PT

PT

PERSPECTIVES ON TERRORISM

A journal published by

International Centre for Counter-Terrorism

in partnership with

Universiteit Leiden

HANDA CSTPV

The Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence

About

Perspectives on Terrorism

Established in 2007, *Perspectives on Terrorism* (PT) is a quarterly, peer-reviewed, and open-access academic journal. PT is a publication of the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), in partnership with the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) at Leiden University, and the Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV) at the University of St Andrews.

International Centre for Counter-Terrorism

The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), founded in 2010, is a think-and-do tank based in The Hague, Netherlands. We provide research, policy advice, training and other solutions to support better counter-terrorism policies and practices worldwide. We also contribute to the scientific and public debates in the fields of counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, notably through our publications and events.

Institute of Security and Global Affairs

The Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) is a scientific institute specialising in security issues. ISGA is embedded in the Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs of Leiden University. ISGA originated from the Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism (CTC) and the Centre for Global Affairs, and today focuses on multidisciplinary research and education within the international scientific field of security studies.

Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence

The Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV), based at University of St Andrews, is dedicated to the study of the causes, dynamics, characteristics and consequences of terrorism and related forms of political violence. Founded in 1994, the Centre is Europe's oldest for the study of terrorism.

Licensing and Copyright

Licensing and Distribution

Perspectives on Terrorism publications are published in open access format and distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License, which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the source referenced, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. Alteration or commercial use requires explict prior authorisation from the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism and all author(s).

Disclaimer

The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism does not take any responsibility for the contents of articles published in the journal, and all such responsibility lies with the author(s).

The opinions expressed in the articles are solely for the author(s), and the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism may not agree with such opinions in part of in full.

© 2024 ICCT

Editorial

Editorial Team

Associate Editors

Editorial Board

Steering Board

Contact

Email: pt.editor@icct.nl

Table of Contents

Words of Welcome

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to announce the release of Volume XVIII, Issue 2 (June 2024) of *Perspectives on Terrorism* (ISSN 2334-3745). This Open Access journal is a joint publication of the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) in The Hague, Netherlands; the Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV); and the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) at Leiden University. All past and recent issues can be found online at https://pt.icct.nl/.

Perspectives on Terrorism (PT) is indexed by JSTOR, SCOPUS, and Google Scholar, where it ranks No. 3 among journals in the field of Terrorism Studies. *Jouroscope*™, the directory of scientific journals, has listed PT as one of the top ten journals in the category free open access journals in social sciences, with a Q1 ranking. Now in its 18th year of publication, PT has close to 8,000 registered subscribers and many more occasional readers and website visitors in academia, government and civil society worldwide. Subscription is free and registration to receive an e-mail of each quarterly issue of the journal can be done at the link provided above. The Research Articles published in the journal's four annual issues are fully peer-reviewed by external referees, while Research Notes and other content are subject to internal editorial quality control. In the first article of this issue, Amarnath Amarasingam, Michèle St-Amant and David Jones examine several ways in which military service intersects and interacts with far-right extremism. Then Hannah Chesterton, Tricia Bacon and Thomas Zeitzoff introduce a typology that accounts for how militant groups choose between logistical needs and ideology and how this choice impacts the degree of violence against civilians. In the next article, a global study of terrorist attacks by Anup Phayal, Sambuddha Ghatak, Brandon Prins and Hongyu Zhang finds that terrorist groups select government and civilian targets based on several strategic considerations, such as local state capacity and regime type.

In the fourth research article, Miron Lakomy draws from social network analysis and open-source intelligence to illustrate the functions, structure, and evolution of al-Qaeda's information ecosystem on the surface web in the second half of 2023. Then Sam Hunter, Alexis d'Amato, Joel Elson, Austin Doctor and Averie Linnel examine how the metaverse and related technologies afford new opportunities for violent extremists to achieve their objectives. And on a related topic, in our final article of this issue, Arsenio Cuenca describes how the transnational neofascist movement uses martyrdom to reproduce hypermedia environments—a specific media content that creates a dialogue between the digital and the physical realm.

Our Research Notes section contains a brief study of the Islamic State in the Sahel by Mathieu Bere, focusing on the group's external relations, targeting logic, tactics, and attack modalities. In our Resources section, Judith Tinnes provides an extensive bibliography on the intersections of terrorism and education. This is followed by our Associate Editor for Book Reviews Joshua Sinai's column, which provides brief capsule reviews of three books relevant to the study of terrorism and counter-terrorism.

This issue of the journal has been produced by the Editorial Team at ICCT with considerable assistance from Clarisa Nelu, for which we are very grateful.

Prof James Forest, Editor-in-Chief

RESEARCH ARTICLE

'Run Silent, Run Deep': Examining Right-Wing Extremism in the Military

Amarnath Amarasingam,[*] Michèle St-Amant, David A. Jones

Abstract: The threat posed by current or former members of the military joining right-wing extremist groups is an issue of growing concern – evidenced by arrests and disrupted terrorist plots across Western Europe and North America. Using interviews with individuals who are both former extremists and have military experience, this article provides a basis for understanding the ways in which military service intersects and interacts with far-right extremism. By focusing on what we term the operational dimensions of the overlap between right-wing extremism and the military service, this article advances a novel framework for understanding how right-wing extremists navigate military institutions, such as recruitment during and after service, and using both covert and overt measures to reveal or conceal their beliefs, as well as recruit others. This study also illustrates how the timing of military service can impact susceptibility or resilience to radicalisation based on specific unit dynamics and planned or unplanned exits from service. Finally, this article discusses how these findings can produce practical recommendations for military institutions, while highlighting the need for more research on the topic.

Keywords: Far-right extremism, military, radicalisation, right-wing extremism, terrorism

Corresponding author: Amarnath Amarasingam, Queen's University, email: aa152@queensu.ca

Introduction

The last five years have seen a rapid re-emergence of right-wing extremism (RWE) as a major threat in Western countries. A point of historical continuity between previous waves of RWE and the present is the presence of current or former members of the armed forces in RWE groups.[1] In Canada,[2] the United States,[3] Germany,[4] and the United Kingdom,[5] there have been a series of high-profile arrests of violent extremists with military experience. The threat these individuals pose is illustrated by Timothy McVeigh, who, after leaving the US Army, carried out the second deadliest act of terrorism in US history. In addition to the role these individuals may play in perpetrating violence, the issue of radicalisation in the ranks also likely has a deleterious effect on a nation's armed forces' reputation and cohesion within the service, as evidenced by the fallout from racist murders carried out by Canadian peacekeepers serving in Somalia.[6]

Our work contributes to the understanding of the nexus between military service and RWE in several ways. First, although work on this topic has grown in recent years, there has been no research based exclusively on interviews with former members of the RWE movement who also have military experience. This article serves to fill this gap, providing one of the first systematic investigations of the overlap between the RWE and military service using data from interviews.

Second, by interviewing RWEs with military experience across several regions, including North America and Europe, our research presents cross-regional findings with implications beyond much of the US-centric work which has been done to date.

Third, whereas previous research focused on tracing the historical origins of the relationship[7] or on the demographic characteristics of RWE plotters and attackers with military experience,[8] we are interested in the *operational dimension* of the nexus between RWE and military experience. By this, we not only mean the ways in which military service affected radicalisation, or vice versa, but also what RWEs did – or did not do – while serving. Did they keep their beliefs covert or share them with others? Did they attempt to recruit others? If the military detected them, how did their behaviours change? How did being discharged from the military impact their beliefs?

These questions and the findings they generated, while atypical for most interview-based research on radicalisation and involvement in violent extremism, are crucial for understanding radicalisation and the behaviour of RWEs in the armed forces. They present a unique opportunity to understand how and why RWEs behave the way they do in the military, how to detect them better, and how best to care for veterans who may be vulnerable to radicalisation by RWE groups once discharged.

Literature on Military Service and Right-Wing Extremism

The literature on the nexus between military service and RWE has grown rapidly in the last five years. While this nexus has a long-documented history, dating back to the end of the American Civil War and the founding of the Ku Klux Klan by ex-Confederate soldiers,[9] the January 2021 Capitol riots in the US sparked renewed interest. Since then, several reports have been published on the relationship between the armed forces and RWE and how to counter it.[10]

However, despite the renewed interest in the topic, there is disagreement about how prevalent this issue is. Most of the literature suggests that the number of individuals who are right-wing extremists and in the military is very low.[11] However, recent work, including a 2022 report by the Canadian Minister of National Defence Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism and Discrimination,

has found that the movement is growing.[12] Another report on the scale and scope of extremism in the US Department of Defence (DoD) concluded "violent extremism in the [US] military remains relatively rare," but that "participation rates for former service members appear to be growing."[13] Another study by Jones et al. found the number of US domestic terrorism plots and attacks perpetrated by active-duty personnel increased from 0 percent of all attacks or plots in 2018 to 1.5 percent in 2019, and to 6.4 percent in 2020.[14]

Even among online RWE groups, there is conflicting evidence about how members view the military as an institution. In a study of RWE messages on Telegram, Davey and Weinberg found that many users drew inspiration from, or referenced, military history, training manuals, or tactics despite holding negative and anti-Semitic attitudes toward the military as an institution.[15] However, they found that only a small percentage of individuals claimed to be current or former members of the US Armed Forces.

These results, though, must be interpreted with caution. It is notoriously difficult to determine the prevalence of RWE in the military because many of these individuals are so-called "ghost skins," a term the FBI Counterterrorism Division defines as individuals who "avoid overt displays of their white supremacist beliefs to blend into society and advance white supremacy causes."[16] According to Nixon, ghost skins suppress their true beliefs while working in the military and other law enforcement agencies, and they use their perceived identity to gather information about security services.[17] In fact, some RWE groups like the Order of Nine Angles encourage their members to enlist in the armed forces, viewing it as an "insight role" to infiltrate and gain information about security institutions.[18]

Moreover, much of what we know about the nexus between RWE and military service is limited to specific time periods (e.g., the American Civil War or the period during and after the January 6th Capitol building riots), or a specific geographic region, primarily the United States, Germany, or the United Kingdom. However, there is evidence to suggest that this problem goes beyond the most studied countries. For example, the Canadian military's international reputation was tarnished for years after two Canadian peacekeepers serving in Somalia beat and killed a Somali teenager in a racially-motivated attack.[19]

Despite debates about the prevalence of this issue, even a small number of RWEs serving in the military can create issues, such as the reputational problems caused to the Canadian military by the racist attacks in Somalia. These issues are not limited to institutional reputation, either. For example, van Dongen et al. developed a typology of the internal and societal problems created by RWE members in military service between 2017 and 2021 in twelve Western countries.[20] These include: (1) RWE violence perpetrated by military personnel; (2) RWE violence facilitated by military personnel; (3) ideologically motivated hate crimes or violations of rules of engagement while deployed; (4) activities or behaviours which lessen diversity and inclusion; and (5) reducing civilian authority over the military.

To illustrate the extreme end of this typology, the second-most deadly terrorist attack in the United States – the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 – was organised and perpetrated by Army veterans Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols. Michael Fortier, an accomplice named later in the case, was also an Army veteran. According to interviews after the attack, McVeigh exhibited overt signs of his extremist beliefs even while in the military. For example, after purchasing a "White Power" t-shirt at a Klan rally, he was reprimanded by the military.[21]

Given the outsized potential impacts the intersection between RWE and the military can have on society, scholars have set out to better understand how the radicalisation process and military service intersect. Some have argued that military life itself can represent a transitional

point in an individual's life, causing some to enter RWE groups and others to exit.[22] McCristall, Hofmann and Perry investigate RWE among the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and propose several push and pull factors including trauma, seeking a sense of belonging, and the perceived courage of military service, which may make radicalisation to RWE more salient among current or former CAF members.[23] Koehler examined the dynamics within special military and police units in Germany, Canada, Australia, and the US, and found that the subculture within these units, as well as a lack of diversity and cognitive rigidity, make service personnel potentially more vulnerable to radicalisation.[24]

Related work has investigated the dynamics of military training and lifestyle on recruits and their connection to RWE movements. For instance, Haugstvedt and Koehler argue that there are parallels between the process of radicalisation and the psychological process of becoming a soldier, such as a sense of vicarious justice, indoctrination, and group solidarity.[25] Similarly, some scholars suggest that the military provides the social context where soldiers learn aggression and violence.[26] However, most scholars have investigated the intersection between military service and RWE amongst those exiting the military – either voluntarily or involuntarily. For example, Haugstvedt and Koehler agree that while there are some cases where active-duty military personnel are radicalised towards violent extremist acts, it is more likely to occur during a veteran's transition to civilian life.[27] Simi et al. similarly find involuntary release from the military can lead to identity incongruence and a perception that achievements are unappreciated in civilian life.[28] Other scholars expand on this, suggesting veterans may place a heavier emphasis on re-establishing a collective identity and group dynamics.[29] As we show below, the risks of radicalisation during the transitionary period to civilian life can also be made greater due to other factors, such as untreated PTSD.[30]

While the studies above have investigated the specific timing of military involvement in relation to radicalisation, none have examined how military service and RWE beliefs differ across an individual's lifecycle in the military. However, there are numerous reasons to investigate this further. For example, there may be differences between those who already hold RWE beliefs and join the military compared to those who only developed these beliefs following discharge. For those who already hold RWE beliefs before joining, their reason for joining the military may be to obtain weapons training. Indeed, Boutilier argues that white supremacists actively encourage their members to enlist in the military.[31] As a result, they may spend a shorter time in active service, and may be more likely to operate as "ghost skins". Despite this, there may be opportunities to detect these individuals earlier, as some might have tattoos, memorabilia, online histories, or criminal records.

On the other hand, veterans with sympathetic views may be more likely to be sought out for recruitment by RWE groups. For example, right-wing extremists – both those who join and those who recruit veterans and service members – see numerous benefits to military service. A Canadian Association for Security and Intelligence Studies briefing note explains that the combat and weapons training received in the military makes it an attractive institution for potential recruits,[32] while an FBI Counterterrorism Division report explains that the white supremacist movement gains expertise with firearms and explosives, tactical skills, and intelligence when they recruit current and former military members.[33]

Boutillier and Bell both report that white supremacists in Canada are actively recruiting individuals with current or prior military experience, as well as those with law enforcement backgrounds.[34] RWE groups not only view veterans as high-value recruits for their skills but also for their ability to train an extremist organisation's personnel, conduct surveillance, and practice operational security.[35] Similarly, Hall et al. suggest that this recruitment also offers the benefit of "integrating military human capital".[36]

The benefits for RWE groups of recruiting current or former service members are well known. For example, Tebbutt explains that the military training personnel receive makes them significantly more deadly and dangerous than civilians who join RWE groups.[37] Overall, veterans and current military personnel who are or have become members of RWE groups significantly increase the respective organisation's potential for lethality. Indeed, an FBI Counterterrorism Division report notes that although only a small number of RWE members have military experience, they also often hold leadership and training roles because of their expertise.[38]

When right-wing extremists do decide to join the military, this raises concerns regarding how they can successfully circumvent screening during the enlistment process. Several scholars have suggested that since 9/11, recruitment and retention standards in the armed forces have noticeably dropped, allowing white supremacists to infiltrate the military more easily.[39] For example, Hall et al. explain that the increase in foreign military deployments after 9/11 coincides with internal concerns regarding attrition rates.[40] As a result, recruiters faced strong incentives to meet enlistment goals and would face punitive measures if they failed, and thus accepted servicemembers who would have otherwise been rejected.[41] Similarly, Chin explains that in 2005, US senior commanders decreased attrition by letting those who should have been discharged from the military remain.[42] Kennard quotes an American public affairs officer who explained, "A Swastika would trigger questions, but … if the gentleman said, 'I like the way a swastika looked,' and had a clean criminal record, it's possible we would allow that person in."[43]

Even before these increasingly lacklustre standards, some scholars criticised enlistment screening into the US military. For example, Flacks and Wiskoff argue that screening is insufficient for five reasons: (1) different levels of conscientiousness among recruiters, (2) lack of guidance to enlistment personnel, (3) wide variation in service-specific policies, (4) lack of coordination, and (5) limited access to background information, such as Juvenile Court records.[44]

While much of the literature on recruitment standards has focused on the US, this is not an America-specific issue. In recent years, the CAF has also needed to address a shortage of personnel, including the need for thousands of new reservists.[45] In tandem with this recruitment pressure, several public incidents of CAF members with links to RWE groups, such as Patrik Matthews, have led some in public to question the CAF's recruitment and retention standards.[46]

The nature of an individual's service may also play an important role in explaining the overlap between the military and involvement in RWE. In Canada, a CASIS report suggested that right-wing extremists were more likely to be found in the reserves than in the regular force. This is likely because reservists do not have the same time constraints and can more easily leave the military than those serving in the regular force.[47] Additionally, involvement in RWE organisations can impede career advancement in the military, but this is less likely to be an issue for reservists, especially those who joined primarily to receive some baseline level of training in order to advance themselves within the RWE movement.[48]

While some areas of research into the links between the military and RWE are fairly extensive, there are still notable gaps. As noted above, this study is interested in the *operational dimension* of this area of research, which is underexplored in other research on the relationship between RWE and the military. Similarly, much of the existing research has relied on secondary sources, such as media and government reports. Our research seeks to fill these gaps by providing an overview of the intersection between RWE involvement and military service using primary data through interviews of former RWE members.

Methods and Sample
## *Interviews with Former Extremists*

Former members of extremist movements, or 'formers,' are frequently thought to possess unique insights into violent extremism – they are, after all, speaking from first-hand experience. While there remains a lively debate over the reliability and accuracy of formers' accounts of their involvement and the relative salience of different factors in explaining their radicalisation,[49] we were primarily interested in their answers to the operational questions discussed in the literature review above.

Before beginning the interview process, the research team compiled 23 open-ended questions designed to gather information on four broad categories of the respondents' experience: their early childhood, the process of their radicalisation, the process of their disengagement and finally, a series of questions specifically related to their time in the military. Participants in the study completed the interview with us over video calls, which were then converted to audio recordings and transcribed. Participants were granted anonymity and we have undertaken measures to ensure that nothing included in this article could potentially be used to identify those we spoke with.

Recruiting participants for this research project was a challenge. Many formers were hesitant to engage in any type of research activity for a host of reasons, including concerns about being identified, or the emotional challenges associated with reliving traumatic events from their past. While some formers are willing to speak in the media or engage in prevention and intervention work, this is not the case for many individuals who have disengaged from RWE and seek simply to move on with their lives. Added to this, the requirement that these individuals not only be a former but also have previous military experience considerably restricted the population from which we could draw participants. Finally, as discussed above, reporting on the Capitol riots of January 2021 drew considerable attention to the overlap between service and RWE involvement that we were seeking to study. As a result of this attention, several individuals declined to be interviewed out of concern it was presently 'too hot' for them to speak about their experiences.

Nevertheless, we interviewed seven former members of the RWE movement who also had military experience, all of whom were male. Six individuals served in the US or Canadian militaries, and one served in a European military. At the time of our interviews, the respondents ranged in age from their late 20s to their late 40s. All participants had left both the movement and the military several years prior to our interviews. Their experience in the military ranged from short-term membership in the National Guard or Primary Reserves to multiple combat deployments in the Middle East. As shown in Figure 1 below, which graphs the variation in timing of RWE and military experience by age, five were involved in RWE prior to joining the military (participants 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7), and three of those five remained involved in RWE during and after military service (participants 1, 4, and 6). Two individuals who joined the military while involved in RWE exited the group midway through their military tenure (participants 3 and 7). Meanwhile, two individuals (participants 2 and 5) became involved in RWE as veterans.

Figure 1. Timeline of RWE Involvement and Military Service
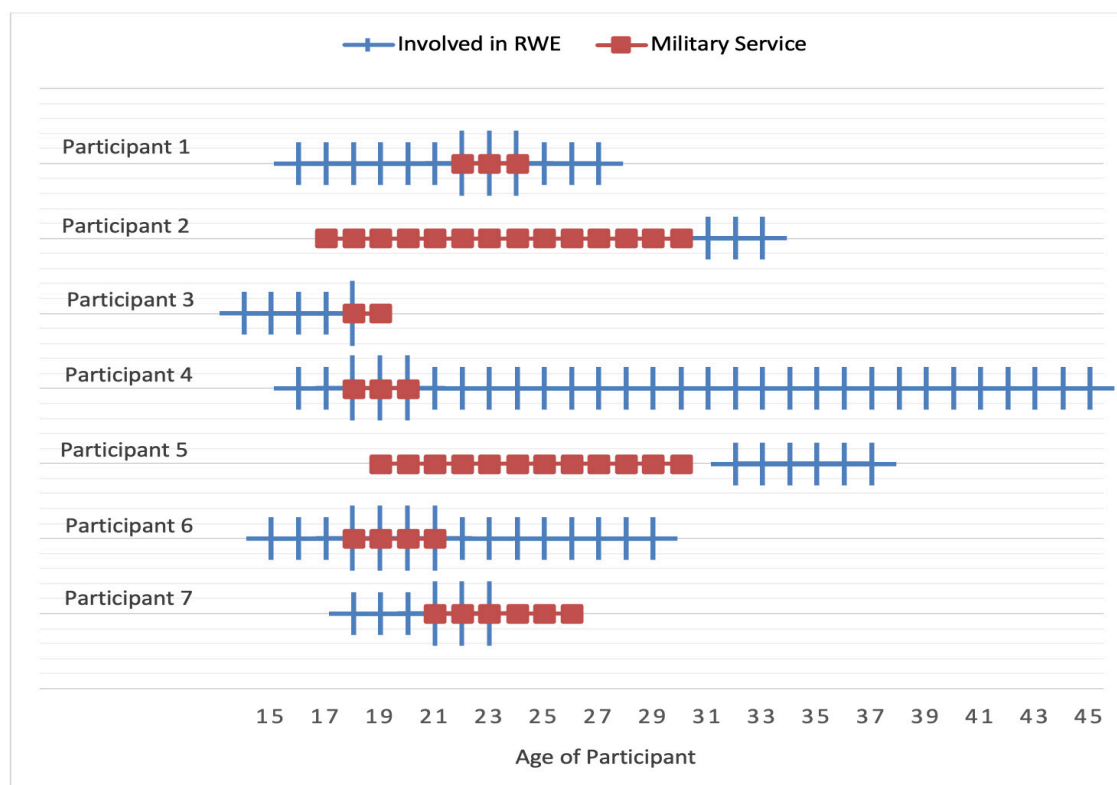
Data gathered from interview participants also provide nuanced insights to complement the public discussions of the overlap between military service and RWE involvement. Internet forums that have been studied by other scholars, like Iron March or Fascist Forge, provide essential insights into RWE and the military.[50] However, there are limitations to these inferences because users' identities are obscured, which lends itself to creating a space where individuals can embellish, or outright fabricate, their experience and credentials. This is likely a particularly acute issue with respect to military service, given that most RWE groups view military experience – and the presumed operational capability it imbues – as highly desirable. Therefore, individuals participating anonymously in online spaces have an incentive to misrepresent the nature of their military service. As a result, media reports or academic studies which rely solely on data from social media sites or forums may not accurately reflect the true scope or nature of the problem. We hope that focusing on data from interviews provides a more well-rounded complementary assessment of the phenomena.

Findings and Discussion

In this section, we discuss the findings of our interviews. First, we present a framework of overt signalling that RWEs can use to selectively reveal themselves to their military colleagues. This framework is based on patterns of behaviour identified during the interviews with partici-pants. Following this, we discuss the findings from our interviews – the operational dimensions of the intersection between RWE and military service as it relates to this overt signalling. These sections include (1) how and why RWEs enlist in military service; (2) RWE activities during military service; (3) detection of RWE activities by military authorities; (4) life after military service; (5) RWE group views of veterans; and finally, (6) how the timing of RWE involvement and military service might impact racist beliefs.

Overt and Covert Displays of Association with Right-Wing Extremism

Throughout our interviews, some participants admitted to a variety of 'signalling' behaviours which they used to reveal their RWE beliefs or affiliations to colleagues in the military suspected of being sympathetic to their views. Adopted from the theory of costly signals in the international relations literature, signalling is a form of costly behaviour that increases one's credibility with others.[51]

Signalling can come with a host of benefits to the signaller. If the individual receiving these signals is receptive, they can become a potential sympathiser, collaborator, or even a future recruit for the RWE group or movement. It may also provide a sense of comradery to know there are others implicitly sympathetic to, or outright supportive of, these beliefs.

Based on the data gathered from the interviews, we identified two types of signalling behaviours. This includes overt signalling behaviours designed to verbally or non-verbally reveal RWE beliefs to colleagues in the military. For example, our interviews described wearing symbols, modifying their appearance, or 'testing the waters' using verbal cues with others whom they suspected of holding views sympathetic to their own. Table 1 distinguishes between two types of overt signalling behaviours active military members can engage in – verbal and non-verbal.

Table 1. Approaches to Signalling Right-Wing Extremist Affiliation

Signalling	(1) Verbal	(2) Non-Verbal
Definition	Verbal confirmation or self-identification as a supporter or member of an RWE group.	Any non-verbal cue or signal which is designed to attract the attention of others who share similar political leanings, support, or membership.
Behavioural Examples	Telling a colleague(s) about one's political leanings, membership in, or support of an RWE group. Active recruitment for an RWE group.	Wearing or otherwise displaying symbols, insignias, logos, flags, or tattoos of RWE content or groups.

However, the very act of signalling RWE beliefs or affiliations to uninvolved colleagues can be risky. The nature of RWE is to be secretive and avoid detection. As our participants noted, when a signaller reveals him or herself to others, this is often based only on a hunch that the other person may be sympathetic. Meanwhile, determining whether a colleague is sympathetic to or outright supports RWE beliefs can be difficult or impossible beforehand. If an individual mistakenly reveals their beliefs or affiliations to an unsympathetic receiver, this can result in facing so-called instalment costs, meaning costs that will be incurred in the future as a result of signalling.[52] For RWEs in the military, this can include discipline and punishment for the signaller, discharge from the military, or even criminal investigations and charges.

As a result of these potential future costs, some interview participants described consciously keeping their beliefs and affiliations to themselves. Known colloquially as 'ghost skins,' these individuals do not disclose their beliefs to 'blend in' and further their own agendas. For example, if an individual in the military wishes to keep their support or membership in an RWE group secret, they can engage in covert behaviours, which can include creating fake social media and

online accounts to follow and engage with RWE content anonymously; destroying, hiding, or otherwise covering up RWE symbols; or consciously avoiding discussions where their political leanings could be revealed. While this strategy is advantageous to reduce the likelihood of detection by authorities, it also makes recruitment, gaining sympathisers or otherwise spreading the message near impossible.

As discussed above, there are costs and benefits to both signalling and remaining as a 'ghost skin.' While it is difficult to assess whether the decision to 'signal' to others is commonplace within the military, by identifying these patterns of behaviour in the data collected from interview participants, we hope to pave the way for future avenues of research to aid investigation and detection.

How and Why RWEs Enlist

A concern identified in the literature is that some RWE groups, like the Order of Nine Angles, encourage their members to infiltrate state-led institutions like the military to gain insider insights.[53] Others have found that RWE groups may encourage their members to enlist to acquire weapons and tactical training.[54] In our interviews with individuals involved in RWE prior to enlisting, we asked what motivated them to join the military and how they evaded screening during the enlistment process. Our interviewees provided evidence from their own experience, which corroborates the notion that their respective RWE groups often encouraged enlisting to gain tactical and weapons experience. For example, participant 3 describes his motivation for enlisting:

> I was very motivated to [join] the military service. I saw it as part of the course. It was a preparation for the coming revolution. We [in the RWE group] talked a lot about the military, [we] had a very militarised way of clothing and idealised militarism. So I was really motivated and prepared to do this...[55]

Participant 1, also a member of an RWE group before, during and after his military service, describes the same reason for joining. When asked what made him interested in enlisting, he replied: "*weapons training.*"[56] However, participant 1 also actively encouraged other RWE members to enlist. When advising others in the movement about enlisting, he described recommending a series of covert behaviours on how to 'ghost skin' and gave them advice for doing so without raising suspicions during screening:

> I'd been encouraging people to join the military. And I said, 'I don't want to know who you are. Just go get your training, keep to yourself, run silent, run deep. And don't get tattoos. Don't do any of that.[57]

Participant 3 similarly recalls strategically distancing himself from the RWE movement to appear 'clean' during the enlistment process. He explains,

> Going into the military meant that I kept a low profile. For the half year before, I also realised that the [military] do not want to train people to do violent revolutions. They weren't really up for training neo-Nazis. So, I tried to keep a very low profile and to distance myself a bit from the activities of the group and didn't participate in different types of events.[58]

According to participant 2, despite joining an RWE group as a veteran, he similarly recalls conversations with the leader of his group encouraging members to enlist:

One of the things I suggested, while I was involved [with the leader of the RWE group,] was that we need to get our younger members to enlist in the military and get that training. And it was so easy to slip through the cracks. You've got a criminal record? No, alright, enlist in the Army, get through basic training... [and] bring back that training to the movement. I already had that training, so that's why I was so valuable to them.[59]

While most participants recall military service being encouraged by their respective RWE groups, participant 6 explained that the RWE groups he joined were more agnostic about military service. These groups did not actively encourage members to enlist because of the perception that the military was run by Jewish interests, though they certainly did not discourage members who did enlist from sharing their training experience:

"They don't mind their members [enlisting] because they want you to get training for their movement, so you can train other members and stuff, but they weren't [pushing for it]... [the leader] used to be like, 'why would you want to join? You're fighting for the Jews.'"[60]

RWE Activities During Military Service

Once successfully enlisted, there was significant variation in the activities of our interviewees. While some recall overtly signalling their beliefs to their colleagues in the military, others kept a low profile. For instance, participant 6 recalls being very overt:

I was pretty open. I mean, I had swastika flags. I had tattoos that were overtly racist. I had literature [that] would be sent in all the time, and I was very well known.[61]

Others expressed similar overt patterns using verbal cues. Despite not becoming involved in RWE until after leaving the military, participant 2 recalls the process of meeting people in the military whom he suspected of holding extreme far-right views. He describes selectively choosing where and when to discuss his beliefs, and how the process of choosing when to be overt also inadvertently groomed other participants in the conversation:

You know who you can talk about it with... You're not going to talk about [the] roach-like infestation from Mexico, [or] illegal[s] jumping the border with your Hispanic Second Lieutenant. You're going to talk about it with the other white guy in your unit that thinks the same way you do, and you're going to groom each other, and you really don't realise that you're doing it. There's a lot of unintentional grooming that goes on because birds of a feather flock together... if [someone is] constantly challenging my ideologies and views, it's going to build this animosity with [them]. And I don't want to talk to you about how I feel. I want to talk to that guy who's going to be like: 'Yeah, man. Yeah, you're right'.[62]

This pattern of selective reinforcement and overt signalling is also confirmed by other interviews. Participant 4 recalls that after joining the military and finding like-minded colleagues, they began to attend events together, alter their appearance, and eventually joined an RWE group together:

I signed up for the Navy... I did my boot camp. And then I was stationed [for] training. While I was there, I met some guys that were listening to like hardcore speed metal and stuff like that. I started hanging out with guys on the base that were, you know, punk rock, hardcore, that kind of stuff. And we started going to the hardcore shows and stuff. And because of the fact we were in the [military], the only real option for a

haircut for us was to shave your head. So, we shaved our heads. [I'm] hanging out with guys, shaving our heads, going to punk rock shows. And it just developed from there into like full-fledged skinhead stuff. [W]e were living together as roommates, and we met some local white power skinheads and started hanging out with them. We were running amuck and committing a lot of violent crimes and stuff.[63]

In the case of participant 4, his overt actions led to an open investigation by his branch's investigative service. While the investigation apparently did not stop his colleagues from continuing to overtly recruit within the military, participant 4 became more covert in his actions as a result:

We were surreptitiously recruiting on base, not so much myself, but there was another one of the roommates who was doing it a lot more actively than I was. And we were also making contacts with other military personnel who were already sympathetic or involved. But, because the [military] started investigating us pretty soon after we started this, we were pretty careful about not doing anything overt on base that we could get caught for. [Instead, we would] listen to what they're saying, you know, and listen for cues. And then when you start to get a feeling like maybe [someone is] sympathetic or even outright involved, [we would] find the right time and the place where it's not going to be overheard or marked by anybody else and be a little bit more overt about what [we're] getting at. If they respond to that level, then maybe even move to the point of having them come to meetings or being pretty explicit about what it is [we're] doing.[64]

Participant 6 similarly notes that he selectively signalled to others about his beliefs while avoiding outright recruitment, which he says would have raised suspicion:

I passed out literature and stuff, gave people stuff to read, but... you're not allowed to recruit anything in the military like that. So, I just kind of stayed away from that. But I think that was something they were afraid of. And I was passing out CDs. I mean, I was getting people to believe some of the same stuff, but not actively like: 'Hey, here's a membership', you know, stuff like that.[65]

Likewise, participant 1 – who encouraged others in the movement to enlist but otherwise maintained covert during his service – notes that recruitment would have raised too much suspicion:

I didn't go in there at all with the idea of recruiting. Because that would bring attention to myself.[66]

Despite his overt actions, when asked whether he believes other RWEs in the military are as overt as he was, participant 4 responded:

These days, I think the majority of people that are in right now that are active white supremacists are very underground and low-key about it. There are, I'm sure, exceptions, but what they've been telling these guys is go in there and hide and wait for stuff to happen.[67]

Like participant 4's assessment above, participant 7 recalls being covert about his beliefs even when others signalled their beliefs to him:

I never said a single racist statement or anything off colour in my entire military career. No one would know people would share their views with me, but I never shared it back because I was just trying to be careful about keeping it a secret.[68]

Detection by Authorities

Every participant that we interviewed whose involvement in RWE either came before or during their military service mentioned that, at some point, law enforcement (including local or federal police or the military's own investigative service) became aware of their membership. The consistency of this theme across our interviews suggests that contrary to how the military's ability to detect such behaviour is often characterised, organisations are often adept at detecting extremism within their ranks. A common thread among the experiences of the participants was the media attention of RWE groups which led to suspicions about their involvement. However, while detection was commonplace, responses and punishments were either non-existent or ineffective. In some cases, the military's response to the individual's involvement led to deeper and escalating commitment to RWE; meanwhile, in other cases, lax punishment led to disengagement from RWE.

For example, participant 1, who was involved in RWE before, during and after his 3-year tenure in the military, recalls remaining covert during his military service. However, once the RWE group he was involved in began garnering media attention, he exited the military. Despite this, he recalls receiving a visit from his branch's investigation unit:

[The RWE group I was in] started to become high profile and draw media attention. And I could see that it was going to, so I quit [the military] before any of that happened. And it was after that when I got the visit from [the investigation unit]. [But], because I was no longer part of [the military], they were limited in their scope. But I said, "I [have] respect for the unit. I didn't try and recruit anybody there.' And they said, 'We know.' There was not much they could do or say at that point.[69]

Participant 3, who exited the RWE group during his service, similarly recalls:

I wasn't [open with others in my unit about my beliefs.] I understood that it wouldn't work to be open on this. And I was really motivated to finalise the military and even thought that this might be a career. So, I was very careful with revealing any of this. But what happened is that there was an event at that point with a very violent crime. [It] made the military look for individuals with connections to these groups. So, what happened is that halfway through [my] military [service], I got identified and was moved from my service to a different service where I wasn't allowed to be around guns or weapons.[70]

Despite being moved to a different service in what might be considered by some to be a lax approach, participant 3 recalls this being an important catalyst that contributed to his disengagement from RWE:

I think what was good is that I got to stay. I wasn't discharged, but I got to stay and I still had involvement and activities [in the military]. I had a specific responsibility that I could continue with even if I was separated from the [RWE] group. I was still motivated to change and to, at least, not go back to the [RWE] movement. It wasn't a dishonourable [discharge]. It wasn't done in a way that was shameful... I think that really helped. I think in that sense, it was still a positive experience because I had a lot of time on my own where I could reflect on what I wanted to do.[71]

In the case of participant 4, his involvement drew media attention and a subsequent branch investigation. However, the investigation never resulted in any punishment, and he was not deterred from RWE activities. Instead, he was simply told not to tarnish the reputation of the branch with his RWE activity:

> *[My involvement] was brought to [the branch's] attention. [The] Investigative Services opened up a case on me and my two roommates. And they were snooping around our house and taking flyers out of our trash cans and stuff. So, they called us in, they interviewed us, all three of us just kind of lied through our teeth saying we weren't white power. And the [branch] just kind of threw Holy Water at it and said, 'well, you guys, aren't doing anything on base and there's no threat to you. So, you're good.' No repercussions whatsoever, no punishment, no trouble. They closed the case.*[72]

Participant 6, who recalls having swastika flags and racist tattoos during his time in the military, was also investigated. However, rather than receiving media attention, it was only after the outward projection of his beliefs caused fights between him and other members of the unit that he was forced to leave the military with an honourable discharge, though he was encouraged to simply re-enlist within a 12-month period:

> *It wasn't until I started getting into fights over it… I didn't get a dishonourable discharge, but I was given an honourable discharge because I was not a screw up by any means. I was pretty squared away. I mean, I had the highest PT score in the company. I was an expert marksman. I was doing the right thing except for the [RWE] aspect. Because I didn't get a dishonourable discharge, they just said, 'Hey, you have to come back within a year and you can re-enlist here' and [I] was able to just get right back in.*[73]

However, participant 6 notes that his honourable discharge did little to sway his beliefs. In fact, it may have even strengthened them:

> *I was [young] and [the military] just released me… I had no job skills. I just felt my life was over. So, I was like, 'Well, I'm just going to go on a hate crime spree'.*[74]

Finally, although participant 7, like participant 3, had exited the RWE group during his military service, media attention again led to the discovery of his past involvement:

> *Eventually, [after the investigation], I was suspended and reinstated, and then suspended again and kicked out.*[75]

Life After Leaving the Military

For individuals leaving the military, inadequate access to transitional services, or an inability to create a new positive identity, can create risk factors that could facilitate radicalisation. The identity and personal instability associated with a significant change in a person's role brought on by an event like leaving or being forced out of the military could possibly play a role in generating this type of instability. This was a shared thread for the two interview participants who joined an RWE group after leaving the military.

For example, participant 2, who only joined an RWE group as a veteran, was discharged from the military following an injury, during which time he became addicted to opioids. He recalls looking for a replacement community to fill the loneliness:

The paranoia [from the drug addiction] led to looking for this replacement community. As a soldier, there's always this perception of the 'fight.' Like, there's still a fight to come. They still need us. I came out of the military, a couple of months goes by, I'm using [opioids] heavy. I started to notice that all my friends that I was in the military with were vanishing. They're just disappearing and they're going and doing their own lives. I've become [as un]important to them as I once was. There was this emptiness, and it was really emotional. It was a very dangerous period in terms of grooming and recruitment. And it's always during these timeframes in a person's life when they're open and susceptible to it and vulnerable. And that's why we only hear about it when it's too late.[76]

Although participant 2 had no previous links with RWE groups, his experience in the military post-9/11 and subsequent unplanned exit helped to facilitate his transition to the group:

I think that at the end of the day, it boils down to trauma sustained through the military. I don't remember hating Muslims until I encountered combat with Muslims. I remember thinking of 'em in a negative bias through the training that I had in the military, which we've established it's necessary for a soldier to be able to go and take [a] life. You have to dehumanise your enemy combatant. We're injecting our soldiers with this serum, hypothetically, that creates radicalisation, extremist ideologies, traumas, [and] grievances, [that] without resolving lead[s] to trauma, [and] trauma leads to action. And that's what we're seeing. We're seeing prior service members that have come out of the military without the help of the military to de-radicalize storming [the U.S.] capitol.[77]

Participant 5 recalls similar feelings of emptiness and difficulty finding employment after service, which contributed to his RWE involvement:

Basically, when you get out of the military, unless you have a job lined up the day you get out, you're going to have a ton of extra time to let your mind be your own worst enemy. And there's a void you got to fill somehow. If you don't have anything better to do you can get down some pretty bad paths. That's what happened to me. I tried getting a job... [but] since the economy was so bad, every time a civilian position opened, they give it to a military guy because they didn't have to pay nearly as much money to fill it with a military guy. In between being out of the military and getting [a] job, that's when I kind of fell down the path of white supremacy. The military has got a rank structure and you're like, 'Hey, this [RWE group], they got a rank structure. Maybe that'll fill the void a little bit.' Next thing you know, you're [promoted] and you haven't done anything.[78]

The timing of joining a RWE group after military service may depend, in part, on whether the individual experienced an 'unplanned' exit (i.e., a release due to injury, etc.), though it should be noted this is a small sample, and generalisations are difficult beyond these interviewees. Nevertheless, participant 2 experienced a discharge due to injury and quickly fell into the group just months after his discharge. He recalls the timing of his exit from the military and entrance into the RWE as being "*almost too perfect.*"[79]

Meanwhile, participant 5 did not experience an unplanned exit from the military and recalls it took about a year and a half before he joined the RWE group. More research is needed to determine whether these differences hold amongst a larger sample and how this information can be utilised to amend discharge and aftercare policies.

RWE Group Perceptions of Veterans

Given the high premium that RWE groups place on military service, it should be no surprise that interview participants who joined a group after leaving the military rose through the ranks quickly once leadership discovered they were veterans.

Participant 2, who had an 'unplanned' exit from the military due to injury, recalls that at the beginning of his involvement with an RWE group, he was not considered particularly special. However, when the group learned about his prior military experience, he was 'promoted' quickly, which served to solidify his identity and his perceived 'value' to the group:

> When I first started, I was a [foot soldier]. I was just a [regular] member who showed up to the meetings and got high, did the drugs, and spouted the rhetoric. But after they realised that I was a veteran and I had combat experience and access to guns and firearms, they were like, 'Higher-ups want to meet with you.' I was offered a second-in-charge position. I took that. At that point, I was in charge of security for functions. I was in charge of taking care of members who would leave the group and not return their memorabilia. You know, it was just a lot of violence in that position.[80]

Participant 5, who experienced a planned exit from the military, also recalls being promoted quickly, partially because of his military experience and training:

> [My military experience] had something to do with it... [the RWE group was] like, 'he's a trained killer. He was in the military'.[81]

Having trained members is not only important as a strategy for the RWE group, but it also serves as a form of identity formation for the veteran experiencing loneliness, isolation, and frustration. Fast promotion may renew their sense of self-esteem and worth, while also instilling a sense of purpose and need within the group. It also demonstrates that, without their skills, the group would be worse off. On the other hand, this may in turn solidify membership in the group and make disengagement from RWE more difficult, because the veteran may fear re-experiencing the same loneliness and frustration they felt after leaving the military in the first place.

Among participants who were members of RWE groups during military service and discharged due to their involvement, the perceived disgrace of their discharge – coupled with the loss of structure and identity – caused these individuals to double down on their involvement. Participant 6 recalls feeling 'lost' after being discharged, which quickly led him down a criminal path:

> I love the army, and when I was discharged, I was lost, and that's what ended up for me going out and going on a hate crime spree and going to prison eventually afterwards. I just felt my life was over. So, it was like, 'well, I'm just going to go on a hate crime spree'.[82]

Participant 6 adds that he did not initially plan to go on a crime spree. However, when he lost his sense of identity and duty through the military, he leaned heavily on the RWE group and their ideals to recover that lost sense of identity:

> I didn't have that plan initially, but after I got out, because my involvement was brought up to [law enforcement agencies], [they] started showing up at my work. It got me paranoid, and I just got tired of being pushed and I just felt like, 'well, I'm gonna' push back.' [This was] a month and half after [leaving] the army. I was thinking, 'I want to be like Bob Matthews.[83] I want to be a hero for my race because now I can't be a

hero for this country because the military kicked me out.' I wanted to give my life for something bigger than me. And since I didn't have the army, the movement was the only thing I had in life.[84]

Timing of Military Service and Involvement in Right Wing Extremism

Evidence from our interviews also highlighted the possibility of military service serving as a moderating influence on individuals involved in the RWE movement, or some cases, promoting disengagement. Some participants who joined RWE groups before their military service said the military tempered their views about diversity. This could be because military service often requires individuals to interact and coexist with a diverse range of people. Participant 2, who only joined an RWE group as a veteran, recalls having a 'healthy' mindset during his time of service:

> *I had a really healthy military mindset. Like, 'I'm a soldier, I represent [my country] and everybody in it, and I need to be professional, courteous, respectful at all times and be a good ambassador to my country.*[85]

Similarly, participant 5 recounts that, despite his later involvement in RWE, he did not necessarily hold or express racist feelings during their service. Instead, the view he held was that diversity in the ranks was not a negative factor:

> *I wasn't raised in a racist family or anything like that. When I was in the military, I didn't have any racist feelings or anything. I mean, especially on submarines, you got people of all different walks of life. I mean, if you have a fire or a flood on a submarine, you gotta' help out your shipmates... it doesn't matter what colour they are. If one guy can't put the fire out, everybody's screwed. So, you count on everybody. You're all brothers out at sea.*[86]

The gap between these participants' views on the acceptability of racism while serving in the military compared to their conduct after their release speaks both to the difficulties of readjusting to civilian life after service, as well as the difficulties of proactively identifying individuals who may experience a 'cognitive opening' to radicalisation after they leave the armed forces.

Conversely, for others who joined the military while involved in RWE, military service helped them to disengage from the movement by replacing the gap in their lives that involvement in the movement filled. For example, participant 3, who was a member of an RWE group before enlisting to gain training for the impending race war, recalls how his mentality abruptly shifted. Instead of hardening his views, he began to distance himself from the RWE group because military service provided much of what he sought from the movement in the first place:

> *Once I was in the military, I think that shift came quite fast. I had this feeling that [the RWE group] was not good enough for me. This is not what I want to achieve with my life. I want something different... I think [the military] really built self-esteem, confidence and helped me to see that I could move on from the movement. A few months into the military, I somehow realised I just won't go back to the movement because it just doesn't really offer me what I need anymore. I think in that sense, I just grew out of it. I quickly realised this is what we talked about in the movement, but [the RWE group] couldn't really live up to it... [things like] order, discipline, pushing your boundaries, evolving, developing, growing...all these things that we were kind of idolizing and talking about, but couldn't really manifest.*[87]

Given these variations in the timing of RWE involvement and military service, more work should be done to understand if and how military service could be a protective factor against future radicalisation or serve to promote disengagement and ideological change among individuals involved in, or sympathetic to, RWE. Specifically, this work can build upon contact theory, a hypothesis in the field of psychology which purports that increased intergroup exposure and contact can, under the right conditions, reduce prejudice toward minority members of the group.[88] In the cases identified above, contact theory may help explain the tempered racist views during service due to specific circumstances within the units themselves.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

Using a unique set of interviews, this article aimed to advance the understanding of the ways in which military service and involvement in right-wing extremism interact with each other. As military institutions work to define their policy responses to extremism within their ranks, an improved understanding of the mechanisms by which military service may create an openness to radicalisation, and the ways in which radicalised service members negotiate their daily duties is an essential foundation.

Our findings demonstrate the complexity and contingency of the relationship between military service and radicalisation, but simultaneously identify some key patterns that emerge from the interview data we gathered. For instance, the value RWE groups place on members with military experience, approaches to overt signalling of affiliation, and the openness to radicalisation that occurs after a planned or unplanned exit from the armed forces are often assumed but underexplored issues within the existing literature.[89] This study has attempted to develop a framework which can be used to inform future understanding and research on the topic.

Admittedly, the largest limitation of this study, like many studies on extremism, is its small sample size of interviewees. Finding individuals who were not only willing to speak to us but also had both experience in the far-right and the military is naturally a small sample size to draw from. Future research should focus on finding methodological ways to increase the validity and accuracy of their findings, such as validating their findings of online forum discussions with interviews or historical data (and vice versa). With the current wave of RWEs moving deeper online, researchers should also attempt to find unique ways to validate and connect real-world incidences of violence with online interactions, such as language analysis of publicly available forums like 8kun.

There are several findings from this study which warrant further investigation. The first is whether contact theory can be applied in specific military units, and whether the specific dynamics of certain units do produce increased resilience to radicalisation (as was seen in some of the cases presented here). While the sample here is not large enough to produce any reliable conclusions about the *type* of unit structure which might be conducive to this, it is likely a fruitful future avenue of research.

A second fruitful future avenue of research is the temporal component of service in relation to radicalisation and involvement in RWE. Although limited by a small sample size, our findings indicate that unplanned exits and identity crises immediately following military service can lead an individual down an accelerated path toward radicalisation, whereas planned exits, while still leading to radicalisation in the case of our interviewee, took much longer. If these findings hold true in larger samples, this has important implications for military institutions across North America and Europe, the most important being reviewing the policies in place for wellness checks and post-discharge social support services.

A third fruitful avenue of research is to further investigate the ways in which military members with ties to RWE employ covert and overt measures to signal to others in the military. Even though we applied the signalling framework after completing our interviews, by including contextualising quotes from participants which indicate when they were trying to recruit or attract others, we can say their actions resemble the framework of signalling, even if the participants did not use these exact words. If this trend is validated in larger samples, this also has important implications for military institutions. The fact that all our interview participants had encountered law enforcement or military investigations at one point indicates these institutions are, in fact, adept at detecting these individuals. However, what appears to be lacking are responses, which were non-existent, inconsistent, or ineffective in many cases.

The link between right-wing extremism and the military is not a new phenomenon but has so far been relatively underexplored in academic research. This study sought to produce a framework for better understanding how RWEs navigate military institutions before, during, and after service. As such, we hope these findings will help fuel further investigations into the topic, which, since 2021, has received renewed attention around the world.

Amarnath Amarasingam is an Associate Professor in the School of Religion, and is cross-appointed to the Department of Political Studies, at Queen's University in Ontario, Canada. He works in the areas of social/extremist movements, radicalisation and terrorism, conspiracy theories, online communities, diaspora politics, post-war reconstruction, and the sociology of religion.

Michèle St-Amant is a Senior Researcher at the Organization for the Prevention of Violence. Her research interests include far-right extremism, anti-government extremism, and violent conspiracy theories. Her work has appeared in the Journal for Deradicalization, the Canadian Journal of Family and Youth, and Lawfare.

David Jones is a Research Advisor at the Organization for the Prevention of Violence. He holds an undergraduate and graduate degree from the University of Alberta and is completing a J.D. at Osgoode Hall Law School.

Endnotes

1 Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), https://www.hup.harvard.edu/books/9780674286078.

2 Sarah Petz, "US Judge Sentences Manitoban Ex-Reservist Patrik Mathews to 9 Years in Prison for Role in Neo-Nazi Plot," *CBC*, October 28, 2021. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/patrik-mathews-sentencing-1.6226116.

3 US Department of Justice, "US Army Soldier Charged with Terrorism Offenses for Planning Deadly Ambush on Service Members in His Unit," Office of Public Affairs, 22 June 2020. https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/us-army-soldier-charged-terrorism-offenses-planning-deadly-ambush-service-members-his-unit.

4 Associated Press, "German Commando Company Is Disbanded Due to Far-Right Culture," *The Guardian*, 1 July 2020, sec. World News. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/01/german-commando-company-disbanded-after-extremist-rightwing-culture-discovered.

5 Haroon Siddique, "British Soldier Recruited for Far-Right Group While in Army," *The Guardian*, 12 November, 2018, sec. World News. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/nov/12/british-army-solider-recruited-far-right-group-national-action.

6 Sherene Razack, "From the 'Clean Snows of Petawawa': The Violence of Canadian Peacekeepers in Somalia," *Cultural Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (2000): 127–63.

7 Belew, Bring the War Home.

8 Håvard Haugstvedt and Daniel Koehler, "Armed and Explosive? An Explorative Statistical Analysis of Extremist Radicalisation Cases with Military Background," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 35, no. 3 (April 3, 2023): 518–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2021.1957675.

9 Bruce Hoffman and Jacob Ware, *Gods, Guns, and Sedition* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2024). https://doi.org/10.7312/hoff21122-011.

10 Todd C. Helmus, Hannah Jane Byrne, and King Mallory, "Countering Violent Extremism in the US Military" (RAND Corporation, 25 October 2021). Available at: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1226-1.html. Seth G. Jones et al., "The Military, Police, and the Rise of Terrorism in the United States" (Washington, D.C.: Centre for Strategic & International Studies, 12 April 2021). https://www.csis.org/analysis/military-police-and-rise-terrorism-united-states.

11 Daniel Koehler, "A Threat from Within? Exploring the Link between the Extreme Right and the Military" (International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2019). Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19622; Major Andrew T. Vandor, "Manifestation of Hateful Conduct to Radical Extremism as a Threat to the Canadian Armed Forces" (Master of Defence Studies, Canadian Forces College, 2021). https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/259/290/23/286/Vandor.pdf.

12 Stewart Bell, "Extremist Groups 'Actively Recruiting' Military and Police, Canadian Intelligence Report Warns," *Global News*, 23 August 2021. Available at: https://globalnews.ca/news/8128463/extremist-groups-military-recruitment-report/. Minister of National Defence, "Minister of National Defence Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism and Discrimination" (Department of National Defence, 2022). https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/reports/2022/mnd-ap-final-report-7-jan-2022.pdf.

13 Peter K. Levine et al., "Prohibited Extremist Activities in the U.S. Department of Defense" (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defence Analyses, December 2023). https://www.ida.org/-/media/feature/publications/p/pr/prohibited-extremist-activities-in-the-us-department-of-defense/p-33076.ashx, 21, 27.

14 Jones et al., "The Military, Police, and the Rise of Terrorism in the United States."

15 Jacob Davey and Dana Weinberg, "Influence: Discussions of the US Military in Extreme Right-Wing Telegram Channels."

16 FBI Counterterrorism Division, "White Supremacist Infiltration of Law Enforcement" (Washington, D.C.: Federal Bureau of Investigation Intelligence Assessment, 2006). http://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/402521/doc-26-white-supremacist-infiltration.pdf, p. 5).

17 Benjamin Simonds Nixon, "Blood and Soil: Right-Wing Terrorism Poses an Existential Threat to the United States" (Undergraduate Thesis, Rutgers-Camden University, 2020). https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/66035/, 9.

18 Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Emelie Chace-Donahue, "The Order of Nine Angles: Cosmology, Practice & Movement," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 7 March 2023, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2023.2186737.

19 Razack, "From the 'Clean Snows of Petawawa.'"

20 Teun Van Dongen et al., "Right-Wing Extremism in the Military: A Typology of Threat," *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism*, 2022. https://doi.org/10.19165/2022.1.02.

21 Lou Michel and Dan Herbeck, *American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh & the Oklahoma City Bombing* (Regan Books, 2001). https://cir.nii.ac.jp/crid/1130282268791211648, 87-88.

22 Leana Allen Bouffard, "The Military as a Bridging Environment in Criminal Careers: Differential Outcomes of the Military Experience," *Armed Forces & Society* 31, no. 2 (January 2005). https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X0503100206, 274.

23 Philip McCristall, David C. Hofmann, and Shayna Perry, "The Nexus of Right-Wing Extremism and the Canadian Armed Forces," in *Right-Wing Extremism in Canada and the United States*, ed. Barbara Perry, Jeff Gruenewald, and Ryan Scrivens, Palgrave Hate Studies (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022), 409–42. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99804-2_16.

24 Koehler, "A Threat from Within?"

25 Haugstvedt and Koehler, "Armed and Explosive?", 4.

26 Tammy Castle and Christopher Hensley, "Serial Killers with Military Experience: Applying Learning Theory to Serial Murder," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 46, no. 4 (August 2002). https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X02464007, 459.

27 Haugstvedt and Koehler, "Armed and Explosive?", 2.

28 Pete Simi, Bryan F. Bubolz, and Ann Hardman, "Military Experience, Identity Discrepancies, and Far Right Terrorism: An Exploratory Analysis," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 36, no. 8 (August 1, 2013). https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2013.802976, 657.

29 Jerrold M. Post, "Terrorism and Right-Wing Extremism: The Changing Face of Terrorism and Political Violence in the 21st Century: The Virtual Community of Hatred," *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy* 65, no. 2 (April 2015): 242–71. https://doi.org/10.1521/ijgp.2015.65.2.242.

30 Tine Molendijk, Eric-Hans Kramer, and Désirée Verweij, "Conflicting Notions on Violence and PTSD in the Military: Institutional and Personal Narratives of Combat-Related Illness," *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 40, no. 3 (September 2016): 338–60. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11013-015-9469-0.

31 Alex Boutillier, "White Supremacists in Canada's Military Pose 'Active Counter-Intelligence Threat': Watchdog," Global News, 13 December 2021. https://globalnews.ca/news/8446253/white-supremacists-canada-military-active-threat/.

32 CASIS, "Right-Wing Extremism Elements in The Canadian Armed Forces," *The Journal of Intelligence, Conflict, and Warfare* 2, no. 2 (21 November 2019). https://doi.org/10.21810/jicw.v2i2.1059, 2.

33 FBI Counterterrorism Division, "White Supremacist Infiltration of Law Enforcement.", 8.

34 Boutillier, "White Supremacists in Canada's Military Pose 'Active Counter-Intelligence Threat.'" Bell, "Extremist Groups 'Actively Recruiting' Military and Police, Canadian Intelligence Report Warns."

35 Jones et al., "The Military, Police, and the Rise of Terrorism in the United States," 2.

36 Abigail R. Hall, Jerod Hassell, and Chivon Fitch, "Militarized Extremism: The Radical Right and the War on Terror," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY, 1 June 2021). https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3857771, 8.

37 Major T.L. Tebbutt, "Cultural Perspectives of Right-Wing Extremism in the Canadian Armed Forces" (Canadian Forces College Thesis, Canadian Forces College, 2021). https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/259/290/23/305/Tebbutt.pdf, 8.

38 FBI Counterterrorism Division, "White Supremacist Recruitment of Military Personnel since 9/11" (Washington, D.C.: Federal Bureau of Investigation Intelligence Assessment, 2008).

39 William Y. Chin, "War and White Supremacists: How Use of the Military in War Overseas Empowers White Supremacists at Home," *Southern Journal of Policy and Justice* 11 (2017), 9.

40 Hall, Hassell, and Fitch, "Militarized Extremism."

41 Hall, Hassell, and Fitch, "Militarized Extremism," 5.

42 Chin, "War and White Supremacists," 9.

43 Matt Kennard, Irregular Army: How the US Military Recr uited Neo-Nazis, Gang Members, and Criminals to Fight the War on Terror (Verso Books, 2015), 23.

44 Marc Flacks and Martin F Wiskoff, "GANGS, EXTREMISTS GROUPS, AND THE MILITARY: SCREENING FOR SERVICE" (Monterey, CA: Security Research Centre – Defence Security Service, 1998). https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA359551.pdf.

45 Lee Berthiaume, "Canadian Military Faces Calls to Weed out Neo-Nazis, Hate Group Members," Global News, 21 August 2019. https://globalnews.ca/news/5796530/canadian-military-neo-nazis-hate-groups/.

46 Lee Berthiaume, "Canadian Military Not Doing Enough to Detect, Prevent Extremism in the Ranks: Report," CTVNews, 25 April 2022. https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/canadian-military-not-doing-enough-to-detect-prevent-extremism-in-the-ranks-report-1.5874626.

47 CASIS, "Right-Wing Extremism Elements In The Canadian Armed Forces," 3.

48 CASIS, "Right-Wing Extremism Elements In The Canadian Armed Forces," 3.

49 John Horgan, "Interviewing the Terrorists: Reflections on Fieldwork and Implications for Psychological Research," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 4, no. 3 (September 2012): 195–211. https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2011.594620.

50 Ryan Scrivens et al., "Combating Violent Extremism: Voices of Former Right-Wing Extremists," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 45, no. 8 (3 August 2022): 661–81. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1686856.

51 Kai Quek, "Four Costly Signaling Mechanisms," *American Political Science Review* 115, no. 2 (May 2021): 537–49. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055420001094.

52 Quek, "Four Costly Signaling Mechanisms," 538.

53 Gartenstein-Ross and Chace-Donahue, "The Order of Nine Angles."

54 Boutillier, "White Supremacists in Canada's Military Pose 'Active Counter-Intelligence Threat.'"

55 Author's interview with participant 3.

56 Author's interview with participant 1.

57 Author's interview with participant 1.

58 Author's interview with participant 3.

59 Author's interview with participant 2.

60 Authors' interview with participant 6.

61 Authors' interview with participant 6.

62 Authors' interview with participant 4.

63 Authors' interview with participant 4.

64 Author's interview with participant 4.

65 Authors' interview with participant 6.

66 Author's interview with participant 1.

67 Author's interview with participant 4.

68 Author's interview with participant 7.

69 Author's interview with participant 1.

70 Author's interview with participant 3.

71 Author's interview with participant 3.

72 Authors' interview with participant 4.

73 Author's interview with participant 6.

74 Author's interview with participant 6.

75 Author's interview with participant 7.

76 Authors' interview with participant 2.

77 Authors' interview with participant 2.

78 Authors' interview with participant 5.

79 Author's interview with participant 2.

80 Author's interview with participant 2.

81 Authors' interview with participant 5.

82 Authors' Interview with participant 6.

83 A reference to Robert Mathews, the leader of The Order, a white supremacist terror cell active in the United

States in the 1980s.

84 Authors' interview with participant 6.

85 Author's interview with participant 2.

86 Authors' interview with participant 5.

87 Authors' interview with participant 3.

88 Thomas F. Pettigrew and Linda R. Tropp, "A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory.," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90, no. 5 (2006): 751–83. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751.

89 Simi, Bubolz, and Hardman, "Military Experience, Identity Discrepancies, and Far Right Terrorism."

Balancing Act: How Militant Groups Manage Strategic and Ideological Resources

Hannah Chesterton,* Tricia Bacon and Thomas Zeitzoff

Abstract: What happens when militant groups must choose between logistical needs and ideology, and how does that trade-off impact subsequent violence? Many groups balance both strategic and psychological considerations but ultimately weigh one more heavily than the other. We propose a typology based on this trade-off between logistical and ideological resources and the degree of violence against civilians. We propose that combination produces four overarching ideal types: violent militants, militant opportunists, professional militants, or disciplined militants. We conduct a plausibility probe of the types and propose a model of how groups re-produce violence patterns once established. The four cases – the Weather Underground, al-Qaeda in Iraq, the Revolutionary United Front, and autodefensas in Mexico – are extreme cases that vary in their calculus of logistics versus ideology and their degree of violence. We find that all types go through a standard process to establish and perpetuate their approach to violence. In addition, groups experience different advantages and pitfalls based on their trade-off calculus. An ideological emphasis is typically accompanied by greater oversight of recruitment and tactics, but groups that become too ideologically rigid risk collapsing from organisational problems and difficulties connecting with their constituents. Conversely, those that weigh logistical considerations more heavily have less oversight over recruitment, which increases their risks of infiltration by opportunists and criminals.

