly violence.

Obviously what counts as out-group varies from one local context to another, as such distinction is fluid and largely depends on the circumstances of the conflict environment. But once such a distinction is made, VE groups gain more leeway in their targeting of civilians they deem as "complicit"[46] in the wrongs perpetrated by the government and allied militias against those the insurgents represent. The latter's constituents might be more amenable to countenance violence against groups they perceive as their greatest threat.[47] In the north of Burkina Faso, for example, VE groups have gradually expanded their attacks to target Christian churches,

calculating that such assaults might not hurt their support in a society that has nonetheless long prided itself on the peaceful coexistence between Muslims, Christians and people of other faiths.[48]



For VE groups, taking on the Christian minority in the north, which they brand as transplants from other regions who have usurped jobs, rights and benefits, is also a direct reaction "to the scorched-earth tactics of the state, and the militias they work alongside."[49] Attacks targeting churches, writes Héni Nsaibia, a senior researcher at the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), "are not a novelty: central Mali saw an analogous trend in 2017, and these took place in a similar context", whereby militias "operate in tandem with government forces, and occasionally with international forces", worsening in the process ethnic fault lines and spurring cycles of violence, victimization, and retaliation.[50]

The same deterioration in intercommunal relations and resultant spike in violence gripped Niger. Since the country allied with French Barkhane, a cross-border counterterrorism force, and Malian ethnic militias, from mid-2017 to mid-2018, its Tillabery region, which borders Mali and Burkina Faso, has seen a significant increase in targeting of civilians and local community leaders suspected by ISGS to be collaborating with the Nigerien state. Since April 2019, militants killed key state partners such as Arrisal Amdagh, the Tuareg leader of Inatès, and his successor, Almoubacher ag Alamjadi, whom ISGS blamed for being a "client of the apostate Nigerien regime and Christian forces in the region" as well as "ignoring warnings to desist from recruiting members of his clan to go to army training camps in Niamey."[51]

This dynamic of targeting what VE groups in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger describe as duplicitous allies of governments[52] is also seen in other countries where insurgents battle government forces. In the majority Muslim north east of Kenya, for instance, al-Shabaab has targeted Christian teachers, health workers, public administrators, and construction workers to force these professionals who come from outside the region to leave in large numbers.[53] Even hotels, states a Saferworld report, "may have been targeted because they are

owned by Kikuyus (members of Kenya's dominant ethnic group, who are considered 'outsiders' in Garissa)."[54] All these examples illustrate how VE groups that operate in fluid conflict environments that have high out-group hostility tend be more prone to attacking civilians than groups with low levels of out-group antagonism. As Louis Audet Gosselin stated in the context of the eastern regions of Burkina Faso, in areas where Christians are "far more numerous and better integrated into the social fabric" VE groups have avoided making them a target.[55] This calculus, however, changes when VE groups face significant threats to their viability, typically due to fierce competition from rival VE factions or attacks from counterinsurgent forces, namely community-based armed groups. For instance, the loss, fragmentation or contestation of territorial control could lead to high levels of violence against civilians.[56] When an insurgent group such as al-Shabab in Somalia loses ground, it tends to become more coercive toward civilians to minimize defection.

Zero-Sum Contestations and Looming Power Shifts

When groups contest one another, the competition over territory, recruits and resources can sometimes turn deadly.[57] Conflict scholars have shown how multi-actor conflict environments influence levels and types of violence.[58] Some studies have illustrated how the presence of competing insurgent groups with similar ideologies, especially religious and nationalist,[59] produce greater violence and attacks on civilians. Others have shown how the emergence of community-based armed groups and local militias as counterinsurgents influence conflict processes and greatly affect the targeting of civilians.[60]

The 1990s civil war in Algeria is a textbook case study of how rivalry between and among religious insurgent organizations shape VE groups' violent strategies. During the decade-long conflict, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) brutally targeted civilians it accused of collaborating with the Algerian military regime and since 1995 with rival Islamist insurgents.[61] The intent was to signal the GIA's ability and resolve to punish offenders and deter further transgressions. The Algerian case also demonstrates how the prospect of power shifts within and between armed groups can contribute to the escalation of violence against civilians. Dominant insurgent groups have incentives to preserve that status quo by attacking adversaries they perceive as impinging on their territory and resources.

In a competitive landscape that is marked by asymmetry in forces, the calculus to brutally stifle threats in their nascent stage makes sense for actors challenged from within and without. In Algeria, the GIA mercilessly liquidated internal dissident factions and attacked towns and villages it accused of supporting competing rebel organizations. The group directed its fury at civilians associated with its rising rival group, the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), the armed wing of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), the party that was poised to win elections in 1992 before the military canceled the vote, dragging Algeria into a brutal civil war. The FIS-AIS axis was particularly threatening because it presented a less radical alternative to the GIA's uncompromising, all-out war against the Algerian military regime.[62] The threat of defections chipping away at the GIA's recruitment base made the prevention of defection a top priority for the group. The FIS-AIS posed another major challenge for the GIA. For the former, violence was a means to pressure the government to make political concessions. For the GIA, the prospect of negotiations with the regime threatened its power. When such prospect became a reality in 1996 and 1997, the GIA-led violence against civilians dramatically escalated.[63]

Most recently, deadly clashes have broken out between the Al-Qaeda coalition in the Sahel JNIM and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, founded in May of 2015 by Abu Walid al Sahrawi, former member of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), a splinter group of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Since then, the two transnational VE groups had largely tolerated each other, with ISGS refraining from infringing on JNIM territory and peacefully coexisting in theatres where their forces operated in close proximity, namely the Malian Gourma and the Soum province of Burkina Faso. The peaceful relationship came to an end "when the balance of power tilted in favor of the ISGS."[64] Throughout 2019 and 2020, the Katiba Macina—a member of the JNIM coalition—has been losing support and recruits to an increasingly

emboldened ISGS. The fear of further defections and the gradual encroachments of ISGS into Katiba Macina's territory in the Inland Niger Delta prompted JNIM "to start a fight" to put a stop to ISGS's efforts to create "a stable stronghold in [JNIM's] most vital territories."[65]

The deadly confrontations in the Sahel and other affected African regions also lend credence to the arguments that associate the proliferation of militias in fragmented civil conflicts with higher levels of violence. In the Sahel, the areas where VE groups and community-based organizations are at odds have seen the most dramatic rise in violence. In the case of central Mali, the violence perpetrated against the Fulani has had a serious impact on the strategies of Katiba Macina. Although Kouffa shied away from identifying himself with any kind of Fulani sectionalism, "there was a marked change in his rhetoric in 2018."[66] Since then, the massacre of civilians, pillaging of communities and burning of villages and mosques have reached unprecedented levels.[67] VE groups, reportedly supported by Fulani self-defense groups, have killed dozens of Bambara and Dogon, imams, village chiefs, farmers and businessmen. Ethnic Dogon and Bambara self-defense groups have targeted largely ethnic pastoral Fulani for their alleged support of VE groups, indiscriminately killing civilians, embargoing villagers, undermining livelihoods and driving thousands from their homes.[68] This cycle of tit-for-tat massacre of civilians has also ensnared Burkina Faso, where thousands of men have joined VE groups or militias such as *Koglweogo* (guardians of the bush).

For VE groups, the incentive to exercise restraint in targeting civilians diminishes when their military capability and territorial control are threatened. The impact of the explosive growth of self-defense militias and vigilante groups on the insurgents' target choice becomes more pronounced when civilians are treated as hostile out-groups. Punitive tactics of terror against civilians in the out-group can elicit local support for insurgent groups. The same calculus applies when the state counterinsurgency threatens VE groups' viability and survival.

Strategies of Counterinsurgency

Governments' counterinsurgency strategies shape insurgent violence.[69] Indiscriminate government repression tends to create a cycle of retaliation and revenge. This is particularly the case when the repression targets groups along ethnic, religious, or regional lines.[70] This distinction matters because repression deepens identity group divides and makes it very difficult for the insurgent constituency to reconcile with the government. Repressive responses also tend to raise anger among the population, radicalize those uncommitted to the cause of the insurgents, and weaken moderates.[71] The result is that even individuals who might have objected to attacking civilians in the out-group might end up sanctioning such tactics as legitimate. In cases of low out-group hostility though, insurgents have an incentive to be selective in their targeting choices, focusing mostly on government targets. Such restraint, however, tends to fade when insurgents' losses are high or when their grip on territory is seriously challenged.[72]

Armed groups "are driven by a survival instinct when under pressure," writes Joanne Crouch in the context of Somalia. The greater loss of territorial holdings and the fear of military liquidation, the greater the incentive for insurgents to lash out viciously against civilians they suspect of supporting their opponents. When threatened and cornered, al-Shabaab, for example, tightened the net on people's movement, coerced young boys into fighting, harshly punished dissent, and exacted revenge on its enemies. This violent behavior, writes Crouch, "is underpinned by political objectives." Anytime the group is threatened with elimination, she adds, "it will fight all the harder to ensure survival."[73]

Data analysis of al-Shabaab's violent actions and target selection seems to confirm Crouch's argument. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) showed that around 2010, there was a quantitative as well as qualitative change in the nature of attacks carried out by al-Shabaab. The year 2010 saw the beginning of a significant assault on the group's positions by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which resulted in the expulsion of al-Shabaab from Mogadishu in late 2011. The military pressure on the group

and its subsequent territorial reversals contributed to an escalation in violence against civilians it deemed disloyal or spies. The higher level of attacks against civilians occurred in the areas contested by al-Shabaab and the government. By contrast, the territories controlled by al-Shabaab saw lower levels of attacks.[74] This lends credence to the influential study by Kalyvas, which showed how the degree of a group's control over a territory shapes its violent strategies. The more territorial control there is in civil wars, the lesser levels of civilian victimization there might be.

Outside Somalia, and particularly in Kenya, al-Shabaab has attacked non-Muslim Kenyans "ever since Nairobi sent troops to Somalia in 2011."[75] Since then, al-Shabaab attacked shopping malls, luxury hotels, schools, construction sites, police stations, and communications masts. In the marginalized north east, the group has generally spared the ethnic Somali population, as occurred in the 2015 massacre of 148 students on a college campus in Garissa.[76] The escalation of attacks on civilians, particularly teachers who hail from outside the region, drove the government in January 2020 to order all non-native teachers to leave the area.[77] That month, al-Shabaab executed its first attack on a military base in Kenya. The attack captured international headlines, as it targeted the joint US-Kenyan military base in Lamu near the Somali border, killing a US soldier and two US military contractors, as well as destroying a US surveillance plane. Al-Shabaab has vowed to pursue its campaign of violence as long as Kenyan troops remain deployed in Somalia.

The case of Boko Haram is another example of how VE groups' target choices evolve under the repression and pressure of the government and its allies. There is a wide consensus that the killing of Mohammed Yusuf and about 1,000 Boko Haram members by Nigerian security agents in 2009 was the critical turning point in the extreme radicalization of the movement. Under Yousuf's successor, Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram lashed out at the Nigerian state and its symbols, including Christian communities and Muslim civilians it deemed complicitous with the brutal government crackdown on the movement.[78] Boko Haram's targeting of civilians escalated in late 2013 when government forces, backed with newly formed vigilante groups, known as the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), drove the group out of its urban strongholds in Maiduguri. "Until the formation of vigilante units", wrote Omar S. Mahmood and Ndubuisi Christian Ani, several "towns and villages had been spared large-scale attacks."[79]

It was also in 2013 that Boko Haram began its vicious campaign of kidnappings of both Muslim and Christian girls in northern Nigeria. This was a direct response to the government's decision to detain the families of a number of Boko Haram commanders, including the wife of its leader, Shekau, Suleiman Muhammed, the commander for Kano, and Kabiru Sokoto, the commander for Sokoto, whose wife was pregnant at the time of detention. "Boko Haram's first foray into gendered kidnapping," writes Aisha Ahmad, "therefore had a clear strategic rationale; by holding these hostages ransom, the jihadists hoped to increase their bargaining position and secure the release of their wives."[80] When the government refused to release their wives, Boko Haram's abductions escalated.

These examples demonstrate that VE groups tend to respond to mounting state pressure by adopting more brutal retaliatory violence against the state and its perceived complicitous constituency. To be sure, not all groups faced with government repression lash out at citizens they label as "collaborators". In contexts marked by low out-group hostility, VE groups have a strong incentive to exercise restraint, especially if brutal counterinsurgency practices spawn a backlash, deepening the insurgency and leaving the government worse off.

Conclusion

The spread of violent extremism and the evolution of VE groups in Africa continue to challenge scholars, policy makers, security officials and practitioners to better understand the nature and dynamics of violent extremist movements. The good news is that there have been great advances in producing more contextualized research and evidence-based knowledge that help illuminate the relevant drivers and conflict dynamics that enable VE groups to flourish in the affected African states.[81] But there is still more that we need to know beyond the

macro-level factors that drive people toward violent extremism. More research is needed to provide insight into the dynamics of VE groups themselves, particularly how they are governed, provide services, cultivate popular support and use violence. This article has sought to contribute to this line of research by providing an explanation for particular patterns of the behavior of VE groups in the African context, namely the logic behind the use of indiscriminate violence.

In so doing, it illustrated how the structure of the competitive environment in which insurgents operate helps explain the variation in VE groups' use of violence. Some VE groups focus their attacks mostly on official targets while others prioritize civilians. Most, however, tend to typically change their target selection over time, depending on the characteristics of the environment they evolve in. For example, VE groups that lack external sources of support and operate in areas characterized by low levels of out-group hostility are more likely to focus most of their attacks on state targets than civilians. The reason is that such groups need the support or at the very least the acquiescence of a fair proportion of their constituency to be viable. Those that do target civilians typically do so in multi-actor conflict environments marked by intense competition and high out-group antagonism. High levels of state repression and threat to the organizational survival of VE groups are other predictors of greater levels of violence against civilian populations, especially members of the out-group.

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Disclaimer

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Research Notes

Fabricated Martyrs: The Warrior-Saint Icons of Far-Right Terrorism

by Ari Ben Am and Gabriel Weimann

Martyrdom does not end something, it is only a beginning.

Indira Gandhi

Abstract

Martyrdom has historically been an important part of underground movements. Martyrs have been utilized as such in propaganda and messaging campaigns in a variety of fashions. This began by expressing one's willingness to sacrifice him or herself for one's faith, and eventually began to be associated with death on the battlefield. The global Far-Right extremist movement has, akin to global Salafi Jihad, adopted martyrdom as well as a tool to encourage members to carry out lone-wolf attacks. In the case of the Far-Right, carrying out a terror attack (and accepting the risk of getting arrested or killed while doing so) is enough for the decentralized Far-Right propaganda machine to create a living "martyr" of the movement by reframing the terrorist as a "holy warrior" of sorts. This article examines three prominent Far-Right terrorists: Anders Breivik, Robert Bowers and Brenton Tarrant as examples, exploring their relevant iconography and imagery to show that their image has been purposed by the Far-Right to inspire lone wolves to carry out attacks.

Keywords: Far-Right, martyrs, propaganda, terrorism

Introduction

In modern times Martyrdom is associated with one's willing to sacrifice himself/herself for the sake of faith, religion, values, ideology or political views. However, in its original meaning, the word martyr, meaning witness or testimony in Greek, was first used in the Bible and the New Testament. A martyr was then a person who was killed because of his/her testimony of God or Jesus. In the early years of martyrdom the death was by sawing, stoning, crucifixion, burning at the stake or other forms of torture and capital punishment.

