ISSN 2334-3745

PERSPECTIVES ON TERRORISM

Volume XVI, Issue 3
June 2022

A JOURNAL OF THE
TRI TERRORISM RESEARCH INITIATIVE
Enhancing Security through Collaborative Research

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Words of Welcome from the Editors

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to announce the release of Volume XVI, Issue 3 (June 2022) 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 can be found at: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/perspectives-on-terrorism.

Perspectives on Terrorism (PoT) is indexed by JSTOR, SCOPUS, and Google Scholar where it ranks No. 3 of journals in the field of Terrorism Studies. Jouroscope™, the directory of scientific journals, has just listed PoT as one of the top ten journals in the category free open access journals in social sciences, with a Q1 ranking. Now in its 16th year of publication, PoT has almost 8,000 registered subscribers and many more occasional readers and website visitors in academia, government and civil society worldwide. 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 four **Articles.** The first, by *Eylem Kanol*, is based on a large database of European foreign fighters and explores how and where they were radicalised. The second article by three Indonesian scholars – *Iwa Maulana, Dewi Indriana, and Gatot Goei* – explains how their country tries to cope with high-risk extremists in its prison system. The third article, by *Robert F. Kelly* and *Dean C. Alexander*, compares an American non-political mass shooting with a political one in terms of pre-attack variables (e.g., leakage) that can play a role in future prevention. Finally, *Adib Abdulmajid* examines incitement in a comparative perspective by exploring how one Shi'ite and one Sunni extremist group instrumentalize religion for their recruitment drives.

The **Resources** section features our regular CT-Bookshelf, with ten short reviews by our book reviews editor, *Joshua Sinai.* This is followed by two longer reviews of recent books by *Alisa Stack*. Our information resources editor, *Judith Tinnes,* offers an extensive bibliography on Islamophobia while *David Teiner* provides a bibliography on the conflict in Yemen. *Berto Jongman* contributes another of his wide-ranging surveys of recent online resources on terrorism and related subjects.

In **Announcements**, *Olivia Kearney* presents her regular "Conference Calendar", which includes the annual World Summit on Counter-Terrorism conference in September. Finally, the **About Perspectives on Terrorism** section lists the people behind the journal and their tasks.

The texts of the current issue of *Perspectives on Terrorism* have been selected and prepared by *James Forest and Alex Schmid,* the journal's principal editors. Editorial Assistant *Jodi Moore* handled proof-reading, while the technical online launch of the June 2022 issue of our journal has been in the hands of our Associate Editor for IT, *Audrey J. Vrolijk* (ISGA, The Hague).

Contexts of Radicalization of Jihadi Foreign Fighters from Europe

by Eylem Kanol

Abstract

The research for this article is based on original biographical and relational data on 1,019 foreign fighters from France, Germany, and the UK who had traveled to a conflict country due to their Jihadi convictions between the years 2000 and 2016. It investigates where and how they had radicalized. The findings suggest that foreign fighters were primarily recruited through interpersonal or religious organizational networks. Salafist mosques, radical religious associations, and more informal groups dedicated to proselytizing were particularly crucial to the radicalization process. In contrast, contexts such as the Internet or prisons were comparably less relevant to the radicalization process of foreign fighters. The important role of interpersonal and organizational ties was further evidenced by social network analysis, which found that the majority of foreign fighters were linked within a single social network prior to their mobilization. Overall, the findings document the continued relevance of religious organizations in the recruitment and mobilization of jihadi foreign fighters.

Keywords: Foreign fighters, ISIS, al-Qaeda, radicalization, jihad, social network analysis

Introduction

Journalists, academics, and policy makers alike often puzzle over the radicalization processes of terrorism offenders and foreign fighters. Apart from the micro- and macro-level determinants of radicalization, such as psychological traits, socioeconomic marginalization, or experiences of discrimination, these debates also focus on the question of where radicalization primarily takes place. Arguably, identifying major contexts of radicalization can be crucial for effective policy interventions and counterterrorism measures. Several contexts of radicalization have been highlighted in terrorism and political violence literature. First and most prominently, terrorism and social movement scholars have documented how friendship and kinship ties can enable and facilitate recruitment and mobilization processes.[1] Second, scholars investigating the terror-crime nexus have focused on prisons as major hubs of jihadi radicalization.[2] Third and more recently, the Internet and social media have come under scrutiny and the importance of online radicalization has been emphasized in literature.[3] Finally, earlier accounts recognized mosques and religious associations as relevant venues of ideological encapsulation and recruitment.[4] However, more recently, they are being largely overlooked in literature. Some scholars have argued that these contexts were gradually being replaced by online forums, chat rooms, and social media.[5] Others have asserted that religious organizations are not at all relevant to Islamist radicalization.[6]

In this study, publicly available information on the biographies of foreign fighters from three European countries is used to investigate the relative prevalence of major contexts of radicalization that have been highlighted in literature. Moreover, the biographical analysis is complemented with social network analysis to further examine the interpersonal and organizational ties of foreign fighters prior to their mobilization. The article's focus is on France, Germany, and the UK because these countries were the top three countries of origin of European foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq.[7] It is estimated that more than 1,000 foreign fighters had left France to fight for (or otherwise support) militant Islamist groups in Syria and Iraq, whereas more than 700 fighters departed from Germany and the UK respectively.[8] These numbers illustrate how these countries were particularly affected by jihadi mobilization in Europe.

For the purpose of this study, "foreign fighters" are defined as individuals who have traveled or attempted to travel to Syria, Iraq, or Afghanistan, or any other conflict region motivated by their jihadi ideology. This broad definition includes individuals who were actively involved in armed combat, who have attended mil-

itant training camps, but also a small group of noncombatants, who, for instance, traveled with the aim of marrying a militant abroad (131, 13%). The research for this article identified and collected information on a total number of 565 foreign fighters, who traveled or attempted to travel to a conflict country between the years 2000 and 2016. The author generated profiles and coded detailed biographical and relational information on the foreign fighters using a codebook specifically designed for this research project and created the Jihadi Radicalization in Europe (JRE) database. Another 454 foreign fighters, who fit the sampling criteria, were identified in the Brandeis University's Western Jihadism Project (WJP) database and their profiles were integrated into the JRE database. The resulting database of 1,019 foreign fighters was analyzed to determine the most important contexts of radicalization.

This research article is structured as follows. First, it reviews the theoretical and empirical literature concerning various settings for radicalization, recruitment, and mobilization of jihadi foreign fighters and formulates the author's expectations. This section also includes a brief overview of the use of social network analysis in terrorism studies. Next, it introduces the original data set consisting of profiles of 1,019 foreign fighters and discusses the empirical strategy. Subsequently it presents the main findings from the analyses of the biographies of foreign fighters and the results of the social network analyses. Overall, the findings document the continued relevance of religious organizations in the recruitment and mobilization of foreign fighters from Europe. Thus, the findings challenge previous assertions that posit that religious organizations were being replaced by Internet and social media as the primary contexts of radicalization. The article concludes with a discussion of the implications and limitations of this study.

Contexts of Radicalization

Interpersonal Ties and the "Bunch of Guys" Hypothesis

In his seminal study, Marc Sageman revealed that friendship relationships of Islamist extremists were often formed prior to their involvement with jihad. His study also showed that the majority of them joined jihad in small groups of friends and relatives: "each new group became a 'bunch of guys', transforming its members into potential mujahedin, actively seeking to join the global jihad."[9] For Sageman, social ties are the key element in the radicalization process.[10] Accordingly, social bonds make it easier for individuals to join the jihad by allowing them to rely on mutual emotional and social support, a shared identity, and encouragement to adopt a new faith. Kinship and friendship ties provide a sense of belonging and support that can be appealing to someone who is feeling alienated or marginalized. Moreover, they can also play a role in reinforcing extremist ideologies. In line with this, Nesser argues that interpersonal networks are important drivers of terrorism activity in European countries: "[a] crucial reason why Britain, France, Belgium, and Germany have experienced so many Islamic State plots is that these countries have had substantial jihadi networks since the 1990s, which produced many foreign fighters for Syria."[11]

Scholars of social movements have long since documented how the process through which movement organizations expand their ranks and mobilize support for their causes is "strongly influenced by structural proximity, availability, and affective interaction with movement members."[12] Movement participation is highly unlikely to occur without prior contact with a movement member. Research into the radicalization processes of foreign fighters is overall in line with these observations. For instance, Reynolds and Hafez used social network analysis to examine the mobilization of German foreign fighters.[13] Nearly 80% of foreign fighters in their sample were mobilized within a single interconnected network, thus showing that, similar to other social movements, foreign fighters in Germany were recruited within dense social networks. However, the study was limited in terms of its small sample size (99 observations). Similarly, Bakker and de Bont also found that the jihadist foreign fighters from Belgium and the Netherlands were closely connected to one another by way of family and/or friendship bonds.[14] These preexisting social bonds appear to have played a crucial role in their recruitment and mobilization. Overall, these findings stress the importance of interpersonal ties in the radicalization and recruitment processes. Therefore, interpersonal ties are expected to be central to the jihadi mobilization in Europe.

Internet, Social Media, and Online Radicalization

Often the radicalization process of the so-called "lone-wolves" is attributed to the consumption of online propaganda videos or interactions with recruiters on social media. For instance, Sageman argues that the Internet can facilitate the radicalization of loners, who are active on online forums, where "they share their plans and are encouraged by chat room participants to carry them out."[15] According to proponents of the online radicalization thesis, radical organizations make extensive use of the Internet and social media for propaganda and recruitment activities: They create and share videos of individuals converting to Islam or of preachers giving advice on radical interpretations of Islam.[16] Monitoring the activities of terrorist groups on the Internet, Weimann documented how there were merely a dozen terrorist websites in the late 1990s; whereas by 2000 nearly all groups had established an online presence.[17] Religious seekers, who are searching for answers to questions about their faith, are often confronted with these contents. The Internet is easily accessible almost anywhere in Europe and online content is available to anyone who owns a smartphone or a personal computer. For instance, a television documentary reported how uncomplicated it is for young people to access online videos of Salafist preachers.[18] Using regression analyses, Pokalova found that Internet penetration was a statistically significant predictor of the outflow of foreign fighters from majority non-Muslim countries.[19]

While the Internet serves as the source of nonrelational, vertical diffusion of movement ideology, social media constitutes the relational, horizontal dimension of radicalization. Accordingly, social media channels "provide horizontal communication that is user generated, interactive, instantaneous, highly personalized, and easily mobile. As such, they facilitate the spreading of radical content between like-minded individuals and assist in forging a sense of communal belonging that is likely to appeal to some alienated individuals."[20] Radical organizations and groups use these social media platforms to disseminate images of Muslims suffering in various conflict settings, sparking resentment and reinforcing grievances among their audiences.

The Islamic State has been particularly effective in using social media channels as a venue for recruiting and mobilizing individuals.[21] During the height of the conflict in Syria and Iraq, a very high number of European and Western foreign fighters were actively using social media to document their experiences and inspire others to join the cause.[22] In the United States, Mitts found that "among over a hundred individuals charged with providing material support for ISIS or plotting a violent attack on the organization's behalf, about 62% used social media when they were radicalizing, and among those, 86% expressed their support for ISIS in publicly viewable posts."[23] However, it is important to note that this study primarily focused on the online behavior of individuals who had already expressed interest in the Islamic State or were already sympathizers and thus, were at the later stages of their radicalization.

In contrast, German security agencies analyzed the profiles of over 370 German foreign fighters and reported that the Internet was not a critical factor for radicalization, neither at the beginning nor at the later stages of the radicalization process.[24] In fact, only 9% of the analyzed individuals had no personal contact with the Salafist milieu and were known to have radicalized solely online. A social network analysis of German foreign fighters similarly maintained that online recruitment was not a primary vector of radicalization.[25] A report on 15 cases of extremism and terrorism in the United Kingdom also found meager support for the online radicalization hypothesis.[26] Although the Internet was found to facilitate radicalization, it did not substitute physical contact during the radicalization process. Based on this discussion and the mixed evidence concerning the role of the Internet and social media, this author expects the Internet to be a relevant facilitator of radicalization but not as important as interpersonal ties. Moreover, online radicalization is expected to be more crucial for the later stages of radicalization rather than during the initial stages.

Prisons

European prisons have been pointed out as crucial recruitment grounds and in some cases as bases of operational planning.[27] Basra and Neumann have suggested that the Islamic State was increasingly recruiting

in European jails and among individuals who were previously engaged in violent and criminal activities.[28] Similarly, in an op-ed published in the Guardian, Pantucci highlighted the problem of the spread of violent Islamist extremist ideas in British prisons. Two prominent cases, Richard Reid the "shoe bomber" and 21 July 2005 plot leader Muktar Said Ibrahim, served as examples of individuals who radicalized while serving prison terms for petty crime. Media reports have dubbed a segregated prison wing in the UK as "Jihad University" to illustrate the increased risk of radicalization of inmates. Belgian and French prisons have also been pointed out as being fertile hunting grounds for Islamist recruiters. Both Chérif Kouachi, who was one of the gunmen in the Charlie Hebdo shooting, and Amedy Coulibaly, who was the hostage-taker in the Hypercacher Kosher Supermarket siege, were radicalized in prison by the al-Qaeda recruiter Djamel Beghal.[29] As Bisserbe reports, convicted terrorists like Beghal, "sit atop the social pecking order in many facilities, using jail time to plot new attacks or groom petty criminals for jihad." Acquaintances and friendships that are made in prisons can also later be activated for the purposes of terrorist activities. For example, it was in a Belgian prison where the 2015 Paris attackers Abdelhamid Abaaoud and Salah Abdeslam had met.[30]

For Neumann, the prison represents a place of vulnerability where individuals experience social isolation or personal crisis, both of which are important risk factors for radicalization.[31] Describing his experiences in a Belgian prison, a former convict echoes these observations as he recalls how Muslim youths arrive in prisons alone and how the older Muslim inmates particularly attract those "who want to become fuller members of the group."[32] Silber and Bhatt note that the "prison's isolated environment, ability to create a 'captive audience' atmosphere, its absence of day-to-day distractions, and its large population of disaffected young men, makes it an excellent breeding ground for radicalization."[33] Similarly, Brandon argues that prison inmates who are disaffected "can easily be persuaded that adopting rigid Islamist beliefs will help them turn away from crime."[34] Prisons can also bring together terrorism offenders with other types of criminals, "creating the potential for an 'unholy alliance' between the two."[35] Within the prison context, politically motivated offenders and 'ordinary' criminals can exchange information and transfer skills on procuring weapons, evading authorities, and engaging in violence.[36] Similarly, Olivier Roy highlights prisons as major places of radicalization. Accordingly, prisons link radicals with other radicalized peers outside of any institutionalized religious circuit and facilitate the "reinterpretation of crime as legitimate political protest."[37]

Despite the media attention and the academic focus on the crime-terror nexus, no study has so far investigated the relative importance of prisons in the jihadi radicalization process using a large sample. Moreover, the available studies have mostly focused on terrorism offenders rather than foreign fighters, and they are also characterized by some limitations. Although Roy considers radicalization in prison to be a common feature of jihadi terrorists, he does not provide an exact share of his sample of 140 Western radicals who radicalized in prison. In their influential study, Basra and Neumann sampled 79 recent European jihadists with criminal pasts and found that one-third of those who spent time in prison (12 out of 45 cases) had indeed been radicalized there.[38] However, this is probably an overestimation of the role of the prison in radicalization considering that only individuals with a criminal past were sampled. Moreover, the authors also note that in the majority of the cases the radicalization process continued and intensified after the individuals were released from prison. In a report published by the German security agencies, prisons are not mentioned among the most important contexts of radicalization of the sample's 378 German foreign fighters.[39] Other studies have primarily focused on previous involvement of foreign fighters in criminal activities, but mostly did not investigate the specific role of prisons in radicalization.[40] Given these limitations and the available evidence concerning the role of prisons in the radicalization of German foreign fighters, prisons are not likely to be central to the mobilization of European foreign fighters.

Religious Organizations

According to Silke, before 9/11, "mosques played a key role in providing potential jihadis with a route into groups such as al-Qaeda."[41] Radical preachers like Abu Qatada (alias Omar Mahmoud Othman) or Mustafa Kamel (alias Abu Hamza al-Mazri), both based in London, are known to have actively recruited

potential jihadis. In fact, attendance at one of two London mosques—Brixton Mosque and Finsbury Park Mosque—linked together a considerable share of the UK's Islamist radicals. Similarly, Sageman highlights that it was primarily in mosques where the intensification of religious sentiment and the reinforcement of ideological commitment took place, transforming potential recruits into dedicated militants."[42] Mosques also provided settings in which individuals could make new friends and interact. Particularly in the diaspora, young, alienated Muslims would seek out a mosque to get to know fellow Muslims from their community and thereby, could get linked to the jihad through those who were already connected.

In the social movement literature, places of worship have previously been characterized as "mobilizing structures." Defined as "collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action,"[43] mobilizing structures include all forms of social movement organizations that provide the infrastructure, resources, and staff for sustained collective action.[44] Social movement theory predicts that activism and mobilization are more likely to occur and endure if there is a dense organizational and institutional infrastructure. Citing the role of churches in the civil rights movement in the United States, social movement scholars point to mosques and other types of religious or cultural organizations as an example of formal mobilizing structures within the Islamist movement.[45]

However, some observers argue that recent developments, which involved a combination of state surveillance and public pressure on local religious community leaders, have pushed the mobilization structures of radical Islamists into more informal settings.[46] Reviewing the empirical literature on homegrown terrorism, Hafez and Mullins stress that "[a]s governments in the Muslim world and Europe look askance on promoters of radicalization and take steps to limit their freedom of maneuver in mosques and other recruitment sites, jihadists turn to the Internet, online forums, chat rooms, and a whole range of social media technologies to circumvent the physical and legal limits on reaching new recruits."[47] Sageman also pointed out that radical mosques have been replaced by the Internet and the new online forums.[48] According to this view, radicalization is now primarily taking place online, and the online forums have the same influence that radical mosques had for the previous generation of terrorists.

There are also scholars who go a step further and outright reject that religious organizations play any role whatsoever in the radicalization process. Most prominently, the French sociologist Olivier Roy asserts that almost all the terrorism offenders from Europe "suddenly renew their religious observance, either individually or in the context of a small group (*never in the framework of a religious organization*)."[49] Roy also makes the claim that most of the jihadists have rarely visited a mosque.[50] In line with this, Uçar points out that there is no available evidence that religious extremists in Germany are influenced by mosques.[51] In contrast, the study by German security agencies on foreign fighters from Germany has highlighted the continued relevance of formal mobilizing structures for the radicalization of potential recruits.[52] Their study shows that the majority of foreign fighters had been active in Salafist or Islamist milieus, where they participated in Koran distribution activities, Islamic seminars, and charity events for Islamic causes.

Although some scholars argue that the relevance of religious organizations or mosques as contexts of radicalization may have declined in recent years, drawing on the social movements literature, one can expect that these contexts continue to play an important role in the radicalization process of European foreign fighters.

Social Network Analysis

Social network analysis has become an increasingly popular tool for studying terrorist groups and understanding their behavior. This method enables researchers to investigate the relationships between individuals within a network as well as the structure of the overall network. It has been widely used to provide valuable insights into how terrorist groups operate and how they might be efficiently countered by security agencies.[53] For example, social network analysis can help identify the key individuals within the network who play important roles in its functioning.[54] It can also be utilized to categorize networks into subgroups and characterize power dynamics within and across different groups. This information can then be used to examine processes of ideological commitment, identity formation, and decision-making within networks as

well as to predict the choice of different tactics by terrorist groups.[55] It is important to highlight the importance of these types of analyses in developing counter-terrorism measures and strategies for disrupting the activities of terrorist networks.

Pioneering the use of social network analyses in the field of terrorism studies, Krebs gathered publicly available information to map the network of the 9/11 hijackers and found that the pilots were embedded in dense preexisting connections established in university, via kinship, or during their training in Afghanistan, making the network very resilient.[56] An influential study by Koschade described processes to detect structural vulnerabilities of terrorist groups by conducting a social network analysis of the Jemaah Islamiyah cell that was responsible for the Bali bombings in 2002.[57] Similarly, Medina demonstrated the strength and flexibility of the global Islamist terrorism network by redrawing their network after removing the most connected individuals.[58] An investigation by Perliger and Pedahzur was another important contribution to the use of social network analysis in the field of terrorism studies.[59] The authors supplemented the predominant organizational approach to suicide terrorism with a social network perspective and demonstrated the grassroots factors responsible for the emergence of Palestinian suicide bomber networks. Their study showed how horizontal networks, based primarily on kinship and friendship ties, gradually replaced hierarchical organizational systems.

Another more recent line of literature has conducted social network analyses of online activities and propaganda campaigns of extremist groups on social media platforms to identify influential figures and map communication structures.[60] Specifically, they investigated YouTube channels and Twitter accounts to show how information about ongoing operations or conflicts is disseminated online. Moreover, they documented the most popular and influential disseminators and their potential role in recruitment and radicalization processes.

For the present study, social network analysis is used to complement the biographical investigation of the contexts of radicalization of foreign fighters. Specifically, it analyzes the interpersonal and organizational ties of foreign fighters prior to their departure to investigate whether individuals were embedded in interconnected networks before their mobilization or whether they mobilized alone in isolation. Moreover, it explores foreign fighters' preexisting ties to religious mobilizing structures to test Olivier Roy's assertion that European jihadists do not radicalize or mobilize in the framework of a religious organization.

Data and Methods

For this study, data on foreign fighters and noncombatant members of militant groups from France, Germany, and the UK were used to investigate the research questions. The data are drawn from the JRE and the WJP databases. Detailed information on the two databases as well as the data collection procedures and data resources used to compile them can be found in the online appendix.[61]

The sample for this study consists of 327 foreign fighters from France, 322 from Germany, and 370 from the UK (Table 1).

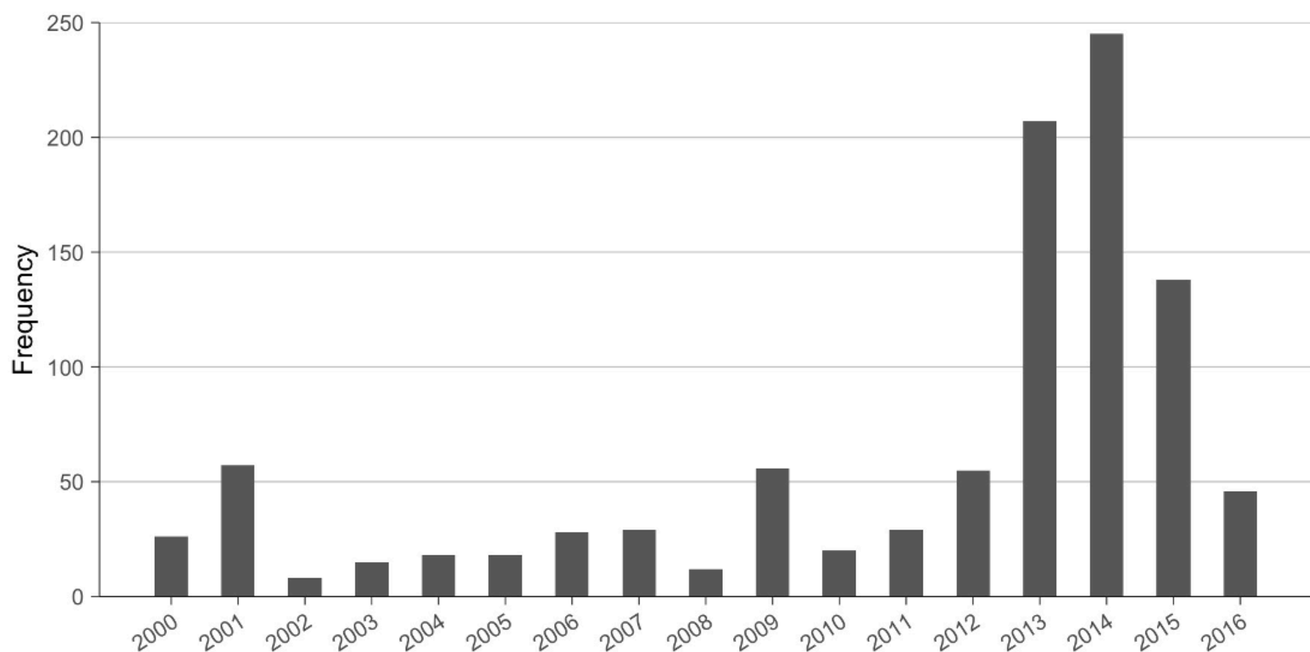
Table 1: Number of Foreign Fighters in the WJP- and JRE-Databases across Countries

	France	Germany	UK	Total
WJP sample	158	99	197	454
JRE sample	169	223	173	565
Total sample	327	322	370	1019

Unless specified otherwise, the term "foreign fighters" will also be used to refer to noncombatants and those who have attempted to travel to a conflict country. 84% of the sample succeeded in reaching their destination and becoming foreign fighters, whereas 16% failed to reach their destination. The majority of those who failed were prevented from departing by security agencies. There were also some individuals who traveled or attempted to travel to multiple conflict countries. Given the public attention received by the most recent wave of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq and the centrality of this conflict to the academic literature, if there were individuals who participated in multiple conflicts, here their most recent travel attempt was analyzed.