Corresponding author: Hannah Chesterton, Catholic University of America, email: chesterton@cua.edu

Introduction

How do groups manage the trade-offs between ideological commitment and strategic considerations? And why do some groups engage in widespread violence against civilians while others use more targeted violence? Threats from militant groups – organisations within a broader social movement that use violence to pursue their goals[1] – are diverse and acute. Yet even groups within the same movement vary significantly in their willingness to use violence against civilians. Two schools of thought dominate the literature on civilian victimisation. The rational choice school argues that strategic objectives motivated by cost-benefit calculations drive such behaviour.[2] From this perspective, even ideologically extreme violence is best understood through an instrumental lens.[3] In contrast, psychological or ideological factors emphasise small group dynamics, sacred values, and deep-seated beliefs driving behaviour.[4]

Decision-makers within militant groups often trade off between rational choice and psychological factors. Consequently, groups tend to favour one logic over another. They must manage a group's spirit, convictions, and overall mission, i.e., the ideological resources. They must also make choices about funding, membership, decision-making structures, and, crucially, how to ensure the group's survival. These represent logistical resources, encompassing a group's acquisition and management of material resources.

Given the prominent role that attacks against civilian targets play in both militant groups' calculations and state responses, we focus on this aspect of the production of violence by militant groups.[5] We propose that the dominance of one factor combined with a group's tendency to use violence against civilians produces four overarching ideal types: violent militants, militant opportunists, professional militants, or disciplined militants.

To understand the relationship between the dominant logic— ideological or logistical — and levels of violence, we propose a model of how patterns of violence are established and then perpetuated within all four types of groups. We propose that leaders play a key role in establishing an organisation's baseline orientation. In turn, leaders' calibration of ideological and logistical resources influence 1) a group's recruitment base and support, and 2) its organisation. The organisational structure and constituencies subsequently influence how much violence groups perpetrate against civilians; this choice, in turn, influences who the group attracts and recruits. There is then a cycle of reciprocation between recruits and the level of violence against civilians. We conduct process tracing of extreme cases to conduct a plausibility probe of our typology and model.

The rest of this article proceeds as follows. First, we discuss current rational choice and psychological theories of militant group behaviour. Second, we introduce our typological theory and discuss how the trade-off between ideological and logistical resources and levels of violence against civilians produces four types of groups. We then propose a model of the cycle that produces those levels of violence. Third, we trace one case of each type: the Weather Underground Organisation (WUO) in the US, al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), *autodefensas* in Mexico, and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone. We present the four types through these extreme cases and identify the cycle perpetuating targeting behaviours. We conclude with our findings, their implications, and avenues for future research.

Existing Theories of Violence Against Civilians
Psychological Theories

Psychological theories of militant group behaviour can be broadly grouped into three complementary explanations: emotions and grievances, ideology, and social bonds. Emotional-based theories of political violence focus on grievances to explain recruitment and tactics, including costly political violence like targeting civilians.[6] The intensity of negative emotions predicts the likelihood of participation and the willingness to engage in such violence.[7]

A second set of psychological theories focuses on an underlying ideology, morality, or worldview for violence. Some focus on how a black-and-white paradigm divides the world between allies and enemies, grafted onto an ideology that justifies violence against civilians.[8] Others emphasise the perceived violation of sacred values and morality to explain participation and support for this kind of violence.[9] All argue that the ideology of a militant organisation attracts recruits and justifies tactics and violence.

Finally, a related group of theories focuses on social identity and small-group behaviour.[10] By this logic, individuals join groups and participate in violence out of an affinity for a close-knit network or social grouping. Radicalisation happens when central individuals within a group become radicalised and recruit others to follow them.[11] Individuals may also feel a strong family-like bond to their in-group that motivates extreme sacrifice and violence.[12] All three explanations can operate simultaneously. Members are angered, alienated, and eventually radicalised in their worldview by members of their social network.

Rational Choice Theories

The guiding precept of rational choice theory is that individuals – for our purposes, militant group decision-makers – choose violence when the benefits outweigh the costs. Rational choice theories can be further broken down into four categories.[13] First, violence can serve as a form of intimidation meant to raise the price of an adversary continuing a specific policy, imposing costs on incumbent governments or occupying forces, by turning a targeted populace against it. Second, groups may employ terror to provoke a harsh response from a target or scuttle a peace deal.[14] Third, violence targeting civilians can result from factional disputes within an organisation. Hardline factions may jockey with moderates and use violence against civilians to press their preferences. Fourth, violence against civilians can result from organisational weakness. Certain kinds of organisations may attract or recruit a particular type of recruit that is more ruthless or prone to attack civilians.[15]

Trade-offs & the Production Violence Against Civilians

We propose that leaders face a dilemma: balancing the logistical challenges – the security context, payments, organisational structure, and realpolitik of their organisation – with the more ideological components of their group – the ideological vision and emotional solidarity they provide to their members.[16] Sometimes, logistical and ideological resources are *complements*, whereby increasing the emphasis on ideological components strengthens logistical resources or vice versa. Alternatively, there may be no tension between ideological and logistical resources, giving leaders the freedom to make *independent* choices about logistics and ideology. However, leaders often face trade-offs between ideological and logistical components. They must choose whether to prioritise ideological or logistical resources, effectively making them substitutes to some degree (see Table 1 below). We focus on groups that experience this trade-off.

Table 1. Relationship between Ideological and Logistical Resources

Type of Resource	Type of Resource	Relationship	Effect
Ideological Resources	Logistical Resources	Complements	Strengthen one another
Ideological Resources	Logistical Resources	Independent	No effect on one another
Ideological Resources	Logistical Resources	Substitutes	Balancing tradeoffs

Substitutes produce trade-offs and heighten certain kinds of risks. For example, groups that become too ideologically rigid risk collapsing due to organisational problems. Conversely, those who become too ideologically flexible risk infiltration by opportunists and militants.

The emphasis on ideological or logistical resources interacts with targeting approaches to produce four ideal types, exemplified in Table 2. Organisations that prioritise ideological resources over logistical ones and engage in indiscriminate violence against civilians are violent militants. Militant groups that emphasise ideological resources and engage in targeted violence are disciplined militants. When an organisation is more concerned with logistical resources and engages in indiscriminate violence, it functions like a militant opportunist. Finally, a focus on logistical resources and the use of targeted violence creates a group of professional criminals.

Table 2. Ideal Types of Militant Groups[17]

	LEVEL of VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS		
PRIMARY MOTIVATION BEHIND VIOLENCE		*Indiscriminate Violence*	*Targeted violence*
	Substitution favors Ideological Resource Considerations	Violent Militants (Al-Qaida in Iraq)	Disciplined Militants (Weather Underground)
	Substitution favors Logistical Resource Considerations	Militants Opportunists (RUF in Sierra Leone)	Professional Militants (autodefensas)

But how do groups establish and perpetuate their levels of violence? We propose that the leaders' calibration of logistical versus ideological components establishes a baseline. The emphasis on one then shapes organisational structures as well as how a group recruits and views its constituency. Once groups develop their approach to violence, there is a reinforcing effect on recruitment. Violence that is highly targeted against military and government forces versus indiscriminate violence against civilians will have differential effects on the kinds of followers attracted to a group. Likewise, violence motivated by logistical concerns, such as looting, will attract a certain type of recruits. Groups that use targeted, ideological violence are more likely to attract disciplined recruits. In contrast, groups that engage in widespread, extortive violence against civilians for logistical motivations will attract undisciplined recruits.

Figure 1. Proposed Cycle of Targeting Behaviour

Leader calibration of
logistical and ideological
components

Group constituency and
recruitment

Organizational structure

Degree and type of violence
against civilians
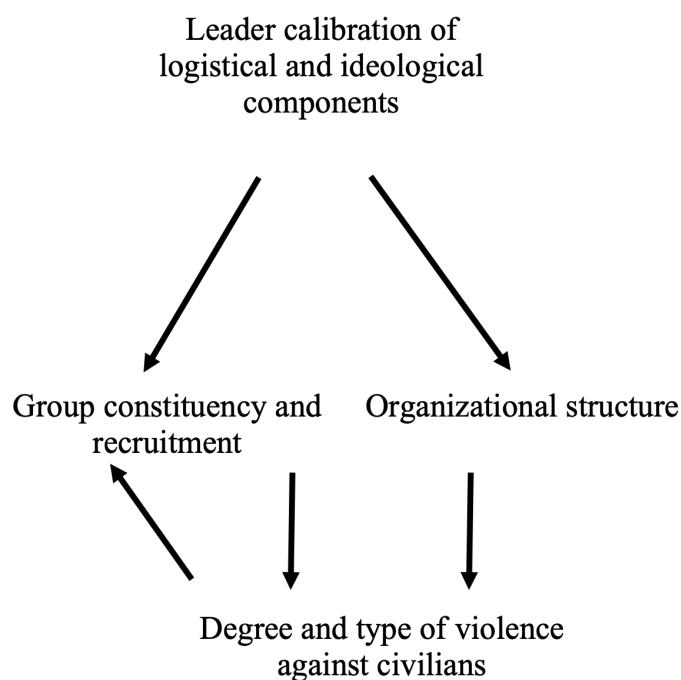
Case Selection and Process Tracing

To conduct a plausibility probe of our typology and the proposed cycle of targeting behaviour, we trace four ideal type case studies: one for each type. We selected extreme cases of violence calibration, either highly targeted or highly indiscriminate. In so doing, we selected cases that provide the full range of variations of the typology.[18]

We then traced each case to identify how decision-makers calibrated logistical versus ideological components, the impact of that decision on violence levels, and whether the proposed cycle explained the perpetuation of that violence approach. This article represents an exploratory effort.[19] Our goal in tracing these cases was three-fold. First, we sought to identify what shaped a group's calibration of the trade-off between logistical and ideological components. Second, we sought to determine the factors that explain the perpetuation (or lack thereof) of the initial targeting approach and level of violence. Third, we assessed the risks inherent in each type.

For the groups that emphasise ideological resources in the trade-off, we selected al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and the Weather Underground Organisation (WUO). Both favoured ideological considerations over logistical resources, but they varied dramatically in their level of violence against civilians.[20] AQI was well known for its widespread and indiscriminate violence against civilians (violent militants), while the WUO opted to avoid targeting civilians (disciplined militants). The two groups are not only on opposite ends of the spectrum from one another regarding violence, but they also differ substantially from other groups within their respective movements. AQI distinguished itself from even other Sunni militant groups in Iraq by being excessively violent, while the WUO showed more restraint than other far-left groups operating during the 1970s.

For the groups with a logistical preference, we selected the RUF in Sierra Leone's Civil War and the *autodefensas* in Mexico. In Sierra Leone's Civil War, the RUF engaged in widespread

atrocities from the outset and under the approval of its leadership, which used access diamonds to recruit "thugs, drug users, and tools of the political elite."[21] It thereby fits the criteria of militant opportunists. In contrast, for an organisation with a logistical preference that evolved into a criminal group, ultimately engaging in targeted violence, we selected *autodefensas*. In 2013, *autodefensas* emerged in southwest Mexico as locals banded together to thwart cartel violence and extortion. Their ideology stemmed from the motto of their leader, Dr Jose Mireles: "Only the people can defend the people" from narco violence. The groups' early leadership sought to protect local communities and establish self-defence councils in each community they "liberated" from cartel control.[22] However, lack of oversight left the groups vulnerable to recruits with cartel connections and enabled criminality to thrive within them. Over time, this changed targeting behaviour to become less targeted, although the groups did not engage in indiscriminate violence like the RUF.

The Weather Underground Organisation: Disciplined Militants

The WUO is an extreme case of an ideologically motivated organisation with leaders who opted for targeted violence. Its defining trade-off was its ideological motivation – to appeal widely to "the people" through "armed propaganda" – and its logistical need to operate secretly underground to avoid arrest. Despite its broad constituency, it was a small organisation that dwindled over time due to logistical constraints, namely infiltration and arrest concerns. Still, its emphasis on ideological resources meant the group had sufficient organisational discipline to adhere to its targeted violence policy, once established by its leaders.

At the outset, when transitioning from protest to armed action, its leaders did not establish clear parameters for violence. This lack of clarity around the scope of its violence enabled some to pursue more lethal violence. After nearly adopting indiscriminate violence, the group's leaders opted for "armed propaganda" that avoided targeting people. This decision was calibrated to gain support from a broad constituency. At the same time, the leaders opted to maintain security over mass recruitment, eventually precipitating organisational dysfunction and decline.

The WUO's Emergence

At the end of the 1960s, the New Left emerged in virtually every hemisphere.[23] Many leftist groups engaged in "theatrical" terrorism,[24] and most far-left militant groups calibrated their attacks to garner attention but limit casualties.[25] Discriminatory violence was "imperative," given that groups in this movement viewed "the people" as their constituency.[26] But even by the far-left's standard, the WUO adopted a restrained approach to its attacks.

The WUO (originally calling themselves "Weathermen") emerged from a faction in the anti-Vietnam War movement, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).[27] In 1969, SDS was in the throes of a crisis with little to show for its efforts. As it prepared for a convention, eleven members drafted a manifesto, "You Don't Have to be a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows," drawing from lyrics of a Bob Dylan song. They proposed building a "revolutionary youth movement."[28] The manifesto signatories would go on to form the Weather Bureau, the group's leadership body. They were mainly white, middle- or upper-class young men. Though their individual influence varied over time, they collectively managed the group's ideological and logistical components from 1969 to 1977.

Having taken over the remnants of the SDS following its fragmentation and dissolution, the Weather Bureau initially experimented with attention-grabbing tactics. For example, they ran through public beaches and high schools carrying National Liberation Front flags and calling for student recruits.[29] Such guerrilla theatre – sometimes resulting in brawls with locals or

police – epitomised its early recruitment and organising efforts. Though the group viewed the working class as its constituency, it garnered little support among working-class communities with these tactics.[30]

In 1969, the leadership escalated to mass violent resistance to mobilise the working class. "The Days of Rage" campaign was designed to be an inflammatory, offensive confrontation with police that would provoke government overreaction.[31] Anticipating tens of thousands of working-class youth[32] – its intended constituency – would come from the expected brawl in Chicago, the leaders miscalculated both their tactics and constituency. Rather than a mass action,[33] the event attracted only a few hundred protesters, who did get the clash with police they sought.[34]

Moving Underground and (Eventually) Calibrating Violence

Faced with this blunder, the leaders changed their organisational, recruitment, and tactical approaches. They abandoned mass mobilisation, moving underground as an "elite fighting force."[35] Seeking only members who shared their ideological commitment, the Weather Bureau culled SDS's membership from 100,000 to a group of several dozen, who then became the nucleus of the WUO. However, they did not make an explicit decision about the scope of their violence.[36]

The logistical need to operate underground weighed heavily in the leadership's subsequent organisational decision to function in compartmentalised factions across the US. For security reasons, the WUO tightly controlled the flow of information between its "collectives."[37] A "need to know" principle also contributed to the group's rigid, hierarchical culture.[38]

The combination of this culture and the narrowing of its constituency and membership opened the group up to expanding violence.[39] In early 1970, the WUO commenced small-scale attacks – throwing Molotov cocktails at police cars and military recruiting stations. It was mostly luck that fatalities did not occur, as several members were prepared, even eager, to inflict violence on such targets.[40] Then, on 6 March 1970, an explosion levelled a townhouse being used by the New York collective as a bomb-making factory.[41] The intended target was a non-commissioned officers' dance, justified as a "pre-emptive strike against those who would soon drop bombs over Vietnam."[42]

The townhouse explosion precipitated reflection by the WUO that the Days of Rage had not. Reversing course, the leadership decided to engage only in what it called "armed propaganda," vowing to conduct attacks against symbolic targets timed to avoid casualties and expelling a leader who continued to advocate for greater violence.[43]

A Campaign of Armed Propaganda: The Trade-off Between Ideological & Logistical Considerations

Though its tactics changed, the WUO's ideological mission did not: support national liberation movements, particularly the Viet Cong and American Black liberation movements. Driven by ideological considerations rather than logistical resources, the WUO did not engage in criminal acts to acquire funds, unlike other far-left groups. Admittedly, its members' socio-economic background helped the group get funds through friends, families, and sympathisers or petty, non-violent crimes like check fraud. After the leaders decided to undertake an ideologically driven, armed propaganda campaign, they issued communiques explaining the rationale for every act.[44]

Due to mounting government pressure, the main logistical concern after 1970 became managing its collectives so that members could avoid arrest and still conduct operations. This generated

tension between its ideological and logistical needs. It sought to cultivate support from a broad constituency through its operations but could not use that support to recruit for fear of arrest and infiltration. Though this approach facilitated discipline and adherence to the targeted violence approach, it also made the group too small to fulfil its ideological goals. Moreover, the small group's severe culture of self-criticism and strict order created dysfunction.[45]

Nonetheless, the WUO maintained its pledge of "armed propaganda" with remarkable success.[46] They selected ideological targets representing "imperialist" power and institutions that oppressed the people and operated the "war machine."[47] They implemented precautions to ensure that no one was harmed during operations.[48] The group's membership profile helped it to access targets without garnering suspicion, enabling the group to limit its violence.[49] In 1970 alone, the WUO conducted about a dozen small-scale bombings.
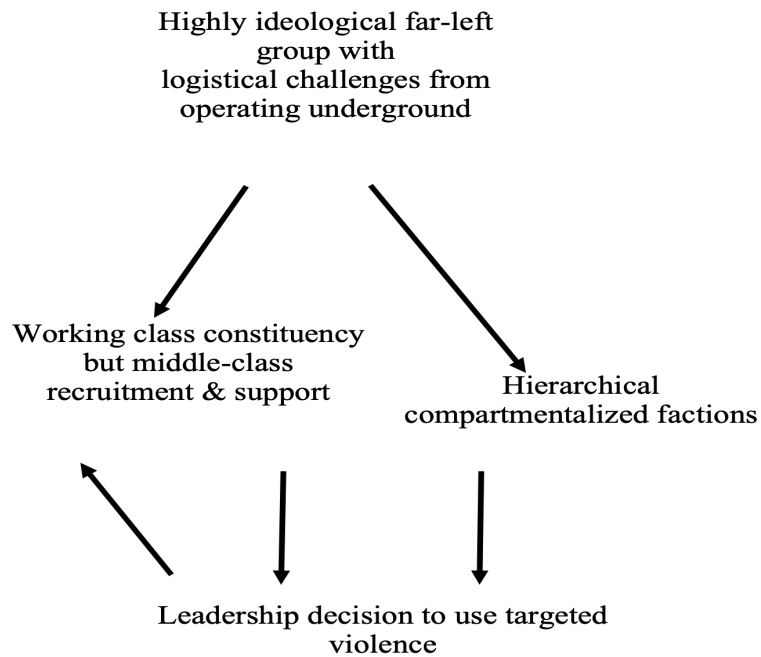
A Drift to the End

But in a 1970 communiqué, the WUO revealed how isolated it had become, acknowledging its "tendency to consider only bombings or picking up the gun as revolutionary, with the glorification of armed action as a 'military error' and also confessed mistakes due to its "technical inexperience."[50] Consequently, its organisational culture relaxed, though it remained hierarchical.[51]

Though its violence remained targeted, its attacks and membership declined after 1970.[52] Significant time, attention, and resources were directed toward the logistics of functioning underground. A near capture by the FBI in the spring of 1971 further slowed attacks, as the West Coast collective was forced to re-establish its underground network and heighten security.[53] Members drifted away from the organisation, and the group's logistical concerns stymied recruitment.[54] What remained of the group was adept at functioning underground, allowing the targeted campaign to continue.[55] With the cessation of the draft in 1973 and the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, the WUO turned its attention to other parts of the world and focused on propaganda, publishing *Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism.*[56] Despite *Prairie Fire*'s success in garnering external donations, support, and recruits,[57] by 1976, organisational fissures threatened its unity.[58] Some questioned the necessity of remaining underground, especially given the lack of government recourse against the group following the COINTELPRO fallout.[59] By 1977, internal tensions could no longer be contained; the organisation splintered, and a self-anointed faction, "the Revolutionary Committee," expelled the WUO leaders.[60] Several leaders surrendered, all receiving light sentences.[61] During this internal crisis, the WUO did not conduct any attacks, and soon thereafter, the organisation ceased to function.

In summary, the WUO combined ideological motivation with targeted violence to become a disciplined organisation. It initially failed to establish the scope of its violence. Then, it carefully calibrated its violence and avoided targeting people, even moving from armed propaganda to regular propaganda because of its expansive view of its constituency. It successfully managed the logistical challenge of operating underground but, as a result, could not actively recruit. This eventually made it susceptible to pathologies, unable to replace members and causing it to succumb to internal disarray as the political context changed.

Figure 2. The Weather Underground Organisation's Cycle

Highly ideological far-left
group with
logistical challenges from
operating underground

Working class constituency
but middle-class
recruitment & support

Hierarchical
compartmentalized factions

Leadership decision to use targeted
violence

Al-Qaeda in Iraq: Violent Fanatics

AQI provides an extreme case of an ideologically motivated organisation that opted for indis-criminate violence. It was a leading organisation in the Salafist jihadist movement and one of its most violent. AQI's leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, emphasised ideological dogmatism and had a narrow constituency, a combination that produced indiscriminate violence from the outset. He defined AQI's constituency as only those who agreed with his interpretation of Islam, casting out not only Shias but also Sunnis who did not support his view.

Militant organisations with religious ideologies generally engage in more violence against civilians than their ideological counterparts.[62] Yet, even among religious groups, AQI stood apart in its use of indiscriminate violence against civilians, a stance that garnered criticism from al-Qaeda leadership. But in so doing, AQI also attracted thousands of Iraqi Sunnis and foreign fighters who would perpetuate AQI's indiscriminate violence.

AQI developed a relatively sophisticated organisational structure to implement its violence. Though it struggled at times with members over-producing violence, this problem was not driving its excessive violence: it was actually the group's organisational structure that enabled it to enact indiscriminate violence as conceived of by its leadership. The group had organisational processes that reduced the risk of attracting criminals or opportunists who would dilute the group's ideological commitment. However, indiscriminate violence and a narrow constituency eventually produced a backlash. Al-Zarqawi's choice of ideological dogmatism, narrow constituency, and excessive violence alienated too many, leading to a period of weakness and decline.

AQI's Leadership, Strategy, and Constituency

Until he died in 2006, al-Zarqawi managed AQI's ideological and logistical components. Having initially established an organisation focused on Jordan in the late 1990s,[63] al-Zarqawi found safe

haven in Afghanistan until 2001. He fled after the US invasion and eventually found sanctuary in northern Iraq. There, he quickly organised a network to move weapons and operatives into Iraq despite being a foreigner.[64] As early as mid-2003, he established cells in key cities and conducted operations.[65] Thus, he was well-positioned to initiate an insurgency just months after the US overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003.

Though al-Zarqawi attracted a following, he did not have a sophisticated grasp of Islam or religious credentials.[66] Instead, al-Zarqawi developed his own ideology. He "interpreted the [Islamic] law however he wanted [and] … created his own rules."[67] He had a narrow view of his constituents: only "true believers" who adhered to his interpretation of jihadism qualified.[68]

Thus, al-Zarqawi was not content with expelling the US from Iraq. He also saw the Shia as an implacable enemy. By sparking a "sectarian war" between Sunnis and Shias in Iraq, al-Zarqawi believed that the ensuing civil war would allow Sunnis to "reclaim their lost power."[69] This expansive approach to violence is detailed in Abu Bakr Naji's the *Management of Savagery*, a manuscript that circulated online in jihadist circles in 2004 and urged massive violence to inflame the opposition and drag the masses into a conflict.[70] Following this approach, a third of AQI's attacks were against Iraqi targets, mostly Shia civilians.

Unleashing Hell

Al-Zarqawi cast himself as the "sheik of slaughters," and his organisation engaged in high levels of violence against civilians from the outset.[71] In August 2003, his opening salvo came in the form of two mass casualty attacks: one against the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad, which killed seventeen, and another against the UN headquarters in Baghdad, which killed 22. Then, at the end of that month, he struck the Imam Ali Mosque – one of Shia Islam's holiest shrines. AQI then targeted Shia shrines in Najaf, Baghdad, and Karbala the following year, with attacks timed to strike when crowds had amassed.

But AQI was not content to engage in acts of brutal violence. It wanted to broadcast them to attract like-minded adherents. Al-Zarqawi was featured prominently in online statements,[72] and AQI videoed its violence, most notably the beheadings of Western hostages like Nicholas Berg. As a result, as Warrick explained, "His intended audience by now knew exactly the kind of battle he meant."[73]

Al-Qaeda central leaders worried that al-Zarqawi's violence was alienating constituents, which al-Qaeda viewed as the entire *ummah*. Their concern led Ayman al-Zawahiri to counsel al-Zarqawi in 2005 against his use of brutal tactics.[74] However, al-Zarqawi's view of his constituency was far narrower. He sought to appeal to "hardened jihadists and to sow fear among everyone else," which vastly expanded the parameters of acceptable targets.[75]

By Organisational Design

Between 2003 and 2005, AQI's ranks were a minority in the Sunni insurgency in Iraq – an estimated 15 percent of the overall insurgency – but they had a disproportionate impact because of their indiscriminate attacks.[76] This was not a reflection of a group lacking internal organisation. By 2004, al-Zarqawi's command-and-control structure was more centralised than other Sunni insurgent groups.[77] AQI developed a "top-down multidivisional hierarchy" with a central management structure, functional bureaus, and bureaucratic and administrative processes. At the top was an emir and an advisory committee. Then, there were functional committees for an array of issues. This structure was replicated at lower geographic levels throughout Iraq. The central management – i.e., al-Zarqawi and his advisors – set strategy and policy. Local units were given some autonomy to execute the strategy but had to report to leadership about their activities.[78] Overall, Johnson et al. found that AQI and its successor group,

the Islamic State in Iraq, "produced violence relative to the population in areas *where it had more positions filled in its administrative apparatus*."[79] In other words, when the organisation was fully staffed, its violence was better managed, though still indiscriminate overall.

Though AQI conducted only 14 percent of all insurgent attacks during this period, it conducted 42 percent of suicide operations, attacks that killed large numbers of civilians[80] – a tactic that al-Zarqawi characterised as "inflict[ing] the deepest wound upon our enemy" at a minimal cost.[81] Such operations were "little effort" because the group had plenty of foreign fighters willing to be suicide operatives. They joined at a rate of 100-150 a month, attracted by AQI's indiscriminate violence[82] and committed to the group's religious ideology.[83]

Thus, AQI's indiscriminate violence helped it to recruit ideological radicals, perpetuating the cycle. Having attracted recruits through its brutal actions, its members continued that approach to the point that the group struggled at times to manage the level of violence within those parameters.[84] It was a self-created problem that reflected the group's success in attracting members who embraced the group's extreme violence. In a 2006 letter, a member of the group's shura council instructs a commander to "Stop the killing of people unless they are spying, military, or police officers. . . . [If] we continue using the same method, people will start fighting us in the streets."[85] Its violence worked; by 2006, AQI was the dominant Sunni insurgent group within Iraq in large part because of its willingness to employ high levels of violence against its rivals, the Shia, and US forces.[86]

A logistical concern for groups engaging in indiscriminate violence is that it will attract opportunists. AQI faced this risk, especially as it transitioned from relying on petty crime and mafia-style protection rackets to direct involvement in oil production and smuggling. AQI made millions through black-market oil sales and criminal activity.[87] Units raised funds locally, largely from criminal activities, keeping some and sending some funds back to headquarters. Such enterprises attracted opportunists motivated by resources but lacking ideological commitment. AQI avoided being overtaken by undisciplined opportunists by developing a payroll system with defined salaries – a practice sustained over the organisation's evolution. Notably, the group did not pay competitive wages. The pay was often lower in places with higher fighting levels and when combat was more intense.[88] Low pay reduced the group's appeal to opportunists and helped limit membership to violent militants.

The Backlash

Though AQI's excessive violence attracted hard-core ideological adherents, a group of violent militants was unable to win widespread support. Its violence against Sunnis, who did not capitulate to its authority, produced mounting resentment among Iraqi Sunnis. Amidst increasing opposition among Sunnis and even other prominent jihadists, AQI's actions successfully unleashed the intended sectarian war when it bombed the Shia Askariya mosque in Samarra in February 2006. The desecration of the holy site incited a backlash from the Shia against Sunnis; however, al-Zarqawi's plan had a significant flaw. The Sunni population was insufficiently prepared to defend itself.[89] Instead of pushing Sunnis to join AQI, it increased Sunni resentment of the group.

Four months later, al-Zarqawi was killed in a coalition airstrike. By then, many Iraqi Sunnis, especially in Anbar, had rejected AQI. As Fishman argued, "By late 2006, AQI's demons were coming home to roost. Brutal tactics, the murder of Muslim civilians, and unrealistic efforts to dominate the political environment in a nation of well-armed tribes had put the group in an untenable position."[90] This opposition gained momentum, culminating in the Awakening and a period of decline for the group.

In sum, from the group's inception, AQI was ideologically uncompromising and brutal towards civilians, even by the standards of the broader Sunni jihadist movement. Its leader had a narrow view of the group's constituency, developed high levels of organisation, limited material rewards, and propagated a black-and-white view of the enemy to produce an organisation of violent militants. It undertook measures to avoid being overtaken by opportunists. Its approach produced massive violence against civilians, ultimately sparking a backlash against the organisation from the population.

Figure 3. al-Qaeda in Iraq's Cycle

Highly ideological Salafist organization using criminal activities to generate resources

Dual recruitment & constituency: Iraq Sunnis and foreign jihadists

Hierarchical, complex & functional differentiation

Extensive violence against civilians
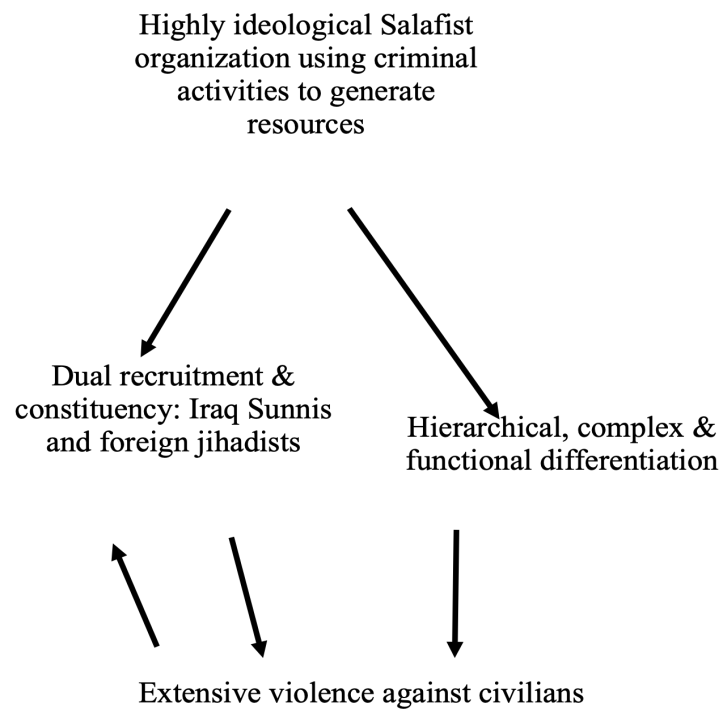
Michoacán Autodefensas: Professional Criminals

The emergence of the *autodefensas* is an extreme case of targeted violence with an emphasis on logistical resources. In February 2013, *autodefensas* (self-defenders) began to mobilise to oppose cartel violence and extortion in Western Mexico. Rural communities in *Tierra Caliente* (Hot Land) – the avocado and lime-growing regions in the states of Guerrero, Michoacán, and Estado de *México* – had long been victims of narco-violence.[91] Alienated by government inaction, communities organised into *autodefensa* groups to expel drug traffickers and institute a grassroots system of security and retribution. Under a loose ideology of collective efficacy and self-protection, the mission was to restore security and protect the livelihood of local communities by preventing further victimisation by the Knights Templar cartel where the government had failed. Thus, the groups were chiefly focused on two issues: establishing safety among communities and protecting the interests of their benefactors, business, and agricultural elites.[92]

However, its leadership prioritised acquiring resources over vetting prospective members and discipline. Initially, the organisation's diffuse structure, loose ideology, and non-selective recruitment were part of its success in eliminating cartel strongholds. Yet, these factors quickly

made the groups vulnerable to infiltration by opportunists, including former cartel members. As criminals penetrated its ranks, violence that once protected civilians increasingly targeted them. This caused splintering within the *autodefensas* movement. Criminal infiltration led to systematic extortion and intimidation against locals under the guise of protection. Within a year, a new cartel formed from within the *autodefensas*. By the end, the groups engaged in the violence and extortion they purportedly sought to end.

Early Leadership and Calibration of Violence

Autodefensa leaders were mostly local elites victimised by cartel violence. One such elite, Hipolito Mora, initially rallied other local Michoacán farmers and workers to fight back in early 2013 when the Knights Templar cartel extorted his business.[93] News of their success in refusing the cartel's demands spread rapidly, prompting Dr Jose Mireles, a charismatic local doctor, to recruit a similar band of fighters. After barricading the cartel's access roads,[94] Mireles spoke against politicians' complicity in national media and gained widespread support among locals in the region.[95]

Autodefensas successfully tapped into a tradition of citizens' movements and vigilante justice, which had deep roots in Michoacán.[96] As a campaign of grassroots vigilantism, it was carried out by ranchers and farmhands and funded by wealthy patrons.[97] Constituents shared not only grievances but also narratives of historical vigilante justice from the region.[98] Therefore, Mireles' recruitment efforts resonated broadly and rapidly; within months, membership reached several thousand.[99] Mireles later admitted he did not realise how large the movement would become.[100]

Under Mireles' leadership, violence was restrained and targeted cartel members instead of relying on the traditional justice system. It mixed community policing with paramilitary approaches to conduct targeted violence against drug traffickers and collaborators.[101] At times, Mireles supported harsh measures of punishment. For instance, he called for the execution of an alleged cartel member, justifying the act as a necessary evil during their war with the cartel.[102]

Though Mora and Mireles enlisted support from wealthy patrons and shared a common vision, they quickly diverged in their strategy. Mora maintained a small, local force and vocally opposed the growing organised crime within the *autodefensas*. Mireles emerged as the movement's figurehead and leader of Michoacán's Self-Defence Council.[103] Mireles and his sponsors were primarily concerned with accumulating resources and manpower to eliminate cartel activity, protect elite businesses, and improve security. They were less focused on recruitment and training, and Mireles even welcomed former repentant Templar Cartel members, referring to them as "the forgiven ones."[104] Though driven by the immediate need to oust the powerful Templars, Mireles's decisions around recruitment would facilitate the criminal infiltration of the *autodefensas*.

Resource Needs and Criminal Infiltration

Initially, Mireles' logistical and ad hoc approach benefited the rapidly emerging *autodefensas*. However, as the campaign gained momentum, Mireles' focus on expansion left his organisation vulnerable to criminal enterprises. Though local narratives of historical vigilantism galvanised many locals, defeating influential drug-trafficking organisations and employing insurgency strategies required extensive recruitment and weaponry. The movement's hybrid grassroots-elite structure worsened its resource challenges. Sponsorship from local businesses was unpredictable, yet the groups' logistical needs increased with the movement's rapid growth.[105]

Prospective members were poorly vetted to allow for rapid recruitment. Recruits were merely required to publicly agree to risk their lives for their locality's security.[106] Each town liberated from the Knights Templar control retained autonomy, forming a network of interdependent groups with minimal oversight from Mireles and the council. The lack of ideology and oversight enabled organised crime to grow in plain sight. The diffuse structure provided the flexibility necessary for broad community mobilisation, yet many *autodefensas* grew increasingly splintered and undisciplined. Soon, violence no longer targeted solely the Knights Templar. Under the guise of vigilante justice, recruits exploited the vacuum left by ousted Templars and became involved in the same kinds of lucrative extortion, intimidation, and kidnapping.[107] Many recruits were even former Templars who had renounced the Templar cartel and joined *autodefensa* groups.[108]

Organised Crime Within Leadership

Corruption was not isolated to the rank and file. Estanislao "Papa Smurf" Beltran, who had taken up arms alongside Mora and Mireles in February 2013, and several other regional leaders, including Luis Antonio Torres "El Americano" and Nicolás Sierra "El Gordo" Santana, had connections to organised crime.[109] By early 2014, leadership instability in the *autodefensas* allowed Beltran, El Gordo, and other figures to institutionalise their cartel connections, deeply embedding extortion in the *autodefensas* movement.
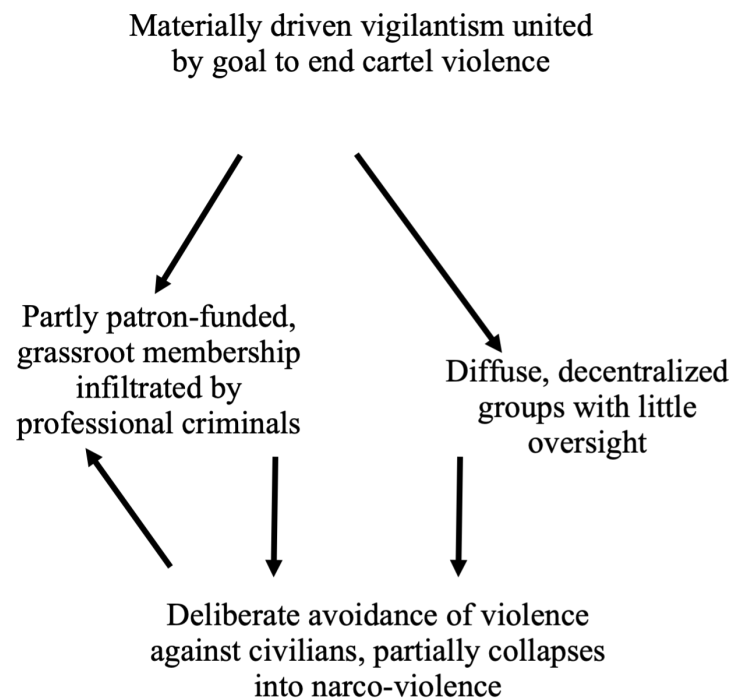
Several coinciding events exacerbated the *autodefensas* groups' instability. In early 2014, civilian victimisation worsened, and the public's tolerance for unruly vigilante violence reached a tipping point. Plagued by rumours of extortion and drug trafficking, public support for Mireles diminished.[110] Several factors compounded these problems: rivalry between factions in the movement, Mireles's injury in a plane crash in January, and the arrest of Mora in mid-March 2014.[111] Unable to lead due to serious injury from the crash, Mireles delegated leadership to Beltran.[112] As the *autodefensas* began to implode, rallies previously filled with loyal supporters became platforms for citizens to criticise *autodefensa* groups.[113]

The Aftermath

During Mireles' convalescence, *autodefensas* irreparably split. The Mexican government had struggled to reign in a movement that had long enjoyed passive tolerance by state police, but it now saw an opportunity to co-opt the groups.[114] In February 2014, Mireles insisted the *autodefensa* groups were not signing an agreement with the government.[115] Nevertheless, Beltrán, El Gordo, and their followers partnered with the government and were deputised as part of its newly formed Rural Forces (*Fuerzas Rurales*). Other *autodefensas* members resisted Beltran's leadership, refusing to join the Rural Forces and remaining loyal to Mireles.[116] Then, between February and June, Mireles was expelled by the council and arrested.[117] El Gordo cultivated a new cartel from within the *autodefensas* movement's ranks over the next few months.[118] By December 2014, the Los Viagras cartel emerged, which El Gordo operated under the facade of a self-defence force.

Neglecting ideology in favour of logistical resources led to poor oversight and fissures throughout the *autodefensas.* These were quickly exploited by cartel members who abandoned the Knights Templar cartel as its power deteriorated and subsequently saw an opportunity in Mireles's groups. Instituting an effective vetting system based on ideological principles could have managed the group's logistical strategy and established much-needed discipline. These failures recalibrated the use of violence and coercion in the movement. Though it did not evolve into indiscriminate violence, extortion and intimidation of local communities became rampant.

Figure 4: Autodefensas *Cycle*

Materially driven vigilantism united
by goal to end cartel violence

Partly patron-funded,
grassroot membership
infiltrated by
professional criminals

Diffuse, decentralized
groups with little
oversight

Deliberate avoidance of violence
against civilians, partially collapses
into narco-violence

Revolutionary United Front: Militant Opportunists

The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) is an extreme case of a group that prioritised logistical resources and imposed indiscriminate violence. Formed in the late 1980s by Foday Sankoh, Rashid Mansaray, and Abu Kanu, the RUF fought a civil war with the Sierra Leone government between 1991 and 2002. It was neither ideology nor an overarching political goal that governed its use of violence. While political corruption was the initial impetus, two motivations drove RUF to violence. First was the desire to accumulate wealth and power, and second was deep-seated disillusionment with the existing system.[119]

The RUF was excessively violent due to a combination of its socio-historical context, goals, and leadership.[120] The RUF leadership met as dissidents, and their initial offensive against the government relied on resources provided by the strongman Charles Taylor, an instigator of the Liberian civil war. The RUF's ranks were comprised of three groups: disillusioned *lumpenproletariat*, fighters familiar with violent tactics, and conscripted youth forced into violence. Sankoh consolidated his power through violence and openly mandated indiscriminate violence. These factors culminated in brutal terror against the civilian population that only escalated over time.[121]

RUF's Leadership and Violent Beginnings

Sankoh, Mansaray, and Kanu founded the RUF against a backdrop of immense hardship in Sierra Leone. Citizens had endured prolonged economic inequality, oppression, and corruption under leader Siaka Stevens, Sierra Leone's leader from 1967 to 1985.[122] Stevens exploited the diamond trade for political power and subsequently nationalised the mines several years into his leadership. Austerity measures under his successor, Joseph Saidu Momoh, compounded the economic decline at the time.[123] These grievances generated widespread social resistance to Momoh's rule, particularly among youth and student activists facing bleak futures.[124]

Sankoh, Mansaray, and Kanu met in 1987 at a Libyan training camp among radicals lacking direction or a unifying ideology.[125] When most opposition moved away from notions of violent revolution, Mansaray and Kanu remained committed and were expelled from a union of student activists. In need of a clear strategy, Mansaray and Kanu were drawn to Sankoh's pragmatism and incendiary rhetoric.[126] However, the group was "a loose collection" of fighters rather than an organised militant group with clear leadership, and they struggled to mobilise recruits.[127] At this time, Sankoh connected with the well-resourced Charles Taylor in Liberia. Taylor led the National Patriotic Front of Liberia's (NPFL) attack in Liberia on 24 December 1989 – an event that triggered the First Liberian Civil War. The two came to an understanding: Sankoh and his small group would join Taylor's NPFL rebels in Liberia; Taylor would reciprocate with weapons and fighters.

Once Sankoh secured sponsorship from Taylor, the RUF launched its campaign to overthrow the government in March 1991. RUF forces consisted of militants who trained in Liberia, a lumpenproletariat recruited from Sierra Leone, and fighters on loan from the NPFL.[128] According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the militants and lumpenproletariat totalled 385 fighters whose training in Liberia had been overseen by Sankoh, while Taylor supplied almost 2,000 NPFL fighters.[129] The RUF's opening salvo involved attacks on border posts in the Kailahun district, which killed eleven civilians and several officers.[130] Seizing border checkpoints gave them access to supplies and fighters from Liberia. Within three months, they controlled almost one-fifth of the country and began establishing training camps.[131]

1991-1993: Materialism over Ideology

The RUF lacked the ideological coherence common to revolutionary social movements.[132] Ostensibly, its motivation was to oust Sierra Leone's dictatorial government under the banner "No More Slaves. No More Masters. Power and Wealth to the People." However, there was no ideology guiding recruitment, strategy, or goals, and the vision post-revolution was poorly defined. Scholars have debated the roles of grievances versus greed in the RUF's origins and its calibration of violence.[133] The ambiguity concerning the RUF's ideological goals was consistent with Sankoh's prioritisation of material gain and his pragmatism. Ideology was always second to the desire to seize natural resources, which the government had long mismanaged.

The RUF focused on survival during its first phase between 1991 and 1993. In its initial invasion of villages and towns in 1991, the group relied on a more conventional warfare strategy, pursuing specific hard targets and towns as part of a larger military strategy.[134] Aided by many NPFL fighters, RUF members captured major towns in southern and eastern Sierra Leone. Despite territorial gains, it faced considerable strategic and organisational setbacks. Attempts to capture hard targets often failed, and growing factionalism and poor communication hampered military coordination between the southern and eastern fronts.[135] Moreover, the group lacked the resources to capture the well-protected diamond districts. It did not attack mines until 1992 and only secured diamonds as steady income several years later.[136] Therefore, after its initial invasion of border posts and territorial gains, recruitment was a priority. As it captured territory, leaders recruited non-selectively, drawing from rural areas and among youth. Sankoh's promise of material reward appealed to people caught in cycles of poverty, those who faced poor employment prospects, and those who lacked social mobility.[137]

Civilian victimisation occurred in the first few years of the war but was not supported by all RUF leaders. Taylor's NPFL fighters included mercenaries that shaped the RUF's use of violence for several years until the troops returned to Taylor in 1993.[138] The mercenaries intimidated and looted violently, instilling fear among locals.[139] With limited resources, lootings and raids became common practice, mainly as the ranks increased. The RUF leadership also mandated violent

tactics in its youth conscription. Yet Kanu and Mansaray opposed the use of indiscriminate and brutal violence against civilians.[140] Sankoh then consolidated his power by arranging Kanu's and Mansaray's executions in 1992.[141]

President Momoh was ousted by a military coup in April 1992 and replaced by the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). Undeterred, Sankoh declared the new government to be illegitimate. However, the RUF and NPRC informally avoided conflict during the first few months until the former launched an offensive on Kono, Sierra Leone's mining capital, in the summer of 1992.[142]

1994-1997: Strategic Changes and Systematic Brutal Violence

Sankoh enjoyed strong support among both commanders and rank and file. Membership had grown from several hundred to several thousand due to forced recruitment. By this point, the RUF had a more formal, hierarchical structure; however, Sankoh had eliminated rivals when positioning himself as leader years earlier.

Turning away from its earlier military strategies, the RUF began employing guerrilla tactics in response to the Sierra Leone Armed Forces (SLA) mobilisation and now operated as small units across the country. It faced mounting external pressures that threatened its survival, most notably from the private security firm Executive Outcomes (which was hired by the government), local militias, and ECOMOG, a coalition of armies from several countries originally formed to defend Liberia from rebellion.[143]

Faced with competition from numerous opposition groups, the RUF fighters relied on looting from government forces to build military supplies. Mining gradually provided more income but was an inconsistent source closely controlled by Sankoh.[144] The RUF briefly captured the Kono mines in 1995 but was pushed to the outskirts by Executive Outcomes. For several years, the group would recapture mines temporarily.[145] Further weaponry was purchased from Taylor with diamonds wherever available.[146]

Torture, murder, amputation, and sexual violence escalated and were notoriously unpredictable.[147] Miners faced abuse and often torture. Child soldiers were used extensively, with approximately 10,000 abducted children forced to fight over the eleven-year conflict.[148] Abductions occurred during raids, and children were often forced to kill family members, then trained to fight and forced to pillage. Violence further increased in brutality and frequency. Lansana Gberie attributes the escalation to characteristics of a desperate, directionless, weak organisation.[149]

Significant political change occurred in 1996, beginning with the country's first democratic elections that February. Facing international pressure, Sankoh capitulated to negotiations with the newly elected President Kabbah in early 1996. Talks of a ceasefire once again deteriorated, and Sankoh was arrested in Nigeria in February 1997 and placed under house arrest.

1997-2002: Alliance, Violent Campaigns, and Disbandment

Sam Bockarie was selected as interim leader and worked covertly with Taylor to replenish RUF military resources.[150] Another successful coup in May 1997 replaced President Kabbah with the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The RUF allied with the AFRC in May 1997 to form a junta in Freetown.[151] Their coalition was ousted within a year with the aid of ECOMOG forces. Freetown returned to government control, once again led by Kabbah. The RUF/AFRC alliance produced massive looting, rape, and killing under "Operation Pay Yourself" and "Operation No Living Thing."[152]

Over the next year, power fluctuated between government forces and the RUF/AFRC while Sankoh awaited his death sentence. The RUF violence lost any coherence, targeted mainly rural areas, and launched an attack on Freetown in which thousands of civilians died.[153] In early 1999, the RUF/AFRC coalition finally signed the Lomé peace agreement. Sankoh was released from prison and appointed chairman of a body regulating natural resources.[154] Still, RUF violence continued, and Sankoh was again arrested in Sierra Leone in 2000, charged with ordering violence against peaceful demonstrators in Freetown.[155] The group was disarmed under Issa Sesay and transitioned to a political party.

Figure 5. RUF Cycle
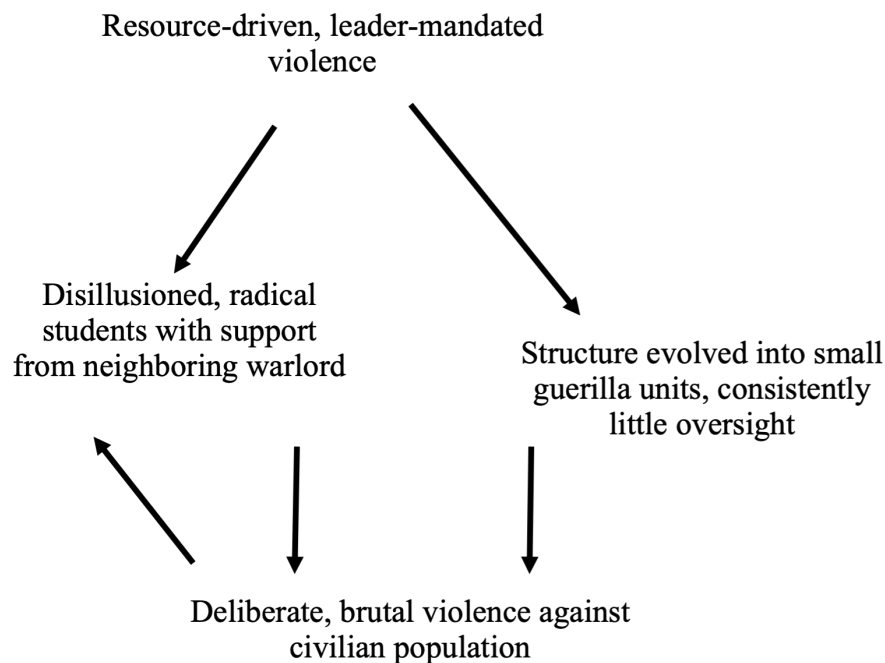
Conclusion

Many militant organisations face tensions between ideological and strategic components. These decisions represent distinct choices that leaders make about ideology and group survival. How they choose to manage this trade-off affects the trajectory of the group and the kind of tactics they use, including violence against civilians. To synthesise the two theoretical approaches, we propose a typology of group types and present a model of how choosing one component for the other interacts with the level of violence against civilian violence. We find that levels of violence were the product of leaders' calibration of logistical and ideological concerns. These factors shaped recruitment and organisation, affecting violence against civilians. Even organisations as ideological and brutal as AQI have a strategic logic and experience logistical constraints. Similarly, groups that are as sensitive to civilian casualties, such as the WUO, must balance ideological and logistical concerns with their desire to influence their constituents.

A Complex System

The case studies show that the balancing act is not static. Instead, the cycle of militant group behaviour is dynamic in several significant aspects. First, it is temporally dynamic. As

organisations grow, their organisational structure may become more formal, as was the case with the RUF. Leaders, like in the WUO, may reduce membership, or the rank and file may grow exponentially with little oversight, as under Mireles' leadership style. In each case, organisational evolution affected recruitment and constituency. Al-Zarqawi, by contrast, constrained AQI's organisational development and implemented a salary system to deter opportunists who did not ideologically align with the group.

Concomitantly, relations with local communities and the state are dynamic external factors that sometimes require leaders to reconsider priorities. Violence and the profile of recruits change the relationship with the community. Despite differing in their use of violence and the weight they placed on community relations, each case was impacted by civilian perceptions. The RUF and *autodefensas* groups began as champions of the oppressed and initially enjoyed public support. By the end, they were resented by victimised locals as they were overcome by state forces and forced to disband.

Second, the cases demonstrate the interconnected dynamics of calibration, organisation, recruitment, and violence. There is a reciprocal relationship between recruitment and use of violence. Logistical and ideological choices influence the organisation of the group and the kind of recruits that groups attract, which in turn affect the production of violence against civilians, further shaping recruitment. Among *autodefensas* groups, the initial infiltration by displaced Templars attracted other professional criminals and escalated intimidation and extortion against local communities, which culminated in the new Los Viagras cartel. Our dynamic framework offers a way to understand why some groups evolve to target civilians while others refrain from doing so.

Too Little Too Late: Prioritisation of Resources
Reining in unruly constituents may become unfeasible when a leader's substitution favours logistical needs. It is challenging to recalibrate the initial trade-off because materially driven organisations generally deprioritise oversight of recruitment. Prioritising logistical gains can benefit the group's relationship with communities early on; however, the treatment of locals by recruits with little oversight risks eroding community support or tolerance. Among the *autodefensas* leaders, Mora preferred to maintain a smaller force, whereas Mireles rapidly recruited and instilled very little organisational control or accountability, which embittered locals against the groups. For the RUF, when Sankoh realised it could not take possession of the state's resources, chaos and indiscriminate, brutal violence became an end itself. On the other hand, the WUO efficiently tightened the reins on its membership when it overhauled the entire group and increased control, reinforcing its commitment against civilian violence, but eventually succumbing to dysfunction because of an inability to recruit.

Finally, our findings suggest important avenues for future research. We find that leaders establish baselines that shape the subsequent production of violence against civilians, so future work could examine how leaders make these initial decisions. Future work should also unpack how leaders come to power and how this socialisation influences their choices to manage groups and ensuing violence. To build our theory, we looked at extreme cases, but future work could look at groups that straddle the types or even change types over time. Finally, social media has also altered how groups communicate to the public and recruit followers, which can shape their relationships with their constituents. Future work could explore how social media has changed how leaders manage logistical and ideological resources.

Hannah Chesterton is an Assistant Professor in the School of Arts and Sciences at Catholic University of America. She studies political violence and state repression, focusing on interactions between states and social movements and decision-making around violence. Dr Chesterton completed her PhD in Justice, Law, and Criminology at American University.

Tricia Bacon, PhD, is an Associate Professor at American University's School of Public Affairs and director of the Policy Anti-Terrorism Hub (PATH) at American University. She is the author of Why Terrorist Organizations Form International Alliances published with University of Pennsylvania Press in May 2018 and Terror in Transition: Leadership and Succession in Terrorist Organizations with Columbia University Press in 2022.

Thomas Zeitzoff is an Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs at American University. His research focuses on political violence, social media, and political psychology. His new book is entitled Nasty Politics: The Logic of Insults, Threats, and Incitement (Oxford University Press). His work has appeared or is forthcoming in Science Advances, American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, Political Psychology and other journals.

Endnotes

1 For more detailed discussion on militant groups: Ronit Berger Hobson and Assaf Moghadam, "Terrorism, Guerrilla, and the Labeling of Militant Groups," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2023): 1–18, doi: 10.1080/09546553.2023.2183052; Michael Shkolnik, "Rival Consolidation in Nascent Insurrections," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 15, no. 4 (2021), 11–26; Sarah V. Marsden, "A Social Movement Theory Typology of Militant Organizations: Contextualizing Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence 28*, no. 4 (2016): 750–773.

2 Jacob N. Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma: Managing Violent Covert Organizations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 246.

3 Barbara F. Walter, "The Extremist's Advantage in Civil Wars," *International Security* 42, no. 2 (2017): 7–39, doi:10.1162/ISEC_a_00292.

4 Jeremy Ginges, Scott Atran, Sonya Sachdeva, and Douglas Medin. "Psychology Out of the Laboratory: The Challenge of Violent Extremism," *American Psychologist* 66, no. 6 (2011): 507–19, doi:10.1037/a0024715.

5 Violence against civilians has two effects. It is both a choice that militant leaders make, and subsequently influences the trajectory of the group via recruitment and subsequent state repression.

6 Jacqueline L. Hazelton, "The 'Hearts and Minds' Fallacy: Violence, Coercion, and Success in Counterinsurgency Warfare," *International Security* 42, no. 1 (2017): 80–113, doi:10.1162/ISEC_a_00283.

7 Jeff Goodwin, "A Theory of Categorical Terrorism," *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (2006): 2027–46, doi:10.1353/sof.2006.0090; Jeff Victoroff, "The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 1 (2005): 3–42, doi:10.1177/0022002704272040; Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Routledge, 2015); Jerrold M. Post, *The Mind of the Terrorist: The Psychology of Terrorism from the IRA to al-Qaeda* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2007).

8 Victoroff, "The Mind of the Terrorist," 25.

9 Ginges et al., "Psychology Out of the Laboratory," 507; Ángel Gómez, Lucía López-Rodríguez, Hammad Sheikh, Jeremy Ginges, Lydia Wilson, Hoshang Waziri, Alexandra Vázquez, Richard Davis, and Scott Atran, "The Devoted Actor's Will to Fight and the Spiritual Dimension of Human Conflict," *Nature Human Behaviour* 1, no. 9 (2017): 673–79, doi:10.1038/s41562-017-0193-3.

10 Max Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy." *International Security* 32, no. 4 (2008): 78–105, doi:10.1162/isec.2008.32.4.78; Erica Chenoweth, Nicholas Miller, Elizabeth McClellan, Hillel Frisch, Paul Staniland, and Max Abrahms, "What Makes Terrorists Tick," *International Security* 33, no. 4 (2009): 180–202, doi:10.1162/isec.2009.33.4.180.

11 Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

12 Scott Atran, Hammad Sheikh, and Ángel Gómez, "Devoted Actors Sacrifice for Close Comrades and Sacred Cause," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111, no. 50 (2014): 17702–03, doi:10.1073/pnas.1420474111; Harvey Whitehouse, Brian McQuinn, Michael Buhrmester, and William B. Swann, "Brothers in Arms: Libyan Revolutionaries Bond Like Family," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111, no. 50 (2014): 17783–85, doi:10.1073/pnas.1416284111.

13 We focus on the decisions made by leaders in militant organisations. This is also related to the rich literature on network adaptation and dilemmas in covert organisations and networks. See Kenney, Michael. *From Pablo to Osama: Trafficking and Terrorist Networks, Government Bureaucracies, and Competitive Adaptation* (Penn State University Press, 2007); Morselli, Carlo. "Assessing Vulnerable and Strategic Positions in a Criminal Network." *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 26, no. 4 (2010): 382-392; and Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma.* We connect these individual decisions of militant leaders and trace how they shape the organizational culture (recruitment and members' behaviour) and control of groups (tightly disciplined, or loose).

14 Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 49–80, doi:10.1162/isec.2006.31.1.49.

15 Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma*; Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Stanford, CA: Cambridge University Press, 2006)*,* 617.

16 We focus on leaders of militant organisations as the primary decision-makers in establishing initial norms towards targeting civilians. However, we adopt an expansive view of leadership beyond a single top leader and include senior decision-makers in an organisation.

17 Other examples of each type could be the following: Violent Militants - Armed Islamic Group; Militant Opportunists - The Lord's Resistance Army and Serb Volunteer Guard/Arkan'sTigers; Disciplined Militants - Army of God; and Professional Militants - Abu Sayyaf Group or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

18 Jason Seawright and John Gerring, "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options," *Political Research Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2008): 294–308.

19 Seawright and Gerring, "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research"; Jason Seawright, "The Case for Selecting Cases That Are Deviant or Extreme on the Independent Variable," *Sociological Methods & Research* 43, no. 1 (2016): 493–525, doi:10.1177/0049124116643556.

20 Seawright, "The Case for Selecting Cases That Are Deviant or Extreme on the Independent Variable."

21 Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion.*

22 Brian J. Phillips, "What Is a Terrorist Group? Conceptual Issues and Empirical Implications," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27, no. 2 (2014): 225–242, doi:10.1080/09546553.2013.800048.

23 Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), 63; David C. Rapoport, "The Fourth Wave: September 11 in the History of Terrorism," *Current History* 100, no. 650 (2001): 419–24, doi:10.1525/curh.2001.100.650.419.

24 Rapoport, "The Fourth Wave."

25 Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 158.

26 Ibid.

27 Martin Klimke, *The Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 118.

28 Mark Rudd, "The Death of SDS," *Mark Rudd*, n.d., http://www.markrudd.com/?sds-and-weather/the-death-of-sds.html.

29 David Gilbert, *Love and Struggle: My Life in SDS, the Weather Underground, and Beyond* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2012), 186; Dan Berger, *Outlaws of America: The Weather Underground and the Politics of Solidarity* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2006), 100.

30 Bryan Burrough, *Days of Rage: America's Radical Underground, the FBI, and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionary Violence* (New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2015), 75; Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 150.

31 Berger, 107.

32 Ibid., 108.

33 United States Congress Senate Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security, *The Weather Underground: Report of the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Ninety-Fourth Congress, First Session* (US Government Printing Office, 1975), 15.

34 Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 82.

35 Ron Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew: A History of the Weather Underground* (London; New York, NY: Verso, 1997), 87.

36 Burrough, *Days of Rage*, 82.

37 Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew*, 95.

38 William Ayers, *Fugitive Days: Memoirs of an Antiwar Activist* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2009), 205–08; Varon, *Bringing the War Home*, 58.

39 *The Weather Underground.* Directed by Sam Green and Bill Siegel. The Free History Project, 2002.