Religious martyrdom emerged during the conflict between the Greek King Antiochus Epiphanes IV and the Jewish rebels. The books of Maccabees recount numerous martyrdoms suffered by Jews resisting the Hellenizing of the Jewish colony. These martyrs were executed for such 'crimes' as observing the Sabbath, circumcising their children or refusing to eat pork or meat sacrificed to foreign gods. Later, Christian martyrdom followed: some scholars like Frend argue that "Jewish psychology of martyrdom" inspired Christian martyrdom. Frend writes, "In the first two centuries AD, there was a living pagan tradition of self-sacrifice for a cause, a preparedness if necessary to defy an unjust ruler that existed alongside the developing Christian concept of martyrdom inherited from Judaism."[1] The early Christians who first began to use the term *martyr* in its new sense saw Jesus as the first and greatest martyr, on account of his crucifixion.

Jesus' image as a martyr is particularly important to the concept of martyrdom as explored in this Research Note in regard to the Far-Right. Jesus' success at drawing mass crowds and leaving an impact on the world beyond his comparatively short life can be attributed to several factors: his charisma and message, and his rejection of the modern world in favor of a better alternative. Moskalenko and McCauley describe this in their book, "The Marvel of Martyrdom."[2] Jesus' message of self-sacrifice in the name of a larger cause inspired others to later do the same, with self-sacrifice also serving as a vehicle to "transform one's worldview, and ultimately one's life."[3]

In the Islamic terminology the title *Shahid* originated from the Quranic Arabic word meaning "witness" and is

also used to denote a martyr. *Shahid* appear frequently in the Quran but only once in the sense "martyr; one who dies for his faith"; this latter sense acquires wider use in the *hadiths*. Islam views a martyr as a man or woman who dies while conducting *jihad*, whether on or off the battlefield. The concept of the martyr in Islam had been made prominent during the Islamic revolution (1978–79) in Iran and the subsequent Iran-Iraq war, so that the cult of the martyr had a lasting impact on the course of revolution and war. Like the English word *martyr*, in the 20th century, the word *shahid* has come to have both religious and nonreligious connotations, and has often been used to describe those who have died for political or ideological causes.

Shahids: Martyrs of Jihad

The understanding of *jihad* as *primarily* "armed combat" (*qital*) took perhaps about a century to develop. The Quran attests to multiple meanings of jihad that range from noncombative to combative. Furthermore, the Quran does not have a single word for "martyr" or "martyrdom," concepts that became intrinsically linked to the concept of jihad as armed combat against the enemies of Islam. One of the Quranic verses (3:169) that refers to the special status of the martyr declares: "Do not think that those who were slain in the path of God are dead. They are alive and well provided for by their Lord." However, later hadith texts, make clear that the phrase "slain in the path of God," are suggesting various forms or martyrdom. Moreover, the term *shahid* in the sense of martyr appeared only in the hadith literature but not in the Quran. During the Islamic Revolution (1978–79) and the subsequent Iran-Iraq war (1980–1988) the cult of the Shahids in Iran has had a lasting impact on the dynamics of revolution and war. The soldiers, clergy, and other individuals who died during the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran were regarded as martyrs and have often been buried in special martyrs' cemeteries. In the 1980–88 Iran–Iraq War, thousands of Iranian youths—many motivated by the religiously based ideas of Ayatollah Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution—volunteered to serve in the armed forces during the conflict, sometimes participating in human wave attacks against the Iraqis. Those who died in battle were considered martyrs.

It was Sheikh Abdullah Azzam who laid the foundations of al Qaeda that connected the Holy War of Jihad with martyrdom. Azzam, the spiritual mentor of Osama Bin Laden, wrote in 1988 the guidelines for al Qaeda and argued that in order to instill the vanguard with the desire for *istishhad* (martyrdom),

> The shahids (martyrs) are those who write the history of nations, because the history of nations is written only in sweat and blood. They are the ones who build the palace of glory, because palaces of glory are built only by skulls and limbs severed from the body. They are the ones who keep the tree of this religion from wilting and drying up, because the tree of this religion is watered only with blood. They are the wise ones, because they found their way to Allah, while the others either mourn them or mock their thinking. They are the ones who love death so that they will earn life (after death).[4]

In the al Qaeda video from January 18, 2002, titled "19 martyrs", the hijackers in the September 11 attacks justify their beliefs and profess their desire to sacrifice themselves. So do Palestinian militants involved in anti-Israel terrorist attacks who have referred to their suicide bombers as martyrs. In the early 1990s the Hamas bestowed its greatest honor on Azzam by naming its military wing in the West Bank for him—the Abdullah Azzam Martyrs Brigades. Some years later, the names of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip military wings were combined and the united outfit became known as the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Martyrs Brigade.[5]

Dying to Kill: Suicide Terrorism

The globalization of "new martyrdom", described by several scholars (e.g., Pedahzur, Moghadam[6]) refers to the merging of terrorism and martyrdom in the form of suicide terrorism. Suicide attacks have become one of the most important and emblematic forms of terrorism today. These acts of self-sacrifice are often

constructed as forms of religious martyrdom. Suicide attacks are acts of organized violence in which the perpetrators *deliberately sacrifice* their own lives. The willingness to die is combined with the willingness to kill simultaneously in the same act: the goal is therefore "dying to kill." Moreover, in suicide attacks, the martyr's death is a necessary requisite of the mission because it is self-inflicted, frequently by means of explosive devices or suicidal missions.

Despite recurrent references to the past and a return to the 'true' fundamentals of religion, genuine suicide terrorism is a recent phenomenon which emerged only in the early 1980s. After its debut in the early 1980s in Lebanon, suicide attacks spread to Sri Lanka in 1987, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 1993, India in 1995, Turkey in 1996, and Chechnya in 2000. The diffusion of this method was facilitated by processes of imitation and learning, as well as by opportunities for inter-organizational cooperation. However, as Marone argues, the notion of combative or offensive martyrdom date back to the time of the 1979 Islamic Revolution led by Khomeini in Iran.[7] Some Iranian religious and intellectual figures promoted an effective re-interpretation of the notion of martyrdom, crucial in the Shi'a doctrine. During the Iran-Iraq war (1980–1988) thousands of young Iranian volunteers blew themselves up to clear Iraqi minefields, wearing a key around their neck in order to open the doors of Paradise.[8]

Martyrdom in the Theater of Terror

From its early days till today, martyrdom fulfilled important functions. The primary function of the readiness to die is symbolic and even mythical, in terms of propaganda, publicity and recruitment. The act of self-sacrifice permits to: (i) draw more media attention and publicize the cause; (ii) promote the legitimacy of the cause, by highlighting through this extreme commitment and devotion the seriousness of the situation or of the motive; and (iii) encourage others to follow and be rewarded forever as martyrs. As O'Shaughnessy (2004) in his *Politics and Propaganda: Weapons of Mass Seduction* argues, "Deaths and martyrdom have always been fecund sources of myth making.... Martyrdom is a particularly persuasive way of inflating a sense of moral grandeur."[9] Thus, all political or ideological actors, from nations to terrorist groups and extremists, seek and attain their martyrs. They don't even have to die though death is of course desirable. Myths and martyrdom are well connected in propaganda and so is symbolism. A key function of propaganda is to manufacture symbols and present them as persuasive mental heuristics. Consequently, propaganda like commercial adverting is very symbol-rich.

When it comes to terrorism, several communication and terrorism scholars reconceptualized modern terrorism within the framework of symbolic communication theory. Already in the 1970s, academic observers remarked increasingly on the theatrical proficiency with which terrorists conducted their operations. As Brian M. Jenkins concluded in his analysis of international terrorism: "Terrorist attacks are often carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the electronic media and the international press. Taking and holding hostages increases the drama. The hostages themselves often mean nothing to the terrorists. Terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not at the actual victims. Terrorism is a theater."[10] Modern terrorism can be understood in terms of the production requirements of theatrical engagements. Terrorists pay attention to script preparation, cast selection, sets, props, role-playing, and minute-by-minute stage management.[11] Within the Theater of Terror conceptualization, a special role is played by the martyrs, the most heroic role in the terrorist cast. In the theater of terror production, the perpetrating organization or group is able to capitalize on widespread media coverage that the martyrs attract. The fate of the martyr is part of the plot, and with a large number of victims, media attention is secured. The media coverage of terrorist martyrdom conveys an image of extreme discipline, dedication, and skill in carrying out such an audacious and incomprehensible act.

In recent years martyrdom videos posted online have become a major instrument in terrorist and extremist propaganda. It serves two propaganda purposes; externally (the enemy) and internally (their own community). The videos are intended to preserve the memory of their subjects, and to justify and glorify their actions. They may also serve the function of committing their makers to their actions, by making a public statement of commitment that they feel they cannot go back on.

Rising Far-Right Extremism

Far-right violence and terrorism are a growing threat to Western societies.[12] Far-right terrorist attacks increased by 320 percent between 2014 and 2019 according to the 2019 Global Terrorism Index.[13] In 2018 alone, far-right terrorist attacks made up 17.2% of all terrorist incidents in the West, compared to Islamic groups which made up 6.28% of all attacks.[14] In January 2019, the Anti-Defamation League's Centre on Extremism reported that every extremist killing in the US in 2018 was linked to far-right individuals or organizations.[15] German authorities registered 8,605 right-wing extremist offenses, including 363 violent crimes in the first half of 2019. Compared to the first half of 2018, an increase of 900 far-right crimes was recorded during the same period. Far-right terrorism is on average five times deadlier than far-left terrorism, with an average of 0.92 deaths per attack compared to far-left terrorism with 0.17 deaths.[16] Nineteen countries across North America, Western Europe and Oceania have been targeted by far-right attackers. This trend in far-right attacks has led some observers to state that far-right domestic terrorism has not been treated seriously enough in the West and that security and intelligence services should pay closer attention to this emerging threat.[17]

"Far-Right" refers to a political ideology that centers on one or more of the following elements: strident nationalism (usually racial or exclusivist in some fashion), fascism, racism, anti-Semitism, anti-immigration, chauvinism, nativism, anti-LGBTQ, and xenophobia. There is also some overlap between far-right groups and Incel movements due to their shared beliefs of hatred and intolerance.[18] Incel is short for 'involuntary celibate' and refers to online groups of men who feel that they cannot enter sexual relationships and express hatred toward women accusing them of sexually manipulating or humiliating men. Other far-right groups enforce traditional gender roles and oppose abortion. Far-right groups are usually strongly authoritarian, but often with populist elements and have historically been anti-Communist, although this characteristic has become less prominent since the end of the Cold War. Not all groups or organizations with any one of these characteristics can be considered far-right and not all far-right groups are automatically violent or terroristic. However, terrorist groups with these characteristics and individuals sympathetic to these ideals have been classified as "far-right terrorism."

Far-Right terrorists have a strong inclination to change the established order, favor the hegemony of traditional elites (typically white, heterosexual and Christian) and advocate the forced establishment of authoritarian order. Far-right attacks are also less predictable as perpetrators are typically unaffiliated with a terrorist group, making them harder to detect. Far-right extremists have also shown a long-term interest in acquiring Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) weapons, resulting in several CBRN far-right terrorist plots in Western countries (mostly in the US) which fortunately did not come to fruition.[19] Another development is the phenomenon of individuals taking part in a group of extremists performing terrorist acts without previous contacts to the extremist environment, sometimes described as "Hive Terrorism": terrorist acts or violent hate crimes committed by a spontaneously formed crowd that quickly disbands after the incident.[20] All the above appears to show a significant terrorist threat posed by extreme right-wing activists and groups.

The Propaganda of Far-Right Terrorism

Like many other modern extremists, jihadists and terrorists, the far-right relies on a massive and wide-ranging propaganda machine. The propaganda campaigns allow the far-right to maximize media and online attention while limiting the risk of individual exposure, negative media coverage, arrests and public backlash. The barrage of propaganda attempts to normalize extremist messages and bolster recruitment efforts while targeting minority groups including Jews, Blacks, Muslims, nonwhite immigrants and the LGBTQ community. Extreme right activists and their ilk have long used propaganda as a tool to spread their message. Long before the Internet, they distributed hateful flyers or drove from town to town, leaving their hateful papers, brochures and manifestos on front steps and in driveways. Today, the rise of digital platforms has changed this and now fringe groups, malevolent actors and extremists have access to platforms that can proliferate disinformation and stir resentments of all kinds. A new development in the propaganda campaigns launched by the far-right was

the adaption and use of new media: the rise of online media has created new opportunities for communication, organization and mobilization by far-right-wing extremist and right-wing radical political groups. Whilst right-wing extremists exploit online platforms and social media for political purposes, the extent to which they have abused online communication is far less certain.

The growing presence of extremist groups in cyberspace is at the nexus of two key trends: the democratization of communications driven by user-generated content on the Internet, and the growing awareness of modern vigilantes of the potential of the Internet for their aims. Terrorists and extremists have used the Internet, as several studies have revealed, for numerous purposes.[21] They use the Net to launch psychological campaigns, recruit and direct volunteers, raise funds, incite violence and provide training. They also use it to plan, network, and coordinate attacks. Thus, not only has the number of terrorist online platforms increased but also the ways in which terrorists use the Internet have diversified.

These potential uses have not gone unnoticed by far-right groups, who moved their communications, propaganda, instruction and training to the cyberspace. As Hoffman and Ware concluded, "today's far-right extremists, like predecessors from previous generations, are employing cutting-edge technologies for terrorist purposes."[22] The far-right online presence is not restricted to a single online platform or space but is instead a patchwork of various types of platforms and spaces, from websites to social media and even the Dark Net. Far-right extremists are generating their content on a variety of online platforms and increasingly also utilizing a wider range of new media technologies for their purposes. A range of relatively new and highly accessible communication 'applications' is another component of this trend. Many of these newer technologies fit into the category of so-called 'dark social', which refers not to the 'dark' nature of the content but to the difficulties of tracking content and communicators.[23]

The Specter of Far-Right Martyrization

The widespread acceptance of the Internet and social media among various streams of Far-Right movements and extremists has led to numerous changes in their organizational structure and propaganda efforts. These propaganda campaigns, initiated and managed by either lone actors empowered by the Internet or by more formal and traditional Far-Right organizations, have changed their messaging in accordance with their new capabilities and external factors. One of the many examples of this is the general shift from leader and hero-worship (generally among historic political figures) among members of the Far-Right to the martyrization and adulation of individual, lone-wolf attackers. These lone wolves take their hatred and terror from the realm of cyberspace to the physical world by carrying out terror attacks, primarily mass shootings.

The Far-Right, like any ideological movement extremist or otherwise, competes with other ideologies among both its adherents and the general public. Martyrdom is a key component of the promulgation of any given ideology; the martyr serves as a symbol for a movement or ideology, as a source of encouragement for action and unity due to the sacrifice of the individual, as well as serving as a figure to be idealized by encapsulating the ideals of the ideology or movement and "humanizing" them. This provides adherents of an extremist movement both a symbol and figurehead to refer to and justify the rightness of their ideology or movement both in the eyes of adherents and parts of a wider public.

The diverse nature of the Far-Right as an umbrella ideology with an increasingly large amount of sub-ideologies and organizations makes it difficult to discuss "martyrdom" as a universal and standard term for the movement. Despite this inherent difficulty, martyrdom and the glorification of martyrs has existed since the inception of modern Far-Right movements in the late 19th century and the early 20th century. An example of early martyrdom in post-WWI Germany would be Horst Wessel, an avowed Nazi whose death at the hands of Communists in 1930 was memorialized in the song "Horst Wessel Lied", a later anthem of Nazi Germany.[24] Martyrization of individual members killed prior to World War II was common to many movements, but the trend changed for the Far-Right post–World War II.