Figure 1 illustrates the number of departures between the years 2000 and 2016. There are three identifiable waves of mobilization. The first peak in year 2001 was connected to the events surrounding the September 11 attacks. Some of the perpetrators had visited al-Qaeda affiliated camps in Waziristan - the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan - whereas others had traveled to Waziristan just before or shortly after 9/11. The most frequent destination for foreign fighters from the second wave in 2009 was also Waziristan. The third wave took place between the years 2012 and 2016. It concerned the civil war in Syria and was much larger than the previous ones.

Figure 1: Year of Departure.



The main destination for foreign fighters in the sample was Syria or Iraq (Levant). There were a total number of 714 foreign fighters (70% of the sample) who traveled to the Levant region, followed by 216 foreign fighters (21%) who traveled to Afghanistan or Pakistan.[62] The insurgency in Somalia also attracted a small number of foreign fighters (43). The other conflict countries included, among others, Mali, Libya, and Palestine. The demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, country of origin etc.) of the sample are described in detail and compared with previous studies in the online Appendix.

Two different variables were used to document the radicalization process. The *introduction to radicalization* variable documents where the individual first came into contact with radical Islamist ideology. Some individuals were socialized in an Islamist/Salafist family. Others were introduced to the radical milieu by their friends. Still others encountered radical content online. Most of the time, this information was available in the sources. In some cases, they were derived from the biographies of the individuals. For example, if the father was a prominent Islamist figure, it is highly likely that the son had his first contact with the radical ideology through his father. Since the aim was to identify and isolate the initial step into radicalization, this variable could only have one single value. The *progression of radicalization* variable documents radicalization enabling contexts and venues where the radicalization further progressed. For instance, after being

introduced to a radical milieu by friends, an individual could still have been further radicalized online. In fact, the radicalization process of many individuals took place in multiple settings, as they gradually became more involved in the cause. Therefore, this variable can have multiple values.

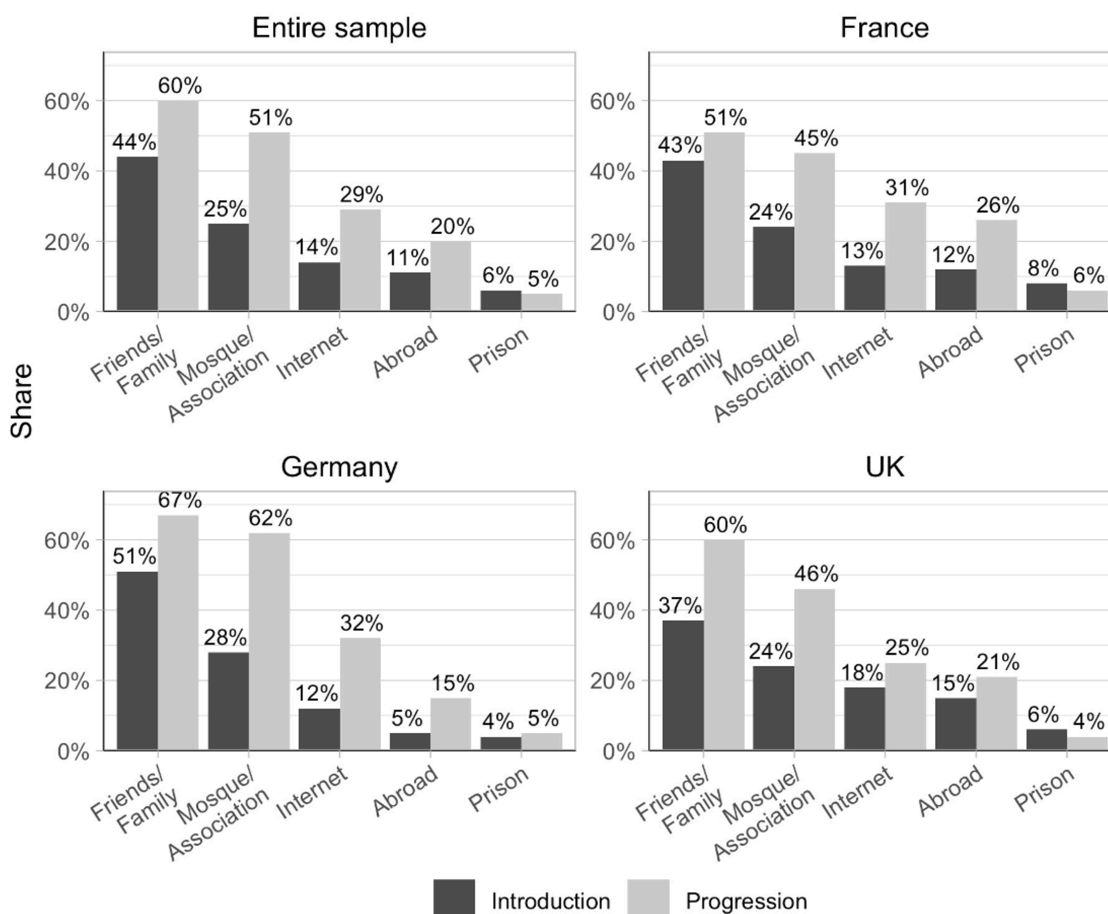
Results

Contexts of Radicalization

In the first step of the analysis, investigating where individuals initially came into contact with the radical ideology, i.e., *introduction to radicalization*, it was possible to identify the mode of introduction to the radical ideology for 442 cases (43%). In a second step, the present study explored where individuals radicalized further, i.e., *progression of radicalization*. There was comparably more information available on the different contexts of radicalization that followed the onset of radicalization. It was possible to identify at least one context of radicalization for 701 (69%) cases.

Figure 2 displays the share of contexts of the introduction to, and the progression of, the radicalization process. In general, the relative importance of each context of radicalization was similar across the three countries. The majority of the cases, for which information on their conditions of introduction to the radical ideology was available, were introduced through their interpersonal ties (44%). These included family members, close friends, work or school colleagues, or other acquaintances. Within each country, interpersonal ties were the most crucial context for both the onset and the progression of radicalization.

Figure 2: Context of Introduction to, and Progression of Radicalization of Foreign Fighters.



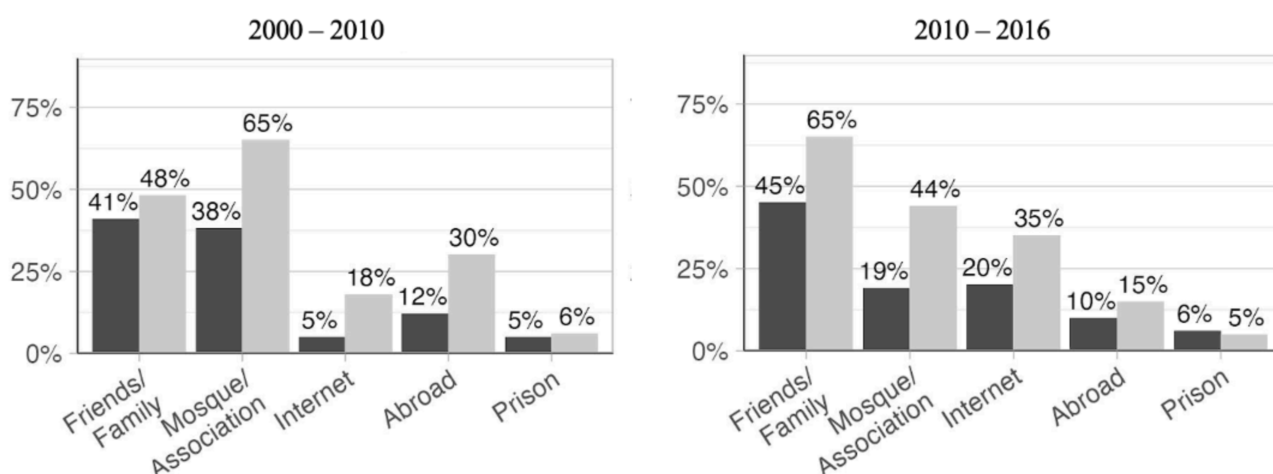
Mosques and religious associations were the second most crucial context of radicalization. A quarter of the individuals made their first encounter with the radical ideology in a mosque, in a religious association, or a religious seminar. Examples of this type of association include the Iqra bookshop in Leeds, the Abu-Bakr Mosque in Vénissieux, or the Al-Nur Mosque in Berlin. They played a comparably bigger role in the

German sample's progression of radicalization. Nevertheless, almost half of the British and French samples also further radicalized by attending radical mosques or during their activities in these radical associations. Together these two networks - interpersonal and organizational - contributed to the onset of radicalization for more than two-thirds of the sample in each country.

The Internet or prisons were comparably less crucial to the radicalization process of foreign fighters. Internet was a relevant catalyst of radicalization particularly in the UK, as it led to the radicalization of almost 20% of the British sample. The Internet was also more important for the progression of radicalization. One-third of the sample within each country further radicalized online, after being introduced to the radical ideology through other contexts.

Internet and social media are nowadays much more widespread than they were at the beginning of the 2000s and have become more central to our lives in the more recent years. Given the timeframe of the sample - which ranges from 2000 to 2016—it is possible that the findings based on such as sample can be slightly biased, as foreign fighters who mobilized in the early 2000s were less likely to have radicalized online. To take this into account, the sample was split into two groups, with one group consisting of foreign fighters who traveled abroad between 2000 and 2010 and a second group consisting of foreign fighters who traveled abroad after 2010 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Context of Introduction to, and Progression of Radicalization of the Entire Sample of Foreign Fighters Depending on the Date of Departure



The findings suggest that the relevance of Internet as a context of introduction to radicalization did, in fact, increase significantly from 5% (2000-2010) to 20%, making it the second most important context of initial radicalization among the 2010-2016 sample. The most notable change was among the British foreign fighters, where the Internet as the primary venue of initial radicalization jumped from 6% to 25% (see also online Appendix Figures S7 and S8 for the results across the different countries). However, even after splitting the sample, interpersonal contacts remain the most crucial context of introduction to radicalization across both timeframes. Similarly, the importance of Internet as a context of progression of radicalization almost doubled from 18% (2000-2010) to 35% (2010-2016) among the pooled sample. However, the interpersonal contacts (65%) and organizational ties (44%) remain the first and second most important contexts of the progression of radicalization for the 2010-2016 timeframe.

One context of radicalization that has not received much attention in the literature but appeared to be relevant was radicalization abroad. Interestingly, more than 10% of the sample had initially radicalized abroad, whereas 20% further radicalized outside of their country of residence. For example, some individuals were radicalized abroad in language schools (e.g., the Easy Language School in Egypt) or while visiting their relatives in their countries of origin. In comparison to foreign fighters from Germany, foreign fighters from

France and the UK were more likely to have radicalized abroad. The share of those who began radicalizing abroad was the highest among the British sample. This is because an estimated number of 22 British foreign fighters had previously attended the private University of Medical Sciences and Technology in Khartoum (Sudan) before traveling to Syria.[63] Overall, prisons played only a marginal role in each country. They were most relevant for the French sample, as 8% initially radicalized in prison.

Social Network Analysis

In the next step of the analysis, the interpersonal and organizational networks of foreign fighters before they traveled to a conflict country were investigated. Figure 4, Figure 5, and Figure 6 are social network graphs representing the foreign fighters and their network ties to each other, to other radical individuals, and to mobilizing structures.

Figure 4: Social Network Graph of French Foreign Fighters Prior to Mobilization.

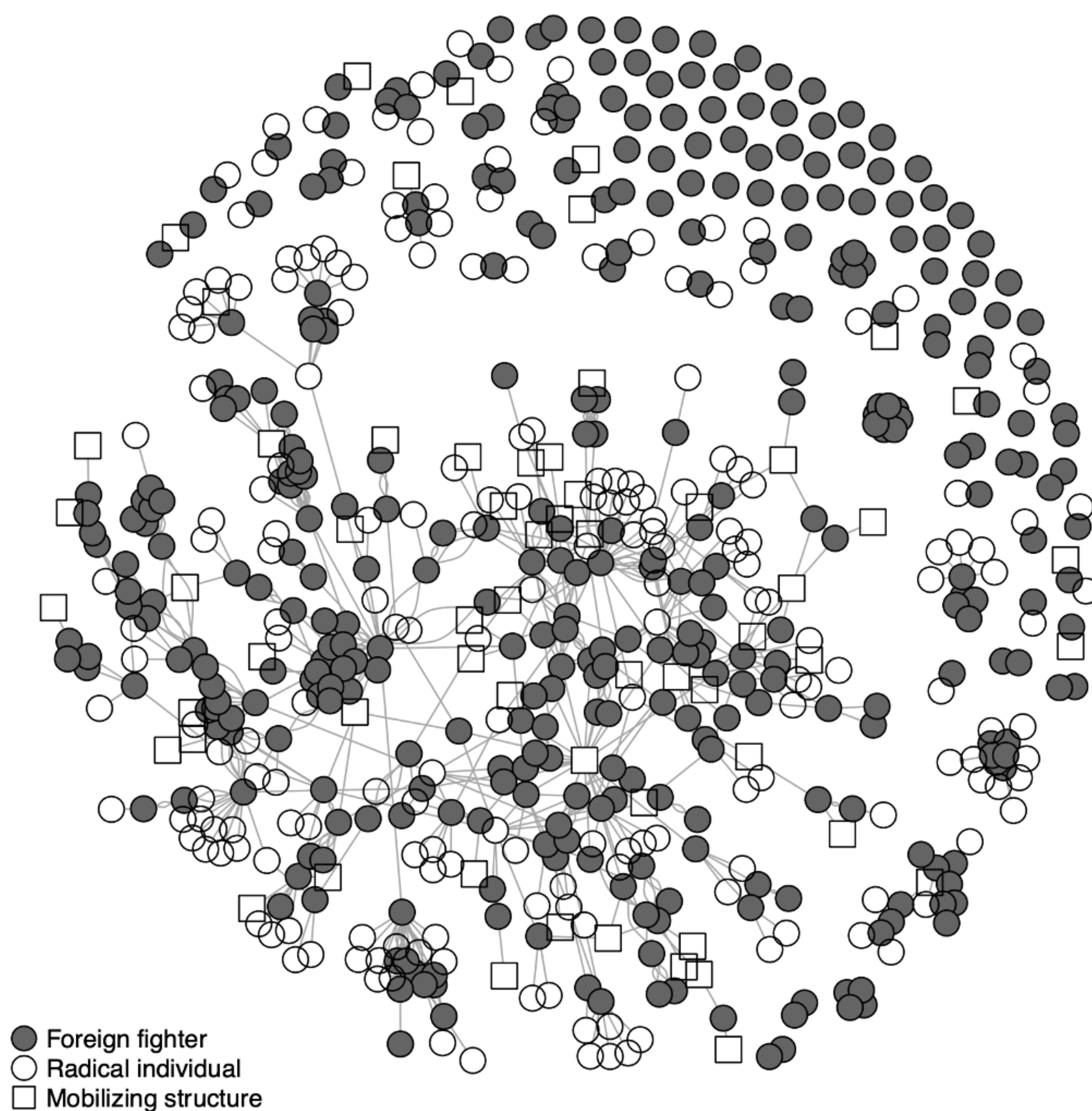
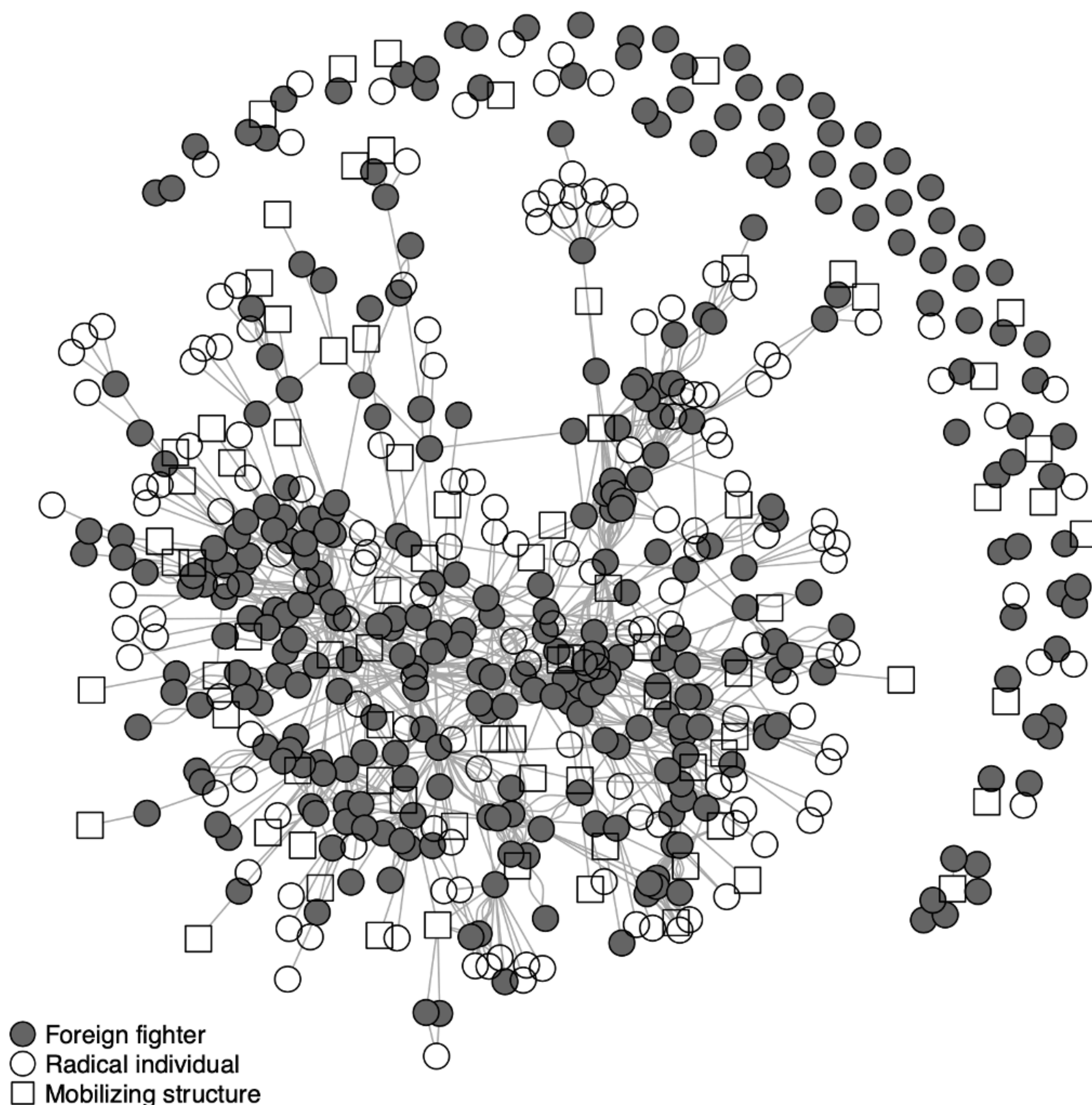


Figure 5: Social Network Graph of German Foreign Fighters Prior to Mobilization.



The depicted network ties include all types of ties, including friendships, kinship, and affiliation and are treated as being uni-directed.[64] Nodes on the network graph are coded by shape and color. Circle nodes represent individuals, whereas square nodes represent the radical religious mobilizing structures. Gray circle nodes represent the sample, i.e., the foreign fighters from each country. Transparent circle nodes represent other radical individuals, including preachers, recruiters, and other terrorism offenders.

The social network graphs of foreign fighters resemble each other across the three countries. Most of the foreign fighters were embedded in densely interconnected networks. Many had multiple connections to both other foreign fighters and to other radical individuals. The number of individuals with memberships in, or affiliations with, mobilizing structures is of particular relevance to this study. First, the interpersonal networks to identify the number of isolated individuals were analyzed.[65] In addition to interpersonal ties, organizational ties in the social network analysis were also included. As Reynolds and Hafez argue, it would be unrealistic to assume that all members of a group knew each other. However, sharing group membership does "establish that these fighters were part of a common network before their mobilization."[66]

Figure 6: Social Network Graph of British Foreign Fighters Prior to Mobilization

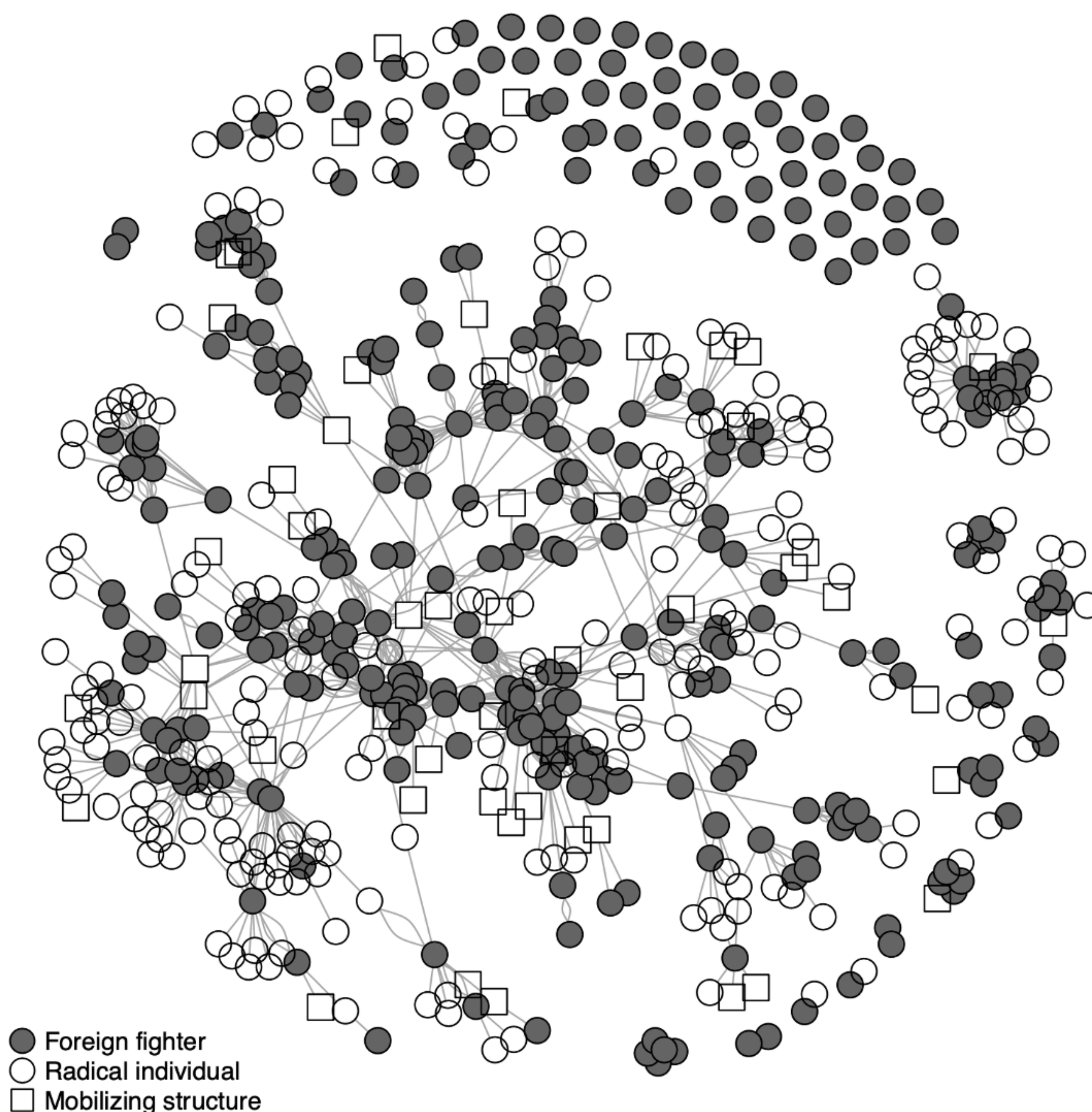


Table 2 below summarizes the findings from the social network analysis. The column "network clusters, excluding MSs" indicates the total number of network components that are identified in the social network graph excluding the mobilizing structures. A component or cluster "is a group of nodes that are connected to each other, but not to the rest of the nodes."[67] Coincidentally, there were 119 clusters in both France and in the UK. In Germany, there were comparably fewer clusters that were not interconnected (84). Even without including the mobilizing structures, a total number of 218 individuals from Germany, which make up almost 70% of the German sample, were connected to one single large network cluster. In France and the UK, the share of foreign fighters within one network cluster was smaller. Nevertheless, half of the sample in each country was still connected to a single network cluster. In France, there were 59 isolated nodes, i.e., 59 foreign fighters from France did not have any connections to other foreign fighters or radical individuals, which constitutes 18% of the French sample. A comparably similar share of foreign fighters was isolated prior to their mobilization in Germany (17%) and in the UK (17%). The remaining foreign fighters were interconnected within smaller separate network clusters (see column "connected nodes in other clusters excluding MSs").

Table 2: Results from the Social Network Analysis of Foreign Fighters' Interpersonal and Organizational Networks Prior to Mobilization.