40 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 199; Burrough, *Days of Rage*, 68; Green and Siegel, *The Weather Underground*.

41 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 91–93.

42 Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 129.

43 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 213–15; Burrough, *Days of Rage*, 121–24.

44 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 240.

45 Varon, *Bringing the War Home,* 57, 59; Green and Siegel, *The Weather Underground*.

46 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 227; "Reminiscences of David Gilbert: Oral History, 1985," *Columbia Centre for Oral History* (Columbia University Butler Library), 217.

47 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 235.

48 Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 154; Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 199.

49 "Reminiscences of David Gilbert," 218.

50 Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew*, 123.

51 Ibid., 124; Varon, *Bringing the War Home*, 294.

52 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 264–65, 267; Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew*, 151.

53 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 259.

54 Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew*, 151.

55 Ibid., 144–45.

56 Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, 240–60, 275; Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 169; United States Congress Senate Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security, *The Weather Underground*, 42; Green and Siegel, *The Weather Underground*; Weather Underground Organization, *Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism* (San Francisco: Communications Co, 1974).

57 Ayers, 243; Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 187, 192.

58 Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 297; Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew*, 175; Varon, *Bringing the War Home*, 298.

59 "The FBI began COINTELPRO—short for Counterintelligence Program—in 1956 to disrupt the activities of the Communist Party of the United States. In the 1960s, it was expanded to include a number of other domestic groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Black Panther Party. All COINTELPRO operations were ended in 1971. Although limited in scope (about two-tenths of one percent of the FBI's workload over a 15-year period), COINTELPRO was later rightfully criticized by Congress and the American people for abridging first amendment rights and for other reasons." Federal Bureau of Investigation, *COINTELPRO*, https://vault.fbi.gov/cointel-pro.

60 Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 334.

61 Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew*, 181.

62 Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*; Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "Dilettantes, Ideologues, and the Weak: Terrorists Who Don't Kill," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25, no. 3 (July 1, 2008): 244–63, doi:10.1080/07388940802219000; Victor Asal, Marcus Schulzke, and Amy Pate, "Why Do Some Organizations Kill While Others Do Not: An Examination of Middle Eastern Organizations," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 13, no. 4 (2016): 811–31, doi:10.1111/fpa.12080.

63 Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, August 2006, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/.

64 Joby Warrick, *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2015), 134.

65 Carter Malkasian, *Illusions of Victory: The Anbar Awakening and the Rise of the Islamic State* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 34.

66 Brian H. Fishman, "After Zarqawi: The Dilemmas and Future of Al Qaeda in Iraq," *The Washington Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (2006): 19–32, doi:10.1162/wash.2006.29.4.19; Warrick, *Black Flags*, 183–84.

67 Warrick, *Black Flags*, 160.

68 Brian H. Fishman, *The Master Plan: Isis, al-Qaeda, and the Jihadi Strategy for Final Victory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 60–61.

69 *Zarqawi Letter*. Bureau of Public Affairs Department Of State, Office of Electronic Information, 12 February 2004, https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/nea/rls/31694.htm

70 Abu Bakr Naji, "The Management of Savagery," http://media.leeds.ac.uk/papers/vp0167b8.html

71 Warrick, *Black Flags*, 160.

72 Fishman, "After Zarqawi," 27.

73 Warrick, *Black Flags*, 169.

74 "Zawahiri's Letter to Zarqawi," Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point, n.d., https://ctc.usma.edu/harmony-program/zawahiris-letter-to-zarqawi-original-language-2/

75 Warrick, *Black Flags*, 160; Fishman, *The Master Plan*, 61.

76 Bruce O. Riedel, *The Search for al Qaeda: Its Leadership, Ideology, and Future* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 100–101.

77 Malkasian, *Illusions of Victory*, 34.

78 Patrick B. Johnston, Jacob N. Shapiro, Howard J. Shatz, Benjamin Bahney, Danielle F. Jung, Patrick K. Ryan, and Jonathan Wallace, "Foundations of the Islamic State: Management, Money, and Terror in Iraq, 2005–2010," (Research Report, RAND Corporation, 2016), 71–83, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1192.html

79 ibid., 100. Emphasis added.

80 Riedel, *The Search for al Qaeda*, 100–101.

81 Warrick, *Black Flags*, 170.

82 Ibid., 187.

83 Johnston et al., "Foundations of the Islamic State," 8.

84 Ibid., 49.

85 Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma*, 48.

86 Warrick, *Black Flags*, 183.

87 Malkasian, *Illusions of Victory*, 65.

88 Johnston et al., "Foundations of the Islamic State."

89 Brian H. Fishman, "Dysfunction and Decline: Lessons Learned from Inside al-Qa'ida in Iraq" (West Point, NY: Combatting Terrorism Centre, 2009).

90 Ibid., 10.

91 Patricio Asfura-Heim and Ralph Espach. "The Rise of Mexico's Self-Defence Forces: Vigilante Justice South of the Border." *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 4 (2013): 143–151.

92 Hans-Maximo Musielik, "The Mexican Doctor Who Leads a Militia Against the Cartels," *Vice*, 13 January 2014, https://www.vice.com/da/article/qbebz7/the-mexican-doctor-who-leads-a-militia-against-the-cartels; Jacobo García, "'Mexico is 10 Times Worse Than When I Was Locked Up:' Mireles." *EL PAÍS*, 26 May 2017, https://english.elpais.com/elpais/2017/05/26/inenglish/1495793315_718768.html

93 Andrea Noel, "Where Mexico's Drug War Was Born: A Timeline of the Security Crisis in Michoacan," *Vice*, 12 March 2015, https://www.vice.com/en/article/qvagzw/where-mexicos-drug-war-was-born-a-timeline-of-the-security-crisis-in-michoacan

94 Ryan Devereaux, "The Hot Land: How a Lime Grower Led an Uprising Against One of Mexico's Bloodiest Drug Cartels," *The Intercept,* 29 June 2016, https://theintercept.com/2016/06/29/lime-grower-uprising-against-mexico-drug-cartel/

95 J. Jesús Lemus. "OBITUARIO: Muere Manuel Mireles, el controvertido líder de las autodefensas que se enfrentó a los Caballeros Templarios." *Los Angeles Times*, 25 November 2020, https://www.latimes.com/espanol/mexico/articulo/2020-11-25/obituario-muere-el-doctor-manuel-mireles-el-controvertido-lider-de-las-autodefensas-que-se-enfrento-a-los-caballeros-templarios

96 Gabriela Zamorano Villarreal, "An Expected Revolution? Visuality, *autodefensas*, and Imaginaries of Citizens' Self-protection in Mexico." *Visual Anthropology* 6, no. 2 (2018), doi:10.4000/anthrovision.3861.

97 Brian J. Phillips, "Inequality and the Emergence of Vigilante Organizations: The Case of Mexican autodefensas," *Comparative Political Studies* 50 no. 10 (2017): 1358–89, doi:10.1177/001041401666686; Villarreal, "An Expected Revolution?"

98 Michael J. Wolff, "Insurgent Vigilantism and Drug War in Mexico." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 12, no. 1 (2020): 32–52; Villarreal, "An Expected Revolution?"

99 Wolff, "Insurgent Vigilantism"; García, "'Mexico is 10 times worse'"; *Cartel Land*, directed by Matthew Heineman. A&E IndieFilms, 2015.

100 *Cartel Land*; García, "'Mexico is 10 Times Worse.'"

101 Villarreal, "An Expected Revolution?"; Phillips, "Inequality and the Emergence of Vigilante Organizations."

102 *Cartel Land*.

103 Musielik, "The Mexican Doctor Who Leads a Militia."

104 *Cartel Land*.

105 Wolff, "Insurgent Vigilantism"; Phillips, "Inequality and the Emergence of Vigilante Organizations."

106 Ibid.; García, "'Mexico is 10 times worse.'"

107 Christopher Woody, "In Mexico's 'Hot Land,' Citizens Self-Defence Forces and Criminal Groups May Be Gearing Up for More Violence," *Insider,* 11 December 11, 2016, https://www.businessinsider.com/autodefensas-causing-violence-in-guerrero-and-michoacan-in-mexico-2016-12; *Cartel Land*.

108 Jeremy Kryt, "Meet the Warlord of the Viagras, Mexico's Hardest Cartel Yet." *Daily Beast,* 13 April 2017, https://www.thedailybeast.com/meet-the-warlord-of-the-viagras-mexicos-hardest-cartel-yet

109 Enrique Guerra Manzo, "Las autodefensas de Michoacán. Movimiento social, paramilitarismo y neo-caciquismo," *Política y Cultura*, no. 44 (2015), https://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-77422015000200002.

110 Phillips, "Inequality and the Emergence of Vigilante Organisations."

111 Daniel Hernandez, and Hans-Maximo Musielik, "Mexico's Self-Defense Militias Follow Cartels Into Deadly Internal Conflict," *Vice*, 14 March 2014, https://www.vice.com/en/article/gynw8x/mexico-s-self-defense-militias-follow-cartels-into-deadly-internal-conflict; "Mexican vigilante leader Hipólito Mora arrested over the murders of two men," *The Guardian*, 12 March 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/12/mexico-vigilante-leader-hipolita-mora-arrested-murders-two-men-drugs-cartel

112 Paula Chouza, "Vigilantes Appoint New Spokesman Following Mireles' EL PAÍS Interview," *EL PAÍS,* 6 February 2014, https://english.elpais.com/elpais/2014/02/06/inenglish/1391699987_565384.html.

113 *Cartel Land.*

114 Manzo, "Las autodefensas de Michoacán"; Myles Estey, "Mexican Vigilantes Take Over for Police: They Don't Need No Stinkin' Badges," *Toronto Star*, 27 April 2013, https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2013/04/27/mexican_vigilantes_take_over_for_police_they_dont_need_no_stinkin_badges.html; Wil G. Pansters, "'We Had to Pay to Live!': Competing Sovereignties in Violent Mexico," *Conflict and Society: Advances in Research* 1 (2015), doi:10.3167/arcs.2015.010112; Salvador Maldonado Aranda, "The Challenges of Security in Michoacán," *Revista Mexicana de sociología* 81, no. 4 (2019), doi:10.22201/iis.01882503p.2019.4.57977.

115 Chouza, "Vigilantes Appoint New Spokesman."

116 *Cartel Land*; Kryt, "Meet the Warlord of the Viagras."

117 Aranda, "The Challenges of Security in Michoacán"; "Mexico Vigilante Leader Jose Manuel Mireles Arrested," *BBC News*, 28 June 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-28069086

118 "How 'The Viagras' got their name: Mexico's Hot Land (Dispatch 3)," *Vice*, 12 March 2015, https://www.vice.com/en/article/gy974q/how-the-viagras-got-their-name-mexicos-hot-land-dispatch-3; Kryt, "Meet the Warlord of the Viagras."

119 Myriam Denov, *Child Soldiers: Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010); David Keen, *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone* (Suffolk, UK: James Currey).

120 Ibrahim Abdullah. "Bush Path to Destruction: The Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 36 no. 2 (1998): 203–35, doi:10.1017/S0022278X98002766; Denov, *Child Soldiers.*

121 "A War of Terror Against Civilians," *Sierra Leone: Sowing Terror* 10, no. 3 (1998), https://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports98/sierra/Sier988-03.htm#P212_31176; Abdullah, "Bush Path to Destruction"; Patrick Johnston, "International Norms, Commerce, and the Political Economy of Insecurity in Sierra Leone," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 41, no. 1 (2007): 66–94 doi:10.1080/00083968.2007.10751352.

122 Denov, *Child Soldiers*.

123 Laura Forest, "Sierra Leone and Conflict Diamonds: Establishing a Legal Diamond Trade and Ending Rebel Control over the Country's Diamond Resources," *Ind. Int'l & Comp. L. Rev.* 11 (2000): 633–664, doi:10.1080/00083968.2007.10751352; Marianne Ducasse-Rogier, "The Sierra Leonean Conflict: Causes and Characteristics," *Resolving Intractable Conflicts in Africa: A Case Study of Sierra Leone,* https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05531.8.

124 Abdullah, "Bush Path to Destruction."

125 Denov, *Child Soldiers*.

126 Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005).

127 Abdullah, "Bush Path to Destruction," 219; Denov, *Child Soldiers*.

128 Jeremy M. Weinstein, "Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 4 (2005): 598–624, doi:10.1177/0022002705277802.

129 "Volume Three A Chapter 3: The Military and Political History of the Conflict" (Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004.)

130 John-Peter Pham, *Child Soldiers, Adult Interests: The Global Dimensions of the Sierra Leonean Tragedy* (New York, NY: Nova Science Publishers, 2005).

131 Ibid.

132 Abdullah, "Bush Path to Destruction."

133 Ibid.; John M. Kabia, "Greed or Grievance? Diamonds, Rent-Seeking and the Civil War in Sierra Leone (1991-2002)," in Kenneth Omeje (ed.), *Extractive Economies and Conflicts in the Global South:Multi-Regional Perspectives on Rentier Politics* (Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014); Ian Smillie, Lansana Gberie, and Ralph Hazleton, *The Heart of the Matter Sierra Leone Diamonds and Human Security* (Ottawa, Ontario: Partnership Africa Canada, 2000).

134 Ismail Rashid, "Sierra Leone: The Revolutionary United Front," *The Journal of Complex Operations*, 24 May 2016.

135 Ibid.; Zoe Marks, "Rebel Resource Strategies in Civil War: Revisiting Diamonds in Sierra Leone. *Political Geography* 75 (2019): 1–11, doi:10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.102059.

136 Jennifer M. Hazen, *What Rebels Want: Resources and Supply Networks in Wartime* (Cornell University Press, 2013).

137 Abdullah, "Bush Path to Destruction"; Peters and Richards, "Rebellion and Agrarian Tensions in Sierra Leone."

138 Abdullah, "Bush Path to Destruction"; Denov, *Child Soldiers.*

139 Pham, *Child Soldier, Adult Interests*

140 Abdullah, "Bush Path to Destruction."

141 John Agbonifo, "Nonstate Armed Groups, Leadership, and Sanctions Effectiveness." *African Security* 14 no. 1 (2021): 27–54, doi:10.1080/19392206.2021.1904536; Pham, *Child Soldiers, Adult Interests.*

142 Arthur Abraham, "War and Transition to Peace: A Study of State Conspiracy in Perpetuating Armed Conflict." *Africa Development/Afrique et Développement* 22 no. 3/4 (1997): 101–116.

143 Antonio Adamo, "Mercenaries or Peacekeepers? Comparing Executive Outcomes and ECOMOG in Sierra Leone," *Africana* Studia no. 33 (2020): 153–169, doi:0874-2375/afr33a10; Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*; Hazen, *What Rebels Want.*

144 Marks, "Rebel Resource Strategies in Civil War."

145 Hazen, *What Rebels Want.*

146 Iryna Marchuk, "Confronting Blood Diamonds in Sierra Leone: The Trial of Charles Taylor," *Yale Journal of International Affairs* 4 no. 4 (2009): 87–99.

147 Aline Leboeuf, "Sierra Leone: List of Extremely Violent Events Perpetrated During the War, 1991-2002, *Online Encyclopaedia of Mass Violence*, 5 March 2008.

148 *Sierra Leone: Childhood – A Casualty of Conflict*, Amnesty International, AI Index AFR 51/69/00, 2000, https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/afr510692000en.pdf

149 Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa.*

150 Rashid, "Sierra Leone: The Revolutionary United Front."

151 Larry J. Woods, *Military Interventions in Sierra Leone: Lessons From a Failed State* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2010).

152 Leboeuf, "Sierra Leone."

153 Anita Gohdes, "Different Convenience Samples, Different Stories: The Case of Sierra Leone" (Benetech Human Rights Data Analysis Group, 2010).

154 Eric G. Berman, "Arming the Revolutionary United Front," *African Security Studies* 10, no. 1 (2001): 5–14, doi:10.1080/10246029.2001.9628095.

155 Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa.*

Attrition and Provocation: Subnational Variation in Terrorist Targeting

Anup Phayal, Sambuddha Ghatak, Brandon Prins, Hongyu Zhang[*]

Abstract: Recent studies have examined the strategic logic of terrorist targeting. We advance this research by studying a broader category of terrorist groups and argue that they select government and civilian targets based on several strategic considerations, such as local state capacity and regime type. The empirical analyses include all geocoded terrorist attacks in the world between 1990 and 2014. We find that local state capacity plays a vital role in terrorist target selection. However, the effect of the local setting on terrorist targeting appears conditional on a country's regime type. In democratic states, terrorists primarily strike civilian targets in urban settings but attack government and security personnel more frequently in rural environments. In autocratic states, terrorists are more likely to target government and security personnel when they operate in urban areas. More notably, the increase in civilian targeting from rural to urban areas in democratic states is nearly twice as high as in autocratic regimes. The findings in this study have important implications for various disciplines across the field.

Keywords: Terrorist targeting, attrition, provocation, regime type, local state capacity

---

* Corresponding author: Hongyu Zhang, University of North Carolina Wilmington, email: zhangh@uncw.edu

Introduction

On 28 May, 2010, a passenger train was derailed in a major terrorist attack in West Bengal, India, killing 68 travellers and injuring another 200. A Maoist outfit called the People's Committee against Police Atrocities (PCPA) claimed responsibility for the attack. About 3000 miles away, an Egyptian Jihadist group called Wilayat Sinai conducted a series of spectacular attacks on a police officers' club in Arish and various locations around the city of Sheikh Zuweid, killing approximately 100 security personnel.[1] The attacks in India and Egypt have several similarities: both of these groups, Maoists in India and Wilayat Sinai in Egypt, are categorised as terrorist organisations by the Global Terrorism Dataset; both groups have power ambitions and seek to overthrow their governments; and both groups are part of broad global political movements. However, there is one significant difference between the two groups: target selection. While the Maoist PCPA chose civilians as the target of their violent actions, Wilayat Sinai predominantly targeted Egyptian and Israeli security forces. What explains the variation in targeting strategies of these two extremist organisations? Recent research and data collection indicate that terrorist organisations attack specific targets with clear goals in mind.[2] However, targeting strategies appear to vary across extremist groups and their contexts. Who are terrorist groups more likely to target, and why? Is there any identifiable pattern or logic when terrorists select their targets?

This article argues that the pattern of terrorist targeting tends to vary with the regime type of a state and the geographical space within it. Since terrorist organisations select their targets strategically, we expect relatively more civilians to be targeted in the urban centres of a democratic state. In contrast, there should be relatively more terrorist targeting of government and security forces in authoritarian states. We test our expectations using a spatial pattern in the terrorist events across the world. We divide the countries into 55km by 55km grid cells, analyse whether terrorist targeting patterns differ by the spatial characteristic of grid cells and regime types, and find supportive evidence for our hypotheses. Our research contributes to the study of terrorist targeting by providing a richer theoretical explanation for target selection, considering both country and local-level factors that shape terrorist targeting decisions. Understanding such behavioural patterns in terrorist targeting can help policymakers and practitioners working in national and international security anticipate such actions and take proactive steps to harden spaces and prevent attacks.

The remainder of this article proceeds as follows. First, we review the extant literature on target selection strategies by non-state groups with a particular focus on terrorist actors. Next, we theorise that distinct objectives guide the targeting strategies of extremist groups in different regimes. For example, attrition drives terrorist attacks in democratic states, while provocation and outbidding explain violence in autocratic regimes better. This variation occurs partly because ruling elites in democratic and authoritarian states confront different insurgents to remain in power. The hypotheses drawn from our theoretical discussion are then empirically tested against a geocoded dataset of domestic terrorist events from 1990-2014. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of the implications of our study and suggest future avenues of research.

Strategies and Targets of Political Violence

Scholars have often applied a rationalist approach to describe why violent political dissidents adopt different strategies and select disparate targets in their fight against states.[3] Most rationalists argue that dissidents desire a particular policy outcome but cannot reach a bargaining agreement with states due to information asymmetries. Consequently, they pursue several strategies and select disparate targets to resolve bargaining failures and achieve their desired outcome.[4] Kydd and Walter have identified five strategies of political violence such as: attrition,

intimidation, provocation, spoiling, and outbidding.[5] These mutually inclusive strategies might be directed toward the state, its population, or the dissidents' support base.

The coercive logic of terrorism has been widely explored in conflict research; militant groups use violence to coerce the state into making political concessions.[6] For example, Frieden, Lake, and Schultz argue that terrorists carry out spectacular attacks on civilians to impose huge costs on the target state, creating panic and uncertainty among the state's population, which would eventually pressure the state to concede.[7] However, there is little conclusive evidence of the effectiveness of the strategy of coercion. In civil wars, rebels' use of terrorism works well to induce concession from the government,[8] whereas some studies find little evidence that groups using terrorism against civilians gain favourable policy outcomes.[9] Moreover, while Fortna indicates that rebel groups use terrorism to perpetuate a conflict, Abrahms and Potter argue that rebel groups with poor leadership will use terrorism more than others.[10]

Rebels in civil conflict often use intimidation as a strategy to selectively target their support base to prevent suspected "informers" from cooperating with the state or gaining total control over an area.[11] Moreover, Duursma has argued that intimidation can be directed against peacekeepers to prevent them from monitoring human rights violations by the rebels in civil conflict.[12] Similarly, attacks against humanitarian aid workers may follow the same logic where violent groups would attempt to deter and delegitimise any outside interference in the areas of conflict.[13]

Militants might carry out attacks to provoke retaliatory state action, which would alienate sections of the population and help dissidents in recruitment.[14] However, states are careful not to fall into such a trap of provocation as this eventually helps the militants.[15] According to Blankenship,[16] only states with weak bureaucratic capacity get provoked into brutal repression since they lack the resources to monitor dissident activity and implement more selective retaliation.

Besides the strategies mentioned above, militant groups have a range of targets, such as civilians, state infrastructure, police stations, media houses, educational institutions, etc. A growing body of research in recent years explores the logic of target selection in terrorism and civil conflict.[17] These recent studies complement earlier findings, highlighting the changing nature of target selection among terrorist groups. For instance, Enders and Sandler find that metal detectors in airports have successfully lowered skyjackings and diplomatic incidents but increased assassinations and kidnappings.[18] Similarly, Brandt and Sandler show that transnational terrorists substituted kidnappings for skyjackings.[19] They also find a positive correlation between skyjacking incidents and hostage-takings. In a renewed focus on rebel target selection, Santifort et al. explored how diversity in target choice has changed since the early 1970s among domestic and transnational terrorists.[20] According to the authors, bombings of private parties have become the preferred target over the years, as they are the hardest to defend and require the most homeland security resources.

A few scholars have explored the pattern of terrorist attacks by dividing targets into 'soft' and 'hard.'[21] Polo and Gleditsch[22] argue that rebels' use of violence against specific targets is a function of rebel group characteristics and the anticipated state response. Weaker groups more frequently resort to terrorist violence in civil conflict. However, rebel groups with more inclusive audiences will attack 'hard' targets such as the military and the police because they do not want to undermine popular support. In contrast, groups with more sectarian audiences will attack civilians ('soft' targets). Abrahms et al.[23] also explore the diversity in terrorist targeting and argue that attacks against civilians often result from agency problems between terrorist

groups when the parent group creates affiliates. Affiliates are more likely to attack defenceless civilians because they gain the most from civilian attacks, while the parent group bears the costs because of their different organisational incentives. However, affiliates change their attack behaviour "as they become more established organisations and prioritise achieving outcome goals over process goals by exhibiting greater tactical restraint."[24] Horowitz et al. argue that some militant organisations diversify into multiple tactics and attack various targets to ensure their survival and continued relevance in response to government repression and inter-organisational competition.[25]

Our study builds on the existing literature and makes three primary contributions. First, we disaggregate terrorist attacks into security and civilian targets and explore the environmental factors that drive groups to attack diverse targets. Most terrorism research analyses incidents of terrorism in totality, ignoring the diversity of target choices.[26] The driving factors of targeting defenceless civilians may differ from attacking government and security targets because the costs and benefits of the attacks on these two target types are different. Groups may even switch between tactics if external or internal circumstances change.[27]

Second, we explore the logic of target selection by terrorist groups. Earlier studies have examined the rationale for rebels' use of violence against civilians[28] and the logic of diversity in target selection by rebel groups.[29] However, researchers have paid little attention to the diversity in the attack behaviour of terrorist organisations. Abrahms[30] analysed the attack behaviour of twenty-eight terrorist groups from the foreign terrorist organisations (FTOs) list in 2001. In another study on terrorist targeting, Abrahms et al. limited the survey to 238 terrorist groups from 1998 to 2005.[31] Our study focuses on these shortcomings and includes all terrorist groups between 1990 and 2014, increasing the sample size and temporal domain compared to earlier studies.

Third, our study includes a richer theoretical explanation for target selection by considering both country and local-level factors that shape terrorist targeting patterns. Existing studies on the attack behaviour of militant groups are either group-level or country-level analyses.[32] More recent research has analysed micro-level data to explore how local factors increase terrorist attacks. Nemeth, Mauslein and Stapley examine within-state variation in terrorist targeting and find attributes like mountainous terrain, proximity to a state capital, large population, high population density, and poor economic conditions increase the chances of domestic terrorism. In line with our results, they find the distance to capital significant only in autocracies. Still, the study does not systematically explore a more nuanced theoretical expectation of why targeting may vary across different regimes.[33]

We focus on the micro-level drivers of terrorist targets within the context of a country. Specifically, we explore the interactive role of a country's regime type and its state capacity at the local level in shaping the tactical choice of terrorist targeting. Hendrix and Young argue that group beliefs shape a dissident group's choice of violent tactics about the viability of these tactics, given the repressive capacity of the state and the group's organisational strength.[34] We extend this earlier research on terrorist group behaviour when making target selection by offering a novel theory. We argue that state capacity is conditioned by regime type in explaining the strategic motivations of terrorist targeting, namely, attrition in democracy and provocation and outbidding in autocracy. Extant research has explored the role of regime types on the incidence of terrorism.[35] However, scholars have largely ignored the possible role of regime type in terrorist targeting. To our knowledge, no study has explored how regime type interacts with state capacity to drive terrorist targeting. We address this gap in terrorism research by exploring the interactive role of regime and state capacity in a terrorist group's selection of

targets. By incorporating this complexity, both in theory and empirics, our study provides more nuanced and generalisable results.

Theoretical Expectations: Terrorist Targeting, State Capacity and Regime Type

A rationalist theoretical model of extremist group actions can help explain targeting decisions by violent non-state actors. Terrorist groups and the state contend over a policy outcome and often fail to reach a bargain because of uncertainty in credibility and commitment.[36] Terrorist organisations seek to convince the state of their resolve and capability by conveying costly signals without backfiring. Therefore, their need to carefully select the target depends on factors like the state's legitimacy, its organisational strength, popular support, recruitment potential, the level of competition with rival groups, and the state's response. The combination of these factors in their decision process explains the wide range of terrorist targets worldwide. To draw the pattern, we focus on two main categories, (1) civilians and (2) government and security forces, which are distinct from other categories (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Distribution of Terrorist Targets Worldwide
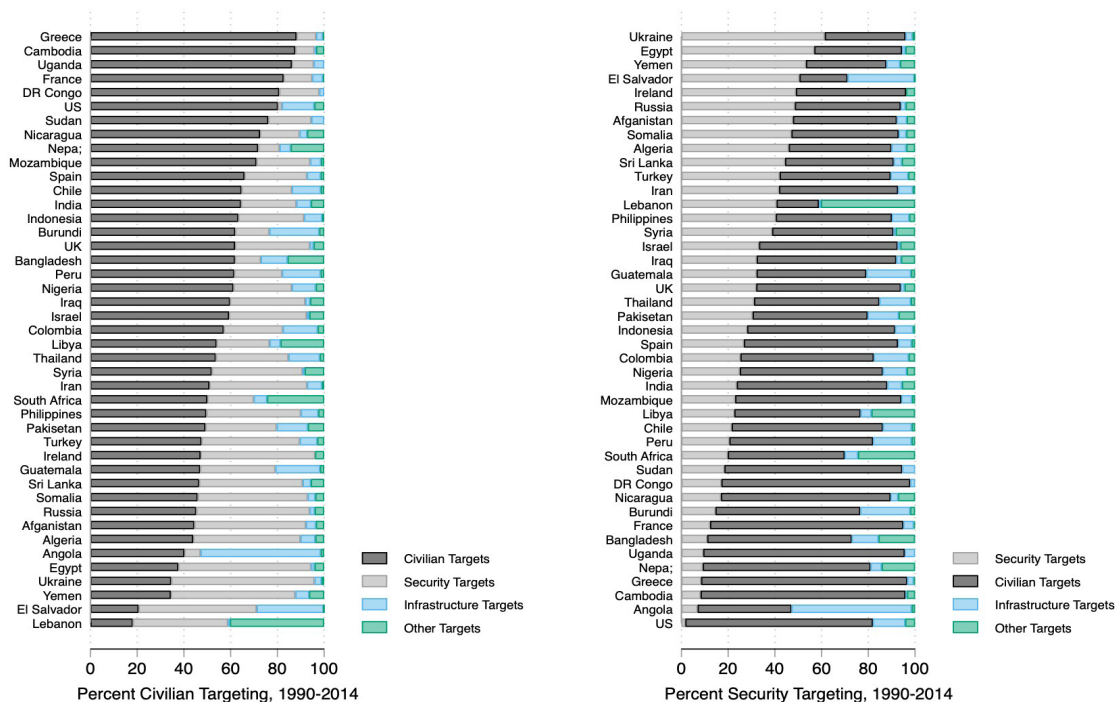
Data Source: Global Terrorism Database

The term 'soft target' has been used in recent research to indicate a vulnerable civilian population or private parties, distinct from 'hard targets,' which refer to government personnel and business installations that have enhanced security measures. Studies show that political leaders have hardened government and business installations in recent years, making it more difficult for terrorist groups to launch attacks against these targets.[37] Therefore, terrorists increasingly target private parties as they are the "hardest to defend." This article examines the strategic logic of target selection. Rather than hard and soft target categories, we differentiate civilian and government targets as a function of a country's regime type and the state's capacity at the local level.

State Capacity and Terrorist Targeting

There are several reasons why terrorists may selectively attack diverse targets in a country. First, a deterministic trend of terrorist targeting is unlikely since terrorist groups strategically shift their targets to maximise the impact of attacks. Creating uncertainty is an integral part of the psychological warfare that terrorists wage against states. There are two main benefits of sowing uncertainty for the terrorists. They can keep the target state's population in a constant state of anxiety, delegitimising the role of the state as a protector and creating pressure on the state to concede to the terrorists' policy demands. By disguising an identifiable trend, they can also make it harder for states to provide security to all possible targets. For instance, when states increased security in airports to stop plane hijackings, terrorists immediately changed their tactics to kidnappings and assassinations, thus creating confusion among policymakers and uncertainty among civilians.[38]

Second, a factor that can influence the target choice of a terrorist group is the strength of a state across regions within a country. A cursory examination of the pattern of terrorist targeting shows that terrorists regularly attack both civilian and government targets in nearly every country where extremists are present. However, some regions may suffer civilian attacks more than others. For instance, states tend to have a strong security force in urban centres but often fail to control the peripheries. These states' inability to project power over longer distances exposes places far from urban centres to threats from violent non-state actors. In fact, research on civil conflict has shown that the target choice of an armed group is a function of their relative capacity vis-à-vis the government.[39] Stronger rebel groups are more likely to attack military bases in remote areas where state capacity is weak, but weaker groups tend to use violence indiscriminately against civilians as they lack the other resources needed to entice loyalty.[40] We argue that terrorist groups are also strategic about their target choices. States generally enhance security around urban centres, but not all urban centres are equally protected. Stantifort et al.[41] argue that states harden high-value-target areas to prevent terrorist groups from imposing high costs. The co-location of such hardened high-value targets, such as government and security infrastructures, in urban centres makes it costlier for terrorist groups to attack them compared to other regions. In contrast, it is relatively less costly for groups to launch an attack against defenceless civilians in urban spaces. Still, since attacks on civilians can undermine a state's reputation and legitimacy, civilians make an attractive target for terrorist groups. Furthermore, significant media presence in urban centres worsens their vulnerability, as they can quickly publicise any instance of security breaches by terrorist groups. These factors make civilians a suitable target choice for terrorists.

Third, if it is less costly for terrorists to attack civilians, why are security personnel targeted at all? Considering the political objectives of terrorist groups, they are better off attacking government and security targets directly. However, due to the power differential and the hardened security targets in urban areas, civilians generally end up becoming the principal targets, mainly as a less costly option for terrorists. Greater surveillance by the state's intelligence and other security agencies prevents them from attacking security targets in urban centres while still relatively easier to hide and carry out covert attacks on defenceless civilians. However, the power asymmetry between the state and terrorists tends to narrow in non-urban areas, where security forces are isolated, and deploying reinforcements can be difficult. Terrorist groups establish their bases in safer outlying regions, often mountainous or forested areas. Over time, they gain a better knowledge of the local terrain, which becomes their additional resource. Therefore, despite being weaker militarily, terrorists still have better odds of exploiting state weakness in the periphery by engaging in opportunistic attacks.[42] These advantages allow terrorists to come out from their bases and attack government and security targets in more rural settings using ambush or hit-and-run techniques. The above discussion leads to the following hypothesis.

H1: Terrorist groups are more likely to target civilians in high-state capacity areas. Conversely, areas of low state capacity are more likely to be associated with attacks on security targets.

Regime Type and Terrorist Targeting

In their struggle against a state for political concession, extremists strategise their actions, anticipating the target state's possible responses and considering its impact on civilian support. A recent study notes that extremist groups incur substantive costs for attacking civilians, but the cost level varies by context.[43] This variation in context can shape terrorist strategies. When local resources are scarce and out-group competition low, terrorist groups are less likely to target civilians, considering the importance of local support in such contexts. Yet, we should also see a similar dynamic on the side of the state since regime elites also face the consequence of public backlash when retaliating against terrorist provocations. However, the sensitivity to the extent of public support depends on the regime type. Democratic governments are more likely to care about public support than their autocratic counterparts. But rather than completely ignoring public sentiment, we argue that autocratic governments have a narrower support base than democratic regimes.[44] These support bases are concentrated in specific geographical spaces. We, therefore, expect militants to select their targets based primarily on these two factors in their local environment.

Marketing research demonstrates the logic of diversification in explaining the strategies of firms so that they can expand or revise their business tactics in response to pressure in a competitive market. External pressure and the economic environment incentivise firms to diversify to mitigate future losses.[45] Conflict scholars have recently adopted this economic rationale to understand militant groups' pattern of target selection. As a part of their strategic decision-making, non-state actors use diverse tactics to minimise risk since they operate in an environment of uncertainty and information asymmetry.[46] Terrorist organisations, too, select their targets in anticipation of the target state's willingness and capacity to protect their population. Therefore, understanding the characteristics of a regime and its security responses in different environments can better predict terrorist attack patterns.

Studies show that democracies are relatively more vulnerable to terrorist attacks.[47] It is puzzling that democracies experience higher levels of terrorist activities than other regimes when such regimes are more considerate of public opinion. But this is also precisely the reason why they are more vulnerable. Democracies have more significant "audience costs" than other regimes and can even face electoral defeat for failing to protect the electorate from terrorist attacks.[48] Below, we extend this logic and argue how terrorist groups have distinctive targeting patterns in high and low state capacity areas within democratic and non-democratic regimes.

Democratic regimes are especially vulnerable due to the constraints on retaliation against terrorist activities. Compared to their non-democratic counterparts, democratic regimes face higher costs domestically and internationally for forceful retaliation that often produces mass casualties. Terrorists also have greater freedom to manoeuvre in a democratic state. Moreover, since democracies are founded on popular legitimacy, terrorist groups get a higher payoff for targeting citizens in democratic regimes than others. Opposition political parties might also take advantage of a democratic regime's failure to protect civilians by criticising the ruling party publicly, anticipating future electoral benefits. Press freedom in democracies amplifies the message of terrorist attacks by widely reporting on violent events.[49] Finally, in terms of psychological warfare, terrorists thrive when they can create an environment of fear among many people. Such vulnerabilities encourage terrorist groups to attack civilians in democratic states.

According to Kydd & Walter,[50] democratic regimes provide favourable conditions for terrorist groups to launch the strategy of war of attrition. In warfare, weaker side initiates the attrition strategy by preventing the stronger opponent from escalating the conflict and bringing the full weight of its military superiority. The objective is to exhaust the enemy's will to continue the fight through attrition.[51] The terrorist groups using this strategy seek to persuade others that "the group is strong and resolute enough to inflict serious costs so that the enemy yields to the terrorists' demands."[52] The basic assumption of democratic vulnerability concerns the ease with which terrorist groups force democratic regimes to concede to demands through violent attacks against civilians.[53]

Understanding the motive of their strategy explains the variation in terrorist targeting within democratic regimes. Terrorist groups in democracies are often weak and ineffective in influencing the government since the popularly elected governments have greater legitimacy. In such contexts, terrorists are more likely to target civilians in high-capacity areas for two reasons. First, they gain greater bargaining leverage when attacking civilians in high-capacity areas. As discussed above, such groups often launch terrorist attacks to signal their power to yield more concessions. While targeting civilians anywhere in a democratic country can be effective, they are likely to get "more bang for the buck" when targeting them in high-capacity areas. Second, targeting civilians in high-state capacity areas is impactful and less costly. Ideally, terrorists are better off attacking state and government targets, but in high-capacity areas of a democratic regime, these are hardened physically. In addition, the supportive mass can serve as another layer, making terrorist attacks on government targets even more challenging. Due to these reasons, civilian targets in high-capacity areas of a democratic regime become the soft underbelly for the terrorists. Mahoney lays out how the terrorist group ETA in Spain changed its strategy to attrition after the country became democratic.[54] According to the author, after the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party won the national election, following Franco's dictatorial rule and the coup attempt in the early 1980s, ETA doubled down on its use of terrorism. While ETA's "previous terrorist campaigns largely targeted the military or government, the group's campaign following the PSOE's election targeted civilians not affiliated with the state".[55]

A terrorist targeting pattern should differ in autocracies. We argue that terrorists are more likely to attack security targets in areas of high state capacity in autocracies. There may be several reasons why groups would attack security targets. First, terrorists would most likely target the state where it hurts the most. If groups want to send a strong signal to the regime they confront, they should select security or state targets in high-capacity areas. Attacking poorly trained security targets yields better results in extracting concessions from the target state.[56] On average, states' security apparatuses in autocracies are weaker than in democracies. Therefore, security targets are more exposed to terrorist attacks even in high-state capacity areas of unpopular regimes.

Second, targeting civilians is not likely to impact an autocracy because such regimes are not dependent on popular support. There is a greater likelihood for terrorist groups to find shelter among the civilian masses, who may not be a part of the regime's winning coalition.[57] Attacks on civilian targets in such cases will be mainly on "complicitous civilians," those from either different ethnic groups or groups connected to the state, which will not erode popular support for the terrorist group. Launching provocative attacks on security forces and eliciting retaliatory government responses can further alienate the regime and help the recruitment and mobilisation efforts of the terrorist group.[58]

Third, attacks on state security targets in non-democratic regimes can signal the group's commitment to the desired political goal and wean away support from rival groups. Such a strategy of outbidding is often observed in places where multiple terrorist groups with similar goals and ideologies operate and compete for prominence. The populace in an autocratic state is

mostly aggrieved and less supportive of the regime; hence, often, multiple groups fight against the government. For example, Wilayat Sinai, an Islamist group with Wahhabi ideology, emerged in 2011 to compete against twenty existing groups with similar ideologies and goals in Egypt.[59] The group has carried out several devastating attacks on Egyptian security since removing the popularly elected Morsi government in 2011; hence, the outbidding logic better explains Wilayat Sinai's targeting behaviour in Egypt. Finally, terrorist groups prefer attacking security targets instead of civilians because they do not want to antagonise civilian non-combatants whose support they require for survival. In most autocracies, governments lack legitimacy, and states use brute force to compel obedience. Consequently, a group is more likely to extract support from an aggrieved population if it attacks the state security personnel, the instrument of state oppression. This discussion leads to the following hypotheses on terrorist targeting across regimes.

> *H2a: Democracies are more likely to experience terrorist attacks on civilian targets in areas of high state capacity. In other words, terrorist groups will target more civilians in areas of high state capacity in democracies, both within and across the regime type.*

> *H2b: Autocracies are more likely to experience terrorist attacks on government and security targets in areas of high state capacity. In other words, terrorist groups will target state security personnel and installations in areas of high state capacity in autocracies, both within and across the regime type.*

Data and Empirical Analysis

We use the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) to analyse terrorist events worldwide from 1990 to 2014.[60] But we only include attacks perpetrated by known *domestic* terrorist groups since our main theory is based on the strategic bargaining between the groups and the government. The dataset has 38,670 counts of such incidents. Important for this analysis is the information about the target category of each terrorist incident included in the GTD, such as business, government personnel, police, military, airports, food, or water supply. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the target categories in the dataset.

Based on our theory, we redefine these target types into three main categories: civilian targets, government and security forces, and other target types. First, as shown in Figure 3, nearly 23 percent of terrorist attacks are targeted against private citizens and property. But even among the other GTD target types, such as business or transportation, civilians are the primary victims. Therefore, we re-categorise terrorist incidents as *civilian targets* if attacks are aimed against private citizens and property, journalists, religious figures, private businesses, NGO personnel, tourists, and transportation. Second, we categorise incidents as *government and security force targets* if the attacks are targeted against military, police, or government officials. Military and police alone comprise 23 percent of all terrorist attacks in the dataset. In addition, around 13 percent of terrorist attacks are against government personnel and the government (diplomats). Finally, all other incidents are categorised as *other targets*. These include terrorist attacks against infrastructure like telecommunications, airports and aircraft, ports and maritime facilities, educational institutions, food or water supply, other militias, violent political parties, and unknown targets.

Figure 2. Domestic Terrorist Incidents by Target Types (1990-2014)
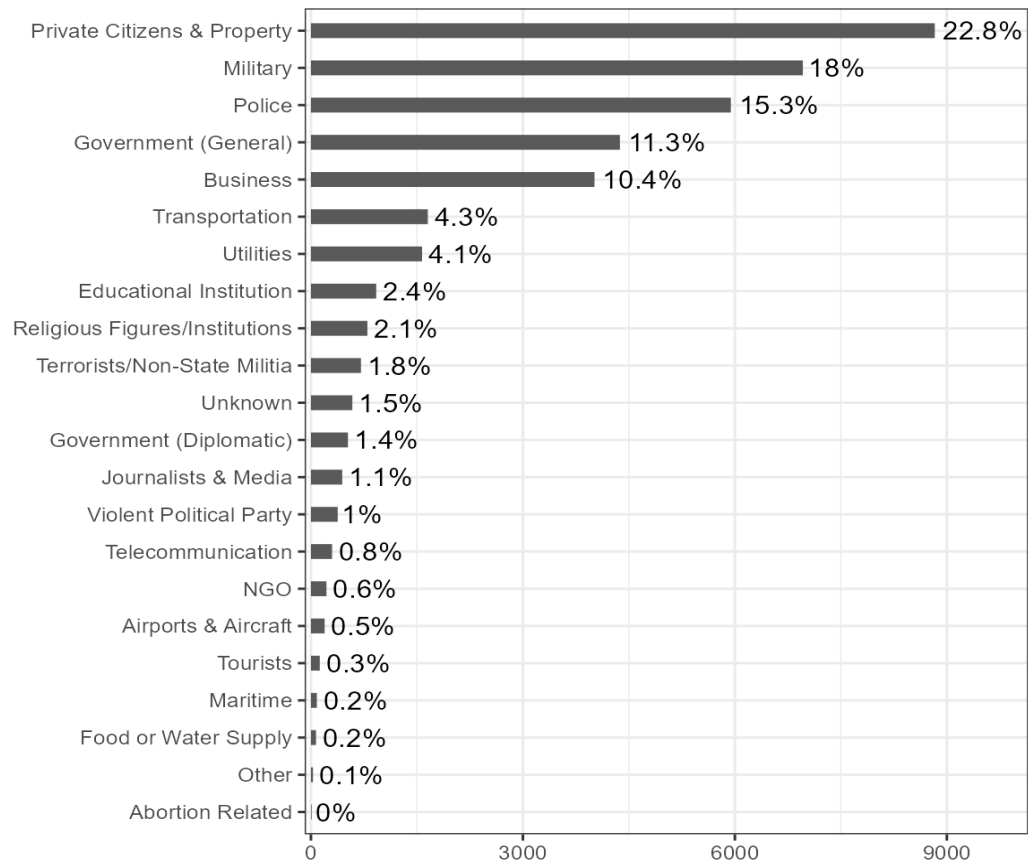
Data Source: Global Terrorism Database

To understand the local dynamics of terrorist targeting within a country, we need to examine the events in each geographical unit within its borders. But rather than administrative boundaries, we use a 55km x 55km grid cell as the unit of analysis by dividing country maps across the world into grid cells using the PRIO-GRID dataset.[61] Using the grid cell is an improvement compared to administrative boundaries since these grid cells are smaller and consistent, and we have fewer concerns about selection bias affecting inference. 64,452 grid cells cover countries around the world. From 1990 to 2014, we first compile a yearly panel dataset to produce grid-cell year observations. We then aggregate the number of domestic terrorist incidents involving the three target types in grid-cell years for that time.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study is the degree of terrorist attacks on civilian targets compared to government and security forces and other target types. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the three re-defined target categories in the dataset. As shown in the figure, 54.4 percent of terrorist incidents are targeted against civilians, whereas 33.4 percent of the incidents are attacks on government officials and security forces. Only 12.3 percent of all terrorist incidents make up attacks on other target types.

Figure 3. Re-categorised Terrorist Targets (1990-2014)
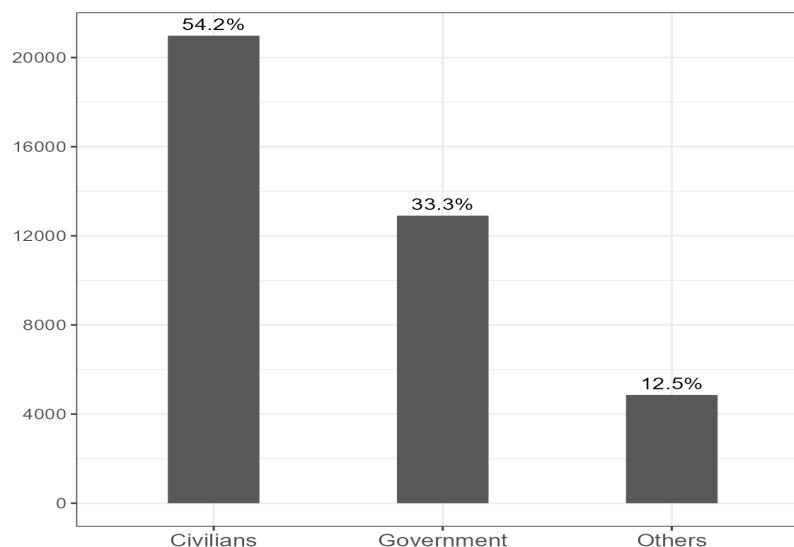
Data Source: Global Terrorism Database

We use multivariate regression models to understand how various factors lead terrorist groups to target civilians versus government and security forces.[62] In our case, we use this approach to compare the probability of terrorist attacks on civilians and government and security forces due to regime type and distribution of state capacity in urban and rural areas. Since we do not expect the hypothesised mechanism to play out in international terrorism, as mentioned above, we exclude international terrorist incidents from the dataset and focus only on domestic terrorism events.[63] We use OLS models since both dependent variables are on a continuous scale.[64]

This study's two main explanatory variables are the state capacity at the grid-cell level and regime type at the country level. Since we are interested in democratic and autocratic regimes, we divide countries in the dataset into democracies, autocracies, and anocracies, using the polity scores of the countries for a given year. Countries with polity scores of six or higher are categorised as democracies, those with scores below -4 as autocracies, and any scores in between as anocracies. Past studies have shown that armed conflict and terrorism are more likely to occur in anocracies than the two other regime types. Since our hypotheses examine terrorist targeting in autocracies and democracies, we use these two subsets to test hypotheses H2a and H2b.[65]

State capacity is a broad term mainly because it encompasses various dimensions, such as the state's extractive, coercive, and legal capacity. At a sub-national level, state capacity is associated with the government's service delivery in these dimensions. Population and urban centres enjoy such services better than regions away from them.[66] To measure state capacity, we use urbanisation within each grid cell, which is calculated as the percentage of a grid cell covered by an urban area.[67] Some scholars have used night light emission as a measure of urbanisation and state capacity.[68] However, following a recent study, we use a percentage of grid cells covered with an urban area, variable urban_ih_comp, as the measure from Meiyappan and Jain. The two variables, night lights and urban_ih_comp are highly correlated. The correlation coefficient for the two variables in the dataset is 0.64 and significant at p<.0.001. When disaggregating by year, the significance level stays the same for all years, and the average correlation coefficient is 0.67.[69] However, rather than using urbanisation on a continuous scale, we create two urbanisation categories. We code variable *urban* as 1 for a grid-cell year if its urbanisation is equal to or more than the mean urbanisation of the country for that specific year. Otherwise,

we code it as 0. Creating a dichotomous measure of state capacity in this way is somewhat arbitrary. Still, it is preferable to a continuous scale due to the uneven distribution of the grid-cell urbanisation data. To check the consistency of this measure, we use another variable from the grid-cell data: distance from the capital. We expect that the capital cities should always fall into the urbanised category. When comparing the distance from a country's capital between grid cells categorised as urban and non-urban, we find that the mean distance for urban grid cells is less than half compared to non-urban grid cells. The t-test shows that this difference is statistically significant at p<.0.001, suggesting that the urban centres are, on average, closer to state capitals.[70] We use the term non-urban rather than rural to describe grid cells that exclude urban areas since these grid cells include less urban and uninhabited regions.

We control various factors at the grid-cell level. Since terrorism and civil war overlap significantly,[71] we use a binary variable to indicate whether a country was undergoing armed conflict in a given year. We create the variable armed conflict and code it as 1 if the country is categorised as an armed conflict country for that year in the UCDP dataset and 0 otherwise. We include the variable distance from the border at the grid-cell level since rebels and terrorist groups are more likely to operate in areas closer to borders. Political violence is often associated with grievances. Therefore, civilian and government personnel should be more likely to be targeted in areas with more outstanding collective grievances and marginalisation. We use two indicators to measure the grievances: Excluded ethnic groups from the Ethnic Power Relations Dataset[72] and Gross Cell Product, which measures the wealth of each grid-cell using the metric equivalent of gross domestic product.[73] We also use forest cover in percentage.[74] We use country dummies as the fixed effect and the year-fixed effects at the country level. Using country dummies models the uniqueness of each country in the dataset, which is a more stringent criterion than using country characteristics in a multi-level model.

Results

Examining the descriptive statistics of the dataset suggests that the majority of terrorist incidents occur in democratic regimes. While 54.3 percent of all terrorist incidents in the dataset are in anocracy regimes, 48.8 percent are in autocracy regimes, and 57.2 percent are in democratcy regimes. For each regime type, the distribution of target types is similar. As shown in Figure 4, civilians are the most common targets across all regimes. Incidents involving attacks against government and security forces are the second-highest target choice. But some differences stand out. Democracies have the highest proportion of terrorist incidents with civilian targeting, whereas autocracies have the highest proportion of incidents where terrorists target government and security forces. Along with civilians, the other target categories, such as infrastructures, are also the highest in democracies.

Figure 4. Terrorist Targets by Regime Types (1990-2014)

Civilians   Government & Security Personnel   Others
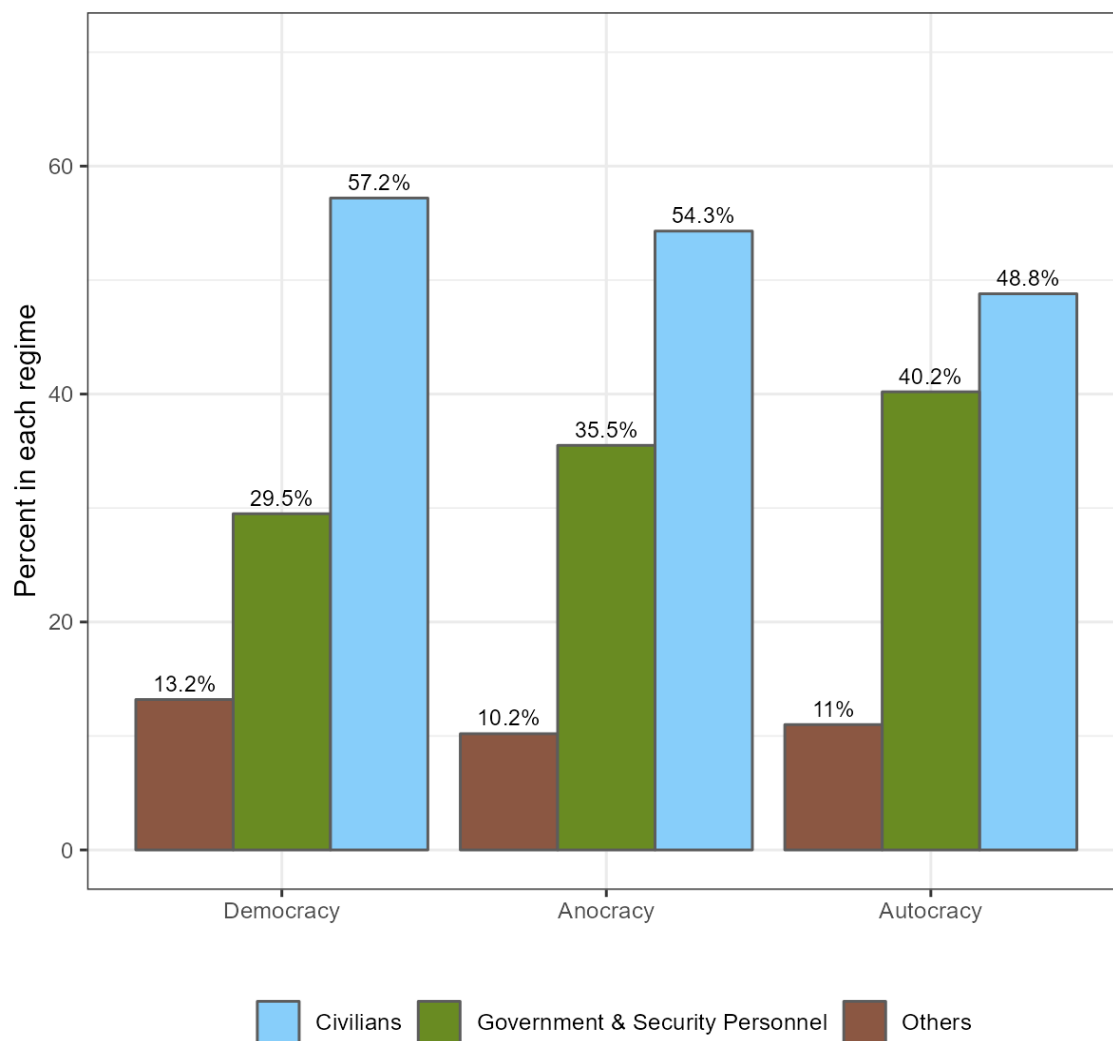
Data Source: Global Terrorism Database and Polity IV

To systematically test our hypotheses, we use multivariate regression models where the two dependent variables are *civilian targeting* and *government & security targeting* in each grid cell. Table 1 shows the main results, including the year and country dummies (fixed effects).[75] The upper and lower panels in the table compare the estimates from models using two different dependent variables. In each panel, there are three models. The first model looks at all cases, while the subsequent models only examine grid cells in democracies and autocracies, respectively. Positive and statistically significant coefficients of the first variable in the two panels (model 1) suggest that terrorists are likely to attack civilian and government targets, mainly in urban areas. The variable's coefficient in the civilian-targeting model is slightly higher than in the government-targeting model. Perhaps echoing this, we also find that grid cells with higher GCP are significant predictors for civilian but not government targeting. While the distinction is not definitive, these differences indicate that, on average, more civilians are targeted in grid cells with higher state capacity. As expected, such incidents are less likely in forested areas for both civilian and government targeting. In sum, the results indicate that compared to attacks on government targets, the number of attacks on civilian targets is slightly higher in urban areas, as shown by the slightly higher magnitude of the urban coefficient and the statistically significant GCP variable (H1).

Table 1. Regime Type, State Capacity and Terrorist Targeting in Grid Cells

|	(1) All b/se	(2) Democracies b/se	(3) Autocracies b/se
DV: Civilian Targeting			
Urban cover	0.023***	0.026***	0.013***
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Distance to Border	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
% Cell Forested	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.000***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Excluded Ethnic Groups	0.006***	0.010***	-0.001
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Gross Cell Produce (GCP)	0.001**	0.000	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)
Conflict	0.013***	-0.016	0.043***
	(0.002)	(0.070)	(0.011)
DV: Government Targeting			
Urban cover	0.022***	0.021***	0.018***
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Distance to Border	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.000***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
% Cell Forested	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.000**
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Excluded Ethnic Groups	0.005***	0.008***	-0.007***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Gross Cell Produce (GCP)	-0.000	-0.000	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)
Conflict	-0.006	-0.730**	0.040***
	(0.004)	(0.253)	(0.009)
Observation	1385650	735124	229947

t statistics in parentheses. Robust SE

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Note: Results include year and country fixed effects for each model.

Comparing coefficients for the variable *urban* in models (2) and (3) reveals more interesting insights. The differences in terrorist targeting patterns become more apparent in the two models that examine democratic and autocratic regime subsets, respectively. The coefficients for the variable *urban* in models (2) and (3) in the upper panel are statistically significant. However, the coefficient in the democratic regime model is almost twice as large as the coefficient in the autocratic regime model, suggesting that the increase in civilian targeting from rural to urban areas in democratic states is much higher than what happens in autocratic regimes. Yet, in the lower panel of the table, the slopes are similar. Figure 5 illustrates the substantive results from the models. The left panel in the figure shows that both slopes are positive, but the slope is steeper for civilian targeting in democracies, as indicated by the larger coefficient.

In the right panel, the slopes for both types of targeting are nearly the same. Still, there are more terrorist attacks against government and security targets in the urban areas of autocracies. Substantively, these results indicate that in the urban regions of a democracy, civilians are targeted nearly 18 percent more compared to government and security personnel. In contrast, in the urban areas of an autocracy, government and security force personnel are targeted nearly 54 percent more than civilians.

Figure 5. Predicted Margins for Terrorist Targeting
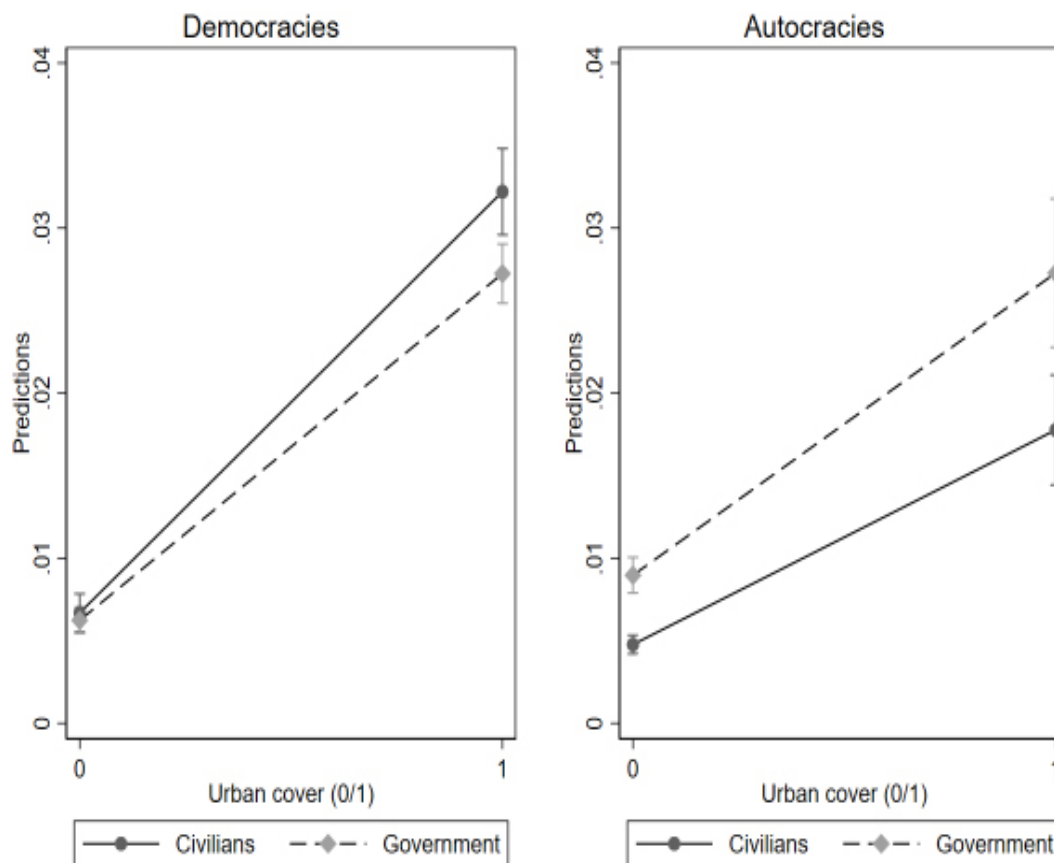
Note: The figure above shows predicted marginal plots from models (2) and (3) in Table 1. The left panel of the figure shows that civilian targeting is higher in the urban areas of democracies. However, the right panel shows that autocratic regimes have higher government and security targets.