Following World War II, the global Far-Right which had only recently come to power in numerous states (primarily Axis powers such as Germany, Italy and Japan) had been relegated to the fringes of mainstream discourse. Following their defeat, Nazism, Fascism and other Far-Right ideologies and movements soon found themselves outside of the political mainstream. Worship of prominent leaders and ideological figures such as Hitler, Mussolini, Mosley, Powell (and others) and their martyrization in the eyes of many Far-Right extremists became commonplace—and with the addition of a few other iconic, ideological figures such as William Luther Pierce, continues until this very day. In fact, many of these ideologies have even converged. Arguably, the importance of maintaining adherence to traditional propaganda focusing on ideological thinkers and leaders was apparent to Far-Right extremist organizations that needed to maintain an ideological core and goal around which to organize members.

In recent years, beginning in the early 1990s in earnest, the Far-Right, which typically was comprised of organizations (with varying levels of public visibility), began to change. Individual Far-Right extremists, who had often undergone radicalization alone and through the Internet and social media platforms, began to carry out mass-terror attacks that prior to the advent of the Internet had been stifled by intelligence and law enforcement agencies (primarily by sting operations). The advent of the Internet enabled the creation of the "lone wolf"—arguably a misnomer. These lone-threat actors never truly acted alone—having undergone radicalization in the Internet and often conversed with extremists online—but in contrast to organized Far-Right activity carried out their attacks individually.

The transition from organized formal and semi-formal movements and organizations to lone wolves (initiated due to the Internet and social media) necessitated a change in Far-Right propaganda efforts. The need for a powerful authority figure, often with a political background, around which organizations could rally members began to subside in the face of the need for symbols of action that could serve as a source of inspiration for other lone wolves. This by no means indicates that general awe and admiration of larger-than-life historical figures in the Far-Right has disappeared, but simply has been superseded by martyr-worship of Far-Right terrorists that carry out mass shootings. These mass-shooter terrorists often are placed upon a pedestal as martyrs for the movement and sometimes even depicted as religious or supernatural figures. The ability to canonize oneself by "deciding to become a saint" is expressed in one's willingness to carry out a terror attack and sacrifice oneself.

The rise of mass-shooters as martyr figures in the Far-Right has occurred thus as the result of changing organizational structures and internal dynamics inside of the Far-Right. Examining relevant Far-Right content on various social media platforms and websites displays this trend well across several different "martyrs": Anders Breivik, Robert Bowers and Brenton Tarrant.

The authors of this Research Note used Cobwebs Technologies' Web Intelligence platform to identify and analyze relevant social media and Internet chatter both qualitatively and quantitatively, some results of which are presented in the following.[25]

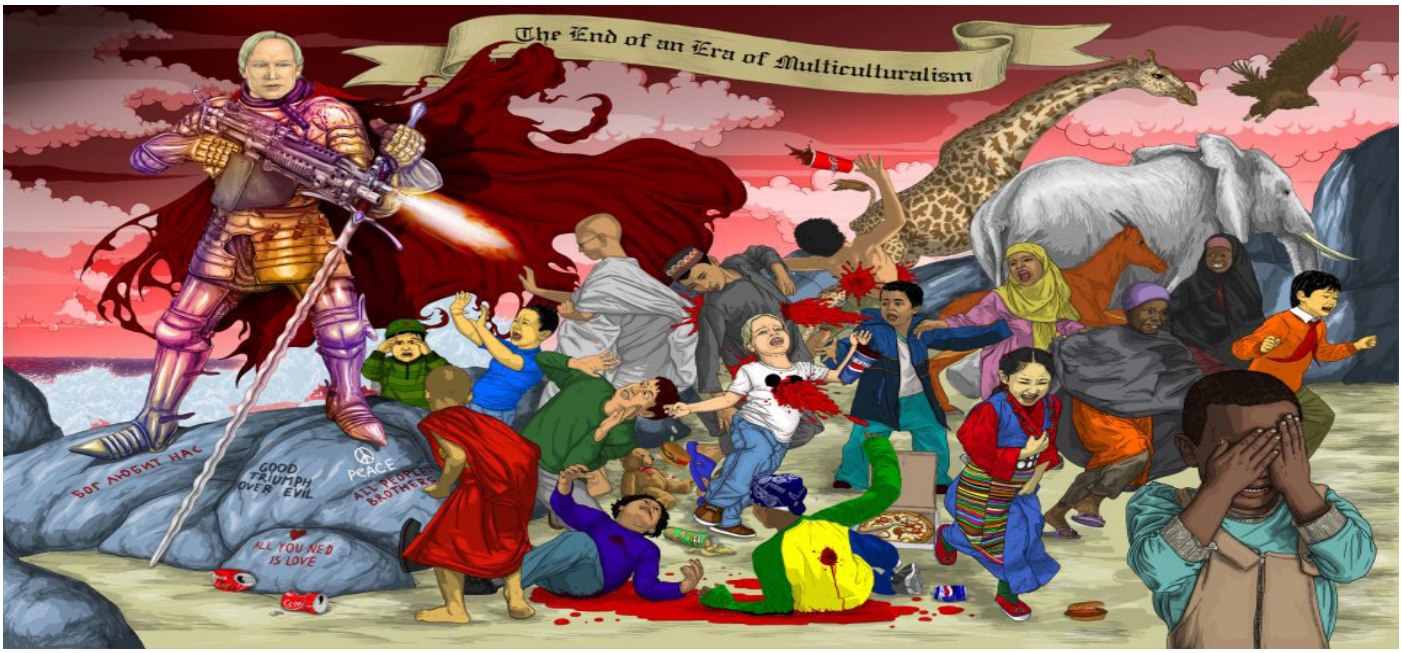
Anders Breivik: The Knight Justiciar

Anders Breivik was by no means the first lone-wolf Far-Right terrorist but was arguably the first since the American Unabomber to ignite public discourse globally regarding the Far-Right. Breivik's attack, in which Breivik killed 77 people and injured many more, occurred in two locations in Norway on the 22nd of July 2011. It was meant to prevent the supposed Islamification of Europe as allegedly enabled by Norway's government. Breivik himself was later diagnosed by Norwegian psychiatrists as mentally ill although others challenged that assessment.

Breivik himself was strongly influenced by al Qaeda's terror and guerrilla warfare tactics and strategy, in particular their emphasis on martyrdom, and had been active on several anti-Islamic Norwegian and European blogs.[26][27] Breivik's ideology as outlined in his manifesto and pre-attack YouTube video focuses on "Eurabia", an Arabized and Islamized Europe supposedly being catalyzed by the European Union and socialists.[28]

Breivik's massacre was a watershed moment in the world of Far-Right extremism but he himself only utilized social media to a small extent: YouTube, as mentioned earlier, and the dissemination of his manifesto on numerous extremist forums. Breivik also has had comparatively less propaganda content generated about him on Far-Right-affiliated message boards and social media platforms such as 4chan, VK, Gab and others. This may be due to the fact that some of these platforms only rose to prominence years after Breivik's attack.

Breivik's digital footprints are quantitatively comparatively low in both mainstream and Far-Right social media (including VKontakte, a platform that is well known for being open to hosting Far-Right content). A particularly interesting propaganda painting of Breivik was identified on 4chan (by researching via 4plebs, a 4chan archiving site).[29] The image below, uploaded by an anonymous user and titled "The End of an Era of Multiculturalism", presents Breivik as he saw himself—a knight crusader acting as a bulwark, protecting Europe's shores from an invading wave of immigrant children by shooting them with a machine gun. These children are primarily Muslim in appearance but include at least one child dressed in Buddhist garb and children of Asian and African descent. The picture also depicts the ills of economic globalism—the children carry with them fast-food pizza, burgers, Pringles and Pepsi and Coca-Cola cans.



This picture, one of comparatively few for Breivik in contrast to other Far-Right terrorists, is unique in its style, reminiscent of Renaissance paintings if not in quality. In addition, the above picture was last shared on 4chan on 27/03/2020 but having originally been uploaded to 4chan and shared on Reddit on October 31, 2011.[30] The photo is arguably a reference to Breivik's membership in a Christian "military order" as a Knight Justiciar, a rank that he bestowed upon himself.[31]

Breivik's comparatively low profile in terms of propaganda iconography is very much contrasted by his perception among Far-Right extremists on 4chan and other social media platforms. Breivik is worshipped as a saint and martyr by many (and disparaged by some for initially having held comparatively hawkish views on Israel) and is one of the few Far-Right terrorists to be unofficially "canonized" as a saint alongside Brenton Tarrant. This "canonization" is very much thanks to his "high score", meaning high kill count, which he and Tarrant share. The use of religious iconography, in particular the term "saint", carries heavy connotations of martyrdom and, perhaps more importantly, as a form of encouragement for any potential lone-wolf terrorist. In addition, categorizing the terrorist as a martyr or "saint" seeks to provide moral justification to the Far-Right movement in a fashion similar to early Christianity—the "martyr" or "saint" is unappreciated in his lifetime for his sacrifice by the masses but is later revered.

Achieving sainthood as a lone-wolf terrorist is arguably appealing to many potential terrorists in that it's a goal that can be feasibly achieved, in contrast to rising to the level of a "great" political leader or writer at the level of Hitler or Mosley. As such, the "canonization" of Far-Right terrorists may act as a form of encouragement for lone wolves to carry out attacks absent any form of formal reward, be it financial, political or religious in the case of Salafi Jihad, which promises religious rewards for martyrs in Jannah (heaven) and often material rewards and incentives for the relatives of those who carry out suicide attacks for formal organizations. The attribution of religious characteristics to martyrs is a fascinating development in the Far-Right that is reminiscent of similar activity in the Salafi Jihad movement. Azzam was known to attribute various types of miracles, such as "downing airplanes with pebbles" and miraculous attributes to the bodies of the fallen mujahideen, such as musk and delayed decomposition.[32] The importance of these attributes and miracles to the propaganda machine of both the Far-Right and Salafi Jihad movements is apparent, as these cases are capable of encouraging individuals to become martyrs themselves and take part in the rewards of doing so.

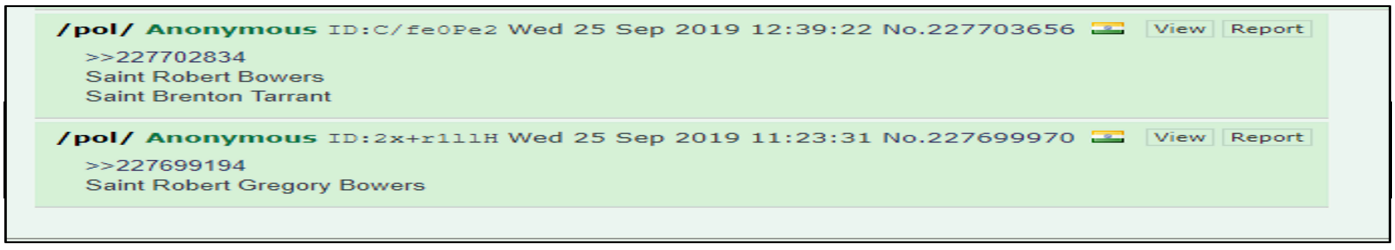
Anders Breivik and his massacre served as a watershed moment for the Far-Right's both in Europe and globally. Breivik's general influence and exposure, while great at the time, has waned drastically—arguably due to his comparatively light digital footprints. Following the Christchurch attacks, however, Breivik has recently resurged in Far-Right discourse as a fellow warrior "saint", paired with Tarrant, which will be further discussed in the portion of this Research Note focused on Tarrant.

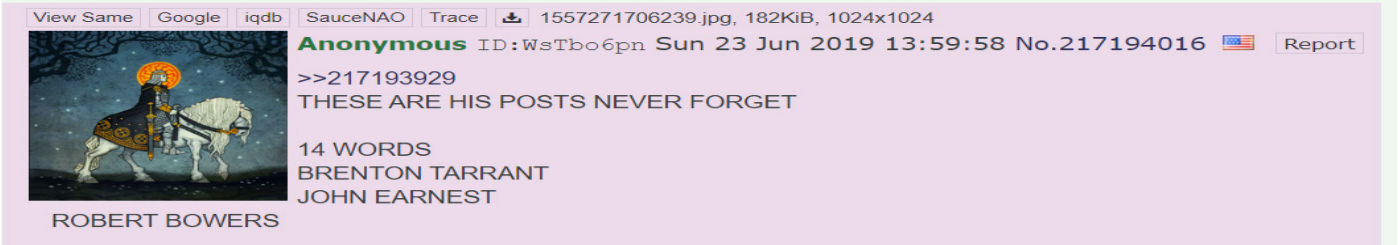
Robert Bowers: The "Chad" Warrior-Saint

Far-Right terror attacks certainly did not subside following Breivik's attack in 2011, but attacks of that magnitude are comparatively rare. The next relevant case to be examined here is that of Robert Bowers. Bowers carried out a brutal attack on the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on October 27, 2018 in which he killed 11 Jews and injured 6 others, all the while espousing his genocidal hatred of Jews.[33] Bowers was arrested at the scene and is, at the time of this writing, awaiting trial after having been charged with a litany of crimes.

Bowers' massacre was the single most deadly attack on a Jewish institution in US history and as such was covered widely in mainstream media and on Far-Right social media platforms, media outlets and image boards. Bowers also was extremely active on the Far-Right social media platform "Gab". Gab, a new network founded in 2016 that purports to promulgate freedom of speech, has become notorious for hosting extremist content and profiles that have been forced to migrate from mainstream social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter following bans.[34] Bowers' activity on Gab was public, meaning that his account was listed under his own name, and he used it for signaling his own activity on it, famously posting:

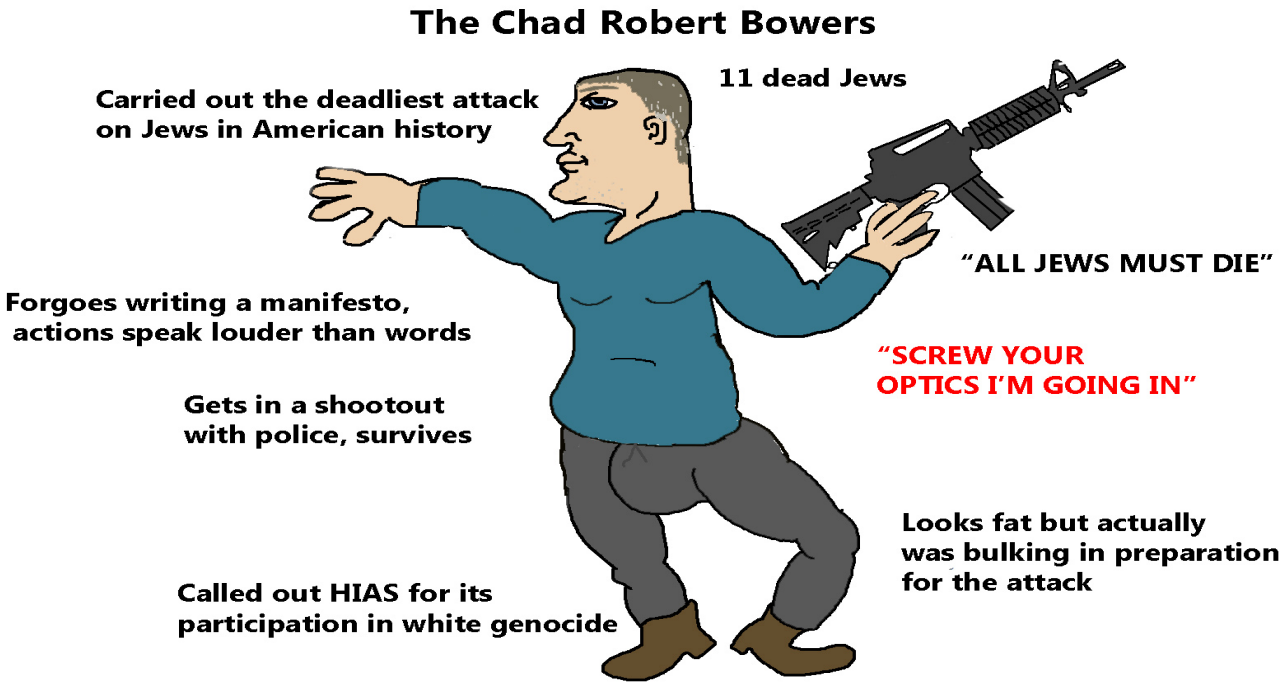
> "HIAS likes to bring invaders in that kill our people. I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I'm going in."[35]