Country	Network clusters *excluding* MSs	Nodes within a single cluster *excluding* MSs	Interconnected nodes in other clusters *excluding* MSs	Isolated nodes *excluding* MSs
France	119	174 (53%)	94 (29%)	59 (18%)
Germany	84	218 (68%)	53 (16%)	51 (17%)
UK	119	172 (46%)	134 (36%)	64 (17%)
Country	**Network clusters *including* MSs**	**Nodes within a single cluster *including* MSs**	**Interconnected nodes in other clusters *including* MSs**	**Isolated nodes *including* MSs**
France	77	215 (66%)	64 (20%)	48 (15%)
Germany	57	242 (75%)	52 (16%)	28 (8%)
UK	105	207 (56%)	109 (29%)	54 (15%)

Note: MS = Mobilizing Structure

Once the mobilizing structures are introduced into the network, the number of distinct network clusters reduces within each network (see column "network clusters including MSs"). Although individuals may not be directly connected to each other through friendship, kinship, or other types of ties, they become connected through their affiliation with, or membership in, radical groups and organizations. Therefore, the number of detached network clusters also becomes fewer. The difference is most significant in France, where the number of network clusters drops from 119 to 77. Including the mobilizing structures in the network analysis also increases the share of connected individuals within one single network cluster to 66% in France. In Germany, the share of foreign fighters within a single cluster got as high as 75%. Once mobilizing structures are taken into account, both in France and in the UK only 15% of the sample remained isolated (see column "isolated nodes including MSs"). In Germany, the share of isolated foreign fighters was halved to a marginal minority of 9%. These findings provide strong supporting evidence that religious associations and organizations are still very relevant to the jihadist mobilization in Europe.

In France, two associations stand out which have mobilized a significant number of foreign fighters. 18 foreign fighters were affiliated with the Sanabil association, whereas 13 were tied to the Forsane Alizza group.[68] Two mosques also feature prominently among the social networks of foreign fighters. 11 individuals were active in the Al-Bakara mosque in Lunel, whereas 9 individuals were active in the El-Islah Mosque in Villiers-sur-Marne.[69]

In Germany, the *Lies!* campaign, or the campaign's initiator *Die Wahre Religion* organization, was the major mobilizing structure of foreign fighters. A total number of 34 individuals took part in the campaign or were active in the *Die Wahre Religion* organization.[70] The second most important mobilizing structure among the German sample was the *Millatu Ibrahim* group, with 22 affiliations.[71] Another frequently mentioned mosque among the sample was the Al-Quds Mosque (later renamed the Taiba mosque) in Hamburg.

In the UK, the al-Muhajiroun organization (or its derivatives such as the Islam4UK or the Need4Khalifah) played a major role in the mobilization of British foreign fighters. 24 foreign fighters in the sample were members of, or were affiliated with, this organization.[72] Two mosques from London were central to the British foreign fighter networks: 16 foreign fighters had attended the Finsbury Park Mosque and 13 had attended the al-Manaar Mosque.[73]

Conclusions

Overall, the present research finds that jihadi foreign fighters from Europe radicalized in the period 2000-2016 primarily through interpersonal and organizational ties. These networks were the main channel for both the onset of radicalization and the further progression of radicalization of foreign fighters within each country. Thus, these findings are generally in-line with previous studies that emphasize the crucial role of preexisting interpersonal ties and more or less organized social networks.[74] In addition, it finds that mosques and religious associations, mostly adhering to a Salafist interpretation of Islam, remained influential contexts of indoctrination. Particularly following the initial onset of radicalization, which is predominantly triggered by interpersonal ties, these mobilizing structures provide a context where the ideological indoctrination can take place. As Schuurman et al. correctly noted, attackers "hastily labeled as 'lone wolves' [in the media] often turn out to have interpersonal, political, or operational ties to larger networks."[75] The authors also stress that some terrorism offenders may indeed act alone but their radicalization process is generally characterized by preexisting social ties to larger radical milieus, groups, or movements.[76] As evidenced by the social network analysis, the majority of the foreign fighters were indeed interconnected within a single interpersonal and organizational network. Although time trends in the radicalization patterns indicate an increased relevance of online radicalization, it has not, so far, replaced face-to-face encounters.

Most importantly, these findings highlight the continued relevance of mosques and religious associations in the radicalization processes of European jihadists and challenge the assertions of some scholars who have argued that mosques have been replaced by the Internet or social media as primary venues of recruitment.[77] The results also refute Oliver Roy's prominent claim that Islamist radicalization does not take place in the framework of a religious organization.[78] In contrast, more than half of the sample was further indoctrinated in the framework of religious mobilizing structures. Based on these findings, programs and strategies that aim to prevent and counter violent extremism could benefit from paying particular attention to existing mobilizing structures and diverting their efforts towards dismantling them.

Another context of radicalization that has recently received ample attention from the media and terrorism scholars alike, namely prisons, also appear to be peripheral to the recruitment and mobilization of European foreign fighters. Previous scholarship has primarily focused on the role of prisons in the radicalization process of terrorism offenders – who mainly operate in their country of residence – but comparably less attention has been paid to foreign fighters. Arguably, the crime-terror nexus may be more relevant for those who plan or perform local attacks, since they may be reliant on criminal networks for gaining access to weapons and other resources. In contrast, those who plan to join conflicts abroad may require other types of logistics, such as funding or safe passage across borders, which can also be provided through interpersonal and organizational networks.

The findings presented in this study point to a limited role played by the Internet and social media in the radicalization process of European foreign fighters. Given its limited effect, why do then extremist groups such as the Islamic State or al-Qaeda produce so much online propaganda? One possible explanation is the theater aspect of terrorism. Online propaganda does not only serve recruitment and mobilization purposes. As Brian Jenkins has argued "[t]terrorist attacks are often carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the electronic media and the international press."[79] Through outrageous acts of staged violence that spread fear and alarm, terrorists aim to persuade or intimidate the public and the governments to achieve their political goals. Arguably, the Internet and social media channels gave terrorist groups the opportunity to produce and disseminate their propaganda materials without the censorship, commentary, or gatekeeping involved in traditional mass media. Therefore, it is not so surprising that we have been confronted with so much online propaganda in recent years.

There are, however, some important limitations to this study that are worth highlighting. First, it is possible that the online activities of jihadi foreign fighters may be underreported in the data. For some journalists, interpersonal contacts and organizational ties may be easier to reveal and document than online activities. Similarly, it is conceivable that when describing their radicalization process, individuals might emphasize

the influence others have had on them over their own wrongdoings. Ideally, future research should draw on declassified court and police records to complement publicly available data in order to provide more in-depth information on these processes. This would also improve the quality of the data and reduce the number of cases with missing information. Second, the study was limited in terms of the number and characteristics of countries of residence of foreign fighters. Arguably, France, Germany, and the UK are the countries with the largest, oldest, and most active jihadi networks.[80] It is possible that foreign fighters from other European countries with smaller preexisting networks may have different radicalization trajectories. A comparative research design including other European countries with less significant histories of jihadi mobilization could address these limitations.

Acknowledgments: This study was supported by grants from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research within the framework of the program "Research for Civil Security" of the Federal Government and the German Federal Ministry of the Interior. (grant no. MOTRA-13N15223). Comments by Ruud Koopmans, Peter Wetzels, Bart Schuurman, my colleagues at the Migration and Diversity department at the WZB, and anonymous reviewers for Perspectives on Terrorism are gratefully acknowledged. The author also thanks Alice Bobée, Jan Osenberg, Ruben Below, and Stefanie Nebel for superb research assistance.

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The Relevance of High-Risk Prisons to Indonesia's Preventing Violent Extremism Policy

by Iwa Maulana, Dewi Indriana, and Gatot Goei

Abstract

Since 2017, the Indonesian Government has established the operation of high-risk prisons for terrorists to prevent radicalization and end the formation and consolidation of terrorist groups in prisons. The operations of high-risk prison are based on the concept of super maximum-security prison, which focuses on security, movement restrictions, and high-level supervision of inmates. This approach makes the aspect of rehabilitation in high-risk prisons less dominant than the security aspect. Therefore, there is a concern that the willingness of terrorist convicts to change is not driven by the success of the intervention programs, but is the result of a brutalist building design and a very tight security system. The long-term consequence of this is that many terrorists tend to be willing to cooperate with the authorities just to get out of high-risk prisons as quickly as possible. However, in many cases their attitudes and behavior basically might not have changed.

Keywords: high-risk prison, preventing violent extremism, terrorist inmates, terrorism, Indonesia

Introduction

The operation of high-risk prisons in Indonesia to deal with dangerous inmates—including terrorists—has started in 2017. Since it incorporates the preventing violent extremism (PVE) approach, this policy encourages individual placement and treatment to keeping terrorist inmates from communicating with fellow terrorists, reducing the possibility of radicalization, and preventing the preparation of terrorist attacks from within prison.

Since the beginning of the enforcement of Law 15/2003 on Eradicating Terrorist Crime until late 2020, Indonesia has curbed and imprisoned more than 2000 terrorist offenders. Due to the fact that their number keeps rising considerably, it is clear that the government has not been able to control prison overcrowding. This has increased the susceptibility of inmates to commit acts of violence, including rape, or even initiate riots.[1] For terrorist inmates, overcrowding increases their opportunity to spread extreme ideas to other inmates. Correctional institutions which should be places of rehabilitation, therefore, can turn into what criminologists call "schools of crime".[2]

In addition to the problem of radicalization in prison, another problem is the reengagement in terrorist group or network activities among ex-inmates due to ineffective intervention programs. The *Center for Detention Studies* (CDS) found in one of its research projects that 37 from 765, or 4.8 percent of terrorist convicts already had a prior terrorism offense record.[3] The *Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict* (IPAC) calculated that at least 94 from 825 former prisoners, or 11.39 percent terrorist of these ex-convicts reengage in terrorist groups after their release from prison.[4] Some of them even repeated their crimes more than twice, so that some elements of law enforcement dubbed them 'career terrorists', in analogy to 'career criminals'—persons who are repeatedly in and out of prison, having re-offended again and again.

Due to these problems, the government of Indonesia, through its Directorate General of Correction (DGC), proposed a policy for long-term segregation, restriction on movement, and high-level surveillance for high-risk terrorist inmates.[5] There is a strong belief among policy makers that the treatment of high-risk and dangerous inmates is ideally conducted within a prison with special security and supervision measures, or a so-called 'prison within prison'.[6] In total, there are four prisons specifically designed to manage high-risk terrorist inmates: Pasir Putih Prison, Batu Prison, Karanganyar Prison in Nusakambangan Island and Gunung Sindur Prison in Bogor, West Java.

These prisons are organized based on Standard Minimum rules for Treatment of Convicts (the 'Mandela

Rules'), which are embodied in the Ministerial Decree of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights on Specialized Prison Working Guideline for High-Risk Terrorist Convicts.[7] It delineates the needs of high-risk prison management in terms of security and other aspects such as a rehabilitation program plan which should be in line with the offenders' rights i.e., right to pray, right to recreation, and the right to interact with the outside world. Therefore, to run an effective high-risk prison, human resources as well as adequate maintenance facilities are needed.[8]

Although the topic of terrorist inmates and radicalism in prisons is relatively under-researched, some of the literature has discussed the conditions leading to radicalization in prison and its pathways,[9] the position of terrorist inmates in prison populations in general,[10] or the implementation of evidence-based practices in managing high-risk inmates.[11] This article is an attempt to enrich these research themes by discussing how high-risk prisons for terrorists can play a role in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) efforts and how the conditions of terrorist inmates are affected in a super-maximum facility. However, the main focus of this article will be a portrayal of policy implementation in high-risk prisons, particularly with respect to efforts to rehabilitate terrorist inmates.

Methods and Data Sources

The data used in this article were obtained from a series of studies and evaluations on the implementation of the P/CVE policy in Indonesian prisons conducted from 2018 to 2021. The primary data were obtained by in-depth interviews with correctional officers and terrorist inmates, focus group discussion documentation in developing a standard for inmates' personality training programs, technical instructions to deliver individualized rehabilitation programs, and terrorist inmates' risk and needs assessment training with DGC officials, prisons and parole officers, and (Prevention/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) practitioner, as well as interview notes and records of rehabilitation programs from correctional guardians or parole officers.

Super Maximum-Security Prison

Among the prison population, a special segment of inmates pose high risks in terms of safety and security, as well as, in a wider sense, stability and society. Inmates who have been assessed to pose a high risk in these four areas have been categorized as high-risk inmates. High-risk inmates are ideally housed in a prison with special facilities, for example, a super-maximum-security prison.[12] A "supermax" prison is a place of detention within an existing prison facility, or, alternatively, is a completely separate facility, with very limited or strict access rules. It is closely guarded, which isolates high-risk inmates from the general prison population and from each other due to their record of violent crimes outside prison, repeated abuse or acts of violence in prison, threats or attempts to escape, and attempting to incite or threaten to incite inmates to cause a disturbance of security and order inside the prison facilities.[13]

Other researchers use the terminology 'super-maximum-control facility', 'super-maximum administrative penitentiary', or 'secured housing unit'[14] to refer to the supermax prison as a last resort for detaining inmates who are classified as the "worst of the worst". The term "worst" refers to a crime that is considered serious and cruel, so that the perpetrator needs to be placed in a single cell confinement for 23 hours a day. The supermax prison facility implements a very high level of security, usually characterized by a lack of activity, reduced rights (such as visits and recreation), and minimal contact between inmates and officers.[15]

Supermax prisons are characterized by segregation.[16] Trouble-making inmates are segregated from the general prison population. The idea emerged originally as part of an effort to manage the various challenges that arise due to overpopulation of prisons.[17] In his research on terrorist convicts in prisons, Thompson noted that segregation is one approach to provide special treatment to terrorist inmates who are considered dangerous or otherwise problematic.[18] In addition to a segregation policy, there is also another approach: concentration. The concentration approach was first proposed by David Ward and Norman Carlson. Concentration itself refers to the creation of special facilities to treat trouble-causing inmates in a high-security environment, isolated them from 'normal' inmates.[19]

In an article, Kurki and Morris suggest that there are four characteristics of a super maximum-security prison. First is its placement for offenders who have to serve long prison terms. Inmates who are sent to a supermax prison will be there for several years or even for the rest of their lives. The second characteristic is the prison administration's far-reaching authority. Supermax prison officials and officers have great power to punish convicts deemed to have violated the rules and regulations—and this is without any external review. Third, supermax prisons are characterized by isolation cells. Each cell is occupied by just one inmate. This is a form of punishment but can also be a form of protection—for themselves and others. Communication for such convicts is very limited. The fourth characteristic is that there is only very limited activity possible for such inmates. The choice of recreation, education, physical activity and other activities that ordinary convicts get is not given to supermax convicts.[20] The existence of various barriers and restrictions in the supermax prison is considered to be effective in reducing the risk of terrorist inmates spreading radicalism to other prisoners.[21] Several authors have, however, highlighted the psychological impact caused by a supermax prison environment which has been designed to strictly limit both movement and communication of inmates.[22]

Supermax prisons in Indonesia have layered security parameters intended to produce behavioral changes among those targeted so as to reduce the risk they may pose to state and society.[23] Terrorism is a crime perceived to pose a massive threat to both national stability and the security of society.[24] The priority given by the Indonesian government to countering and preventing terrorism can be seen in the fact that it has established several supermax prisons for the placement and treatment of terrorist offenders.

Indonesia's P/CVE Policy

In Indonesia, terrorism received serious attention after the first Bali bombing attack on October 12, 2002. The action, masterminded by Imam Samudra and his group, forced the Indonesian government to immediately introduce Government Regulation in Lieu of UU No. 1 of 2002 concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism, which was later enacted into Law Number 15 of 2003 of the anti-terrorism legislation. This law contained a definition of terrorism, specifying the offenses falling under the crime of terrorism, and outlining types and durations of criminal sanctions for terrorists. It also addressed issues such as compensation, restitution and rehabilitation of victims, as well as international cooperation in combating terrorism.[25] The enactment of the Anti-Terrorism Law marks the end of the use of the Anti-Subversion Law which dealt with acts deemed to disturb state security, disrupt stability, and create fear—a law that had been used in both the Old Order and the New Order.[26] The replacement of the Anti-Subversion Law also marked the end of the military's central role in combating terrorism. In the reform era, where democratization is progressing rapidly, human rights issues greatly influence policies and strategies for countering terrorism, prioritizing a law enforcement approach to terrorism.[27] As a result, the police, who had been detached from the armed forces in 1999,[28] has the largest role when it comes to dealing with terrorism.

Following this new direction, in 2002 the Coordinating Minister for Political and Security affairs established the Coordination Desk for Combating Terrorism.[29] Initially, the desk contained the National Police's (Polri) Anti-terror unit, better known as Detachment C Regiment IV Gegana Brimob Polri, elements of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) and the National Intelligence Agency. In their evolution, each of these units did not coordinate their work very well because they preferred to be linked to their original organization. The escalation of terrorist acts, and the unreliability of the Coordination Desk, urged Polri to form a Bomb Task Force, which falls under the Criminal Investigation Agency (Bareskrim). At the same time, Polri also has the Gegana Brimob Unit and the Directorate IV Anti-terror.[30] To avoid overlapping tasks and functions of these units and improve Polri's counter-terrorism capability, the Chief of Police reorganized Directorate IV in 2003 through the Decree of the Chief of Police No. 30/VI/2003. This marked the establishment of the Special Detachment 88 Anti-terror unit, better known as Densus 88.[31]

The government's efforts to strengthen the nation's counter-terrorism capacity are not limited to the police. In 2006, the Indonesian Attorney General's Office established the Transnational Crime and Terrorism Task Force. This unit contains public prosecutors who have received special training to deal with terrorism cases.

It is also authorized to prepare trials.[32] In 2010, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono revised the Coordination Desk to become the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) through Presidential Decree Number 46 concerning the Establishment of the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT)—a decree which was later amended by Presidential Decree Number 12 of 2012.[33] In 2013, as a follow-up to nine special recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force' (FATF), the Indonesian government passed the Law on the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism Financing. This special law is crucial for the government's efforts to freeze and seize assets of terrorist groups.[34]

The Directorate General of Correction (DGC) itself has also been involved in efforts to tackle domestic terrorism. It did so in 2010 by developing a procedure for the treatment of high-risk inmates, which regulates how to handle dangerous inmates. In the DGC procedure, the definition of high-risk inmates includes narcotics, corruption, and terrorism convicts.[35] Unfortunately, the procedure was not properly disseminated to every prison, which led to inconsistencies in the treatment of terrorist convicts. This has been shown by several studies that highlight too lax a treatment of convicts, even though high-risk status had been assigned to them.[36]

Even after the DGC issued the procedure, the PVE policy in prisons remains unclear. As noted by the former Head of Densus 88, Tito Karnavian, PVE efforts in Indonesia were mostly ad-hoc at that time, depending on the personal initiatives of certain officers, officials or other individuals.[37] Only after the enactment of Law Number 5 of 2018 did the PVE strategy in prisons become more clear. The new Anti-Terrorism Law has three sections that specifically outline strategies for preventing violent extremism in Indonesia: 1) national preparedness; 2) counter radicalization; and 3) deradicalization.[38] In addition, pre-emptive efforts were also strengthened. This was done by including several new articles in anti-terrorist legislation that can be used to arrest sympathizers of a violent extremism movement before they engage in acts of violence. Therefore, it is not surprising that after the enactment of this new law, the number of arrests and convicts of terrorism has increased.[39]

Among the three prevention strategies mentioned in the New Anti-Terrorism Law, deradicalization is the most relevant for the treatment of terrorist inmates. The Indonesia government defines deradicalization as a planned, integrated, systematic, and continuous process to eliminate or reduce and reverse radical ideas that lead to terrorism within a person.[40] In addition to deradicalization, a process to alter terrorist inmates' behavior—known as disengagement—is also employed,[41] although it is not specifically regulated in any policy. In the context of corrections, disengagement is very similar to DGC's rehabilitation and reintegration programs which are intended to improve the attitudes and behavior of inmates while they serve their time in prison, in an effort to prevent recidivism after release from prison.[42] Both rehabilitation and reintegration have been recognized by BNPT as policy goals, serving a function similar to deradicalization and disengagement, which have been BNPT's main programs for many years.

Deradicalization has received great attention because the number of terrorist inmates in detention centers and prisons continues to grow. The increasing number of perpetrators of violent extremism entering the criminal justice system represents two major problems—problems not confined to Indonesia. First, many countries are trying to suppress the increase in extremism in prisons, which is exacerbated by the lack of quantity and quality of human resources that can specifically be used to address this issue. Therefore, rehabilitation is very important, so that after being released, ex-convicts do not become a threat to society. Second, many countries are aware that prisons are often places of radicalization. To break this process, increased efforts are made to prevent convicts from going down this road.[43]

High-risk prisons for terrorist inmates are part of Indonesia's effort to prevent and counter terrorism. In high-risk prisons, inmates are prevented from connecting with their group members and are offered various personality training programs so they do not repeat their involvement in terrorist movements or engage in terrorism acts. The DGC has created a needs assessment instrument, which is specifically used for terrorist inmates in high-risk prisons, to ensure that the intervention programs provided by the state are in accordance with the different needs of each inmate.

Terrorist Inmates in Indonesian Prisons

"Terrorist" became one of the categories for convicted inmates in the Indonesian prison system after the 2002 Bali bombing. Since then, more than two thousand persons have been imprisoned for involvement in terrorism. Based on 765 court decisions, the *Center for Detention Studies* found that the average criminal sanction for terrorist offenders in Indonesia were sentences of 68.7 months or around 5 years and 9 months (These numbers exclude four death sentences and two life imprisonment cases).[44] The punishment of most perpetrators tended not to be heavy because a majority of them were caught long before they had actually performed a terrorist attack. Many became involved as accessories to a conspiracy to commit terrorism (e.g., by hiding information about certain terrorists, not reporting terrorist group activities to law enforcement, or by helping to provide facilities for terrorists).[45]

At first, when the number of terrorist inmates began to increase significantly, the separation of terrorist inmates from the general prison population was carried out with a segregation approach: that is, placing the terrorists in special blocks. However, outside the special block, the terrorist inmates still had the opportunity to meet and mingle with fellow terrorists as well as ordinary inmates. Placing them in a special block without cutting off interactions among terrorists made their group more solid and exclusive. Generally, they only wanted to hang out with fellow terrorist inmates. These contacts were then used to expand their network and discuss plans for reengagement in the terrorism movement after their release, and even to plan actions from within prisons. For example, in the Cipinang Prison in Jakarta, convicts formed gangs to counterbalance the power of two other feared criminal gangs in prison. Gathering them into one solid group allowed the convicts to control the prison to some extent.[46] Moreover, the status of terrorist inmates in prisons was often viewed highly, both by fellow inmates and officers, because they had combat experience and knew how to handle explosives. In addition, they were considered to be pious individuals willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their religion.[47] However, as Veldhuis reminds us,[48], such a view of terrorist inmates often arises from fear and a sense of danger rather than from genuine respect or admiration.