Substantively, our results show that terrorists in autocratic countries, on average, target government and security forces over 50 percent more often than targeting civilians when launching attacks in urban areas (H2b).[76] These are sizable differences. Note that the threshold for urban areas in this analysis was 50 percent of the grid-cell as urban. When we increase this threshold to 90 percent, the difference is starker, thus confirming our expectations.[77]

Robustness Check

We check the robustness of the above results by creating a new variable that indicates the difference between civilian and military terrorist targets in each grid-cells (Civilian minus Security targets). Variable *CMS* in each grid-cell year shows the difference between the number of incidents with civilian targets minus those with government and security targets. Thus, a higher and positive value on variable *CMS* in a grid-cell suggests more civilian targeting in the grid-cell, and an increasing value in the negative direction suggests a greater number of security targets in the grid-cell.[78] Since the dependent variable is on a continuous scale, we first use linear regression models with country-level fixed effects to test our theoretically derived conjectures. Since we do not expect the hypothesised mechanism to play out in international terrorism, as mentioned above, we exclude international terrorist incidents from the dataset and focus only on domestic terrorism events.[79]

The two main explanatory variables remain the same: the regime type at the country level and state capacity at the local level. For regime type, we divide countries in the dataset into

three categories––democracies, autocracies, and anocracies, as described earlier. Since our hypotheses examine terrorist targeting in autocracies and democracies, an anocratic regime is treated as the baseline category in the models. The other key independent variable, state capacity, is measured using grid-cell urbanisation as in the main analysis. As described earlier, the regime type measure is a categorical variable, with the anocratic regime as the baseline category. The second main independent variable, *urban*, is dichotomous, where a 1 captures an urban.

We also continue to use the variable *armed conflict* at the country level. Two other variables used as controls at the country level are GDP and a country's population on a logarithmic scale, both taken from the World Bank dataset. We include the variable *distance from the border* at the grid-cell level since rebels and terrorist groups are more likely to operate in areas closer to borders. We also control for *excluded ethnic groups* and *forest cover*.

To systematically test our hypotheses, we use a series of regression models, which are shown in Table 2. Models (1) to (3) in the table show the results of the OLS regression models with country-fixed effects and include variables at both country and grid-cell levels. The main models, models (4) and (5), are multi-level models with grid-cell variables at the first level and country characteristic variables at the second level. Note that these two models use either a democratic regime type or an autocratic regime type to compare against other regime types for easier comparison. The last model (model 6) includes both regime types to compare them against the reference anocratic regime type. All models except the first include the cross-level interaction terms. Models (2) and (3) are random-intercept models, but models (4), (5), and (6) include both random intercepts and slopes.

Results in model (1), Table 2 show that variables *urban* and *autocracy* are both statistically significant, but their coefficient signs are in opposite directions. A positively significant coefficient for the variable *urban* suggests that terrorists, on average, target more civilians than government officials in urban areas (H1). This result is expected. However, the negative and significant coefficient for the variable *autocracy* suggests that more government and security officials are targeted in autocratic regimes compared to the baseline category. Other variables such as conflict, population, and GDP are all positive and statistically significant, suggesting that terrorists tend to target more civilians in countries that are wealthier, more populous, and those experiencing armed conflict.

The interaction terms in models (2) through (6) are the primary variables of interest. Model (2) shows the effect of the interaction between the democratic regime and urban areas. The interaction term coefficient in model (2) is positive and statistically significant at p<0.01. While the variable *democratic regime* is not statistically significant in model (1), the interaction term in model 2 is positive and significant at p<0.01, suggesting that compared to other areas in democratic regimes, terrorists target more civilians in urban areas (H2a). Model (3), similarly, shows that the interaction between autocratic regimes and urban grid cells is statistically significant. The coefficient for the interaction term in the model is negative and statistically significant at p<0.01, which is an interesting case compared to the positive and significant *autocratic regime* variable in model (1). While model (1) shows that terrorist groups target more government and security forces in autocratic regimes, they seem to do that relatively more in urban areas. In other words, compared to democracies, we do not find more civilians targeted in the urban areas of autocratic regimes (H2b). Models (2) and (3) are stricter non-nested random-intercept (or fixed-effects) models, which assume high variability and ignore some similarities that may exist among countries due to factors like shared borders or regions.

A better modelling approach accounts for both variability and similarities by considering a multi-level regression model with a random intercept and slope.[80] Models (4), (5), and (6) are multi-level models that use both within and across differences, and the coefficient for the interaction terms in the models becomes stronger. Comparing AIC and BIC scores suggests that models (4) and (5) fit better than the stricter previous two models.

Table 2. Regime Type, State capacity and Terrorist Targeting

|	CMS (1)	CMS (2)	CMS (3)	CMS (4)	CMS (5)	CMS (6)
Urban x democracy		0.012***		0.023***		0.015***
		(0.002)		(0.004)		(0.004)
Urban x autocracy			-0.015***		-0.097***	-0.094***
			(0.002)		(0.005)	(0.005)
Democratic regime	0.001	-0.000	0.001	-0.001		-0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)		(0.001)
Autocratic regime	-0.010***	-0.011***	-0.009***		0.001	0.001
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)		(0.002)	(0.002)
Urban	0.005***	-0.001	0.008***	0.001	0.030***	0.021*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Distance from border	-0.001	-0.001	0.001	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
% Cell forested	-0.000	-0.000	-0.001	-0.001*	-0.001*	-0.001*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Excluded ethnic groups	0.001**	0.001**	0.001**	0.001**	0.001**	0.001**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Gross cell product	0.001***	0.001***	0.001***	0.001***	0.001***	0.001***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Conflict	0.260***	0.257***	0.257***	0.033***	0.037***	0.036***
	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Year	-0.001***	-0.001***	-0.001***	-0.001**	-0.001**	-0.001***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
GDP (log)	0.003**	0.003**	0.003**	0.002	0.002*	0.003*
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Population (log)	0.011***	0.012***	0.011***	0.008***	0.004	0.004
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Constant	0.383***	0.387***	0.387***	0.262**	0.272**	0.286**
	(0.125)	(0.125)	(0.125)	(0.120)	(0.119)	(0.120)
Lns1_1_1				-2.051***	-2.022***	-2.015***
				(0.066)	(0.066)	(0.065)
Lns1_1_2				-2.458***	-2.461***	-2.463***
				(0.077)	(0.076)	(0.076)
Atr1_1_1_2				0.410***	0.394***	0.396***
				(0.109)	(0.106)	(0.107)
Lnsig_e				-1.163***	-1.163***	-1.163***
				(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
AIC	671694	671652	671648	669401	669045	669053
BIC	673494	673464	673460	669594	669239	669270
Observation	1303139	1303139	1303139	1303139	1303139	1303139

t-statistics in parentheses. Robust SE

*p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.01

Note: The table above shows results from regression models. Models (1) to (3) are OLS regression with country-fixed effects, while models (4) to (6) are multi-level models with random intercept. The main models are (4) and (5), and the final model (6) is a full model for comparison. The dependent variable in all models is the difference between civilian and military terrorist targets in each grid cell (CMS, Civilian minus Security targets).

Figure 6 shows the predicted marginal plot from the two cross-level interaction terms in the multi-level models (4) and (5) in Table 2. The figure's left and right panels depict the interaction of the variable *urban* with democratic and autocratic regimes. As the figure illustrates, civilian targeting in urban areas increases in democratic regimes compared to anocratic and autocratic regimes and reaches statistical significance at p<0.1. The relationship is even more pronounced for autocratic regimes, with a negative slope that is statistically significant at p<0.01. These results confirm our expectation that terrorists tend to target relatively more civilians in urban areas of a democratic regime than in an autocratic regime. Furthermore, relatively more government and security forces seem to get targeted in the rural areas of an autocratic regime.

Figure 6. Cross-level Interaction between Urban and Regime Type in Table 2
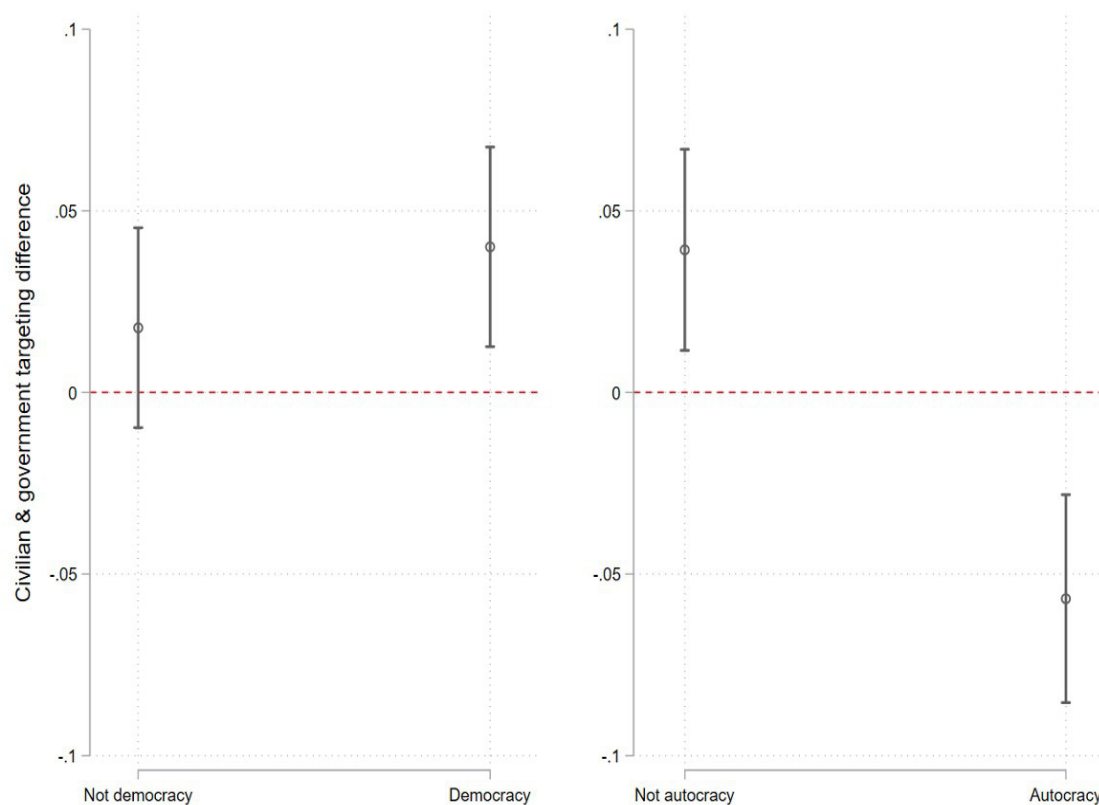
Note: The figure above shows the marginal prediction from models (4) and (5) in Table 2, where the dependent variable is the difference between civilian, security and government targets. The confidence interval in the figure is 90 percent.

Conclusion

Do terrorists discriminate against civilians and government personnel when launching an attack? Past studies have found that terrorist groups have increasingly targeted civilians. According to them, civilians have become more vulnerable since governments worldwide have hardened themselves and other high-value targets since the start of the global war on terrorism.[81] We contribute to this work by highlighting the strategic logic of target selection by the perpetrators of terrorist attacks at the local level in different regime contexts. We offer a new theory of terrorist target selection, arguing that more civilians get targeted in the urban areas of a democratic regime where the state capacity is higher, and civilians are generally more supportive of the government than in the urban areas of autocratic regimes. In contrast, terrorist groups tend to target more government and security personnel than civilians in the urban areas of autocratic regimes. By exposing this dynamic, our study adds to an understanding of terrorist targeting, which has important policy implications.

Our study also suggests several future avenues of research. For instance, future research can explore the consequences of terrorist targeting. Studies so far are inconclusive on whether targeting civilians helps or hurts terrorist groups in achieving their political objectives. To our knowledge, all these studies have explored the possibility of consequences without modelling the regime-type distinction. Following our research, researchers in the future may have a more precise answer if they examine the consequences of terrorist targeting by disaggregating regime types and considering local-level factors. For instance, are terrorist groups in democratic countries more likely to achieve their objectives by targeting civilians?

Anup Phayal is an Associate Professor at the Department of Public and International Affairs, University of North Carolina Wilmington. His research focuses on conflict, terrorism, and maritime security.

Hongyu Zhang is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at University of North Carolina Wilmington. His research focuses on international relations and security, nuclear proliferation and deterrence, and global terrorism.

Sambuddha Ghatak is an Assistant Professor at the School of Public Affairs, San Diego State University and SDSU Imperial Valley, California. His research focuses on conflict, political violence, and terrorism.

Brandon Prins is Professor and Head of Political Science at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. His research focuses on political violence, maritime crime and conflict, and research methods. He is the co-author of Pirate Lands: Governance and Maritime Piracy published by Oxford University Press in 2021.

Appendix: Attrition and Provocation: Subnational Variation in Terrorist Targeting

Table A-1: Regime Type, State Capacity and Terrorist Targeting in Grid-Cells

	(1) All b/se	(2) Democracies b/se	(3) Autocracies b/se
DV: CIV TGT			
Urban	0.042***	0.046***	0.027***
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Distance to Border	-0.000	-0.000***	-0.000**
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
% Cell Forested	-0.000**	-0.000***	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Excluded Ethnic Groups	0.006***	0.010***	-0.001
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Gross Cell Product	0.000	0.000	0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)
Conflict	0.010***	-0.017	0.051***
	(0.002)	(0.070)	(0.012)
DV: GOV TGT			
Urban	0.041***	0.034***	0.041***
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.005)
Distance to Border	0.000	-0.000***	-0.000***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
% Cell Forested	-0.000*	-0.000***	0.000***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Excluded Ethnic Groups	0.005***	0.008***	-0.006***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Gross Cell Product	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.001
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)
Conflict	-0.009*	-0.730**	0.053***
	(0.004)	(0.253)	(0.010)
Observations	1385650	735124	229947

*p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.00; t statistics in parentheses. Robust SE.
Note: In contrast to results in Table I (main manuscript), threshold for variable urban is scaled up to the 90th percentile in each country (from 75th percentile). In other words, a grid-cell is considered urban (urban=1) only if its urbanization is greater than 90th percentile of all grid-cells in the country (urban=0)

Table A-2: Regime Type, State Capacity and Terrorist Targeting in Grid-Cells (Count model)

	(2) Democracies_nbreg b/se	(3) Autocracies_nbreg b/se
DV: CIV TGT		
Urban	1.604***	2.073***
	(0.213)	(0.556)
Distance to Border	-0.002***	-0.005**
	(0.001)	(0.002)
% Cell Forested	-0.012*	-0.024
	(0.005)	(0.013)
Excluded Ethnic Groups	0.710***	-0.831**
	(0.209)	(0.306)
GCP	0.090**	0.062
	(0.035)	(0.060)
Conflict	3.404***	4.462***
	(0.417)	(1.054)
DV: SEC TGT		
Urban	1.251***	2.447***
	(0.207)	(0.678)
Distance to Border	-0.002**	-0.006***
	(0.001)	(0.002)
% Cell Forested	-0.013*	-0.070**
	(0.005)	(0.027)
Excluded Ethnic Groups	0.690***	-1.915***
	(0.192)	(0.560)
GCP	0.052	0.065
	(0.030)	(0.139)
Conflict	3.546***	5.001***
	(0.479)	(1.094)
Observation	735124	229947

*p<0.1 **p<0.05 ***p<0.00; t statistics in parentheses. Robust SE.

Note: Table above shows results from negative binomial models, and is similar to Table 1 in the main text.

Endnotes

1 This attack occurred on 1 July 2015.

2 The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) defines terrorism as "…the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation." One additional criterion of GTD is that the action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities. Terrorist groups are subnational political organisations using terrorism.

3 Barbara F. Walter, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement", *International Organization* 51, no. 3 (1997): 335–64, https://doi.org/10.1162/002081897550384; Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Massacres in Algeria", *Rationality and Society* 11, no. 3 (1999): 243–85; Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Mark Juergensmeyer, "Terror in the Name of God", *Current History* 100, no. 649 (2001): 357–61; David A. Lake, "Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century", *Dialogue IO* 1, no. 1 (2002): 15–28; Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism", *American Political Science Review*, 2003, 343–61; Jeff Goodwin, "Introduction to a Special Issue on Political Violence and Terrorism: Political Violence as Contentious Politics", *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (2012): 1–5; Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism", *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 49–80; Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "The Nature of the Beast: Organizational Structures and the Lethality of Terrorist Attacks", *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 2 (2008): 437–49; Zoe Marchment and Paul Gill, "Spatial Decision Making of Terrorist Target Selection: Introducing the TRACK Framework", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2020, 1–19.

4 Michael G. Findley and Joseph K. Young, "Terrorism, Spoiling, and the Resolution of Civil Wars", *The Journal of Politics* 77, no. 4 (2015): 1115–28.

5 Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism."

6 Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism", *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (1981): 379–99; Pape, 'The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism'; Lisa Hultman, 'Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19, no. 2 (2007): 205–22.

7 Jeffry A Frieden, David A. Lake and Kenneth A. Schultz, *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 2013).

8 Jakana Thomas, "Rewarding Bad Behavior: How Governments Respond to Terrorism in Civil War", *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 4 (2014): 804–18.

9 Max Abrahms, "The Political Effectiveness of Terrorism Revisited", *Comparative Political Studies* 45, no. 3 (2012): 366–93; Max Abrahms and Philip B. K. Potter, 'Explaining Terrorism: Leadership Deficits and Militant Group Tactics', *International Organization*, 2015, 311–42; Virginia Page Fortna, 'Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes', *International Organization* 69, no. 3 (2015): 519–56.

10 Fortna, "Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes"; Abrahms and Potter, "Explaining Terrorism: Leadership Deficits and Militant Group Tactics."

11 Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*; Laia Balcells, "Rivalry and Revenge: Violence Against Civilians in Conventional Civil Wars", *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2010): 291–313; Megan A. Stewart and Yu-Ming Liou, "Do Good Borders Make Good Rebels? Territorial Control and Civilian Casualties", *The Journal of Politics* 79, no. 1 (2017): 284–301; Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, Kristin M. Bakke, and Lee J. M. Seymour, "Shirts Today, Skins Tomorrow: Dual Contests and the Effects of Fragmentation in Self-Determination Disputes", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 1 (2012): 67–93.

12 Allard Duursma, "Obstruction and Intimidation of Peacekeepers: How Armed Actors Undermine Civilian Protection Efforts", *Journal of Peace Research* 56, no. 2 (2019): 234–48.

13 Kristian Hoelscher, Jason Miklian, and Håvard Mokleiv Nygård, "Conflict, Peacekeeping, and Humanitarian Security: Understanding Violent Attacks against Aid Workers", *International Peacekeeping* 24, no. 4 (2017): 538–65.

14 Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism."

15 Jennifer S. Holmes, *Terrorism and Democratic Stability* (Manchester University Press, 2001); Kevin Siqueira and Todd Sandler, "Terrorists versus the Government: Strategic Interaction, Support, and Sponsorship," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 6 (2006): 878–98; Ethan de Mesquita and Eric S. Dickson, "The Propaganda of the Deed: Terrorism, Counterterrorism, and Mobilization," *American Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 2 (2007): 364–81.

16 Brian Blankenship, "When Do States Take the Bait? State Capacity and the Provocation Logic of Terrorism," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 2 (2018): 381–409.

17 Charlinda Santifort, Todd Sandler, and Patrick T. Brandt, "Terrorist Attack and Target Diversity: Changepoints and Their Drivers," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 1 (2013): 75–90; Abrahms and Potter, "Explaining Terrorism: Leadership Deficits and Militant Group Tactics;" Sara M. T. Polo and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, "Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 6 (2016): 815–29; Max Abrahms, Matthew Ward, and Ryan Kennedy, "Explaining Civilian Attacks: Terrorist Networks, Principal-Agent Problems and Target Selection," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, no. 1 (2018): 23–45; Shawn L. Ramirez and Arianna J. Robbins, "Targets and Tactics: Testing for a Duality within Al Qaeda's Network," *International Interactions* 44, no. 3 (2018): 559–81; Michael C. Horowitz et al., "Tactical Diversity in Militant Violence," *International Organization* 72, no. 1 (2018): 139–71; Konstantin Ash, "'The War Will Come to Your Street': Explaining Geographic Variation in Terrorism by Rebel Groups', *International Interactions* 44, no. 3 (2018): 411–36.

18 Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, "Distribution of Transnational Terrorism among Countries by Income Class and Geography after 9/11," *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (2006): 367–93.

19 Patrick T. Brandt and Todd Sandler, "What Do Transnational Terrorists Target? Has It Changed? Are We Safer?," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54, no. 2 (2010): 214–36.

20 Santifort, Sandler, and Brandt, "Terrorist Attack and Target Diversity."

21 Sara M. T. Polo, "The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice," *Journal of Peace Research* 57, no. 2 (2020): 235–50; Polo and Gleditsch, "Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War;" Abrahms, Ward, and Kennedy, "Explaining Civilian Attacks;" Michael C Horowitz et al., 'Tactical Diversity in Militant Violence.'

22 Polo and Gleditsch, "Twisting Arms and Sending Messages."

23 Abrahms, Ward, and Kennedy, "Explaining Civilian Attacks."

24 Ibid. p. 39.

25 Horowitz et al., "Tactical Diversity in Militant Violence."

26 William Eubank and Leonard Weinberg, "Terrorism and Democracy: Perpetrators and Victims," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13, no. 1 (2001): 155–64; Enders and Sandler, "Distribution of Transnational Terrorism among Countries by Income Class and Geography after 9/11"; Joseph K. Young and Laura Dugan, "Veto Players and Terror," *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 1 (2011): 19–33; James A. Piazza, "Types of Minority Discrimination and Terrorism," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 29, no. 5 (2012): 521–46; Seung-Whan Choi and James A. Piazza, "Ethnic Groups, Political Exclusion and Domestic Terrorism," *Defence and Peace Economics* 27, no. 1 (2016): 37–63; James A Piazza, "Terrorist Suspect Religious Identity and Public Support for Harsh Interrogation and Detention Practices," *Political Psychology* 36, no. 6 (2015): 667–90.

27 Jacob N. Shapiro, "Terrorist Decision-Making: Insights from Economics and Political Science," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 6, no. 4/5 (2012): 5–20.

28 Ash, "'The War Will Come to Your Street'"; Luis de la Calle and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, "The Quantity and Quality of Terrorism: The DTV Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 1 (2011): 49–58; Fortna, "Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes"; Jessica A. Stanton, 'Terrorism in the Context of Civil War', *The Journal of Politics* 75, no. 4 (2013): 1009–22.

29 Polo and Gleditsch, "Twisting Arms and Sending Messages"; Horowitz et al., "Tactical Diversity in Militant Violence"; Polo, "The Quality of Terrorist Violence."

30 Max Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," *International Security* 31, no. 2 (2006): 42–78.

31 Abrahms, Ward, and Kennedy, "Explaining Civilian Attacks."

32 Brandt and Sandler, "What Do Transnational Terrorists Target?"; Stanton, "Terrorism in the Context of Civil War"; Polo and Gleditsch, "Twisting Arms and Sending Messages"; Abrahms, Ward, and Kennedy, "Explaining Civilian Attacks."

33 Stephen C. Nemeth, Jacob A. Mauslein, and Craig Stapley, "The Primacy of the Local: Identifying Terrorist Hot Spots Using Geographic Information Systems," *The Journal of Politics* 76, no. 2 (2014): 304-317. See also, Josiah Marineau, Henry Pascoe, Alex Braithwaite, Michael Findley, and Joseph Young, "The local geography of transnational terrorism." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 37, no. 3 (2020): 350-381.

34 Cullen S Hendrix and Joseph K Young, "State Capacity and Terrorism: A Two-Dimensional Approach," *Security Studies* 23, no. 2 (2014): 329–63.

35 Jennifer L. Windsor, "Promoting Democratization Can Combat Terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (2003): 43–58; Quan Li, "Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 2 (2005): 278–97; Seung-Whan Choi, "Fighting Terrorism through the Rule of Law?," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54, no. 6 (2010): 940–66; Khusrav Gaibulloev, James A Piazza, and Todd Sandler, "Regime Types and Terrorism," *International Organization* 71, no. 3 (2017): 491–522; Sambuddha Ghatak, Aaron Gold, and Brandon C Prins, "Domestic Terrorism in Democratic States: Understanding and Addressing Minority Grievances," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 2 (2019): 439–67.

36 Lake, "Rational Extremism "; David A. Lake, "International Relations Theory and Internal Conflict: Insights from the Interstices," *International Studies Review* 5, no. 4 (2003): 81–89; Findley and Young, "Terrorism, Spoiling, and the Resolution of Civil Wars"; Blankenship, "When Do States Take the Bait?"

37 Santifort, Sandler, and Brandt, "Terrorist Attack and Target Diversity"; Brandt and Sandler, "What Do Transnational Terrorists Target?"

38 Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, "The Effectiveness of Antiterrorism Policies: A Vector-Autoregression-Intervention Analysis," *American Political Science Review*, 1993, 829–44.

39 Reed M. Wood, "Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence against Civilians," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 5 (2010): 601—-614.; Hendrix and Young, "State Capacity and Terrorism: A Two-Dimensional Approach."

40 Wood, "Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence against Civilians."

41 Santifort, Sandler, and Brandt, "Terrorist Attack and Target Diversity."

42 Nemeth et al. "The Primacy of the Local."

43 Polo, "The Quality of Terrorist Violence."

44 Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (MIT press, 2005).

45 Paul R Lawrence and Jay W Lorsch, "Differentiation and Integration in Complex Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1967, 1–47; William Weitzel and Ellen Jonsson, "Decline in Organizations: A Literature Integration and Extension," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1989, 91–109.

46 Horowitz et al., "Tactical Diversity in Militant Violence."

47 Eubank and Weinberg, "Terrorism and Democracy "; Joe Eyerman, "Terrorism and Democratic States: Soft Targets or Accessible Systems," *International Interactions* 24, no. 2 (1998): 151–70; Li, "Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?"; Young and Dugan, "Veto Players and Terror."

48 Courtenay R. Conrad, Justin Conrad, and Joseph K. Young, "Tyrants and Terrorism: Why Some Autocrats Are Terrorized While Others Are Not," *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 3 (2014): 539–49.

49 Shana Kushner Gadarian, "The Politics of Threat: How Terrorism News Shapes Foreign Policy Attitudes," *The Journal of Politics* 72, no. 2 (2010): 469–83.

50 Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," 60–62.

51 Ahmed S. Khalidi, 'The War of Attrition', *Journal of Palestine Studies* 3, no. 1 (1973): 60–87.

52 Ibid, p. 59.

53 Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism."

54 Charles W. Mahoney, "End of the Cycle: Assessing ETA's Strategies of Terrorism," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 29, no. 5–6 (2018): 916–40.

55 Ibid, p. 927.

56 Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work."

57 De Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival*.

58 Sara M. T. Polo and Belén González, "The Power to Resist: Mobilization and the Logic of Terrorist Attacks in Civil War," *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 13 (2020): 2029–60.

59 Mapping Militant Organizations. "Islamic State – Sinai Province (Wilayat Sinai)." Stanford University. Last modified December 2018. URL: https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/islamic-state-sinai-province

60 Although the original global terrorism dataset starts from 1970, we use 1990 as the starting point for two reasons. The first and most important reason is that the grid-cell level data of other covariates used

in this study begin from 1990. Aligning the terrorism data with these covariates ensures consistency and comparability across variables and enhances the study's robustness. Another significant factor is the emergence of a new wave of terrorism around 1990. Unlike previous waves during or before the Cold War era, this new wave exhibits distinct characteristics. Understanding this shift is essential for drawing relevant conclusions in the present context.

61 Andreas Forø Tollefsen, Håvard Strand, and Halvard Buhaug, "PRIO-GRID: A Unified Spatial Data Structure," *Journal of Peace Research* 49, no. 2 (2012): 363–74.

62 Results using Seemingly Unrelated Regression models are similar. We show results with SUR models in the supplementary information.

63 We exclude transnational terrorist events or those with unknown perpetrators.

64 Using count models (negative binomial) produces identical results.

65 In the online Appendix, we also present multinomial regression to investigate whether the choice of more civilian or more government targets (compared to the baseline of zero terrorism grid-cells), in democratic and autocratic countries. Results using this technique is similar.

66 Luciana Cingolani, Kaj Thomsson, and Denis de Crombrugghe, "Minding Weber More Than Ever? The Impacts of State Capacity and Bureaucratic Autonomy on Development Goals." *World Development* 72 (2015): 191-207; Kamiljon Akramov and Felix Asante, (2008): "Decentralization and Local Public Services in Ghana. Do Geography and Ethnic Diversity Matter?," GSSP Working Paper, 16, International Food Policy Research.

67 Prasanth Meiyappan and Atul K. Jain, "Three Distinct Global Estimates of Historical Land-Cover Change and Land-Use Conversions for over 200 Years," *Frontiers of Earth Science* 6, no. 2 (2012): 122–39, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11707-012-0314-2.

68 Ore Koren and Anoop K. Sarbahi. "State Capacity, Insurgency, and Civil War: A Disaggregated Analysis." *International Studies Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (2018): 274-288.

69 Mariya Y. Omelicheva and Lawrence P. Markowitz. "When Does the Crime-Terror Nexus Fail to Materialize? Drug Trafficking, Militants, and the State in Russia." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 6, no. 2 (2021): 274-288.

70 Mean distance between the capital of countries all across the world to their urban grid-cells is 946 km, whereas to non-urban grid-cells, it is 1943 km.

71 Michael G. Findley and Joseph K. Young, "Terrorism and Civil War: A Spatial and Temporal Approach to a Conceptual Problem," *Perspectives on Politics*, 2012, 285–305.

72 Julian Wucherpfennig et al., "Politically Relevant Ethnic Groups across Space and Time: Introducing the GeoEPR Dataset," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 28, no. 5 (2011): 423–37.

73 William D Nordhaus, "Geography and Macroeconomics: New Data and New Findings," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 103, no. 10 (2006): 3510–17.

74 Meiyappan and Jain, "Three Distinct Global Estimates of Historical Land-Cover Change and Land-Use Conversions for over 200 Years."

75 Fixed effect for each country is not shown in the table due to space limit.

76 Another approach we have taken to test these results is by using multinomial regression, which confirm the main findings.

77 See Appendix for results with urban category based on 90 percent urbanisation.

78 To understand where terrorists are more likely to attacks civilians and government targets, we first categorize each grid-cell based on whether there are more civilians or government and security forces are targeted. Of the total 1,601,757 observations in the dataset, there are 10,237 grid-cells with some level of terrorist attacks on either civilian or government and security forces. Out of these 9,430 grid-cells have either more or less attacks on civilians, whereas 807 grid-cells have exactly equal number of attacks on civilian and security targets. Rest of the grid-cells have zero terrorist attacks on these two types of targets.

79 We exclude transnational terrorist events or those with unknown perpetrators.

80 Andrew Gelman and Jennifer Hill, *Data Analysis Using Regression and Multilevelhierarchical Models*, vol. 1 (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

81 Brandt and Sandler, "What Do Transnational Terrorists Target?"; Santifort, Sandler, and Brandt, "Terrorist Attack and Target Diversity."

In Mapping Digital Jihad: Understanding the Structure and Evolution of al-Qaeda's Information Ecosystem on the Surface Web

Miron Lakomy[*]

Abstract: This article, which combines social network analysis and open-source intelligence, discusses the functions, structure, and evolution of al-Qaeda's (AQ) information ecosystem on the surface web in the second half of 2023. It argues that despite preferring Rocket Chat as a primary communication channel, this terrorist organisation developed an extensive and robust propaganda distribution network detectable from the surface web. The pro-AQ ecosystem on this Internet communication layer relied primarily on standalone websites, message boards, and blogs, interconnected with a broad range of file-sharing services and channels on encrypted communication apps. Aside from them, the group manifested limited activity on mainstream social media. In the second half of 2023, the group demonstrated resilience to content takedowns, as most of its key domains used to disseminate propaganda continued to be active under the same or changed URLs. This study shows that, in contrast to the Islamic State, al-Qaeda's information ecosystem was largely decentralised, which was primarily caused by the differentiated approaches of its branches to maintaining their presence in this environment. The lack of centralisation of AQ's propaganda distribution network may be considered both an advantage and a disadvantage. On the one hand, it potentially increases its resilience to content takedowns. On the other hand, however, it also demonstrates a lack of coordination between branches, which decreases their media operations' potential efficiency and reach.

Keywords: Al-Qaeda, propaganda, networks, information, jihad

_____

Corresponding author: Miron Lakomy, University of Silesia, email: miron-lakomy@wp.pl

Introduction

Al-Qaeda (AQ) is one of the first terrorist organisations that started to use the Internet to radicalise, inspire, and recruit followers. Its activities in this regard, dating back to the 1990s, evolved significantly over time. During the War on Terror, AQ spearheaded the development of terrorist online propaganda in many aspects.[1] Among others, it introduced new forms of influencing online audiences, as demonstrated by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi of al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI).[2] It was also one of the first to experiment with new channels of propaganda dissemination.[3]

Due to these features, al-Qaeda's online strategic communication has been the subject of significant interest from the academic community. Since the beginning of the 21st century, researchers representing diverse fields have analysed this phenomenon from multiple angles. Many scholars focused on understanding what AQ published and how these productions radicalised and inspired online audiences.[4] Others were more inclined to explore the workforce behind its propaganda machine.[5] Noticeable attention was also devoted to understanding some distinctive types of AQ's propaganda, such as its terrorist manual series[6] and e-magazines.[7] However, in a plethora of publications on AQ's strategic communication, relatively few publications have focused on understanding the structure, core features, and evolution of its propaganda distribution networks. While such works were published in the pre-Islamic State era,[8] only a few significant studies have attempted to do so in recent years. This contrasts with the amount of attention in the subfield of online terrorism and political violence dedicated to, for instance, mapping information ecosystems maintained by far-right violent extremist organisations (VEOs) and the Islamic State (IS).[9] Effectively, we have only a limited understanding of how exactly al-Qaeda distributes its propaganda today and how to curb it.

This study aims to fill this gap in research and has three scientific objectives. First, to identify communication channels exploited by AQ and its followers on the surface web in the second half of 2023 and understand their main functions. Second, to map the structure of the pro-AQ information ecosystem in this environment and explore its crucial elements responsible for propaganda distribution. Third, to understand the evolution of the detected AQ's propaganda dissemination network over a period of six months, which enables its vitality and resilience to be measured. To reach these objectives, this study exploits a combination of open-source intelligence, social network analysis (SNA), and comparative analysis. It focuses on communication channels available on – or detectable from – the surface web, as this layer of Internet communication potentially offers the easiest and broadest access to terrorist propaganda. The data discussed in this paper was collected between 1st July and 31st December 2023.

This research article is divided into five sections. The first briefly overviews the most critical studies on AQ's exploitation of the surface web for propaganda distribution. The second covers in detail the methodology of this research project, including open-source intelligence methods utilised and approaches used in social network analysis. The third section discusses fundamental quantitative data collected by this study in a comparative perspective. It provides information on the quantity and types of the identified propaganda distribution channels in July and December 2023. The fourth part explores the structure and interconnectedness of al-Qaeda's information ecosystem on the surface web uncovered in July 2023. The final section highlights crucial changes introduced to this ecosystem throughout a period of six months.

What Do We Know About al-Qaeda's Use of the Surface Web?

Al-Qaeda's propaganda dissemination networks were the subject of scientific analyses primarily at the apogee of the War on Terror. One of the first to do so was Weimann, who listed and investigated communication channels used by the group at the beginning of the 21st century. His analyses covered popular webpages run by AQ at the time, such as alneda.com, jihadunspun.net, aloswa.org, islammemo.com, and jehad.net.[10] In the following years, various recognised scholars, such as Riedel,[11] Zelin,[12] Awan,[13] and Conway,[14] have studied various aspects of al-Qaeda's exploitation of standalone websites and message boards. The scale of the Salafi-jihadist information ecosystem – dominated by al-Qaeda – was estimated to reach 4,000 domains between 2000 and 2005.[15] Unfortunately, due to the lack of publicly accessible databases from this period, we know little about how this network exactly functioned, its accurate scale at a given time, its accessibility, and how it responded to content takedowns. In time, due to the belief that traditional websites were in decline,[16] scholars' attention started to shift increasingly toward exploring al-Qaeda's migration to social media platforms. The papers of Weimann,[17] Klausen,[18] West,[19] and Torres-Soriano[20] described various aspects of this notable process.

Since 2014, the scientific community working on online terrorist communication has paid visibly less attention to analysing al-Qaeda's media operations on the Internet. This was primarily caused by the launch of the Islamic State's "shock and awe" propaganda campaign.[21] Effectively, the academic discourse in this subfield was dominated for several years by studies exploring different aspects of IS's activities online. These studies that included al-Qaeda frequently compared its operations on the Internet to those carried out by Islamic State.[22] After the fall of IS as a territorial organisation, online terrorism and political violence research started to be dominated by studies concentrating on the far-right violent extremists' use of various online platforms, including primarily messaging apps and services used by video gamers.[23]

Effectively, al-Qaeda's online operations drew relatively little attention from the academic community in the last decade. We know little about the scale, structure, and evolution of its information ecosystem since the launch of Islamic State's propaganda campaign. This is especially visible regarding AQ's presence on the surface web, which has remained under-researched for years. This trend was accurately summarised by Conway and Looney, who argued that "terrorist websites never really went away, they were just overlooked for a decade by researchers and others due to a not unwarranted narrowing of focus to social media platforms and, latterly, messaging applications and adjacent online spaces".[24]

In this context, there is just a handful of more recent academic papers published in recognised journals that touch upon al-Qaeda's presence on the surface web and beyond. In 2017, Rudner published a paper that attempted to understand how this terrorist organisation exploited various Internet platforms, ranging from message boards to *Facebook* and *Twitter*. His study noticed the Salafi-jihadist migration from the World Wide Web towards social media but still emphasised the importance of terrorist-operated websites.[25] In 2021, Nsaibia and Lyammouri published a valuable analysis of al-Qaeda's propaganda distribution strategy, although it focused primarily on encrypted communication apps like *WhatsApp* and *Rocket Chat*. They noted that "while al-Qaeda groups are certainly present on Telegram, WhatsApp, Riot, and Minds, the number of subscribers on these platforms is only a fraction of the number of users on Rocket Chat".[26] Insightful reports on various aspects of AQ's online propaganda were also recently published by Taneja and Thakkar. Taneja compared al-Qaeda's and Islamic State's propaganda related to the Hindu-Muslim tensions.[27] Thakkar, on the other hand, focused on the development

of al-Qaeda's capabilities in carrying out global propaganda campaigns. She also noticed that AQ has profited from "the efforts of intelligence and security agencies to evict Islamic State's media constellations from encrypted and social media platforms."[28] In this context, while all these studies provided valuable insights, none allowed for a better understanding of the scale, structure, and functions of al-Qaeda's information ecosystem on the surface web.

Methodology

As stressed above, this study aims to fill this gap in research by providing a detailed picture of al-Qaeda's information ecosystem discoverable on and from the surface web in the second half of 2023.[29] To do so, it was founded on the combination of open-source intelligence, comparative analysis, and social network analysis.[30] Open-source intelligence means were primarily based on the so-called "Google dorks," which is a set of methods allowing for maximisation of search results based on the use of advanced options and operators in the *Google* search engine.[31] Other capable search engines, including *Bing*, *Yahoo*, *Baidu*, *Yandex*, and *DuckDuckGo*, were used in a similar manner.

There were several distinct ways of carrying out advanced searches for al-Qaeda-associated URLs.[32] To begin with, this part of the investigation used specific keywords related to AQ, its branches, media offices, or titles of individual propaganda productions. They were combined with advanced operators, allowing the uncovering of communication channels operated by terrorists. The study used search queries utilising terminology in multiple languages popular in AQ's propaganda, including Arabic, English, Bengali, and Somali. Aside from the terminology itself, advanced search methods exploited addresses of the detected websites of al-Qaeda, which allowed the identification of link directories and hotspots of networking used by its followers. Aside from search engines, the study also utilised alternative methods of detecting such content, including reverse image search platforms and software, such as *TinEye*, *Yandex Image Search*, or *Google Lens*. Image-based search queries used the most popular pieces of content or logotypes published by al-Qaeda. Subsequently, detected links were verified regarding their association with this terrorist organisation.[33]

Positively verified and available URLs were subject to subsequent website intelligence (WEBINT) gathering,[34] mainly comprising various forms of data scraping. It primarily aimed to discover information, allowing learning locations of other interconnected communication channels used by al-Qaeda. To do so, the study used several distinct methods, including those focused on extracting out links leading to other associated AQ domains. Aside from them, the study focused on other relevant pieces of data, such as websites co-hosted on the same server or information included in the website's code. For this purpose, several types of software were used, including *SpiderFoot* and *Recon NG*. In this context, it must be noted that data scraping was not carried out on communication channels falling beyond the surface web unless they could be accessed with an ordinary browser and without the need for additional registration. In other words, the study collected deep web and dark web links available from the surface web, as well as information about channels on messaging apps, but in most cases, they were not subject to additional data scraping.

All identified Internet addresses were registered in the database under multiple categories. First, each URL was coded in terms of its type, namely: Web 1.0 (surface web domains, such as standalone websites, blogs, and message boards), Web 2.0 (social networks, file-sharing services), communication apps (*Telegram*, *Rocket Chat*, *Threema*, *WhatsApp*, etc.) and dark web (mainly .onion domains). Second, the availability of all detected URLs that could be accessed with an ordinary browser was verified and registered in the database at regular intervals. This

verification occurred at the beginning and end of each month.[35] Internet addresses were coded as "positive" if their content was accessible for at least one day a month. Third, monthly changes in accessibility were also registered separately. Fourth, approximate dates of takedowns and creation were included wherever possible. Fifth, all URLs associated with a given domain (for instance, through out links) were registered for social network analysis. In this context, it must be noted that multiple external links from one URL to a single file-sharing platform were treated in the database as one record.[36] Exceptions were made only in these cases where pro-AQ media operatives treated file-sharing domains as separate communication ecosystems. This attitude mainly applied to accounts active on the Internet Archive. Finally, each detected and accessible domain was subject to online observation, focusing on understanding its predominant function in propaganda dissemination.

This cumulative database, compiled and updated monthly,[37] was subject to subsequent social network analysis, primarily done with *Gephi*.[38] To do so, detected URLs were given unique IDs and treated as "nodes" in SNA.[39] Each node was assigned additional variables, including availability in a given month and the cumulative number of mirrors detected during the investigation. This allowed a "node list" to be created. A second database – an "edge list" – was also compiled, which included interconnectedness between the nodes based on the detected external links in the pro-AQ communication channels. This approach effectively allowed the structure of the al-Qaeda information ecosystem to be mapped.

Both databases combined were subject to social network analysis from multiple angles, including:
- degree – related to the number of connections to a given node;
- modularity class – a method allowing showing internal subdivisions ("communities") in a network, based on the comparison of densities of edges within a group;[40]
- page rank – calculated based on the links directed to a node from other nodes.[41]

Effectively, six monthly graphs portraying the interconnectedness and specific features of al-Qaeda's information ecosystem on the surface web were generated. A comparative analysis of the monthly databases was carried out at the final stage. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted. The quantitative analysis focused on monthly changes in all coded variables – including, for instance, the number of standalone websites or social media profiles detected and their availability. This facilitated learning how this propaganda distribution network evolved over time. The qualitative approach, on the other hand, focused more on the changes in the features of the ecosystem as a whole, as well as the changes in the functions of individual communication channels over a six-month period.

This study has one limitation that must be discussed in detail. As mentioned above, this project prioritised exploring the surface web. This approach allowed for the detection of parts of al-Qaeda's information ecosystem located on the deep and dark web, as well as in encrypted communication apps. However, these environments were usually not subject to additional data scraping, similar to surface web locations. Such an approach was adopted because the surface web, aside from being under-researched, still plays a crucial role in Salafi-jihadist propaganda dissemination.[42] Terrorist-operated websites (TOWs) are less ephemeral compared to alternative communication channels, accessible with ordinary web browsers, and usually do not require additional registration.[43] Thus, violent extremist organisations tend to use them to maximise the efficiency of their strategic communication. Moreover, there are certain legal constraints in exploring encrypted environments used by terrorists in the territory of the European Union member states where this project was conducted. Effectively, there is a limited risk that this study does not provide a complete picture of al-Qaeda's information ecosystem in the second

half of 2023 due to the lack of data scraping of, for instance, the *GeoNews* platform. Still, the data gathered in this project allowed for portraying the core of its propaganda dissemination network, which was available on (or detectable from) the surface web at the time.

There are also two caveats. First, due to research ethics reasons, this study avoided collecting or processing any data that could be related to individual people. It consisted of no activities defined as profiling natural persons with online identifiers.[44] Second, for counter-terrorism reasons, this paper does not provide exact URLs of the detected communication channels used by al-Qaeda and its followers. Instead, it uses labels adopted in social network analysis.

Evolution of al-Qaeda's Propaganda Dissemination Networks on the Surface Web in the Second Half of 2023: A Quantitative Perspective

In July 2023, the study detected 237 individual Internet addresses associated with al-Qaeda. This number comprises 40 standalone webpages, 101 Web 2.0 addresses (social media or file-sharing services), 95 channels on communications apps, and one .onion domain. Six months later, the identified ecosystem proved to be 53.1 percent bigger, consisting of a cumulative number of 363[45] Internet addresses. It consisted of 88 standalone websites and blogs,[46] 152 Web 2.0 addresses, 122 communication applications, and one webpage located on the dark web (Figure 1).[47] This data shows how dynamic al-Qaeda's ecosystem was, as it regularly established new ways of communicating with online audiences.

It must be noted that throughout the second half of 2023, proportions in the structure of this ecosystem changed. The most significant change could be seen in the use of TOWs, as the cumulative number of standalone websites and blogs increased by 120 percent compared to July. It is indicative of their importance for al-Qaeda's propaganda distribution. Moreover, while in the summer of 2023, the share of messaging apps and Web 2.0 in the whole network was almost equal, it shifted in favour of the latter six months later. In December, the number of detected Web 2.0 URLs increased by 50.4 percent, compared to only a 28.4 percent rise in the use of encrypted communication apps. No new developments in the use of the dark web were detected.

Figure 1. Structure of pro-AQ Information Ecosystem between July and December 2023
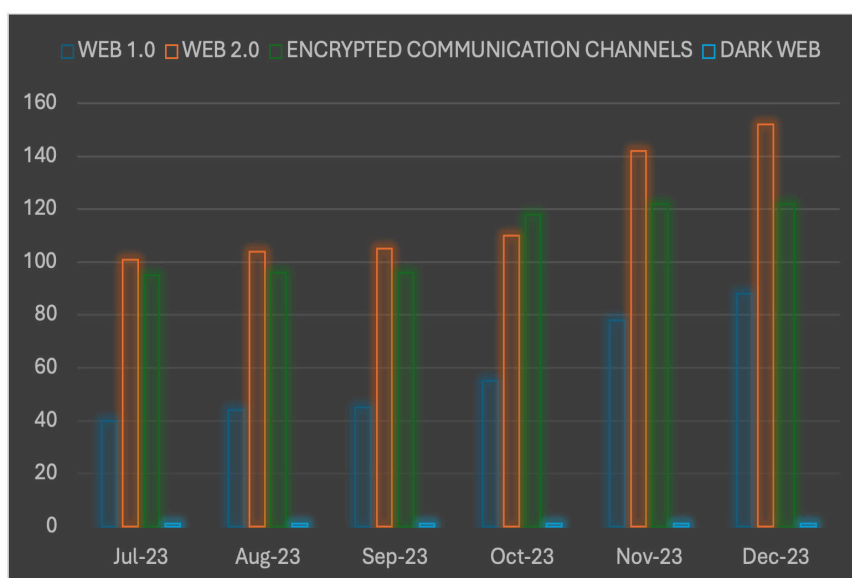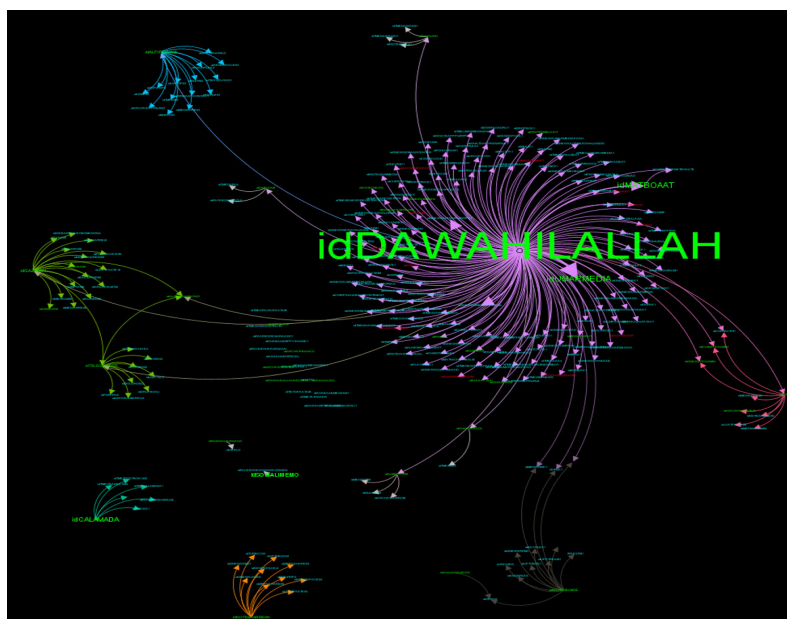

Source: The VEOMAP project

The most significant quantitative change in the number of detected Internet addresses occurred in October (37 new channels identified) and November (59 URLs). These changes were, at least partially, caused by the October 7th terrorist attack against Israel and its subsequent military operation in Gaza, which significantly engaged al-Qaeda's strategic communication.[48] In effect, its media offices launched many publication series dedicated exclusively to events in Palestine, which were distributed through a set of new blogs and file-sharing services. However, at the time, the group also advertised a large number of new *Telegram* and *Rocket Chat* channels, run by such media cells as Markaz al-Fatah, al-Sindh Media, Thabat News Agency, and al-Firdaws Media. In December 2023, AQ's activity in establishing new communication channels slightly dropped.

Mapping al-Qaeda's Surface Web Propaganda Ecosystem on the Surface Web in July 2023

Looking at al-Qaeda's information ecosystem, as of July 2023, through the lens of social network analysis, allows for identifying some of its features that are critical to understanding the group's propaganda distribution strategy. First of all, as demonstrated by Figure 2, a large part of the detected network was concentrated around the *Dawahilallah* message board, which stands out in terms of its SNA degree level, maintaining 168 connections as of July 2023. This domain, active since at least 2017, proved to be a primary communication hotspot for online communities and media offices supporting al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), although its everyday audience was somewhat limited.[49] It was utilised predominantly by the group's Bengali-speaking supporters for networking, exchanging ideas, and gathering information. It constituted a link directory, allowing followers to reach active AQ communication channels available on the messaging apps, as well as the surface, deep, and dark web. Aside from these functions, *Dawahilallah* served multiple pro-AQIS media centres as a propaganda aggregator. Such entities as al-Firdaws Media, al-Hikmah Media, Islamic Translation Centre, and an-Nasr Media used this board's "sticky threads" function to share their productions regularly. On top of this, this domain provided AQ supporters a platform to debate the most important international events, interpret religious texts, and discuss various aspects of jihad.

Figure 2. AQ Information Ecosystem in July 2023
through the Lens of Social Network Analysis[50]

Source: The VEOMAP project

Dawahilallah proved to be interconnected with several important parts of the pro-AQ ecosystem. First, as of July 2023, it shared links to 84 channels on encrypted communication apps. Most of them redirected users towards the *Rocket Chat*-based *GeoNews* platform, utilised by prominent al-Qaeda media offices, ranging from the al-Kata'ib Foundation – which supports Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin (HSM) – to al-Andalus Media, producing propaganda for al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). This confirms the previously mentioned AQ's preference to exploit *Rocket Chat*, which offers open-source architecture and owner-operated servers.[51] However, aside from *GeoNews*, the board's members published information on the whereabouts of pro-AQ content on other encrypted messaging platforms like *Chirpwire*[52] and Telegram.

Second, *Dawahilallah* redirected users towards a broad range of file- and text-sharing services, including mega.nz, noteshare.id, jumpshare.com, mediagram.me, file.fm, gofile.io, and justpaste.it. Overall, the webpage contained links to 49 different Web 2.0 platforms as of July 2023. They were predominantly used as short-term storage for individual pieces of content released by al-Qaeda. However, the same file-sharing role was also fulfilled by multiple WordPress blogs that were advertised on the board, mostly by an-Nasr Media. They lacked any content on the main page, but their subdomains were exploited to store individual propaganda items for periods ranging from several weeks to several months. This approach to using blogs is relatively uncommon among other violent extremist organisations.[53]

Third, *Dawahilallah* redirected its users to other standalone websites and blogs that played important roles in al-Qaeda's information ecosystem. The board's members prioritized publicising links to a broad range of websites targeting online audiences from Southern and Southeastern Asia, including, for instance, *Matboaat*, *Gazwah*, or an-Noor Media's home page, all of which published a variety of pro-AQ propaganda in Bengali. *Gazwah* stood out in terms of the quantity and quality of the published content. It was a standalone website that published translations of various types of propaganda associated with al-Qaeda. It maintained a significant propaganda distribution network by itself, sharing its publications through thirteen different file-sharing services, including mega.nz, *Internet Archive*, noteshare.id, and justpaste.it. It was also interconnected with several blogs. Other communities in the region were also targeted. Among others, *Dawahilallah* shared links to a webpage dedicated to influencing the Rohingya community or to the *Nawaigh* domain, which targeted Hindi-speaking Internet users. Aside from them, this message board advertised these parts of the surface web ecosystem that was maintained by al-Qaeda's Arabic-speaking core. These websites included, among others, the *Sahelnews*, which stored various types of propaganda in its subdomains. More in-depth analysis of its content was impossible, as the webpage required a signing-up procedure. In July 2023, the message board also shared links to – inactive at the time – URLs used by al-Malahem Media and al-Zallaqa Media. On top of this, the board's members distributed links to a constellation of loosely associated domains, such as the *Umarmedia*, which constitutes a primary communication channel utilized by the AQ-aligned Tehreek-E-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).[54] *Dawahilallah* lacked significant connectivity with websites exploiting Western languages. One notable exception was the *al-Minara* blog in English, which remained accessible in 2023 but was not updated for some time.

Two Internet addresses stood out among all websites interconnected with this message board. The first was run by al-Firdaws Media Foundation, a pro-AQ office publishing content in Bengali. While it predominantly focused on the Indian Subcontinent, al-Firdaws Media frequently shared productions released by other branches of al-Qaeda. Compared to other standalone websites linked with *Dawahilallah*, it proved to have the most professional structure and was updated regularly. For instance, it released a series dedicated to highlighting "crimes" committed against Muslims globally, articles publicizing successful operations of al-Qaeda in Africa and the Middle

East, or pieces positively framing the Taliban's rule over Afghanistan. Al-Firdaws domain was also a central point of a separate propaganda distribution network consisting of twelve Web 2.0 platforms, such as anonfiles.com, top4top.io, tinyupload.com, gofile.io, and file.fm, sendspace.com, zippyshare.com, and udrop.com. Al-Firdaws website also redirected all visitors towards its official channel on *Telegram*.

The second exceptional website was run by the Islamic Translation Centre (ITC), a media office dedicated to boosting the multilingual campaign of al-Qaeda similarly to the Islamic State's I'lam Foundation or Fursan al-Tarjuma.[55] As of July 2023, the ITC domain published content in 34 languages, including English, Albanian, Persian, Pashto, Arabic, and Tamil. Aside from the website itself, translated propaganda items were stored on a constellation of external file-sharing platforms, including mediagram.me, mediafire.com, noteshare.id, and the *Internet Archive*. Aside from propaganda aggregation, ITC's webpage focused on redirecting all visitors to its official channels at *GeoNews* and *Chirpwire*.

In this context, there were other parts of the pro-AQ information ecosystem detected in July 2023 that maintained no evident links with the network discussed above, which shows the lack of coordination between different branches. These parts mainly comprised websites associated with Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin.[56] Among those, *Calamada*, *Shahadanews, Radio al-Furqaan*, and *Somalimemo* stood out. *Calamada* proved to be the primary communication channel that disseminated content in Somali, produced by all official and unofficial media bureaus associated with HSM, including al-Kata'ib Foundation, Idaacadda Andalus, and Radio al-Furqaan. This domain stood out primarily regarding the regularity of the published content. Every day, it released between three to five radio broadcasts alongside various other productions, including combat videos, photo reports, and standalone articles. They covered a broad spectrum of topics ranging from international relations to highlighting HSM's victories in Eastern Africa. *Calamada* also maintained a small network of interconnected propaganda distribution channels, consisting of (among others) ok.ru or *Telegram*. *Shahadanews*, run by HSM-aligned Shahada News Agency, fulfilled a similar function but released content in Arabic. It focused on a relatively narrow set of topics, including promoting HSM operations in Somalia and Kenya, in particular.[57] In contrast to *Calamada*, aside from ok.ru, it maintained no relevant links to other platforms as of July 2023. Radio al-Furqaan's webpage published regular audio broadcasts. Its content was organized into several sections, such as internal news, international news, reports, the history of Islam, special programs, and more (photos, videos, and literature). Similarly to *Shahadanews*, the only relevant external link led to the ok.ru webpage, which HSM-aligned media offices preferred. The last relevant standalone website aligned with al-Shabaab – *Somalimemo* – had a history of supporting this organisation since 2011. It generally fulfilled similar functions to *Shahadanews*, although it primarily shared content in Somali. It stood out mainly in terms of the highest number of parallel mirrors active simultaneously on the surface web.

There were two eye-catching features of the al-Shabaab-related propaganda dissemination network. In contrast to the rest of the mapped ecosystem supporting al-Qaeda on the surface web, it attempted to exploit mainstream social media platforms. This tendency was already noticed in 2022 by Ayad, Harrasy, and Abdullah A.[58] *Somalimemo* advertised itself on and was supported by a *Facebook* profile, although its reach was limited to only 34 followers as of July 2023. *Calamada* exploited the same platform, although in a slightly different manner – mostly for file-sharing purposes. Lastly, al-Kata'ib Media also ran a popular *TikTok* profile consisting of more than 30 videos in the summer of 2023. This shows that al-Shabaab media operatives wanted to capitalise on the popularity of this platform in a similar manner to, for instance, far-right violent extremist organisations.[59] Aside from these attempts, it should be stressed that, surprisingly, none of these HSM-related websites and profiles contained links leading to other

parts of the al-Shabaab's ecosystem. No attempt was, therefore, made to mutually reinforce their traffic with out links, which contrasts with the approach frequently adopted by other VEOs.[60]

Other Internet addresses in AQ's information ecosystem played secondary roles and lacked substantial interconnectedness with the communication channels discussed above. Judging from their content, they were probably manifestations of al-Qaeda's followers' attempts to support the group's presence on the surface web. This is hinted at by the fact that many constituted link directories, rerouting online audiences to AQ-affiliated communication channels.

A Structure of al-Qaeda's Surface Web Information Ecosystem in December 2023

At the end of 2023, the accessibility and functions of primary surface web communication channels utilised by al-Qaeda remained generally unchanged. After six months, those websites that aimed to influence online audiences in Southern and Southeastern Asia used similar addresses and remained active. This refers, among others, to *al-Firdaws*, *Gazwah*, *Matboaat*, and ITC web pages. The only exception was the TTP-aligned *Umarmedia*, which was temporarily unavailable but eventually reestablished an active URL. No significant changes in accessibility and functions could also be registered in the network associated with Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin. They were not subject to any content takedowns.[61] The most important SNA data related to the core nodes in the ecosystem are provided in Appendix 1.

Still, during the second half of 2023, five quantitative and qualitative changes were introduced in AQ's information ecosystem (Figure 3). To begin with, the propaganda distribution network concentrated around the *Dawahilallah* message board developed significantly. The number of Web 1.0 URLs advertised on this message board grew from 35 to 62 Internet addresses as of December 2023. They predominantly consisted of *WordPress* blogs used mainly by an-Nasr Media to store its productions. Moreover, compared to July 2023, *Dawahilallah* gained nine new links (up to a cumulative number of 58) to Web 2.0 platforms. They mainly consisted of new file-sharing services like drive.internxt.com, backblazeb2.com, and k00.fr. It also gained multiple links to new channels on messaging apps, including *WhatsApp*, *GeoNews*, *Matrix*, and *Telegram*. Most of them seemed to be new versions of the channels banned by law enforcement agencies, as over time, the study registered several new channels run by the same bureaus. Overall, in December 2023, the degree level of *Dawahilallah* increased to 228, compared to 168 in July 2023, which constituted a 35.7 percent rise. This change manifests that aside from aggregating propaganda and networking, this message board played an important role in sharing information on the whereabouts of AQ-affiliated propaganda. However, this function was partially mitigated by its relatively low popularity, narrowed down predominantly to Bengali speakers. While the board consisted of propaganda published by multiple branches of the group, only AQIS-aligned media offices used it to disseminate propaganda. Effectively, despite its high degree level in SNA, caused by its interconnectedness with other pro-AQ addresses, it could hardly be considered a cornerstone for the whole information ecosystem maintained by this terrorist organisation.

*Figure 3. AQ Information Ecosystem in December 2023
through the Lens of Social Network Analysis*
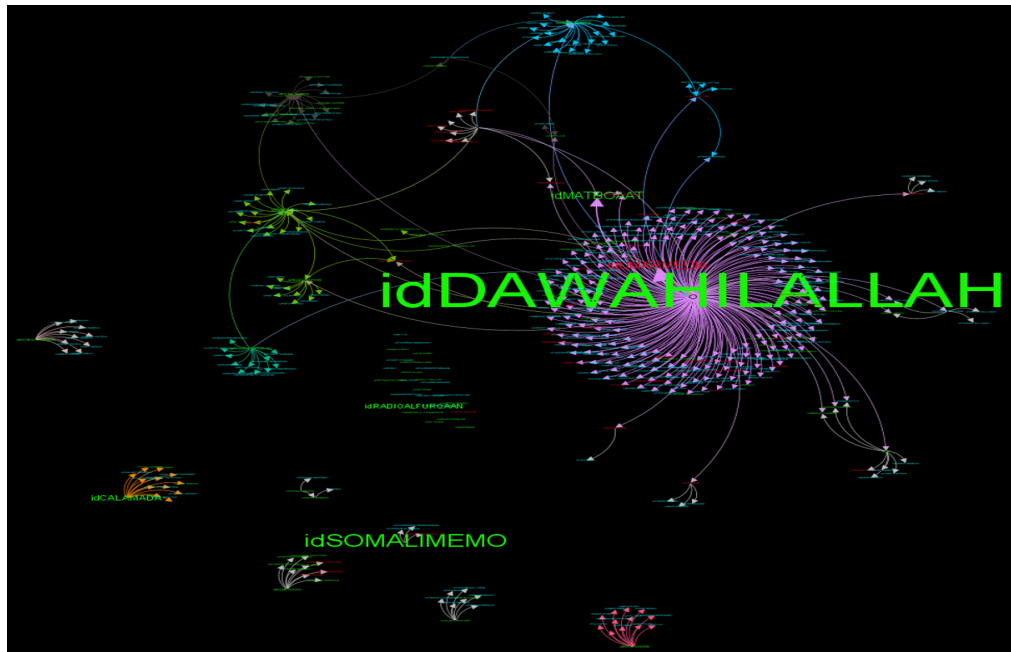
Source: The VEOMAP project

Secondly, al-Firdaws Media, the most active media office supporting AQIS, made attempts to expand beyond its traditional environment during the second half of 2023. It was manifested by the fact that the group created and exploited a *YouTube* account. Its primary function was to release a news series summarising the most important topics covered by this group each week. Such content was usually published in a way that allowed it to be disguised as non-partisan journalism. Al-Firdaws avoided the most controversial topics and often used images and videos originating from mass media or social networks. Still, this account was subsequently blocked by the platform.