Bowers first referred to HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), an organization founded originally to provide aid to Jewish refugees fleeing Russia to the United States in the late 19th century, but has since expanded to offering aid to refugees of all backgrounds seeking to attain asylum in the US.[36] Then he mentioned the discussion about "optics", or public opinion, vis-a-vis White Nationalism in which the value of carrying out mass shooting attacks was, and still is, a common subject of debate. Bowers received near-universal praise on Far-Right message boards and social media platforms thanks to his targeting of Jews, and his quantifiable success in killing Jews lead to his unofficial "canonization" among other prominent Far-Right terrorists such as Dylann Roof. It should be noted that John Earnest, a Far-Right terrorist who targeted Jews but failed in killing more than one, is often referred to as a "disciple" or receives an "honorable mention".[37][38][39]

Bowers has achieved, as seen in the above posts and in others, the status of a "warrior". Bowers is compared to James Bond and mentioned in a post in which a medieval painting of a warrior is uploaded alongside other prominent terrorists. Bowers has also had a unique style of propaganda imagery form around him as evident in some traditional propaganda content and Internet memes. This style focuses on Bowers' comparatively unique modus operandi; carrying out a violent attack against Jews and even exchanging fire with the police despite his age. This style of meme is indicated below and in a series of memes inspired by Bowers: "Boomerwaffen". In the below meme, Robert Bowers is presented as a "Chad", a form of masculine archetype originating in the "incel", or "involuntarily celibate" extremist movement which has since crossed into the Far-Right and certain other Internet-based communities. Chad is a term reserved for physically fit men who are worthy of adulation and admiration, primarily from their female counterpart, a "Stacy," due to their resolve, strength and even enlarged genitalia which is often contrasted with a "Virgin" counterpart.[40]



[41]

Presenting Bowers, an older, overweight man as a "Chad" in spite of his physical attributes being unexceptional to say the least is an important element of promoting his image. Being a "Chad" as well as a "Saint" can be possible for any Far-Right activist, regardless of his actual physical fitness, if he carries out a terrorist attack is the implied message.

Bowers' age is also a fascinating element of the Far-Right propaganda machine. Bowers' advanced age and willingness to carry out an exceptionally violent attack has led to much adulation of him amongst Accelerationists. Accelerationism is a sub-ideology which seeks to hasten the end of modern society, insomuch as it is irredeemably corrupt. Numerous Accelerationist organizations exist and have carried out terror attacks,

such as Atomwaffen, Sonnenkrieg Division and others, albeit on a smaller scale than Bowers. Bowers' success and his post uploaded to Gab prior to carrying out his attack, "Screw your optics, I'm going in", have been immortalized in a series of images as seen below, including the formation of a new term on 4chan and 8chan: Boomerwaffen (a portmanteau of the terms "Boomer", meaning of the "Baby Boomer" generation, and "Waffen" meaning weapon, a term used for SS divisions in the Nazi military).

Bowers' immortalization among the Far-Right has included mentions of canonization due to his actions but has focused primarily on emphasizing Bowers' manliness and "Chad" status. Emphasizing these elements of Bowers' image serves to inspire two separate groups—the physically unfit by appealing to the ability to be immortalized as a "Chad", as well as older members of the Far-Right who may identify with Bowers and be inspired to become a member of the "Boomerwaffen Division".

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Brenton Tarrant: 'Lord' and 'Savior'

Brenton Tarrant is one of the most discussed Far-Right terrorists on social media, image boards and public discourse about the Far-Right. This is due to his almost unprecedented 'success'—having killed 51 Muslims and wounded almost as many others in his bloody massacre in Christchurch, New Zealand, in an attempt to prevent "The Great Replacement", meaning the alleged replacement of European, White populations by nonwhite migrants (often said to be orchestrated by Jews), even naming his manifesto after it.[44]

Tarrant was later captured alive and is currently on trial. Tarrant's attack was well-planned and killed almost as many innocent people as Breivik in 2011 in Norway. Despite having murdered fewer people than Breivik, Tarrant's attack was arguably more influential in mass media and the Far-Right—and this is for several reasons. Firstly, Tarrant livestreamed his attack on Facebook and famously boasted about carrying it out on 4chan's /pol/ imageboard. Tarrant also provided a link to his personal Facebook profile to view the livestream of the attack, and links to the MediaFire hosting site to obtain copies of his manifesto.[45]

File (hide): 8b867149e7cb3a4···.jpg (70.33 KB, 904x711, 904:711, Screw your optics.jpg) (h) (u)

[–] ▶ *ahem* Anonymous 03/15/19 (Fri) 00:28:41 ID: c800e3 No.12916717 >>12916719 >>12916726 >>12916730 >>12916748 >>12916763 >>12916770 >>12916773 >>12916784 >>12916807 >>12916835 >>12916870 >>12916924 >>12916954 >>12916981 >>12917041 >>12917103 [Watch Thread] [Show All Posts]

Well lads, it's time to stop shitposting and time to make a real life effort post.
I will carry out and attack against the invaders, and will even live stream the attack via facebook.
The facebook link is below, by the time you read this I should be going live.
https:// www .face book . com/brenton.tarrant.9
It's been a long ride and despite all your rampant faggotry, fecklessness and degeneracy, you are all top blokes and the best bunch of cobbers a man could ask for.
I have provided links to my my writings below, please do your part by spreading my message, making memes and shitposting as you usually do.
If I don't survive the attack, goodbye, godbless and I will see you all in Valhalla!
https://www.mediafire.com/file/3vcjr5lll3r6xte/The_Great_Replacement.docx/file
https://www.mediafire.com/file/u153u4aqviafb3y/The_Great_Replacement.pdf/file
https://mega.nz/#!e0tQ2Y4K

Tarrant was heavily influenced by manifestos of other Far-Right extremists. In his own manifesto, Tarrant claimed to have been influenced by "Knight Justiciar Breivik" as well as having read the manifestos of other shooters such as Dylann Roof.[46] The reference to Breivik as a "Knight Justiciar" ties in to Breivik's element of holy knighthood being repeated by Tarrant, among other Far-Right activists and expands upon the concept of martyrdom as a noble end-goal for Far-Right terrorists. Martyrdom thus provides a religious element to Far-Right "Knights" by promising them both status and even the potential of holy redemption by their actions on behalf of Christendom.

Tarrant's self-awareness and use of his attack as propaganda was received by the Far-Right in an unprecedented fashion. Tarrant has been canonized by a wide swathe of members of the Far-Right, including but not limited to accelerationists.[47] The Far-Right's iconography of Tarrant is primarily Christian in orientation but includes also more general propaganda content, as well as combinations of the two. Tarrant's popularity on the Far-Right has even led to the founding of unique sub-pages on imageboards (most interestingly "BTG", or "Brenton Tarrant General" on Neinchan, a dark-web hosted imageboard).

The first example that we can see of propaganda content regarding Tarrant is the ubiquitous "Chad" meme. The below meme posted on 4chan presents the "Chad Saint Brenton" and his "loyal Chad Disciples John [Earnest] and Patrick [Crusius]."

"Chad Saint Brenton" is a combination of both the "Chad" meme and canonization, and the text accompanying the section describing Tarrant even mentions that he was "Anointed Saint for his sacrifice." Tarrant's other achievements, such as "removing the most universally hated group of invaders [Muslims], racked up 50" and having "introduced millions to the accelerationist solution" are secondary to his canonization. Tarrant's other contributions and canonization are similar to Breivik as well: both are recognized for their sacrifice but also presented as having taken the moral high-ground as per the Far-Right by acting to remove the "hated group of invaders".

The accessibility of canonization to any potential successful Far-Right terrorist is very much appealing thanks to the inherent hierarchy of "saints" and "disciples". Even if one doesn't succeed in murdering as many as Tarrant or Breivik, becoming a "Chad Disciple" like Patrick Crusius (the El Paso shooter) or John Earnest is eminently possible for the average Far-Right extremist. Earnest even wrote that Tarrant "showed me that it could be done. And that it needed to be done," and others followed in his path.[48] Tarrant's influence on the Far-Right was not only his terror attack, but also his lasting influence on future "martyrs" who viewed him as others viewed Jesus: hated in his time by the masses but ultimately right and thus worth emulating.

Tarrant has also been immortalized in the Accelerationist-style of propaganda. The below image presents Tarrant in traditional Accelerationist style: red-eyed (as seen with Bowers and other "based" Far-Right terrorists), garbed in a Sonnenrad (black sun, a prominent Neo-Nazi symbol) balaclava and armed with his rifle, proclaiming the imminent "end of society".

While beyond the scope of this Research Note, Tarrant held some views that were in sync with Accelerationist ideology and promoted elements of it but wouldn't necessarily have fit in completely with the "Siege" ideology groups or other proponents of Accelerationism, but rather is an "ethnopluralist" inspired by eco-fascism.[49] Despite that, Tarrant's appeal in the Far-Right appears to be almost universal and he has thus been coopted to varying degrees by numerous elements of the Far-Right.

[50]

Tarrant's appeal is widespread among the Far-Right, but most interestingly he was immortalized uniquely as a Christian religious figure beyond sainthood. Far-Right propaganda uploaded to 4chan, 8chan and traditional social media platforms such as Facebook and forums such as Reddit presents him as Jesus. Imagery of Tarrant as Jesus can be attributed to his status in the eyes of many Far-Right activists as a martyr and even savior of their movement. This propaganda includes a variety of imagery ranging from wall paintings, mockups and more. Examining the below images illustrates Tarrant's unique status.

In the above three photos, all uploaded to 4chan, 8chan and social media networks such as Facebook and Vkontakte, "Saint Tarrant" is presented as Jesus, the ultimate martyr, in several classical styles. The image on the right presents Tarrant as Jesus by utilizing Christian imagery merged with military-inspired imagery.[51] Tarrant's upright open hand position, which appears to be a variation of Catholic-style imagery in contrast to the Orthodox-style (holding two charms, one engraved with a Sonnenrad and the other the Celtic cross), his "tactical" clothing is covered and merges naturally into flowing olive-green robes with a Sonnenrad patch in the center. Tarrant is holding his rifle, as well as a copy of his manifesto akin to a bible and his helmet is presented with his GoPro camera on top of it prominently behind a halo.

Tarrant is clearly presented as a militant Jesus figure who has been elevated to this level due to his sacrifice for "mankind". This trend is further displayed in the two images on the left-hand side: in the upper-left Tarrant is yet again presented as Jesus in an oil-painting style albeit more simplistically[52], whereas in the bottom left Tarrant is presented as Jesus sitting on a heavenly throne, being crowned the king of heaven (by being bestowed with a "bowl cut", reminiscent of the "Bowl Patrol" Dylann Roof meme)[53] by both Adolf Hitler and Dylann Roof under the holy sun of the Sonnenrad.[54] This propaganda content has been expanded beyond oil paintings and drawings to mockups of stained glass windows (see image below[55]). This image presents Tarrant in the form of Jesus juxtaposed on a crucifix and under both the Sonnenrad and "Deus Vult", a Crusades-era motto (meaning: 'God wills it') that has recently become affiliated with some Far-Right movements.

Tarrant's terror attack created waves in both mainstream media and the Far-Right, primarily on "Chan" imageboards, Telegram channels and Discord servers which spill over into traditional mainstream platforms. Tarrant's actions lead to his canonization in the Far-Right as Saint Tarrant and even in the eyes of some as Jesus. Tarrant-related propaganda thus serves to present him as a holy figure, but also as one link in the chain of Far-Right terrorists, from Hitler and Dylann Roof and continuing the chain via his "disciples". Tarrant's status as a saint is even accepted by Paganist-inspired Far-Right organizations (see figure 7). Tarrant's status as a "Saint" or even Jesus as the ultimate martyr is presented as attainable and desirable for members of the Far-Right, and Tarrant's stature as Jesus—being reviled in his own time but ultimately right and promulgating the truth—has indeed proven itself as having influenced other attackers and inspired them to follow in his footsteps.

Conclusion

The concept of martyrdom in extremist groups of all types has been an important factor historically and continues to be so today. Martyrdom, by providing an ideological, religious, and occasionally material incentive to join an organization and being willing to die in order to promote its interests, is especially relevant for extremist organizations who often lack other means of incentivizing members to act publicly. In recent years, the concept of martyrdom and its accessibility in the Far-Right has changed drastically and arguably become more in line with traditional forms of martyrdom as seen in global Salafi Jihadist movements.

The willingness to die for the movement is inherent to martyrdom, but to the Far-Right and Salafi Jihadism the concept of willingness to die has been expanded upon. In these terrorist movements, a martyr's willingness to die for the movement carries within it the willingness to kill for it as well, with martyrdom being achieved as the result of carrying out a successful attack. In contrast to Salafi Jihadism, dying as the result of a successful terrorist attack is not a key requirement to becoming a martyr for the Far-Right movement—carrying out the attack and being jailed for it is sufficient.

This development in martyrdom in the Far-Right has occurred over time as the Far-Right in general has transitioned from organized, ideological movements to violent outbursts of terrorism from lone wolves, primarily due to the Internet. This process has translated into the ascension of a more decentralized and occasionally even "leaderless" organizational structure (in the words of James Mason[56]). This structure has necessitated the creation of a system of martyrdom for Far-Right terrorists in line with the goals of current Far-Right extremists and organizations—primarily the desire to encourage individuals to carry out lone-wolf attacks that cannot be easily thwarted by law enforcement or intelligence agents.

This transition also necessitated Far-Right extremists to change their model of martyrdom. Hitler, Mosley and other prominent ideologues and political leaders were once crucial to maintaining an ideological, organizational core that could attract and maintain extremists and keep organizations running on a "low burn". These martyr figures were less capable of inspiring Far-Right extremist lone wolves to carry out successful terror attacks This phenomenon changed with the first successful mass Far-Right terror attack carried out by Anders Breivik, the proverbial lone wolf.

The new possibility of being immortalized as a warrior-martyr in the eyes of the Far-Right was appealing to, and influential on, a number of extremists. Bowers' mass shooting attack on a synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was reminiscent of Breivik's attack in both motive (action against "foreign invaders") and modus operandi. Bowers was immortalized too as a holy warrior. Bowers-related propaganda splits into two main streams: a martial stream which emphasizes the manliness and "Chad"-ness of Bowers while also a number of calls to recognize him and other Far-Right terrorists as "Saints". This stream dovetails with the religious imagery of the "Saint Bowers" stream to appeal to potential Far-Right terrorists on two fronts: both to immortalize them as saints but also to artificially enhance their physical appearance and status. These two attributes would arguably be very appealing to Internet-addicted, less physically fit and older extremists who are now presented with an incentive to become martyrs.

The continuum of Far-Right martyr iconography reached its peak with Brenton Tarrant. Tarrant was heavily influenced by "Knight Justiciar" Breivik and other terrorists such as Dylann Roof. Tarrant brought with him an awareness of the importance of martyrdom imagery and propaganda in the Far-Right and acted accordingly. The response to Tarrant's attacks was tremendous, bringing unprecedented attention to the Far-Right in general and his own particular views in particular. Tarrant was thus coopted by a number of sub-ideologies on the Far-Right, which can be seen by the variety of styles of propaganda used.