The existence of a gang consisting of terrorist convicts— known as the *ustaz gang*—gave birth to a distinctive culture. They could be identified by their appearance (wearing ankle-length pants and keeping a long beard), certain words they used, having a strong logistical clandestine supply line, and by demonstrating a rebellious attitude toward the prison authorities. The *ustaz gang's* culture eventually attracted ordinary inmates who needed protection, and in this way they too became radicalized.[49] Initially, the spread of radicalism and jihadism in Indonesian prisons often did not receive serious attention. Until 2017, terrorist inmates in prisons were treated in a less than strict way. The *Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict* (IPAC) found in one of its reports that a massive rejuvenation process occurred in prisons, affecting families, supporters and other inmates. Sometimes the terrorist group even used mobile phones to record and broadcast live '*tausiyah*' (meaning, broadcast of lectures or religious advice) to supporters outside prison.[50]

The influence that the terrorist inmate group had in prison allowed them to control the prison mosque and prayer room. At least until 2017, they could organize recitations led by a fellow terrorist inmate who was considered to have solid religious expertise. He could promulgate militant ideas, such as war against Allah's enemies, *thaghut* (idol worshippers) and *anshar thaghut* (protector or supporter of idol worshippers), faith cancellation, and so on. Through the studies they carried out, the terrorist convicts soon had the opportunity to spread its ideology to members of the general prison population. Among them, many were looking for guidance while serving their time in prison. In the Cipinang Prison, when inmates affiliated with Jamaah Islamiyah were dominant, the terrorist group could routinely organize prayer classes and Quranic studies which were attended by hundreds of inmates.[51] By late 2013, Abrory, one of the pro-ISIS ideologues in Indonesia, reported that he had succeeded in influencing at least 50 inmates in the Tangerang Prison imprisoned for drug-related crimes, by giving them religious instruction.[52]

In 2005, at the Tanjung Gusta Prison in North Sumatra, two drug offender inmates were radicalized after regularly attending lectures delivered by a terrorist inmate who had been involved in the 2003 J.W. Marriott Hotel bombing and in a series of robberies in Medan.[53] While serving his sentence at the Cipinang Prison

from 2007 to 2011, a prison inmate who had been a marijuana courier came into contact with extremist ideas through recitations in prisons organized by a militant group. After his release in 2014, he pledged allegiance to ISIS and was instrumental in dispatching several waves of ISIS sympathizers to Syria.[54] In 2014, an inmate serving time for homicide in Nusakambangan became friends with a terrorist inmate and together they pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. After leaving prison, he was asked by his terrorist friend to deliver 800 rounds of bullets to the East Indonesia Mujahideen Group (MIT) which was led by Santoso in Poso, Central Sulawesi.[55] Meanwhile at a prison in Banten, in 2016 an inmate serving time for theft was influenced by two terrorist inmates to steal a firearm from the prison armory. The stolen weapon was to be sent to Poso, to support the MIT group.[56] To give one more example, there was Suherman, an inmate waiting for a death sentence for a series of terrorist attacks on police personnel in 2018. Before joining a pro-ISIS group, Suherman had been sentenced to 16 years in prison for murder. Inside the prison, he was introduced to the teachings of Aman Abdurrahman (the ideologue of pro-ISIS groups in Indonesia) and began to adopt militant thinking and changed his appearance to resemble other members of the terrorist inmate group and to distinguish himself from the general prison population. This demonstration of loyalty to the group is commonly associated with the concept of *al-wala' wal-bara'* (meaning 'closer to Muslims and separate from non-Muslims').[57]

After the Mako Brimob riots in May 2018, the government accelerated the introduction of high-risk prisons in Nusakambangan and Gunung Sindur and transferred hundreds of terrorist inmates there.[58] Terrorist inmates in high-risk prisons cannot control the prison mosque because they have to say their daily prayers in their own cells. Meanwhile, for terrorist inmates in lower classification prisons, their prayer activities are always closely monitored by officers and inmates are not given permission to deliver lectures or to lead the prayers.[59]

Another threat posed in the past by terrorist inmates was their ability to provoke riots. In 2013, a major riot caused by poor prison management broke out in the Tanjung Gusta Prison in North Sumatra. The riots caused the death of five people—two officers and three inmates. In addition, hundreds of convicts, including 14 terrorist convicts, managed to escape. One of them was Fadli Sadama, who had a long history of acts of terrorism in Indonesia and who had been one of the provocateurs of the riots in Tanjung Gusta.[60] Five years later, no less violent riots occurred at the Mako Brimob prison, a branch of the Salemba prison. The riot was started by terrorists who disapproved of a prison officer's treatment of the relatives of one of the convicts who had come for a visit. This action led to an act of hostage-taking and ended with the murder of five staff members of the Brimob Polri.[61]

While terrorist inmates pose great risks, there are also staffing problems. In terms of quantity, the ratio of security officers to inmates is often very uneven. Meanwhile, in terms of quality, many correctional officers, whether security officers, treatment officers or those charged with mentoring have not been trained properly to deal with terrorist inmates. An officer at the Salemba Prison, Jakarta, once received death threats from a terrorist inmate and a group of his visitors when they were reminded that the visiting hours were over.[62] There was also an account from the Parole Offices which was having a difficult time to assign parole officers (*pembimbing kemasyarakatan*—PK), to conduct assessments of terrorist inmates and provide guidance. Most PKs are still afraid to face terrorist inmates while a large amount of PK's workload consists of handling terrorist inmates. On average, one PK has to handle more than five terrorist clients, in addition to dozens—in some cases even hundreds—of non-terrorist convicts.[63]

Conflicting Objectives: Security vs. Rehabilitation

Although high-risk prisons have developed instructions for managing supermax prisons, the main function that they want to perform is not security or deterrence, but rehabilitation. As explained in the basic rules for establishing high-risk prisons, their main function is to "run a treatment program for high-risk inmates to encourage behavioral change and reduce risk levels".[64] The rehabilitation mission should be dominant in high-risk prisons, despite the need for very tight security measures.

The lack of rehabilitation measures in high-risk prisons has received criticism, both from internal and external observers. To some of them, the existence of high-risk prisons indicates that the Indonesian correctional system prioritizes the deterrence effect over the provision of intervention programs to change terrorist inmates' attitude and behavior.[65] As findings obtained from the Batu Prison, Pasir Putih Prison, Gunung Sindur Prison, and Karanganyar Prison indicate, the rehabilitation programs have not been able to be adequately executed because, in practice, the four high-risk prisons place more emphasis on security aspects.[66] Due to the generally uncooperative and dangerous character of terrorist inmates, the prison authorities tend to wait for the terrorist convicts to take the initiative to start a process of change. If terrorist inmates remain firm in their stance not to cooperate with the prison officials and the Indonesian authorities more generally, they will be subjected to limited rehabilitation activities. On a day-to-day basis, what most officers do is to provide the terrorist convicts with their daily necessities, deliver food, and take these inmates out of their cells to catch some sunlight. In the midst of such activities, officers will sometimes try to persuade inmates to become cooperative so that they can obtain all regularly available treatment activities which include legal counseling, religious discussions, and more.[67]

Once terrorist inmates decide to cooperate, the prison officers are to provide them with rehabilitation programs. The programs for terrorist inmates at high-risk prisons focus on personality and attitude change, because the ultimate goal to be achieved by high-risk prison programs is to create an awareness by terrorist inmates that they had been wrong in their understandings as well as in their actions.[68] Once inmates realize that they were wrong, then other intervention programs are easier to carry out. Building such awareness is very important, because in general terrorist inmates are known for their strong belief that the acts of violence they committed were morally just. When a person has a deep-rooted belief that everything he did or does is serving a noble cause, then attempts to shake such a belief will be perceived as an attempt to attack their very identity. Once realizing this 'danger', terrorist convicts might in fact strengthen their approval of violence even further which can and lead to a continuation of hostility.[69]

The working guidelines for high-risk prisons stipulate that the personality development program should consist of religious awareness programs in the form of daily worship and active listening to lectures broadcast via a prison system's audio-visual equipment. The program also involves psychological counseling, visits by family members and officials, book reading, as well as physical activities and recreation. The religious awareness program has to be carried out by each inmate in his own cell, using tools of worship that have been provided to him. However, lecture broadcasts have in many cases not been provided due to the absence of adequate audio-visual facilities. Ideally, each cooperative inmate should receive daily lectures offering counter-ideologies and counter-narratives.[70] Psychological counseling, which should be part of the program, has, in many cases, also not been taking place due to the absence of professional counselors. The only personal intervention program that has been carried out in many cases is the provision of books, which, according to officers interviewed, have only been made available once a month. Physical activities during recreational hours have, however, been carried out even though they are to take place in the inmate's prison room. Visits are allowed once a month for members of the nuclear family and for the inmate's biological parents, with a duration of 15 to 30 minutes per visit.

Individual treatment requires the presence of adequate infrastructure and human resources. With the presence of one man per cell, coaching facilities ought to be available for every convict. However, prison officials admit that the lack of human resources and infrastructure has a major negative impact on the sustainability of the coaching program. One of the indicators that an inmate can be transferred to a less severe maximum-security prison is an assessed reduction in risk. Specifically for terrorist inmates, there is an additional condition they have to meet: pledge allegiance to the Republic of Indonesia—an act which should be video-recorded. During the operation of high-risk prisons, at least 150 terrorist inmates have been transferred from one of the high-risk prisons to a maximum-security prison.[71]

Given the very tight security at high-risk prisons, there is a debate whether the reduced risk that has been noted in a terrorist inmate is really the result of rehabilitation programs or is in fact a by-product of the super-tight security measures and the intrusive supervision tactics, including the brutalist prison building

architecture that deters inmates and forces them to change. This debate was initiated following statements of inmates admitting that the intention to change came about from a sense of surrender due to the very tight security which dissuaded them from continuing their previous resistance.[72]

This view can indeed be justified based on to the concept of deterrence. The tight security in high-risk prisons can act as a deterrent.[73] The concept of deterrence is embedded in the rational-choice analysis of human behavior developed by early classical penologists advocating judicial reform. From this perspective, every person is a rational actor involved in end/means calculations and freely chooses law-abiding or law-breaking behaviors based on cost-benefit calculations. All else being constant, choice will be directed toward a maximization of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Therefore, painful punishments (especially those administered in a swift, severe, certain, and proportional manner) become the key to controlling and decreasing socially harmful behaviors.[74] Based on this line of thinking, the deterrent effect arising from the experience of being in a high-risk prison, can, at a certain point, become a tool to reduce the risk posed by terrorist convicts, forcing them to want to change.

However, the deterrent effect of high-risk prisons is not felt by all inmates. A considerable number of convicts are still at high risk and do not hesitate to put up a fight with prison officers. This is shown by the violations that occurred during the implementation of the high-risk prison concept. Some inmates misused everyday items such as toothpaste, soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, cloth, chicken bones, prayer rugs, and other items as a tool or weapon. Toothpaste, soap and shampoo were used to draw prison plans or paint slogans and symbols of resistance. Clothes, toothbrushes, chicken bones, and prayer mats were used to injure themselves or attack officers. For non-repenting terrorist inmates, officers are legitimate targets of attack because they are considered to be *thaghuts* (idol worshippers). Such attacks were carried out against officers who wanted to perform health checks and even against officers who were writing inspection reports. There were also cases when convicts would take advantage of family visits to communicate with their network through verbal messages or by writing instructions on paper and palms.[75] There were several cases of (failed) attempts at suicide or self-harm by inmates reported. Officers confessed that they were often anxious about interacting with inmates who tried to hurt themselves or others. However, there are rules that require officers to take action against perpetrators.[76] At the same time, some officers think that punishing someone with psychological problems is not the right thing to do. It is feared that the punishment will worsen the psychological condition of certain inmates.[77]

Strangely, for some perpetrators of terrorism, entering a high-risk prison is considered to raise their status among adherents of extremism. The determination to neither surrender nor cooperate with the authorities can be used by them as a kind of 'social capital' to make them more respected after their release. One of the terrorist convicts at the Karanganyar Nusakambangan prison stated that since his trial he had become determined not to cooperate with law enforcement. He knew that the judge would not impose a harsh sentence on him, and planned to use his time in prison to deepen his ideology.[78]

Super maximum security affects all types of high-risk prison operations, including health care. Based on work guidelines, direct interaction with inmates can only be carried out by security officers who have been trained and equipped with the use of security devices. This also applies to the distribution of food, drinks, personal equipment, and escorts. The limited security resources available can lead to some activities that are not in accordance with work guidelines and affect other functions, including health care.

The worst result of substandard health care can be death. Members of Commission III of the House of Representatives were during a hearing questioning the Ministry of Law and Human Rights about nine terrorist inmates who had died in high-risk prisons. According to the Director General of Corrections, the deceased inmates had a history of illness and prison authorities had made maximum efforts to provide them with medical support.[79] It was, however, found that while medical examinations of convicts in high-risk prisons had been carried out, these were often only of a very superficial nature. This was due to the unavailability of adequate support facilities to conduct comprehensive tests. The main purpose of medical examinations is to ensure that an inmate does not have a medical condition that can affect the health of others, and that he is

not a danger to himself.[80] The absence of an in-depth medical examination makes it difficult to determine the kind of treatment and care that meets the needs of each convict.

Despite the lack of some facilities, several activities were eventually organized with some improvisations so that a degree of health care could be provided. The distribution of food, drink, and personal equipment was helped by care workers. In addition, the provision of time for sports and for daily recreation in open spaces which previously could not be given to all convicts was reorganized and carried out by taking turns. In other words, some tasks that are not in full accordance with the work guidelines were carried out in other ways due to the lack of infrastructure and human resources. The prison officers themselves emphasized that if they wanted to impose an ideal high-risk prison operation according to the work guidelines they feared it would, under existing conditions, cause greater harm for both inmates and officers.[81]

As a part of an evaluation of high-risk prison operations, the *Center for Detention Studies* and DGC conducted in 2019 a survey of 36 officers of the Pasir Putih prison and 33 officers of the Batu prison. The survey found that these officers showed signs of dissatisfaction, unhappiness, and stress while performing their jobs in these high-risk prisons. They admitted that the demands for professionalism in the working guidelines were not commensurate with the instruments actually provided to them. The workload of the officers of high-risk prisons are quite high and they also face risks, including threats to the safety of their families and, of course, themselves.[82]

This is not unique to Indonesia. Even in one of America's supermax prisons, there has been an imbalance between the burden and risk of prison work and the pay prison officers receive. From the convict's perspective, if the tight security is not balanced with adequate rehabilitation activities and health care, it is feared that his condition will worsen. Isolated inmates can feel depressed, lonely, angry, panicky, weak and abandoned.[83] This was also admitted by one of the inmates during an interview. He admitted that being locked up for 24 hours with no activity and interaction actually creates stress and sparks feelings of revenge against officers or the state.[84]

Inmates who exhibit high risk and danger are ideally placed in prisons with high security and supervision. However, the lack of amenities will negatively impact the main goal of holding a convict in a high-risk prison, namely changing his behavior and reducing the risk a convict poses to others and himself. The provision of appropriate intervention programs is recognized as an important factor to support behavioral change and risk reduction for high-risk convicts.[85] It is also recognized that the provision of intervention programs can increase the potential for greater success of reintegration programs into the community.[86] In addition, terrorists as people with extreme ideologies are in need of special intervention treatments focusing on disengagement and deradicalization. The objective must be to bring inmates to seriously question the morality of their past conduct.[87] However, due to existing circumstances, it is generally not possible for intervention programs to be carried out directly by the coaching staff. Therefore, audio-, video- and reading materials must often replace the presence of human coaching by implementation officers. Apart from being in the form of technical equipment, training materials should also be prepared based on the needs of each individual inmate.

The Relevance of High-Risk Prisons to Indonesia's PVE Policy

Since 2018, the Indonesian government has begun to pay more attention to PVE in responding to terrorism. In the National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020–2024, Indonesia's government emphasizes the importance of preventing extreme violence and the importance of deradicalization in maintaining national stability and security.[88] Following the RPJMN, in 2021 the government issued a National Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism. Rehabilitation of terrorist inmates is one of the main objectives.[89] At the ministerial level, one of the annual performance targets set by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights for the years 2020 to 2024 is the rehabilitation of 50 terrorist inmates per year.[90]

Based on these policies, it is clear that prison will play an important role in PVE. To support the implemen-

tation objectives for high-risk prisons and in order to achieve the targets set by the government, the Directorate General of Corrections introduced several new internal policies, including an instrument to assess the risk posed by terrorist inmates,[91] as well as an instrument to assess criminogenic factors,[92] while also developing technical instructions to deliver individualized rehabilitation programs. Every six months, each terrorist inmate will be assessed by a parole officer (PK) to measure their risk level and explore appropriate intervention needs. Based on the assessment, the PK will provide recommendations for appropriate intervention programs and recommend whether a terrorist inmate can be transferred to a lower-security prison in a document called correctional research or *penelitian kemasyarakatan* (Litmas).

At first sight, the DGC's efforts to rehabilitate terrorist inmates can be seen as being quite successful. Since 2020, the number of terrorist convicts willing to pledge allegiance to the Republic of Indonesia has exceeded the annual target set by the government. In 2021 alone, the DGC succeeded in encouraging 125 terrorist inmates to pledge allegiance to the Republic of Indonesia.[93] Among them, some were even willing to be actively involved in a program named '*safari da'wah*'. This program involves the holding of meetings between a noncooperative terrorist inmate and a resource person so that they can engage in a dialogue about religious understanding and other topics. The resource persons in *safari da'wah* are cooperative terrorist inmates who had been transferred to lower security prisons. The resource person in *safari da'wah* must have a good understanding of Islam, enjoy the respect of fellow terrorist inmates, and adhere to the same Islamic sect or *mazhab* as the noncooperative participating inmate.[94] *Safari da'wah* was an innovation program initiated by some officers in high-risk prisons in the midst of all the limitations they faced. It is one of the programs that has received an award from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights because it was able to significantly increase the number of terrorist convicts who wanted to recognize the Republic of Indonesia.[95]

This approach is related to the dynamics of terrorism in general. Since the implementation of the high-risk prison policy, the number of terrorist attacks has decreased. On the one hand, the reduction in the number of attacks certainly cannot be separated from the intensification of arrest operations by the police to foil planned terrorist attacks. Yet, on the other hand, it is undeniable that the disruption of communication between the militants and their regular followers outside the prison walls and important terrorist leaders who are inmates in high-risk prisons has caused a command- and leadership vacuum in the terrorist movement in Indonesia. Command and leadership are important organizational and operational tools that largely determine the capabilities of terrorist groups.[96]

Conclusion

The separation of terrorist convicts into special high-risk prisons was an important strategic step taken by the Indonesian government in the face of a massive spread of radicalism in prisons and terrorist inmate provocations that caused riots. The Ministry of Law and Human Rights, through the Directorate General of Corrections, has made a real effort to prepare high-risk prisons, starting with the establishment of four such prisons, the creation of a high-security infrastructure, the preparation of work guidelines and the training of prison officers.

Based on the results of a review, a debate arose about the rationale of punishment used in high-risk prisons. By regulation, high-risk prisons should prioritize rehabilitation through coaching to encourage behavioral change in inmates and thereby also reduce risks they pose to others. However, the personality development program as the core of rehabilitation is known to have fallen short of expectations. This finding raises the question whether the reduction in risk that has occurred so far is really the result of rehabilitation interventions or whether the effect of tight security is more dominant in "softening" hardcore terrorist convicts. The research and analysis on which this article is based tends to support the thesis that a high-security prison system can indeed have a major impact on the reduction of terrorist risk even though rehabilitation has not been the main cause of it.

The establishment of high-risk prisons can be considered to be the right response when it comes to handling high-risk terrorist convicts. However, the implementation of commensurate prison policies brings higher

costs, especially regarding support of infrastructure and human resources. Separation methods and case-by-case treatment require supporting facilities for each inmate such as healthy cells, 24-hour CCTV surveillance, audio equipment for receiving broadcasting materials, as well as other items to ensure that convicts can be exposed to appropriate counter-narratives. In addition, the welfare of officers as stakeholders who play an important role in the implementation of high-risk prisons policies needs to receive special attention, given their high workload and the dangers they are exposed to. Consequently, future government policy priorities ought to be focused on supporting facilities for implementing intervention programs to accelerate behavioral changes in inmates with a terrorist background and reduce the overall risk posed by terrorist convicts.

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Notes

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[77] The authors obtained this statement from an in-depth interview with security officers at Batu High-Risk Prison in Nusakambangan in September 2019 as part of an evaluation of high-risk prison operations.

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[93] *Optimalisasi Penanganan Napiter Ditjenpas gandeng UNODC Selenggarakan Pelatihan Peran Pembina Keagamaan Profesioanl dalam Rehabilitasi, Disengagement dan Reintegrasi Napiter,* https://ntt.kemenkumham.go.id/berita-kanwil/berita-utama/9238-optimalisasi-penanganan-napiter-ditjenpas-gandeng-unodc-selenggarakan-pelatihan-peran-pembina-keagamaan-profesioanl-dalam-rehabilitasi-disengagement-dan-reintegrasi-napiter (accessed on April 16, 2022).

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Insights from Comparing Pre-Attack Variables in the Las Vegas Mass Shooting with Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremist Attacks

by Robert F. Kelly and Dean C. Alexander

Abstract

This article provides a review of recent literature, summarizing the development and discussion of pre-attack variables as an area of focus for threat assessment and proactive risk mitigation concerning lone actor attacks and targeted violence attacks. An in-depth case study of the motivationally elusive Las Vegas mass shooter Stephen Paddock is presented, including an analysis of Paddock's pre-attack planning behaviors, using the same variable nomenclature as a recent FBI pre-attack planning behaviors study of active shooters. The pre-attack planning and preparation activities are compared both factually and in the context of recent literature regarding lone actor attacks. The pre-attack process of radicalization is discussed as a primary distinction between motivation-elusive actors and ideologically motivated extremists. The article concludes with a discussion of pre-attack intervention opportunities and potential lessons learned to improve future threat assessment and risk-mitigation efforts.

Keywords: lone actor attacks, targeted violence, motivation-elusive perpetrator, Las Vegas mass shooting, Stephen Paddock

Introduction

As noted in the United States Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) *Strategic Framework for Countering Terrorism and Targeting Violence*, "threats of terrorism and targeted violence increasingly intersect with one another, and there is likewise some alignment in the tools that can be used to counter them."[1] Targeted violence incidents are defined by DHS as "any incident of violence that implicates homeland security and/or US Department of Homeland Security activities, and in which a known or knowable attacker selects a particular target prior to the violent attack."[2] With some lone actors, it can be difficult to definitively establish their motivation. Thus, at times, they may fall outside strict definitions of violent extremism (due to the lack of an ascertainable qualifying goal) but squarely within understandings of mass violence or targeted violence. The deadliest mass shooting in the United States' recent history is also the seminal example of this dichotomy as it involved a motivationally elusive perpetrator, Stephen Paddock. Paddock's attack on the 2017 Las Vegas Route 91 Harvest Country Music Festival claimed sixty lives[3] and inflicted more than 850 injuries.[4][5] Following its review of the Las Vegas shooting, the FBI Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU) concluded that Paddock was not motivated by ideological, political, religious, or social reasons. While Paddock was a lone actor, there "was no single or clear motivating factor…behind the attack."[6]

Countering mass violence proactively involves careful threat assessment: a systematic process by which various interdependent community stakeholders partner to evaluate disturbing individual behavior, gauge the risk level, and coordinate appropriate risk-mitigation efforts.[7] Successful pre-attack interventions are notoriously complicated by many factors, not the least of which is that there is no consistent profile of actors or community sectors targeted.[8] The challenge only increases when facing the threat of suspected lone actors with unclear motivations, such as Paddock. More specifically, in such cases, there may arise comparatively fewer pre-attack external contacts and manifestations of intent as one might expect of someone drawn toward the path of violent extremism.

A substantial challenge to effective threat assessment and successful countermeasures to mass attack incidents is well illustrated by the lone actor, "motivation-elusive" case involving Paddock. Thus, a focused examination of Paddock's pre-attack behaviors, and the lessons learned, is a valuable reflection point as threat assessment efforts are increasingly likely to face this type of phenomena in the future. As noted by the

FBI-BAU, "[i]n addition to qualitative and quantitative research, targeted violence incidents themselves represent an additional and invaluable source of knowledge and experience for threat assessment practitioners and policymakers alike."[9] Accordingly, our discussion begins with a case study of Paddock's 2017 attack, focused on his pre-attack behaviors. We then contrast Paddock's pre-attack variables against the ideologically motivated extremist attack by the Tree of Life Synagogue Shooter Robert Bowers to facilitate a discussion of the potential intervention opportunities and lessons learned, including an examination of so-called leakage behaviors. Consistent with the theme regarding mass shooting incidents, timely considerations for both practitioners and researchers are offered including a discussion of the increasing rollout of "red flag" firearms laws and their potential utility as a risk-mitigation tool for mass shootings and the importance of effective communications strategies to promote greater reporting of concerning behaviors.

Examining Pre-Attack Planning Behaviors as a Tool to Improve Proactive Targeted Violence Countermeasures

Lone actor terrorism or violence has attracted research interest in the past decade.[10] There is increasingly strong researcher and practitioner interest focusing on the planning and preparation activities of lone actors due to the opportunity for early detection they offer. Schuurman et al., notably, conducted detailed research on lone actor planning and preparation, building on Gill et al.'s previous "codebook" with additional layers of focus on planning and preparation resulting in 198 variables which can contribute to a more common infrastructure for future research and discussion of preparatory measures.[11] The variables include disparate inquiries of the actors' personal backgrounds, social/contextual factors, planning and preparation activities, mindfulness of operational security, and leakage behaviors.[12] Regarding the codebook, Schuurman et al. noted:

> With regard to attack preparation and planning, two related processes were identified as key to this phase of the event, meaning that disrupting either of these processes would disrupt the event altogether: the emergence (and maintenance) of the motivation to act and the perception of the capability to act (successfully). Indicators that made up the codebook were inferred to be visible "flags," that is symptoms or markers of key processes likely to be detectable by stakeholders, but with the understanding that in another time or place the specific markers (e.g., weapon type) may appear different, though their function (e.g., capability acquisition) remains the same.[13]

Of vital importance to practitioners is identifying and countering attacks before they occur. One can immediately see how having a codex of sorts to organize threat assessment efforts is useful as it can aid in the formation of effective, evidenced-based law enforcement/security practices. Schuurman et al.'s research is useful and can be summarized as follows: for many lone actors there is a lengthy planning and preparation period during which their activities or behaviors make them vulnerable to discovery; (49%) of the studied actors had pre-incident contact with authorities during their planning and preparation; and further, many of the lone actors are neither highly skilled nor discreet, and they are frequently desirous of fame which may yield further opportunities for detection.[14] To screen for "false positives" due to the sheer volume of behaviors and incidents practitioners may be called upon to evaluate, threat assessments require analysis of both motivation and capability with "at least a rudimentary level of capability" being an important determinate of an actual threat.[15] In assessing capability indicators, Bouhana et al.'s research found "[t]he most prevalent capability indicator…" evaluated being "stockpiling of weapons" and other important considerations being "owning a vehicle,…consulting bomb manuals,… learning from virtual sources,… engaging in hands-on training…and in dry runs…."[16] Regarding the weapon choice of lone actors, threat assessors should be cognizant that firearms and explosives are the two most prevalent risks.[17]

The FBI's June 2018 release, *A Study of the Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters in the United States Between 2000 and 2013*, addresses the behavior of active shooters before their attacks. It found cause for hope in preventing such attacks due to the fact that "[i]n the weeks and months before an attack, many

active shooters engage in behaviors that may signal impending violence."[18] This is consistent with the perspective of Schuurman et al., who noted "[t]he potential to disrupt terrorist plots through such clues is not merely a theoretical possibility: Strom et al. (45) claim that over 80 percent of foiled terrorist attacks on American targets between 1999 and 2009 were initially discovered by law enforcement or the general public."[19] Among other things, the FBI study endeavors "to make...warning signs more visible and easily identifiable…not only by law enforcement officials, mental health care practitioners, and threat assessment professionals, but also by parents, friends, teachers, employers, and anyone who suspects that a person is moving towards violence."[20] Interested or concerned parties, in addition to neutral parties and strangers, are often described in the literature as "bystanders" whose reporting of intervening behaviors is highly encouraged.[21] The study protocol detailed by Silver et al. examines many variables including: demographics, planning and preparation, acquisition of firearms in relation to the attack, stressors, grievance formation, pre-attack behaviors and communications, targeting decisions, and mental health.[22][23] Our own case-study analysis detailed below examines Paddock through the filter of these same variables to glean what can be learned from open-source investigative documents and, when necessary, alternative sources of information, such as press reports.