Thirdly, a number of new standalone websites that supported al-Qaeda's ideology were identified. Some of them were active for a long time, although they were not initially detected. One of the most important was a website that focused on the history of jihadism. This domain, apparently associated with the pro-AQ community in the Caucasus, featured numerous videos and images highlighting the most important Salafi-jihadist leaders during the War on Terror, including Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri. This webpage maintained a well-developed propaganda distribution network consisting of several channels on *Telegram* and *Chirpwire*, an *Internet Archive* account, and two *Discord* groups. It was the only recorded case of a pro-al-Qaeda media office exploiting *Discord*, which as other researchers have noted is a common strategy among far-right groups.[62]

Another relevant webpage focused on publishing fatwas on issues related to jihad.[63] It was advertised by the *Dawahilallah* message board as a relevant and accurate source of theology-related information on an armed struggle against disbelievers. However, similarly to al-Firdaws Media, this domain avoided posting content directly associated with al-Qaeda. Thanks to this strategy, it was present on multiple mainstream platforms, allowing it to increase its resonance with the online audience. They included *Twitter/X*, *Facebook*, and *YouTube* profiles and an *Internet Archive* account. Its *YouTube* profile had 61 videos and 513 subscribers as of November 2023. On top of this, it utilised several file-sharing services, including mymegacloud.com, top4top.io, and megaup.net.

During the second half of 2023, several new pro-AQ blogs emerged online. Among others, the *Shohayeb* blog featured a number of official al-Qaeda propaganda productions. For instance, it published Osama bin Laden's *Letter to America*, which was seemingly AQ's response to the fact that it went viral on American social media.[64] It must be noted that similar actions at the time were carried out also by other AQ-aligned communication channels. Another new URL, located on the *Site123* platform, constituted a high-quality news webpage on al-Qaeda's activities. Aside from these two, there were also some blogs that promoted both AQ and Taliban agendas simultaneously. On top of this, many websites consisted of the group's propaganda, which were still accessible but remained inactive for several years.

Lastly, the study detected several new communication channels exploited by those branches of al-Qaeda that manifested little interest in maintaining a significant presence on the surface web, notably Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wa al-Muslimeen (JNIM) and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Media offices representing those branches, al-Zallaqa Media and al-Malahem Media, moved their websites to new URLs. However, they remained temporarily unavailable in the second half of 2023 and lacked technical quality compared to domains maintained by pro-AQIS bureaus. Furthermore, they were visibly treated by both branches as secondary communication channels. This was proven by the distribution of one of the most important al-Qaeda propaganda productions in recent years, the video *Inspire – What America and the West Do Not Expect: Open Source Jihad*,[65] published by al-Malahem Media in December 2023. This high-quality bomb-making manual was not released through its official website but only through *Rocket Chat* and *Telegram*. In this context, aside from standalone domains, this study found that al-Zallaqa Media's *Chirpwire* channel was exploited to disseminate its propaganda and advertise other al-Zallaqa channels located on other platforms, such as *Telegram*. Effectively, it demonstrated that this platform was still considered a gateway to attract online audiences from the surface web and reroute them deeper into the encrypted part of the AQ ecosystem.

Conclusion

This study allows several conclusions to be drawn. First of all, the information ecosystem maintained by al-Qaeda in the second half of 2023 proved to be stable, holding a high degree of accessibility. The vast majority of standalone websites that served as primary communication channels for al-Qaeda remained available during this period, which shows that its propaganda distribution network was generally resilient to relatively infrequent content takedowns. Over six months, it also grew significantly and tended to rely more on terrorist-owned domains and blogs.

The overall scale of AQ's information ecosystem on the surface web during this period was relatively large and similar to the one supporting the Islamic State in mid-2021.[66] It also relied on a similar set of Web 2.0 platforms, as well as messaging apps (*Telegram, Rocket Chat*). However, the structure of these networks was different in many aspects. This difference primarily refers to the fact that the Islamic State's propaganda distribution network in this environment was more centralised, founded on the so-called "Index" (*Fahras*) webpage that served as a central link directory, rerouting its followers to all relevant communication channels associated with this terrorist organisation.[67] This strategy contrasts with al-Qaeda's information ecosystem mapped by this study, which lacks a similar cornerstone of the whole propaganda dissemination network. The *Dawahilallah* message board is closest to providing such a function. Still, it cannot be considered central due to its limited traffic, focus on digital jihad in South and Southeastern Asia, and the lack of connectivity with networks maintained by al-Shabaab.

The lack of a central communication channel dedicated to aggregating propaganda and redirecting followers to other relevant parts of the ecosystem seems to be primarily caused by

the specific internal structure of al-Qaeda. This study confirms the recent findings indicating that AQ as a whole prioritised the use of *Rocket Chat* through its *GeoNews* platform.[68] However, its branches adopted differentiated – and sometimes opposing – strategies to utilise the potential offered by the surface web. In this context, such groups as JNIM, AQIM, and AQAP attached relatively little importance to maintaining a prolonged presence in this environment. While they manifested some activity in this regard, their websites remained inaccessible for long periods and lacked significant connectivity with other parts of AQ's networks. Moreover, as manifested by al-Malahem Media, they sometimes used the surface web to publish only less important propaganda pieces, while the essential productions were released elsewhere. This contrasted with the approach adopted by HSM and AQIS, which attached significant importance to reaching online audiences through standalone websites, message boards, and blogs. These contrasting attitudes explain the eye-catching lack of solutions introduced by most AQ websites to reinforce the traffic in other parts of the ecosystem through out links, which is a common feature present in Islamic State domains.

It should also be stressed that pro-AQ media offices manifested great interest in using platforms that were considered successful in detecting and removing terrorist content. This was proven by the fact that they regularly exploited *Facebook*, *TikTok,* and *YouTube* to reach online audiences. They were also interested in introducing innovations in propaganda dissemination strategy, as they tested *GitHub* and *Discord*, which Salafi-jihadist media operatives have not frequently used in recent years.[69] While these activities were relatively short-lived, they hinted at the capability to learn from others – namely far-right, violent extremist organisations – and test new ways of radicalising online audiences.

To summarise, the mapped information ecosystem of al-Qaeda shows that this group adopted a well-balanced but generally uncoordinated approach to online propaganda distribution, relying on multiple Internet layers at the same time. While all AQ branches prioritised encrypted messaging apps, including primarily the *GeoNews* platform, most established at least some presence on the surface web. In this context, the aforementioned decentralisation and lack of coordination of al-Qaeda's propaganda distribution network may be considered both an advantage and disadvantage from the viewpoint of countering violent extremism on the Internet. On the one hand, the lack of coordination potentially decreases the connectivity and traffic on al-Qaeda's communication channels, which lowers their potential efficiency. On the other, however, it may increase the resilience of the whole ecosystem to content takedowns. These features must, therefore, be taken into consideration in initiatives aiming to counter al-Qaeda's strategic communication on the Internet.

Miron Lakomy is a Professor at the Institute of Political Sciences, the University of Silesia, Poland and a visiting fellow at the ITSTIME research centre in Milan, Italy, within the NAWA Bekker programme (2023-2024). His research primarily focuses on various aspects of political violence and terrorism on the Internet, as well as military conflicts. He is author of Islamic State's Online Propaganda: A Comparative Analysis (London-New York, Routledge, 2021) and has published five monographs and more than 60 scientific papers in several countries.

Appendix

Social network analysis statistics on the top 20 nodes in al-Qaeda's information ecosystem (December 2023)

LABEL	MIRRORS	AVAILABILITY*	IN-DEGREE	OUT-DEGREE	DEGREE	PAGERANK
idDAWAHILALLAH	3	1	4	224	228	0.004162563
idGAZWAH	1	1	5	18	23	0.004178349
idALFIRDAWS	1	1	3	18	21	0.002911913
idFATWAAORG	1	1	7	12	19	0.010621654
idARRIBATMEDIA123	1	1	0	13	13	0.002256761
idOFFDOCPICTURES1	1	1	0	12	12	0.002256761
idCALAMADA	2	1	0	12	12	0.002256761
idNOTESHARE	1	1	0	12	12	0.002256761
idTELEGRAPH05	1	1	2	9	11	0.002469742
idNOTESHAREID9h	1	1	0	10	10	0.002256761
idITC	1	1	1	8	9	0.002272547
idALMIRSAAD	1	1	0	9	9	0.002256761
idISLAMICHISTORY	1	1	0	7	7	0.002256761
idAFNYOUTUBE	1	0	2	4	6	0.002410011
idCHIRPAZZALLAQA	1	2	1	4	5	0.002272547
idNAWAIGH	1	0	1	3	4	0.002272547
idALMAKHTUM	1	0	1	3	4	0.002272547
idGITHUBFAHADHUSSAIN	1	2	0	4	4	0.002256761
idDARULILM	1	1	2	1	3	0.002752071

Availability: 0 – inaccessible, 1 – accessible; 2 – not monitored

Endnotes

1 Gabriel Weimann, "www.terror.net. How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet," *United States Institute of Peace Special Report*, no. 116 (2004), pp. 10-11.

2 AQI was one of the first groups to massively utilize execution recordings in online propaganda. Al-Qaeda as a whole was also a pioneer in exploiting other means of radicalizing online audiences, such as video games and e-radios. See, for instance: Martin Harrow, "Video-recorded Decapitations – A seemingly perfect terrorist tactic that did not spread," DIIS Working Paper, no. 8 (2011); Rosanna E. Guadagno et al., „Social Influence in the online recruitment of terrorists and terrorist sympathizers: Implications for social psychology research," *Revue Internationale de Psychologie Sociale,* vol. 23, no. 1 (2010).

3 AQ was a pioneer in exploiting social media. See Gabriel Weimann, "Terror on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2010), pp. 45-54.

4 Manuel R. Torres Soriano, "Spain as an Object of Jihadist Propaganda," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 32, no. 11 (2009).

5 See Agnes Hankiss, "Behind the Scenes of Al-Qa'ida's Media Strategy," *Journal of Strategic Security*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2019).

6 See Sara Zeiger and Joseph Gyte, "Prevention of Radicalization on Social Media and the Internet," in *Handbook of Terrorism Prevention and Preparedness*, ed. Alex P. Schmid (The Hague: ICCT, 2021).

7 See, for instance: Xander Kirke, "Violence and Political Myth: Radicalizing Believers in the Pages of Inspire Magazine," *International Political Sociology*, vol. 9, no. 4 (2015), pp. 283-298; Alastair Reed and Haroro J. Ingram, "Exploring the Role of Instructional Material in AQAP's *Inspire* and ISIS' *Rumiyah*," *EU-ROPOL*, 26 May 2017, https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/publication/reeda_ingramh_instructionalmaterial.pdf.

8 Daniel Kimmage, "The Al-Qaeda Media Nexus," *An RFE/RL Special Report*, March (2008).

9 Stephane J. Baele, Lewys Bryce, Travis G. Coan, "Uncovering the Far-Right Online Ecosystem: An Analytical Framework and Research Agenda," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 46, no. 9 (2023).

10 Gabriel Weimann, "www.terror.net. How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet," *United States Institute of Peace Special Report*, no. 116 (2004), pp. 10-11.

11 Bruce Riedel, "Al Qaeda Strikes Back," *Foreign Affairs*, May-June (2007), pp. 24-41.

12 Aaron Y. Zelin, *The State of Global Jihad Online. A Qualitative, Quantitative, and Cross-Lingual Analysis* (New York: New America Foundation, 2012).

13 Akil N. Awan, "Radicalization on the Internet? The Virtual Propaganda of Jihadist Media and Its Effects," *The RUSI Journal*, vol. 152, no. 3 (2007).

14 Maura Conway, "Terrorism and New Media: the cyber battle-space," in *Countering terrorism and insurgency in the 21st century*, ed. James Forest (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007); Maura Conway, "From al-Zarqawi to al-Awlaki: The Emergence of the Internet as a New Form of Violent Radical Milieu," *Combating Terrorism Exchange*, vol. 2, no. 4 (2012).

15 Akil N. Awan, "Radicalization on the Internet? The Virtual Propaganda of Jihadist Media and Its Effects," *The RUSI Journal*, vol. 152, no. 3 (2007), p. 76.

16 Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, Audrey Alexander, Nick Kaderbhai, "The Impact of digital communications technology on radicalization and recruitment," *International Affairs*, vol. 93, no. 5 (2017), pp. 1233-1249.

17 Gabriel Weimann, "Terror on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2010), pp. 45-54; Gabriel Weimann, "Al-Qa'ida's Extensive Use of the Internet," *CTC Sentinel*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2008).

18 Jytte Klausen, "Tweeting the Jihad: Social Media Networks of Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 38, no. 1 (2015).

19 Levi J. West, "#jihad: Understanding Social Media as a Weapon," *Security Challenges*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2016).

20 Manuel R. Torres-Soriano, "The Caliphate Is Not a Tweet Away: The Social Media Experience of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 39, no. 11 (2016).

21 Asma Shakir Khawaja and Asma Hussain Khan, "Media Strategy of ISIS," *Strategic Studies*, vol. 36, no. 2 (2016).

22 *Jihadism Transformed: Al-Qaeda and Islamic State's Global Battle of Ideas*, eds. Simon Staffel and Akil Awan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Haroro J. Ingram, "Learning from ISIS's Virtual Propaganda War for Western Muslims: A Comparison of Inspire and Dabiq," *NATO Science for Peace and Security Series*, vol. 136 (2017).

23 See, for instance: Aleksandra Urman and Stefan Katz, "What they do in the shadows: examining the far-right networks on Telegram," *Information, Communication & Society*, vol. 25, no. 7 (2022).

24 Maura Conway and Sean Looney, *Back to the Future? Twenty First Century Extremist and Terrorist Websites* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2021), p. 3.

25 Martin Rudner, "'Electronic Jihad': The Internet as Al Qaeda's Catalyst for Global Terror," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 40, no. 1 (2017).

26 Héni Nsaibia and Rida Lyammouri, "The Digital Transformations of Al-Qaeda and Islamic State in the Battle Against Online Propaganda," *Global Network on Extremism & Technology*, 19 May 2021, https://gnet-research.org/2021/05/19/the-digital-transformations-of-al-qaeda-and-islamic-state-in-the-battle-against-online-propaganda/.

27 Kabir Taneja, "Al Qaeda, Islamic State, and Targeted Online Propaganda Around India's Domestic Political Discourse," *Global Network on Extremism & Technology*, 28 June 2022, https://gnet-research.org/2022/06/28/al-qaeda-islamic-state-and-targeted-online-propaganda-around-indias-domestic-political-discourse/.

28 Mona Thakkar, "Islamic Translation Centre (ITC): Taking al-Qaeda's Media Jihad Global," *Global Network on Extremism & Technology*, 14 November 2022, https://gnet-research.org/2022/11/14/islamic-translation-centre-itc-taking-al-qaedas-media-jihad-global/.

29 Data discussed in this paper was collected between 1st of July 2023, and 31st of December 2023.

30 OSINT is usually defined as "intelligence produced by collecting, evaluating and analyzing publicly available information". See Ritu Gill, "What is Open-Source Intelligence," *SANS Institute*, 23 February 2023, https://www.sans.org/blog/what-is-open-source-intelligence/.

31 See Star Kashman, "Google dorking or legal hacking: From the CIA compromise to your cameras at home, we are not as safe as we think," *Washington Journal of Law, Technology & Arts*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2023).

32 URL stands for Unified Resource Locator, which is a reference to an address on the World Wide Web.

33 Verification of already unavailable Internet addresses was founded on two separate methods: the use of either Wayback Machine or the Google "cache" command.

34 Unavailable websites were not subject to WEBINT but were still included in the database in order to gain as much historical perspective as possible. However, old websites that were inaccessible for years were not considered.

35 Due to the adopted way of coding out links to file-sharing services in the database, their availability was not verified. This approach was explained in endnote 36.

36 For instance, if a given website consisted of five different links leading to five propaganda items located at mega.nz, they were counted in the database as one record. This approach was adopted because a single website sometimes consists of dozens or hundreds of links leading to a single file-sharing platform, most usually active only for brief periods. Including them as a whole in social network analysis would, therefore, bring no additional value and, at the same time, would negatively impact the clarity of SNA results.

37 It means that the database compiled for December 2023 consisted of all URLs collected from July 2023, although updated monthly regarding changes in their accessibility and interconnectedness.

38 Gephi is a leading open-source and free social network analysis software that allows exploring and visualizing different types of networks. See: *Gephi – The Open Graph Viz Platform*, Github, https://gephi.github.io/.

39 It must be stressed that the number of URLs and nodes discussed in the paper is not identical. This is because the quantitative statistics described in the third section include all URLs detected, while individual nodes in SNA could represent more than one Internet address if they were mirrors of the same domain. For instance, the idDAWAHILALLAH node consisted of three URLs, being mirrors of this message board.

40 Martin Grandjean, *Gephi – Introduction to network analysis and visualization*, MartinGrandJean, http://www.martingrandjean.ch/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Gephi-introduction.pdf.

41 Alan Shaw, *How a Page Rank is calculated in Gephi*, *Strategic Planet*, 31 March 2019, https://www.strategic-planet.com/2019/12/how-a-page-rank-is-calculated-in-gephi/.

42 See Ali Fisher, Nico Prucha, and Emily Winterbotham, "Mapping the Jihadist Information Ecosystem. Towards the Next Generation of Disruption Capability," *Global Research Network on Terrorism and Technology*, no. 6 (2019); "Terrorist-Operated Websites," *Tech Against Terrorism*, https://techagainstterrorism.org/terrorist-operated-websites. Accessed 22 February 2024.

43 See more in: Arthur Bradley and Deeba Shadnia, *Examining Online Migration to Terrorist and Violent Extremist-Owned Domains* (Washington D.C.: George Washington University, 2022).

44 Lee A. Bygrave, "Article 4(4). Profiling," in *The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): A Commentary*, eds. Christopher Kuner et al. (New York: Oxford Academic, 2020), pp. 127-131.

45 This is a cumulative amount, including all communication channels, available and unavailable, detected throughout a six-month investigation.

46 This number includes mirrors of AQ's websites.

47 It should be mentioned, however, that al-Qaeda used more websites on The Onion Router. They were just not advertised in their surface web ecosystem. See Miron Lakomy, "Dark web *jihad*: Exploring the militant Islamist information ecosystem on The Onion Router," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* (2023). DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2022.2164326.

48 Rohan Gunaratna, "Al Qaeda's Stance in the Gaza War," *RSIS Commentary*, 22 February 2024, https://www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/rsis/al-qaedas-stance-in-the-gaza-war/.

49 On AQIS propaganda narratives see: Shafi Md Mostofa, "A Study of Al-Qaeda's Propaganda Narratives in Bangladesh," *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, vol. 11, no .2 (2019).

50 Green labels mark accessible websites; red labels mark inaccessible ones. IDs with light blue color were not subject to regular accessibility verification. It should be stressed, however, that most Web 2.0 links were active upon their detection. The size of the labels on the diagram is based on their degree level as well as on the number of detected mirrors. It should also be stressed that the number of nodes in this SNA is slightly different from the statistical data provided above. This is because the SNA treated mirrors of the same website as one node.

51 "Rocket.Chat Remains One of the Most Resilient Platforms for Jihadists," *Flashpoint*, 20 December 2020, https://flashpoint.io/blog/rocket-chat-remains-resilient-platform-for-jihadists/.

52 ChirpWire is an encrypted messaging platform that offers increased anonymity for its users. Among others, it does not require a phone number or e-mail address to sign in. It is also known for not exchanging any information about its users with third parties, such as authorities. See "ChirpWire: A virtual safe haven for Bangladeshi extremists," *Dhaka Tribune*, 13 September 2021, https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/258292/chirpwire-a-virtual-safe-haven-for-bangladeshi.

53 See Stuart Macdonald, Connor Rees, Joost S., *Remove, Impede, Disrupt, Redirect: Understanding & Combating Pro-Islamic State Use of File-Sharing Platforms* (Washington D.C.: RESOLVE Network, 2022).

54 On TTP media operations see: Joshua Bowes, "Telegram's Role in Amplifying Tehreek-e-Taliban's Umar Media Propaganda and Sympathiser Outeach," *Global Network on Extremism & Technology*, 30 January 2024, https://gnet-research.org/2024/01/30/telegrams-role-in-amplifying-tehreek-e-talibans-umar-media-propaganda-and-sympathiser-outreach/.

55 Mona Thakkar, "Islamic Translation Centre (ITC): Taking Al-Qaeda's Media Jihad Global," *Global Network on Extremism & Technology (GNET)*, 14 November 2022, https://gnet-research.org/2022/11/14/islamic-translation-centre-itc-taking-al-qaedas-media-jihad-global/.

56 See more in: Evan Matos, "Al-Shabaab: Information Operations Strategy Overview," *Small Wars Journal*, 29 August 2019, https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/al-shabaab-information-operations-strategy-overview.

57 More on operations of Shahada News Agency in: "Inside Al-Shabaab's digital propaganda machine," Disinfo Africa, 23 November 2023, https://disinfo.africa/inside-al-shabaabs-digital-propaganda-machine-05cbdb04ed4f.

58 Moustafa Ayad, Anisa Harrasy, Mohammad Abdullah A., *Under-Moderated, Unhinged and Ubiquitous: Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State Networks on Facebook* (Washington D.C.: Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2022).

59 See Gabriel Weimann, Natalie Masri, "Spreading Hate on TikTok," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 46, no. 5 (2023).

60 Stuart Macdonald, Daniel Grinnell, Anina Kinzel and Nuria Lorenzo-Dus, "A Study of Out links Contained in Tweets Mentioning Rumiyah," *Global Research Network on Terrorism and Technology*, no. 2 (2019).

61 Takedowns of some of these addresses took place at the end of January 2024. However, all HSM-aligned websites were quickly reestablished under new Internet addresses. See "Somalia's Intelligence Agency shuts down 14 news websites linked to al-Shabab," *Hiiraan*, 1 February 2024, https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2024/Feb/194839/somalia_s_intelligence_agency_shuts_down_14_news_websites_linked_to_al_shabab.aspx.

62 Aofie Gallagher et al., *The Extreme Right on Discord* (Washington D.C.: Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2021).

63 On e-*fatwas*, see: Gary R. Bunt, *Islam in the Digital Age. E-Jihad, Online Fatwas and Cyber Islamic Environments* (London: Pluto Press, 2003).

64 Amit Chaturvedi, "Osama bin Laden's 'Letter to America' Goes Viral Amid Israel-Hamas War," *NDTV World,* 17 November, 2023, https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/explained-osama-bin-ladens-letter-to-america-controversy-and-why-its-viral-4581487.

65 Federico Borgonovo, Giulia Porrino, Silvano Lucini, Alessandro Bolpagni, "Debunking Al Qaeda new Inspire productions," *ITSTIME*, 1 February 2024, https://www.itstime.it/w/debunking-al-qaeda-new-inspire-productions-by-f-borgonovo-g-porrino-s-lucini-a-bolpagni/.

66 Islamic State maintained 386 unique communication channels on the surface web at the time. See Miron Lakomy, "The virtual 'Caliphate' strikes back? Mapping the Islamic State's information ecosystem on the surface web," *Security Journal*, vol. 36 (2023), pp. 791-811.

67 See *Online Jihadist Propaganda. 2021 in review* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2022), p. 23.

68 Héni Nsaibia and Rida Lyammouri, "The Digital Transformations of Al-Qaeda and Islamic State in the Battle Against Online Propaganda," *Global Network on Extremism & Technology*, 19 May 2021, https://gnet-research.org/2021/05/19/the-digital-transformations-of-al-qaeda-and-islamic-state-in-the-battle-against-online-propaganda/.

69 There are some known cases of Islamic State supporters utilizing Discord, but they have been relatively rare. See "ISIS Supporters Communicate, Compete On Encrypted Discord Channel; TikTok Account Which Promoted Server Recently Suspended," *MEMRI*, 1 February 2024, https://www.memri.org/cjlab/isis-supporters-communicate-compete-encrypted-discord-channel-tiktok-account-which-promoted.

The Metaverse as a Future Threat Landscape: An Interdisciplinary Perspective

Sam Hunter,* Alexis L d'Amato, Joel S Elson, Austin C Doctor, and Averie Linnell

Abstract: In response to the emergence of new, paradigm-shifting technology that increases capability for the benefit and – as is the focus of this work – harm, we sought to provide contributions across three key areas. First, as a foundation, we provide a definition of the ambiguous and, at times, confusing term 'metaverse' and outline its unique characteristics as an emerging ecosystem. Second, we synthesise definitional framing with the violent extremist literature to offer guidance on how the metaverse can (and currently is), manifest in terrorist and extremist activities, such as recruitment, planning, finance, and malevolent creativity. We offer that while the use of the internet is not a novel application for such activities and groups, the metaverse and related technologies afford new opportunities for how the internet is used to advance violent missions and objectives. Third, we draw on psychology literature to offer potential mechanisms by which the metaverse may emerge as a future threat landscape. Future areas of research are also discussed.

Keywords: Metaverse, technology, future threats, novel threats, violent extremism, terrorism, psychology, mixed reality

Corresponding author: Sam Hunter, University of Nebraska, email: samuelhunter@unomaha.edu

Introduction

In 2022, three teens plotted to destroy a virtual Russian building (formerly the KGB building, now the Federal Security Service or FSB building) in the popular *Minecraft* gaming platform.[1] Investigators also reportedly found evidence of testing explosive devices that could have been used in a physical attack that, although unlikely to be successful, would have at least partially mirrored the virtual destruction. All three teens were tried in the Russian court system, with one 15-year-old sentenced to five years in prison after failing a lengthy appeal process.[2] A 2022 report from the *Wall Street Journal* outlined the use of non-fungible tokens (NFTs) by an alleged member of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to both spread extremist propaganda, as well as assess capability around acquiring financial support for the terrorist organisation.[3] Most recently, members of the Houthi, an Iranian-linked terrorist organisation based in Yemen, posted several videos of a hijacking of a cargo ship in the Red Sea. Close inspection of the videos reveals the use of 360-degree video capture devices, allowing groups, such as the Houthi, to share their footage in an immersive, virtual reality format. More directly, this event illustrates how terror groups can not only share videos as part of their propaganda arm but are now afforded the opportunity to allow potential recruits to virtually "go along for the ride" as well. As we will discuss later, this virtual experience can become nearly indistinguishable, from a neuroscience perspective, from having actually experienced the event itself.[4]

The emergence of blended physical and digital environments, known more colloquially as the *metaverse,* has resulted in notable opportunities for collaboration and engagement. Outlined above and discussed in some detail by others, there is a darker side of this emerging landscape and, with it, the potential for use by malign actors, including terrorists and violent extremists.[5] In light of the rapid growth of this emerging technology and associated ecosystem and potential for malign use, we set out to accomplish three goals in the present effort. First, we aim to provide clarity around the ambiguous language used when describing the metaverse and associated technologies. Second, we discuss how the metaverse as an ecosystem provides opportunities for exploitation by malign actors. Finally, we seek to provide guidance as to how and why the metaverse represents a unique and potentially impactful tool for terrorist actors. Specifically, we utilise existing literature from the fields of psychology and computer science to provide guidance as to the mechanisms by which the use of metaverse technologies may be leveraged for harm. In doing so, we aim to go beyond simply describing the problem and providing insight into how and why such technologies represent a new frontier of threat, thereby permitting greater clarity around future interventions and mitigation approaches.

Defining the Metaverse

As with many emerging terms and new forms of technology, (e.g., artificial intelligence, blockchain, and even the internet), the metaverse has been many different things to many different individuals. Although the term *metaverse* first appeared in the 1992 novel Snow Crash, exponential innovation has led to many technological capabilities that were unimaginable, even in science fiction writing of that era. The term metaverse continues to evolve as technology, application, and social views shift and change over time. This change in meaning has been an understandable source of some consternation for some (e.g., Apple's refusal to use the term metaverse, opting instead for the term *spatial computing*). While some continue to think of the metaverse as a purely digital world, industry and academics are increasingly moving beyond this framing, recognising the future implications of technologies that allow for the manipulation of digital information within physical and digital space.

As technology progresses, inevitable change will be experienced in terms of the users, environments, interactions, resources, and systems that are tied together because of the

interconnectedness between the digital and physical. For our discussion here, we follow emerging consensus and define the metaverse as the ecosystem surrounding the blending of physical and digital realities.

The metaverse is defined here as an ecosystem, which includes a combination of various elements that enable humans to experience it directly or indirectly. The term *ecosystem* has been employed to describe the interconnected elements and stakeholders in domains such as information systems and terrorism.[6] Viewing the metaverse as an ecosystem provides a holistic perspective, emphasising both the individual components and their interconnectedness, while fully embracing the potential for growth and change. As an ecosystem, it consists of physical infrastructure, platforms, applications, digital goods, artefacts, human users, communities, standards, and governance. Humans can engage with the metaverse through human-computer interfaces like head-mounted displays or traditional computing devices such as mobile phones. These interfaces offer different levels of interaction, from direct manipulation of computer-generated assets (e.g., spinning a virtual globe) to mediated interfaces affording indirect interaction (e.g., turning on a physical light switch to illuminate a virtual lamp). The metaverse can be observed and engaged with across a spectrum of mediums, ranging from predominantly physical to predominantly digital.[7] On the physical end of the spectrum, augmented reality (AR) devices overlay digital content on top of the physical environment. Conversely, virtual reality (VR) devices fully immerse users in a digital space. Mixed reality (MR) represents an intersection of these environments, where the physical and digital realities blend seamlessly. The term extended reality (XR) includes the entire continuum of technology. The metaverse encompasses this plus an entire ecosystem, including the social and economic dynamics surrounding the emergence of these technologies.

Although XR technologies are crucial for immersive digital experiences, it is necessary to provide additional guidance on the unique aspects of the metaverse. We offer that differentiating properties separating the metaverse from non-metaverse content are best represented by the concepts of spatiality, interoperability, and persistence (SIP). Formally, *spatiality* refers to the orienting of objects in relation to one another. As humans, our sensorial experience of reality is predominantly spatial, allowing users to move and interact with objects and others in a way that feels natural and intuitive. Spatial reasoning and embodied cognition suggest that the human mind is a product of evolutionary adaptations to challenges in a three-dimensional environment. Humans are capable of spatial reasoning and utilise several physical adaptations to allow better interaction in the natural environment and, by extension, spatial digital environments. The second feature, *interoperability*, describes the ability to exchange data and move between experiences, systems, and information technology components efficiently and seamlessly. Today, an object purchased in one virtual experience cannot readily be brought into another. For example, an intelligent robot assistant purchased in one virtual work environment cannot be brought into the digital office of a competing platform provider.

Digital apparel from a work environment cannot be worn in a recreational game by a different developer. Similarly, virtual experiences are often disconnected from one another and do not allow for a user to move between experiences in a seamless manner. Yet, as the metaverse evolves, this interoperability will be key for long-term functionality and sustainability. Finally, *persistence* refers to the ability of an object or data to remain stored and accessible over time. A lack of persistence is presently observed in many of today's video games. An object in a virtual reality game can be destroyed and then restored, or a structure built in a game vanishes when the player logs off. In the metaverse, virtual objects and assets can (and many will) persist over time, serving to establish real value, meaning, and connection. NFTs, for example, are unique digital assets that can be augmented in a way that enhances or detracts from their value.

Although metaverse applications may not always ensure complete persistence, they will be closely tied to an enduring experience. There may be, for example, situations where persistence is intentionally not preserved, such as an object or experience within that is dynamically generated or time-limited to achieve a purpose, such as increased rarity. From an extremism and terrorism perspective, this persistence means that many objects in the metaverse will have value due to their rarity and unique, persistent quality.

It is important to note that several other key aspects (scalability, immersion, etc.) of the metaverse are still crucial in shaping the overall vision and values of the metaverse, even if they are not strictly necessary for its *technical* functioning and sustainability. As an example, scalability is not an absolute requirement for the metaverse to operate as an ecosystem since there could be hypothetical situations where an experience is designed for a small group or even a single individual. Immersion is also critical (though not a wholly essential feature), as experience can exist where various levels of immersion are realised at different moments in time, and there is no minimum or maximum threshold that needs to be maintained. Rather, immersion is an experienced phenomenon that is also best depicted on a continuum. Immersion is a particularly notable aspect of the metaverse in relation to the topic of extremism and will be expanded upon later in our discussion. At one end of a continuum, immersion may be leveraged to showcase propaganda in an emotionally evocative and cognitively powerful manner, yet at the other, a simple digital overlay (i.e., augmented reality) may provide a user with guidance on which door leads to an exit following an attack.

Although competing labels continue to emerge and language also evolves, following a similar trajectory of the internet and personal computing devices, the expansion and ubiquity of what we now call the metaverse will impact nearly every aspect of society and human interaction. Although the notion of the metaverse reached an unsustainable fever pitch in 2022, companies continue to recognise that integrating metaverse technologies into daily lives is unavoidable. A recent report by McKinsey, for example, estimated a five trillion-dollar impact by 2030.[8] As such, although the broad hype of the metaverse has died down, substantive interest from major players in the technology market continues. Citing a recent *Harvard Business Review,* it appears that "Yes, the metaverse is still happening".[9] Most relevant to our discussion here, however, this trajectory both directly and indirectly links to how violent extremist organisations can recruit, plan, and finance their operations by leveraging this ecosystem.

Implications of the Metaverse in the Terrorism and Violent Extremism Context

Given the emergence of metaverse and related extended reality (XR) technologies, we have outlined some of the key features and mechanisms by which these phenomena are structurally different from traditional web-based platforms and experiences. In this section, we shift the focus from understanding what the metaverse is to the implications of this new landscape for violent extremist actors, groups, and organisations. Building off early initial efforts[10] and congruent with recent reviews[11], we offer at least six ways in which the metaverse may be exploited by terrorists to augment their operations and pursue their strategic objectives: (1) radicalisation, (2) recruitment and member selection, (3) operational training and planning, (4), target selection, (5) finance, and (6) malevolent creativity.[12] In such a discussion, it is important to acknowledge the forward-learning nature of this discussion, identifying the potential for malign application in the emerging threat landscape.[13]

Radicalisation

Online radicalisation occurs by means of the internet, social networking sites, and other forms of online communication and reflects a process through which individuals or groups are exposed to and begin to internalise violent extremist beliefs, which may manifest in behaviour and attitudes.[14] There is a wide range of behavioural influence tactics and tools that are subsumed into online radicalisation, which some have tried to delineate between instrumental (e.g., training manuals, and funding) and communicative (e.g., disseminating information, and recruitment). Others have delineated radicalisation as occurring through several types of interactions, such as sharing information that reinforces prior beliefs; disseminating propaganda with additional material support; seeking legitimisation of future attacks; or attempting to recruit.[15] The immersive environment of the metaverse means that interactions may be more effective than traditional online radicalisation via social media or the dark web. A report by PWC, for example, revealed that VR – compared to traditional video conferencing – resulted in greater emotional connection, focus, and confidence.[16] Other studies on VR and interaction highlight reports of higher social connection as well.[17]

Extended reality offers capabilities for making these interactions more personalised and emotionally evocative. Given the unique features of Web 3.0, the metaverse, and related XR technologies, extremist content – including propaganda or disinformation – can be created and disseminated quickly and effectively,[18] and with fewer established mechanisms for content moderation and monitoring. With the advent of realistic and natural-looking avatars, as well as an influx of data about users on social media (e.g., their interests, photos of their families, etc.), individuals could have a face-to-face interaction in a virtual setting customised to their interests and prior beliefs. Deepfakes – AI-generated images, videos, and voices – as well as realistic-looking avatars, can provoke emotional reactions among users. This may even further reveal the "blurry" intersection between offline and online extremist behaviour.[19] Technological advances afford additional opportunities for realistic interactions and provide a stronger foundation for cultivating influence. These can be generated quickly and customised to increase susceptibility to radicalisation.

Recruitment and Member Selection

Although organisations differ in their goals, be they for good or ill, all face common challenges.[20] One of those ubiquitous challenges is deciding who should join the organisation and what role they should play in it. Hunter and colleagues[21], for example, outline the tools used by al-Qaeda in recruiting and selecting members for their terrorist organisation. These tools and techniques (e.g., interviews, life history, and online applications) mirror those used by many, if not most, corporations. Given the parallels, it seems reasonable to consider how metaverse tools used to select members in traditional organisations could also be adopted by extremists.

Admittedly simplifying for space constraints, web-based recruitment processes often follow several distinct phases.[22] First, recruiters who monitor online communities make initial contact with an individual, usually of a vulnerable population (e.g., individuals seeking community). Next, the recruiter invites the individual to a micro-community, where they share information in a private community and reinforce feelings of belonging or exclusivity among members.[23] This is where, historically, the interaction has involved voice or video conversation. Interactions using technology in the metaverse ecosystem, however, provide unique and increased opportunities for interaction while leveraging the cost-effective (e.g., not requiring the cost of travel while still experiencing nearly in-person equivalent interaction) and customisable (e.g., avatar choice, and location choice) options, made available via digital content. As noted earlier, these immersive experiences can be superior to voice or video engagement for generating feelings of presence and closeness.[24]

Moreover, younger users are more likely to engage in virtual and augmented reality learning and coordination, allowing a wider range of recruits to be accessed quickly.[25] To provide context on these trends, 70 percent of US children aged 9-12 play the game Roblox, with a whopping 70 million daily users worldwide.[26] Roblox has also recently entered the VR space as well, highlighting the trend toward immersive spaces.[27] These and future advances in technology will remedy constraints on traditional forms of recruitment, as recruiters rely on emerging virtual online communities to seek out and connect with individuals in search of connection and community. In the case of Roblox, there are already issues with extremist content – a trend likely to increase as the user base expands.[28]

Operational Training and Planning

There are several features to the metaverse and other extended reality technologies that may afford extremist organisations new capabilities related to operational training and planning. Training aids the acquisition of knowledge and strengthens skills, as well as captures cognitive, behavioural, and affective development.[29] In the context of violent extremism, following radicalisation and recruitment, virtual learning occurs to socialise and instruct behaviours, such as accessing ideological content, opting for violence, choosing a target, preparing an attack, overcoming anticipated hurdles, and coordinating with fellow members (e.g., security measures).

Traditional means of operational teaching have taken place in various terrorist training camps around the world, such as the Khaldan Training Camp in Afghanistan.[30] Examples of common training outcomes include (but are not limited to), how to mount a rocket launcher onto a truck, how to build an improvised explosive device, how and where to launder money, how to successfully surveil, and more. Many such camps share a number of common characteristics. First, they are geographically isolated to build group identity and cohesion (and avoid detection). Second, these are often under sustained pressure as regular targets of directed counter-terrorism initiatives. Finally, these camps require easy access to weapons, ammunition, food, and water.[31] These characteristics pose constraints to individuals wanting to join an organisation from across the world. However, the advent of social media, the metaverse, and related technologies have created new opportunities for distance learning approximating "hands-on" teaching and development.

To be clear, the internet has already created robust opportunities for online engagement with extremist organisations. However, Web 2.0 applications limit access to tactical training required to execute an attack. Reading a training manual is not the same as multiple people walking through an interactive digital version in real-time. In contrast, immersive environments, full-body haptic suits, and augmented reality can allow individuals to train together despite their geographic location. Consider a scenario in which an individual visits a shooting range to practice shooting their desired target (in the form of augmented reality holograms) instead of paper target practice. In a different scenario, an individual practices loading and shooting semi-automatic weapons within a virtual reality immersive shooting range while wearing a full-body haptic feedback suit. In both examples, the individuals are tactically and operationally preparing themselves to shoot a weapon correctly and accurately, as well as desensitising themselves to real-world outcomes. Immersive technology, as well as haptic feedback and extended reality, create new opportunities and remedy constraints to tactical, operational, and affective training activities for extremist organisations.[32]

Second, terrorist organisations can use virtual spaces to plan and prepare for attacks in the physical world. For example, using a VR headset, an individual can visit a virtual location (i.e., a "digital twin") of a critical infrastructure target, such as a power substation or water treatment

facility. During their virtual visit, a prospective attacker can determine the potential for harm to surrounding infrastructure, and the best place to target based on traffic, flow, and the scale of the target. Planning is an essential step in the attack process, where they begin to decide whether their goals will be met by virtually exploring options. Because they are in an undisclosed location, wearing a headset, and using a publicly available app, this type of selection planning goes unnoticed and cannot be reported.

Target Selection

Related to the above, extremist and terrorist organisations choose an attack location as a function of their strategic goals, which include recruiting, inciting fear, and maximising harm. In this case, the rise of the metaverse as an ecosystem allows for new targets to emerge within these digital spaces. Ultimately, terrorists use violence as a vehicle for communicating a political message and driving social and political change.[33] Targets are selected carefully and strategically to align with the perpetrator's desired outcomes, which requires close attention to the political, social, and symbolic value of a target.[34]

The metaverse and related technologies will likely affect target selection in at least two ways. First, terrorist organisations can choose virtual targets, such as digital twins of sacred spaces (e.g., virtual Mecca), or municipal buildings (e.g., virtual embassies and police stations). These opportunities are readily available in virtual environments, as there is very little infrastructure for preventing such attacks. As a recent example, the opening of a Holocaust Museum in the online space Fortnite had to be delayed due to threats of harm to the space.[35] These spaces afford individuals the opportunity to travel or visit museums from the comfort of their homes. However, as the example above highlights, it also presents vulnerabilities to places and objects that are meaningful to individuals. For example, the Virtual Black Stone project created the digital twin of Mecca, the holiest city in Islam.[36] This initiative allows users who have purchased a VR headset (or "Kaaba glasses") to participate in communal live streaming of prayer, and virtually touch the Black Stone or other three-dimensional replicas.[37] The blurring of digital and physical worlds will result in more people transferring to the metaverse to visit digital replicas of vacation destinations, museums, and places of worship. As these soft targets enter the metaverse more readily and with little to no protection, they become the newest grounds for a potential act of violence.

Finance

Terrorist and extremist organisations raise money to conduct their operations and exist as an organisation. Historically, these organisations have raised money from a variety of sources: state sponsorship, theft, international smuggling, drugs, extortion, money laundering, and donations. These funds are used to build training camps, provide food and housing to members, pay salaries, and acquire guns, explosives, triggers, training simulations, fake documents, and technology-mediated communication.[38] The emergence and widespread use of cryptocurrencies and NFTs, in particular, serve as the foundation for how organisations can use the metaverse and related technologies to move money and generate revenue (and some already are doing this). More directly, as a digital ecosystem, the metaverse is built on blockchain and cryptocurrency, meaning that concerns about these finance tools have even greater applicability in the metaverse.[39]

The metaverse may prove an ideal environment for the laundering and transfer of funds controlled by terrorist actors. For example, laundering money via NFT art sales is ambiguous and lucrative, whereby substantial money can be exchanged, without regulation and with limited risk.[40] Transferring money within Web 3.0 allows for greater anonymity, lower fees, and minimal physical infrastructure. Generating revenue will likely mirror established approaches but capitalise on unique features of extended reality technologies. Donation pools will increase,

as methods of sending money can go unnoticed. For instance, imagine a teenager is radicalised after spending time in VR and decides to send money to a foreign terrorist organisation. Instead of using PayPal, which exists on a centralised platform, they decided to anonymously send money via decentralised Web 3.0. Other methods, including scams, identity theft, and extortion, will likely use AI, deepfakes, NFTs, and biometric data.[41]

Malevolent Innovation and Creativity

Although creativity and innovation have traditionally been depicted as more positive or benevolent phenomena, researchers have recently begun to acknowledge that malign actors are also quite capable of novel ideation and implementation.[42] Malign and malevolent creativity may come in a variety of forms, yet technology is often a means by which novel attacks and other kinds of harm are deployed.[43] Along these lines, researchers have examined the impact technology can have on shaping creativity and innovation. Although there is some variability in the precise nature of the impact, technological advances have generally been linked to enhanced creative production.[44] As a specific example, in a sample of engineering students, Starkey and colleagues examined virtual vs. physical product dissection, where participants disassembled products to learn about inner workings and mechanisms, prior to generating new mechanical designs for a dart gun. Comparing the creativity of the dart gun models developed, the researchers found that virtual product dissection resulted in greater creativity than physical product dissection. That is, manipulating products in a virtual environment produces more creative ideas than manipulating physical products.

The emergent argument here is that advances in technology serve as the backbone to how the metaverse will result in greater potential for novel idea production. Most relevant to the present effort is that this appears true for both malevolent and benevolent forms of creativity, although a few points are warranted when discussing malevolent forms of creativity. The first is that increased anonymity linked to the metaverse will allow for the sharing of harmful ideas that are novel, further increasing this form of creativity. Consider, for example, the case of Seif Allah Hammami, who learned of developing the poison ricin from encrypted chats on Telegram.[45] The second is that the metaverse will allow for the prototyping and testing of novel attacks or approaches in digital twin contexts. That is, as the metaverse continues to map the physical world and create a digital analogue, there will be the potential to engage in simulations using those digital twins. As exploration and testing are critical to successful innovation, the metaverse will allow for novel ideation and development in ways not possible prior to the ubiquity of such technology. Although other examples exist, the takeaway here is that creativity and innovation will increase with advances in metaverse technology. This trend will be true for both benevolent and malevolent forms, with non-trivial advances unique to more malevolent innovative outcomes.

How and Why Immersive Metaverse Experiences Will Uniquely Create In-Roads for Violent Extremism: Social and Psychological Mechanisms

In the previous section, we offered ways that the metaverse may be leveraged by extremists to further violent ends. Yet, to better understand the vulnerabilities of users while in the metaverse, it is necessary to detail the mechanisms by which this emerging ecosystem can have a unique impact. Although admittedly not comprehensive due to space constraints, we draw on theories and mechanisms in the fields of psychology and computer science to provide guidance on how and why the metaverse represents an area worthy of consideration by terrorism researchers. More directly, the state of science in these fields offers a deeper understanding of how, and to what extent, the vulnerabilities identified in earlier sections can affect users in a digital

world. Moreover, by understanding these mechanisms, researchers and practitioners can more effectively and directly combat attempts to leverage the capabilities of the metaverse applied for malign ends.

Engagement in a Mixed Reality World – Potential Implications

A key to understanding the metaverse is recognising the potential for immersive experiences uniquely offered by XR technology, and VR in particular. As noted earlier in our discussion, immersion in the digital world is the sense of being in the virtual setting, a phenomenon defined by both technological and user-focused contributions (e.g., custom avatar creation) in the metaverse. High-speed fifth-generation internet, artificial intelligence-powered tools, advances in lenses, and cloud computing can optimise immersion, as well as virtual avatars that deploy similar human-like behaviours and attitudes. These tools, as well as digital twinning with environments that look and feel natural to the physical world aid interconnected experiences on metaverse and extended reality platforms. Users' minds and bodies become unable to differentiate between physical and digital experiences, as they all feel real when immersed. More directly, neuroscientists have begun using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) machines to examine participants' brain while using these devices, revealing similar patterns of stimulation when using metaverse devices as compared to physical experiences.[46] In other words, emerging research indicates that as metaverse devices advance, our brains cannot distinguish between virtual and physical realities. Consider the capturing of 360-degree video by the terrorist group the Houthis mentioned at the outset. An individual viewing that event in an immersive device would form memories and sensations akin to experiencing that attack as if they were a member boarding that ship via helicopter. This is not to suggest full equivalence of such experiences, of course, but rather to underscore that engagement using XR devices would represent a non-trivial escalation from historical means of sharing terrorist propaganda. Colloquially speaking, it's a notable step-up from watching disinformation and propaganda videos on cozy.tv or kick.com.

Empathy and Perspective Taking

Extending the conversation from above, due to the immersive nature of a fully realised, 3D digital world, users may feel notable empathy towards other avatars or digital representations, thereby offering another tool to be leveraged by malign actors. That is, VR, AR, and XR devices afford greater immersion and challenge the brain's capacity to distinguish digital individuals from physical ones. As such, seeing a digital avatar will elicit empathy on par with a person standing in front of you. Empathy is comprised of two subdimensions: cognitive empathy and emotional empathy.[47] Cognitive empathy, the ability to understand the feelings of others, is elicited by conscious and effortful mental processes, whereas emotional empathy is the ability to feel concern for others and occurs automatically through unconscious processing.[48] This combination of explicit and implicit processes is described as a dual-process system by psychologists. In the context of VR, evidence suggests that such experiences can improve emotional empathy.[49] This occurs because the immersive nature of VR allows explicit presentation of thoughts and feelings of others eliminating the need to engage in conscious mental effort. Through implicit, emotional empathy, VR users can feel for others, but are not required to think about the perspectives of others through cognitive empathy consciously.

Given such implicit empathy, users subjected to emotion eliciting content will feel deep and genuine concern for what they witnessed. Eliciting empathy and concern are typically pro-social human emotions, but the ease of doing so using immersive technologies coupled with the increased range of audiences are also conducive to fear garnering tactics used by extremists.

Eliciting fear through violence is not novel to the metaverse and, instead, represents an extension of current tactics on the part of extremist organisations. ISIS, for example, prioritises inciting fear through violent propaganda on YouTube.[50] Using these methods of propaganda distribution, terror groups share graphic acts of violence, such as beheadings.[51] However, improvements to video fidelity and a sense of immersion afforded by metaverse technologies have the potential to amplify this effect in a non-trivial way. The immersion triggers deep and automatic empathetic concern before conscious mental effort even occurs. That is, even a short exposure to violent imagery could instil fear before the propaganda is removed. In the case of deepfakes, fear tactics can target individuals by modifying the appearance of victims to appear similar to onlookers (i.e., seeing oneself or a family member harmed or tortured). The immersive nature combined with self-prioritising processes likely means the psychological response of fear is more rapid than that provoked by preceding forms of propaganda.[52]

Copresence and Social Presence

When describing immersion in a virtual environment, computer scientists rely on psychological copresence and social presence to describe interacting with other users in the environment. More specifically, these phenomena provide scaffolding for forming relationships and socialising in a digital environment. Copresence is the sense of mind and connection with an individual, leading to mutual perception of each other.[53] Social presence is the degree of salience between individuals in an interaction. It is described as the feeling of psychological proximity, closeness, connectedness, and intimacy with one another via the medium of communication.[54] When avatar behavioural realism and visual realism are not aligned (e.g., delays in avatar movements or an avatar displays inappropriate facial expressions during a conversation), the perception of social presence is lower.

5G network speed and dissemination of information facilitate a greater sense of presence and copresence when users are immersed in a digital environment. Both phenomena are necessary factors for a user to feel and sense they are truly in their virtual world. It is impossible for a user to embody their avatar and immerse themselves without these phenomena present, as they explain why and how users feel connected to their digital environments and can build relationships with other digital users.

The importance of copresence and social presence to extremism has been touched on in our earlier section, but examples include activities such as recruitment, where a leader would be able to remotely connect with a potential member in a way that feels immediate, rich, and immersive due to the capabilities of emerging metaverse technologies. That is, advanced technological capabilities can make recruits feel as if they are spending time with a terror group in real-time. Similarly, the ability to plan and coordinate attacks from a distance is also afforded due to copresence and social presence. As speed and technology improve, the ability to practice and coordinate specific timing of events is also increased. As a final illustration, the sense of connection to a larger group and being part of a community is facilitated with this technology and moves beyond a typical listserv, chatroom, or even video call. In other words, members can meet and build kinship remotely in a way that is similar to – and with the benefits of – an in-person event, while limiting exposure to an attack or entities (e.g., the FBI) creating records of meeting attendance (if anonymity protocols are applied).

Sense of Embodiment

Moving from perceiving others in the environment to feeling connected to one's digital self, sense of embodiment (SoE) describes the unconscious process of feeling one's own body.[55] Cognitive neuroscientists describe this sensation as how the brain expresses the body related to having, being in, and controlling a virtual body. Computer scientists suggest SoE is related

to bottom-up information (e.g., visual and tactile) and top-down information (e.g., cognitive processes that modulate processing sensory stimuli). To illustrate these information processes, Botvinick and Cohen conducted experiments to investigate the rubber hand illusion. The core function of these experiments was to induce the embodiment of an artificial hand. During the experiment, participants were placed in front of a rubber hand while their hand was obstructed from view. The participant's hand was then stroked with a paintbrush while the rubber hand was also being stroked. Participants began to take ownership of the rubber hand in front of them after some time.[56] When that hand is attacked, genuine fear and protection of that hand occurs. Participants gasp, snatch their hands away, and spike physiological stress responses. They know their hand is safe, but the brain builds connections that are quite real to the body. The implication for terrorism is that as users engage with metaverse devices, users' brains begin to inform the body that the experience has real danger and the experience, physiologically speaking, is nearly as real as a physical experience.

There are three classes of embodiment: self-location, agency, and body ownership.[57] Self-location is related to a user's point of view, which can determine the spatial relationships of one's avatar and their virtual body.[58] More specifically, the sense of self-location is greater in first-person than in third-person views. Put simply, the sense of self-location impacts how a user perceives themselves to be located in their digital environment. Sense of agency is related to one's ability to control one's avatar. Congruent physical and virtual body movements contribute to a high sense of agency, whereas discrepancies or keyboard-controlled movements tend to decrease one's sense of agency.[59] Agency plays an important role in recognising one's actions and impacts ownership of digital selves.[60] One's self-location and agency influences their body ownership, or sense of ownership, over their avatar. Congruent visual, motor, and tactile movements from a first-person point of view impact one's sense of ownership to the greatest extent. For example, when users have an extra body part, say a virtual tail, their sense of ownership is higher when they can control it by moving their hips.[61] Together, the sense of embodiment describes the sensations related to having, being located in, and controlling a virtual body.[62]

The illusionary ownership of one's avatar, achieved by a synchronous first-person point of view, is also described as a body swap illusion. This phenomenon describes users perceiving their physical bodies as swapping with their digital selves.[63] Body swap illusion can be induced by placing individuals in a multi-sensory stimulation in a first-person perspective. Keizer et al. induced the illusion with participants suffering from anorexia nervosa. Throughout the study, participants perceived stimulation (e.g., haptic feedback) on their physical bodies while viewing the same stimulation on their virtual avatars. Participants of these studies reported decreased body-size overestimation. When manipulating visual and auditory feedback, body swap illusion can be induced, potentially impacting users' behaviour.[64] Although these phenomena could be leveraged by malign actors in a variety of ways, several come to mind initially. The first is by facilitating a sense of dehumanisation by placing recruits or members into avatars that promote a loss of individuality (e.g., making all recruits look the same). This dehumanisation process is used by terrorist groups to allow greater control over members for acts of violence.[65] A second illustration would be placing a member in the avatar of a victim who was attacked by an adversary. This would allow a member to experience that attack and develop an intimate desire for justice or revenge. Imagine, for example, experiencing the attack on a wedding procession in Yemen from the eyes of the bride and the impact that would have on a member then tasked with retribution.[66]

Proteus Effect

When a user feels a sense of ownership or body swaps with their avatar, behavioural or attitudinal changes are defined as the proteus effect. The proteus effect explains an individual's likelihood to conform to how they believe their embodied avatar should act.[67] The effect received its name from the Greek god Proteus, known for his ability to change shape and alter reality. Because users often represent themselves differently online, their behaviours may subsequently change to match their new, desired appearances.[68] Rooted in self-perception theory, users can customise their avatars' appearances, leading users to choose their appearances and subsequent attitudes and behaviours. Some studies suggest that users who perceive their avatars as being attractive act more extroverted and friendly, and taller avatars were perceived as more confident and in positions of power.[69] The proteus effect, a manifestation of body ownership, serves as a foundational aspect of immersive experiences.

The key here, from a terrorism perspective, is that the proteus effect is a lasting effect outside of the immediate virtual reality experience. That is, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes persist post-engagement. As such, this phenomenon could be leveraged by malign actors by using metaverse technologies as a starting point for indoctrination, recognising that those perceptions will persist once they stop using those technologies. That is, the proteus effect illustrates how immersive experiences and their impacts do not end once the devices are removed.

Place Illusion and Plausibility Illusion

An extension to the proteus effect involves place and plausibility illusions. Fully immersive experiences cause the lines between digital and physical worlds to blur, resulting in the belief that one is actually in the digital environment and interacting or connecting with others. Along these same lines, users start to believe that the things they see or experience actually happen. Similar to waking up from a bad dream and thinking about it throughout the day, situations or scenarios that occur in an immersive digital environment can have lasting effects on witnesses. Consider the drone attack on the wedding processional noted earlier and the long-term effect experiencing that event in an immersive environment would produce.

Formally, place illusion is the belief of being in a virtual environment despite the user knowing they are not there.[70] Similar to the body swap illusion, users can look down and see their avatar's body. There is no direct way to measure place illusion, but some researchers have compared responses between digital and physical environments.[71] Plausibility illusion is defined as the belief that a scenario in a digital environment actually occurred.[72] This illusion happens when events are not directly caused by the user and their own sensations, such as another avatar speaking or walking towards the user's avatar. These different immersion illusions can cause users to become vulnerable to their digital environments. For example, a woman reported being virtually sexually assaulted by a group of 3-4 avatars with male voices while beta testing the VR platform Horizon Worlds. Due to the nature of virtual reality, the user could not differentiate their experiences between physical and virtual.[73] Explained by the place and plausibility illusions, users feel as though their virtual experiences really happened to their physical bodies. Taken together, these phenomena outline the mechanisms by which the metaverse and related technologies are a step forward in the potential for malign application by terrorists.

Limitations

Although our review here provides an overview of key features of the metaverse, related technologies, and mechanisms for malign application, several limitations should be borne in mind. First, although many organisations have dedicated significant resources to building the metaverse as an ecosystem, there is some indication of shifting interest. The company

Meta (formerly Facebook), for example, has recently shifted resources from VR/XR/MR to AI. Although these trends are notable, they are also expected as interest waxes and wanes in new technology. Moreover, the investment and focus on AI are not mutually exclusive to the metaverse, as AI may similarly be leveraged by malign actors in ways related to (e.g., creating 3D environments quickly and easily) and unique from the metaverse itself (e.g., flying autonomous drone swarms).[74] Tempered views are warranted, however, in predicting the future of digital and physical intersections. Second, given space constraints, we were not able to detail all psychological mechanisms by which the metaverse may be leveraged by malign actors. Although we hope that our discussion provides a starting point, these mechanisms are not comprehensive and as such should be viewed as a limitation. Finally, many of the examples provided are speculative in nature, drawing on current trajectories and pairing them with what is likely in the future. Nonetheless, our work here is forward-leaning and should be viewed as such, conceding the likelihood of proving incorrect in some instances.

Future Research

When discussing what might be done to limit the range, reach, and impact of extremist organisations it is clear that a number of knowledge gaps remain. Although space does not permit a discussion of every gap, we offer two areas that warrant consideration in future efforts. The first is an examination of the differences between domestic and foreign actors. As an analogy, we may turn to drone use capability and how drones have been adopted by terrorist groups across the globe. Conceding a nuanced history, the success of commercial drones in delivering lethal payloads in the Middle East paired with their commercial availability now makes them appealing to extremists in the US.[75] That is, this technology has emerged as a credible, if not novel, domestic threat despite its use originating outside of the US. Highlighting the unique characteristics and challenges of terrorism in the metaverse. However, this analogy only works when the avatar we might engage within a digital environment may be a neighbour who subscribes to white nationalist ideology or a member of ISIS based in West Africa. Moreover, the digital nature of interaction means that these geographically dispersed groups could find common ground in digital spaces. Stated more broadly, it will be critical to examine differences (if they exist) between how foreign terrorist organisations and domestic violent extremists use the metaverse for malign purposes, as well as how these groups may blend in the often anonymous, richly connected digital environment.

Second, we offer that the emergence of dynamic, communication-rich, and deeply embedded forms of technology – such as the metaverse – may result in their own form of ideological rejection. Like racially and ethnically motivated violent extremists (REMVE), Salafi Jihadists, or anti-government, anti-authority violent extremists (AGAAVE), we may see an "anti-metaverse" ideology formed. Ted Kaczynski, also known as the Unabomber, has either inspired or been linked to groups and communities such as anarchists, neo-Luddites, primitivists, and ecofascists. In his manifesto, *Industrial Society and Its Future*, he makes a number of arguments including that humans are psychologically and biologically maladapted to a society that is grounded in a technological system. This sentiment is evident in some circles today, as modern groups gravitate toward similar ideologies, albeit in less violent ways. Indeed, there is a growing sentiment among some youth groups that refer to themselves as Luddite teens or the Luddite club who are actively opposed to the rich forms of technology that continue to evolve and permeate our lives.[76] Thus, it will be critical that those in law enforcement and homeland security consider how current extremist groups may leverage the metaverse, while also recognising that the very existence of the metaverse may result in extremists seeking to push against it.

Summary and Concluding Comments

To summarise, this exploration of the metaverse's implications for violent extremism and terrorism underscores the urgent need for interdisciplinary research and proactive measures. Our review highlights the metaverse's potential to revolutionise not only societal interactions but also the methods by which extremist ideologies are propagated and operationalised. By defining the metaverse, illustrating its use in extremist activities, and delving into the psychological underpinnings that make such technologies potent tools for radicalisation and terror, we lay the groundwork for understanding the emerging threat landscape.