Tarrant is presented in different imagery as the warlike "Chad Saint Brenton" whose actions inspired future 'Saints' and "Disciples", as a more traditional Accelerationist-inspired terrorist clad in the Sonnenrad and a balaclava, and finally as Jesus himself. Tarrant's presentation as Jesus, the ultimate martyr and most importantly a "Savior" figure, is an "honor" that other Far-Right terrorists have overall not been accorded. Tarrant being tantamount to Jesus illustrates that Tarrant is viewed as the most influential and important Far-Right "martyr", even more so than Breivik who inspired him. His example provides another level of incentive for Far-Right extremists to carry out attacks, as the new level of adulation is possibly even higher than that of 'Saint' or 'Chad'. Tarrant's stature in the Far-Right is that of Jesus as the Far-Right propaganda narrative emphasizes the parallels between them: both were hated by the masses in their time but were ultimately right, and eventually paid the price for their insistence on telling the "truth", resulting in their eventual ascension.

The Far-Right is, like any other ideological terrorist or extremist movement, dynamic and adaptive to change. The Far-Right has transitioned from organized, hierarchical groups to a more decentralized overall structure. The Internet with its inherent opportunities and challenges lead to the ascension of lone-wolf mass terror attacks which are harder to foil. Encouraging an individual extremist to carry out a terrorist attack outside of the social framework of a terrorist cell is difficult and thus necessitates an effective messaging and propaganda campaign. This propaganda must serve to incentivize the individual to carry out the attack, knowing full well that he will probably die or be captured. This incentivization is expressed in the Far-Right as fabricating the image of terrorists as 'warrior saints' post-attack to immortalize terrorists and improve their social standing.

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Counterterrorism Bookshelf: 19 Books on Terrorism & Counter-Terrorism-Related Subjects

Reviewed by Joshua Sinai

So many books are published on terrorism- and counterterrorism-related subjects that it is difficult to catch up on a large backlog of monographs and edited volumes received for review. In order to deal with this backlog, this column consists of capsule reviews, with Tables of Contents, of 19 books, including also several books published less recently but still meriting attention. Some of the new books will be reviewed in future issues of 'Perspectives on Terrorism' as stand-alone reviews. The books are listed topically.

General

Martin Van Creveld, *Seeing into the Future: A Short History of Prediction* (London, England, UK: Reaktion Books/ Distributed by Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 288 pp., US $ 24,00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-7891-4229-7.

This is a highly insightful account by a veteran academic expert on the history of predictive analytics. Especially noteworthy is the author's breakdown of the art of prediction into three historical eras: ancient Greece, the Bible, and modernity and its introduction of the scientific method, culminating in the current era's utilization of algorithms, such as the ones used by Google, to predict future trends, e.g. in the field of consumer behavior. Predicting future trends, the author concludes, is difficult because reality is shaped by "psychological and social factors, as opposed to physical ones," the "more detailed a forecast, the more likely it is to go wrong," and the "more remote the future we are trying to foresee, the more complex the chain of events that leads to it, and the less accurate our forecasts" (pp. 232-233).

Table of Contents: Introduction; *Part I:* A Mysterious Journey; A Villain of a Magician; In the Name of the Lord; Oracles, Pythias and Sibyls; A Dream to Remember; Consulting the Dead; *Part II*: Be Sober and Reasonable; Searching the Heavens; Clear and Manifest; On Birds, Livers and Sacrifices; The Magic of Numbers; Decoding the Bible; *Part III:* Enter Modernity; From Patterns to Cycles; With Hegel on the Brain; Ask, and You'll Be Answered; The Most Powerful Tools; War Games Here, War Games There; *Part IV:* The Lord of the Universe; Looking Backward; Why is Prediction So Difficult?; Is Our Game Improving?; A World Without Uncertainty?

Dipak K. Gupta, *Understanding Terrorism and Political Violence: The Life Cycle of Birth, Growth, Transformation, and Demise* [Second Edition], 322 pp., US $128.00 [Hardcover], US $ 35.96 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-3672-7712-3.

This is an excellent account by a leading expert on terrorism that applies a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the role of human behavior and individual motivations in shaping the life cycle of violent political movements. This edition updates, revises and expands the author's earlier edition which was published in 2008. In this edition, the author explains the factors that drive "rational" individuals to join violent dissident groups that engage in killing their targeted adversaries, and to be willing to be killed while doing so. To examine these issues, the author draws upon research on brain science, evolutionary biology, and social psychology to explain the drivers behind such pathological collective behavior. The discussion then shifts to applying theories of organizational development to explain how terrorist groups have evolved over the years. Cumulatively, these and other theories help to explain the life cycle of how ideological groups can evolve into terrorist organizations, including, in some cases, criminal syndicates. The author's hypotheses about the origins and evolution of groups that become terrorist are tested by case studies of three disparate terrorist movements: the nationalists of the IRA, the communist Naxalites of India, and the religious fundamentalists of al-Qaeda

and ISIS. The book's account then shifts to explaining what the author terms the global trend of rising tribalism and authoritarianism, which is accompanied by a wave of xenophobia, which is further exacerbated by severe climate change and the consequent rise in sea levels, which could displace millions from the areas least able to mitigate the effects of global warming to the countries that can. Such insights about the wider context that is accompanying the evolution of contemporary terrorism make this book an important contribution to the literature on the multiplicity of systematic crises that are shaping the current global order. The author is Professor Emeritus at the Department of Political Science, San Diego State University, USA, and a Visiting Professor at the University of San Diego, USA.

Table of Contents: Introduction; Into the Mind of An Un-rational Being; Path Toward Pathology: An Individual's Perspective; Terrorism and Political Violence: An Organizational Perspective; The Dynamics of Dissent; Faith, Nationalism, and Class Warfare: Birth of A Movement; Growth and Longevity; A Marriage Made in Hell? Terrorism and Organized Crime; Demise of Dissent; Lands of the Fearful: Tribalism and Authoritarianism, The Fifth Wave; Terrorism's Trap.

John P. Sullivan and Robert J. Bunker (Eds.), ***COVID-19, Gangs, and Conflict*** (Indianapolis, IN: Xlibris/A Small Wars Journal – El Centro Reader, 2020), 235 pp., US $ 44.99 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-6641-2434-9.

In this important and conceptually innovative volume, the contributors examine how the coronavirus pandemic is fueling a variety of conflicts globally, which are exploited by violent extremists for political gain and the latest generation of criminal groups for illicit profit. Criminal groups that exploit the pandemic for their illicit activities, such as gangs, criminal cartels, and mafias that operate in countries such as Brazil, El Salvador, Mexico, Colombia, and South Africa, are highlighted in the volume's chapters. Also examined are the implications for governmental responses to such threat actors, with specific responses involving not only anti-crime measures, but biosecurity components as well. An Afterword by Colin P. Clarke examines the relationship between terrorism, biosecurity, and Covid-19. John Sullivan, a retired Lieutenant with the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, is a Senior Fellow with Small Wars Journal – El Centro. Robert Bunker is Director of Research and Analysis, C/O Futures, LLC, and is a Senior Fellow with Small Wars Journal – El Centro.

Table of Contents: Prologue: COVID-19 – Gangs, Statemaking, Threats, and Opportunities; Foreword: Pandemics and Conflict; ***Introduction***: Pandemics, Governance, and Security; *PART 1:* Strategic Notes; Third Generation Gangs Strategic Note No. 22: Rio's Gangs Impose Curfews in Response to Coronavirus; Third Generation Gangs Strategic Note No. 23: El Salvadoran Gangs (Maras) Enforce Domestic Quarantine / Stay at Home Orders (Cuarentena domiciliary); Mexican Cartel Strategic Note No. 29: An Overview of Cartel Activities Related to COVID-19 Humanitarian Response; Third Generation Gangs Strategic Note No. 24: COVID-19 Gangs and Lockdown in Cape Town; Third Generation Gangs Strategic Note No. 26: COVID-19, Revolutionaries and BACRIM in Colombia; Third Generation Gangs Strategic Note No. 27: COVID-19 and Transnational Italian Mafias; *PART 2***:** Essays; The Covid-19 Crisis and Future US National Security; When Pandemics Come to Slums; Outbreak: COVID-19, Crime and Conflict; Venezuela: Could the Coronavirus Threat be an Opportunity; The Coronavirus is a Call to Build Resilience in Fragile States; Cyber-States and US National Security: Learning from Covid-19; Using Hybrid-Warfare to Defeat Mechanisms to Fight the Coronavirus and Counter Future Bioweapons, A Novel Approach; *Conclusion:* Gangs vs. States – The Battle Over the Contested Pandemic Space; Afterword: Terrorism, Biosecurity, and COVID-19; Postscript: Pandemics and Transnational Crime; Appendix 1: U.S. Naval War College – Humanitarian Response Program – Pandemic Response: Select Research & Game Findings; Selected Readings.

Textbooks on Terrorism and Counterterrorism

Monique M. Chouraeshkenazi, *Homeland & National Security: Understanding America's Past to Protect the Future* (San Diego, CA: Cognella Academic Publishing, 2018), 540 pp., US $ 143.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-5165-1894-4

This interesting and well-presented, comprehensive textbook discusses the origins and evolution of America's response to the multiplicity of threats facing it, beginning with the American Revolutionary War, through the Cold War era, and then the events which, following al Qaida's attacks on 9/11, led to the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security in 2002, which ushered in a new paradigm in the American government's responses to a multitude of threats facing the country. As a textbook, each chapter includes key terms, learning objectives, case studies, application activities, and a practice problems quiz. The textbook is recommended for undergraduate and graduate courses on homeland security subjects. The author, a former anti-terrorism instructor for the United States Air Force, teaches distance learning courses on terrorism and counterterrorism at Southern New Hampshire University and other academic institutions.

Table of Contents: Foreword; Preface; List of Figures; The Evolution of American Policy: Timelines, Events & Conflicts; Introduction to U.S. National Security; The Conceptualization of National Security; National Security Methodologies and Policies; Introduction to Homeland Security: A Historical Impression; Historic Disasters: The Evolution of Homeland Security in the U.S.; American Terrorism; Homeland Security Statutes and Initiatives; Weapons of Mass Destruction and Preventative Measures; Intelligence and Security; Emergency Operating Procedures: Preparedness and Mitigation; Communication, Response, Recovery, and Technology; Where National Security Meets Homeland Security; The Future of National and Homeland Security; Glossary.

Kyle Kattelman, Monique M. Chouraeshkenazi, and Francis Boateng (Eds.), *Terrorism: Strategic and Methodological Approaches* (San Diego, CA: Cognella Academic Publishing, 2019), 374 pp., US $ 83.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-5165-2909-4.

This is a very interesting and useful textbook, in the form of an anthology, that presents strategic and methodological approaches to the study of terrorism and counterterrorism. Following the editors' excellent overview on the scientific study of terrorism, the successive chapters begin with brief overviews, followed by previously published selections by prominent experts on those topics. As an example, in the section on defining terrorism, the editors provide a five page overview, which is followed by an article by James M. Lutz and Brenda J. Lutz on "What is Terrorism? Definition and Classification". The concluding chapter presents the editors' findings on how their approach to scientific methods and research processes can help students comprehend issues such as why terrorists engage in violent attacks and effective measures in response. Instructors that adopt the textbook will receive from the publisher a sample syllabus featuring course objectives and a recommended timeline for assigning chapters, as well as nine PowerPoint presentations, one for each chapter of the text. This textbook is recommended for courses on terrorism and counterterrorism at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Kyle Kattelman is an Assistant Professor in the School of Criminal Justice, Political Science & International Affairs at Fairleigh Dickinson University. Monique M. Chouraeshkenazi a former Air Force Officer specializing in counter-terrorism, cyber-security, knowledge operations, and security management; is also an instructor on terrorism and counterterrorism courses at the Southern New Hampshire University. Francis Boateng is an Assistant Professor of Legal Studies at the University of Mississippi.

Table of Contents: Preface; *Part I:* Introduction; The Scientific Study of Terrorism; *Part II:* Definition of the Problem; What's in a Name?; *Part III:* Historical Trends; The Progression of Terrorism: How to Capture an Audience; Part IV. Methodological Approach to Studying Terrorism; The Rational Terrorist; *Part V:* Ideologies; Ideologies and the Comparative Method; *Part VI:* Motivations and Recruitment; How to Study Motivation: Look at the Levels; *Part VII:* Strategic Interaction and Terrorist Tactics; To Understand Suicide Terrorism, One Must Look at Nonsuicide Terrorism; *Part VIII:* Transnational Terrorism and Democracy; The Confounding

Relationship Between Democracy and Terrorism; *Part IX:* Al-Qaeda and ISIS; Religion and Islamist Terror: Some Clarifications; *Part X:* Final Thoughts; Conclusion; Works Cited.

Robert Kirkland, *Case Studies in Domestic & International Terrorist Organizations* (San Diego, CA: Cognella Academic Publishing, 2017), 76 pp., US $ 48.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-6348-7992-7.

This short anthology on cases in domestic and international terrorist organizations is a useful supplementary resource for courses on these subjects. The case studies, which consist of previously published articles by other authors, cover seven terrorist organizations (see Table of Contents, below). The author is a retired Lieutenant Colonel, United States Army, who currently serves as the coordinator of homeland security studies for Union Institute and University, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Table of Contents: Preface; *Section One*: Domestic Terrorist Organizations; An Ethnographer Looks at Neo-Nazi and Klan Groups; The Radical Environmentalist Movement; Sovereign Citizens: A Growing Domestic Threat to Law Enforcement; The Identity Christian Movement: Ideology of Domestic Terrorism; *Section Two:* International Terrorist Organizations; Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam; Palestinian Terrorist Groups; The Myth of Madness: Cold Rationality and 'Resource' Plunder by the Lord's Resistance Army.

Matthew Lippman, *Terrorism & Counterterrorism: Theory, History, and Contemporary Challenges* (San Diego, CA: Cognella Academic Publishing, 2019), 372 pp., US $ 87.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-5165-2370-2.

This is an excellent, clearly written and well-organized introductory textbook on terrorism and counterterrorism issues. Its 12 chapters cover important subjects, ranging from how to define terrorism, theories of terrorism, terrorist tactics and strategies, types of terrorist groups, the media and terrorism, the involvement by some states as sponsors of terrorism, homeland security, and counterterrorism. The concluding chapter presents the author's findings about contemporary terrorism and future challenges. As a textbook, each chapter includes learning tools such chapter objectives, introduction, summary, review questions, and terminology. This textbook is highly recommended for undergraduate and graduate courses on terrorism and counterterrorism. The author is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Criminology, Law, and Justice at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he teaches courses in criminal law and criminal procedure and has taught courses on civil liberties, law and society, and terrorism.

Table of Contents: Preface; Defining Terrorism; Theories of Terrorism; Terrorist Tactics and Strategies; The Foundations of Modern Terrorism; Ethnonationalist and Revolutionary Terrorism; Religious Terrorism; State Terrorism; Terrorism in the United States; The Media and Terrorism; The Legal and Historical Basis of Homeland Security; Counterterrorism; Donald Trump and Contemporary Terrorism; Appendix.

Robert W. Taylor and Charles R. Swanson, *Terrorism, Intelligence & Homeland Security* [Second Edition] (New York, NY: Pearson, 2019), 512 pp., US $ 179.99 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-1348-1814-6.