Case Analysis: Examining the Pre-attack Behaviors of Las Vegas Shooter Stephen Paddock

For approximately eleven minutes (between 10:05 and 10:16 p.m. – PDT), on October 1, 2017, 64-year-old Stephen Craig Paddock opened fire on an outdoor crowd attending the Route 91 Harvest Festival in Las Vegas, Nevada.[24] His actions ultimately claimed sixty lives and injured more than 850 persons.[25] He also fired at McCarran International Airport fuel tanks visible from his hotel rooms.[26] Paddock had strategically positioned himself above his targets as he was perched on the 32nd floor of the Mandalay Bay Hotel and Casino, in rooms 32–135 and 32–134.[27] The police investigation indicated that 14 of the 67 firearms Paddock was known to have purchased since the 1980s were present with him at the crime scene.[28] He fired some 1,057 rounds into the crowd.[29] When responding officers were preparing their response outside of his hotel room, Paddock took his own life with a handgun.[30]

To facilitate a review and discussion of Paddock's mass murder through the lens of the FBI study's pre-attack variables, we assembled, organized, and condensed notable highlights from our review of the open-source data provided by two investigative agencies—the criminal report of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) (2018) and the FBI's (2019) BAU "Key findings" report respectively. Notable pre-attack variables for Paddock, through the parameters featured in the FBI pre-attack study, are summarized in Table 1 below[31]:

Table 1: Examination of Las Vegas Shooter Stephen Paddock's Pre-attack Variables through the Parameters Featured in the FBI Pre-attack Study

FBI pre-attack study variable	Case Examination of Las Vegas Shooter Stephen Paddock
Demographics	64, white, college graduate, self-employed (real estate investment/gambling), in a relationship, father was a convicted violent offender (spent time away from the family in prison), no arrest history—only minor traffic offenses
Planning & preparation	➢ 5/18/2017: Internet map and search queries for outdoor venues including concerts ➢ 9/5/2017: Internet searches regarding Life is Beautiful and Route 91 ➢ Harvest Festival concerts, along with expected attendance, and Mandalay Bay Las Vegas ➢ 9/15/2017: searches regarding SWAT team weapons, Las Vegas SWAT, ballistics, and police use of explosives ➢ 9/17/2017: check into the Ogden, coinciding with the Life is Beautiful Festival ➢ 9/25/2017 check into the Mandalay Bay ➢ "L" bracket used to barricade first of two hallway doors to access the 32nd floor ➢ Numerous instances of surveillance footage of Paddock moving suitcases to his rooms
Acquisition of firearms	➢ 19 of 67 firearms were purchased over a 33-year time span from 6/14/1982 to 12/16/2015 ➢ 43 of 67 firearms were purchased from 10/2/2016 to 09/28/2017 (just prior to the attack) ➢ 13 of the 14 firearms recovered from rooms 32–134 & 135 were purchased within the year prior to the attack
Stressors	Allergy complaints, declining health and finances, aging
Grievance formation	Motivation not determined, but no evidence of specific grievances against persons or locations
Pre-attack behaviors & communications	➢ Girlfriend Marilou Danley's investigative interview indicated she was aware Paddock purchased large sums of ammunition in August 2017 and she helped him load magazines and place them into suitcases and duffle bags, accompanied him on trips to gun stores, gun ranges, and assisted him in setting up range targets, and explained her interpretation of this behavior as a hobby ➢ Two $50,000.00 Wells Fargo wire transfers (9/26 and 9/28/2017) to the Philippines which Danley explained made her concerned Paddock intended to break off their relationship and set her up with house money ➢ Official reports do not indicate Paddock ever leaked his intent to anyone or left any legacy tokens, such as a manifesto
Targeting decisions	Evidence of evaluation of target locations was contained in Paddock's search queries (detailed above) Otherwise, open-source investigation reports do not indicate a reason why those sites were selected beyond privacy in the hotel room to prepare and execute his plans, proximity to his residence, and tactical considerations regarding the suitability of the site for his plans
Mental health	Suicidal ideation present - Intentional act

The aforementioned summary of LVMPD's criminal investigative report and the FBI-BAU's key findings applied through the lens of pre-attack variables enables an inquiry into whether, prior to the attack, there were any opportunities for proactive intervention. The FBI-BAU's key findings conclude that Paddock was a lone actor, without an ideological motivation, a person "who went to great lengths to keep his thoughts private, and that extended to his final thinking about mass murder."[32] Therefore, he was not the type, in the BAU's estimation, to leak his intentions verbally to others. What then of his actions and behaviors especially those which can offer, as stated by Silver, et al. "the possibility of identifying active shooters before they attack by being alert for observable, concerning behaviors"?[33] Like other active shooters, Paddock was not completely socially isolated, being, for instance, in a partnered relationship.[34]

"Concerning Behaviors": A Discussion of Potential Lessons Learned from the Pre-Attack Variables Related to Paddock's Case

The normal human impulse following incidents of mass violence is to ask: "Why?" Unlike ideologically driven violent extremists, Paddock's motivations remain largely elusive beyond limited inferences which may be drawn from materials derived from open-source investigations. Pointing back to the research, one finds a broad explanation that "[t]he motivation to harm or kill others and/or cause damage to property is commonly seen as the result of a complex process in which a variety of factors play a role."[35] With Paddock, inferences which may be drawn from official reports regarding his motivations are sparse as there is a lack of identifiable grievances or causes as one may find with a politically motivated extremist. He may have had some concern or awareness of forthcoming fame or infamy, making a suicidal exit from this world in a manner he must have known would create headlines. Paddock's brother speculated about this to official interviewers in the sense of suspecting feelings of superiority in his brother.[36] Another basic motivational factor for Paddock must have been that he intended to kill, inflicting as many casualties as possible. This is evident in the relative abundance of open-source information regarding his planning and preparation activities as detailed above. Whether motivational indicators are present or not, and regardless of the sophistication of actors regarding their pre-attack leakage of intent to people they know, improving detection during the pre-attack planning and preparation stage is a logical area to focus proactive countermeasures.

Regarding Paddock's planning and preparation, one may correctly assume that his attack required substantial long-term planning and preparation (12 months or greater). Evidence of that could have been found as early as October 2, 2016, and is supported by an accelerated pace of firearms purchases and increased training time at firearms ranges. Regarding acquisition, the publicly available information regarding Paddock's firearms acquisition is well documented, but as these purchases were lawful, [37] the procurement activity is more usefully looked at in the context of the variable "concerning behaviors." The variable "concerning behaviors," has been described by Silver, et al. as "what was objectively knowable to others"[38] prior to the attack—yielding perhaps the most constructive learning opportunity from this tragedy. In Paddock's case, the "concerning behaviors" opportunity was most closely associated with his relationship partner, who explained the interpretation of Paddock's substantial increase and interest in the acquisition of firearms, stockpiling large quantities of ammunition, and increasing trips to the shooting range in terms of a "new hobby". [39] Imputing mindset or veracity regarding this claim is impossible without detailed individualized data, so it is unhelpful to speculate in this instance. Instead, solutions to missed opportunities regarding unreported individual observations require an understanding that an individual's response—or lack thereof—is "likely influenced by a host of personal and situational factors (e.g., whether the behavior is threatening to the observer or others, the relationship of the observer and active shooter, avenues for anonymous reporting, and/or confidence in authorities or others to address the concerning behavior)."[40]

Practical agency action to counter the problem of unreported concerning behaviors would not only be to expand and publicize anonymous reporting lines, but also, focus on reducing barriers to reporting problematic behaviors. For example, reluctance in reporting arises from a bystander's concerns for their own safety and perceived danger to a potential actor they care about or other adverse consequences for them. Although official sources assert Paddock's attack was not ideologically motivated, there is nonetheless overlap in util-

ity for risk assessment tools targeted toward radicalization such as the Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18). This is particularly true when it comes to leakage behavior which Rose and Morrison (2020) note as "the most prevalent TRAP-18 indicator" for lone actors and a probable "point of entry for a threat assessor in any given case."[41] In one sense, due to Paddock's pre-attack operational security and absence of leaking his murderous intent to family or friends, he is similar to earlier extremely deadly, comparatively disciplined, and difficult to detect ideologically motivated lone actor cases such as the Norwegian mass murderer and terrorist Anders Breivik and the American Unabomber Ted Kaczynski.[42][43] Importantly, however, the break in Kaczynski's case notably came from a family member coming forward to the FBI. His brother recognized the similarity between his personal communications and the published communications of the Unabomber.[44] Even in the absence of a relationship partner being willing to step forward—a crucial and regrettably lost potential "point of entry" in Paddock's case—there were also potential detection opportunities from more neutral, non-relational sources. For instance, his stockpiling of materials during hotel stays was potentially detectable both through surveillance footage and from his interactions with hotel staff. Thus, even in a difficult case where leakage behavior was low, there were still potential opportunities in Paddock's case. Further, and perhaps reassuringly, these problematic cases may be seen as exceptions to the more common cases of less disciplined or sophisticated actors where pre-attack leakage of warning signs to persons close to the subsequent perpetrator is more prevalent and therefore more detectable.[45] With this in mind, it is instructive to examine how detection opportunities vary between motivationally elusive non-political actors and ideologically motivated actors.

A Key Distinction between Motivationally Elusive Actors and Extremists: The Radicalization Process as an Additional Opportunity for Detection

A key opportunity present with extremists, which is lacking in motivationally elusive actors, is based on the element of radicalization. Lindekilde et al. argue that an understanding of radicalization patterns may create opportunities for interested stakeholders (e.g., practitioners and academics) to improve risk assessment and resource allocation.[46] Contrary to understandings of attackers as reclusive lone wolves, socialization of extremists with other fanatics, whether in person or online, is often an important contributor to their radicalization.[47] In particular, such interactions contribute to reducing the normal reluctance of a human being to greviously injure or murder other human beings.[48] Inter-personal associations can offer potential signals for crucial intelligence for law enforcement to exploit.[49] There is also a series of observable mobilization indicators for violent extremists, released by the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), which, due to their nature, are "highly diagnostic on their own": for example, final (martyrdom) statements, "seeking religious or political justification[s] for a planned violent act", mobilization attempts of others or seeking their assistance, and direct communications of intent (often online).[50]

Although there are many instructive examples of information leakage behaviors by ideologically motivated actors, no consistent uniform profile exists. The Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue mass shooter, Robert Bowers, (responsible for shooting eighteen people, killing eleven of them, in the worst anti-Semitic attack in United States history)[51][52] serves as an illustrative example for discussion regarding evident pre-attack variables and how they align and contrast with cases such as Paddock. In the wake of the Pittsburgh attack, the Associated Press reported that Bowers' social media account included neo-Nazi slogans and imagery, slurs and conspiracy theories regarding Jews, photos of semi-automatic handguns described as "my glock family," and, on the morning of the attack, a more direct statement of motivation which read: "HIAS [a non-profit refugee assistance group influenced by 'Jewish values and history'] 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."[53] According to the indictment, Bowers indeed used three Glock handguns in the attack, along with a Colt AR-15 rifle, and he also "made statements" during the attack "indicating his desire to 'kill Jews.'"[54]

Press accounts, from friends who knew Bowers in the 1990s, reported that he "struck his colleagues as a guy who liked beer, Hooters, action films and guns, with a bit of an anti-government streak—not as a virulent anti-Semite primed to explode."[55] In contrast to frequent associations with "lone wolves" in the

public consciousness, one close contact who associated with Bowers until 2004 described him as "a happy dude."[56] Clues from friends and associates to Bowers' radicalization process indicate: increased interest in political topics through a talk radio program, for which he may have done encoding work for the associated website "warroom.com" around the year 2000; hostility toward the United Nations; "dropping off the radar" with former associates and friends in the early to mid-2000s; apparent influence by online extremists as evidenced by his shared posts; and author[ing] or sharing of "apocalyptic post after post" in the weeks leading up to his attack.[57]

Bowers' behaviors are consistent with several research-based risk factors associated with lone actor radicalization to terrorism released by the National Institute of Justice and the NCTC. For instance, Bowers, a lone actor, "convey[ed] information about [his] grievances [and] extremist ideologies" pre-attack and broadcast[ed] his intent ("I am going in") on the morning of the attack.[58] His posts contained evidence of extremist influencers, ideology, grievances, contemplations of violent resolutions, capabilities (possession of, and practice with, firearms). Ultimately, his targeting decision related to a specific identifiable group consistent with his stated extremist views. Table 2 contrasts comparatively circumspect pre-attack behaviors of the motivationally elusive Paddock versus the comparatively abundant leakage behaviors of the radicalized and ideologically motivated Bowers.

Table 2: Contrasting Selected Pre-Attack Variables of Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue Mass Shooter, Robert Bowers, and Las Vegas Shooter, Stephen Paddock

FBI pre-attack study variable	Stephen Paddock	Robert Bowers
Grievance formation	Motivation elusive, no evidence of specific grievances	Connections with extremist influencers and ideologies observable via shared social media posts Neo-Nazi imagery, slurs, and conspiracy theories regarding Jews observable on social media
Pre-attack behaviors & communications	➢ Girlfriend's awareness of Paddock's purchase of large sums of ammunition, loading of magazines and placement into suitcases and duffle bags, trips to gun stores/ranges ➢ Two unusual $50,000.00 Wells Fargo wire transfers to the Philippines ➢ No reported leakage of intent or legacy tokens	➢ Sharing of posts of online extremists ➢ Accelerated posting of extremist content in the weeks prior to attack which was described as increasingly apocalyptic ➢ References to firearms and firearms training ➢ Posted photos of firearms (later used in the attack) ➢ Specific leakage of intent on the day of the attack
Targeting decisions	Post attack investigation - Revealed target locations were contained in Paddock's search queries Site selection - Ideology/motivation unknown: by inference sites were selected for privacy, proximity to his residence, and tactical considerations	Specific leakage of target identification, a Jewish nonprofit (HIAS) involved in refugee assistance, along with a specific extremist ideological statement regarding the targeting decision

Considerations for Researchers and Practitioners in the Context of These Cases

Preventing mass casualty incidents is an area of grave and mutual concern for both academic researchers and practitioners in the intelligence and law enforcement communities. Although there is always the proverbial strategic danger of "fighting the last war," regarding planning efforts, research supports the proposition that planners developing countermeasures to lone attackers—whether motivationally elusive (like Paddock) or ideologically motivated (like Bowers)—are allocating time productively when anticipating and preparing for attack scenarios involving firearms. Practitioners, however, must be concerned with the attendant legal issues to ensure the integrity of their investigations (balancing public protection and individual liberties). Also, they are constricted by limited resources when facing lawful but concerning behaviors which are potentially indicative of pre-attack activity (e.g., accumulation of materials).

Regarding firearms-based attacks, Paddock is a case-in-point of an otherwise lawful course of activity (accumulation of firearms) which was surrounded by suspicious, but ultimately unreported actions. His rapid pattern of accumulation of firearms was inconsistent with his past activities. Bowers, in contrast, is an example of an actor who was less disciplined regarding leakage, which included pre-attack references to firearms and firearms-related training. A crucial question in terms of pre-attack mitigation strategy for legal firearms jurisdictions is: Can public policy facilitate additional pre-attack intervention opportunities, in similar cases, especially when leakage behaviors are more prevalent? Relevant to this inquiry, we recommend that researchers direct their attention to a promising area of research: "red flag" firearms laws. The enforcement of "red flag" laws may yield actionable information to facilitate the formation of evidenced-based pre-attack mitigation countermeasures by practitioners in jurisdictions where firearms possession is generally lawful (absent personal disqualifying factors).[59]

Gun ownership is an individual right in the United States under the Second Amendment to the US Constitution and subsequent jurisprudence such as the 2008 Heller decision of the US Supreme Court.[60] It is not, however, an unlimited right. There are considerable differences between individual states regarding firearms laws. Also, reform measures in the wake of mass violence incidents are frequently followed by years of court challenges. For instance, a bump stock ban, ordered by President Donald Trump in the wake of Paddock's use of bump stocks, (which accelerate a firearm's rate of fire), was enjoined in federal court. Attorney generals from seventeen states are currently requesting that the US Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit overturn the bump stock ban.[61][62] Comparing the US to other nations, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) observes (citing a 2018 small arms survey from a Swiss-based university institute) that at "less than 5 percent of the world's population" the US accounts for "46 percent of the world's civilian-owned guns."[63] Firearms-related deaths were at a two-decade high for 2020—with the statistics for 2021 also projected to be grim.[64] Opponents of gun control in the US have argued that Norway's comparatively stricter gun control measures did not prevent right-wing extremist Anders Breivik's attack which resulted in the death of 77 people.[65]

Outside of the more general gun control debate in the United States, however, the effectiveness of state "red flag" laws merit closer examination in terms of pre-attack mitigation activities. In April 2021, the Biden-Harris administration directed the US Justice Department to "publish model 'red flag' legislation for states."[66] The administration describes these laws as a mechanism to "allow family members or law enforcement to petition for a court order temporarily barring people in personal crisis from accessing firearms if they present a danger to themselves or others."[67] The effectiveness of red flag laws to inform evidence-based practices in preventing mass violence is a burgeoning key area for future study. Considered from a researcher's perspective, the system of federalism in the United States creates a control group (states not adopting red flag laws) and an experimental group (states that do adopt red flag laws). In a recent study, Dalafave (2021), for instance, studied the outcomes of red flag laws on firearms-related suicides and homicides, noting a 6.4% reduction in firearms-related suicides.[68] Concurrently, the research found no significant impact regarding firearms-related homicides.[69] Also, the study posited in the conclusion that these laws may be "more politically palatable than other forms of gun legislation because of their targeted nature and potential to balance the interests of gun owners against the negative externalities of gun violence."[70] Indeed, the need for said

balance is crucial in a politically polarized society which lacks consensus on gun control–related measures.

As future studies examine the impacts of red flags laws from a scientific evidentiary perspective, practitioners can further examine them from an operational perspective to inform best practices. The recent case of alleged neo-Nazi leader Kaleb James Cole provides a useful example from the practitioner perspective. In the fall of 2019, Seattle police seized several rifles (including an AK-47) and pistols from Cole pursuant to Washington State's red flag law.[71] This was spurred after Cole's extremist rhetoric began manifesting into what police described as "taking active steps or preparation for an impending 'race war'."[72] Although Cole was not charged with a crime, the court granted an "extreme risk protection order", thereby supporting the prosecutor's office assessment of risk in this case.[73] Cole, along with other alleged associates, was arrested in 2020 for what US Attorney Brian T. Moran described as "a conspiracy to threaten and intimidate journalists and activists" which the criminal complaint noted was "focused primarily on those who are Jewish or journalists of color."[74] Evaluating the success of proactive measures prior to an attack is inherently limited by the fact that the question "what did not occur here" is conjecture. However, when looked at through the lens of pre-attack variables and risk assessment factors, one can readily answer: Which variables were present in the Cole case? Five stand out: (i) *Escalating rhetoric, (ii) capability in the form of firearms, (iii) active preparation steps, and—in the following year—(iv) specific identification and threatening of targets (in the form of intimidation) (v) consistent with known grievance statements.* Comprehending and framing these variables in such a way is useful both in threat assessment and resource allocation decisions as well as in evaluating the effectiveness of one's efforts when "success" means a potential event that does not occur.

Researchers and practitioners can also learn from instances where red flag laws fail in their intended purpose and use information gleaned from an examination of the pre-attack variables of a given case to highlight where intervention opportunities were potentially lost and failed to inform public policy improvements. Recently, limitations of red flag laws, even in the comparatively firearms-restrictive state of New York, have been exposed by lone-actor mass shooter Payton Gendron's racially motivated hate-based murder of 10 Black Americans (and wounding of 3) in Buffalo.[75] Gendron, nearly a year prior to the attack, had been reported to his school for "mention of a murder-suicide—at Susquehanna Valley High School."[76] Although details are still being released at the time of this writing, questions regarding the effectiveness of New York's red flag law have been raised, for example, why Gendron was not flagged and the fact that the law allows for seizures of existing firearms from a subject but not necessarily prohibitions and/or heightened scrutiny regarding future purchases.[77] Nonetheless, a common nomenclature provided by critically examining cases in the context of the pre-attack variables may allow the various web of agencies with interlocking responsibilities related to these incidents to communicate more effectively—both with each other regarding clarifying allocation of responsibilities and also by highlighting issues and failure points to be redressed by policymakers.

Our second and closing recommendation proceeding from the case studies discussed in this article regards communications. Effective agency communications and outreach once again proves to be the lynchpin of any strategy to proactively counter acts of mass violence. Practitioner agencies are well served to review both their communications policies and public outreach procedures in the wake of what can be learned from the attacks by motivation elusive actors such as Paddock and ideological extremists such as Bowers. Agencies should focus on removing barriers whether of logistics, trust, or public confidence to ensure "concerned party" or "bystander" information funnels to mitigation resources in time. As the FBI-BAU notes, "[b]ystanders are the force multipliers of threat management" and crucial to success.[78] Has one's agency recently published or linked to resources which inform the public regarding signs of activity? This is a threshold question. There are many such resources appropriate for public outreach, such as the Department of Homeland Security's leaflet *Recognize the Signs of Terrorism-related Suspicious Activity* which specifically lists relevant information consistent with the research regarding the pre-attack behaviors such as "expressed or implied threats, surveillance, … acquisition of expertise, … materials acquisition/storage" and "weapons collection/storage."[79] However, simply electronically publishing such information on a department website does not ensure widespread community awareness. Also, it will not address potential barriers of trust where the desired awareness exists.

A comprehensive community relations strategy should ensure the public knows not only what to report and how, how confidentiality will be protected, and what actions the agency may take following a report. The effort must be continuous. Information regarding public awareness and perceptions may be ascertained formally through external surveys. Less formally, such data can be garnered through dialogue at community meetings and meetings with community leaders. Community policing strategies should include provisions to frequently reinforce both the necessity of this dialogue and the potential benefits to empower more bystanders to report potentially lifesaving information in time.

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Authors' Note: No conflicts of interest to disclose.

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Discourse and Terrorism: Religionization, Politicization and the Incitement of Sectarian Conflicts

by Adib Abdulmajid

Abstract

This article delves into the diverse aspects of the discourse of terrorist groups in the Middle East. It tackles a poorly investigated area of research, as it strives to provide a better understanding of the specific elements of the discourse of influential terrorist organizations with diverse sectarian affiliations. It contributes to the fields of discourse analysis and terrorism studies by providing new insights into the linguistic and contextual activities, the explicit and implicit messages within the discourse of major terrorist groups. The adopted methodological framework comprises 'discursive ideologization' and 'discursive manipulation', allowing the exploration of ideological practices, manipulative strategies and propaganda methods. Key features identified within the discourse of the studied organizations include politicization, religionization and sectarianization.

Keywords: Extremism, terrorism, Middle East, media discourse, discourse analysis, sectarianism, politicization, religionization, ideologization, manipulation.

Introduction

Amid the extensive use of digital media platforms by terrorist groups operating in war-torn countries, the discourse of such groups is believed to have contributed to the escalation of violence and the deterioration of living conditions at the heart of the Middle East. Among the most powerful militant groups that emerged in the region were the Islamic State (ISIS)[1] and al-Hashd al-Shaabi.[2] Each group has founded its own media outlets and reinforced its propaganda machines, making use of the digital age to convey its messages and to promote its activities to an unlimited audience. These groups have developed a discourse mainly characterized by sectarian extremism and hostility toward rivals. This extremist discourse is believed to have incited a sectarian conflict in different parts of the region.

For the purpose of this article, a discourse analysis has been conducted on written texts and multimedia materials released by ISIS and al-Hashd al-Shaabi in the period between 2014–2017. This phase in the history of those groups has been studied since it represents a key stage in the development of an extremist discourse through digital media that has gained great attention from the international community. In addition, it has been associated with an intensified sectarian hostility on a regional level, the persecution of religious minorities,[3] rapid demographic changes[4] and the redrawing of administrative borderlines in accordance with military gains by parties to conflict in the region.[5]

This article also delves into the religious texts and recitations employed by these groups to support and further increase the impact of their messages. The goal is to investigate the specific sources each group relies on and the general context of the original texts compared to the contemporary discourse. Furthermore, this study investigates the sectarian element of the extremist discourse employed by terrorist groups through online media platforms to induce, radicalize and eventually recruit numerous Muslim youngsters in Europe. The extremist discourse through digital media has played a crucial role in the radicalization of a considerable number of Western Muslims, which makes this discourse and the associated messages of major interest to explore.