Key themes include the unique affordances of the metaverse for recruitment, planning, and execution of extremist acts; the role of immersive technologies in enhancing radicalisation and operational training; and the novel challenges these developments pose to content moderation, security, and counter-terrorism efforts. The call for future research emphasises the importance of distinguishing between the uses of the metaverse by different extremist groups, addressing the originality bias in threat assessment, and considering the potential for anti-technology extremism. This analysis not only illuminates the complexities of the metaverse as a double-edged sword but also underscores the critical need for collaborative efforts to navigate the challenges it presents to global security. The metaverse as a concept is equally amorphous as it is complex. It continues to evolve as an idea, yet there is consensus that it will impact the lives of many. We stand now with the initial surge of interest quieting and the real process of technological change beginning. Extended reality hardware will become embedded in our lives, and all forms will become cheaper and easier to use. Software will be developed and, with the support of AI, also be easier to deploy by an army of content makers. Without expressly knowing it, AR and VR will quietly seep into our lives. With that immersion and embeddedness comes access. Doctors can more readily fix our bodies, families can connect in ways unimaginable a generation prior, instructors and professors can show us rather than lecturing to us. And of course, malign actors will have a new platform and a novel tool in their behavioural influence arsenal. No meaningful force has ever landed squarely on the side of benevolence, be it gunpowder, nuclear fission, or the printing press. Rather, it is incumbent to embrace and protect those with benevolent aims and prepare for those with malevolent intent. We hope this discussion moves the needle on both.

Dr Sam Hunter is a Regents-Foundation Professor of Organizational Psychology at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the Head of Strategic Initiatives at the National Counterterrorism, Innovation, and Technology (NCITE) centre of excellence. His primary areas of research include leadership and innovation with a particular focus on malign application of each.
Twitter: @dr_samhunter

Alexis d'Amato is an Industrial and Organizational Psychology PhD student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Marketing and Management from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Her research interests include conventional and malevolent creativity and creativity training. Twitter: @alexis_damato

Dr Joel Elson is an Assistant Professor of IT Innovation at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and serves as a Principal Investigator at the National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education (NCITE) Centre. His research focuses on human-computer interaction, mixed-initiative teaming, and cyber-influence, particularly exploring trust and its impact on behaviour and decision-making. Elson specialises in eye-tracking instrumentation to measure intangible latent

constructs. He has collaborated with local businesses, Fortune 500 companies, and government agencies, including the US Department of Defense and the US Department of Homeland Security, conducting applied research on innovative technology for counter-terrorism and identifying emerging threats.

Dr Austin C Doctor is the director of counter-terrorism research initiatives at the National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education (NCITE) Center, a Department of Homeland Security Centre of Excellence, and a political scientist at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He has served as a non-resident fellow with the Modern War Institute at the United States Military Academy at West Point as well as the National Strategic Research Institute, a Department of Defense University Affiliated Research Center. He earned his PhD at the University of Georgia. His research focuses on militants, terrorism, and emerging threats. Twitter: @austincdoctor

Averie Linnel is an Industrial and Organisational Psychology PhD student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Her research interests include conventional and malevolent creativity. Twitter: @AverieLinnell

Endnotes

1 Lik-Hang Lee, Tristan Braud, Pengyuan Zhou, Lin Wang, Dianlei Xu, Zijun Lin, Abhishek Kumar, Carlos Bermejo, and Pan Hui. "All one needs to know about metaverse: A complete survey on technological singularity, virtual ecosystem, and research agenda." *Journal of Latex Class Files,* 14, no. 8 (September 2021): 1-66.

2 Ibid.

3 Ian Talley, "Islamic State Turns to NFTs to Spread Terror Message." *The Wall Street Journal*, 6 September 2022, https://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-turns-to-nfts-to-spread-terror-message-11662292800.

4 Y. H. Chou, Carol P. Weingarten, David J. Madden, Allen W. Song, and N. K. Chen. "Applications of virtual reality technology in brain imaging studies." *Virtual Reality in Psychological, Medical and Pedagogical Applications, ed. C. Eichenberg (Croatia: InTech)* (2012): 203-228; Farzin Hajebrahimi, Halil Aziz Velioglu, Zubeyir Bayraktaroglu, Nesrin Helvaci Yilmaz, and Lutfu Hanoglu. "Clinical evaluation and resting state fMRI analysis of virtual reality-based training in Parkinson's disease through a randomized controlled trial." *Scientific Reports* 12, no. 1 (2022): 8024.

5 S. Joel Elson, Austin C. Doctor, and Samuel T. Hunter. "The Metaverse offers a future full of potential– for terrorists and extremists, too." *The Conversation*, 7 January 2022, https://theconversation.com/the-metaverse-offers-afuture-full-of-potential-for-terrorists-and-extremists-too-173622; Gabriel Weimann and Roy Dimant, "The Metaverse and Terrorism: Threats and Challenges." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 17, no. 2 (June 2023): 92-107; Suraj Lakhani, "When Digital and Physical World Combine: The Metaverse and Gamification of Violent Extremism." *Perspectives on Terrorism,* 17, no. 2, (June 2023): 108-178.

6 Jiajing Wu, Kaixin Lin, Dan Lin, Ziye Zheng, Huawei Huang, and Zibin Zheng. "Financial Crimes in Web3-empowered Metaverse: Taxonomy, Countermeasures, and Opportunities." *IEEE Open Journal of the Computer Society* 4 (2023): 37-49; Jade Hutchinson, Julian Droogan, Lise Waldek, Jade Hutchinson, and Brian Ballsun-Stanton. "Violent extremist & REMVE online ecosystems: Ecological characteristics for future research & conceptualization." *Resolve Network* (2022): 6-31.

7 Sophie Morosoli, Peter Van Aelst, Edda Humprecht, Anna Staender, and Frank Esser. "Identifying the drivers behind the dissemination of online misinformation: a study on political attitudes and individual characteristics in the context of engaging with misinformation on social media." *American Behavioral Scientist* (2022): 1-20; Richard Skarbez, Missie Smith, and Mary C. Whitton. "Revisiting milgram and kishino's reality-virtuality continuum." *Frontiers in Virtual Reality* 2 (March 2021).

8 McKinsey (2022) "Value creation in the metaverse, 2.02/2023." McKinsey & Company, https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/valuecreation-in-the-metaverse.

9 Deborah Piscione and Drean, Josh. "Yes, the metaverse is still happening." *Harvard Business Review* (May 2023).

10 See Elson, et al. (2022)

11 See Weimann and Dimant (2023); Lakhani (2023)

12 Bajwa, Aman. "Malevolent Creativity & the Metaverse: How the immersive properties of the metaverse may facilitate the spread of a mass shooter's culture." *The Journal of Intelligence, Conflict, and Warfare* 5, no. 2 (2022): 32-52; Weimann and Dimant (2023); Lakhani (2023)

13 Weimann and Dimant (2023); Lakhani (2023)

14 Michael Breazeale, Erin G. Pleggenkuhle-Miles, Mackenzie Harms, and Gina Scott Ligon. "The dark side of CRM: Brand relationships and violent extremist organisations," in *The Dark Side of CRM*, edited by Bang Nguyen, Lyndon Simkin, and Ana Isabel Canhoto, 192-214. Routledge, 2015; Maja Golf-Papez, Jonas Heller, Tim Hilken, Mathew Chylinski, Ko de Ruyter, Debbie I. Keeling, and Dominik Mahr. "Embracing falsity through the metaverse: The case of synthetic customer experiences." *Business Horizons* 65, no. 6 (2022): 739-749; Peter R. Neumann, "The trouble with radicalization." *International Affairs* 89, no. 4 (2013): 873-893; Joe Whittaker, "Rethinking online radicalization." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 16, no. 4 (2022): 27-40; Bart Schuurman, "Non-Involvement in Terrorist Violence." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 14, no. 6 (2020): 14-26.

15 Austin L. Wright, "Terrorism, ideology and target selection." *The Pearson Institute Discussion Paper,* no. 9 (2013): 1-31; Paul Gill, Emily Corner, Amy Thornton, and Maura Conway, "What are the roles of the Internet in terrorism? Measuring online behaviours of convicted UK terrorists." *VOX Pol* (2015):10-34.

16 PWC Network. "What Does Virtual Reality and the Metaverse Mean for Training." https://www.pwc.com/us/en/tech-effect/emerging-tech/virtual-reality-study.html. Accessed 30 January 2024.

17 Bronwyn, Tarr, Mel Slater, and Emma Cohen. "Synchrony and social connection in immersive virtual reality." *Scientific Reports* 8, no. 1 (2018): 3693.

18 Don Fallis, "The varieties of disinformation," in *The Philosophy of Information Quality*, edited by Luciano Floridi and Phyllis Illari, 135-161. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2014.

19 Whittaker, (2022): 32; Paul Gill et al., "Terrorist Use of the Internet by the Numbers: Quantifying Behaviors, Patterns, and Processes," *Criminology and Public Policy*, 16(1), (2017): 114.

20 Jacob N. Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma: Managing Violent Covert Organizations.* Princeton University Press, 2013.

21 Hunter, et al. (2017)

22 J. M. Berger, "Tailored online interventions: The Islamic state's recruitment strategy." *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 10 (2015): 19-23.

23 Ibid; Martha Crenshaw, "I've Studied Terrorism for over 40 Years. Let's Talk about What Comes Next." *The New York Times*, 10 February 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/10/opinion/capitol-terrorism-right-wing-proud-boys.html.

24 Abraham G. Campbell, Thomas Holz, Jonny Cosgrove, Mike Harlick, and Tadhg O'Sullivan. "Uses of virtual reality for communication in financial services: A case study on comparing different telepresence interfaces: Virtual reality compared to video conferencing." In *Advances in Information and Communication: Proceedings of the 2019 Future of Information and Communication Conference (FICC), Volume 1*, pp. 463-481. Springer International Publishing, 2020.

25 Gill, Corner, Thornton, and Conway (2015).

26 Matthew Ball, *The Metaverse: And How It Will Revolutionize Everything*. Liveright Publishing, 2022.

27 Jay Peters, "Roblox is Now Available to Try on Meta Quest VR Headsets." *The Verge*, 2023, https://www.theverge.com/2023/7/27/23810093/meta-quest-roblox-vr-headsets-beta.

28 *The Guardian.* "Online Gaming Platforms Such as Roblox Used as "Trojan Horse" for Extremist Recruitment of Children, AFP warns. https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/dec/03/online-gaming-platforms-such-as-roblox-used-as-trojan-horse-for-extremist-recruitment-of-children-afp-warns. Accessed 30 January 2024.

29 Den Ladden-Hall, "Russian Teen's Sentence Upheld in Minecraft Terrorism Case." *The Daily Beast*, 17 January 2013, https://www.thedailybeast.com/russia-upholds-sentence-against-teen-who-planned-to-blow-up-fsb-building-in-minecraft.

30 Michael J. Franklin,and Stanley B. Zdonik. "Dissemination-based Information Systems." *IEEE Data Eng. Bull.* 19, no. 3 (1996): 20-30.

31 Ibid.

32 Jakob Fröhner, Gionata Salvietti, Philipp Beckerle, and Domenico Prattichizzo. "Can Wearable Haptic Devices Foster the Embodiment of Virtual Limbs?" *IEEE transactions on haptics* 12, no. 3 (2018): 339-349.

33 Victor H. Asal, R. Karl Rethemeyer, Ian Anderson, Allyson Stein, Jeffrey Rizzo, and Matthew Rozea. "The Softest of Targets: A Study on Terrorist Target Selection." *Journal of Applied Security Research* 4, no. 3 (2009): 258-278.

34 R. Kim Cragin, "Virtual and Physical Realities: Violent Extremists' Recruitment of Individuals Associated with the US Military." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (2022): 1-22.

35 Sarah Cascone, "The Opening of a New Virtual Holocaust Museum in Fortnite Has Been Delayed After White-Supremacist Nick Fuentes Rallied Antisemites to Attack It." ARTNet (August 10, 2023).

36 Gruber, Christine. "Muslims in the Metaverse." *New Lines Magazine*, 30 November 2022, https://newlinesmag.com/essays/muslims-in-the-metaverse/.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Winston Ma and Ken Huang. *Blockchain and Web3: Building the cryptocurrency, privacy, and security foundations of the metaverse.* John Wiley & Sons, 2022.

40 Samuel T. Hunter, Kayla Walters, Tin Nguyen, Caroline Manning, and Scarlett Miller, "Malevolent Creativity and Malevolent Innovation: A Critical but Tenuous Linkage," *Creativity Research Journal* 34, vol. 2 (November 2022): 123-144.

41 Audrey Kurth Cronin, *Power to the People: How Open Technological Innovation is Arming Tomorrow's Terrorists*. Oxford University Press, 2019.

42 Paul Gill, John Horgan, Samuel T. Hunter, and Lily D. Cushenbery. "Malevolent Creativity in Terrorist Organizations." *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 47, no. 2 (2013): 125-151; Hunter, Walters, Nguyen, Manning, and Miller. "Malevolent Creativity and Malevolent Innovation."

43 Cronin (2019).

44 Joshua Fairchild, Scott Cassidy, Lily Cushenbery, and Samuel T. Hunter. "Integrating Technology with the Creative Design Process," in *Technology for Creative and Innovation: Tools, Techniques and Applications*, edited by Anabela Mesquita, Hershey: IGI Global, 2011, 26-51; Rachel Heinen, Salvatore A. Leone, Joshua Fairchild, Lily Cushenbery, and Samuel T. Hunter. "Tools for the Process: Technology to Support Creativity and Innovation," in *Handbook of Research on Digital Media and Creativity Technologies,* edited by D. Harrison, Hershey: IGI Global, 2015, 374-403; Samuel T. Hunter, Lily Cushenbery, Nicole Ginther, and Joshua Fairchild. "Leadership, Innovation, and Technology: The Evolution of the Creative Process," in *The Evolution of the Creative Process,* edited by Sven Hemlin, Carl M. Allwood, Ben Martin, and Michael D. Mumford, New York: Routledge, 2013, 81-110.

45 Cronin (2019).

46 Y. H. Chou, Carol P. Weingarten, David J. Madden, Allen W. Song, and N. K. Chen. "Applications of virtual reality technology in brain imaging studies." *Virtual Reality in Psychological, Medical and Pedagogical Applications, ed. C. Eichenberg (Croatia: InTech)* (2012): 203-228.

47 Mark H. Davis, "Measuring Individual Differences in Empathy: Evidence for a Multidimensional Approach." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 44, no. 1 (1983): 113-126.

48 Chi-Lin Yu, and Tai-Li Chou. "A Dual Route Model of Empathy: A Neurobiological Prospective." *Frontiers in Psychology* 9 (November 2018): 1-5.

49 Alison Jane Martingano, Fernanda Hererra, and Sara Konrath. "Virtual Reality Improves Emotional but Not Cognitive Empathy: A Meta-analysis." *Technology, Mind, and Behavior* 2, no. 1 (June 2021).

50 Yanyun Wang, Crystal Chen, Michelle R. Nelson, and Sela Sar. "Walk in My Shoes: How Perspective-taking and VR Enhance Telepresence and Empathy in a Public Service Announcement for People Experiencing Homelessness." *New Media & Society*, (August 2022).

51 Simone Molin Friis, "'Beyond anything we have ever seen': beheading videos and the visibility of violence in the war against ISIS." *International Affairs* 91, no. 4 (2015): 725-746.

52 T. B. Rogers, N. A. Kuiper, and W. S. Kirker. "Self-reference and the Encoding of Personal Information," in *The Self in Social Psychology,* edited by R. F. Baumeister (Psychology Press, 1999), 139-149; Frank Tong and Ken Nakayama. "Robust Representations for Faces: Evidence from Visual Search." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance* 25, no. 4 (1999): 1016-1035.

53 Erving Goffman, "International Ritual: Essays on Face-to-face Behavior." *New York: Double Day Anchor Books* (1967); Kristine L. Nowak and Frank Biocca. "The Effect of the Agency and Anthropomorphism on Users' Sense of Telepresence, Copresence, and Social Presence in Virtual Environments." *Presence: Teleoperators & Virtual Environments* 12, no. 5 (2003): 481-494.

54 Ederyn Williams and Bruce Christie, *The Social Psychology of Telecommunication.* London: Wiley & Sons, 1976.

55 Matthew Botvinick and Jonathan Cohen. "Rubber Hands 'Feel' Touch that Eyes See." *Nature* 391, no. 6669 (1998): 756-756.

56 Ibid.

57 Konstantina Kilteni, Raphaela Groten, and Mel Slater. "The Sense of Embodiment in Virtual Reality." *Presence: Teleoperators and Virtual Environments* 21, no. 4 (2012): 373-387.

58 Rebecca Fribourg, Ferran Argelaguet, Anatole Lécuyer, and Ludovic Hoyet. "Avatar and Sense of Embodiment: Studying the Relative Preference Between Appearance, Control and Point of View." *IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics* 26, no. 5 (2020): 2062-2072.

59 Ferran Argelaguet, Ludovic Hoyet, Michaël Trico, and Anatole Lécuyer. "The Role of Interaction in Virtual Embodiment: Effects of the Virtual Hand Representation." *HAL Open Science*, (March 2016): 3-10.

60 Emilie A. Caspar, Axel Cleeremans, and Patrick Haggard. "The Relationship Between Human Agency and Embodiment." *Consciousness and Cognition* 33 (2015): 226-236; Manos Tsakiris, Marcello Costantini, and Patrick Haggard. "The Role of the Right Temporo-Parietal Junction in Maintaining a Coherent Sense of One's Body." *Neuropsychologia* 46, no. 12 (2008): 3014-3018.

61 William Steptoe, Simon Julier, and Anthony Steed. "Presence and Discernability in Conventional and Non-photorealistic Immersive Augmented Reality." *IEEE International Symposium on Mixed and Augmented Reality (ISMAR)*, (September 2014): 213-218.

62 Kangsoo Kim, Celso M. de Melo, Nahal Norouzi, Gerd Bruder, and Gregory F. Welch. "Reducing Task Load with an Embodied Intelligent Virtual Assistant for Improved Performance in Collaborative Decision Making." *IEEE Conference on Virtual Reality and 3D User Interfaces,* (March, 2020): 529-538.

63 Chiara Fini, Flavia Cardini, Ana Tajadura-Jiménez, Andrea Serino, and Manos Tsakiris. "Embodying an Outgroup: The Role of Racial Bias and the Effect of Multisensory Processing in Somatosensory Remapping." *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience* 7, no. 165, (2013): 1-9.

64 Tabitha C. Peck, Sofia Seinfeld, Salvatore M. Aglioti, and Mel Slater. "Putting Yourself in the Skin of a Black Avatar Reduces Implicit Racial Bias." *Consciousness and Cognition* 22, no. 3 (2013): 779-787; Harry Farmer and Lara Maister. "Putting Ourselves in Another's Skin: Using the Plasticity of self-perception to enhance empathy and decrease prejudice." *Social Justice Research* 30 (2017): 323-354.

65 Sara Hamad Alqurainy, Adnan Hamedi, and Abubakar Usman Abubakar. "The road to the slaughter: ISIS process of dehumanizing the enemy." *Opción: Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales* 20 (2019): 757-774.

66 Jeffrey S. Bachman and Esther Brito Ruiz. "The geopolitics of human suffering: a comparative study of media coverage of the conflicts in Yemen and Ukraine." *Third World Quarterly* 45, no. 1 (2024): 24-42.

67 Nick Yee and Jeremy Bailenson. "The Proteus Effect: The Effect of Transformed Self-Representation on Behavior." *Human Communication Research* 33, no. 3 (2007): 271-290.

68 Ibid.

69 Karen Dion, Ellen Berscheid, and Elaine Walster. "What is Beautiful is Good." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 24, no. 3 (1972): 285-290; Young, Thomas J., and Laurence A. French. "Height and Perceived Competence of US Presidents." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 82, no. 3 (1996): 1002-1002.

70 Mel Slater, "Place Illusion and Plausibility Can Lead to Realistic Behaviour in Immersive Virtual Environments." *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 364, no. 1535 (2009): 3549-3557.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid.

73 Hannah Frishberg, "Mother Opens Up About Being 'Virtually Gang Raped' in Metaverse." *New York Post*, 1 February 2022, https://www.nypost.com/2022/02/01/mom-opens-up-about-being-virtually-gang-raped-in-metaverse/.

74 I. B. R. Soto and N. S. S. Leon (2022). How artificial intelligence will shape the future of the metaverse. A qualitative perspective. *Metaverse Basic and Applied Research*, *1*, 12-12.

75 Cronin (2019); Alyssa Sims, "The rising drone threat from terrorists." *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 19 (2018): 97.

76 Wright (2013); Philip B. Heymann, *Terrorism, Freedom, and Security: Winning Without War*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Death Cult in Hypermedia Environments: Martyrdom and Terrorism in the Neofascist Movement

Arsenio Cuenca[*]

Abstract: The proliferation of images and videos online commemorating the death of martyrs is becoming more and more widespread within the neofascist movement. Ceremonies honouring fallen comrades today go viral on the Internet in a manner that information technologies could not facilitate in the past. Neofascist organisations share these ritualistic practices on the Internet, producing hypermedia environments: specific media content that creates a dialogue between the digital and the physical realm. Analysing these hypermedia environments enables a better understanding of neofascist representations and tactics today. Noting that supremacist terrorism is widely excluded from the far-right hypermedia fabric, while the martyrs of neofascism are at the centre of these actions, this article illustrates the shifts that the movement is experiencing, from a clandestine offensive to a self-defence mass strategy.

Keywords: Neofascism, martyrdom, terrorism, hypermedia, violence

* Corresponding author: Arsenio Cuenca, École Pratique des Hautes Études, email: arsenio.cuenca@etu.ephe.psl.eu

Introduction

Celebrating martyrdom has historically been a common practice in the far right – that is, in those political organisations defending a hierarchical and anti-egalitarian vision of society, based on traditional values and a rejection of liberal democracy.[1] Paying tribute to comrades who have died for the cause allows members to unify and create bonds within the movement ritualistically.[2] Ceremonies during which fallen soldiers are commemorated have strengthened the politics of spirituality within fascism and the far-right.[3] First as heroes, then as myths, martyrs crystalise the cult of sacrifice and death within far-right ideologies. These ceremonies involve the occupation of space and, whether in broad daylight or at night (e.g., in the form of torchlight processions), the far-right parades under the captive watch of passers-by. These marches usually conclude in a symbolic place.

Today, neofascists seek to take over not only a designated physical space but also the cyberspace.[4] Establishing a synchronic dialogue between the offline and the online, neofascist groupuscules and organisations shape hypermedia environments around the commemoration of their designated martyrs. However, due to their fragmented and de-territorialised character, the neofascist movement does not agree over the canonisation of some of their comrades or likeminded individuals. The martyrs of neofascism are enthroned because they can be ascribed certain values upon which the movement builds its politics. White supremacist shooters tend to be excluded, even ostracised, from any kind of commemoration. Terrorists like Anders Breivik or Brenton Tarrant are neglected from the space and, therefore, from these hypermedia environments, precisely because they do not correspond to the ideal type of the neofascist soldier, nor do their actions correspond to the strategy that the movement seeks.

This article will discuss the particular nature of neofascist martyrdom nowadays. After reviewing the theoretical and ideological basis of martyrdom within neofascism, an empirical analysis of neofascist hypermedia environments allows us to infer conclusions about the state of the cult of death in the neofascist movement today. It will be argued that spheres of meaning created around a death cult in hypermedia environments – i.e., media content that is put in relation to both online and offline realms – legitimise the commemoration of certain martyrs instead of others and sublimate their sacrifice. Whilst fallen militants are subject to political remembrance, tribute to far-right terrorists is barely paid beyond the fringes of the Internet and almost never make it to the public sphere. The exaltation of the first through diverse hypermedia environments indicates the kind of commitment sought after by the movement, their strategy and their tacit approach to violence. Furthermore, this hypermedia ritualisation of martyrdom contributes to solidifying the transnational bonds of far-right organisations, developing a common set of codes within the transnational neofascist movement and modelling a specific geopolitical representation of Europe and the West.

All in all, this article seeks to address the crucial necessity to broaden the field of studies concerned with neofascism's current "visual culture"[5], as its images and representations reflect a concrete ideology and rationale that guide the movement, allowing researchers a better understanding of it. Notably, analysing the celebration of martyrdom within different neofascist organisations is capital as, through these ceremonies, they recreate and consolidate their transnational bonds, while also outlining a particular strategy for the violent defence of Europe and the West. After discussing the results of the analysis, the domain of terrorism and extremism studies may be provided with new theoretical insights, hopefully expanding knowledge about visual realities and, specially, neofascism's new approaches to violence, including a nuanced rejection of terror and a renewed sublimation of death, delineated from a position of victimhood and self-defence.

Understanding Neofascism

As a fundamentally Western European phenomenon, neofascist ideology was constructed as an alternative to fascism and Nazism starting in 1942.[6] The defeat of the main ultranationalist forces in their respective countries, first in Italy and Germany, then in France after the capitulation of the defenders of French Algeria, led what remained of the international far right to rethink their strategy. The main enemies of fascism, namely egalitarianism and its derivatives such as liberal democracy or human rights, were (and still remain) the same ones of neofascism. However, Jacobinism and Aryan supremacism began to lose importance in front of an idealistic unitary representation of Europe. Further, in neofascism, modern idiosyncrasies of fascism also lost ground to a largely conservative and reactionary social ideology.

Terrorist violence and vanguardism are also largely discarded in current neofascist endeavours such as the New Right, the neofascist school of thought that neglected militant politics and opted for a cultural shift – *metapolitics* – to become hegemonic.[7] At most, violence is framed as part of a larger defensive strategy against the avatars of the modern world – i.e., multiculturalism, communism or different designated ghosts like wokeness or cultural Marxism. Nevertheless, as this article will illustrate, violence is not completely delegitimised within neofascism as it can become the ultimate resort to defend the last remains of a delusional and idealised traditional order.

A Theory of Neofascist Martyrdom

To fully grasp the nature of martyrdom in today's neofascist ideologies, it is important to delineate the fascist martyr, differentiate it from others and define it. Firstly, the fascist type of martyrdom is quite distinct from the Christian one. Although it seems contradictory, mainly due to the influence of Roman Catholicism in some fascist movements, there are some essential differences. Christian martyrdom evokes the death of a victim, one who pays the price of their faith. Martyrdom in Christianity takes on a fundamentally passive role. In fact, a good Christian is not supposed to actively seek martyrdom, as this would go against the sacred principle of human life, just like suicide. Christians are even compelled to express love to the people responsible for their martyrdom. As stated by Pope Benedict XVI: "Martyrdom is an act of love, towards God and men, including the persecutors".[8]

The concept of martyrdom in jihadist terrorism is closer to the fascist type than to the Christian one. Within violent Islamic jihadism, there is a vocation for suicide. This is compensated with a whole device of spiritual and material incentives.[9] The death cult in jihadism is more pronounced. The far right has historically weaponised the Bible and Christian mythology to justify violence and continues to do so today.[10] However, the parallels between the far right and jihadi martyrdom – such as a profoundly reactionary vision of the world, a political rationale motivating people to take action or their willingness to sacrifice, just to mention a few – bring both phenomena closer. If they do diverge substantially, common traits, especially those observed in studies on the "white jihad" hybrid, are notable.[11]

The logics of fascist martyrdom are more scattered and less regulated. In addition, fascist ideologies are backed by a less extended historical background. Since fascist regimes were largely defeated after WWII, neofascist intellectuals, movements, and organisations have produced a more decentralised, even contradictory, politics of the dead. In a moment of relative retreat and marginality, the idea of sacrifice (for instance) does not necessarily entail death anymore: do not kill nor die. Lacking any institutional or national reference, as it was during fascist Italy or the Third Reich, and because the neofascist movement is essentially a transnational loose coalition of organisations and groupuscules, the canonisation of contemporary comrades is subjected

to debate and they are not unanimously recognised. Nevertheless, the neofascist movement today still draws on the cult of martyrdom from interwar fascism. As Gentile eloquently puts it, the experience of the Great War and the cult of fallen heroes in fascist Italy "contributed to spreading among the fighters the idea of politics as a total experience [...] to not returning to the banality of everyday life, but perpetuating the heroic impetus of war".[12] Funeral rites, often sublimated through the cry "Present!" after evoking the name of the fallen, represented a sort of secular liturgy connecting life and death, reinvigorating the bonds between past, present and future.

Ultimately, these men, or more generally the image of these men as projected by fascist martyrdom, were mostly headed towards death. However, it is important to note that in neofascism, death is avoidable. Gabriele D'Annunzio's aphorism stating that "If dying means ceasing to fight, one cannot die" resonates vigorously with neofascist ideologies.[13] A soldier is determined to die for the cause but equally contemplates life in a vitalist and heroic manner. The traditionalist thinker Julius Evola, a key figure in the renewal of the post-WWII far right, embodies this idea in his representation of medieval chivalry.[14] Evola opted for "the hero before the saint and the victor before the martyr; whose values were summarized in fidelity and honour, more than in *caritas* and love".[15] Ironically, Evola's knight submits the fascist soldier to an apparent contradiction, which extends to the rest of the neofascist movement: for a hero to turn into a myth, he must first become a martyr.

Today, the struggle of neofascism is different from that of historical fascism. There is no nostalgic vision of a conflict like that of the Great War. The fight is rather against the alleged "death of the spirit"[16], social and civilizational decadence, multiculturalism or some other ghosts that haunt neofascism. To keep the flame of a languished movement alive, the mythology of the dead is embodied in different sorts of martyrs. Those who were canonised by regimes like Nazism, the Francoist dictatorship in Spain, or even by ultranationalist movements in the past, as Robert Brasillach for the French far-right, benefit from a sustained and regular tribute. Spanish phalangists are known to parade the streets of Madrid to commemorate the death of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, just like French ultranationalists bring flowers to the cemetery of Saint-Germain de Charonne in Paris to honour the victims of the 6 February 1934 crisis.

Recently established neofascist organisations also pay homage to their own fallen comrades. Fundamentally linked to a groupuscule kind of activism, martyrs and militants share a generational bond and common trait: their youth. The neo-Nazi organisation Golden Dawn in Greece has commemorated since 2013 the death of Manolis Kapelonis and Giorgos Fountoulis, two members of the organisation killed in retaliation for the death of anti-fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas. Inheriting the martyrs of the Italian Social Movement (MSI), CasaPound members gather in memory of the killings related to the Acca Larentia massacre in 1978, which took place during the Years of Lead in Italy. Sebastien Deyzieu, a member of the Pétainist movement L'Œuvre Française, who died while running away from the police after a demonstration in 1994, is honoured by an annual parade organised by the Committee May 9 (C9M), mostly controlled by the Groupement Union Défense (GUD). In Sweden, the Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM) also weaponises the death of Daniel Wretström, a skinhead teenager killed in 2001 during a fight with youngsters of immigrant descent, whose passing is remembered with a torchlight procession.

These ceremonies are not only attended by local members of the organisations. The acts usually provide a meeting point for international neofascists to strengthen their ties. The death of some of the most iconic martyrs has historically stimulated the creation of special bonds within the larger European neofascist movement. In Spain, local neofascists have developed a particular

sensitivity towards the Romanian Iron Guard around a shared Latin vision of fascism.[17] Ion Mota and Vasile Marin, two legionaries[18] who volunteered to fight during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), have, as of today, a monument dedicated to them on the outskirts of Madrid, where Spanish and international neofascists regularly meet.[19] In turn, Spanish phalangists, also joined by French neofascists, often travelled to Tâncăbeşti, where the Iron Guard's founder Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, was killed in 1938.[20]

Younger organisations also engage with this transnational dimension of neofascism. When Daniel Wretström passed away, the neo-Nazi organisation Blood and Honor stated that he was the "Horst Wessel of our generation" – in reference to the iconic young martyr of Nazi Germany – and that "Europe weeps for a fallen hero."[21] On several occasions, neofascists from central and Scandinavian Europe have travelled to Salem (Sweden) to participate in the night march honouring the death of Daniel Wretström. Similarly, a delegation of Italian members of CasaPound went to Greece in 2023 to attend (alongside neo-Nazis related to Golden Dawn) the 10th anniversary of the death of Manolis Kapelonis and Giorgos Fountoulis.[22]

There is still another kind of martyrdom commemorated by today's neofascism, although not strictly related to the death of fallen comrades. Many victims of attacks perpetrated by racialised people, especially minors, are presented as martyrs. When in October 2022, 12-year-old Lola Daviet was brutally murdered in Paris and Dahbia Benkired, a woman of Algerian origin, was identified as the main suspect, her death was associated with that of a martyr by identitarian authors and neofascist groups.[23] Also in France, in November 2023, the death of 16-year-old Thomas Perotto in a mass fight against other young Frenchmen of immigrant descent triggered a similar outrage.[24] Both deaths provoked the reaction of the transnational neofascist movement, mobilised in their respective countries. They were also branded as a "Francocide" by leaders of the French far-right such as Eric Zemmour. This use of the concept of martyrdom applies not only to individuals when designating victims of immigration and multiculturalism. In the case of the coastal city of Calais (France), known for being home to an important migrant population seeking to cross the channel over to the United Kingdom, the historic militant of the French identitarian movement, Philippe Vardon, referred to it as the "martyr city".[25]

Debating Martyrdom: The Case of Dominique Venner

The tension described above – between death and the representations of the hero, the martyr and the myth, reflected in the works of D'Annunzio or Evola – is synthesised in the figure of Dominique Venner. A founding member of the French New Right and posthumous reference author for international neofascism, Venner committed suicide in 2013 in the Notre Dame Cathedral of Paris. The purpose of his act was to awaken consciences and set an example of stoic heroism. Indeed, his goal was met after his death, which triggered the creation of the Iliad Institute the following year later as a beacon for his legacy to live on.[26] Under the premise of the Great Replacement theory[27] and campaigning for a return to the pagan and Christian roots of Europe, the Iliad Institute has radicalised the last remaining vestiges of the New Right.

The significance of Venner's death is not interpreted unanimously. Although on some occasions he has been called a martyr, the Iliad Institute is very reluctant to do so.[28] Even if the representation of the martyr and the hero overlap in neofascist martyrology, it seems like the Iliad Institute makes a clear distinction between the former and the latter, Venner being, for them almost, exclusively a hero. His sacrifice elevates him and lays the foundations for a believable myth.[29] Nevertheless, it is precisely the choice of committing suicide which was not convincing for other comrades. Former member of the New Right and key ideologist of transnational neofascism Guillaume Faye expressed doubts back then regarding Venner's decision:

> Venner did not kill anyone but himself. He did not detonate a suicide vest. He interrupted his life and put his plunge into death in service of a message. He followed precisely in the footsteps of Yukio Mishima. Now, what I said is not a certainty. Everyone follows his path. I have never considered suicide as a means of sending a message. Simply because death interrupts the flow of the message. Unless you think you have said everything.[30]

During an interview for a media outlet linked to the Iliad Institute, Dominique Venner's widow left an enlightening testimony about the reception of her husband's suicide among his close political circles.[31] Clotilde Venner noted that older generations of far-right militants, who had become "conformist bourgeois", did not understand Venner's gesture and found it extremely troubling.[32] She also indicated that "many Catholics said that it was a sacrilege" and that, generally, she received "very unpleasant remarks" from his entourage. Clotilde Venner did praise younger militants who "truly understood his death very well" or, as she presented it, his "deeply anti-bourgeois action". She specifically mentioned the tribute paid by the militants of CasaPound after Venner's death.

Beyond primarily intellectual circles, his death is commemorated all over Europe. Venner left an enormous literary production as an alt-historian,[33] but it is without a doubt his books about his militant life, including *For a Positive Critique* (1962) or *Un Samouraï d'Occident* (2013), that have been most translated and caused the greatest impact. It is not the intellectual but the comrade who is remembered, and one can argue that without having inflicted death on himself, Venner would hardly have acquired the status of a myth. Yet precisely because of it, he is remembered in the West and the cry of his name is followed by a "Present!" in countries like Serbia, Italy, Greece, or France.[34]

Dominique Venner's manifesto *Un Samouraï d'Occident* (2013) recounts a struggle against the death of spirit and the replacement of European populations. In this breviary, the image of the samurai epitomises *Gesta non Verba*, in other words, action and honour over words.[35] Venner praises Zen as a "rejection of thought",[36] as the way to overcome all reflection and reason that restrains us from taking action. In Venner's manifesto, Japan finds itself in an equally-balanced commitment towards Modernity and Tradition, the latter being strongly associated with the mystique of the warrior. Faced with the samurai's spirituality, Venner laments the loss of the transcendental bond that European knights developed with their sword.[37] Ultimately, samurais represent in the eyes of Venner an aspirational detachment from death, a cult of sacrifice.[38]

The rest of Venner's breviary is a constant reference to Greco-Latin classicism. Venner affirms that Europe must return to its classical heritage to rediscover its roots. Combining a personal interpretation of Stoic philosophy and the poetry of Homer, specifically the Iliad, Venner praises heroism and moral righteousness. His ideal of duty is embodied in Hector, the Trojan prince who dies at the end of the war against the Greeks, as recounted in the Homeric poem. Hector personifies the unwavering patriotism of the one who is ready to die for his kingdom, his wife and his son. In fact, Venner establishes a link between Hector's homeland and his family, arguing that both his wife and son are its concrete representations. If Venner's suicide is commemorated as the death of a martyr, it is mainly because he theorises and personifies the ideal of the neofascist man and the strategy the movement aims to follow: a struggle of self-defence to protect Europe's soul from the Great Replacement.

Analysing Neofascist Martyrdom Through Hypermedia Spaces

After following the activity of the large grassroots neofascist organisations mentioned above – all of them movements with moderate or non-existent institutional representation, with a relevant presence within the European neofascist milieu, significant numbers of followers on social media and that have already attracted the interest of other researchers[39] – it has been stated that the commemoration of martyrs represents a major event for them. In addition, the sublimation of neofascist martyrs in hypermedia environments allows us to understand who is granted the legitimacy to be commemorated and, most importantly, how the prototypical hero and the strategy of today's neofascism is profiled. The online communication and diffusion of these rituals, as well as other events and actions that far-right groups stage in the physical realm, shape what some scholars have agreed to call hypermedia environments.[40] Accordingly, hypermedia environments are digital spaces that combine the online and the physical realm to spread a certain message and reinforce its emotional charge. Within the far-right, highly performative ceremonies shared in hypermedia environments – like the commemoration of martyrs – have, as Önnerfors suggests, "the deliberate purpose of online dissemination, appealing to both cognitive and behavioural dimensions of social activism".[41]

The refinement and sophistication of these communication methods, between the physical and the digital world, reinforces the affective and political impact of transnational neofascism, as well as their eventual virality. For years, the aesthetics of the movement have been progressively merging within cyberspace. Some channels of the messaging platform Telegram function as an agora, where the international far-right shares online content, usually tailored under similar patterns. In channels like Ouest Casual, much of the digital imagery representing scenes of the physical world involves a dramatic show of force.[42] Groups of individuals and members of grassroots movements, using standard dress codes, occupy the public space of their local strongholds. These exhibitions are recorded and then posted online. When filmed, the scenery, music and final editing are very much standardised. The style of the lettering on the banners, illuminated by the brightness of the flares, the bridges on which they are displayed – everything is part of a global decoration, a game of mirrors.

The cult of death is also capitalised in the digital realm, independently from the physical one. The anniversaries of the deaths of the leaders of historical fascism, as well as the passing of fallen comrades, prompt the publication of posts with images and texts of a political and mystical nature. For instance, the legacy of the Iron Guard's leader, Corneliu Codreanu, is regularly commemorated.[43] When the day of his martyrdom arrives, 30 November, users on social media extensively share images of his face and captions, alongside old photographs of him. Around 17 August, images of Rudolf Hess also circulate on Telegram channels of neo-Nazi ideology, to remember him on the day of his death.

These digital campaigns are usually reinforced by ceremonies and actions in the physical realm. In 2013, the Evolian traditionalist group Fronte della Tradizione placed posters in multiple cities across Italy on the 75th anniversary of Codreanu's death. The banners either displayed the face of the leader of the Iron Guard or the symbol of his movement, all containing the caption "Love the trench, hate the drawing room".[44] Likewise, in 2022, the neo-Nazi cultural association Devenir Europeo organised a similar action, covering several Spanish cities with posters and stickers to commemorate the death of Rudolf Hess.[45] German counterparts of Der Dritte Weg also uploaded several images and videos of ceremonies organised in honour of Albert Leo Schlageter, the Prussian member of the Freikorps who died in 1923 and turned into a martyr under the Nazi regime. Whether in the forest or abandoned buildings, under the glow of torches

and flares, or hiking in the mountains, the members of this neo-Nazi party perform a ritual during these ceremonies to later disseminate the images on their social networks.

Since his death in May 2013, Dominique Venner has been rewarded with much greater recognition than he received during his lifetime. Throughout Europe, the neofascist movement has elevated him to the summit of commitment and sacrifice. On the 10th anniversary of his death, members of different European grassroots movements and organisations paid tribute to Venner on Telegram and other social media. Homages involved the placement of posters in public spaces, the documentation of the process and its later diffusion online. Images from Germany, Spain or Austria, to name a few, circulated in the pan-European Telegram channel Zentropa, while Italy and France remained the most active countries.[46]

The tenth anniversary of the death of Golden Dawn militants Manolis Kapelonis and Giorgos Fountoulis was also celebrated in November 2023. On previous occasions, some footage of the tributes was posted on far-right Telegram channels like Samurái de Occidente.[47] The images show a large crowd at night, illuminated by candlelight. While gathering around the monument that bears the pictures of the death, a cry resonates in the darkness: *"Αθάνατοι!"* (*"Athánatoi!"*, "Immortals!"), which the crowd repeats right after, followed by the Greek national anthem. If the images are striking, the dialogue between the online and the offline realm is still very rudimentary in the communication of the heir organisations of Golden Dawn.[48]

The Nordic Resistance Movement also uses the cult of the dead to reproduce its own hypermedia environment. Commonly associated with a pan-Nordic identitarian and national socialist ideology, the NRM has rallied on several occasions over the memory of the victims of the Dresden bombing in 1945 by the Allies.[49] Similarly, the commemoration of the Finnish soldiers and Swedish volunteers who died during the Civil War of Finland (1918) and the Winter War (1939) against the Soviet Union, popularly known as the Day of the Fallen Soldiers, is an important day for the NRM. Local leaders of the movement in Sweden and Finland are filmed in cemeteries and other iconic locations, reading a manifesto. The videos conclude with the sound *"Nordiska motståndsrörelsen, Närvarande!"* ("Nordic resistance movement, present!").[50]

Some other hypermedia actions of the NRM are of more significance. In December 2023, a video was published on their official site and Telegram channel with images of a march in honour of Daniel Wretström. Beyond the demonstration, the footage shows NRM member Joakim Kannisto giving a speech and confronting a man labelled as a "racial stranger."[51] At the end of the video, there is a QR Code that gives access to an article in which the moral of the action is explained in depth. Not only was the death of Daniel Wretström remembered that night, but also that of the American neo-Nazi militants Robert Jay Matthews and George Lincoln Rockwell, of Horst Wessel and, finally, those of "all the people who died as a result of mass immigration."[52] The pictures portray a reduced group of men, first parading over the city of Västerås (Sweden), carrying a banner with the slogan "The blood of martyrs demands struggle today!", next to the tomb of Daniel Wretström, in Northern Västerås. Despite a proper editing of the action's footage, the text of the article establishes a dialogue between the online and the offline realm, describing meticulously how everything unfolded:

> When the comrades arrived at the location, they formed into ranks again, this time with flags and a wreath at the forefront. Once again, torches were lit to illuminate the winter darkness. With the snow falling over the silent cemetery, the train moved slowly and quietly towards its destination [...] Candles were placed along the path to Daniel's grave, with several larger candles having already been lit in front of the tombstone. Comrades stood behind the grave with flags, as the wreath was laid and

torchbearers lined up, one by one, to place their own candles next to Daniel's resting place. They then stood in two rows on either side of the grave, holding the torches in their left hand.[53]

The key reference for high-impact hypermedia campaigns was – until their dissolution – Generation Identity (GI), whose communication strategy caught scholarly attention.[54] According to Cahuzac and François, GI's approach was intended to be eminently cultural and metapolitical.[55] Considering violence as sterile, or at least not defending it openly, this youth group resorted to social media to impose their ideas on the political mainstream. Their role model became Greenpeace, and their mode of action, was the public incident.[56] GI's most spectacular initiatives included patrolling the border between Italy and Spain, driving Toyota pick-ups like some jihadist groups or flying over the area in helicopters. Even if the views of the videos on their channel did not usually exceed tens of thousands of views, most media outlets contributed to their dissemination as they felt compelled to report on their actions.

When celebrating their fallen comrades, CasaPound Italia has perfected the porous frontier and interaction between the online and offline realms. Named after the American poet and supporter of fascist Italy, Ezra Pound, this organisation was first established as a countercultural political movement opposed to MSI's electoralism.[57] However, CasaPound maintains a historical bond with the MSI. Every 7 January, members of CasaPound congregate at the square of Acca Larentia, in front of an MSI premises, where in 1978, events unfolded culminating with the killing of three members of the MSI youth group by communist antifascists.

The performance is filmed from the very moment the preparations begin.[58] Some videos show the Celtic cross engraved on the floor of the square. CasaPound militants appear with their faces uncovered in front of the camera while they chat or smoke, accompanied by a solemn, sometimes agitated, music in the background. The president of the organisation and former leader of the RAC group ZetaZeroAlfa, Gianluca Iannone, is usually present. In some videos, the moments leading up to the participants' gathering around the square also appear. Once all have congregated, the images show the plaque with the names of the murdered, near the MSI premises. The camera reveals a shot of portraits of the young deceased, printed and pasted on urban furniture. Little by little, the attendees are arranged in a military phalanx, facing the plaque. Some militants step forward to offer roses and flower wreaths. Then comes the climactic moment. After the offerings, a voice breaks the silence to cry out: "*Per tutti i camerati caduti!*" ("For all the fallen comrades!"), to which the crowd responds in unison making the Roman salute: "*Presente!*" The screen darkens, and this same dialogue appears written across the screen and the video comes to an end.

The Committee May 9 (C9M) in France has also polished its communication strategy. This platform, mainly composed of members from the neofascist student union Groupe Union Défense (GUD), was founded two days after the death of Sébastien Deyzieu in May 1994, while he was running from the police and fell from a building.[59] At a time when the French neofascist movement and the National Front (renamed National Rally in 2018) were much closer, the leader of the GUD, Frédéric Chatillon, and then-member of the National Front youth, Samuel Maréchal, created the C9M. Its purpose was to organise the annual march that commemorates Deyzieu's death every 9 May. The march, which usually goes across the left bank of Paris, has so far taken place without any impediment from the police prefecture due to what they consider to be peaceful behaviour on the part of the protesters.

For some years now, C9M has used images of their demonstrations to produce visual content very similar to that of CasaPound. GUD militants appear in their videos, usually wearing balaclavas or other piece of clothing to cover their faces. The predominant colour is black, and some wear

classic leather jackets and aviator glasses referencing traditional ultra-nationalist aesthetics. Styles deriving from hooliganism and mainstream dress codes are also present. On the banner preceding the demonstration is written "*Sébastien, présent*", on some occasions surrounded by the names of other dead comrades in Spanish, Russian, or Greek. The demonstrators brandish black flags with the Celtic cross, the symbol adopted by transnational neofascism after WWII and particularly by the GUD today in France. Throughout the march, they light torches even in broad daylight. When they arrive at the building where Deyzieu died, they gather in a military formation in front of it. Again, after some speeches, the crowd remains silent until a voice shouts the rallying cry: "*Pour tous les camarades tombés!*"[60] ("For all the fallen comrades!"), to which the assembly answers "*Présent!*" and shouts the GUD's historic slogan *"Europe, jeunesse, révolution!"* ("Europe, youth, revolution!"). Then, a group enters the building, to the courtyard where he fell. Once flowers are left as an offering, they sing the old nationalist chant *Les lansquenets* and the screen fades to black.

Why Are Lone-Wolf Terrorists Ostracised From Hypermedia Fabric?

Paradoxically, whilst the number of far-right terrorist attacks continues to grow steadily,[61] public and unambiguous support of terror remains scarce, even within the large neofascist movement. After the massacre in Norway by Anders Breivik in 2011, only the more marginal segments of the global far-right were those who sided with him.[62] Similarly, when Generation Identity was accused of being linked to Brenton Tarrant, primarily due to the various donations he made to the organisation prior to the Christchurch shooting in 2019, they refused to recognise any affiliation with him.[63] Since this same link was one of the reasons motivating their dissolution, they even condemned Tarrant's massacre in 2021.[64] In this sense, the author of *The Great Replacement* (2011) Renaud Camus, when asked about the crimes perpetrated by Tarrant, due to the similarities between his work and Tarrant's manifesto, also condemned this violence.[65] As it will be demonstrated later, the key to the strategy of Camus or other neofascist intellectuals and organisations is to condemn these acts, while inciting other types of violence. Breivik or Tarrant have been canonised within the fringes of the Internet, but scarcely praised outside it, remaining ostracised from the dynamics of hypermedia. Even the way they are paid tribute online is different. Although they usually are portrayed as saints, these representations are covered in a cynical and nihilistic veneer,[66] and having little or nothing to do with the martyrs previously mentioned. They are rarely commemorated with ceremonies during the day or at night, in videos or pictures. These shooters are remembered through histrionic and provocative memes, in tune with the satire that is characteristic of environments such as 4chan or similar forums. By taking on their role as the anti-hero of the white race by pushing the limits of this taboo to the maximum, users praising them may take real action someday. But it seems like the purpose of communities praising far-right terrorism is essentially to create a bond between their members while playing with the limits of the taboo of violence.[67]

In fact, online subcultures, allegedly more supportive of supremacist terrorists, do not univocally side with individuals like Breivik or Tarrant – not to mention with people who sanctify them. Consulting 4chan's archive, both shooters have been criticised because of their choice of target. White supremacists attack Breivik for choosing young white people[68], just like Tarrant is blamed for targeting Muslim elders and children – rather than male adults or Jews, following the antisemitic version of the theory of the Great Replacement.[69] Detractors of far-right terrorism also resort to conspiracy theories to condemn the attacks. Thus, according to some users, Israel and Mossad were behind Tarrant's attack,[70] while freemasonry was behind Breivik's.[71]

Both this atmosphere surrounding the vindication of supremacist terrorists and their path to become martyrs is contested by more established organisations or renowned neofascist intellectuals. If their ideology resonates, their strategy and representation of martyrdom differs. Not only do they reject terrorism to a great extent, they do not express any particular recognition towards them. Arguably, the representation of the neofascist martyr differs from the profile of far-right terrorists. While the first is portrayed as a hero, the embodiment of an ideal in its purest form, the second is associated to psychotic pathologies and social awkwardness, and characterised as an uncomfortable and alienated man rather than a mass leader.

A former member of the terrorist group Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS), Dominique Venner ended up diminishing, and almost rejecting, the role of terrorism in the struggle back in the day. As a former volunteer of the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), Venner was incarcerated between 1961 and 1962 after pleading guilty to supporting the generals' putsch against Charles de Gaulle.[72] While serving his sentence, he wrote *For a Positive Critique* (1962), one of the books that laid the foundations for the neofascist far-right's new strategy.[73] Drawing from Lenin's *What Is to Be Done?* (1902), Venner heavily criticised the internal dynamics in which his older comrades were subsumed, including their lack of a solid organisation to seize power and maintain it, unawareness of new ideological frameworks to reinvigorate the neofascist movement, and a disinterest to fight on ideological grounds.[74] Regarding terrorism, he affirmed the following:

> Inept situational analysis, and the absence of doctrine and training that pushes some towards opportunism, throws others into counterproductive violence and terrorism [...] Blind terrorism is the best way to alienate the general population. As indispensable as clandestine action and the calculated use of force can be when a nation has no other means of defending itself, especially when this action seeks to call the populace to action, terrorism places those using it outside the popular community and is condemned to failure.[75]

Gerd Bergfleth, a German specialist of Georges Bataille and prominent intellectual source for the French New Right during the 1990s, identified terrorism as a product of Western decadence, as "the spearhead of European nihilism."[76] According to Bergfleth, the death of a terrorist – in this case suicides committed by members of the Red Army Faction in Stammheim Prison (1976-1977) – barely managed to escape a materialist logic of exchange. There is no spirituality since death is part of a calculation from which a political result is expected. The terrorist, he argued, "does not give his own death, but sells it, and as expensive as possible".[77]

There is another logic underlying the critique of the terrorist strategy: in a moment of militant scarcity, every man counts, and prison or death should not be an option. During the interview with Venner's widow, an idea haunts the conversation on several occasions: her husband's death seems like a waste, a discouraging gesture for other militants. For some, there is no heroism in suicide, an act often complicated to absorb through a neofascist or conservative rhetoric.[78] Suicide or even kamikaze missions have been previously dismissed by other representatives of the neofascist movement. Koehler speaks of the introduction to the fourth edition of James Mason's *Siege* about this stance:

> SIEGE [...] expounds on how it is nowadays absurd to contemplate full engagement against ZOG [Zionist Occupation Government] by means of noble violence, as there is no longer the existing time, numbers, or expertise to wipe the slate clean in this manner. The pages of SIEGE bear testament to the many who have tried 'heightening the contradictions' through guerrilla warfare [...] and lost, becoming purposeful

martyrs either imprisoned or killed outright. Thus, only the second half of the equation remains a viable practicality–a Total Drop-Out and with-drawal.[79]

Discussion: Martyrdom, Hypermedia and the Neofascist Strategy

Hypermedia spaces are being structured and monopolised by European neofascists with the intention of sublimating the cult of death. The tribute that has historically been paid to the martyrs of fascism is being reformulated and progressively strengthened through the penetration of the far right into cyberspace. Many of the videos of the tributes to the martyrs of CasaPound and C9M have been uploaded to the Ouest Casual YouTube channel. Although controlled by French members of the neofascist movement, Ouest Casual centralises the codes that are used in the hypermedia space of European neofascism. CasaPound and the GUD, two organisations united through historical links via members of European neofascism such as Frédéric Chatillon or Gabriele Adinolfi,[80] shed light on the transnational synergies that neofascism aims to follow.

For several years, literature has demonstrated the tactical and cultural shift operated by neofascism that allowed the movement to avoid marginality and full ostracism.[81] Action has been subordinated to reflection and the battle of ideas currently occupies a central place within the strategy of the abovementioned groups. This includes their interpretation of the use of violence as a means to an end. Today, neofascism does not openly advocate direct action or terrorism, but supports violence and presents it as an inevitable consequence. After portraying itself as the victim under siege – of the migratory invasion, the great replacement or wokeness, to name a few – neofascism struggles, following the Evolian principle, to "keep standing amid a world of ruins." Theirs is not a strategy of action, but of reaction. In a C9M statement in which they celebrate the martyrdom of Deyzieu, the signatories explain why they compare themselves to the statue entitled *The Guard* (Der Wächter, 1940) by Arno Breker and the Tyr rune, by delving into this idea:

> *The Guard* (Der Wächter), a bas-relief by Arno Breker, sculpted in 1940. Destined to adorn Germania, this monumental work is significant both for its size (17m high) and its symbolism: an athletic warrior, his face proud, implacably determined, ready to fight. In his image, we are the sentinels of Europe, guardians of our civilization, firmly resolved to defend it. The rune of Týr, or rune of Victory, is also that of just war. We are indeed waging a legitimate war against the enemies of our people. We will not stop fighting until victory, whatever the cost.[82]

A similar pattern has been identified by Bjørgo and Ravndal in their study of the NRM and its relation to violence and terrorism.[83] The NRM rejects terrorism in the short term because it argues that the social and political atmosphere is not favourable for implementing such a strategy. Just like Venner in the past, NRM ideologues like Klas Lund, after a prison sentence on terrorism charges, seem to fear that terrorism is counterproductive for the movement itself. Similarly, apologising for terrorism is also identified within the movement as self-defeating for its larger mass strategy. Violence is accepted, as it does not entail a moral problem at all, but only one that can portray the NRM as the victim of a civilizational conflict and dedicated to self-defence. For the NRM, as Bjørgo and Ravndal state: "Violent self-defence is not only acceptable but desirable".[84]

Renaud Camus has also articulated a similar discourse. During the same interviews in which he condemned Tarrant's shooting or "individual acts of violence", he added: "I am non-violent but not at all pacifist. I do not eliminate war at all if it is to save one's homeland, but I completely rule out attacks and violence".[85] These types of statements reinforce an idea that other researchers

have already confirmed: that the theory of the Great Replacement encourages the outbreak of a civil war.[86] While terrorism is rejected because of a lack of popular support, violence related to these imagined conflicts, portrayed as ethnic or civilisational, is evoked with less criticism within the neofascist movement. For organisations such as the GUD or CasaPound, which also buy into replacement-related theories, violence is legitimised, even romanticised, as it is presented under the appearance of a patriotic war of self-defence. In a context where conspiracy theories like the Great Replacement are increasingly gaining popular support – due in part to its trivialisation in the political field and media discourse – transnational neofascism can justify its own violent strategy, different from terrorism, and even trigger outbreaks of violence beyond its own movement.

The cult of sacrifice and death, organised today around the commemoration of the passing of Dominique Venner or other fallen comrades, sends a message of heroism and resistance. When members of the neofascist movement organise locally – either to celebrate the death of their own martyrs, to show solidarity towards other organisation's fallen soldiers or to mourn the death of the alleged victims of multiculturalism – and share these acts in a performative manner within hypermedia environments, they are trying to legitimise a collective reaction and if necessary violent, against the modern world. Since the common trait shared by all the deceased is their status of victim, killed at the hands of the designated enemies of neofascism, this mythology of death allows them to motivate empathy and a reaction of a victim mentality. The reasons used to justify violence are the same social anxieties and moral panics that have obsessed the far right throughout history, fundamentally the fear of the extinction of the white race or the fall of the West – the latter being represented as a civilisational, spiritual and traditional order.

The hypermedia commemoration of martyrdom in neofascism corresponds to the ritualisation of political mythology, a way to sublimate struggle and self-defence from a position of victimhood.[87] The demonstration of the NRM in December 2023 was quite explicit: not only did their banner state "The blood of martyrs demands struggle today!", but the statement of the demonstration reported "The Resistance Movement remembers fallen heroes who fought and died for our cause, for the survival of the White race." This is also the implicit logic underpinning Venner's premise "to exist is to fight what denies me"[88] – in other words, the aestheticised cult of death by neofascist organisations in cyberspace. The recognition and celebration of sacrifice in hypermedia spaces show that neofascism chooses not to resort to clandestinity to fight for its civilization and for its race, as it can be performed in broad daylight, and condemns terrorism while advocating for an alleged right of self-defence.

Conclusion

This article has delved into the representation of martyrdom within hypermedia environments and its role in the transnational neofascist movement. Commencing with a theoretical analysis of the inherent contradictions and the significance of martyrdom in fascist and neofascist ideologies, the argument unfolds that the ritualisation of the passing of fallen comrades, framed as victims of an imagined civilizational order, allows the movement to legitimise and even implement a strategy of self-defence. By constructing hypermedia environments that sublimate the commemoration of martyrs and strengthen the bonds of the movement on the Internet, transnational neofascism is forsaking far-right terrorism in favour of a mass strategy. Through these rituals, anchored in both the digital and physical realms, neofascism is progressing in its normalisation process, making its ideas more acceptable.

Arsenio Cuenca is a PhD student at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris. His research focuses on the geopolitical representation of Hispanidad on the Internet. His areas of expertise include analysing far-right social, political, and ideological phenomena, both online and offline. Additionally, he investigates the intersections of anticolonial and far-right discourses.

Endnotes

1 Cas Mudde, *The Far Right Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019).

2 Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism: A History, 1914–1945* (London: UCL Press, 1997).

3 For Italian fascism and Nazism see respectively Emilio Gentile, *Fascismo. Historia e Interpretación* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2004); and Jesús Casquete, *El Culto a los Mártires Nazis: Alemania, 1920-1939 (*Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2020). Regarding other historical case studies, see Graham D. Macklin, "'Hail Mosley and F'Em All': Martyrdom, Transcendence and the 'Myth' of Internment," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7.1 (2006): 1-23.

4 Manuela Caiani, *European and American Extreme Right Groups and the Internet* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

5 Graham D. Macklin, (2006).

6 Nicolas Lebourg, *Le Monde vu de la Plus Extrême Droite. Du Fascisme au Nationalisme-Révolutionnaire* (Perpignan: Presses Universitaires de Perpignan, 2010).

7 Pierre-André Taguieff, *Sur la Nouvelle Droite* (Paris: Descartes Et Cie, 1994); Roger Griffin, *Fascismo* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2018).

8 See: Odile Hardy, "Le martyr, témoin de la vérité," in *Qu'est-ce que la vérité?* ed. Odile Hardy & Grégory Woimbée (PU de l'ICT, coll. Theopraxis, Parole et Silence, 2022), 171-187.

9 Simon Perry & Badi Hasisi, "Rational choice rewards and the suicide bomber," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27, no. 1 (2015): 53–80.

10 Today it is common to come across Matthew's verses 10:34, "I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" on social networks like Telegram. See URL: https://t.me/NashPut83/904; https://t.me/nuestralucha/911.

11 Ariel Koch, Karnie Nahon and Assaf Moghadam, "White Jihad: How White Supremacists Adopt Jihadi Narratives, Aesthetics, and Tactics," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (2023): 1-25. Also Nicolo Miotto, "Visual Representations of Martyrdom: Comparing the Symbolism of Jihadi and Far-Right Online Martyrologies," *Journal for Deradicalization* 32, (2022): 110-163.

12 Gentile, *Fascismo. Historia e Interpretación* (2004), 228-229.

13 "Se morire e cessare di combattere, non si può morire. See URL: https://ia801606.us.archive.org/14/items/lariscossa00dannuoft/lariscossa00dannuoft.pdf; The maxim is shared on popular neofascist telegram channels. See URL: https://t.me/Zentropa451/22638.