This is a comprehensive and detailed textbook on terrorism, counterterrorism, as well as homeland security. It is well produced pedagogically, with each chapter including learning objectives, key terms, boxes highlighting interesting topics and challenging questions to promote class discussion, quick facts boxes, chapter summaries, review questions, chapter summaries, and critical thinking exercises. The textbook is also lavishly illustrated with photos, maps, and useful tables and figures, for example, a useful breakdown of how to define terrorism, the methods used by terrorist groups to recruit and organize. Much of the authors' discussion is well-informed, although, now and then, some of it is biased, for example, their anti-Israel discussion of the country's origin, where they only focus on terrorism by far right Zionist groups, without any mention of Palestinian terror, or their over-emphasis on anti-American traitors such as Bradley Manning and Edward Snowden. This reviewer also disagrees with the author's contention that "there is no quick and easy resolution to terrorism. The continuous possibility of an attack is akin to learning to live with an incurable disease" (p. 6). There are numerous methods

to mitigate and resolve terrorism, as well as to thwart terrorism through effective law enforcement and military intelligence operations. Overall, nevertheless, this is a useful textbook, once an instructor is able to point out to the students some of its shortcomings, because there are still sufficiently insightful chapters to recommend it as an undergraduate or graduate textbook on these subjects. Robert Taylor is Professor in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Texas at Dallas. Charles Swanson, a former police officer, is a faculty member at the Institute of Government at the University of Georgia.

Table of Contents: Part I: Understanding Terrorism; Defining, Conceptualizing, and Understanding Terrorism; Political Ideology and the Historical Roots of Terrorism; Understanding the Middle East and Islam; The Rise of Radical Islam; *Part II:* Typologies, Organizational Structures, Tactics, and Critical Processes of Terrorism; Terrorist Organizations and Structures; Critical Processes of Terrorist Organizations; Typologies of Terrorism: State Involved and Single or Special Issue Movements; Typologies of Terrorism: The Right and Left Wings and Separatist or Nationalist Movements; *Part III:* Responding to the Challenges of Terrorism; Intelligence and Terrorism; Intelligence, Terrorism, and the U.S. Constitution; Homeland Security; America's Vulnerability to Terrorism; Emergency Management; *Part IV:* Combating Terrorism and the Future; Combating Terrorism; Terrorism, Intelligence, and Homeland Security; The Future.

Counterterrorism – Countering Violent Extremism

Amos N. Guiora, ***Freedom from Religion: Rights and National Security*** (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 208 pp., US $ 115.00 [Hardcover], US $ 80.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-1998-9911-1.

This is an excellent and well-argued account by a prominent academic legal authority on the important subject of the relation between the tolerance in mostly Western societies to expressions of religious extremism and the rise of terrorist activity by such groups. To examine these issues, the author discusses how the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Turkey, and Israel have attempted to cope with how these dilemmas affected their security. The author concludes that "society must protect itself more pro-actively and effectively against religious extremism" (p. 118), with governments applying "self-defense measures in the face of religious extremism" (p. 124). Overall, even when weighing a ban against the wearing of a *burkha*, the author advises, "criteria-based, rational decision-making" should be applied, with the "balance between threats and rights… carefully weighed". It is such well-considered and insightful discussion that makes this book an important contribution to the literature on the relation between civil liberties and expressions of religious extremism in democratic societies. The author is Professor of Law at S. J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah, where he teaches Criminal Law, Global Perspectives on Counter-terrorism, Religion and Terrorism, and National Security Law.

Table of Contents: Preface; Foreword; Ignoring the Storm; The Threat of Religious Extremism; The Limits of Freedom of Speech; Freedom of Association; The Role of the Media Regarding Religion; Separating Church and State; Free Exercise of Religion; Cultural Considerations and the Price of Religious Liberty; Confronting the Storm; Recommended Reading List.

Amos N. Guiora, ***Tolerating Intolerance: The Price of Protecting Extremism*** (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 224 pp., US $ 115.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-1993-3182-6.

This book is a follow-up to the author's previous volume on "Freedom from Religion." It differs from the previous book in several ways, including adding the dimension of secular extremism (while still examining religious extremism) to the case studies, which now focus on Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States. Also discussed are the effects of multiculturalism, the role of the Internet and social media in empowering extremist ideas and movements, as well as the roles of economic crises and the breakdown of traditional family structure in contributing to extremist tendencies in societies. All these

issues make this account especially relevant to understanding the spread of extremism in the contemporary period, which is exacerbated by the rise of far-right White Supremacist movements and disruptions caused by the current COVID-19 pandemic. The author concludes with the insightful recommendation that "Dialogue (not echo chamber) and education are, then, the carrots in minimizing extremism; limiting the free speech of extremist inciters is the stick" (p. 183).

Table of Contents: Preface; Introduction; Defining extremism; The dangers extremism poses to society; Multiculturalism; Secular extremism and religious extremism: the differences, causes, and role of religion in fomenting extremism; The power of the Internet and social media in facilitating extremist movements and ideas; Contemporary social tensions; The power of 'hate speech' and what limits should be imposed on free speech in the context of extremism; Looking forward.

Counterterrorism – Intelligence

Anthony R. Wells, *Between Five Eyes: 50 Years of Intelligence* Sharing (Philadelphia, PA: Casemate, 2020), 256 pp., US $ 34.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-6120-0900-1.

This is a fascinating insider's account of the origin and evolution of the more than fifty-year close intelligence sharing relationship called the "Five Eyes" Community - the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Especially pertinent is the chapter on current and emerging threats and their impact on intelligence collection and analysis by the "Five Eyes". These threats include the impact of new surveillance technologies on HUMINT (human intelligence), especially in running covert agents. Other issues of concern include the need to "concentrate joint resources in identifying in real time and eliminating from the worldwide web" extremist terrorism-related content, with radicalization and extremism "growing, not diminishing" (p. 198). The author, originally from Britain, where he received his doctorate, has worked in the US intelligence community.

Table of Contents: The Foundations; The Sources, Methods & Analysis that unite UK-US intelligence in a Common Cause; UK-US intelligence Structure & Organization in the post-World War Two Era; UK-US intelligence in the latter days of the Cold War, and the post-Cold War Era; UK-US intelligence & September 11, 2001, and the Aftermath; UK-US intelligence Roles, Missions, & Operations 1990-2018, and a Review of the Post-World War Two Era; UK-US intelligence and Contemporary & Future Threats; UK-US intelligence and a new Global Strategy to meet the Challenges of the 21st Century.

Counterterrorism – Legal

Amos N. Guiora, *The Crime of Complicity: The Bystander in the Holocaust* (Chicago, IL: Ankerwycke, 2017), 220 pp., US $ 29.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-6345-5731-2.

Although this book focuses on the role of bystander complicity in the Holocaust, its legal and moral discussion is pertinent to counter-terrorism, especially the role of bystanders who may be aware that a perpetrator might be on a trajectory into conducting a terrorist attack, but do not inform the authorities that an attack might be imminent. To explain these issues, the author writes that a person is complicit when he/she "failed to make reasonable efforts to prevent a crime; that failure is tantamount to the crime of nonintervention" (p. 105). While the complicit individual "is not the perpetrator," the author holds that "the complicit individual is liable for failure to act" (p. 106). This issue is complicated, he explains, "The determining factors in assessing complicity include physical proximity to the victim, clarity of the situation, capability of providing assistance, degree of assistance required, and degree of risk intervention implies. Those five, individually and collectively, determine whether the bystander was complicit" (p. 107). The volume's appendix includes a series of questions for further

discussion. For these and other reasons, this book's analysis is highly recommended as an indispensable resource for evaluating the complicity roles of bystanders not only in genocides such as the Holocaust, but in the field of terrorism as well.

Table of Contents: Preface; Introduction; Where I Come From – Who I Am; My Family; Historical Background; Death Marches, Holland, and Hungary; The Bystander and the Victim; The Crime of Complicity; Duty Owed is a Legal Obligation – The Bystander's Legal Obligation; Maastricht, The Netherlands: Summer 2016; Hungary: The Ultimate Bystander? Moving Forward: The Bystander as Crime; Where Do We Go from Here? Afterword; Appendix: Book Club Questions.

Counterterrorism – Red Teaming

Natalia Wojtowicz, *Wargaming Experiences: Soldiers, Scientists and Civilians – Notes from NATO Wargame Designer* (Delft, The Netherlands: J10 Gaming, 2020), 188 pp., US $ 39.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-9-0830-7010-0.

This is a highly innovative and useful account of the field of wargaming by a veteran NATO defense practitioner. The volume's first five chapters discuss the basics of wargaming, with the subsequent eleven chapters presenting the author's experiences in wargaming in areas such as Baltic states security; managing an Ebola outbreak; the battle of Mosul; managing civil preparedness in a disaster; managing the implications of the Russian poisoning of Sergei Skripal, in Salisbury, England; the critical infrastructure in the Middle East, and holding a Joint NATO cooperation exercise. The chapters' discussion is illustrated by numerous diagrams and matrices, making this a valuable teaching and reference resource for those involved in designing and organizing wargame exercises. The author is a lecturer at the Hague University of Applied Sciences in the Safety and Security Management Studies. She previously worked at NATO Headquarters in Brussels in the Defense Investment Division, after which she joined the NATO Civil-Military Cooperation Center of Excellence in the Hague.

Table of Contents: Introduction: Why Wargame?; Definition: What is a Wargame? Application: Who Wargames and Why?; Wargaming Systems Other Than War; Methodology; From a Proof-of-Concept to a Proof-of-Practice; From Cold War to Cold Peace: The Baltic Challenge; From Western Samurai to Transnistria: Masters of Liaison; From Critical Infrastructure to Critical Vulnerability: Dam in Distress; From Resilience in Slides to Resilience in Ebola Case Study: Choose Your Stakes; From Dungeons and Directors to Escape Room: A Call to Adventure; From Complex to Conscious: Mosul Battle Case Study; From Combat Readiness to Civil Preparedness: Skripal Case Study; From Collective Training to Individual Performance: Joint Cooperation 2019; From Collective Defense to Individual Decision-Maker: Faroe Islands Case Study; Experiences in Wargaming: Collection and Discussion; List of Figures; List of Tables.

Counterterrorism – Workplace Violence Prevention

Robin C. Nagele, Claire Knowles, and Richard Knowles, *Guide to Reducing the Risk of Workplace Violence…The Absolute Essentials* (St. Petersburg, FL: Nagele, Knowles and Associates, 2020), 86 pp., US $24.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-9721-2048-7.

With numerous individuals who conduct terrorist-driven attacks also targeting co-workers, such as Major Nidal Hasan's November 2009 attack against his fellow soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas, and the radicalized husband-and-wife team who attacked the husband's co-workers at their holiday party in San Bernardino, California, in early December 2015, it is important for the counterterrorism community to be aware of workplace violence. This insightful book by veteran practitioners in preventing workplace violence is an ideal resource for gaining a better understanding. It provides essential information to enable not only workplace security departments, but

also counterterrorism practitioners to know how to develop a comprehensive workplace violence prevention program that can aid in identifying suspicious warning indicators that a susceptible employee might be on a trajectory into carrying out a violent attack against fellow employees, including for employment grievance issues that are combined with extremist ideological vengeance against one's place of employment (or former employment). The authors are principals of Nagele, Knowles and Associates, a St. Petersburg, Florida-based consultancy on workplace violence prevention.

Table of Contents: Content Statement & Testimonial; About Nagele, Knowles and Associates; Are You & Your Organization Prepared?; The Penny Metaphor; The Basics / Points to Consider; About Bullying…and About Harassment; Iceberg of Ignorance; Incivility; More on Bullying / Mobbing (because it is pervasive & hurtful); Emotional Intelligence; Speaking of H.R. (Huge Responsibilities); Leadership; Respect; More on Leadership (because is it so important / The Silver Bullet; What Does a Civil Workplace Look Like?; Preventing Sexual Harassment – It is a Big Deal!; Hidden Costs of Workplace Violence; Comprehensive Workplace Violence Program…What's Included?; Why so much Violence?; EAP – Employee Assistance Professionals & Program; Anger Management; Terminating the Contentious Individual; The Real Deal – Security Mindedness & Active Shooter Protocol; Situational Awareness; Our Offerings.

Psychology of Terrorism

Abigail R. Esman, ***Rage: Narcissism, Patriarchy, and the Culture of Terrorism*** (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books/ An Imprint of the University of Nebraska Press, 2020), 264 pp., US $ 29.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-6401-2231-4.

This is an interesting and well written account of the connections between individuals who engage in domestic abuse – and display other psychological disorders such as narcissism – as some of the preconditions that pave the way for some of them to ultimately engage in acts of terrorism against third parties. However, without naming terrorist perpetrators who may have displayed such characteristics, because, for various reasons, the author chose not to name them, it is impossible to ascertain whether this hypothesis can be proven, as the author's reliance on what various psychologists say on this issue is interesting, but insufficient to base this argument on empirical evidence. The book also lacks an index. The New York City-based author, who has also lived in Europe, publishes extensively for various publishers, including the Investigative Project on Terrorism.

Table of Contents: Introduction; The Narcissist; The Shame and the Power; Honor Society; Empathy; The Abuser; The Abused; Terror, Honor, Violence; The Women; The Ties That Bind; Peace at Home, Peace in the World; Culture of Terrorism; Toward a Solution; Appendix A. Following the Links of Terrorism and Violence; Appendix B. Statistics; Appendix C. Violence at Home, Violence in the World.

Israel – Counterterrorism

Ophir Falk, ***Targeted Killings, Law and Counter-Terrorism Effectiveness: Does Fair Play Pay Off?*** (New York, NY: Routledge, 2020), 156 pp., US $ 128.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-3673-3926-5.

This is an important account of the application of the rule of law when it comes to the permissibility and effectiveness of governments' use of targeted killing in counter-terrorism campaigns against terrorist adversaries. Especially noteworthy is the author's basing of overall effectiveness in the employment of the tactic of targeted killings in terms of legal, moral and operational factors. An extensive academic literature on these factors informs the study's argument. To apply the author's thesis, Israel's policy of targeted killings against terrorist adversaries serves as the study's primary case study, with cases from other countries, also discussed

such as the United States' campaign of targeted assassinations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. The book's Epilogue presents an examination of the United States' targeting killing of Iranian Major General Qaseem Soleimani, on January 3, 2020. Regarding the effectiveness of the use of targeted killings, the author concludes that "minimal unintended deaths is in counter-terrorism's best interest. Therefore, while the principle of proportionality complies with legal constraints, the principle of minimal unintended deaths may be of greater weight" (p. 116). Regarding the targeted killing of Soleimani, the author insightfully finds that this tactic is effective when it "sends a message," in this case to the Iranian leadership and others, that they will be held accountable "for their clandestine attacks or proxy attacks," which is part of the application of "relevant legal criteria," to let them realize that "no terrorist who serves as an imminent threat is immune to targeting" (p. 132). The book's Annex includes a valuable discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of several databases on American targeted killings. The author is an Israeli lawyer and a Research Fellow at the International Institute of Counter Terrorism (ICT) in Herzliya, Israel.

Table of Contents: Introduction; The Permissibility of Targeted Killing; Measuring the Effectiveness of Israel's Targeted Killing Campaign; Unintended Deaths and Targeted Killings' Effectiveness; Discussions and Conclusions: Does Fair Play Pay Off?; Epilogue: Targeting Soleimani; Annex: American Targeted Killing.

Shabtai Shavit, *Head of the Mossad: In Pursuit of a Safe and Secure Israel* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020), 434 pp., US $ 29.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-2681-0833-5.