Unlike other "-isms" which have a semantic kernel that partly explains the use of a concept, extremism has no such a core that could provide guidance as to its meaning.[6] Extremism can take a political or a religious form, namely, 'political extremism' or 'religious extremism', and it is manifested by nonviolent as well as violent activities. The term extremism is defined as the rejection, in thought or action, of democratic pluralism, and its operational heart is the suppression of difference and dissent and the elimination of other views on the marketplace of ideas.[7] In the course of this article, the term *extremism* is employed to describe the ap-

proach of both ISIS and al-Hashd al-Shaabi to the religio-sectarian identity each group claims to represent, their discursive practices and the suppressive mechanisms they utilize in their efforts to realize their political goals. In addition, the employment of the term *terrorism* is meant to describe the involvement of the concerned organizations in acts of violence, whether on domestic, regional or international levels.[8]

This research article is structured in a way to present the reader with the outcome of a multidimensional critical discourse analysis study of a diverse set of media materials published by ISIS and a-Hashd al-Shaabi about various topics. Initially, the corpus data and the methodological framework are outlined, and samples of the analysis process are provided. Then, the results of the discourse analysis are presented to allow the reader to obtain an insight into the most crucial elements of the extremist discourse of these organizations. That includes the messages delivered and the linguistic and contextual activities pursued by media outlets affiliated with ISIS and al-Hashd al-Shaabi. This is followed by a summarized explanation of the three major aspects of the discourse of these organizations, namely politicization, religionization and sectarianization. Finally, the concluding remarks reiterate the main contributions of this analysis while also identifying its limitations—gaps in our knowledge that will require further attention by future studies in this field.

Data and Means of Analysis

The data that form the collective corpus of this study are extracted from online platforms of media organizations affiliated with our main focus groups, ISIS and al-Hashd al-Shaabi. Hence, websites and digital magazines run by these organizations constitute the main source of data. Rather than focusing on individual online communication channels utilized by members and followers of the two organizations, official online platforms of these organizations have been studied for they represent the official. Thus, this research rather focuses on the prevalent language use by media outlets affiliated with the groups under study.

Official websites and relevant online media platforms of these Syria- and Iraq-based groups therefore constitute the main source of data. ISIS used to run several media outlets responsible for publishing statements, news reports and multimedia materials. Among the leading pro-ISIS outlets and propaganda machines are *Dabiq Magazine*, *Al-Hayat Media Center*, *al-Furqan Foundation for Media Production* and *Al-Naba*. These outlets form a key source of data when analyzing the discourse of ISIS. On the other hand, al-Hashd al-Shaabi also publishes its statements and reports its news through its own digital platforms. The most prominent outlets run by al-Hashd include *Al-Tawjih Al-Aqa'idi*, *Humat al-Watan Magazine*, and *al-Hashd al-Shaabi Newspaper*. Since this study focuses on the discourse of these two groups in the period between 2014 and 2017, the archives of their media outlets are used as a main data source.

This study is predominantly corpus-based. The advantages of a corpus approach for the study of discourse include the emphasis on the representativeness of the text sample.[9] The data selection strategy and downsizing procedure were based on several criteria, including topic relevance, subject diversity, inclusiveness, availability and accessibility. Hence, key factors for the selection of this specific data set include the relevance of the topics of the selected media materials and the diversity of the subjects these materials sought to tackle. Also, the corpus is meant to be as inclusive as possible in terms of the various affiliations of the media organizations included. Needless to say, the availability and accessibility of the data have played an undeniable role in the selection process.

Discourse was first considered as a form of spoken dialogue and in contrast to written texts.[10] The concept was later understood as a combination of both spoken and written texts, referring to discourse as "all forms of spoken interaction, and written texts of all kinds."[11] In accordance with such definitions, discourse was initially deemed to be the study of language, a perspective that has been adopted by many of the early discursive accounts. Later on, new insights emerged, such as those of Woodilla,[12] who defined discourse as practices of talking and writing, constrained by broader social structures and cultural factors. According to Hardy, discourse is a system of texts that bring objects into being through the production, dissemination, and consumption; the texts used to bring about these 'objects' may include "written or spoken language, cultural artifacts, and visual representations."[13] Therefore, the main objective of the discourse analyst is

to explore the relationship between discourse and reality, search for hidden meanings, and mediate between past and present.[14]

According to Schiffrin et al., discourse analysis entails the study of language use, linguistic structure 'beyond the sentence', and social practices and ideological assumptions that are associated with language and communication.[15] These aspects are to be covered throughout the present study. Besides analyzing the linguistic, semantic and ideological dimensions of the extremist discourse, a comparison is made between moderate interpretations of the *Qur'ānic* verses and the Sharīʿa and explanations suggested by terrorist groups to justify their actions and provide a religious basis for their practices. As Zguri et al. elaborate, in the international academic, political and media debate of the past few years, it is widely accepted that Islamist extremism is not a derivation of Islam, but its misinterpretation and misuse for needs of political interests.[16]

In order to conduct a systematic critical discourse analysis, there are essential steps to be pursued, which include establishing the context, exploring the production process, examining the structure of each text under study, collecting and examining discursive statements, identifying cultural references, identifying linguistic and rhetorical mechanisms, interpreting the data and presenting the findings.[17] These steps constitute building blocks on the path toward realizing an in-depth investigation into the discourse of ISIS and al-Hashd al-Shaabi. In order to explore the various discursive activities employed by both organizations, a multidimensional methodology is utilized. The data analysis process combines Blass's (2005) *Manipulative Strategies* and van Dijk's (2000) *Ideological Square* as methodological instruments for the sake of delving deep into the discourse of media outlets run by the two groups and provide a well-founded analysis. Based on the methodological framework introduced by Blass, discursive manipulation can be conducted by means of *omission*, *commission*, or *propaganda strategies*.[18] Van Dijk's *Ideological Square* implicates emphasizing positive features about one's own group and negative aspects about the perceived other, while de-emphasizing negative features about "us" and positive aspects about "them".[19]

Sample I

> *Soldiers of the Caliphate took control of several towns in the area following heavy clashes with the Rāfiḍi militias and the Nuṣayri army… The Nuṣayri troops fled the battlefield after suffering heavy losses under heavy bombardment by the soldiers of the Caliphate… The mujahidin were able to eliminate dozens of murtaddīn, including Iranian Rāfiḍis.[20]*

In an attempt to stigmatize and dehumanize the enemy, terms such as "Rāfiḍi" (rejectionist) and "murtad" (apostate) are frequently used by the ISIS official newspaper *al-Naba* in reference to enemy forces. Within the framework of discursive manipulation, the frequent exposure to the same information basically represents an invitation to the recipients to think about this information, a process that may eventually lead to (re)shaping their beliefs and attitudes in accordance with the addresser's desires. The sectarian nature of the employed manipulative discourse is manifested in the language use, particularly by branding the Shiʿites as "Rāfiḍi" and the Alawites as "Nuṣayri". Branding Shiʿite Muslims as such invokes deeply held sectarian sentiments, for the term implicates a Shiʿite rejection to, and denial of, the legitimacy of any successor of the Prophet other than Ali and his descendants. Concerning the use of the term "Nuṣayri", the sectarian dimension of such terminology stems from the fact that the roots of Alawism lie in the teachings of Muhammad ibn Nusayr an-Numayri, a Basran contemporary of the tenth Shiʿite Imām. Such teachings are seen by orthodox Sunnis as heretical innovations. This language use implies that ISIS represents Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamāʿah in what appears to have been framed as a religio-sectarian conflict.

Sample II

> *"Fight them, and Allah will punish them by your hands." Under the banner "O' Father of Abdullah al-Hussein", with the help of Allah, forces of al-Hashd al-Shaabi hit strongholds of the terrorists and turned them into pieces…. The forces advanced with an Alawi will and a Husseini spirit, regained control of major areas and forced the terrorists to flee.[21]*

The discursive foundation of this text shows an attempt to draw an explicit contrast between al-Hashd al-Shaabi and its enemies. While positive characteristics about the former are emphasized and potential negative ones are de-emphasized, the latter's negative features are underlined across this particular ideological discourse. Such discursive practices fall within the framework of the Ideological Square. Reciting a Qur'anic verse from *surat at-Taubah* (Q9:14) at the very beginning of the article represents an explicit instance of discursive *religionization* with respect to the armed conflict in Iraq. Such a recitation is meant to support the process of portraying al-Hashd as a holy force. The employed terminology further relates to the core doctrinal tenets of Shiʿism. For instance, the phrase "Alawi will" refers to the struggle of Ali ibn Abi Talib, as one of *ʾAhl al-Bayt* (household of the Prophet), to claim his righteous position as a successor of the Prophet. Al-Hashd claims to be inspired by such definitions of historical events. Such doctrinal beliefs also emphasize its sectarian identity and seek to ignite sectarian sentiments amongst its militants and other recipients of its propaganda.

Messages, Linguistic and Contextual Activities

Comparing the discursive approach toward recipients by ISIS on the one hand, and al-Hashd al-Shaabi on the other, one can conclude that while the former has attempted to address a worldwide Muslim community, the latter has focused its efforts more on reaching and appealing to a local audience. Global-minded ISIS has primarily structured its discourse in such a way that facilitates targeting and touching on the feelings of Sunni Muslims around the world. The group's discourse and the associated messages are mainly directed to all Sunni Muslims, seeking to manipulate their emotions through invoking the dream of the caliphate by utilizing Sunni-based elements. This is also reflected in the group's attempts to recruit Muslims from different parts of the world to join its ranks in Syria and Iraq or, alternatively, to operate as lone wolves or scattered smaller cells across the so-called enemy states. Indications of such messages can be found in the discourse of ISIS's leadership while addressing its recruits and potential sympathizers. Meanwhile, al-Hashd al-Shaabi appears to be mainly locally, and in certain cases regionally oriented in accordance with developments related to Shia Muslims. The organization's Shia-based discourse demonstrates a considerable attachment to unified actions under the umbrella of sectarian-based *fatwas*, whereby discursive efforts appear to be mainly focused on a local, Shia-guided agenda.

The main messages observed throughout the analytical process of the discourse of ISIS comprise: the legitimacy of ISIS as a sole representative of *Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamāʿa*; the group's possession of the necessary tools, such as military capabilities and religious guidance, to defeat the *kuffār*; emphasis on *jihād*, in its physical form, as an obligatory action and a command by Allah; ISIS's administrative capabilities to run its so-called Islamic State; combating foreign forces and sectarian adversaries as a duty on every Sunni Muslim; promising a glorious victory for the *mujāhidīn*; the application of the Islamic *Sharīʿa* in accordance with the Prophet's *manhaj (methodology to find truth)*; striving against all forms of ṭāġūt (idolatry and tyranny), *nifāq* (hypocricy) and *bidʿah* (heretical innovation); resisting the *kuffār* (infidels), and suppressing the *murtaddīn* (apostates).

In order to realize and ensure a resounding impact of the delivered messages among the recipient audience, certain linguistic and contextual activities are employed throughout ISIS's discourse. The analysis of the research data has illustrated a selective recitation of various *Qurʾānic* verses and *ḥadīths (recorded sayings of the Prophet)* in accordance with the context they tend to serve, and in such a way that would ultimately facilitate the delivery of particular messages. The *Qurʾān* and the *ḥadīth* are mainly recited within the framework of ISIS's call for *jihād* and martyrdom. The recited verses tackle the concept of *jihād* as a form of *ʿamalu l-badan bil-qitāl* or physical effort in combat.[22] This appears to be aimed at emphasizing the righteousness of the group in presenting its struggle as a struggle between "the people of faith" and "the people of disbelief". Such a discourse basically implicates that ISIS is fighting "for the cause of Allah" and everyone who joins its ranks is a righteous "mujāhid" and those who end up dead are portrayed as *shuhadāʾ* or martyrs. An example of recitation for contextual purposes is that of a verse from the Āl *ʻImrān* chapter which refers to the glory promised by Allah to the believers. The utilization of such a verse in the concerned context can be seen as an

attempt to mobilize forces for ISIS's cause and to emphasize its righteousness in reviving the caliphate and leading the Muslims. The discourse analysis has shown the employment of multiple verses from *Qur'ānic* chapters, each appearing in a certain context and serving to push a particular message. These include *al-Nahl* on fighting against the enemies of Allah; *at-Taubah* on preserving and applying Islamic teachings; *al-Anfāl* on enforcing the Islamic faith; and *al-Baqarah* on resistance against oppressors. Multiple *ḥadīths* are also recited for the sake of emphasizing the credibility of ISIS's claims with respect to the prophetic *manhaj* for leading the *'ummah*, carrying out *Daʿwah*, and promising a glorious and victorious end to the "true" Muslims. Thus, the selective recitation of the *Qur'ān* and the *ḥadīth* within ISIS's discourse can be viewed as a contextual activity that tends to serve the ultimate objectives of the group, that is, reaching the addressees through a convincing tone and ensuring the conveyance and effectiveness of implicit and explicit messages.

In terms of language use, a set of terms that explain the extremist and sectarian nature of ISIS has been identified during the data analysis. The employed vocabulary and concepts, such as *jihād* (struggle for the cause of God), *ṭāġūt* (tyranny), *nifāq* (hypocricy), *bidʿah* (heretical innovation), *takfīr* (excommunication of infidels), *riddah* (apostasy), *al-walā' wa-l-barā'* (loyalty and disavowal), and *ḥ*ākimiyyah (God's dominion), reveal the Salafi-Jihadi foundation of ISIS and manifest religious extremism as one of the cornerstones upon which the group seems to rest in terms of ideology.[23] Another terminological set shows traces of sectarian-guided hate speech that portrays foes and adversaries in the most malicious and indignant terms. Such terms mostly carry historical connotations of a divisive, schismatic and inciteful nature. The conflict of which ISIS emerges as main party is discursively sectarianized by means of utilizing pejorative terms such as *rāfiḍah* (rejectionists) and *Ṣafawi* to describe the Shia,[24] and *Nuṣayri* or heretical to describe the Alawites.[25] Other linguistic and contextual activities depicted throughout the analysis of ISIS's discourse include: picturing the ongoing conflict as a struggle between ʾīmān or belief represented by ISIS itself, and *kufr* or disbelief represented by all those who fall outside its ranks; the group's activities are depicted as blessed efforts for the sake of a holy cause and its members are continuously portrayed as true *mujāhidīn* and *muwaḥidīn* who follow the command of Allah and are eventually rewarded by him; those who tend to oppose the group or deny the legitimacy of its cause are branded as *ṭawāġīt* (idols, tyrants), *kuffār* (infidels), *murtaddīn* (apostates), people of *bidʿah* (heretical innovations) and *munāfiqīn* (hypocrites); the legitimacy of the group's self-proclaimed "Islamic khilāfah" is discursively supported by the frequent mention of *ahlul-ḥalli-wal-ʿaqd* (elite scholars who loose and bind), *ijmāʿ* (consensus), and *bayʿah* (swearing allegiance to the Caliph); while ISIS's claimed "Islamic khilāfah" is depicted as a long-standing "dream" of all Muslims. Notions such as "democracy, secularism and nationalism" are portrayed as "corrupt" ideologies that need to be destroyed; the group tends to present itself and those associated with its struggle as *al-ṭ*ā'ifah *al-manṣ*ūrah or the sole triumphant group of Muslims, and *al-firqah al-nājiyah* or the saved denomination,[26] while its opponents, rivals and enemies are shown as the lost and misled ones; the Sunnis or *Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamāʿa* are referred to as "masters" and "esteemed", whereas the Shia are defamed as "*rāfiḍah*" or rejectionists[27] and "*filthy Ṣafawis*".[28]

Key messages identified within the discourse of al-Hashd al-Shaabi involve: the maintenance of basic Islamic principles and teachings by the *mujāhidīn* of al-Hashd; emphasizing the crucial role of the Shia Imamate—or the *Mujtahids*—in initiating and leading *jihād* against foes and adversaries; labeling the struggle of al-Hashd *jihād kifāyah*,[29] launched voluntarily based on the *fatwa* of the Shia Supreme Religious Reference for the sake of defending the land and the religion—namely *Jihād al-*Dafʿ[30]—against enemies; showing the Shia as victims of injustices by the Sunnis throughout the Islamic history; stressing attachment to Shia symbols and rituals as a source of inspiration; associating the Sunnis with "extremism" and "terrorism";[31] emphasizing the sacredness and piety of al-Hashd members; underlining the political legitimacy of the organization under the umbrella of the Shia-led Iraqi government; sectarianizing the conflict by means of asserting the righteousness of the Shia; and insisting on al-Hashd's key role in bringing about stability and security to the region.

In terms of contextual activities, an increasing reference to the Shia Imamate and the associated teachings, lessons and principles has been observed in the discourse analysis while the Qur'ān is rarely recited by pro-

al-Hashd media. This explains the deeply rooted sectarian spirit guiding the organization through its discourse and the importance of the Shia characteristics to the organization, rather than the religious features that may bring al-Hashd al-Shaabi closer to other Islamic groups. Such discursive practices can be interpreted as a quest for uniqueness through what we may call *religio-sectarian distancing*, which entails reinforcing the sectarian divide in order to draw a clear line between good and evil, using sectarian markers. *Qur'ānic* verses are only employed in the context of implicating God's involvement in rendering al-Hashd al-Shaabi victorious over its enemies, which is meant to portray the group as a holy force. Besides, the *ḥadīth* further emerges in the context of tackling the embodiment of core Islamic values by the Prophet and *'Ahl al-Bayt*—to whom al-Hashd claims a fundamental attachment—in a bid to underline the Shia belief concerning the importance of bloodline when it comes to the religious leadership of the *'ummah*, which is to trace back to the concept of *Shia Imamate*. Such recitations are basically meant to support the effort of religionizing the image of al-Hashd al-Shaabi and ultimately assist in (re)shaping the opinions and beliefs of the addressed audience[32] regarding the organization.

As for the linguistic activities within al-Hashd's discourse, the employed vocabulary, such as *jihād kifāyah* (collective struggle on a voluntary basis), *fatwa* (jurisprudential opinion), *Imamate*, *Alawi will* and *Husseini spirit*, represent attempts of discursive sectarianization and the incitement of sectarian sentiments, whether among supporters or rivals. A positive image about al-Hashd is constantly consolidated through portraying its members as "protectors", "liberators", "mujāhidīn", and "proud men of Allah". At the same time, an extremely negative image is being conveyed about rivals and adversaries. These are pictured as "enemies of Allah", "takfiri", "Baathist", "Wahhabi", "extremists", "Salafists", and "gangs" who are primarily concerned with "smashing" and "destroying" the country and its people in accordance with an agenda described as "terrorist", "separatist" and "sectarian". The concept of *takfīr* is repeatedly attributed to Sunni-based organizations in a bid to emphasize the extremist Salafi-Jihadi nature of their enemies. In order to stress the religiosity of al-Hashd al-Shaabi, the group's Shia members are portrayed as "holy", "sacred" and "saintly". The constant association of al-Hashd with Shiʿism and the martyrdom of al-Hussein makes this type of utilized discourse an example of sectarianization in the context of armed conflict; it is a clear manifestation of what Ibn Khaldun labeled *ʿaṣabīya* or the nurturing of a group feeling at times of crisis.[33] Furthermore, associating al-Hashd's struggle with Imam al-Hussein and emphasizing the latter's membership to *'Ahl al-Bayt* reflect a sectarian-based Shia perspective on "sacredness" and "saintliness".

Hence, despite the different approaches each of the two studied groups discursively take in terms of contextual and linguistic activities, the messages they both deliver to their audiences make clear that religious extremism is at the core of their discourse. Once such discursive practices succeed in rendering the implied messages effective and impactful, the incitement of sectarian schism and the contribution to an intensified sectarian strife in war-torn countries such as Syria and Iraq appears to be an inevitable consequence.

Politicization

In a discursive context, politicization, as a notion of fundamental ties with politics and power, forms an intrinsic dimension of 'discursive ideologization' in that it promotes politically guided messages with the objective of influencing supposedly vulnerable recipients.[34] The analysis of the research data has shown a frequent emergence of politicization as a key dimension of the discourse of both ISIS and al-Hashd al-Shaabi.

In ISIS's discourse, contrasts have been drawn between the Islamic *Sharīʿa* as a correct *manhaj* of governance[35] on the one hand, and the concepts of democracy, secularism and nationalism as supposedly misleading Western-based ideologies on the other hand. The Iraqi central government is depicted as a *Rāfiḍi* authority, and its relation to Iran—as a major Shia power and a facilitator to the Iraqi government's political and military activities—is frequently highlighted alongside the sectarian borderlines demarcated and reinforced by ISIS's discourse. References are made to the Shia *Ṣafavids* and their historical struggle against the Sunnis, and that same historical context is projected onto the ongoing conflict within this politicized

discourse. Another manifestation of discursive politicization is the emphatic reference to ISIS's pursuit to implement *Sharīʿa* guidelines.

Within al-Hashd's discourse, the Sunnis are portrayed as main facilitators of dictatorship and terrorism to which Iraq has been exposed, whereas the Shia emerge as a key player in terms of positively reshaping the political scenery in Iraq and the region. The utilized discourse suggests a struggle for power and a competition for (re)gaining authority between "desperate, ideologically disoriented" Sunnis, and "righteous" Shia. Describing the Baathist ideology as comprising nationalism, religion and the sect, besides the explicit reference to today's Iraq as a Shia state in contrast to what is discursively considered a Sunni state under the former regime of Saddam Hussein, illustrates the religio-political and sectarian foundation of the employed discourse. Combining religion and politics in the context of conflict emerges as one of the serious dimensions of sectarian media discourse due to its potential capability to facilitate and consolidate social divide. Politicization also manifests itself within the discourse of al-Hashd through constant attempts to emphasize the political legitimacy of the organization, its role in maintaining national unity and the sovereignty of Iraq. Besides, the discursive attempt to portray al-Hashd as a force acting under the legislative and executive umbrella of the Iraqi central government falls under politicization as a discursive strategy, aimed at establishing and projecting legitimacy in terms of the organization's activities and objectives. This can be interpreted as an attempt to nationalize the agenda of an armed sectarian militia and providing it with the necessary tools to prosper and increase its power and influence into the future of the region.

Religionization

Within the framework of this study, discursive religionization is defined as the employment of religious identity, recitation of religious sources, and the utilization of religious symbols and references for the sake of asserting the religiosity, piety and righteousness of those involved. As such, religionization surfaces as one of the major aspects of the discourse of each group under study.

Traces and indications of discursive religionization are regularly observed throughout the research data associated with ISIS. A clear cut is being fostered between what ISIS considers as *kuffār* (infidels), *ṭawāġīt* (idols and tyrants), *murtaddīn* (apostates), people of *bidʿah* (heretical innovations) and *munāfiqīn* (hypocrites) on the one hand, and the believers, *muwaḥidīn* (monotheists), and *mujāhidīn* on the other hand. Terms with religious connotations are constantly employed for the sake of stressing the religiosity of the group and its members. The legitimacy of the group's self-proclaimed *khilāfah* is discursively supported by the mention of *ahlul-ḥalli-wal-ʿaqd* (elite scholars who loose and bind), *ijmāʿ* (consensus), and *bayʿah* (swearing allegiance to the Caliph). The group's discourse further tends to draw comparisons between ISIS's leader and the Rightly Guided Caliphs or the *Rāshidūn*.[36]

The "method" or *manhaj* that ISIS claims to have adopted is discursively promoted as being based on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. This can be seen as an attempt by ISIS to propagate itself as *al-ṭā*'ifah *al-manṣ*ūrah or the sole triumphant group of Muslims, and *al-firqah al-nājiyah* or the saved denomination. Such a discourse relates to the core principles of Salafism that entail a consistent emphasis on the preservation of *ʿaqīdah* or doctrinal pureness by means of what Salafi-Jihadi movements such as ISIS promote as the "correct" and "true" *manhaj*. Also, the reference to the *Sharīʿa* guidelines in this context as a basis for the way ISIS allegedly runs its "Wilayāt" (provinces) illustrates the organization's attempt to politicize religion and religionize politics, as grounded in the theological teachings of Ibn Taymiyya.[37] The reference to *tawḥ*īd, *takfīr*, *ḥ*ākimiyyah and *jihād* that emerge in the discourse of ISIS shows the group's commitment to the fundamental tenets of Salafi-Jihadism. Such discursive practices can be seen as obvious attempts by ISIS to characterize itself as an organization staffed by a group of *mujāhidīn* who are deemed to be *Salafi* in creed and *jihādi* in method, namely *Salafī-yul ʿaqīdah wa jihādī-yul manhaj*.[38]

The utilized discourse frames *jihād*, in its physical form, as an "obligatory" action and a "command" by Allah. Employing phrases such as "either khilāfah or shahādah" (martyrdom) implicate a suicidal nature of ISIS's members and their belief in the allegedly divine reward awaiting every *shahīd* for the cause of Allah.

Such language use reflects what Nawawi emphasizes as the physical embodiment of *jihād* as an activity of self-sacrifice, participation in armed struggle in the path of God and aspiration for *shahādah* or martyrdom for God's cause.[39] In order to consolidate a positive image about its ranks, the *Qur'ān*, *ḥadīth* (recorded sayings of the Prophet) and the *Sharīʿa* are referred to as jurisprudential bases within ISIS's discourse.