14 Stéphane François, "Le Moyen Âge idéalisé de l'extrême droite européenne," *Parlement [s], Revue d'histoire politique*, no. 2 (2020): 217-231.

15 See the text "La spiritualité païenne au sein du Moyen Âge". LA SPIRITUALITE PAÏENNE AU SEIN DU MOYEN ÂGE « CATHOLIQUE » from Julius Evola: https://www.terreetpeuple.com/paganisme-memoire-35/6199-la-spiritualite-paienne-au-sein-du-moyen-age-catholique-par-j-evola.html.

16 The *Manifiesto contra la muerte del espíritu y la tierra* is an anti-materialist text that received great media coverage in Spain in the 2000s. Its main authors are linked to the French New Right. See: Diego Sanromán, *La Nueva derecha: Cuarenta años de agitación metapolítica* (Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2008).

17 Xavier Casals, *Neonazis en España. De las audiones wagnerianas a los skinheads (1965-1995)* (Barcelona: Grijalbo, 1995), 65.

18 Although the name "Iron Guard" has passed into history, this fascist organisation was known as the Legion of Saint Michael the Archangel until 1930. Its militants were called "legionaries", even after the name changed.

19 Pablo del Hierro, *Madrid, Metrópolis (Neo)Fascista* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2023).

20 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

21 See: Kjell Baekken, "Are Right-Wing Extremists in Scandinavia a Threat to Government Personnel and the Societal Mainstream? A Prognosis" (Master diss. of military studies, United States Marine Corps, 2001).

22 Redazione online, "Arrestati 21 di Casapound ad Atene. In Grecia per un raduno di militanti di estrema destra," *Corriere della Sera*, 1 November 2023, https://www.rainews.it/articoli/2023/11/21-neonazisti-italiani-arrestati-allaeroporto-di-atene-saranno-espulsi-per-motivi-di-sicurezza-b5765155-ce59-4a3e-bec5-11800cf20a9f.html.

23 Jonathan Sturel is a far-right publisher and essayist. See: https://t.me/JonathanSturel/1047 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

24 Jules Torres, "Laurent Obertone: 'Thomas est un nouveau martyr du vivre ensemble'," *Le Journal du Dimanche*, December 1, 2023, https://www.lejdd.fr/societe/laurent-obertone-thomas-est-un-nouveau-martyr-du-vivre-ensemble-140052.

25 See Stéphane François, "Le Moyen Âge idéalisé de l'extrême droite européenne," Parlement [s], Revue d'histoire politique, no. 2 (2020) 217-231.

26 "L'Institut ILIADE face au 'grand effacement'," Dominique Venner, accessed 22 November 2023, https://www.dominiquevenner.fr/2014/12/22/linstitut-iliade-face-au-grand-effacement/.

27 "Tour d'Europe de l'impossible assimilation des immigrés," Institut Iliade, accessed 22 November 2023, https://institut-iliade.com/tour-deurope-de-limpossible-assimilation-des-immigres/.

28 "Rebelle, historien, martyr de la cause européenne: l'itinéraire de Dominique Venner," Institut Iliade, accessed 22 November 2023, https://institut-iliade.com/rebelle-historien-martyr-de-la-cause-europeenne-litineraire-de-dominique-venner/.

29 "Dominique Venner, un mythe mobilisateur," Institut Iliade, accessed 22 November 2023, https://institut-iliade.com/dominique-venner-un-mythe-mobilisateur/.

30 Guillaume Faye, "Interview on Dominique Venner," interview by Thomas Ferrier, *Counter-Currents*, 29 November 2013, https://counter-currents.com/2013/11/interview-on-dominique-venner/.

31 Clotilde Venner, "Dominique Venner, un coeur rebelle – entretien avec Clotilde Venner," interview by Ego non, https://www.ego-non.com/videos_publiques.

32 Clotilde Venner affirms: "Dès que les amis politiques avaient 50-60 ans et s'étaient un peu endormis, ils trouvaient ça fou, ils ne comprenaient pas, c'était trop [...] quand on vieillit on se trouve des excuses et un geste aussi absolu met mal à l'aise" ("As soon as the political friends were 50-60 years old and had become a little numb, they found it crazy, they didn't understand, it was too much [...] when we get older we make excuses and such an absolute gesture makes us uncomfortable."). Source: Venner, interview.

33 Louie Dean García (Ed.), *Far-Right Revisionism and the End of History: Alt/Histories* (New York: Routledge, 2020).

34 [URLs removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

35 Dominique Venner, *Un Samouraï d'Occident* (Paris: La Nouvelle Librairie, 2013).

36 Venner, *Un Samouraï d'Occident* (2013), 113.

37 Venner, *Un Samouraï d'Occident* (2013).

38 Admiration for traditional Japanese culture and samurai codes have historically been of great interest to European neofascism. This rapprochement between the two cultures was especially carried out by the Japanese writer and reference for the transnational neo-fascist sphere Yukio Mishima.

39 See Sofia Vasilopoulou and Daphne Halikiopoulou. *The Golden Dawn's 'Nationalist Solution': Explaining the Rise of the Far Right in Greece* (New York: Springer, 2015); Catarina Froio et al. *CasaPound Italia. Contemporary Extreme-Right Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2020); Nicolas Lebourg, "Violence Militante Juvénile d'Extrême Droite: Le Cas du Groupe Union Défense (GUD)" in *Radicalités Identitaires. La Démocratie Face à la Radicalisation Islamiste, Indigéniste et Nationaliste,* ed. Manuel Boucher (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2020), 219-242; and Tore Bjørgo & Jacob A. Ravndal, "Why the Nordic Resistance Movement restrains its use of violence," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 14, no. 6 (2020): 37-48.

40 Mari Liis Madisson, "The Semiotic Construction of Identities in Hypermedia Environments: The Analysis of Online Communication of the Estonian Extreme Right," *Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling* Vol. 53, Issue 9 (2016); and Andreas Önnerfors, "Researching Far-Right Hypermedia Environments," in *Researching the Far Right. Theory, Method and Practice*, ed. Stephen D. Ashe, Joel Busher, Graham Macklin, & Aaron Winter (New York: Routledge, 2021), 178–194.

41 Önnerfors, "Researching far right hypermedia environments," 179.

42 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

43 Arktos media posted a picture of Codreanu on July 29, 2023: https://x.com/ArktosJournal/status/1685078789544345601?s=20.

44 "Ama la trincea, disprezza il salotto" – Striscioni in tutta Italia in ricordo di Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, nel 75° anniversario della morte: https://www.azionetradizionale.com/2013/11/30/ama-la-trincea-disprezza-il-salotto-striscioni-in-tutta-italia-in-ricordo-di-c-z-codreanu/.

45 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

46 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

47 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

48.[URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

49 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

50 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

51 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

52 Flash demonstration honouring martyrs. See: https://nordicresistancemovement.org/flash-demonstration-honouring-martyrs/.

53 Ibid.

54 See Yannick Cahuzac & Stéphane François "Les Stratégies de Communication de la Mouvance Identitaire: Le Cas du Bloc Identitaire," *Questions de Communication*, no. 23 (2013): 275–292; and Jacob Aasland, "The Emergence of Transnational Street Militancy: A Comparative Case Study of the Nordic Resistance Movement and Generation Identity," *Journal for Deradicalization*, no. 25 (2020): 1–34.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 Catarina Froio et al. *CasaPound Italia. Contemporary Extreme-Right Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2020).

58 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

59 Mathias Destal & Marine Turchi, "*Marine est au Courant de Tout...": Argent Secret, Financements et Hommes de l'Ombre. Une Enquête Sur Marine Le Pen* (Paris: Flammarion, 2017).

60 In some occasions, the term *assasinés* is placed instead of *tombés.*

61 Colin P. Clark, "Trends in Terrorism: What's on the Horizon in 2023?", Foreign Policy Research Institute. URL: https://www.fpri.org/article/2023/01/trends-in-terrorism-whats-on-the-horizon-in-2023/.

62 Lars Erik Berntzen & Jacob A. Ravndal, "Monster or Hero? Far-Right Responses to Anders Behring Breivik and the July 22, 2011 Terrorist Attacks," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, no. 15(3), (2021): 37-59.

63 Spokesperson from GI affirmed: "Nous ne pouvons pas être tenus pour responsables du comportement de chaque personne qui nous fait un don. Ensuite, je peux vous l'assurer, nous n'avons jamais eu de contact personnel avec Brendon Tarrant." See: https://t.me/generationidentitaire/679.

64 Nathan Daligault, "Génération identitaire: 'C'est maintenant la bataille juridique qui commence'," *L'Incorrect*, 3 March 2021, https://lincorrect.org/generation-identitaire-cest-maintenant-la-bataille-juridique-qui-commence-lincorrect/.

65 "Le grand remplacement : histoire d'une idée mortifère", see: https://lcp.fr/programmes/le-grand-remplacement-histoire-d-une-idee-mortifere-107146.

66 Ari B. Am & Gabriel Weimann, "Fabricated Martyrs: The Warrior-Saint Icons of Far-Right Terrorism," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, no. 14(5), (2020): 130-147.

67 Lars E. Berntzen & Jacob A. Ravndal, "Monster or Hero?" 2021. Other cases of online community construction through a reactionary discourse have been studied in masculinist cyberspace, see Mélanie Gourarier, *Alpha Mâle: Séduire les Femmes Pour s'Apprécier Entre Hommes*. (Paris: Seuil, 2017).

68 Comments include "It only shows their true colors that they are happy with white kids getting murdered." or "Same retarded logic that made anders breivik think he was fighting white genocide by murdering a bunch of white kids". See: https://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/text/Breivik%20AND%20white%2A/.

69 Some users state: "why did mr tarrant not attack jews and instead attack a mosque that mossad had previously tried to infiltrate?" See: https://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/text/Tarrant%20AND%20muslim%2A/page/2/.

70 Ibid.

71 "Breivik was a freemason and a pro-zionist, he is in fact the real betrayer of the white race.", see: https://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/text/Breivik%20AND%20freemason/; https://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/text/Breivik%20AND%20mason%2A/.

72 Stéphane François, *Géopolitique des Extrêmes Droites. Logiques Identitaires et Monde Multipolaire* (Paris: Le Cavalier Bleu, 2022).

73 Nicolas Lebourg, *Le Monde vu de la plus Extrême Droite. Du Fascisme au Nationalisme-Révolutionnaire* (Perpignan: Presses Universitaires de Perpignan, 2010).

74 Pour une critique positive. Dominique Venner. See: https://www.atalantequebec.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Venner-Dominique-Pour-une-critique-positive.pdf.

75 Dominique Venner, *For a Positive Critique* (Budapest: Arktos, 2017).

76 Gerd Bergfleth, "Teoría de la Revuelta," *Hespérides* 15, (1996): 695-710.

77 Ibid.

78 Daniel Koehler, "Dying for the Cause? The Logic and Function of Ideologically Motivated Suicide, Martyrdom, and Self-Sacrifice Within the Contemporary Extreme Right," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, no. 14(2), (2022): 120–141.

79 See in ibid.

80 Périne Schir "Sous la présidence Bardella, la Nouvelle Droite retrouve un rôle de premier plan au RN," interview by Marine Turchi, *Mediapart*, December 18, 2023, https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/france/181223/sous-la-presidence-bardella-la-nouvelle-droite-retrouve-un-role-de-premier-plan-au-rn.

81 Jacob A. Ravndal, "From Bombs to Books, and Back Again? Mapping Strategies of Right-Wing Revolutionary Resistance," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 46, no. 11, (2023): 2120-2148.

82 [URL removed by Editors for ethical concerns; available from author upon request].

83 Tore Bjørgo & Jacob A. Ravndal, "Why the Nordic Resistance Movement Restrains its Use of Violence," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 14, no. 6 (2020): 37-48.

84 See in ibid.

85 "Je suis non-violent mais pas du tout pacifiste. Je n'élimine pas du tout la guerre si c'est pour sauver sa patrie, mais j'écarte tout à fait les attentats, la violence". URL: https://lcp.fr/programmes/le-grand-remplacement-histoire-d-une-idee-mortifere-107146.

86 Nicolas Bancel et al., *Le Grand Repli* (Paris: La Découverte, 2015).

87 "Dominique Venner, un mythe mobilisateur," Institut Iliade, accessed 22 November 2023, https://institut-iliade.com/dominique-venner-un-mythe-mobilisateur/.

88 Venner, *Un Samouraï d'Occident* (2013).

The Islamic State in the Sahel: Understanding its Internal and External Dynamics and Attack Modalities

Mathieu Bere[*]

Abstract: The Islamic State in the Sahel (also known as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, or ISGS) is one of the major jihadist groups operating in the tri-border region of the Sahel, and was formed by dissidents who shifted allegiance from al-Qaeda to ISIS. Despite their ideological affinities, there are a few internal and external factors that differentiate the ISGS and the al-Qaeda-affiliated groups in the region, such as JNIM. Drawing on evidence from previous studies and from an analysis of available data from relevant datasets, this Research Note provides a close examination of these factors to help better understand strategic choices made by ISGS leaders or militants in their external relations, their targeting logic, tactics, or attack modalities. A few recommendations are offered in the conclusion to help governments in their counter-terrorism efforts. Key among these recommendations is the necessity for African states to strengthen their cooperation and mutual support, especially at the legislative, financial, and military levels, in order to reduce the possibility for jihadist terrorist groups like ISS to survive and continue their operations on the continent.

Keywords: Terrorism, Islamic State, Sahel, tactics, violence against civilians

* Corresponding author: Dr Mathieu Bere, George Mason University (Carter School for Peace & Conflict Resolution), email: mbere@gmu.edu

Introduction

Throughout history, very few terror groups have equalled the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), in terms of brutal violence against civilians. Even though its activities have decreased in the Middle East and North Africa, ISIL's affiliates remain active in other parts of the world – particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where deaths attributed to ISIL affiliates have been increasing in recent years.[1] ISIL is in decline in the Middle East, where it has lost territory and sources of income, but it is not yet completely dead. Data on incidents attributed to ISIS affiliates show that the organisation is gaining strength in Africa through some of its franchises. This Research Note focuses on one of these franchises, namely the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), often called Islamic State in the Sahel (ISS), a group that was listed as a foreign terrorist organisation (FTO) in May 2018 by the US Department of State, and added in February 2020 to the ISIL and al-Qaeda sanctions list of the United Nations Security Council.[2]

Researching terrorist groups is both exciting and challenging, for it arouses our curiosity and, at the same time, leads us to realise how difficult it is to collect information and get sufficient knowledge of such groups. This is particularly true of the ISGS, whose leader, Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahraoui, was declared by the US Department of State's Rewards for Justice Program as one of the most wanted persons, with a reward of up to USD $5 million for information leading to his apprehension.[3] To better understand and counter the numerous attacks officially claimed by, or attributed to this group in the Sahel's tri-border region (where the borders of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger meet) – including an ambush in which four soldiers of Niger and four US Special Forces were killed on 4 October 2017 in Tongo Tongo (Niger) – this Research Note examines two under-researched areas: the internal and external factors that influence the group's functioning and the decision-making of its leaders, and the group's attack modalities. Although the primary focus of this study is not theoretical, this analysis will also help assess to what extent terrorists' selection of targets (especially civilians) is guided by rational choice and by ideology, as some scholars argue.[4]

The ISGS: Internal Dynamics and External Relations

The ISGS was formed by Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahraoui, one of the leaders and dissidents of al-Mourabitoun, an affiliate of al-Qaeda. After al-Sahraoui's declaration of allegiance in May 2015 to al-Baghdadi was rejected by Moktar Belmoktar – the founding leader of al-Mourabitoun – al-Sahraoui left al-Mourabitoun with other fighters and started the Islamic State in Mali which later became the ISGS.[5] Al-Sahraoui was born, reportedly, into a "well-connected and wealthy" family in 1973 in the disputed territory of Western Sahara, whose inhabitants felt repressed and marginalised by Moroccan authorities, a feeling that led to the formation of a secessionist pro-independence movement, the Polisario Front, which al-Sahraoui joined at a young age (as did other Sahraoui youth). To avoid arrest by the Moroccan security forces, al-Sahraoui fled to southern Algeria, where he lived and studied as a refugee before getting involved in cross-border smuggling between southern Algeria and northern Mali.[6] Later, he joined Islamist militant groups connected to al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) operating in northern Mali, such as the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and al-Mulathameen Brigade, two groups that merged to create Al-Mourabitoun, the group in which he became a key leader before leaving in 2015.[7]

Based in Mali and Niger, ISGS has been operating in the tri-border region that encompasses northern Mali, the Tillabery region in Niger, and the northern and eastern regions of Burkina Faso that border Mali and Niger (see map below).[8] ISGS was officially recognised in 2016 by ISIS, a year later after al-Sahraoui pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. However, while some

analysts contend that ISGS has been (since this official recognition by ISIS) receiving ideological and strategic guidance from the Islamic State central,[9] others argue instead that the group only uses the label of ISIS' affiliate for international recognition, and that "for all practical purposes, it operates according to its own organizational structures, goals, and resources."[10] Actually, after being "the Greater Sahara faction of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP)" (an organisational relationship that began in March 2019), ISGS was declared a separate province of the Islamic State in March 2022.[11]

ISGS assumedly shares the Salafi-jihadist ideology (a conservative, revolutionary, and anti-imperialist stream of Islam) that is embraced by ISIS, al-Qaeda and their respective affiliates such as Boko Haram, the Islamic State in West Africa Province, the Islamic State in Central Africa Province, al-Shabaab, and the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM). Considering the example of the Prophet and his early companions (*sala'af*) as the standard for authentic Muslim faith and behaviour, the grand strategy of al-Qaeda, ISIS, and arguably their affiliates in the Sahel includes primarily restoring the Caliphate in the Muslim world, a political order based on the divinely-revealed law of the Sharia, through violent means if necessary. Nevertheless, ISGS does not seem to be driven by a consistent ideological narrative, but rather by a desire to expand its territorial control at the expense of its al-Qaeda-affiliated rival JNIM. Further, the youth who have joined the group, mainly from Fulani backgrounds, were in most cases driven by a need for social significance, a desire to protect their cattle, and grievances against their national governments or against other rival ethnic groups (e.g., the Tuaregs), rather than by a strong adherence to jihadist ideology.[12]

In terms of demographics, most members of ISGS are dissidents from MUJAO, al-Mourabitoun, and Katiba Macina, who followed al-Sahraoui.[13] According to a recent study by Heni Nsaiba, "Its members belong to the Fulani, Arab, Tuareg, Daoussaks, Songhai, and Djerma ethnic groups, although its core leadership was historically composed of Western Saharan militants."[14] Another study by Raineri Luca confirms that ISGS recruited many of its militants from the disgruntled ethnic Fulani and Daoussaks, who are nomadic communities in the Northern Tillabery region of Niger and central and northern Mali.[15] Through field research in these regions, Raineri found that the Fulani became hostile to the government in Niger and Mali after the latter sided with other communities (such as the Tuaregs) against them in inter-community conflicts. As a result, he concludes that "ISGS supplied an opportunity to fulfil the protection demands by Fulani dwellers of the Mali-Niger borderland, feeling marginalized, abandoned, and eventually discriminated against by their own state authorities."[16] In fact, tensions, alliances, and disputes between ethnic communities (Arabs, Tuaregs, Fulanis, Dogons, Songhai, etc.) are among the key factors that have been influencing the relationships between armed groups and their recruitment efforts in the Sahara-Sahel region for many years.

Moussa Ag Acharatoumane, one of the leaders of the *Mouvement pour le Salut de l'Azawad* (a Tuareg-led movement that fights ISGS alongside the French forces), revealed in an interview that the men of ISGS move in small units (usually on motorbikes), and that most of them are citizens of Niger who hail from the region of Tillabery.[17] While it is often assumed that some jobless youth are driven towards groups like ISGS by frustrating socio-economic conditions or radicalisation, field research in northern Tillabery did not find any evidence corroborating that young militants of ISGS were primarily motivated by ideology, religious conviction or financial gain.[18]

As regards the size of the group, according to estimates by Jason Warner and Charlotte Hulme, ISGS had about 300 to 425 fighters by the end 2018, and is very likely the fourth largest ISIS affiliate in Africa after ISWAP (about 3,500 fighters), the Islamic State in Sinai (about 1,250

fighters), and the Islamic State in Libya (about 500 combatants).[19] However, during the last couple of years both ISGS and ISWAP have lost hundreds of fighters and key leaders (including al-Sahraoui) in violent clashes with JNIM, with the French Barkhane forces in the tri-border region, or with the armed forces of Nigeria and Chad in the Lake Chad region.[20]

Troubled Relationships with the Local Populations, National Governments, and al-Qaeda Affiliates

After several years of exceptional collaboration between ISGS and JNIM in jointly coordinated operations, according to data collected by Heni Nsaiba and Caleb Weiss, 46 clashes erupted between the militants of these two jihadist organisations in Mali and Burkina Faso from July 2019 through July 2020, leaving several hundred of fighters dead on both sides and reigniting the rivalry in the Sahel between the Islamic State and al-Qaeda.[21] This rivalry has been accompanied by ideological and tactical differences on the battlefield. Al-Qaeda's affiliates (like JNIM) are more open to negotiation with some local ethnic communities, such as the Bambaras or Dogons, as well as with the French and the government of Mali. These al-Qaeda affiliates tend to follow the Taliban's model and exercise more restraint in their attacks. In contrast, ISGS mocks JNIM's soft approach, rejects negotiation with their "enemies," and opts for brutal, indiscriminate violence targeting both the military and civilians.[22] For example, after the incorporation of ISGS into ISWAP in March 2019, both groups increased their targeting of civilians, including Christians in churches in north-eastern Nigeria and Burkina Faso.[23]

However, a January 2024 report by the UN Sanctions Monitoring Team noted important strategic developments in the relationships between ISGS and JNIM (its rival), and with the local civilian populations. According to their analysis:

> A localized détente between ISGS and JNIM raises concerns about the possible establishment of a terrorist sanctuary. By implicitly dividing the territories where they operate, these groups can concentrate on targeting security forces and continue to embed within local communities. This is a worrying trend, as it enables them to conduct attacks and facilitate operations beyond borders of neighboring countries. Unlike the previous strategy of terror, ISGS in Mali is pursuing a new strategy to reinforce its acceptance among the population, thus increasing its influence, funding, and recruitment capabilities.[24]

The killing of civilians by ISGS militants has arguably damaged its relationships with most of the population of the Sahel region. As mentioned above, the organisation took advantage of violent clashes between ethnic militias to recruit youth from disgruntled ethnic groups, especially the Fulani.[25] However, because of its brutal attacks against civilians, ISGS has often lost the support of some local people and turned local militias against itself. For example, after attacks in northern Mali, two local militias (*Mouvement pour le Salut de l'Azawad* and GATIA) joined the Mali government forces and the French Barkhane Force to fight ISGS, killing more than a hundred of its combatants.[26]

According to Moussa Ag Acharatoumane, these local militias were able to fight ISGS more effectively than the government or foreign forces because they knew the actors, the territory, the customs, and the mentalities of the local people better and could better monitor the movements of ISGS.[27] Does this suggest that locally recruited law enforcement or military personnel – if they are adequately trained and equipped – might see better results in the fight against terrorist groups than the national government and international forces who come from outside and usually have poor knowledge of the local terrain and context? It would be difficult

to make such a claim without further research and more evidence. To stay within the limited scope of this Research Note, let us now examine what has influenced ISGS' selection of targets in the incidents in which its militants were involved.

The Targeting Logic and Operational Objectives of the Islamic State in the Sahel

From 2016 to 19 November 2020, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Events Database project (ACLED), about 746 incidents were claimed by (or attributed to) ISGS. These incidents include battles with the military, violence against civilians, explosions or remote violence through improvised explosive devices, extortion, looting, and property destruction. A close look at those incidents suggests that the group has been strategically targeting government representatives, police and military personnel, foreign troops deployed in Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali, militants of al-Qaeda affiliated groups (especially those of the JNIM coalition that it views as rivals), local militias that fight it, and (more importantly) civilians. They have also targeted private property such as cattle, businesses, and other resources for its strategic developments.[28]

Restricting inclusion in its database to incidents that meet its three defining criteria of terrorism[29], the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) from 2016 to 2020 identified 102 incidents that it considered terrorist and attributed to ISGS (see Figure 1), 51 of which targeted the military, the police, non-state militia groups, or other terrorist groups.

Figure 1. Terrorist incidents attributed to ISGS: 2016-2020
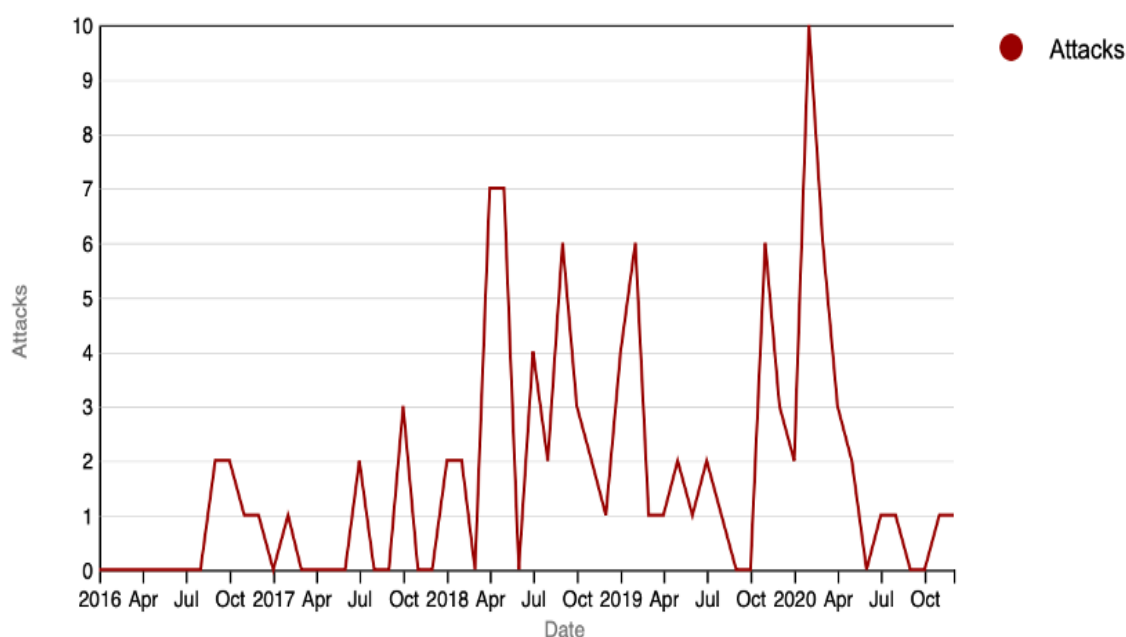
Data source: Global Terrorism Database

A more detailed typology of the targets or collateral victims shows that they included businesses; general government or diplomatic personnel; the security forces (police and military); educational institutions who continue to provide Western education instead of teaching the Quran and Arabic; NGOs; private citizens and property; religious figures or institutions (mainly churches), other terrorist groups or non-state militia groups; tourists; and a few unknown or other types of targets (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Targets of terrorist incidents attributed to ISGS between 2016 and 2020
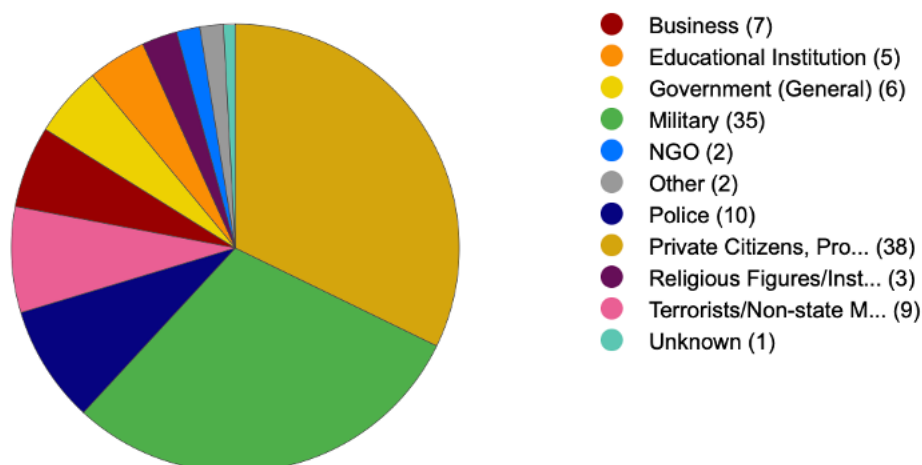
Data source: Global Terrorism Database

All these incidents were perpetrated in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, especially the tri-border region, except one in Ghat (Libya) in 2016 against a business. But the terrorist character of some of the 102 incidents is doubtful, and according to the GTD researchers, only 71 incidents meet without doubt all the three defining terrorism criteria – namely, the requirements that they should be acts aiming at achieving a political, religious, or social goal; that they involve coercing, intimidating, or conveying a message to a broader audience; and that they should be acts posed outside the parameters of international humanitarian law.

Although one may have the feeling that ISGS is indiscriminate in its violence because its attacks target both combatants and civilian noncombatants, an analysis of the available data about the targets and fatalities in the incidents claimed by (or attributed to) ISGS suggests that the leaders and field commanders of ISGS select their targets based on their perception of who is to be regarded as an enemy. Besides personal or psychological motives such as revenge or retaliation, this enemy's perception is greatly shaped by their ideology and their operational objectives. Thus, the following are considered enemies: the military and citizens of "infidel" powers of the West, the "apostate" regimes that cooperate with them, and civilians who collaborate with the government military or do not support the jihadist activists.[30]

In line with their Salafi-jihadist ideology, ISGS militants forbid the selling and consumption of alcohol and tobacco, require that women be veiled, and that schools teach the Qu'ran (and in Arabic) in the regions where they operate. This ideological agenda, along with (in some cases) contextual operational objectives, explains their targeting and destruction of liquor stores and schools, their kidnapping or killing of teachers, other civil servants, Westerners, and suspected collaborators of government security forces.[31] Besides the ISGS militants' determination to punish the local civilian population for not supporting the jihadist cause or for collaborating with enemy forces, both the data and the literature suggest that these militants are often motivated in their attacks against civilians by the desire to grab the attention of the media and by purely economic reasons, as in the case of cattle theft. Nonetheless, in many incidents, the perpetrators' specific motivations cannot be clearly determined.

A Growing Lethal Potential in the Sahel

Among the factors that are critical to the selection of targets, and to the operations and survival of a terrorist organisation such as ISGS, one needs certainly to consider its human, financial, physical, and logistical resources, and its sources of income.[32] Very likely, the sources of funding for ISGS include direct support from ISIS-central, as well as income acquired from extortion, cattle rustling, and kidnapping for ransom. Narrative reports of attacks attributed to ISGS in the ACLED database also suggest that the organisation acquires some of its weapons from attacks against police stations, military units, or military patrols, attacks during which some military equipment was often seized and taken away by the assailants.

As regards the logistical and other physical resources that ISGS enjoys, a leader of the *Mouvement pour le Salut de l'Azawa*d, which took up arms to fight the jihadist organisation after its militants killed many civilians in northern Mali, revealed the following in an interview:

> The terrorists [that is, the ISGS militants] usually set up camp in a rather dense forest—the trees allowing them to escape the surveillance of planes—and surrounded by shrubs, which deters patrols from entering. In a base, there are between ten and thirty people, who communicate with each other with walkie-talkies. There is fuel, in drums or jerry cans, but also food—spaghetti, rice, tea, sugar, water.[33]

Like other jihadist groups operating in the region, ISGS purchases motorbikes and food items from local markets and from neighbouring countries, and has established a network of collaborators who provide them information and the material assistance they need.[34] Drawing on information gathered from former members of terrorist groups (including ISGS) operating in Eastern Burkina Faso, journalist Atiana Serge Oulon revealed that terrorist groups in each locality have people who provide them information in return for money; they also have supporters from whom they receive in-kind donations and cash, nurses who take care of their wounded or sick members, business people from whom they buy what they need either in Burkina Faso or in neighbouring countries.[35] Thus, some civilians, who are not members of the terrorist groups, unknowingly or intentionally support terrorist activities.

ISGS, in the footsteps of the Islamic State central and other Islamic State affiliates, takes advantage of governance weaknesses that plague states in the Sahel, as well as local conflicts and the grievances of some ethnic communities (for example, the Fulani) against the government to recruit militants.[36] More generally, jihadist groups in the region use "a calibrated mix of coercion and co-option" and "adapt to shifting dynamics."[37] ISGS has claimed responsibility (or was attributed) for many attacks against civilians, the military, and the French Barkhane force, mainly in the border regions of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. High-profile attacks that give an idea of the operational capabilities of the group include the ambush of Nigérien soldiers in the village of Tongo Tongo at the border between Mali and Niger in which 28 soldiers were killed in May 2019; a suicide attack with a bomb-loaded truck against a convoy of the Barkhane forces in northern Mali in January 2018; and in October 2017, an ambush of a joint-patrol of Nigérien forces and American special forces outside Tongo Tongo.[38] On 19 August 2019, early in the morning, more than 100 ISGS militants on motorbikes attacked with rockets a military camp in Koutougou, in the Soum province, in northern Burkina Faso, killing at least 24 soldiers, wounding several others, and burning down buildings, cars, and motorbikes.[39] By the end of 2020, the most lethal attacks attributed to ISGS (or claimed by them, through a post to a website or blog) were directed against the military. For example, ISGS' attacks against military positions left 166 dead in Chinagoder in Niger in January 2020, 115 dead in two separate attacks in December 2019 in Arbinda (Burkina Faso), 60 and 49 dead in Mali respectively in Tabankort on 18 November 2019, and in Indelimane on 1 November 2019.

According to data on wounded and killed terrorists from the GTD, ISGS had lost about 239 of its fighters or leaders by the end of 2020. Many of their bases have been and continue to be destroyed in counter-terrorism operations, while their equipment is either destroyed or taken away by government armed forces. Nonetheless, ISGS (like JNIM) remains resilient and has been expanding its operations across the Central Sahel.

The attacks mentioned above, and many others against military and police outposts in the region, were attributed to ISGS by both ACLED and the GTD.[40] This suggests that the group still has significant combat capacities, including heavy weaponry and fighters who received military training and acquired technical expertise in the manufacturing and use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) from either the Islamic State central or al-Qaeda's affiliates in the region. Repeated attacks by ISGS militants against military barracks and patrols, which are rather hard targets that enjoy a high level of protection, also suggest that the group is confident in its capacities and has a high-risk threshold that is bolstered by its familiarity with the security environment in the region of Tillabery and in other localities where it operates.

The Tongo Tongo Ambush: The Modalities of a Deadly Attack

A frequency analysis of the GTD data on attack types or tactics employed by ISGS militants to achieve their ideological or operational objectives shows that they favour armed assaults with guns (67.2 percent), explosives (10.3 percent), projectiles such as rockets, mortars, RPGs (5.2 percent), vehicles (5.2 percent), landmines (3.4 percent), automatic or semi-automatic rifles (3.4 percent), arson/fire (3.4 percent), and finally, suicide attacks (1.7 percent). But in at least 16.7 percent of the incidents attributed to ISGS militants, the tactics or types of weapons employed were unknown or could not be clearly determined.

A closer look at one high-profile attack claimed by ISGS can help get a better idea of the tactics employed by this group. On 4 October 2017, five military vehicles in which about thirty men – including eight American military instructors and more than twenty Nigerien soldiers of the Security and Intelligence Battalion – were attacked near the village of Tongo Tongo, close to the Mali border, South of Menaka, one of the major jihadist strongholds in northern Mali.[41] A violent shootout erupted between the assailants and the soldiers, who strongly repelled the attack and started to hunt down the assailants. However, as they were more familiar with the terrain, the attackers hid and ambushed the soldiers. An undetermined number of assailants were killed or injured; five Nigerien soldiers and four American instructors were left dead. The injured soldiers were urgently taken to hospitals in Niger or to the AFRICOM's headquarters in Germany. Nigerien, French, and American forces then launched huge land and air operations to hunt down the attackers.

The Tongo Tongo attack – and a more recent attack that left 51 Burkinabe soldiers dead on the Deou-Oursi road in the border region between Mali, Burkina and Niger on February 27, 2023[42] – illustrate one of the tactics favoured by ISGS and other jihadist groups against the foreign and national military in the Sahel region. Narratives of attacks reported by newspapers have shown that these groups wage an asymmetrical warfare against much stronger government and international armed forces by using ambushes, improvised explosive devices planted on the trajectories of military patrols, and then armed assaults by their combatants. This has usually led to shootouts that resulted in varying numbers of casualties on both sides. Sometimes, these casualties included civilians who were escorted by security forces or happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. In border regions of Burkina Faso and Niger, jihadist groups who had their bases in safe havens in northern Mali often crossed the border and perpetrated

attacks, and then they fled back to their hideouts in northern Mali through roads in the desert that they were very familiar with.

The favourite targets of these groups for armed assault or kidnapping for ransom include the American and French forces that support the national government forces of the G5 Sahel to fight jihadist groups in the region, and citizens of Western countries.[43] For example, in 2020, the Islamic State claimed responsibility in its magazine Al Naba for the killing and burning of six French volunteers (employees of the humanitarian organisation ACTED), along with their Nigerien guide, near a giraffe reserve in Koure (Niger) on 9 August 2020, as well as for the kidnapping of two other French individuals, who are still held hostages.[44] Both of these incidents were perpetrated by ISGS militants.

Even though reports on terrorist attacks attributed to ISGS rarely include information on the specific type of weapons used by the perpetrators, some statistical reports and pictures of equipment taken from killed perpetrators suggest that mostly small arms and light weapons of the Kalachnikov type are used. Further, according to the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, as of January 2019, about 63 percent of the weapons used by terrorist groups to attack their targets across Africa – mostly civilians (53 percent) and security and military forces (32 percent) – were small arms and light weapons (63 percent or more) and explosives (27 percent).[45] Subsequent reports by the same research centre show little variation in the type of weapons and techniques used in the reported attacks, which suggests a low propensity of terrorist groups operating in Africa to innovate, and no indication of interests to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction. However, attacks against hard targets, such as the one of Tongo Tongo, indicate that ISGS has a very high-risk threshold, suggesting its leaders and militants are ready for suicide attacks in which they have little chance of escaping and surviving.

It would be interesting to know whether the decision-making process within ISGS regarding their selection of targets – especially military targets – is decentralised (that is, left to field commanders) or is centralised. If centralised, it can be assumed that al-Sahraoui or the leaders of ISWAP have been making decisions and giving orders for high-profile attacks. Thus far, the available data does not provide any definitive answers to this question. However, it is clear that the perpetrators seek to affect the behaviour of national governments and of Western powers, such as the United States and France, whose troops they want to drive out of what they consider to be Muslim lands.[46] Further, the disappointment of local populations and military leaders towards the foreign forces has led them to call for the French (and other foreign) forces' withdrawal from Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, with some suggesting that the French military presence in the Sahel is aimed primarily at serving French interests rather than resolving the terrorist crisis that has been worsening despite the increasing numbers of foreign troops deployed in the region.[47]

This study suggests that the reasons that motivate ISGS fighters to attack national and foreign military targets are related to their ideological and policy goals, for they perceive the military (and collaborators) as their primary enemies and as key obstacles to the implementation of a Sharia-based political order. Nevertheless, ISGS' attacks against civilians – including in villages where they operate – have often been indiscriminate, reducing popular support for the group. Rather than rational choice, the leadership's stupidity and their poor control of their militants are a more plausible explanation for their repeated and indiscriminate attacks against civilians, as Max Abrahms suggested in his book *Rules for Rebels.* As he explains, given the reputational costs of attacks against the civilian population for insurgent groups, it is difficult to argue that rational choice or strategic calculus accounts for terrorist indiscriminate violence against civilians. If these groups attack civilians indiscriminately, it is most often because their leaders

are either inept and ignore that such a strategy will make them unpopular and lead them to failure, or because they have poor control of their foot soldiers, which is most likely to be the case in decentralised insurgent movements such as ISGS.[48]

Concluding Remarks

ISGS has been operating mostly in poorly governed regions located along the porous borders of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger – three landlocked, impoverished countries of the arid, semi-desert Sahel region, south of the Sahara. Due to their geographic location, demographic configuration, and economic situation, these countries and north-eastern Nigeria have been fertile ground for the expansion of the jihadist movement in West Africa. Mali and Niger neighbour the Maghreb, a region that is predominantly Arab, Muslim, and the birthplace of several militant Islamist groups. Further, all three countries have a fast-growing population, the large majority of which is Muslim, below 25 years old, and in need of education, employment, and economic opportunities, thus constituting a great reservoir of potential militants, in which ISGS and other jihadist groups can easily tap. Beyond this human potential, ISGS has been taking advantage of local conflicts, the grievances of some ethnic communities against the government, the fragility of the state, and the weakness of the state security apparatus in these three countries to recruit fighters and mobilise supporters from the local population. Thus, besides the Salafi-jihadist ideology, identity and security concerns account for the mobilisation of supporters and militants who join the local armed groups affiliated with al-Qaeda and ISIS against what they consider as "infidel" Western powers and "apostate" political regimes of the Sahel that cooperate with the latter.

A key asset that ISGS and other jihadist militants in the region have in this war, in comparison to their enemies who come from outside, is that they most often know the terrain better and can more easily find their way around. The Tongo Tongo deadly ambush, which ISIS claimed responsibility for, in many ways illustrated key factors and attack modalities that shed light on the ideology, functioning, and *modus operandi* of ISGS. However, a significant weakness of ISGS is the hostility that the group's brutal violence against civilians has generated toward it among some local civilian populations and its rivals of the JNIM coalition. Counter-terrorism forces might leverage this weakness to accelerate the military defeat of their common lethal enemy.

However, by the end of 2023, the situation seemed to be turning to the advantage of ISGS and JNIM in the tri-border region after the military coup in Niger and the departure of international forces, as requested by the military junta. Apparently, as the UN Sanctions Monitoring Team anticipated, this departure leaves a vacuum that "ISGS might exploit these weaknesses to strengthen its logistical corridor to Nigeria, enabling it to secure supplies and potentially recruit from other communities." [49] In any case, the great power rivalry between Russia and Western states and the divisions within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) – divisions caused by the threat of military intervention against the putsch leaders in Niger who now enjoy the support of Russia and the military juntas of Burkina Faso and Mali – have weakened ECOWAS as well as national and international counterterrorism capacities. These developments are likely to lead, at the regional level, to a deterioration of the security situation while harming regional integration efforts.

A few suggestions may be made based on the findings of this study to contribute to more effective counter-terrorism efforts in West Africa. First, given that ISGS continues to lose fighters, sympathisers, logistical resources, and military equipment as a result of government counter-terrorism operations, it is logical to assume that this group could not survive and pursue its operations unless it obtains new fighters, arms, funding and other type of support. Consequently, governments should focus not only on eliminating individual terrorists but also

on tackling their sources of funding and arms provisions both within and outside Africa, as these sources of funding and supplies greatly contribute to their resilience over the years. This would require not only the mobilisation of a peace enforcement or counter-terrorism force by regional organisations but also more cooperation, more trust, targeted and coordinated actions among African states, and between the latter and foreign states who are known or suspected of providing arms, funding, ideological or logistical support to ISGS and other terrorist groups operating in Africa. In that regard, the Sahel states must realise that they need the cooperation and support of their neighbours within ECOWAS, as well as that of the international community to contain terrorist violence. To obtain meaningful results in that area, negotiations and other diplomatic tools will not be enough. The African Union and individual member states will need to make bold decisions, including sanctions against state and non-state sponsors of terrorism.

Second, as demonstrated clearly in this study, no terrorist group can survive without a minimum level of support and complicity among the local population, so it is essential that civilians in the localities where terrorist groups operate and in neighbouring countries are made aware of the risks of unknowingly contributing to terrorism by passively collaborating with members of these groups or trading with unusual and unknown individuals who might be associated with them. To more effectively police and stem the flow of goods and arms contributing to terrorism, states within ECOWAS and the Lake Chad Basin need to strengthen their cooperation, take stronger measures to improve the control of transactions at their borders, and detect and punish acts or attempts of corruption in the course of these transactions. Better, instead of waiting for terror groups to attack them on their territory, African states should mobilise and unite to support each other financially and militarily in fighting jihadist terrorist groups wherever they operate on the continent, for these groups have become a major threat to peace and security in Africa. Divisions and disagreements among African states or among international partners who intervene in the region to help them fight terrorism will only strengthen their common enemy, namely the terrorist groups.

And lastly, as this study and others have suggested, the complexity of the history and the relationships between ethnic communities – including tensions, rivalries, and alliances – shape much of the evolution of the armed groups operating in the Sahara-Sahel region. Knowing these complex relationships and history, as well as the local cultures, contexts, and terrain, is necessary for national and international actors to achieve their objectives in dealing with these groups.

Dr Mathieu Bere is a research consultant at the Carter School for Peace & Conflict Resolution at the George Mason University (USA).

Endnotes

1 See Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Deaths Linked to Militant Islamist Violence in Africa Continue to Spiral, 29January 2024. https://africacenter.org/spotlight/mig2024-deaths-militant-islamist-violence-africa-rise/ See also Institute for Economics & Peace, *Global Terrorism Index 2020: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism,* Sydney (November 2020), 2. http://visionofhumanity.org/reports

2 *Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS),* United Nations Security Council, 2020. https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/islamic-state-greater-sahara-isgs

3 Rewards for Justice is the US Department of State Counter-terrorism Bureau's rewards program. For details, see its website https://rewardsforjustice.net/english

4 See for example, Prunckun, H., & Whitford, T., *Terrorism & counterterrorism : a comprehensive introduction to actors and actions*, 2019. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., and Drake, C. J. M., *Terrorists' Target Selection.* Macmillan, 1998.

5 Warner, J. & Hulme, C., "The Islamic State in Africa: Estimating Fighter Numbers Across the Continent." *CTC Sentinel (*August 2018), vol. 11, Issue 7, 24. https://ctc.usma.edu/islamic-state-africa-estimating-fighter-numbers-cells-across-continent/

6 See Warner, J. et al., *The Islamic state in Africa: the emergence, evolution, and future of the next jihadist battlefront.* London, England: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd., 314 ff, 2021.

Leroux, P., "Exploiting Borders in the Sahel: The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara." *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 10 June 2019. https://africacenter.org/spotlight/exploiting-borders-sahel-islamic-state-in-the-greater-sahara-isgs/

7 Ibid.

8 See Oulon, S., *Comprendre les attaques armées au Burkina Faso: Profiles et itinéraires de terroristes.* Ouagadougou: Emile Sia Éditeur, 57, 2019.

9 Mapping Militant Organizations. "The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara." Stanford University, July 2018. Available at: https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/islamic-state-greater-sahara

10 Leroux, P., "Exploiting Borders in the Sahel: The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara," 2, 2020.

11 Heni, N., Actor Profile: The Islamic State Sahel Province. Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), 13 January 2023.https://acleddata.com/2023/01/13/actor-profile-the-islamic-state-sahel-province/

12 Leroux, P., "Exploiting Borders in the Sahel: The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara," 2, 2020.

13 Zenn, J., "ISIS in Africa: The Caliphate's Next Frontier." *Center for Global Policy*, 26 May 2020. https://cgpolicy.org/articles/isis-in-africa-the-caliphates-next-frontier/

14 Heni, N., Actor Profile: The Islamic State Sahel Province. Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), 13 January 2023. https://acleddata.com/2023/01/13/actor-profile-the-islamic-state-sahel-province/

15 See Raineri, L., "Explaining the Rise of Jihadism in Africa: The Crucial Case of the Islamic State of the Greater Sahara." *Terrorism and political violence*, 22 October 2020, 8.

16 Ibid.

17 Ag Acharatoumane, M.,. Interview with Baba Ahmed: « L'État islamique au Grand Sahara ne sera pas vaincu par des forces étrangères ». *Jeune Afrique*, 19April 2018.https://www.jeuneafrique.com/552759/politique/mali-moussa-ag-acharatoumane-msa-letat-islamique-au-grand-sahara-ne-sera-pas-vaincu-par-des-forces-etrangeres/ (Accessed November 28, 2020).

18 See Raineri, L., "Explaining the Rise of Jihadism in Africa: The Crucial Case of the Islamic State of the Greater Sahara," 7, 2020.

19 Warner, J. & Hulme, C., "The Islamic State in Africa: Estimating Fighter Numbers Across the Continent." *CTC Sentinel,* August 2018, vol. 11, Issue 7, 22. https://ctc.usma.edu/islamic-state-africa-estimating-fighter-numbers-cells-across-continent/

20 Nsaibia, H. & Weiss, C., "The End of the Sahelian Anomaly: How the Global Conflict between the Islamic State and Al-Qa'ida Finally Came to West Africa." *CTC Sentinel*,July 2020, Vol. 13, Issue 7, pp.6 ff. Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, died reportedly by detonating a suicide vest during a battle with ISWAP in the Sambisa Forest and was replaced by Abu Musa al Barnawi in 2021. See Hinshaw, Drew; Parkinson, Joe,. "Boko Haram Leader, Responsible for Chibok Schoolgirl Kidnappings, Dies". *The*

Wall Street Journal, 21 May 2021. https://www.wsj.com/articles/boko-haram-leader-responsible-for-chibok-schoolgirl-kidnappings-dies-11621608392 . Likewise, Adnan Abu Walid was killed in a French drone strike in the tri-border region in 2021.

21 Nsaibia, H. & Weiss, C., "The End of the Sahelian Anomaly: How the Global Conflict between the Islamic State and Al-Qa'ida Finally Came to West Africa." CTC Sentinel (July 2020), Vol. 13, Issue 7, pp.6 ff

22 Ibid., 8.

23 Zenn, J. (2020)."ISIS in Africa: The Caliphate's Next Frontier," 13.

24 UN Security Council, Thirty-Third Report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2610 (2021) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, 29 January 2024, p.10. https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/431/79/pdf/n2343179.pdf?token=jZF3cMvidecpnZ6ZNB&fe=true

25 See Mapping Militant Organizations, "The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara." Stanford University, July 2018.

26 Ag Acharatoumane, M., "L'État Islamique au Grand Sahara ne sera pas Vaincu par des Forces Etrangères", 2020.

27 Ibid.

28 See Clionadh, R., Linke, A. Hegre, H. and Karlsen, J., "Introducing ACLED-Armed Conflict Location and Event Data." *Journal of Peace Research,* 2010*, 47*(5), 651-660. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343310378914 Data from the Global Terrorism Database on the types of targets attacked by ISGS militants confirm my analysis.

29 For an incident to be considered terrorist and be included in its database, the Global Terrorism Database , the National Consortium for the Study and Responses to Terrorism requires that the incident meets the following three criteria: i) the act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal; ii) there must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims, and iii) he action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities, i.e. the act must be outside the parameters permitted by international humanitarian law (particularly the admonition against deliberately targeting civilians or non-combatants).

30 See Naji, A. B., *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through which the Umma Will Pass.* Translated from the Arabic by W. McCants. Boston: Harvard University, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, 41-84, 2006.

31 See Oulon, S.,*Comprendre les attaques armées au Burkina Faso,* 38, 2019. See also Nabons Laafi Diallo, N.L.,*Le terrorisme au Sahel: Dynamique de l'Extrémisme Violent et Lutte Anti-terroriste : Un regard à partir du Burkina Faso.* Paris : L'Harmattan, 96-97, 2020.

32 The exact size of the group and its funding sources are still unknown, according to the *Country Reports on Terrorism 2019* published by the Bureau of Counter-terrorism of the US Department of State, see p. 270. https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2019/

33 Ag Acharatoumane, M. "L'État Islamique au Grand Sahara ne sera pas vaincu par des forces étrangères", 2020.

34 See Oulon, S., *Comprendre les Attaques Armées au Burkina Faso,* 37, 2019.

35 Ibid., p.38.

36 International Crisis Group."Exploiting Disorder: Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State." *Crisis Group Special Report* (March 4, 2016), Executive summary, 1. https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/exploiting-disorder-al-qaeda-and-the-islamic-state.pdf . See also Leroux, P.,"Comment l'État Islamique dans le Grand Sahara exploite les frontières au Sahel"", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 21 June 2019 https://africacenter.org/fr/spotlight/comment-letat-islamique-dans-le-grand-sahara-exploite-les-frontieres-au-sahel/

37 Ibid.

38 United Nations Security Council,*Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS)*, 23 February 2023. https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/islamic-state-greater-sahara-isgs

39 France 24, "Attaque d'envergure" contre l'armée au Burkina Faso., 20 August 2019 https://www.france24.com/fr/20190820-burkina-faso-attaque-envergure-armee-morts-soum.

40 See Raineri, L, "Explaining the Rise of Jihadism in Africa: The Crucial Case of the Islamic State of the Greater Sahara," 8, 2020.

41 See the report of the attack by RFI. "Niger: des soldats nigériens et américains tués à la frontière du Mali"", *Radio France Internationale*, 5 October 2017. https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20171005-niger-tongo-tillabery-nord-mali-frontiere-embuscade-bsr-soldat-mort-americain-sahra

42 Coulibaly, N.,"Ce que l'on sait de la sanglante attaque de Déou, dans le nord du Burkina Faso", *Jeune Afrique*, 21 February 2023. https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1420117/politique/ce-que-lon-sait-de-la-sanglante-attaque-de-deou-dans-le-nord-du-burkina-faso/

43 Several citizens of Western countries were kidnapped and held as hostages in Niger, Burkina Faso, or Mali, prompting Western governments to advise their citizens to avoid travelling to many parts of the region, except when necessary.

44 Africanews & AP, "Niger: l'attaque terroriste de Koure revendiquée par l'Etat Islamique." *Africanews,* 18 September 2020. https://fr.africanews.com/2020/09/18/niger-l-attaque-terroriste-de-koure-revendiquee-par-l-etat-islamique/ .

45 African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism,*Africa Terrorism Bulletin*, 1-15 January 2019, No: 001, 5. https://caert.org.dz/Medi-review/Terrorism-bulletin/Bulletin-1.pdf

46 See Fathali, M.,*From the Terrorists' Point of View: What they experience and why they come to destroy*. London: Praeger Security International, 5, 2016. See also Diallo, N.L.,Le *terrorisme au Sahel: Dynamique de l'Extrémisme Violent et Lutte Anti-terroriste : Un regard à partir du Burkina Faso.* Paris: L'Harmattan, 47-48, 2020.

47 AFP,"Les forces étrangères au Sahel de plus en plus contestées", *AFP, 5* November 2019. https://laminute.info/2019/11/05/les-forces-etrangeres-au-sahel-de-plus-en-plus-contestees/ See also Maiga, I. & Adam, N.,"Sahel, les armées étrangères roulent pour elles mêmes", *Mondafrique, 5* May 2018, 5. https://mondafrique.com/que-font-les-armees-etrangeres-au-sahel/

48 Abrahms, M.,*Rules for Rebels: The Science of Victory in Militant History (First edition).* Oxford University Press, 2018.

49 See UN Security Council, *Thirty-Third Report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2610 (2021) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individual and entities,* 29 January 2024, pp. 9-10. https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/431/79/pdf/n2343179.pdf?token=jZF3cMvidecpnZ6ZNB&fe=true. Since the coup d'Etat of 26th of July 2023 by General Abdourahamane Tiani, the number of terrorist attacks against the military and civilians in the tri-border region has been increasing following the suspension of joint counter-terrorism operations conducted by the Nigerien and French forces in the region. See Georges Ibrahim Tounkara, Au Niger, les putschistes face aux réalités sécuritaires. Deutsche Welle, 22 August 2023. https://www.dw.com/fr/niger-pusch-tiani-djihadisme-sahel/a-66598881.

Terrorism and Education

Judith Tinnes[*]

Abstract: This bibliography contains journal articles, book chapters, books, edited volumes, theses, grey literature, bibliographies and other resources on the multi-faceted relationship between terrorism and education. It covers a wide range of aspects (such as how education affects radicalisation processes, the impact of (counter-)terrorism on educational institutions, or the training of terrorist actors). The bibliography focuses on recent publications (up to April 2024) and should not be considered as exhaustive. The literature has been retrieved by manually browsing more than 200 core and periphery sources in the field of Terrorism Studies. Additionally, full-text and reference retrieval systems have been employed to broaden the search.

Keywords: Bibliography, resources, literature, terrorism, education, learning, schools, universities, CVE, PVE, CT, madrassas, terrorist training

Corresponding author: Judith Tinnes, Terrorism Research Initiative, email: j.tinnes@gmx.de

Bibliographies and other Resources

Blumör, Rüdiger; von Buttlar, Nora (2007): *Annotated Bibliography on Education and Conflict.* (UNESCO Background Paper; Document 2008/ED/EFA/MRT/PI/77). URL: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000155591

Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University (GHELI) (2023): *Annotated Bibliography: Gender, Conflict, and Education.* URL: https://repository.gheli.harvard.edu/repository/11658

Moorman, Carolyn (Host); Marston, Jerome; Kochenburger, Alexander; Toure, Miriam (Guests) (2023): *Protecting Education and Schools from Attack.* (New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy's Contours Podcast Episode]. URL: https://newlinesinstitute.org/nonstate-actors/protecting-education-and-schools-from-attack

Steiner, Marcus; Angelini, Eileen; Rogers, Rhianna C. (2023): *Mass Atrocity Prevention Open Educational Resource (OER).* (RAND Tools, TL-A2506-1). DOI: https://doi.org/10.7249/TLA2506-1

Books and Edited Volumes

Afzal, Madiha (2018): *Pakistan Under Siege: Extremism, Society, and the State.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Ahmed, Zahid Shahab; Mattei, Cristina; Zeiger, Sara (2019): *Classroom Activities: Preventing Violent Extremism Through Education (PVE-E) in East Africa.* [e-Book]. Abu Dhabi: Hedayah. URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/classroom-activities-preventing-violent-extremism-through-education-in-east-africa

Allely, Clare S. (2020): *The Psychology of Extreme Violence: A Case Study Approach to Serial Homicide, Mass Shooting, School Shooting and Lone-Actor Terrorism.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Awan, Imran; Spiller, Keith; Whiting, Andrew (2018): *Terrorism in the Classroom: Security, Surveillance and a Public Duty to Act.* (Palgrave Studies in Risk, Crime and Society). Cham: Palgrave Pivot / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-01710-1

Bekerman, Zvi; Zembylas, Michalinos (2012): *Teaching Contested Narratives: Identity, Memory and Reconciliation in Peace Education and Beyond.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ben Slama, Brahim; Kemmesies, Uwe (Eds.) (2023, September): *Handbook of Preventing Violent Extremism: An Integrative Cross-Phenomenal Approach for Governmental Agencies and Civil Society.* [e-Book]. (Polizei+Forschung, Vol. 54). Wiesbaden: Federal Criminal Police Office Wiesbaden. URL: https://www.handbuch-extremismuspraevention.de/HEX/DE/Home/Download_Handbuch/PDF_Handbook_of_Preventing_Violent_Extremism.pdf (Original work published in German 2020)

Busher, Joel; Jerome, Lee (Eds.) (2020): *The Prevent Duty in Education: Impact, Enactment and Implications.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-45559-0

Carter, Candice C.; Dhungana, Raj Kumar (Eds.) (2024): *Educating for Peace Through Countering Violence: Strategies in Curriculum and Instruction.* (Routledge Research in International and Comparative Education). Abingdon: Routledge.

Castagnera, James Ottavio (2009): *Al-Qaeda Goes to College: Impact of the War on Terror on American Higher Education.* Westport: Praeger.

Chase, Alston (2003): *Harvard and the Unabomber: The Education of an American Terrorist.* New York: W. W. Norton.

Chen, Hsinchun et al. (Eds.) (2008): *Terrorism Informatics: Knowledge Management and Data Mining for Homeland Security.* (Integrated Series in Information Systems, Vol. 18). New York: Springer. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-71613-8

Cruickshank, Paul (Ed.) (2013): *Al Qaeda.* (5 Vols.). (Critical Concepts in Political Science). Abingdon: Routledge.

Culbertson, Shelly; Constant, Louay (2015): *Education of Syrian Refugee Children: Managing the Crisis in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan.* [e-Book]. (RAND Research Reports, RR-859-CMEPP). Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7249/RR859

Davies, Lynn (2008): *Educating Against Extremism.* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Davis, Paul K.; Cragin, Kim (Eds.) (2009): *Social Science for Counterterrorism: Putting the Pieces Together.* [e-Book]. (RAND Monographs, MG-849-OSD). Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7249/MG849

Dawson, Laura; Edwards, Charlie; Jeffray, Calum (2014): *Learning and Adapting: The Use of Monitoring and Evaluation in Countering Violent Extremism: A Handbook for Practitioners.* [e-Book]. London: Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). URL: https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/rusi-books/learning-and-adapting-use-monitoring-and-evaluation-countering-violent-extremism

Dhali, Helal Hossain (2024): *The Role of Coloniality, Decoloniality, and Education in Shaping Perspectives on Extremism: Exploring Perceptions Among Students in Bangladesh.* (Routledge Research in International and Comparative Education). Abingdon: Routledge.

Di Leo, Jeffrey R. et al. (2016): *Neoliberalism, Education, and Terrorism: Contemporary Dialogues.* Abingdon: Routledge. (Original work published 2013)

Dorroll, Courtney M. (Ed.) (2019): *Teaching Islamic Studies in the Age of ISIS, Islamophobia, and the Internet.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Duckworth, Cheryl Lynn (2015): *9/11 and Collective Memory in US Classrooms: Teaching About Terror.* (Routledge Research in Education, Vol. 124). Abingdon: Routledge. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315814926

Dyregrov, Atle; Raundalen, Magne; Yule, William (2019): *What Is Terrorism? A Book to Help Parents, Teachers and other Grown-ups Talk with Kids About Terror.* London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Edler, Kurt (2017): *Islamismus als pädagogische Herausforderung.* (2nd ed.). (Brennpunkt Schule). Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer.

Faure Walker, Rob (2022): *The Emergence of "Extremism": Exposing the Violent Discourse and Language of "Radicalisation".* London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Finney, Mark; Shannon, Matthew (Eds.) (2019): *9/11 and the Academy: Responses in the Liberal Arts and the 21st Century World.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-16419-5

Flores, Ygnacio V. (2017): *The Pedagogy of Violent Extremism.* New York: Peter Lang.