When a former head of the highly secretive Israeli Mossad publishes a political memoir it becomes a newsworthy event, making this book especially important. Following a distinguished military career in Israeli Special Operations, Mr. Shavit served as director of the Mossad from 1989 to 1996, after which he continued to play a prominent role in Israeli national security as chairman of the Institute for Counterterrorism (ICT) at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya and as a business entrepreneur. He is also a prominent advocate for greater peace initiatives by the Israeli government to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this gripping memoir, which reads like a spy novel, Mr. Shavit writes about his role in closely witnessing the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the first Gulf War, the Oslo peace process with the Palestinians and then with Jordan, as well as the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995. More recent events in Israeli national security are also discussed. Also valuable are the author's numerous practitioner insights on the role of intelligence in counter-terrorism, such as his observation that HUMINT (human intelligence) is "the pinnacle of the art of intelligence" because it "is the only intelligence discipline that enables us to ask questions of the source and receive answers" (p. 20), and its "potential to delve deep into the enemy's true intentions. This point deserves to be emphasized especially given today's reality, in which there is an almost religious worship of technology and a tendency to devote the lion's share of the intelligence budget to it" (p. 20).

Table of Contents: Introduction; Intelligence; Intelligence and the International Arena; Intelligence and National Security; Diplomatic Perspective; Wars; Appendix: In Memoriam.

United States – Far-Right Wing Terrorism

Sam Jackson, *Oath Keepers: Patriotism and the Edge of Violence in a Right-Wing Antigovernment Group* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2020), 240 pp., US $ 105.00 [Hardcover], US $35.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-2311-9345-0.

This is a detailed account of the Oath Keepers far-right militant group. As the author explains, the group was formed in 2009 and gained notoriety for its resistance to government authority in the Bundy Ranch standoff of 2014 and the Malheur Refuge occupation of 2016. In terms of its size, the author estimates that it has approximately 5,000 active members, but in today's highly polarized political environment, together with other far right-wing groups, it plays an important role in these groups' violent street demonstrations. To explain the nature of the group, the author begins his discussion with a chapter on right-wing extremism in

the United States, which is followed by a detailed discussion of the Oath Keepers origins, leadership, ideology, and activities. In the conclusion, the author observes that the group's future direction will be influenced by the results of the November 2020 presidential election. "If the Democrats retake political power," he writes, "the group is likely to have more grievances to talk about that will resonate with a larger audience" (p. 124). As an empirically-based study, the book's appendices include a discussion of data and methods, as well as the group's ideological proclamation. The author is an Assistant Professor in the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity at the University at Albany.

Table of Contents: Introduction; Understanding Right-Wing Extremism in the United States; Introducing Oath Keepers; An Operational History of Oath Keepers; The Ongoing Struggle Over Natural Rights; The American Revolution Redux; "No More Free Wacos"; Conclusion: The Importance of Oath Keepers; Appendix 1: Data and Methods; Appendix 2: Declaration of Orders.

Arie Perliger, ***American Zealots: Inside Right-Wing Domestic Terrorism*** (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2020), 232 pp., US $ 90.00 [Hardcover], US $ 28.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-2311-6711-6.

This is an empirically-based examination of the phenomenon of far-right wing domestic terrorism in the United States. Although it is not a monolithic movement, with numerous groups that are not necessarily affiliated with one another, the author traces their historical roots, their ideologies, leaders, organizations, tactics, radicalization, and activities, whether on the 'ground' protests and attacks, or on the Internet, as well as trends in their violent trajectories. In general, these groups include white supremacists, such as the KKK and neo-Nazis, Christian Identity, skinheads, anti-government groups, and anti-abortion extremists. This account is based on the author's comprehensive dataset of more than 5,000 attacks and their perpetrators from 1990 through 2017, with the findings illustrated by numerous tables and graphs. To counter far-right groups, the author recommends employing "a multitude of measures on the state, communal, and individual levels" that are accompanied by "antidotes to [their] main arguments" that are effective at undermining "the credibility, popularity, and attractiveness of the far right's ideological narratives" (pp. 159-160). Since it appears that this study was written prior to President Donald Trump's accession to the presidency, and the ensuing polarization in the country that is empowering many of these groups, it would be interesting to explore if new counter-measures are now required to mitigate the threats posed by such groups. The Appendix includes a detailed account of the study's methodology and statistical results. The author is professor and director of the graduate program in security studies at the School of Criminology and Justice Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell.

Table of Contents: The Challenges of Comprehending and Responding to Domestic Terrorism; An Ideological Typology of the Violent Far Right; Historical Pillars of the Violent American Far Right; Tactics of the American Far Right; the Rise and Decline of Far-Right Violence in the United States; Perpetrators of Far-Right Violence; Contemporary Discourse of the American Far Right; The Future of the Violent American Far Right; Appendix: Methodology and Statistical Results.

About the Reviewer: **Dr. Joshua Sinai** *is the Book Reviews Editor of 'Perspectives on Terrorism'. He can be reached at: Joshua.sinai@comcast.net.*

Aaron Y. Zelin, Your Sons Are at Your Service: Tunisia's Missionaries of Jihad

(New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2020), 400 pp., US $120.00 [Hardcover], US $ 40.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-2311-9377-1.

Reviewed by Fabio Merone

This book is an historical account of the Tunisian Salafi-jihadi movement, covering the period from the 1980s until to the late 2010s when the participation of Tunisians foreign fighters in the Syrian jihad became a prominent news story. The book's focus is on jihadism and Ansar al-Sharia Tunisia (AST), which emerged as the most important Salafi-jihadi movement between 2011 and 2013, in post-revolutionary Tunisia. Zelin argues that the expansion of AST between 2011 and 2013 was the consequence of the Islamist party Nahdah's "light touch" approach when in government (p.96). The author calls it "the original sin" of the transitional government (p.97) and this argument is the major thread of the story. While the organization was born when its members were in prison, it began to operate freely thanks to the 2011 amnesty law, which allowed for the release from jail of most of the country's jihadis (p. 94-95).

The author must be praised for the enormous effort he made in collecting primary source material, such as online data, trial investigation documents and police reports about the group. However, the book's flaw is that this descriptive knowledge and data are not exploited for original analytical insights and fails to explain satisfactorily why jihadism became a force, so a broader political and sociological story is missing from the account.

AST became a central actor not simply because the transitional government allowed it to exist through its light-touch approach to freedoms and liberties. The author's main interest is 'recruitment' and the book revolves mainly around this issue. Tunisian fighters became numerous around the world because of the successful jihadi 'recruitment' campaigns; itself the consequence of AST's ability to make use of the country's permissive environment to build those networks between 2011 and 2013. Therefore the book's main preoccupation is to understand the logic and success of AST's recruitment.

The Tunisian experience of a jihadi movement that tries to build a new type of jihadi organization deserved more in-depth analysis than offered in this book, and it is a pity that the author fails to achieve it despite his extensive knowledge of the topic. The author could have gone beyond the focus on recruitment strategy and could have better exploited the information and the data collected. For example, the author maps the geography of AST's local groups, which he himself argues is a nation-wide organization (chapter 6). However, there is no analysis as to what this map might actually represent from a sociological perspective. Tunisian jihadis come from different backgrounds, but their social base is typical of the urban disenfranchised neighborhoods, which should lead to ask questions about motivations for mobilization and for participation in the political life of the country beyond the slogans of democratization and not simply about the recruitment in terrorist networks.

Most surprisingly, the book's account lacks an in-depth engagement with AST's dawa-first approach, although an entire chapter is dedicated to the issue (chapter 5). The book also does not elaborate on the implications of the movement's focus on social and charitable activities. The author himself argues that the latter became the core of AST's work (pp.143-153). However, the only conclusion that is drawn from this is that it simply represents a façade transformation, in line with al-Qaeda's evolution, a movement and an ideology (for the author) that is violent by nature. Therefore, what is potentially the evidence of a jihadi group transformation into a social movement that merges in and represents specific social groups and organizes social and political contention, is looked at by the author as a mere deceiving strategy aimed to attract more recruits for a future violent jihad. As a consequence of this approach, the context of the process of democratization is no longer an opportunity for the political transformation of the movement but an opportunity for recruitment of members for more violence. The problem with this approach is that the author does not see beyond the 3,000 Tunisians

who joined the Syrian, Iraqi and Libyan jihads. There is no real discussion, for instance, of why so many young people, in the many thousands, and not necessarily inspired by the group's carrying out violence, were attracted to the movement. The author could have offered a more complex questioning of the movement's particular path.

The author might have looked at the Tunisian context in a slightly different way. The particular reality within which AST developed in Tunisia was one of democratization, and AST's dawa-first approach was also an attempt to integrate the new political field as a social mass movement that organized contention mainly through peaceful means. It was not simply a terrorist-recruiting enterprise. This was a major transformation for an ideologically oriented jihadi movement that the author should have emphasised. The reason for the failure of this transformation was the violent polarization in society and the evolution of the political process in which the main contenders (Islamists and nationalists) looked at each other as enemies. The author does not incorporate this complexity and draws mainly on the narrative of the secular elites that see all Islamists, including Nahdah, as potential terrorists. This polarization in society is the key within which to contextualize Islamism, be it moderate or radical.

In conclusion, this volume presents valuable research on the international jihadi networks when it comes to Tunisian foreign fighters and it provides an in-depth collection of data on AST, but it is not an original contribution for the understanding of the evolution of the jihadi movement. It is an important research that offers raw material for policy analysts and those who in the future would want to employ it for more theoretically sophisticated discussions on Salafi-Jihadism.

About the reviewer: **Fabio Merone** *is an Italy-based independent research on political Islam. He obtained his PhD in Political Science from the University of Ghent in Belgium, with his dissertation titled "Tunisian Islamism Beyond Democratization."*

Haroro J. Ingram, Craig Whiteside, and Charlie Winter, The ISIS Reader: Milestone Texts of the Islamic State Movement

(London: Hurst Publishers, 2020), 326 pp., US $ 44.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-7873-8197-1.

Review by Aaron Y. Zelin

The ISIS Reader: Milestone Texts of the Islamic State Movement is the descendant of a genre of book that has become common in the post-9/11 era in attempting to understand the ideas that undergird the jihadi organizations that are at war with the United States and its allies in the Arab and Muslim world, the West, and beyond. Between 2005 and 2010 there were three books that published primary sources from Usamah Bin Ladin and al-Qaeda, while a second wave of books in the two years prior to *The ISIS Reader's* release covered al-Qaeda in the Ayman al-Zawahiri era and Boko Haram/the Islamic State's West Africa Province.[1]

What sets *The ISIS Reader* apart from these past enterprises is that although there are introductory remarks at the beginning of each book, at the front of sections separating themes or years, or short biographies on particular individuals, *The ISIS Reader* not only presents the primary sources themselves, but helps analyze and contextualize each specific document they present in the book. This adds an extra layer for both individuals that are new to the topic and those that have studied it for longer since it helps clarify and situates the Islamic State not only within its own history, but also compared with its jihadi competitors. This is further bolstered by the fact that the three authors of this book come from different academic disciplines or areas where they have previously done research on leadership, insurgency and war, and propaganda messaging, among other things, thereby allowing a deeper look at particular documents without sacrificing nuance.

The greatest strength of this work is that unlike many discussions about ISIS that usually begin with its entrance into Syria in April 2013 or its Caliphate announcement in June 2014, the book provides texts from the Islamic State, its predecessor groups and its leaders going as far back as 1994. This allows not only for a greater background on ISIS's full history, but provides an opportunity to see how the thinking of the group has either evolved or remained the same overtime. Therefore, the monograph is divided into sections between the Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi years of the group, the years it became known at the Islamic State of Iraq, the rise of the territorial Caliphate, and the fall of the territorial Caliphate.

Many of the documents presented in *The ISIS Reader* are about the group's strategy, its status at the time and how the Islamic State sought to move forward whether when it was winning or losing, advice to its members and followers, the role of women and media individuals within the organization, and the structure of its bureaucratic organization. One particular text is worth highlighting: the 2009 Fallujah Memorandum (pages 107-148). As the authors note, at the time, very few individuals took it seriously because it was at the nadir of the Islamic State of Iraq (page 107). However, it provided the blueprint for how the Islamic State would build itself back up and become the entity individuals in governments would become surprised by when it came back with such force since ISIS was not truly defeated as many assumed by the Sunni tribal awakening and the U.S. surge of troops in the latter years of the 2000s.

In this text, ISIS noted that it wanted to unify the ranks of the remaining insurgents in Iraq whether through absorption or coercion (pages 117-124), a leadership decapitation strategy against the leaders of the tribal awakening, local collaborators, and specialized leaders within Iraqi military and security forces (pages 125-129), establishing relations and contacts with other tribal leaders (pages 134-137), and acting as intermediaries to settle disputes between different parties locally and building up a *dawa* (outreach/proselytization) apparatus to teach people about the realities of the Islamic State and its ideology (pages 141-143). And since many locally in Iraq as well as those in Washington, DC, did not take the group seriously anymore, it provided the space for the Islamic State to take advantage from 2009-2013 before it became an immediate concern to local and international security.

Unlike the tactical defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq by 2009, when the Islamic State lost its last slice of territory in Baghuz, Syria in March 2019, many within the government and the analytical communities were aware of the lessons of not taking the Islamic State seriously even if it appeared defeated. Due to its resurgence there was a greater understanding of the group's trajectory over time too. In contrast to the Fallujah Memorandum, when then official spokesperson of the Islamic State Abu Muhammad al-Adnani made a speech in May 2016 (pages 249-262) discussing ways forward and preparing for the group's loss of territory and return to insurgency it was not brushed aside.

Yet even with that knowledge, more than a year-and-a-half since the fall of Baghuz, the Islamic State continues to harass its enemies in Iraq and Syria following the same playbook as before. It is also attempting to further build greater infrastructure in its external *wilayat* (provinces). This highlights again that even having the information sometimes does not protect against history potentially repeating itself. Time will tell, however, on that front.

The latter point about external *wilayat* is this reviewer's only major critique of this work, in that the authors did not include Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's November 2014 speech announcing the expansion of the Islamic State beyond its core territories of Iraq and Syria to a range of locations outside from Africa to Asia.

Nevertheless, this is an important work that should be read by anyone interested in truly understanding the history of the Islamic State - whether new students to the field or those within government or practitioner fields attempting to get up to speed on an issue they may have not focused on deeply before. Moreover, it is a useful reference guide for those that have been studying the Islamic State for a while to look back on and recall or cite particular releases from the group over time.

***About the Reviewer*: Aaron Y. Zelin,** *Ph.D., is a Visiting Research Scholar in the Department of Politics at Brandeis University, the Richard Borow Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, an Associate Fellow for the Global Network on Extremism and Technology, and founder of Jihadology.net. He is also author of the new book Your Sons Are At Your Service: Tunisia's Missionaries of Jihad (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020).*

Notes

[1] Bruce Lawrence, *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama Bin Laden*, Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2005; Raymond Ibrahim, *The Al Qaeda Reader: The Essential Texts of Osama Bin Laden's Terrorist Organization*, Portland, OR: Broadway Books, 2007; Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli, *Al Qaeda in Its Own Words*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2010; Donald Holbrook, *Al-Qaeda 2.0: A Critical Reader*, London: Hurst Publishers, 2018; Abdulbasit Kassim and Michael Nwankpa, *The Boko Haram Reader: From Nigerian Preachers to the Islamic State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Bibliography: Democracy and Terrorism

Compiled and selected by Judith Tinnes

[Bibliographic Series of Perspectives on Terrorism – BSPT-JT-2020-8]

Abstract

This bibliography contains journal articles, book chapters, books, edited volumes, theses, grey literature, bibliographies and other resources on the nexus between democracy and terrorism. It focuses on recent publications (up to September 2020) and should not be considered as exhaustive. The literature has been retrieved by manually browsing more than 200 core and periphery sources in the field of Terrorism Studies. Additionally, full-text and reference retrieval systems have been employed to broaden the search.

Keywords: bibliography, resources, literature, terrorism, democracy, democratization, elections, policy, politics, political impact

NB: All websites were last visited on 26.09.2020. - See also Note for the Reader at the end of this literature list.