Likewise, religionization arises as a fundamental element in the discourse of al-Hashd al-Shaabi. Portraying al-Hashd members as *mujāhidīn* is meant to show those fighters as the sole true representatives of Islamic *jihād*, to deprive Sunni militants of this title and to render them illegitimate or false *mujāhidīn*. This discourse holds traces of the historic Shia-Sunni differences, including a sectarian-based interpretation of *jihād*.[40] The repeated use of the term *mujāhidīn* to describe fighters of al-Hashd is primarily aimed at picturing those fighters as the only true strugglers in the path of Allah [*jihād fī sabīl allāh*] in the region. Employing the concept of *jihād kifāyah* is meant to emphasize the voluntary basis of the *jihād* claim by al-Hashd. Besides the rise of *farḍ kifāyah* as a key feature of the *jihād* claimed by al-Hashd al-Shaabi, another main characteristic of this *jihād* is being defensive in nature, namely *Jihād al-Dafʿ*.

Having an identity marked by grievances and suffering, the Shia perceive Sunnis as the main source of their miseries throughout history and they therefore believe in the need to resist and fight against what they deem to be a long-standing injustice and oppression practiced against them, known as *jihād of the sword*. Such an image is being constantly consolidated through the discourse of al-Hashd al-Shaabi. Al-Hashd's discourse implicates an alleged "holiness" of its mission by means of associating it with the "determination of Ali" and the "glory of al-Hussein", besides portraying its members as "the courageous men of ʿAshura'". Drawing a direct link between its efforts and ʿAshura' reflects another fundamentally sectarian feature of this discourse, for it implicates a supposedly high level of commitment among the ranks of al-Hashd to the teachings of al-Hussein and to lessons associated with his martyrdom.[41]

The religio-ideological nature of al-Hashd's discourse mainly emerges in the form of an obvious attempt to consolidate a "holy", "sacred" and "saintly" image about al-Hashd al-Shaabi and its Shia members. Imam Ali al-Sistani, known as the Supreme Religious Reference among Iraq's Shia, whose *fatwa* led to the establishment of al-Hashd al-Shaabi in the first place, is portrayed as an ʿālim and *Mujtahid* who possesses the authority to launch *jihād* in its defensive form. This can be viewed within the context of the role of *Mujtahids* in initiating *jihād* in accordance with the Shia teachings and al-Hashd's religious commitment to the principle of *'Imāmah* or the leadership of the infallible Shia Imams. Al-Hashd al-Shaabi is also portrayed as a protector of the "ʿaqīdah", which, as a notion, constitutes the foundation of ʾīmān or faith.[42] Thus, protecting the *ʿaqīdah* essentially implicates preserving the faith as a whole. Hence, the religionization of the image of the organization is meant to legitimize its efforts and convince the addressees about the piety, devotion, and dedication of its members in their struggle for the greater good. Discursive religionization is ultimately aimed at influencing the addressees' views and attitudes, and eventually gaining their sympathy and support.

Sectarianization

Discursive *sectarianization* implies the employment of sectarian markers for the sake of increasing the sense of belonging to an in-group and demarcating the relationship to an out-group. It basically involves a set of prejudiced attitudes, policies and types of treatment based on religious differences, occurring at the levels of ideas, individual action and social structure.[43] It essentially reflects a manifestation of what Ibn Khaldun coined as *ʿaṣabīya* or the nurturing of a group feeling at times of crisis. Sectarianization further represents a sectarian-guided incitement of social stratification and divide that could eventually lead to conflict, wherein religion and politics arise as key factors. Concepts of "*othering*", *in-group* versus *out-group*, "*us*" versus "*them*", representation and misrepresentation emerge at the heart of sectarianization.[44] Within the framework of discursive sectarianization, sectarian markers of *positive* connotations are attributed to the in-group, while those of *negative* connotations are associated with the out-group or the perceived others. Religio-sectarian values and principles of the in-group are praised and portrayed as valid and righteous, whereas those embraced by the out-group are deemed to be spurious, illusive and even vicious.

A key sectarian-guided contrast drawn by the ISIS discourse is between Sunni and Shia Muslims. The Sunnis or *Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamāʿa* are referred to as "masters" and "esteemed", whereas the Shia are stigmatized as *rāfiḍah* or rejectionists and *Ṣafawi*. Terms such as *Nṣayri* or heretical are utilized to describe the Alawites. The terminology employed illustrates deeply sectarian sentiments derived from a historical divide within the Muslim world and shows an attempt to revive a sectarian strife for the sake of current strategic and political ends. The constant attribution of the pejorative term *rāfiḍah* to Shia Muslims holds deeply sectarian sentiments, for the term first emerged during the historical rift over the rightly guided successor of the Prophet. While the Sunnis relied at the time on consensus, the Shia insisted on the idea that Ali and his descendants were the rightful successors, and they were therefore branded as *rāfiḍah*.[45] Also, using the term *Nuṣayri* to describe the Alawite sect is meant to stigmatize its adherents as heretical. The sectarian dimension of such terminology stems from the fact that the roots of Alawism, as a branch of Shiʿism, lie in the teachings of Muhammad ibn Nuṣayr an-Numayri, a Basran contemporary of the tenth Shiʿism Imam. Orthodox Sunnis segregate the Shia—including its branches—as 'heterodox' and 'heretical'. Hence, the use of the term *Nuṣayri* in reference to the Alawites basically stems from a deeply sectarian-guided perspective and is meant to associate the sect with heterodoxy and heresy, to which Salafi-Jihadists are strongly rejective.[46]

ISIS's "creed" is frequently pictured as the true version of "Islam" and the group's practices as efforts to revive "aspects of the religion"—in contrast to the "Sufis" who are portrayed as "heretical". Branding the Sufis and their interpretations of Islamic principles as heretical reflects the extreme Salafi-Jihadi doctrinal basis of ISIS. Furthermore, the Yezidi religious minority is depicted as a group of "devil worshipers", "Satanists" and "kuffār" whose suppression and "enslavement" is allegedly recommended within the framework of the "*Sharīʿa*". This discourse implicates that the Yezidis are merely followers of "Iblīs, who is the biggest taghūt" and "mushrikīn" (polytheists) who, therefore, deserve no mercy.

Traces of discursive sectarianization manifest themselves throughout the discourse of al-Hashd al-Shaabi as well. Language use that reveals the sectarian basis of the discourse of al-Hashd includes references to Imam Ali, the martyrdom of Imam al-Hussein, and the ʿAshura'. The Shia believe that the tale of Hussein's martyrdom holds moral lessons for the community as it became a symbol for struggling against suppression and striving for justice. Furthermore, the Shia are referred to as righteous rulers of Iraq, while the Sunnis are portrayed as desperate ideologues. The Sunnis are closely associated with "extremism" and "terrorism", which can be seen as a manifestation of what Dixon coins as a 'sectarian narrative',[47] which has become a basic explanatory feature of conflicts in the region. The term Wahhabism also emerges in al-Hashd's discourse while attacking the ideological basis upon which extremist Sunni groups rest. This reflects an attempt to emphasize the extremist nature of the rivals and enemies of al-Hashd, given that Wahhabism is deemed to be the most extreme manifestation of Sunnism. Also, the concept of *takfīr* is repeatedly attributed to Sunni-based organizations in a bid to emphasize the extremist Salafi-Jihadi nature of those perceived enemies.

Drawing a link between the *mujāhidīn* of al-Hashd al-Shaabi on the one hand, and the Shia's historical suffering, al-Hussein's martyrdom, and the annual "visit" to his shrine as "the master of all martyrs" on the other hand, is meant to serve the consolidation of a trustworthy, positive image about al-Hashd among the recipients. The religionized and sectarianized ideological discourse of al-Hashd carries traces of fundamental Shia tenets, namely an emotional attachment to the historical exclusion from power at the hands of the Sunnis; an allegedly constant strive for bringing about justice; and a great commitment to the principle of *ʾImāmah* or the leadership of the infallible Shia Imams. The Shia sect is frequently depicted as a victim of suppression by Sunni-led entities in Iraq and the region, and al-Hashd al-Shaabi is deemed to be the "righteous" force to protect the sect through its so-called "legendary victories" and the "hidden assistance" of Imam al-Mahdi and the blessing of Imam Ali al-Sistani. This deeply sectarian discourse contradicts the organization's claim of struggling for unity and denouncing sectarian divides within the society. Armed and political conflicts are hence discursively sectarianized through the utilization of *Sunni* and *Shia* as markers to conflict parties in Iraq and the region. The intended impact of such a discourse among the addressees falls within the framework of what Brewer calls "attitudes and practices"[48] that invoke religious differences as the boundary marker to represent social stratification and conflict.

Conclusion

The incitement of a sectarian schism through the employment of religionized and politicized messages, besides the associated linguistic and contextual practices, demonstrates the significance of exploring and identifying such discursive dimensions. This article has delved into the diverse aspects and dimensions of the discourse of Sunni-based ISIS and Shia-based al-Hashd al-Shaabi. Politicization, religionization and sectarianization are among the key aspects identified within the analyzed discourses. Furthermore, while many studies tend to solely focus on extremist Sunnism, extremist Shiʿism remained poorly investigated. By including ISIS and al-Hashd al-Shaabi within the framework of this discourse analytical study, the research on which this article is based has provided new insights into sectarian-guided terrorism in terms of discursive practices.

While this study fills a gap in the relevant fields, it has gaps of its own, as does any academic research work. These include the limited attention paid to the theological feature of the discourse of these organizations and the political agendas they tend to serve. Also, it does not examine the different ways through which the concerned organizations tend to approach local audiences in contrast to global recipients and addressees. Another weakness is the inability of this study to explore the actual effect of the delivered messages among the recipients. Discursively analyzing terrorist organizations is a domain in need of extensive and continuous research, given the fact that such groups keep adjusting their propaganda strategies in response to the surrounding developments. Future research needs to cover an extended set of up-to-date data and study them in light of the historic moment they correspond to. The employment of multiple methodological tools might also contribute to a higher level of accuracy in terms of results. Future research should also examine the diverse audience-approach methods as pursued by such organizations and the practical efficiency of their discursive practices and messages on individual recipients and society as a whole.

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Notes

[1] Also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ISIS, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, ISIL, the Islamic State, IS, or Daesh. The latter [داعش dāʿish] is an acronym for the group's name in Arabic [الدولة الإسلامية في العراق والشام al-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah fī al-ʿIrāq wa al-Shām]. In this article, the group is referred to as ISIS.

[2] Al-Hashd al-Shaabi [الحشد الشعبي al-Ḥashd al-Shaʿbi] is also known as the People's Mobilization, the Popular Mobilization Units, PMU, or the Popular Mobilization Forces, PMF. The name al-Hashd al-Shaabi is used in this article to refer to this organization.

[3] Religious minorities in Iraq and Syria, such as the Yezidis and Christians, were notoriously victimized by armed Islamist groups and many of their places of worship were demolished.

[4] Campaigns of ethnic cleansing, forced displacement and resettlement witnessed in different areas in the region at the hand of various armed groups resulted in a dramatic demographic change in the affected towns and villages.

[5] As some armed forces extended their areas of control at the expense of others, some villages and towns fell outside their usual administrative borders and became part of other (sometimes artificial) governorates or provinces. This has been reinforced by sieges, security checkpoints and military fortifications.

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against Sunnis in the Muqdadiya town in Diyala province (See URL: https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/01/31/iraq-possible-war-crimes-Shia-militia). In a report released on 16 February 2017, HRW accused the same militia of terror acts and abuses, including the destruction and demolishing of civilian houses in Sunni areas near Mosul (See URL: https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/16/iraq-looting-destruction-forces-fighting-isis). Also see: Abbas, H. (2017). *The Myth and Reality of Iraq's al-Hashd al-Shaabi (Popular Mobilization Forces): A Way Forward.* Amman: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Policy Paper.

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Counterterrorism Bookshelf: 10 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 the large backlog of monographs and volumes received for review. In order to deal with this backlog, this column consists of capsule reviews and tables of contents of ten recently published books.

Victor Asal, Brian J. Phillips, and R. Karl Rethemeyer, ***Insurgent Terrorism: Intergroup Relationships and the Killing of Civilians*** (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022), 256 pp., US $ 110.00 [Hardcover], US $ 45.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 9780197607060.

This is an important account, based on empirical evidence, of the overall calculus that drives terrorist groups' targeting selection against what they consider to be their civilian adversaries. The book's empirical findings are generated by what the authors term the Big Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) insurgency database, which consists of attacks during the timeframe 1998-2012 by 102 groups that have employed terrorist attacks against civilians (pp. 220-221). The generated data is used to answer questions such as "why insurgent groups sometimes target civilians" (p. 11), which the authors define as "the general public, schools, and journalists" (p. 13). One finding is that seven indicators are related to terrorists' targeting of civilian adversaries: "government concessions and coercion, interorganizational alliances and rivalry [among the terrorist groups – JS], social service provision, ethnic motivations, and crime…." (p 217). Within this overall finding, one policy implication is that to mitigate terrorism "government actions have the potential to profoundly affect the use of terrorism by insurgents" (p. 221). This reviewer does not agree with the authors' claim that "there have been few studies" on terrorists' targeting of educational institutions and journalists, when, in fact, one can point to numerous studies on these topics. In another disagreement with the authors' approach, there have been numerous intentional targeting attacks by terrorists against armed military (and law enforcement) personnel, so excluding these important targets from their dataset presents only a partial picture of terrorists' overall targeting selections. Also, to terrorists, intentionally attacking armed military (and law enforcement) personnel demonstrates their "military prowess," so arguing that they are "too weak to directly attack military troops" (p. 215) is in many cases inaccurate. Aside from these criticisms, this book is a significant empirically-based contribution to the social science literature on terrorism and counterterrorism. Victor Asal is Director of the Center for Policy Research and Professor of Political Science at the University of Albany, SUNY. Brian J. Phillips is Reader in the Department of Government at the University of Essex, England, UK. R. Karl Rethemeyer is Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and a faculty member in SBS's School of Public Policy.

Table of Contents: Section I: Introduction, Theory, and Initial Testing; Introduction; The Embeddedness Theory of Civilian Targeting by Insurgent Organizations; Describing the Big, Allied, and Dangerous Insurgency Data and Other Data Sources; Testing Primary Hypotheses; Section II: Empirical Extensions, Types of Civilian Targeting; Why Do Some Insurgent Groups Mostly Attack the General Public?; Why Do Some Insurgent Groups Attack Schools?; Why Do Some Insurgent Groups Attack Journalists?; Section III: Further Analysis of Intergroup Relationships; Longitudinal Modeling of Insurgent Alliances; Understanding Insurgent Rivalry; Conclusion.

James Bacigalupo, Kevin Borgeson, and Robin Maria Valeri, ***Cyberhate: The Far Right in the Digital Age*** (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022), 186 pp., US $ 95.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-7936-0697-6.

The contributors to this conceptually innovative volume examine how far-right-wing extremists operate in cyberspace. The disciplines of criminal justice, psychology, cybersecurity, religion, law, education, and terrorism studies are applied to analyze their activities in cyberspace and physical space. Primary sources are examined, such as manifestos and other correspondence, and how they impact on the violent activities of

extremist individuals and groups. In the concluding chapter, "Responding to Cyberhate," James Bacigalupo points out that solutions to mitigating the threats posed by "cyberhate" include censorship (although some of the extremists use coded words to avoid censorship), and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security ramping up its social media tracking capability (pp. 159-161). Bacigalupo is a doctoral student in the criminology and justice studies programs at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. Kevin Borgeson is Associate Professor of Criminal Justice at Salem State University and former Research Fellow for the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Robin Maria Valeri is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Center for Nonviolence at St. Bonaventure University.

Table of Contents: Introduction; Welcome to Cyberspace; Looks Can Be Deceiving: The Challenges of Recognizing Hate in Cyberspace; Is Hate Against the Law? Legal Responses to Cyberhate; Bitcoin: The Currency of White Supremacists; Accelerating Hate: Atomwaffen Division, Contemporary Digital Fascism, and Insurrectionary Accelerationism; When Cyberhate Turns to Violence: White Nationalism to the Manosphere; The Alt-Right: Breaking into the Mainstream; Responding to Cyberhate.

Robert J. Bunker and John P. Sullivan (Eds.), ***Criminal Drone Evolution: Cartel Weaponization of Aerial IEDs*** (Indianapolis, IN: Xlibris, 2021), 302 pp., US $ 19.99 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-6641-1142-4.

Published under the auspices of the Small Wars Journal-El Centro Anthology, the contributors to this volume examine current and emerging trends in the threats posed by the proliferation in the use of drone technology and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) by Mexican narcotics-based criminal cartels. As David Hambling points out in the book's Preface, "Drones are now part of the challenge faced by law-enforcement agencies" (p. xxxvi), with the threat likely to become more significant with the utilization of "more sophisticated drones with increasing levels of onboard intelligence" (p. xxxvi). Dr. Robert J. Bunker is Director of Research & Analysis, C/O Futures, LLC, and Dr. John P. Sullivan served as a Lieutenant with the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. Both are Senior Fellows with the Small Wars Journal-El Centro.

Table of Contents: Preface; Foreword; Introduction; Mexico's Cartels Building Custom-Made Narco Drones: DEA; Mexican Cartel Tactical Note #21: Cartel Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs); Mexican Drug Traffickers Using Drones to Bring Drugs into the United States; Border Patrol Foils Drone Drug Incursion into the U.S.; Mexican Cartel Strategic Note No. 18: Narcodrones on the Border and Beyond; Yuma Border Patrol Experiencing Drone Activity; Narco-Drones: A New Way to Transport Drugs; Smuggler Using Drone Busted by Border Patrol; Mexican Cartel Tactical Note #35: Weaponized Drone/UAV/UAS Seized in Valtrierrilla, Guanajuato with Remote Detonation IED ('Papa Bomba') Payload; Mexican Cartel Tactical Note #38: Armed Drone Targets the Baja California Public Safety Secretary's Residence in Tecate, Mexico; Are Armed Drones the Weapon of the Future for Mexico's Cartels?; El Paso Sector Border Patrol Encounters New Tactics as Smugglers Keep Sending in Families and Felons; Uuxpan and Tecalitlan, Jalisco: "Thank you, Senior Mencho"; Yuma Sector Agents Intercept Narcotics Dropped From Drones; Mexican Cartel Tactical Note #45: Drones and Explosives Seized in Puebla, Mexico; El ExMarino Miembro Activo Del CJNG; How Organized Crime Networks Are Using Drones to Their Advantage; Mexican Cartel Tactical Note #46: Weapons Drones Deployed by CJNG in Tepalcatepec, Michoacan; Yuman Agents Detect Cross Border Drone Smuggling Narcotics; Mexican Cartel Tactical Note #48: Video of CJNG Engagement of Autodefensa Mounted Infantry in IAFV in La Bocanda, Michoacan; Mexican Cartel Tactical Note #49: Alleged CNJG Drone Attack in Aguililla, Michoacan Injures Two Police Officers; Mexican Cartel Tactical Note #50: Additional Weaponized Consumer Drone Incidents in Michoacan and Puebla, MX; Conclusion; Afterword; Postscript; 4 Appendices.

Sara Cobb, Sarah Federman, and Alison Castel, ***Introduction to Conflict Resolution: Discourses and Dynamics*** (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020. 912 pp., US $ 138.00 [Hardcover], US $ 47.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-78660-852-9.

This massive textbook provides a comprehensive introduction to the discipline of conflict resolution. Major topics, approaches, and research methodologies are covered by leading academic and practitioner experts. Much of the discussion on conflict resolution is sound, but the brief sections on terrorism are biased, with the U.S. State Department's terminology to counter terrorism supposedly portraying terrorists as "violent

automatons," viewing terrorists as "non-people" and their groups "without a history" (pp. 7-8). As a textbook, each section provides useful summary teaching points, including several that are useful in studying terrorism and counterterrorism, such as "What causes conflict? How does one stave off people's natural urges toward violence? What factors contribute to conflict escalation? What are the stages of development in a conflict? Why do peace negotiations fail? And when and where will violence erupt again?" (p. 31). Sara Cobb is Drucie French Cumbie Professor at the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University. Sarah Federman is Assistant Professor in the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Baltimore. Alison Castel is Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Communication Studies at Regis University.

Table of Contents: Preface; Introduction: Understanding; Part I: Epoch One: 1945 – The Fall of the Berlin Wall; Topics; Tactics and Strategies; Research Methodologies; Part II: Epoch Two: Coexistence as Peace, 1991-2000; Topics, Approaches; Research Methodologies; Part III: Epoch Three: Transboundary Conflicts, 2001-Present; Topics; Praxis; Research Methodologies; Questions for Discussion.

Andrew Fox, ***The Devil's Toy Box: Exposing and Defusing Promethean Terrorists*** (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books, 2022), 256 pp., US $ 32.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-64012-479-0.

This interesting book's title refers to "Promethean" terrorists as those that exploit latest warfare technologies to develop and deploy their own weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). As the author points out, emerging WMD technologies have become increasingly accessible to terrorists, such as home gene-splicing kits to make airborne pathogens, three-dimensional home printer to create surface-to-air missiles and other weapons, and hobbyist drones that can be weaponized to carry out remote-controlled lethal attacks (p. 3). To anticipate, prepare for, and counter terrorists' new tools of warfare, the author recommends a proactive Promethean 'Spyglass' "road map for conducting a thorough analysis of the devil's toy box" (pp. 4-5). The 'Spyglass' roadmap is a suite of forecasting tools, such as technology sequence analysis (TSA), alternative scenario analysis, and red teaming, with these approaches synthesized to form a multi-disciplinary team to prioritize future lethal threats by a terrorist adversary. This book is an important contribution to the literature on forecasting potential future types of terrorist warfare. The author is a management and program analyst for a U.S. federal law enforcement agency.

Table of Contents: List of Illustrations; List of Tables; Prologue: The Parable of the Devil's Toy Box; Future Shock Visits the Subway: The 1995 Aum Shinrikyo Sarin Gas Assault as a Prototypical Promethean Terror Strike; Made in Japan? Or "Overeducated and Underemployed"?; Promethean Technologies: Adding Accelerants to the Spreading Fire; Endless Threats: Promethean Technology's Mind-Bending Challenge to Homeland Security; Selecting the Tools to Build a Promethean Spyglass: A Brief Survey of Seventy Years' Worth of Forecasting Methods; The Core of a Devil's Toy Box Analytical Team? Science Fiction Writers; The Promethean Spyglass: Doing a Devil's Toy Box Analysis Right; Conclusion: Buy That Fire Insurance Policy!

Jacob C. Holzer, Andrea J. Dew, Patricia R. Recupero, and Paul Gill (Eds.*),* ***Lone-Actor Terrorism: An Integrated Framework*** (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022), 424 pp., US $ $99.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-1909-2979-4.

Lone-actor terrorism has become a widely prevalent trend in terrorist warfare, especially in Western Europe, the United States, and Israel, as it has become increasingly difficult for foreign-based organized terrorist groups to carry out attacks in these countries. Still, even lone-actor terrorists have some minimal contact with their foreign organized group counterparts, especially in being radicalized into violent extremism via their extremist websites. This volume brings together some of the world's leading experts on lone-actor terrorism who study this phenomenon from different social science and psychological disciplines. Another virtue of this volume is its use of the term "lone-actor" as opposed to the less accurate (but, unfortunately, still widely used) "lone wolf" to describe such individual perpetrators, although in a few incidents a husband-and-wife or two brothers are involved in carrying out such lone-actor attacks. [Full disclosure: this

reviewer contributed one of the volume's chapters.] Jacob C. Holzer, MD, LFAPA, is an Attending in Clinical and Forensic Psychiatry at McLean Hospital. Andrea J. Dew, PhD, MALD, is Associate Professor of Strategy and Policy at the US Naval War College. Patricia R. Recupero, JD, MD, is a Clinical Professor at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University in the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior based at Butler Hospital, Providence, RI. Paul Gill, PhD, is Professor of Security and Crime Science at University College London.

Table of Contents: Preface; Foreword; Introduction: Scope of the Problem, Definitions and Concepts; Historical Aspects and Evolution of Lone-Actor Violence; Case Reviews in Lone-Actor Terrorism Incidents; Clinical Psychiatric and Neuropsychiatric Aspects of Lone-Actor Terrorism; Psychoactive Agents and Mental Disorders in Lone-Actor Terrorism; Developmental Aspects of Lone-Actor Terrorists; The Role of Psychometrics in Investigating Lone-Actor Terrorism; Understanding Lone-Actor Violence through Linguistic Analysis; Propaganda and Lone-Actor Terrorism; Lone-Actor Mass Casualty Events and Linkages to Organized Violent Salafist-Jihadist Inspired Terror Groups; The Internet and Social Media as an Enabling Force; Geographic Context: Domestic vs. International Lone-Actors; Means, Mechanisms, and Trends of Operationalizing Violence; Role of Forensic Mental Health and Lone-Actor Violence; An Ethics Analysis of Lone-Actor Terror and Society's Response; Law Enforcement Response to Lone-Actor Incidents at the Local through Federal Levels; Post-9/11 U.S. Military and Intelligence Approaches to Lone-Actors; U.S. Legal Perspectives: Legislative, Intelligence, and Law-Enforcement Aspects; Pursuing Lone-Actor Terrorists: U.K. Counterterrorism Law and Policy; Lone-Actor Terrorism: Understanding Online Indoctrination; Hatred and Grievance as Constructs in Lone-Actor Terrorism; Comparing Lone-Actor Terrorism to Other High-Threat Groups; A Risk Analysis Framework of Lone-Actor Terrorism; A Framework for Preempting Lone-Actor Terrorists during the Pre-Incident Phases; Threat Assessment: the TRAP-18 and Application to a Lone-Actor Terrorism Incident; Use of Threat and Risk Assessment Tools in the Evaluation of Lone-Actor Terrorists; Developing a Risk Assessment and Intervention Strategy: Future Directions in Research and Practice.