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Note for the Reader

Whenever retrievable, URLs for freely available versions of subscription-based publications have been provided. Thanks to the Open Access movement, self-archiving of publications in institutional repositories, on professional networking sites, or author homepages for free public use (so-called Green Open Access) has become more common. Please note, that the content of Green Open Access documents is not necessarily identical to the officially published versions (e.g., in case of preprints); it might therefore not have passed through all editorial stages publishers employ to ensure quality control (peer review, copy and layout editing etc.). In some cases, articles may only be cited after obtaining permission by the author(s).

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Recent Online Resources for the Analysis of Terrorism and Related Subjects

by Berto Jongman

Most of the clickable items included became available online between August and October 2020. They are categorized under thirteen headings (as well as sub-headings, not listed below):

1. Non-Religious Terrorism
2. Religious Terrorism
3. Terrorist Strategies and Tactics
4. Conflict, Crime and Political Violence other than Terrorism
5. Extremism, Radicalization
6. Counterterrorism - General
7. Counterterrorism: Specific Operations and/or Specific Policy Measures 8. Prevention, Preparedness and Resilience Studies
9. State Repression, Civil War and Clandestine Warfare
10. Intelligence Operations
11. Cyber Operations
12. Risk and Threat Assessments, Forecasts and Analytical Studies
13. Also Worth the Time to Read/Listen/Watch

N.B. *Recent Online Resources for the Analysis of Terrorism and Related Subjects* is a regular feature in 'Perspectives on Terrorism'. For past listings, search under 'Archive' at http://www.universiteitleiden.nl/PoT

1. Non-Religious Terrorism

F.N. Jan, I. Marandici. Libya: a country up for grabs? The National Interest, September 30, 2020. URL: https://nationalinterest.org/feature/libya-country-grabs-169831

S. Jones. How Spanish writer's novel about ETA terror campaign became global hit. The Guardian, September 25, 2020. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/25/how-spanish-writers-novel-patria-about-eta-terror-campaign-became-global-phenomenon

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DPR threatens to attack Ukrainian forces in Donbas. UAWire, August 29, 2020. URL: http://www.uawire.org/dpr-threatens-to-attack-ukrainian-forces-in-donbas

Sudan: main rebel alliance agrees landmark peace deal with government. Middle East Eye, August 30, 2020. URL: https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/sudan-main-rebel-alliance-agree-landmark-peace-deal-government

2. Religious Terrorism

2.1. Al Qaeda and its Affiliates

F. Bezhan. Is the Taliban seeking a 'Sunni Afghan version' of Iran? RFE/RL, October 2, 2020. URL: https://www.rferl.org/a/is-the-taliban-seeking-a-sunni-afghan-version-of-iran-/30870998.html

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About the Compiler: **Berto Jongman** *is Associate Editor of 'Perspectives on Terrorism'. He is a former senior Military Intelligence Analyst and currently serves as an International Consultant on CBRN issues. A sociologist by training, he previously worked for Swedish and Dutch civilian research institutes. Drs. Jongman was the recipient of the Golden Candle Award for his World Conflict & Human Rights Maps, published by PIOOM. He is editor of the volume 'Contemporary Genocides' (1996) and has also contributed to various editions of 'Political Terrorism', the award-winning handbook of terrorism research, edited by Alex P. Schmid.*

Conference Monitor/Calendar of Events

(October 2020)

Compiled by Olivia J. Kearney

The Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), in its mission to provide a platform for academics and practitioners in the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism, compiles an online calendar, listing recent and upcoming academic and professional conferences, symposia and similar events that are directly or indirectly relevant to the readers of *Perspectives on Terrorism*. The calendar includes academic and (inter-) governmental conferences, professional expert meetings, civil society events and educational programs. The listed events are organised by a wide variety of governmental and non-governmental institutions, including several key (counter) terrorism research centres and institutes.

We encourage readers to contact the journal's Associate Editor for Conference Monitoring, Reinier Bergema, or Olivia Kearney, Editorial Assistant, and provide them with relevant information, preferably in the same format as the items listed below. Reinier Bergema can be reached at <r.bergema@icct.nl> or via Twitter: @reinierbergema and Olivia Kearney can be reached at <oliviaj.kearney@gmail.com> or via Twitter: @oliviajkearney.

October 2020

Emerging Trends in Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism: A Focus on Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism
UNCTED, UN New York
6 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @UN_CTED

Misogynistic Terrorism and the Far-Right
Monash University, Canberra
6 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @MonashUni

Community-Focused Interventions Against Terrorism
ICSVE, Washington DC
7 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @icsve

Leading the Blueprint: International Perspectives on Blockchain for Nuclear Security
Stimson Center, Washington DC
7 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @StimsonCenter

Regional Security and De-Escalation in the Middle East: What Role for Europe?
Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome
7 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: n/a

Ten Years of Pan-Arab Protests: Understanding the New Dynamics of Change
Wilson Center, Washington DC
7 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @thewilsoncenter

Virtual Workshop: Gender & Extremism and Framing Terrorism
TSAS, Waterloo, Canada
7 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @TSASNetwork

GLOBSEC 2020 Bratislava Forum
GLOBSEC
7-8 October, Bratislava, Slovakia
Website: visit | Twitter: @GLOBSEC

A Conversation with NCTC Director Christopher Miller
CSIS, Washington, DC
8 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CSIS

"American Zealots" with Arie Perliger
Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center, Bethesda, Md.
8 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @DSGNow

Is Kenya Succeeding in Preventing Violent Extremism?
Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Nairobi, Kenya
8 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @issafrica

Lessons from Africa: Building Resilience through Community-Based Health Systems
Wilson Center, Washington DC
8 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @thewilsoncenter

QAnon: The Crank Cult Comes to Britain: What is it and Why Should We Care?
Quilliam, London
8 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @QuilliamOrg

Researching the Far Right: Methodology Matters Researching the Far Right
C-REX, Oslo
8 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CrexUiO

Responses to Returning and Repatriating ISIS Affiliates
GWPOE, Washington DC
8 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @gwupoe

Islamist Rebel Governance Workshop
The Graduate Institute: Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, Geneva
8-9 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @IHEID

Emerging Trends in Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism and Addressing Violent Extremism through a Human Rights-Based Approach
UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC), New York
9 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @UN_CTED

Countering Terrorism in Southeast Asia 18 Years After the 2002 Bali Bombing
Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research, Manila
12 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: n/a

Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience Book Project
Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism, Ankara, Turkey
13 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: n/a

How to Lose the Information War
Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford Cal.
13 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @FSIStanford

When Disaster meets Conflict: Lessons on Disaster
KUNO, The Hague
13-14 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @KUNO_platform

IFTRIP Livestream: Defining Terrorism
International Forum of Terrorism Risk (Re)Insurance Pools
13-15 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @IftripO

CST Virtual Roundtable: 'Strategic Responses to Organized Crime: Lessons from the Americas'
Centre for Conflict, Security and Terrorism, Nottingham, UK
14 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @UniofNottingham

How have some Nigerian states resisted Boko Haram?
Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Nairobi, Kenya
14 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @issafrica

The Regional Impact of Intra-Afghan Talks
Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, USA
14 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @QuincyInst

Threat of Dissent: A History of Ideological Exclusion and Deportation in the United States
Wilson Center, Washington DC
14 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @thewilsoncenter

Cyber Security Summit 2020
Cyberpol Summit, Geneva
15 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: n/a

Gendered Justice: Female Perpetrators and Extremism
GWPOE, Washington DC
15 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @gwupoe

Islamic State teach-in
Terrorism and Political Violence Association, Leeds, UK
15 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @_TAPVA

John Brennan's Undaunted: My Fight Against America's Enemies, At Home and Abroad
Center on National Security, New York
15 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CNSFordhamLaw

Friday Seminar Series, featuring Cynthis Miller-Idriss
John Jay College Center on Terrorism, New York
16 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @JohnJayCollege

Security Days: Revitalizing Trust and Co-operation in Europe: Lessons of the Paris Charter
OSCE
16 October, Prague and *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @OSCE

Eurojust Virtual Open Day
Eurojust, The Hague
17 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @Eurojust

Terrorism and Media [Course]
NATO Centre of Expertise Defence Against Terrorism (COEDAT), Ankara, Turkey
19-23 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: *n/a*

Building a National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE): A Virtual Learning Journey
Geneva Centre for Security Policy
19 October – 13 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @theGCSP

ISIS During the COVID Pandemic: A Resurgence?
JASON Institute, The Hague
20 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @stichtingjason

Police and VRWE Lone Actors
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), Amsterdam / Brussels
20 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RANEurope

Terrorism Prosecutions: A Conversation with Acting US Attorney Seth D. DuCharme
GWPOE, Washington DC
20 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @gwupoe

Losing the Long Game: The False Promise of Regime Change in the Middle East
Foreign Policy Research Institute, Philadelphia, PA
21 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @FPRI

Modern Deterrence Spring 2020 Conference
Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)
21 October, London, United Kingdom
Website: visit | Twitter: @RUSI_org

Multilateralism and Armed Drones: Escaping the Gridlock
Stimson Center, Washington, DC
22 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @StimsonCenter

Pandemic of Repression in Africa: Challenges for Civil Society
Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen
22 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @diisdk

Violent Extremism in Canada: Anticipating the Future by Clarifying the Past
TSAS, Waterloo, Canada
22 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @TSASNetwork

Tackling the Pandemic in Situations of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence
CSIS, Washington, DC
23 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CSIS

The Dynamics of Refugee Return: Syrian Refugees and Their Migration Intentions
Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford, Cal.
28 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @FSIStanford

1980-1920: The Forgotten History of Right-Wing Terrorism
FORENA/University of Applied Science Düsseldorf & NS-Dokumentation Centre of the City of cologne, and Nachwuchsforschungsgruppe der Hans-Böckler-Stiftung
29 October, Cologne, Germany
Website: visit | Twitter: *n/a*

A Thin Line: Freedom of Expression Vis-à-vis (Extremist) Hate Speech
International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), The Hague
29 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @ICCT_TheHague

Building Stronger Societies: Involving Teenagers in National Security
RUSI, London
29 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RUSI_org

Future of Palestine: One state, Two states, No state
Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen
29 October, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @diisdk

National Security Law and the Coming AI Revolution
Syracuse University Institute for Security Policy and Law, Syracuse, NY
29 October, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @SU_ISPL

November 2020

CBRNe Convergence Boston
CBRNe Convergence
2-4 November, Boston (MA), United States
Website: visit | Twitter: @cbrneworld

Misogynistic Terrorism and the Far-Right
Monash University, Australia
3 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @MonashUni

Preparation Victim's Day 2021
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN, Amsterdam, Brussels)
3 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RANEurope

Defence Against Terrorism Seminar
NATO Centre of Expertise Defence Against Terrorism (COEDAT), Ankara
3-4 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: *n/a*

Workshop: Counter-Terrorism Handbook
NATO Centre of Expertise Defence Against Terrorism (COEDAT), Ankara
5-6 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: *n/a*

Friday Seminar Series, featuring Noemie Bouhana
John Jay College Center on Terrorism, New York
6 November, *online*

Website: visit | Twitter: @JohnJayCollege

The Role of Human Rights Defenders in Promoting and Protecting Human Rights
OSCE, Vienna
6 November, *Online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @OSCE

1325 Twenty Years On – The Evolution of the WPS [Women, Peace, and Security] Agenda after 9/11
International Centre for Counter Terrorism (ICCT), The Hague
11 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @ICCT_TheHague

Islamic Humanitarian Law and Islamic Armed Groups
Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford, Cal.
11 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @FSIStanford

Understanding the Rise and Resilience of Islamic State Khorasan in Afghanistan
Peace Science Society, Denton, Texas
12-14 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @PeaceScienceSoc

2020 Annual Meeting of the Peace Science Society
START UMD, College Park, Maryland
12 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @START_umd

Middle East Congress on Politics and Society
Middle East Congress, Sakarya, Turkey
14-15 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @SAUOrtadogu

Online Workshop on Open Source Research
Bellingcat, Amsterdam
16-19 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @Bellingcat

Homegrown: ISIS in America
START UMD, College Park, Maryland
17 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @START_umd

2020 Stockholm Security Conference
Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
17-20 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @sipriorg

Security, Democracy & Cities Conference
European Forum for Urban Security
25-27 November 2020, Nice, France

Website: visit | Twitter: @Efusnews

Youth Isolation, How to Get Them Out of It
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), Amsterdam, Brussels
26-27 November, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RANEurope

December 2020

Engaging with Non-Violent/Not Yet Violent Activists and Extremists to Prevent Them from Turning to Violence
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN),Amsterdam, Brussels
2 December, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RANEurope

Border Security, Refugees and CT
Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism, Ankara, Turkey
7-11 December, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: n/a

89th Interpol General Assembly
Interpol
7-8 December, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Website: visit | Twitter: @Interpol_HQ

Police and Dealing with Online Incitement, Mobilisation, Recruitment and Radicalization
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN, Amsterdam, Brussels)
8 December, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RANEurope

Historical Appropriation Among Far-Right Extremists
START UMD, College Park, Maryland
10 December, *online*
Website: visit | Twitter: @START_umd

Dem Extremismus an die Wurzel! – Prävention und Repression im Zusammenspiel zwischen lokaler, nationaler und europäischer Ebene
Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge
15-16 December, *Nurnberg, Germany*
Website: visit | Twitter: *n/a*

January 2021 & Beyond

20th Nordic Migration Research Conference & 17th ETMU Conference
University of Helsinki
11-14 January 2021, Helsinki, Finland
Website: visit | Twitter: @Helsinkiuni

Advanced Winter Programme: Preventing, Detecting and Responding to Violent Extremism
Leiden University Centre for Professional Learning & International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague
25-29 January 2021, The Hague, The Netherlands
Website: visit | Twitter: @UniLeidenCPL; @ICCT_TheHague

26th German Prevention Congress/ 14th Annual International Forum
German Prevention Congress
10-11 May 2021, Cologne, Germany
Website: visit | Twitter: @praeventionstag

The 20th Jan Tinbergen European Peace Science Conference
European Peace Scientists
29 June – 1 July 2021, London, United Kingdom
Website: visit | Twitter: @NEPS01

Acknowledgement

Special thank goes out to Alex Schmid and Berto Jongman for their suggestions and contributions to this conference calendar.

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About *Perspectives on Terrorism*

Perspectives on Terrorism (PoT) is a joint publication of the Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), headquartered in Vienna, Austria, and the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) of Leiden University, Campus The Hague. PoT is published six times per year as a free, independent, scholarly peer-reviewed online journal available at the following URL: **https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/perspectives-on-terrorism.**

PoT has over 9,100 subscribers and seeks to provide a platform for established scholars as well as academics and professionals entering the interdisciplinary fields of Terrorism, Political Violence and Conflict Studies. The editors invite researchers and readers to:

- present their perspectives on the prevention of, and response to, terrorism and related forms of violent conflict;
- submit to the journal accounts of evidence-based, empirical scientific research and analyses on terrorism;
- use the journal as a forum for debate and commentary on issues related to the above.

Perspectives on Terrorism has sometimes been characterised as 'non-traditional' in that it dispenses with some of the rigidities associated with commercial print journals. Topical articles can be published at short notice and reach, through the Internet, a much larger audience than subscription-fee based paper journals. Our online journal also offers contributors a higher degree of flexibility in terms of content, style and length of articles – but without compromising professional scholarly standards. The journal's Research Notes, Special Correspondence, Op-Eds and other content are reviewed by members of the Editorial Team, while its Articles are peer-reviewed by outside academic experts and professionals.

While aiming to be policy-relevant, PoT does not support any partisan policies regarding (counter-) terrorism and waging conflicts. Impartiality, objectivity and accuracy are guiding principles that we require contributors to adhere to. They are responsible for the content of their contributions and retain the copyright of their publication.