Ashley Jackson, ***Negotiating Survival: Civilian-Insurgent Relations in Afghanistan*** (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021), 328 pp., US $ 45.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-1976-0617-9.

With the Taliban now in control of Afghanistan, to understand how it succeeded in taking over this disparate country, this book offers an important account of how it maneuvered its way, generally through coercion, to exert its will over the country's largely tribal-based population. The key to its success, the author argues, can be understood by placing "Taliban violence and coercion within the group's broader social, ideological and political strategy" (p. 213). Making this book especially authoritative is the result of the author's more than 400 interviews in Afghanistan with Taliban leaders, operatives, and the country's civilian population. Ashley Jackson is the co-director of the Centre for the Study of Armed Groups at the Overseas Development Institute. She has worked on Afghanistan for more than a decade and has published extensively on the Taliban.

Table of Contents: Introduction; Negotiating Rebellion: A Theory of Civilian-Insurgent Bargaining; Dancing with Whoever Is There: Surviving the Afghanistan Wars; Coercion, Co-Option, and Co-Operation: Taliban Tactics and Strategy; Navigating Forever War: Civilian Bargaining Strategies; The Art of the Deal: Evolution, Variation, Enabling Factors, and Constraints; Conclusion.

Terry L. Oroszi, ***The American Terrorist: A 20-Year Study, 2001-2021*** (Dayton, OH: Greylander Press, LLC, 2022) 58 pp., US $ 12.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-8-82201272-1.

This is a fascinating short book that is filled with useful color infographics presenting the author's findings on the attributes of domestic terrorists in the United States, from 2001-2021. Fifty demographic variables are correlated, based on research on U.S. citizens convicted of crimes related to terrorism. Additional characteristics include the convicted terrorists' location of residence, crimes committed, religion, organizational alliances, race, heritage, occupation, military experience, mental health, marriage and family, and targeting (p. 4). The study's aim is to identify individuals susceptible to radicalization leading to terrorist attacks, with the results enabling communities to locate such individuals in their midst and provide them with methods to curb radicalization at the community level (p. 4). The author is Vice Chair and Associate Professor in the

Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, Boonshoft School of Medicine, Wright State University. She is also Secretary, InfraGard National Members Alliance (a partnership between the FBI and the private sector).

Table of Contents: Overview; Learning Objectives; Definitions of Terrorism; What Makes a Crime an Act of Terror?; US Code Title 18 – Crimes & Criminal Procedure; Terrorism Enhancement Charge; Terrorism Legislation; Domestic or International Terrorist?; Learning Through Game-playing; Demographics; Allegiance; Careers; Behind Bars; Infographics.

Anthony Richard with Devorah Margolin and Nicolo Scremin (Eds.), ***Jihadist Terror: New Threats, New Responses*** (New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2019), 336 pp., US $ 95.00 [Hardcover], US $ 30.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-7883-1554-8.

The contributors to this important volume utilize several academic disciplines to examine the magnitude of the threats presented by Islamist jihadist terrorist groups and lone actors and counterterrorism response measures. The volume is divided into four parts: the 'pull factors' and 'push factors' that motivate individuals to become radicalized into terrorism; how terrorist attacks are launched against their targets in the United Kingdom and effective responses; two key areas of response: the UK's legislative response and intelligence services' responses; and assessing successes and failures in the UK's response measures and comparisons with other countries' response measures (pp. 3-4). The volume resulted from a Combating Jihadist Terrorism and Extremism (COJiT)-funded conference on "Combating Jihadist Terrorism in the United Kingdom," which was held at RUSI, London, in September 2018. Anthony Richards is Reader in Criminology and Programme Leader for Criminology and Criminal Justice and the University of East London. Devorah Margolin is currently affiliated with the George Washington University's program on extremism. Nicolo Scremin is a Research Analyst at CoJiT-UK and a Master's student in Terrorism, Security and Society at King's College London.

Table of Contents: Introduction; **Part 1** Motivations for Jihadist Terrorism; Drivers of Jihadist Terrorism: Understanding the Ideological Antecedents of Salafi-Jihadi Terrorism; The Impact of Jihadist Terrorist Narratives and How to Counter Them: A Research Synthesis; The Impact of Conspiracy Theories and How to Counter Them: Reviewing the Literature on Conspiracy Theories and Radicalization to Violence; The international Context of UK Radicalization Trends: Developments Abroad That Inspire Terrorism within the UK; Evidence for the Relationship Between Non-Violent Extremism and Violent Radicalization: Conveyor Belt or Firewall?; A Demography of British Muslims: Cross-Sectional Understanding of Muslim Communities and Their Heterogeneity within the UK; Willingness to Engage and Discuss Issues across Muslim and Ethnic Minority Communities: Attitudes towards Muslims from Non-Muslims in the UK; The Impact of Structural Inequalities, Integration, Otherness and Discrimination; The Role of Community Engagement and the Practical Role of Moderate and Non-Violent Extremist Movements in Combating Jihadist Terrorism; The Role and Impact of Women's Influence in Radicalization and Counter-Radicalization; Psychological Dimensions of Terrorism: Profiling Impossible but Patterns Discernible; **Part 2** Methods and Modalities of Jihadist Terrorism and Counter-Measures; Neighborhood Effects - How Jihadist Recruitment Really Works; The Role and Impact of Encryption as Facilitator and Pros and Cons of the Encryption Intervention Debate; Physical Facilitating Environments - Prisons and Madrassas as Mechanisms and Vehicles of Violent Radicalization?; Improved Terrorist Practical Learning Potentials from Internet-Based Platforms; Lone-Actor Terrorism: The Nature of the Threat and Responses; Returning Foreign Fighters: The Extent of the Threat to the UK and Prospects for Reintegration; **Part 3** Legislative and Intelligence Responses; Responding to Terrorism through Legislation; Assessing the Legislative Response to Terrorism: Adequacy, Gaps, What's Unnecessary or Counterproductive; Independent Assessment of the Current Balance between Counter-Terrorism Legislation and Civil Liberties: The Role of the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation; An Assessment of Prevent and the Challenges Ahead; Intelligence-Led Policing and Counter-Terrorism; Part 4 General Perspectives on the Jihadist Terrorist Threat and Responses; Personal and Organizational Patterns of Known Terrorists and Related Groups in the UK since 1998; Successes and Failures of the UK's Counter-Terrorism, Counter-Radicalization and Prevent Strategy against Jihadist Terrorism since 1998; An Independent Assessment of the UK's Capacity and Capabilities Devoted to Countering Jihadist Terrorism: Government, Policing, Intelligence Agencies and Civil Society; Comparison of Experiences and Best Practice Drawn from Research in Other Countries: Countering Violent Extremism in Europe; Comparison of Experiences and Best Practice Drawn from Research in Other Countries: What Accounts for the Lack of a CVE Strategy in the USA?; Conclusions and Summary.

Leila Vignal, ***War-Torn: The Unmaking of Syria, 2011-2021*** (London, England, UK: Hurst Publishers/New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021), 328 pp., US $ 39.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-1976-1998-8. This is an authoritative and detailed account of the unraveling of the Syrian state and society during the height of its civil war from 2011 to 2021. It explains how although the Assad regime has remained in power (also, thanks to the military interventions by Iran and Russia on behalf of the regime), the country is broken and fragmented in many ways, with several million of its citizens internally displaced or dispersed to neighboring countries as refugees. The roles of Islamist insurgent groups such as the Islamic State and others are discussed. In the conclusion, the author observes that "With little immediate prospect of a genuine political solution and a stable, peaceful Syria, ambitious reconstruction plans may need to be shelved until a future date" (p. 248). Leïla Vignal is Professor of Geography at the École Normale Supérieure, Paris, and the editor of *The Transnational Middle East: People, Places, Borders*.

Table of Contents: Introduction; Anatomy of a Conflict: From Revolution to War; Borders and the Fragmentation of the Nation State; Destruction in Progress; Mapping the Destruction; Mass Displacement: A Weapon of War; Trajectories of Displacement; Daily Economic Life in Times of War; Transnational Syria: Syria Beyond Syria; From Dispossession to Regime-Led Reconstruction; Conclusion: Which Future? For Whose Syria?

About the Reviewer: **Dr. Joshua Sinai** *is the Book Reviews Editor of 'Perspectives on Terrorism'. He can be reached at:* Joshua.sinai@comcast.net.

Katherine E. Brown. *Gender, Religion, Extremism: Finding Women in Anti-Radicalization*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020. 281 pp; US $ 71.75 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-1900-7569-9.

Reviewed by Alisa M. Stack

In security studies as well as in actual practices of countries and international organizations, "gender" is often equated with "woman." In *Gender, Religion, Extremism: Finding Women in Anti-Radicalization,* Katherine E. Brown seeks to demonstrate how this misunderstanding of gender contributes to ineffective policies for countering violent extremism (CVE) while also affecting deradicalization programs regardless of the recipient's gender.

Brown's description of CVE and deradicalization policies and programs sponsored by the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union (EU), the United States, the United Kingdom (UK), Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, Pakistan, and Indonesia show how concepts of masculinity and femininity can serve to reinforce existing power relationships between men and women. Her use of feminist theory to assess these programs identifies assumptions underpinning existing policies that most other evaluations have failed to note.

Most contemporary deradicalization programs that target Muslims focus on Jihadist ideology as principal motivator for terrorism. They tend to offer participants the hard choice to be with the government or against it. Throughout *Gender, Religion, Extremism*, Brown shows that government and internationally-sponsored programs share an approach that tends to: equates women and youth; sees women and youth as at-risk for, or victims of, radicalization; excludes boys and men when discussing gender; does not consider gender differences as a factor in the radicalization process; and views women's role mainly as serving to "…. minimize and mitigate the violence of 'their men'" (p. 33).

In each chapter, Brown presents her analysis of deradicalization programs thematically, with observations on the them based on country case studies. In the five countries she examines (UK, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Indonesia), all the programs use education for women as means of "empowerment", with some of them assuming that if women understand Islam and the values of modernity in the same way their governments do, women will be a moderating influence on militant Muslim men. The Saudi program is the most explicit in its expectations for proper male and female behavior as part of deradicalizing efforts. Its state-run facility, the Mohammed bin Naif Counselling Center, only serves men while the women's program is run in-home by families. In both the male and female programs, proper husband-wife relationships are encouraged to keep men in their role as father and head of household (p. 136). The other countries' programs also tend to assume that proper gender roles and a closer connection to the community will support stable social relationships and assure loyalty to the government. The other countries' programs, however, do not explicitly state that gender roles and relationships are tools for deradicalization.

The key theme Brown exposes in many government-sponsored deradicalization programs is "chivalric masculinity," that is, the state sees itself as exhibiting "generosity, justice, sacrifice, and courage" (p. 172) to protect the community. Governments tend to act paternalistically, using traditional, binary gender stereotypes which reinforce the status quo. Brown finds that government programs tend to see female terrorist in one of four ways: 1) suicide terrorist; 2) white widow; 3) jihadi bride; and 4) female foreign terrorist fighter. These four types assume the woman was seduced or groomed for her role and did not make a considered choice of her own to engage in political violence. Since this view explains away many militant women's actions, government programs tend not to study women's motivations to join violent groups or outline how to intervene in the recruitment process. Brown's section examining how programs view men's radicalization is especially strong, noting that the programs she analyzed tend to look at men as being "… hypersexual, working class, and foreign" (p. 108).

Brown's examination of deradicalization programs' approach to women is well developed. Her review of

the programs highlights how governments tend to view the home as a "site of tranquility" in which women rule. Further, they assume that women will take an "... active stance toward world preservation and protection" that benefits the state (p.115). When governments create deradicalization programs for women, they equate "woman" and "mother", being unable to envision a radical mother (p.118). Fatherhood also has a role to play in some of the programs; however, the deradicalization programs demonstrated more diversity in men's than women's roles. Counter-extremism programs, especially those in the West, or those funded by Western governments, assume that women are the beneficiaries of secularism and modernity. They do not acknowledge that some women could by themselves choose to live differently, nor do these programs acknowledge that modernity brings with it a dual burden on women to be in the public sphere as well as being responsible for the home. These same programs see men as making informed, if misguided, choices when it comes to extremism and radicalism, viewing these as "... avenues for men to fulfill their identities as men" (p. 76). A number of programs tend to view male rebelliousness as a part of the male maturation process that can be addressed by rational discussion and by presenting men with other choices while female militancy tends to be viewed as an aberration in some of the countries studied.

Such observations about radicalization lead logically to Brown's prescription for change. She offers conceptual-level alternatives including: promoting alternative peaceful masculinities (p. 208); acknowledging that radicalization affects women and men differently and tailoring prevention measures accordingly; protecting without instrumentalizing the rights of women and children; and providing gender-sensitive services such as safehouses for women. These alternatives provide a vague vision of a proposed better programmatic outcome, stating that the feminist theory seeks "peace rather than stability" with peace being defined by inclusivity, human security, and by dismantling "neoliberal economics" (p. 202). This vision asks governments to upend their current policies for better ones, but it is vague about how to get there.

Alternative policies could have questioned the expectations of women and men, asking what programs could do to open space for people who do not comfortably identify as only one gender or want to reconsider gender roles. In the history of insurgency, terrorism, and imprisonment, we see repeated examples of individuals who take on gender roles that do not coincide with their physical sex assigned at birth. *Gender, Religion, Extremism* shows how women who commit violence are seen as weak-minded, faulty in their femininity, out of place – in a word "queer." It is because of such observations that this reviewer found, in the end, the tools of feminist theory to be insufficient to understand gender in CVE and deradicalization. Perhaps using Queer Theory would have offered a wider range of options and observations.

Gender, Religion, Extremism is a valuable book for understanding CVE as part of the post-September 11 counterterrorism environment. However, the book's policy recommendations stop short of offering a concrete alternative vision for CVE or providing practical steps for policymakers. For recommendations of alternative approaches, feminist theory seems to be too limiting. For academics and researchers, the book offers ideas for further exploration, including how historical lessons could be incorporated into today's CVE policies and how best practices from local-level criminal gang intervention programs could inform future deradicalization efforts. *Gender, Religion, Extremism* opens space to question binary gender approaches and the intersections of race, gender, and economic class (and more) in deradicalization program development and implementation. It is to be hoped that Brown and other scholars will take the volume's findings and continue the work to expand our understandings of gender and terrorism, separately and together.

About the Reviewer: **Alisa Stack** *is an Independent Scholar in Worcester, MA, USA.*

Darren Hudson, Arie Perliger, Riley Post, Zachary Hohman. *The Irrational Terrorist & Other Persistent Terrorism Myths.* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2020. 165 pp.; US $ 21.00 [paperback], ISBN: 978-1-6263-7850-6.

Reviewed by Alisa M. Stack

With this volume, the authors seek to "fill the gap between the theoretical and empirical academic literature and the broader public literature in a way that is accessible." (p. 3) They do so by employing multidisciplinary methods and techniques from history, psychology, economics, business, and political science. Unlike some other volumes that tout new revelations in understanding terrorism but are often old wine in new bottles, in this book the authors credit foundational works in terrorism studies—for example, David C. Rapoport's theoretical work on four historical waves of modern terrorism. *The Irrational Terrorist & Other Persistent Terrorism Myths* recognizes that the scholarly research on terrorism has both the depth and breadth needed to credibly refute outdated or simply incorrect assumptions and thereby inform policy-making. Armed with a solid basis in both history and theory of terrorism, the authors tackle many persistent myths and false assumptions, including the belief that "terrorists are crazy, poor and uneducated" and "religious fundamentalism is the main cause of terrorism." They also examine salient debates about the definition of terrorism, the role of the media, the organizational design of terrorist groups, and (very briefly) counterterrorism.

By applying models from economics and other academic disciplines, the authors utilize proven analytical techniques to refute myths in their effort to correct the record. However, the use of these models necessarily imports some of the weaknesses and assumptions from those disciplines. For example, economic models assume that people are rational actors motivated by self-interest and equipped by perfect information to make well-calculated trade-offs in their decision-making. Similarly, terrorism is frequently defined as a type of political violence, so it is difficult to accept the authors' claim that they can "refrain from discussing politically motivated views and perceptions of the phenomenon of terrorism." (p. 24) There are often national and political interests in keeping the concept broad and vague, and as long as myths about terrorism have value in the political marketplace, some myths will survive. Further, it is often easier to make counterterrorism policy focused on a narrow political interpretation of the threat rather than confront a more complex reality. By combining economic and political science analyses, the authors could have helped explain why sticking to some myths can in fact be a rational choice.

Finally, the authors include a relatively short chapter on counterterrorism myths, which would have been much better as the beginning chapter of a separate companion volume. A much more expansive analysis and evaluation of the many myths of counterterrorism, particularly one that incorporates cases from a wider variety of countries and conflicts, would surely be welcome by the policy and research communities.

Despite these points, *The Irrational Terrorist & Other Persistent Terrorism Myths* treats its topic with competence. It is a valuable contribution to terrorism studies and the bibliography alone is worth the purchase.

***About the Reviewer*: Alisa Stack** *is an Independent Scholar in Worcester, MA, USA.*

Bibliography: Islamophobia

Compiled and Selected by Judith Tinnes

[Bibliographic Series of Perspectives on Terrorism – BSPT-JT-2022-2]

Abstract
This bibliography contains journal articles, book chapters, books, edited volumes, theses, grey literature, bibliographies and other resources on Islamophobia, with a particular focus on anti-Muslim extremism and securitization. It prioritizes recent publications (up to May 2022) and should not be considered as being 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, Islamophobia, anti-Muslim extremism, anti-Muslim racism, anti-Muslim prejudice, anti-Islam sentiment, hate crime, stigmatization, securitization.

NB: A sister bibliography on Antisemitism, guest-authored by experts from the field, is scheduled for publication in a future issue of this journal. All websites were last visited on 17.05.2022. - See also Note for the Reader at the end of this literature list.

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Bibliography: The Conflict in Yemen

Compiled and Selected by David Teiner

Abstract

This bibliography contains books, edited volumes, journal articles, book chapters, theses, grey literature, and other resources on the ongoing conflict in Yemen. It mainly features publications analyzing the Houthi insurgency, the Saudi-led military intervention, and war-related implications for the Yemeni population, regarding lacking basic social services and an ever more unfolding medical crisis as well as famine. Literature on Yemeni cultural life, religion, and economy were included when promising to enhance understanding of the long-lasting conflict.

Keywords: Yemen; Houthis; Southern Transitional Council; Saudi Arabia; Iran; Operation Decisive Storm

NB: All websites were last visited on 06.06.2022 – See also Note for the Reader at the end of this bibliography.

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Recent Online Resources for the Analysis of Terrorism and Related Subjects

Compiled and Selected by Berto Jongman

Most of the clickable items included below became available online between May and June 2022. They are categorized under 13 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 and Rehabilitation 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 to Read/Listen and 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 https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/perspectives-on-terrorism

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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 (June 2022 and beyond)

Compiled by Olivia 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 organised between June and August 2022 (with a few shortly thereafter). The listed events are organised by a wide variety of governmental and non-governmental institutions, including several key (counter) terrorism research centres and institutes listed in the February 2021 issue of this journal.

We encourage readers to contact the journal's Associate Editor for Conference Monitoring, Olivia Kearney, and provide her with relevant information, preferably in the same format as the items listed below. Olivia Kearney can be reached at <oliviaj.kearney@gmail.com> or via Twitter: @oliviajkearney.

June 2022

Summer Law Programme
Asser Institute,
31 May - 24 June, *The Hague, Netherlands*
Website: visit | Twitter: @TMCAsser

GLOBSEC 2022 Bratislava Forum
Globsec,
2-4 June, *Bratislava, Slovakia*
Website: visit | Twitter: @Globsec

The Link Between Instability and Violent Extremism in West Africa
Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI), Online
7 June, *Philadelphia, United States*
Website: visit | Twitter: @FPRI

Countering Tomorrow's Threats, Today
Counter Terror Expo (CTX),
8-9 June, *London, United Kingdom*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CTX_Event

Going Nativist: How to Interview the Radical Right
Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), Online
9 June, *Oslo, Norway*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CrexUiO

Al-Qaeda, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, and the Future of Jihadism
Washington Institute, Online
9 June, *Washington, DC, United States*
Website: visit | Twitter: @WashInstitute

The Global Rise of White Supremacist Terrorism
Brookings Institute, Online
9 June, *Washington, DC, United States*
Website: visit | Twitter: @BrookingsInst

2022 CNAS National Security Conference: Security in the Balance
Center for a New American Security (CNAS), Online
14-16 June, *Washington, DC, United States*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CNASdc

Threats at Home and Abroad
Program on Extremism (GWPOE),
15 June, *Washington DC, United States*
Website: visit | Twitter: @gwupoe

The Citizenship Revocation and Rehabilitation of Young European Women Who Joined ISIS
Transnational Configurations, Conflict and Governance (TCGG), Online
15 June, *Amsterdam, Netherlands*
Website: visit | Twitter: @UvA_AISSR

BISA 2022 Conference
British International Studies Association,
15-17 June, *Newcastle-upon-Tyne, United Kingdom*
Website: visit | Twitter: @MYBISA

Understanding Al Qaeda in the Islamic Magreb:
Responses to Terrorist Tactics and Insurgent Strategies
Institute for Security and Global Affairs (ISGA),
16 June, *Campus The Hague, Netherlands*
Website: visit | Twitter: @ISGA_Hague

Resolving the Detainee Dilemma I:
What Next for the Men, Women & Children of Islamic State
International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR),
16 – 17 June, *London, United Kingdom*
Website: visit | Twitter: @ICSR_Centre

RAN Local – How to Deal with the Local Impact of Online Extremist Activities
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN),
16 – 17 June, *Barcelona, Spain*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RANEurope

RAN C&N – Digital Frontrunners in P/CVE Work
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN),
16 – 17 June, *Riga, Latvia*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RANEurope

TAT & GIFCT E-Learning Webinar Series
Global Internet Forum to Counter-Terrorism, Online
23 June, Washington DC, United States
Website: visit | Twitter: @GIFCT_official

RAN POL – The Challenges of Anti-Authorities Extremism for Police
Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN),
23 - 24 June, *Copenhagen, Denmark*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RANEurope

International Terrorism and Social Media Conference
Swansea University,
28-29 June, *Swansea, United Kingdom*
Website: visit | Twitter: @SwanseaUni

The Non-Party Sector of the Far-Right
Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), Online
29 – 30 June, *Oslo, Norway*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CrexUiO

July 2022

Summer School on Concepts and Methods for Research on Far-Right Politics
Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), Online
4 – 8 July*, Oslo, Norway*
Website: visit | Twitter: @CrexUiO

Behavioural and Social Sciences in Security (BASS22)
Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST),
19 - 21 July, *Lancaster, United Kingdom*
Website: visit | Twitter: @Crest_research

Annual GIFCT Global Summit
Global Internet Forum to Counter-Terrorism, Hybrid
26-27, Washington DC, United States
Website: visit | Twitter: @GIFCT_official

August 2022 & Beyond

The Emergence of Hybrid Warfare in Afghanistan: Taliban and Islamic State
Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), Online
11 August, *London, United Kingdom*
Website: visit | Twitter: @RUSI_terrorism

West Africa Workshop: Countering Terrorism & Violent Extremism Online
Global Internet Forum to Counter-Terrorism, Online
7 September, Washington DC, United States
Website: visit | Twitter: @GIFCT_official

World Summit on Counter-Terrorism
International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT),
11 - 15 September, *Herzliya, Israel*
Website: visit | Twitter: @ICT_org

Security and Defence 2022
Chatham House, Online
28 – 29 September, *London, United Kingdom*
Website: visit | Twitter: @ChathamHouse

Terrorism, Counterterrorism, and the Rule of Law
Asser Institute,
29 August – 2 September, *The Hague, Netherlands*
Website: visit | Twitter: @TMCAsser

Reassessing the Financing of Terrorism in 2022 (RAFT22)
Project CRAAFT/RUSI Europe, Hybrid
15 November, *Brussels, Belgium*
Website: visit | Twitter: @projectcraaft

Acknowledgment: Special thanks go 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. Now in its 16th year, PoT is published six times annually as a free, independent, scholarly peer-reviewed online journal available at the URL: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/perspectives-on-terrorism.

Perspectives on Terrorism has recently been ranked by Google Scholars again as No. 3 in 'Terrorism Studies" (as well as No. 5 in "Military Studies"). Jouroscope™, a directory of scientific journals, has just listed PoT as one of the top ten journals in the category free open access journals in social sciences, with a Q1 ranking. PoT has almost 8,000 registered subscribers and many more occasional readers.

Our journal seeks to provide a platform for established scholars as well as academics and professionals entering the interdisciplinary fields of (Counter-)Terrorism, Political Violence and Conflict Studies.

The editors invite researchers and readers to:

- use the journal as a forum for debate and commentary on issues related to the above.
- present their perspectives on the prevention of, and response to, terrorism and related forms of violent conflict; and
- submit to the journal accounts of evidence-based, empirical scientific research and analyses on terrorism.

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 (double-blind) by members of the Editorial Board and outside academic experts and professionals. Due to the hundreds of submissions we receive every year, only the most promising and original ones can be sent for external peer-review.

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.

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