Forest, James J. F. (Ed.) (2006): *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century: International Perspectives.* (3 Vols.). Westport: Praeger Security International.

Forest, James J. F. (Ed.) (2006): *Homeland Security: Protecting America's Targets: Volume 2. Public Spaces and Social Institutions.* Westport: Praeger Security International.

Forest, James J. F. (Ed.) (2006): *Teaching Terror: Strategic and Tactical Learning in the Terrorist World.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Forest, James J. F. (Ed.) (2006): *The Making of a Terrorist: Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes.* (3 Vols.). Westport: Praeger Security International.

Gambetta, Diego; Hertog, Steffen (2016): *Engineers of Jihad: The Curious Connection Between Violent Extremism and Education.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gansewig, Antje (2023): *"Intention Is Not Method, Belief Is Not Evidence": Civic Education and Prevention with Former Right-Wing Extremists in German Schools.* Wiesbaden: Springer VS. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-39776-0

Gansewig, Antje; Walsh, Maria (2020): *Biografiebasierte Maßnahmen in der schulischen Präventions- und Bildungsarbeit: Eine empirische Betrachtung des Einsatzes von Aussteigern aus extremistischen Szenen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung ehemaliger Rechtsextremer.* Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed; Joscelyn, Thomas (2022): *Enemies Near and Far: How Jihadist Groups Strategize, Plot, and Learn.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Gearon, Liam Francis (Ed.) (2018): *Education, Security and Intelligence Studies.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Gearon, Liam Francis (Ed.) (2020): *The Routledge International Handbook of Universities, Security and Intelligence Studies.* (Routledge International Handbooks). Abingdon: Routledge. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203702086

Gereluk, Dianne (2012): *Education, Extremism and Terrorism: What Should be Taught in Citizenship Education and Why.* London: Continuum.

Gill, Scherto; Niens, Ulrike (Eds.) (2016): *Education as Humanisation: Dialogic Pedagogy in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Gohel, Sajjan M.; Forster, Peter K. (Academic Project Leads & Eds.) et al. (2020, May): *Counter-Terrorism Reference Curriculum (CTRC).* [e-Book]. Brussels: North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_176310.htm

Goodall, H. L., Jr. (2010): *Counter-Narrative: How Progressive Academics Can Challenge Extremists and Promote Social Justice.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Görzig, Carolin et al. (Eds.) (2024): *How Terrorists Learn: Organizational Learning and Beyond.* Abingdon: Routledge. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003361435

Grover, Sonja C. (2011): *Schoolchildren as Propaganda Tools in the War on Terror: Violating the Rights of Afghani Children Under International Law.* Heidelberg: Springer. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-17900-6

Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger, Eveline; Abs, Hermann J.; Göbel, Kerstin (Eds.) (2022): *The Challenge of Radicalization and Extremism: Integrating Research on Education and Citizenship in the Context of Migration.* Leiden: Brill.

Holmwood, John; O'Toole, Therese (2018): *Countering Extremism in British Schools? The Truth About the Birmingham Trojan Horse Affair.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Izarali, M. Raymond; Masakure, Oliver; Shizha, Edward (2017): *Security, Education and Development in Contemporary Africa.* (The International Political Economy of New Regionalisms Series). Abingdon: Routledge.

Jackson, Brian A. et al. (2005): *Aptitude for Destruction: Vol. 1. Organizational Learning in Terrorist Groups and its Implications for Combating Terrorism.* [e-Book]. (RAND Monographs, MG-331-NIJ). Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7249/MG331

Jackson, Brian A. et al. (2005): *Aptitude for Destruction: Vol. 2. Case Studies of Organizational Learning in Five Terrorist Groups.* [e-Book]. (RAND Monographs, MG-332-NIJ). Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. URL: https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG332.html

James, Jonathan S.; Janmaat, Jan Germen (2019): *Civil Disorder, Domestic Terrorism and Education Policy: The Context in England and France.* Cham: Palgrave Pivot / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-31642-6

Kaufmann, Fabian; Sierts, Lena (Eds.) (2020, April): *Aufruhr in der Echokammer: Fragestellungen und Analysen zum Thema medienpädagogische Interventionen im Feld der Neuen Rechten.* [e-Book]. (Prisma Expertise #1). Hamburg: CJD Hamburg. URL: https://prisma.online/wp-content/uploads/prisma_expertise1_web.pdf

Lall, Marie; Saeed, Tania (2019): *Youth and the National Narrative: Education, Terrorism and the Security State in Pakistan.* London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Langner, Joachim et al. (Eds.) (2020): *Religion in der pädagogischen Auseinandersetzung mit islamistischem Extremismus.* [e-Book]. Halle: Arbeits- und Forschungsstelle

Demokratieförderung und Extremismusprävention. URL: https://www.dji.de/fileadmin/user_upload/bibs2020/AFS-Band-14_Religion.pdf

Larabee, Ann (2015): *The Wrong Hands: Popular Weapons Manuals and their Historic Challenges to a Democratic Society.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Mac an Ghaill, Máirtín; Haywood, Chris (Eds.) (2017): *Muslim Students, Education and Neoliberalism: Schooling a "Suspect Community".* London: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56921-9

Malik, Jamal (Ed.) (2008): *Madrasas in South Asia: Teaching Terror?* (Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series, Vol. 4). Abingdon: Routledge.

Martellini, Maurizio; Rao, Jason (2017): *The Risk of Skilled Scientist Radicalization and Emerging Biological Warfare Threats.* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – E: Human and Societal Dynamics, Vol. 138). Amsterdam: IOS Press.

McGlynn, Catherine; McDaid, Shaun (2019): *Radicalisation and Counter-Radicalisation in Higher Education.* Bingley: Emerald. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1108/9781787560024

Miah, Shamim (2017): *Muslims, Schooling and Security: Trojan Horse, Prevent and Racial Politics.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-52335-4

Millican, Juliet (Ed.) (2018): *Universities and Conflict: The Role of Higher Education in Peacebuilding and Resistance.* (Routledge Studies in Peace and Conflict Resolution). Abingdon: Routledge.

Moj, Muhammad (2015): *The Deoband Madrassah Movement: Countercultural Trends and Tendencies.* London: Anthem Press.

Moland, Naomi A. (2020): *Can Big Bird Fight Terrorism? Children's Television and Globalized Multicultural Education.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Moosa, Ebrahim (2015): *What Is a Madrasa?* (Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks). Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Morgan, Matthew J. (Ed.) (2009): *The Impact of 9/11 on Psychology and Education.* (The Day that Changed Everything? book series) New York: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230101593

Nash, Carolyn et al. (2017): *Youth Led Guide on Prevention of Violent Extremism Through Education.* [e-Book]. New Delhi: Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development. URL: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260547

Nelles, Wayne (Ed.) (2003): *Comparative Education, Terrorism and Human Security: From Critical Pedagogy to Peacebuilding?* New York: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/9781403982391

Niglia, Alessandro; Ben Yaakov, Uri; Ezra, Gadi (Eds.) (2018): *Countering Terrorism and Urban Warfare: Training and Informative Operations.* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – E: Human and Societal Dynamics, Vol. 140). Amsterdam: IOS Press.

Noor, Farish A.; Sikand, Yoginder; van Bruinessen, Martin (Eds.) (2009): *The Madrasa in Asia: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) (2018, January): *After Study Hours: Exploring the Madrassah Mindset.* [e-Book]. Islamabad: Author. URL: https://www.pakpips.com/article/book/after-study-hours-exploring-the-madrassah-mindset

Panjwani, Farid et al. (Eds.) (2018): *Education and Extremisms: Rethinking Liberal Pedagogies in the Contemporary World.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Peled-Elhanan, Nurit (2012): *Palestine in Israeli School Books: Ideology and Propaganda in Education.* (Library of Modern Middle East Studies, Vol. 82). London: I.B. Tauris.

Peters, Michael A. (2016): *Education, Globalization, and the State in the Age of Terrorism.* Abingdon: Routledge. (Original work published 2005)

Peters, Michael A.; Besley, Tina (2021): *The Far-Right, Education and Violence: An Educational Philosophy and Theory Reader; Volume IX.* (Educational Philosophy and Theory: Editor's Choice). Abingdon: Routledge.

PIN (2020, February): *Psychoeducational Workshop Program: Handbook for Facilitators.* [e-Book]. (STRIVE Global Program). Belgrade: Author. URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/pin-handbook-for-facilitators

Ragazzi, Francesco (2018): *Students as Suspects? The Challenges of Counter-Radicalisation Policies in Education in the Council of Europe Member States.* Namur: Council of Europe.

Ragazzi, Francesco; Walmsley, Josh (2021): *Counter-Radicalisation in the Classroom: The Challenges of Counter-Radicalisation Policies in Education in the Council of Europe Member States.* Namur: Council of Europe.

Reinisch, Dieter (2022): *Learning Behind Bars: How IRA Prisoners Shaped the Peace Process in Ireland.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Riaz, Ali (2008): *Faithful Education: Madrassahs in South Asia.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Schmitt, Josephine B. et al. (Eds.) (2020): *Propaganda und Prävention: Forschungsergebnisse, didaktische Ansätze, interdisziplinäre Perspektiven zur pädagogischen Arbeit zu extremistischer Internetpropaganda.* (Interkulturelle Studien). Wiesbaden: Springer VS. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-28538-8

Scott-Baumann, Alison; Perfect, Simon (2021): *Freedom of Speech in Universities: Islam, Charities and Counter-Terrorism.* (Routledge Focus). Abingdon: Routledge. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429289835

Shami, Seteney; Miller-Idriss, Cynthia (Eds.) (2016): *Middle East Studies for the New Millennium: Infrastructures of Knowledge.* New York: New York University Press.

Singh, Jagtar; Kerr, Paulette; Hamburger, Esther (Eds.) (2016): *MILID Yearbook, 2016: Media and Information Literacy: Reinforcing Human Rights, Countering Radicalization and Extremism.* [e-Book]. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). URL: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246371

Sklad, Marcin et al. (2021): *Social and Civic Competencies Against Radicalization in Schools.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-85921-3

Sloan, Stephen; Bunker, Robert J. (2011): *Red Teams and Counterterrorism Training.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Smith, Carter F. (2017): *Gangs and the Military: Gangsters, Bikers, and Terrorists with Military Training.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Staub, Ervin (2011): *Overcoming Evil: Genocide, Violent Conflict, and Terrorism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195382044.001.0001

Stenersen, Anne (2017): *Al-Qaida in Afghanistan.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/9781139871501

Tabbah, Rhonda (2021): *Arab American Youth: Discrimination, Development, and Educational Practice and Policy.* (Advancing Responsible Adolescent Development). Cham: Springer. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66804-4

Tan, Charlene (2011): *Islamic Education and Indoctrination: The Case in Indonesia.* (Routledge Research in Education, Vol. 58). New York: Routledge.

Taylor, Emmeline (2013): *Surveillance Schools: Security, Discipline and Control in Contemporary Education.* (Crime Prevention and Security Management). Basingstoke: Palgrave Pivot. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137308863

Us Salam, Ziya; Parvaiz, Mohammad Aslam (2020): *Madrasas in the Age of Islamophobia.* New Delhi: SAGE Publications India.

Vaz Borges, Sónia (2019): *Militant Education, Liberation Struggle, Consciousness: The PAIGC Education in Guinea Bissau 1963-1978.* (Studia Educationis Historica, Vol. 4). Berlin: Peter Lang. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3726/b15150

Vestenskov, David (Ed.) (2018, January): *The Role of Madrasas: Assessing Parental Choice, Financial Pipelines and Recent Developments in Religious Education in Pakistan and Afghanistan.* [e-Book]. Copenhagen: Royal Danish Defence College. URL: https://research.fak.dk/esploro/outputs/991815947703741

Wengler, Patrick (2024): *Policing and CBRN Hazards: Advancing CBRN Competence in Police Education.* (Innovations in Policing). New York: Routledge. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003340775

Wibben, Annick T. R.; Donahoe, Amanda E. (Eds.) (2020): *Teaching Peace and War: Pedagogy and Curricula.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Yousafzai, Malala; with Christina Lamb (2013): *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban.* London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Zelkovitz, Ido (2014): *Students and Resistance in Palestine: Books, Guns and Politics.* (Routledge Studies on the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Vol. 18). Abingdon: Routledge.

Theses

Ahmed, Mohamed (2021, May): *The Use of Counter Narratives as a Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) Communications-Based Measure: A Study of Muslim-American Undergraduate Students in Universities and Colleges in California.* (Doctoral Thesis, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia). DOI: https://doi.org/10.25777/h6pa-5g05

Alexa, Stefan (2019): *Terrorism-Affected Biographies Within Us: "Terrorist Learning" as Pilgrimage Towards Death.* (Doctoral Thesis, Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, United Kingdom). URL: https://repository.canterbury.ac.uk/item/8qyyw/terrorism-affected-biographies-within-us-terrorist-learning-as-pilgrimage-towards-death

Becker, Michael Henry (2017): *Control, Learning, and Vulnerability: An Interactional Approach to Engagement in Violent Extremism.* (Master's Thesis, University of Maryland, College Park, United States). URL: https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/control-learning-vulnerability-interactional/docview/2013332519/se-2

Bell. Paul M. P. (2007, March): *Pakistan's Madrassas – Weapons of Mass Instruction?* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10945/3653

Billquist, Daniel L.; Colbert, Jason M. (2006, December): *Pakistan, Madrassas, and Militancy.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10945/2385

Boström, Lukas (2019, January): *Understanding Educational Causes of Terrorism: An Empirical Analysis Investigating the Global Relationship Between Specific Educational Attributes and its Effects on Domestic Terrorism Activity.* (Bachelor's Thesis, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden). URL: https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-373040

Celebi, Erdogan (2006, December): *Systems Approach to Terrorism: Countering the Terrorist Training Subsystem.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10945/2401

Clayton, Ashleigh Nicole (2018, March): *Are U.S. Based "Jihadi" Inspired Terrorists Transitioning Away from Physical Training Camps to Online Training Camps?* (Master's Thesis, California State University, San Bernardino, United States). URL: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd/618

Clinch, Amy Louise (2011, June): *A Community Psychology Approach to Preventing Violent Extremism: Gaining the Views of Young People to Inform Primary Prevention in Secondary Schools.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom). URL: http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/3197

Denholm, Emma (2019): *"It's the Hardest Conversation I've Had to Have": A Psychosocial Exploration of Teachers' Experiences of Talking to Children About Terrorism.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Essex, Colchester, United Kingdom). URL: http://repository.essex.ac.uk/id/eprint/26096

Detweiler, Nura Estella (2017): *Counter-Radicalization Policies – A Threat to the Principles of Democratic Education? A German Case-Study.* (Master's Thesis, Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/1887/52675

DeVolld, Blake Douglas (2018, May): *Experiences of Teaching Controversial and Emotive Issues in Terrorism Studies Courses in the Politically-Charged Classroom: A Transcendental Phenomenological Study.* (Doctoral Thesis, Liberty University, Lynchburg, United States). URL: https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/1748

Gjelsten, Craig A. (2008, March): *Homeland Security Planning for Urban Area Schools.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10945/4239

Gorman, Chad M. (2012, March): *Getting Serious About Games—Using Video Game-Based Learning to Enhance Nuclear Terrorism Preparedness.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: https://hdl.handle.net/10945/6803

Heyworth, Lucienne (2017, Spring): *Education – A Dark Force? A Qualitative Investigation of Education and Domestic Terrorism in the Middle East North Africa.* (Master's Thesis, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden). URL: https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-324937

Higgins, Ronnell A. (2020, March): *Campus Police Participation in Joint Terrorism Task Forces.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: https://hdl.handle.net/10945/64908

Hussain, Nouman (2023): *UK Religious Studies Textbooks and the Notion of Jihad: An Analysis Using the Works of Ibn Taymiyyah.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom). URL: http://theses.gla.ac.uk/id/eprint/83928

Ibarra, Roberto (2011, June): *Modernization Through Education: The Answer for Combating Terrorism?* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10945/5683

Ippolito, Steven Christopher (2017, July): *Convergence – A Homeland Security and Educational Problem: A Mixed Methodological Study.* (Doctoral Thesis, Northcentral University, Prescott Valley, United States). URL: https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/convergence-homeland-security-educational-problem/docview/1972843370/se-2

Isokpan, Aisosa Jennifer (2016, March): *The Boko Haram Insurgency and the Child's Right to Education in Nigeria.* (Master's Thesis, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/11394/5351

James, Natalie Claire (2020, July): *Implementing the Prevent Duty: Conceptualising Threat Within Greater Manchester's Further Education Sector.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Leeds, Leeds, United Kingdom). URL: https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/27805

Johnson, Isaac D. (2018, September): *Lessons in Ideology: A Study of the Relationship Between Formal Education, Socialization, and Violent Extremism.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: https://hdl.handle.net/10945/60414

Johnson, Karin Annette (2016, June): *International Student Flows to the U.S. Before and After 9/11.* (Master's Thesis, University of California, Riverside, United States). URL: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/03c487zh

Kagioglidis, Ioannis (2009, September): *Religious Education and the Prevention of Islamic Radicalization: Albania, Britain, France and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/4561

Kihara, Ivy Evonne Wanjiku (2010, October): *The Impact of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism on the Right to Education.* (Master's Thesis, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/11394/1884

Lang, Adam Peter (2022): *The "Prevent Duty" (Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015) and its Impact on English Secondary Schools and Colleges: A View from Leadership.* (Doctoral Thesis, University College London, London, United Kingdom). URL: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10155928

Lindberg, Nikolaj (2022, March): *In Other Words: Crafting Fiction to Understand Theory.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10945/69672

Lockley-Scott, Anna (2020, May): *Exploring the Imagined Identities of Muslim Pupils in the Context of Prevent.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom). URL: http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/153071

McGrath, Kevin Patrick (2012, April): *Aid to Education and Terrorism: Exploring Unintended Consequences.* (Master's Thesis, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10822/557895

Muliru, Scofield Yoni Awiti (2016, October): *Challenges of Countering Terrorism in Africa: Youth Radicalization in Schools in Kenya.* (Master's Thesis, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya). URL: http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/handle/11295/98254

Munir, Faisal (2015, May): *Understanding the Role of Education in Promoting Violence and Terrorism in Pakistan.* (Master's Thesis, Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø, Norway). URL: https://hdl.handle.net/10037/8122

Nielsen, Richard Alexander (2013, May): *The Lonely Jihadist: Weak Networks and the Radicalization of Muslim Clerics.* (Doctoral Thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/1902.1/21437

Nuth Kajtaniak, Tara (2014, July): *A Pedagogical Framework for Global Citizenship Education: Themes, Objectives, and Methods for Teaching Conflict at the Secondary Level.* (Master's Thesis, Humboldt State University, Arcata, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10211.3/124811

Panteli, Paraskevi (2016, September): *Prevention of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism of Potential Homegrown Terrorists: Reverse Inner Reinforcement Through EU Education.* (Master's Thesis, Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/1887/43680

Payne, Melissa Alyece (2017, June): *Toujours Le Choix: The Role of Entertainment Education in Radicalization Prevention.* (Master's Thesis, American University of Paris, Paris, France). URL: https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/toujours-le-choix-role-entertainment-education/docview/2206754267/se-2

Powell, John Eric (2016, September): *Creating a Learning Organization for State, Local, and Tribal Law Enforcement to Combat Violent Extremism.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10945/50468

Quartermaine, Angela (2014, September): *Pupils' Perceptions of Terrorism from a Sample of Secondary Schools in Warwickshire.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom). URL: http://webcat.warwick.ac.uk/record=b2820716~S1

Rahman, Fauzia S. (2018): *Local Voices Challenging Global Campaigns: Re-Thinking Childhood, Agency, and Girls' Education in Northwest Pakistan.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/2142/102918

Ramadan, Ibtihal (2017, July): *The Experiences of Muslim Academics in UK Higher Education Institutions.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/1842/31350

Scerri, Daniela (2021, September): *Secondary School Teachers' and Prevent Practitioners' Conceptualisations of Radicalisation: The Impact on Teachers' Professionalism.* (Doctoral Thesis, Royal Holloway University of London, London, United Kingdom). URL: https://pure.royalholloway.ac.uk/en/publications/secondary-school-teachers-and-prevent-practitioners-conceptualisa

Smith, Jacqueline Christine (2011, April): *Radicalization of Life Scientists to Terrorism.* (Master's Thesis, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, United States). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10822/553586

Stinson, Robert T., III (2009, June): *Detection and Monitoring of Improvised Explosive Device Education Networks Through the World Wide Web.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: http://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/7289

Sulaiman, Thanaa (2017, May): *Education as Counter Terrorism in Iraq.* (Master's Thesis, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, United States). DOI: https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.16324446.v1

Takhar, Jasleen Kaur (2022, Fall): *An Introduction to Domestic Terrorism: A Course Created for Community College Students.* (Master's Thesis, California State University, Sacramento, United States). URL: https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12741/rep:3128

Tella, Oluyinka (2010): *International Education and the Post-9/11 Syndrome: A Study of International Educators in Selected Miami-Area Colleges.* (Doctoral Thesis, Florida International University, Miami, United States). DOI: https://doi.org/10.25148/etd.FI10080411

Tighe, Evan (2011): *Trust in Allah, But Tie Your Camel: The Effects of Radicalized Schooling and State Security on Islamic Terrorism in the Middle East.* (Master's Thesis, University of Georgia, Athens, United States). URL: https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/tighe_evan_201105_ma.pdf

Uddin, Mohammed Jamal (2019): *Citizenship Education and the Prevent Duty in a Muslim-Majority State School in London.* (Doctoral Thesis, University College London, London, United Kingdom). URL: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10093733

Unal, Tuncay (2010, June): *An Assessment of the Methods that are Used to Recruit College Students into the Turkish Hezbollah.* (Doctoral Thesis, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, United States). DOI: https://doi.org/10.25772/JF5Z-SK02

Vaughn, Leona (2019, March): *"Doing Risk": Practitioner Interpretations of Risk of Childhood Radicalisation and the Implementation of the HM Government PREVENT Duty.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom). DOI: http://doi.org/10.17638/03047974

Vickerage-Goddard, Lisa Marie (2021, July): *Should Teachers be Expected to Undertake the Role of Counter-Terrorism Operatives? An Investigation into the Prevent Duty Strategies Requirement of UK Secondary Schools.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom). URL: https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/30758

Weedon, Malachy (Max) Raymond (2021, April): *Counter-Terrorism Measures in the Classroom: Exploring the Perceptions and Experiences of Education Professionals Enacting the Prevent Duty in Bath and Bristol.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of the West of England, Bristol, United Kingdom). URL: https://uwe-repository.worktribe.com/output/6905888

Welch, Alicia L. (2006, March): *Terrorism Awareness and Education as a Prevention Strategy for First Responders.* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, United States). URL: https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/2942

Westcot, Julia Ellen (2002, September): *The September 11th Tragedy: Effects and Interventions in the School Community.* (Master's Thesis, California State University, San Bernadino, United States). URL: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/2271

Wijgaart-Van Dijk, Karsten Olav (2022, May): Preventing Radicalisation Through Reading Fiction: How Reading *North of Dawn* or *The Lines We Cross* Can Teach Adolescents Intercultural Competence and Build Resilience Against Radicalisation. (Master's Thesis, Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø, Norway). URL: https://hdl.handle.net/10037/25876

Wonder, Terri K. (2008, January): *Re-Islamization in Higher Education from Above and Below: The University of South Florida and its Global Contexts.* (Doctoral Thesis, University of South Florida, Tampa, United States). URL: https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/etd/571

Wright, Timothy Gregory Arthur (2007, January): *Education and Conflict: Border Schools in Western Uganda.* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom). URL: http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/1164

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Aarseth, Mathilde Becker (2018, Spring): Resistance in the Caliphate's Classrooms: Mosul Civilians vs IS. *Middle East Policy*, *25*(1), 46-63. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12324

Aarseth, Mathilde Becker (2021): Resistance in the Classrooms. In: *Mosul Under ISIS: Eyewitness Accounts of Life in the Caliphate.* London: I.B. Tauris, Chapter 4.

Abdel-Fattah, Randa (2019): Managing Belief and Speech as Incipient Violence: "I'm Giving You the Opportunity to Say that You Aren't". *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, *14*(1), 20-38. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2019.1566632

Abdel-Monem, Tarik et al. (2020): Perceptions of Human Security Among Islamic School Students, Parents and Teachers in Southern Thailand's Subnational Conflict Zone. *Civil Wars*, *22*(2-3), 379-421. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2020.1765541 URL: https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/publicpolicypublications/167

Aboul-Enein, Youssef H. (2010): What Is *Not* Being Taught in Politicized Madrassas: Beginning to Understand Militant Islamist Ideology. In: *Militant Islamist Ideology: Understanding the Global Threat.* Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 12-19.

Adam-Troian, Jais (2021, Fall): The French (non)Connection: A Closer Look at the Role of Secularism and Socio-Educational Disparities on Domestic Islamist Radicalization in France. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 28, 39-66. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/491

Adelman, Rebecca A. (2015): "Coffins After Coffins": Screening Wartime Atrocity in the Classroom. In: David Kieran (Ed.): *The War of my Generation: Youth Culture and the War on Terror.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 223-245.

Agbor, Avitus (2018): Boko Haram and the Abduction of Schoolgirls in Nigeria: Reflecting on "Gender-Based Crimes" as a Legal Misnomer. In John-Mark Iyi; Hennie Strydom (Eds.): *Boko Haram and International Law.* Cham: Springer, 311-349. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74957-0_14

Ahmed, Kawser (2016, Spring): Radicalism Leading to Violent Extremism in Canada: A Multi-Level Analysis of Muslim Community and University Based Student Leaders' Perceptions and Experiences. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 6, 231-271. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/49

Ahmed, Zahid Shahab; Jafri, Qamar Abbas (2020): Drivers of Violent Extremism in Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways toward terrorism and genocide*, *13*(3), 230-244. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2020.1821068 URL: https://www.kpsrl.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/Drivers%20of%20violent%20extremism%20in%20higher%20education%20institutions%20of%20Pakistan.pdf

Ahmed, Zahid Shahab; Shahzad, Rizwana (2021): Assessment of Foreign-Funded Interventions of Preventing Violent Extremism Through Education in Madrassas: The Case of Pakistan. In: Farangiz Atamuradova; Sara Zeiger (Eds.): *Researching the Evolution of Countering Violent Extremism.* Abu Dhabi: Hedayah, 147-170. URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/researching-the-evolution-of-cve

Ahmed, Zahid Shahab; Shahzad, Rizwana (2021): The Role of Peace Education in Countering Violent Extremism in Pakistan: An Assessment of Non-Governmental Efforts. *Conflict, Security & Development*, *21*(3), 199-222. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2021.1943150

Akbarzadeh, Shahram (2013): Investing in Mentoring and Educational Initiatives: The Limits of De-Radicalisation Programmes in Australia. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, *33*(4), 451-463. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2013.866347 URL: http://www.deakin.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/184559/Akbarzadeh-JMMA2013-De-radicalisation.pdf

Al-Badayneh, Diab M.; Almawajdeh, Murad A.; Al-Enazi, Abdulla T. (2021): Radical Thoughts: Fears About and Supporting ISIS Among Jordanian College Students. In: Jack A. Goldstone et al. (Eds.): *From Territorial Defeat to Global ISIS: Lessons Learned.* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – E: Human and Societal Dynamics, Vol. 151). Amsterdam: IOS Press, 139-156. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3233/NHSDP200080

Aldrich, Daniel P. (2014): First Steps Towards Hearts and Minds? USAID's Countering Violent Extremism Policies in Africa. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *26*(3), 523-546. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2012.738263 URL: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2156060

Alfano, Marco; Görlach, Joseph-Simon (2023, April): Terrorism, Media Coverage, and Education: Evidence from al-Shabaab Attacks in Kenya. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, *21*(2), 727-763. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/jeea/jvac054

Aljasem, Ali (2022): An Episode of the Revolution: Aleppo University Protest Movement 2011–2013. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *49*(3), 446-462. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2021.1920215

Aly, Anne; Taylor, Elisabeth; Karnovsky, Saul (2014): Moral Disengagement and Building Resilience to Violent Extremism: An Education Intervention. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *37*(4), 369-385. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2014.879379 URL: http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11937/6270

Amit, Sajid; Rahman, Imran; Mannan, Sadiat (2020): Social Media and Radicalisation of University Students in Bangladesh. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, *15*(3), 228-243. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2020.1820070

Andrabi, Tahir; Das, Jishnu; Khwaja, Asim Ijaz (2012): Madrasa Statistics Don't Support the Myth. In: Shahzad Bashir; Robert D. Crews (Eds.): *Under the Drones: Modern Lives in the Afghanistan-Pakistan Borderlands.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 162-173.

Arlikatti, Sudha (2016): Counter Terrorism and Human Rights: Missing Perspectives from Muslim Children and Youth in the USA. In: Sıddık Ekici et al. (Eds.): *Countering Terrorist Recruitment in the Context of Armed Counter-Terrorism Operations.* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – E: Human and Societal Dynamics, Vol. 125). Amsterdam: IOS Press, 181-191. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3233/978-1-61499-613-2-181

Arshad, Misbah (2016, February): Kompass–Muslim Youth Education: Empowerment and Prevention Through Education. In: The Carter Center (Ed.): *Countering Daesh Propaganda: Action-Oriented Research for Practical Policy Outcomes.* (Workshop Report). Atlanta: The Carter Center, 77-80. URL: https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/counteringdaeshpropaganda-feb2016.pdf

Arvisais, Olivier et al. (2021, November): The Educational Intentions of the Islamic State Through its Textbooks. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *87*, Article 102506. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102506

Asadzade, Peyman (2022, March): Higher Education and Violent Revolutionary Activism Under Authoritarianism: Subnational Evidence from Iran. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *39*(2), 143-165. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894221991790

Aslam, Mohd Mizan bin Mohammad (2017, April): Threat of Daesh in Universities: Malaysia's Experience. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, *9*(4), 13-17. URL: https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/CTTA-April-2017.pdf

Atiles-Osoria, José; Whyte, David (2011, December): Counter-Insurgency Goes to University: The Militarisation of Policing in the Puerto Rico Student Strikes. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(3), 393-404. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2011.623412

Ayub, Sumbal; Khan, Alam; FarhatUllah (2019, July): Perceived Risk Factors of Terrorist Attacks in Educational Institutions: The Case of KPK, Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology*, *11*(3), 43-60. URL: http://www.pjcriminology.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/4-Sumbul-Ayub.pdf

Azam, Jean-Paul; Thelen, Véronique (2018): Why Suicide Terrorists Get Educated. In: *Fighting Terrorism at Source: Using Foreign Aid to Delegate Global Security.* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 39-66.

Azhar, Aisha; Malik, Muhammad Nasir; Muzaffar, Asif (2019, March): Social Network Analysis of Army Public School Shootings: Need for a Unified Man-Made Disaster Management in Pakistan. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, *34*, 255-264. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2018.11.024

Bakier, Abdul Hameed (2007, March): The New Issue of Technical Mujahid, a Training Manual for Jihadis. *Terrorism Monitor*, *5*(6). URL: https://jamestown.org/program/the-new-issue-of-technical-mujahid-a-training-manual-for-jihadis

Bashir, Mohsin; Ul-Haq, Shoaib (2019): Why Madrassah Education Reforms Don't Work in Pakistan. *Third World Quarterly*, *40*(3), 595-611. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2019.1570820

Bass, Sarah Bauerle et al. (2016, October): How Do Low-Literacy Populations Perceive "Dirty Bombs"? Implications for Preparedness Messages. *Health Security*, *14*(5), 331-344. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1089/hs.2016.0037

Baytiyeh, Hoda (2016): The Dilemma of Terrorist Retaliations Against Schools in Sectarian Conflict Regions: The Case of Lebanon. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, *11*(4), 402-421. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19361610.2016.1210480

Becker, Carmen (2009): "Gaining Knowledge": Salafi Activism in German and Dutch Online Forums. *Masaryk University Journal of Law and Technology*, *3*(1), 79-98. URL: https://journals.muni.cz/mujlt/article/view/2526

Becker, Michael H. (2021): When Extremists Become Violent: Examining the Association Between Social Control, Social Learning, and Engagement in Violent Extremism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *44*(12), 1104-1124. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1626093 URL: https://spaces-cdn.owlstown.com/blobs/x42b611j67keyy85davvy70i7378

Belt, David D. (2021, April): Causes of the Ongoing Mass Radicalization of Islam in Pakistan: An Ethnography. *CTX*, *11*(1), 34-57. URL: https://nps.edu/documents/110773463/127421833/Vol11N01-vFinal.pdf

Benes, Libor (2013, Fall): OSINT, New Technologies, Education: Expanding Opportunities and Threats: A New Paradigm. *Journal of Strategic Security*, *6*(3), 22-37. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.6.3S.3

Benjamin, Saija (2021): Safe Space, Dangerous Territory: Young People's Views on Preventing Radicalization Through Education – Perspectives for Pre-Service Teacher Education. *Education Sciences*, *11*(5), Article 205. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11050205

Bennett, Robin (2021): The Lived Experiences of Prevent in University Law Schools. In: David Lowe; Robin Bennett (Eds.): *Prevent Strategy: Helping the Vulnerable Being Drawn Towards Terrorism or Another Layer of State Surveillance?* (Routledge Advances in Sociology, Vol. 305). Abingdon: Routledge, 29-50.

Ben-Porath, Sigal (2023, June): Learning to Avoid Extremism. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3), 376-393. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12587

Bergen, Peter; Pandey, Swati (2006, Spring): The Madrassa Scapegoat. *The Washington Quarterly*, *29*(2), 115-125. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1162/wash.2006.29.2.117

Biberman, Yelena; Zahid, Farhan (2019): Why Terrorists Target Children: Outbidding, Desperation, and Extremism in the Peshawar and Beslan School Massacres. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *31*(2), 169-184. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2015.1135425

Bin Ali, Asif (2019): Bangladesh's "War on Terror" and Madrasa Education. In: Mubashar Hasan; Kenji Isezaki; Sameer Yasir (Eds.): *Radicalization in South Asia: Context, Trajectories and Implications.* New Delhi: SAGE Publications India, 226-253. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4135/9789353287825

Bin Jani, Muhammad Haziq (2017, June): Countering Violent Extremism in Malaysia: Past Experience and Future Prospects. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, *9*(6), 6-10. URL: https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/CTTA_June_2017.pdf

Biskamp, Floris; Hößl, Stefan E. (2014): Handlungsstrategien, Möglichkeiten und Grenzen von politischer Bildung und Pädagogik im Kontext von Islamismus und islamistischer Radikalisierung. *JEX*, 2/2014, 190-233. URL: https://journal-exit.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/75-309-1-CE_H.pdf

Bliesener, Thomas; Schröder, Carl Philipp; Lehmann, Lena (2021): Pathways to Radicalization in Adolescence: The Development of Ideological Beliefs, Acceptance of Violence, and Extremist Behavior. *Monatsschrift für Kriminologie und Strafrechtsreform*, *104*(3), 231-242. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/mks-2021-0124

Bloom, Mia (2010): Are There "Root Causes" for Terrorist Support? Revisiting the Debate on Poverty, Education, and Terrorism. In: Benjamin H. Friedman; Jim Harper; Christopher A. Preble (Eds.): *Terrorizing Ourselves: Why U.S. Counterterrorism Policy is Failing and How to Fix it.* Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 45-60.

Bloom, Mia (2017): Constructing Expertise: Terrorist Recruitment and "Talent Spotting" in the PIRA, Al Qaeda, and ISIS. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7), 603-623. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1237219

Booysen, Hanlie (2021): Teaching "Islam and Politics" in the Wake of the Christchurch Terrorist Attack. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, *41*(3), 437-451. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2021.1997270

Borchgrevink, Kaja (2013, March): Transnational Links of Afghan Madrasas: Implications for the Reform of Religious Education. *PROSPECTS*, *43*(1), 69-84. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-012-9258-2

Boucek, Christopher (2009): Extremist Re-education and Rehabilitation in Saudi Arabia. In: Tore Bjørgo; John Horgan (Eds.): *Leaving Terrorism Behind.* (Cass Series on Political Violence). Abingdon: Routledge, 212-223.

Bourgeois-Guérin, Élise et al. (2021, October): Evaluation of a Training Program on the Prevention of Violent Radicalization for Health and Education Professionals. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, *58*(5), 712-728. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/13634615211047438

Bowie, Robert A. (2017, July): The Rise and Fall of Human Rights in English Education Policy? Inescapable National Interests and PREVENT. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(2), 111-122. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197917693020

Boyd-MacMillan, Eolene M.; Campbell, Claire; Furey, Andrea (2016, Winter): An IC Intervention for Post-Conflict Northern Ireland Secondary Schools. *Journal of Strategic Security*, *9*(4), 111-124. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.9.4.1558

Boyle Espinosa, Elise; Ronan, Adam (2023): Rojava's "War of Education": The Role of Education in Building a Revolutionary Political Community in North and East Syria. *Third World Quarterly*, *44*(10), 2281-2299. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2022.2115884

Brachman, Jarret M.; Forest, James J. F. (2007): Exploring the Role of Virtual Camps. In: Michael A. Innes (Ed.): *Denial of Sanctuary: Understanding Terrorist Safe Havens.* New York: Bloomsbury, Chapter 9. URL: https://www.aclu.org/files/fbimappingfoia/20111110/ACLURM003039.pdf

Bradford, Emma; Wilson, Margaret A. (2013, October): When Terrorists Target Schools: An Exploratory Analysis of Attacks on Educational Institutions. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, *28*(2), 127-138. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-013-9128-8

Bradford, Emma; Wilson, Margaret A. (2016): Terrorist Targeting of Schools and Educational Establishments. In: Alex Stedmon; Glyn Lawson (Eds.): *Hostile Intent and Counter-Terrorism: Human Factors Theory and Application.* (Human Factors in Defence). Boca Raton: CRC Press, 233-244.

Brantly, Aaron; al-`Ubaydi, Muhammad (2015, May): Extremist Forums Provide Digital OpSec Training. *CTC Sentinel*, *8*(5), 10-13. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CTCSentinel-Vol8Issue53.pdf

Breen-Smyth, Marie (2020): Interviewing Combatants: Lessons from the Boston College Case. *Contemporary Social Science*, *15*(2), 258-274. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2019.1637533

Breidlid, Torhild (2021, Summer): Preventing Violent Extremism in Kenyan Schools: Talking About Terrorism. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 27, 71-107. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/461

Brockhoff, Sarah; Krieger, Tim; Meierrieks, Daniel (2015, October): Great Expectations and Hard Times: The (Nontrivial) Impact of Education on Domestic Terrorism. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *59*(7), 1186-1215. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002713520589

Brooke, Nick (2023): Fundamental British Values and the Prevent Duty in Scotland. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *16*(4), 700-719. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2023.2266161

Brooke-Smith, Robin (2013): Liberal Madrassa. In: *Storm Warning: Riding the Crosswinds in the Pakistan-Afghan Borderlands.* London: The Radcliffe Press, Chapter 4.

Brown, Katherine E.; Saeed, Tania (2015): Radicalization and Counter-Radicalization at British Universities: Muslim Encounters and Alternatives. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *38*(11), 1952-1968. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2014.911343

Bryan, Hazel (2017, November): Developing the Political Citizen: How Teachers are Navigating the Statutory Demands of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 205 and the Prevent Duty. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(3), 213-226. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197917717841 URL: https://eprints.glos.ac.uk/id/eprint/4582

Burgers, Tobias J.; Romaniuk, Scott N. (2017, June): Learning and Adapting: al-Qaeda's Attempts to Counter Drone Strikes. *Terrorism Monitor*, *15*(11), 5-7. URL: https://jamestown.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Terrorism-Monitor-June-2-2017.pdf

Busher, Joel; Choudhury, Tufyal; Thomas, Paul (2019): The Enactment of the Counter-Terrorism "Prevent Duty" in British Schools and Colleges: Beyond Reluctant Accommodation or Straightforward Policy Acceptance. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *12*(3), 440-462. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1568853 URL: https://pure.hud.ac.uk/en/publications/the-enactment-of-the-counter-terrorism-prevent-duty-in-british-sc

Buzdar, Muhammad Ayub; Tariq, Riaz Ul Haq; Ali, Akhtar (2019, September): Combating Terrorism on Intellectual Battlefields: Lenses on the Potentials of Universities in Pakistan. *Higher Education Policy*, *32*(3), 441-460. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-018-0090-z

Cerina, Roberto et al. (2024, April): Explaining Recruitment to Extremism: A Bayesian Hierarchical Case–Control Approach. *Political Analysis*, *32*(2), 256-274. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/pan.2023.35

Ceylan, Rauf; Kiefer, Michael (2016, October): Mosques as Partners in Prevention. *Hikma*, *7*(2), 143-158. DOI: https://doi.org/10.13109/hikm.2016.7.2.143

Charles, Christopher A. D.; Maras, Marie-Helen (2015): Strengthening Counterterrorism from the Information of a Successful Terrorist Attack and Failed Missions in the United States. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, *10*(2), 155-180. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19361610.2015.1004513

Cherney, Adrian et al. (2022): Understanding Youth Radicalisation: An Analysis of Australian Data. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *14*(2), 97-119. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2020.1819372

Chernov Hwang, Julie (2023): Internal Pathways: Kinship and Schools. In: *Becoming Jihadis: Radicalization and Commitment in Southeast Asia.* (Causes and Consequences of Terrorism). New York: Oxford University Press, 62-79. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197653005.003.0003

Choudhury, Tufyal (2017): Campaigning on Campus: Student Islamic Societies and Counterterrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(12), 1004-1022. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1253986

Christensen, Tina Wilchen et al. (2024): "Being a Risk" or "Being at Risk": Factors Shaping Negotiation of Concerns of Radicalization Within Multiagency Collaboration in the Nordic Countries. *Democracy and Security*, *20*(1), 1-24. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2023.2220117

Christodoulou, Eleni (2020, March): "Boosting Resilience" and "Safeguarding Youngsters at Risk": Critically Examining the European Commission's Educational Responses to Radicalization and Violent Extremism. *London Review of Education*, *18*(1), 18-34. DOI: https://doi.org/10.18546/LRE.18.1.02

Clifford, Bennett (2018, May): "Trucks, Knives, Bombs, Whatever:" Exploring Pro-Islamic State Instructional Material on Telegram. *CTC Sentinel*, *11*(5), 23-29. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CTC-Sentinel_Vol11Iss5.pdf

Clifford, Bennett (2019, April): Exploring Pro-Islamic State Instructional Material on Telegram. In: Georgia Harrigan (Ed.): *On the Horizon: Security Challenges at the Nexus of State and Non-State Actors and Emerging/Disruptive Technologies.* (SMA Periodic Publication). Boston: NSI, 15-20. URL: https://nsiteam.com/on-the-horizon-security-challenges-at-the-nexus-of-state-and-non-state-actors-and-emerging-disruptive-technologies

Cohen, John D. (2016, November): The Next Generation of Government CVE Strategies at Home: Expanding Opportunities for Intervention. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *668*(1), 118-128. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716216669933

Cole, David R. (2007, June): Virtual Terrorism and the Internet E-learning Options. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, *4*(2), 106-221. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2304/elea.2007.4.2.116

Collier, Michael W. (2013, Fall): Critical Thinking Instruction in Academia: What Can the U.S. Intelligence Community Expect? *Journal of Strategic Security*, *6*(3), 61-64. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.6.3S.6

Combs, Cynthia C. (2023): Terrorist Training. In: *Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century.* (9th ed.). New York: Routledge, 173-217.

Conway, Maura; Parker, Jodie; Looney, Sean (2017): Online Jihadi Instructional Content: The Role of Magazines. In: Maura Conway et al. (Eds.): *Terrorists' Use of the Internet: Assessment and Response.* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – E: Human and Societal Dynamics, Vol. 136). Amsterdam: IOS Press, 182-193. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3233/978-1-61499-765-8-182

Cook, Joana (2023, September): Distinguishing Children from ISIS-Affiliated Families in Iraq and their Unique Barriers for Rehabilitation and Reintegration. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *17*(3), 42-69. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-09/PT%20-%20Vol%20XVII%2C%20Issue%20III%20-%20Cook.pdf

Cozine, Keith (2013, Fall): Teaching the Intelligence Process: The Killing of Bin Laden as a Case Study. *Journal of Strategic Security*, *6*(3), 80-87. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.6.3S.9

Cozine, Keith (2015): Thinking Interestingly: The Use of Game Play to Enhance Learning and Facilitate Critical Thinking Within a Homeland Security Curriculum. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, *63*(3), 367-385. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2015.1069256

Cram, Ian (2012, Spring): The "War on Terror" on Campus: Some Free Speech Issues Around Anti-Radicalization Law and Policy in the United Kingdom. *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, *6*(1), 1-34. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/jsr.2012.0004

Cucinella, Erica (2018, Spring): The Psychosocial Development of Terrorists and the Role of Education and Media to Thwart the Spread of Terrorism. *Journal on Terrorism and Security Analysis*, 13, 25-32. URL: https://satsa.syr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/JTSA-2018-text.pdf

Danzell, Orlandrew E.; Yeh, Yao-Yuan; Pfannenstiel, Melia (2020): Does Education Mitigate Terrorism? Examining the Effects of Educated Youth Cohorts on Domestic Terror in Africa. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *32*(8), 1731-1752. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1506336

Darwinkel, Elli; Chan, Annabel; Sheridan, Lorraine (2020): Tertiary Concerns: Campus Threat Assessment and Management in an Australian University. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, *7*(3-4), 173-185. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000152

Davies, Lynn (2016, Winter): Wicked Problems: How Complexity Science Helps Direct Education Responses to Preventing Violent Extremism. *Journal of Strategic Security*, *9*(4), 32-52. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.9.4.1551

Davies, Lynn (2019): Education and Violent Extremism: Insights from Complexity Theory. *Education and Conflict Review*, *2*, 76-80. URL: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10081591

Davis, Bradley (2020, February): Educator of the Faithful: The Power of Moroccan Islam. *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, *25*, 89-115. URL: https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.hudson.org/files/publications/CurrentTrends25_.pdf

Daymon, Chelsea (2019, June): The Utility of Disabled Fighters in the Islamic State. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *13*(3), 76-86. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-06/Research%20note%201_9.pdf

de Graaf, Beatrice et al. (2024): Discussing Terrorism in the Classroom – Adopting an Empathizing and Historical Perspective: A Research Note. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *47*(1), 98-114. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2023.2229088

de Ruyter, Doret; Sieckelinck, Stijn (2023, June): Creating Caring and Just Democratic Schools to Prevent Extremism. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3), 413-433. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12583

Devasher, Tilak (2016): Education: An Emergency. In: *Pakistan: Courting the Abyss.* Noida: HarperCollins, Chapter 11.

Devasher, Tilak (2016): Madrasas. In: *Pakistan: Courting the Abyss.* Noida: HarperCollins, Chapter 8.

de Wit, Hans; Altbach, Philip G. (2016, Winter): The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Higher Education. *International Higher Education*, 84, 9-10. DOI: https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2016.84.9109

Díaz-Sanz, Marina (2023): Terrorism and the Middle East? A Decolonial Teaching Project to Soften a Stubborn Association. In: Alice Martini; Raquel da Silva (Eds.): *Contemporary Reflections on Critical Terrorism Studies.* (Routledge Critical Terrorism Studies). Abingdon: Routledge, 69-85.

D'Olimpio, Laura (2023, June): Educating the Rational Emotions: An Affective Response to Extremism. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3), 394-412. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12579

D'Olimpio, Laura; Hand, Michael (Guest Eds.) (2023, June): Symposium: Education Against Extremism. [Special Section]. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3). URL: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/17415446/2023/73/3

D'Olimpio, Laura; Hand, Michael (2023, June): Symposium Introduction: Education Against Extremism. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3), 337-340. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12580

Dresser, Paul (2021): What About Hope? A Critical Analysis of Pre-Empting Childhood Radicalisation. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *14*(2), 201-224. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2021.1902612

Dunning, Tristan (2016): Ideational Jihad, Education and Islamic Values. In: *Hamas, Jihad and Popular Legitimacy: Reinterpreting Resistance in Palestine.* (Routledge Critical Terrorism Studies). Abingdon: Routledge, 166-198.

Eck, Kristine; Cohen, Dara Kay (2021): Time for a Change: The Ethics of Student-Led Human Subjects Research on Political Violence. *Third World Quarterly*, *42*(4), 855-866. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2020.1864215

Edwards, Aaron; Hadjiathanasiou, Maria (2021): Brothers in Arms? How the IRA and EOKA Insurgencies Transcended the Local and Became Transnational. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, *32*(4-5), 642-664. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2021.1932105

Ekhomu, Ona (2020): Targeting Schools and Students. In: *Boko Haram: Security Considerations and the Rise of an Insurgency.* Abingdon: Routledge, 113-130.

Ekici, Niyazi; Akdogan, Huseyin (2020, October): Structural Equation Modeling of Terrorism Perception: New Correlates of Perception Formation. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *14*(5), 63-76. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/ekici-and-akdogan.pdf

El Damanhoury, Kareem (2020, Fall): Entertainment-Education Versus Extremism: Examining Parasocial Interaction Among Arab Viewers of Anti-ISIS TV Drama. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 24, 40-78. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/383/239

Ercan, Eren Ekin (2022): The Approach of the Islamist Press in Turkey to the Murder of Samuel Paty: A Qualitative Content Analysis. In: Elnur Ismayil; Ebru Karadogan Ismayil (Eds.): *Media and Terrorism in the 21st Century.* Hershey: IGI Global, 13-27. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-9755-2.ch002

Erikha, Fajar et al. (2021): Counter Violent Extremism: A Collaboration Between the University and the Government of Indonesia. In: Rohan Gunaratna; Mohd Mizan Aslam (Eds.): *Civil Society Organizations Against Terrorism: Case Studies from Asia.* (Routledge Studies in the Politics of Disorder and Instability). Abingdon: Routledge, 167-185.

Fahey, Susan; Asal, Victor (2020): Lowest of the Low: Why Some Countries Suffer Terrorist Attacks Against Schools. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways toward terrorism and genocide*, *13*(2), 101-124. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2019.1700540

Farhan, Sara (2020, June): Resistance, Resilience and Recovery: Archives and Libraries in Post-Liberation Nineveh. *Journal of Contemporary Iraq & the Arab World*, *14*(1-2), 143-147. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1386/jciaw_00024_1

Faure Walker, Rob (2018): Counter-Terrorism in the Classroom. In: Gwynyth Overland et al. (Ed.): *Violent Extremism in the 21st Century: International Perspectives.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 98-124.

Fenwick, Helen; Fenwick, Daniel (2019): Prevent in Schools After the Trojan Horse Affair. In: Ian Cram (Ed.): *Extremism, Free Speech and Counter-Terrorism Law and Policy.* (Routledge Studies in Extremism and Democracy, Vol. 42). Abingdon: Routledge, 96-131.

Fitzgerald, James; Lemieux, Anthony F. (2011, December): Embracing Subjectivities in the Collaborative Teaching of Terrorism: Pedagogy in a "Critical" Learning Environment. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(3), 441-450. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2011.623425

Ford, Kieran (2017): Developing a Peace Perspective on Counter-Extremist Education. *Peace Review*, *29*(2), 144-152. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2017.1308189

Ford, Kieran (2019): This Violence Good, That Violence Bad: Normative and State-Centric Discourses in British School Textbooks. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *12*(4), 693-714. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1618643

Foster, Dakota; Milton, Daniel (2018, June-July): Children at War: Foreign Child Recruits of the Islamic State. *CTC Sentinel*, *11*(6), 11-17. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CTC-SENTINEL-062018_1.pdf

Fox, Andrew (2022): Made in Japan? Or "Overeducated and Underemployed"? In: *The Devil's Toy Box: Exposing and Defusing Promethean Terrorists.* Lincoln: Potomac Books, Chapter 2.

Fraihi, Hind (2018): The Future of Feminism by ISIS Is in the Lap of Women. *International Annals of Criminology*, *56*(1-2), 23-31. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/cri.2018.7

Frantzman, Seth J. (2015, Fall): Challenges and Influences of the "Americanization" of Palestinian Education: A Case Study of Al-Quds University's American Studies Department. *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, *19*(3), 1-9. URL: https://www.proquest.com/openview/fd14400ce5653d1f42f31fb3eb68fd3b/1

Fürstenberg, Michael; Görzig, Carolin (2020, February): Learning in a Double Loop: The Strategic Transformation of Al-Qaeda. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *14*(1), 26-38. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-06/Research%20note%201_5.pdf

Gambetta, Diego; Hertog, Steffen (2009): Why Are There so Many Engineers Among Islamic Radicals? *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *50*(2), 201-230. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975609990129

Gansewig, Antje; Walsh, Maria (2023): Preventing Violent Extremism with Former Extremists in Schools: A Media Analysis of the Situation in Germany. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *35*(1), 47-64. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2020.1862802

Gansewig, Antje; Walsh, Maria (2024): "That Is Simply One Thing That Goes With It": Former Extremists in School Settings and Empirical Evidence. *Educational Review*, *76*(2), 277-298. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2022.2028733

Garofalo, Daniele (2023, January): Yurtugh Tactical: Profiling the Anti-Chinese Uyghur Training Group in Syria. *Terrorism Monitor*, *21*(2). URL: https://jamestown.org/program/yurtugh-tactical-profiling-the-anti-chinese-uyghur-training-group-in-syria

Gelici, Zehra (2022): Relationship Between Education, Media, and Terror. In: Elnur Ismayil; Ebru Karadogan Ismayil (Eds.): *Media and Terrorism in the 21st Century.* Hershey: IGI Global, 43-63. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-9755-2.ch004

Gerdes, Luke M.; Ringler, Kristine; Autin, Barbara (2014): Assessing the Abu Sayyaf Group's Strategic and Learning Capacities. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *37*(3), 267-293. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2014.872021

Gereluk, Dianne (2023, June): A Whole-School Approach to Address Youth Radicalization. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3), 434-451. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12581

Ghannouchi, Rached (2020): Deradicalization Through Religious Education. In: Stig Jarle Hansen; Stian Lid (Eds.): *Routledge Handbook of Deradicalisation and Disengagement.* (Routledge Handbooks). Abingdon: Routledge, Chapter 12.

Ghosh, Ratna (2022): Bridging Education and Law Enforcement for Countering Violent Extremism. *The Journal of Intelligence, Conflict, and Warfare*, *4*(3), 175-179. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21810/jicw.v4i3.4182

Ghosh, Ratna et al. (2017): Can Education Counter Violent Religious Extremism? *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, *23*(2), 117-133. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/11926422.2016.1165713

Ghosh, Ratna et al. (2023): Socio-Ecological Portrait of Two Young Women from Montreal who Joined ISIS. *Contemporary Voices: St Andrews Journal of International Relations*, *5*(1). DOI: https://doi.org/10.15664/jtr.1626

Gill, Paul (2017): Tactical Innovation and the Provisional Irish Republican Army. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7), 573-585. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1237221 URL: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1521069

Gill, Paul et al. (2017, February): Terrorist Use of the Internet by the Numbers: Quantifying Behaviors, Patterns, and Processes. *Criminology & Public Policy*, *16*(1), 99-117. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12249

Gill, Paul et al. (2020): Terrorist Propaganda After the Islamic State: Learning, Emulation, and Imitation. In: Stephane J. Baele; Katharine A. Boyd; Travis G. Coan (Eds.): *ISIS Propaganda: A Full-Spectrum Extremist Message.* (Causes and Consequences of Terrorism). New York: Oxford University Press, 242-264.

Glees, Anthony (2014): Islamist Terrorism and British Universities. In: Colin Murray Parkes (Ed.): *Responses to Terrorism: Can Psychosocial Approaches Break the Cycle of Violence?* Hove: Routledge, 144-150.

Goerzig, Carolin (2019): Terrorist Learning in Context – The Case of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *12*(4), 629-648. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1596623

Goerzig, Carolin (2022): Deradicalization Through Double-Loop Learning? How the Egyptian Gamaa Islamiya Renounced Violence. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *45*(8), 704-726. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1680193

Göl, Ayla (2011, December): Developing a Critical Pedagogy of "Research-Based" Teaching in Islamic Studies. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(3), 431-440. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2011.623421

Gosling, David L. (2015): Educational Renaissance. In: *Frontier of Fear: Confronting the Taliban on Pakistan's Border.* London: Radcliffe Press, Chapter 7.

Grigat, Sonja (2014): Educating into Liberal Peace: The International Crisis Group's Contribution to an Emerging Global Governmentality. *Third World Quarterly*, *35*(4), 563-580. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2014.924061

Grumke, Thomas (2010): "Andi" – Educational Comic and Website for Democracy and Against Extremism. In: Hans-Liudger Dienel et al. (Eds.): *Terrorism and the Internet: Threats – Target Groups – Deradicalisation Strategies.* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – E: Human and Societal Dynamics, Vol. 67). Amsterdam: IOS Press, 211-220. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3233/978-1-60750-537-2-211

Guarrieri, Thomas R.; Meisel, Collin J. (2021): Extremists and Unconventional Weapons: Examining the Pursuit of Chemical and Biological Agents. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *13*(1), 23-42. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2019.1698633

Guelke, Adrian (2017): Irish Republican Terrorism: Learning from and Teaching other Countries. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7), 557-572. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1237222

Halimi, Mahfuh Haji; Bin Sudiman, Muhammad Saiful Alam Shah; Sultan, Zulkifli Mohamed (2014, March): The Teacher-Student Approach to Religious Rehabilitation. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, *6*(2), 31-35. URL: https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CTTA-March14.pdf

Hand, Michael (2023, June): Education, Extremism, and Aversion to Compromise. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3), 341-354. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12582

Hanif, Saba; Ali, Majid Hassan; Shaheen, Faiza (2021): Religious Extremism, Religiosity and Sympathy Toward the Taliban Among Students Across Madrassas and Worldly Education Schools in Pakistan. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *33*(3), 489-504. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1548354

Hansen, William W.; with the assistance of Kingsley Jima; Nurudeen Abbas; Basil Abia (2016, October): Poverty and "Economic Deprivation Theory": Street Children, Qur'anic Schools/almajirai and the Dispossessed as a Source of Recruitment for Boko Haram and other Religious, Political and Criminal Groups in Northern Nigeria. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *10*(5), 83-95. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/508-poverty-and-economic-deprivation-theory-street-children-qur-anic-schools-almajirai-and-the-dispossessed-as-a-source-of-recruitment-for-boko-haram-and-other-religious-political-and-.pdf

Hardes, Jennifer; Revell, Lynn (Guest Eds.) (2017, July): Law, Education and Prevent. [Special Issue]. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(2). URL: https://journals.sagepub.com/toc/esja/12/2

Hardes, Jennifer; Revell, Lynn (2017, July): Law, Education and Prevent. [Editorial]. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(2), 93-96. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197917706017

Hawdon, James; Costello, Matthew (2020): Learning to Hate: Explaining Participation in Online Extremism. In: Derek M. D. Silva; Mathieu Deflem (Eds.): *Radicalization and Counter-Radicalization.* (Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance, Vol. 25). Bingley: Emerald, 167-182.

Hayes, Mark (2020): The ESRC University Project on "Dissident" Irish Republicanism: Some Reflections on the Relationship Between Research, Academia, and the Security State. *Contemporary Social Science*, *15*(2), 175-195. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2018.1427884

Hedges, Joshua W. (2008): Eliminating the Learning Curve: A Pragmatic Look at Jihadist Use of the Internet. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, *3*(1), 71-91.

Heinke, Daniel H.; Persson, Mareike (2016): Youth Specific Factors in Radicalization. *Defence Against Terrorism Review*, *8*, 53-66. URL: https://www.coedat.nato.int/publication/datr/volumes/datr8-2016.pdf

Hesterman, Jennifer (2019): Soft Target Threat Assessment: Schools, Churches, and Hospitals. In: *Soft Target Hardening: Protecting People from Attack.* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge, 123-184.

Hoffman, Bruce (Ed.) (2017): How Terrorists Learn: Adaptation and Innovation in Political Violence. [Special Issue]. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7). URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/uter20/40/7

Hoffman, Bruce; Ware, Jacob; Shapiro, Ezra (2020): Assessing the Threat of Incel Violence. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *43*(7), 565-587. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2020.1751459

Hofinger, Veronika (2023): Strategies of Extremist Organisations and their Influence in the Education Sector: Summary of the Results of the Stratex Project. *SIAK-Journal – Journal for Police Science and Practice: International Edition*, *13*, 36-48. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7396/IE_2023_D

Høigilt, Jacob (2013): Islamism and Education: The Nature and Aims of Islamic Schools in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. *Middle East Critique*, *22*(1), 63-76. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19436149.2012.748133

Holt, Thomas J. et al. (2018): Examining the Utility of Social Control and Social Learning in the Radicalization of Violent and Non-Violent Extremists. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways toward terrorism and genocide*, *11*(3), 125-148. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2018.1470661

Hoque, N. M. Sajjadul (2014): Reviewing the Education Policy of Bangladesh: Is the Present Education Policy Adequate for Countering Terrorism and Ethnic and Religious Intolerance? In: Siegfried O. Wolf et al. (Eds.): *The Merits of Regional Cooperation: The Case of South Asia.* Cham: Springer, 35-41. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02234-5_4

Horgan, John G. et al. (2017): From Cubs to Lions: A Six Stage Model of Child Socialization into the Islamic State. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7), 645-664. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1221252 URL: https://humantraffickingsearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/9.horgan_etal_ISIS.pdf

Hou, Dongfang (2022): The Impact of Education on Domestic Terrorism in Asia: A Control Function Approach. *Defence and Peace Economics*, *33*(7), 857-875. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/10242694.2021.1874640

Hudson, Darren et al. (2020): Myth: Terrorists Are Poor and Uneducated. In: *The Irrational Terrorist and Other Persistent Terrorism Myths.* Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 47-64.

Hwang, Julie Chernov; Schulze, Kirsten E. (2018): Why They Join: Pathways into Indonesian Jihadist Organizations. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *30*(6), 911-932. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1481309

Ide, Tobias (2020, March): Teaching Terrorism, Saving the State? Education and Geopolitical Imaginations of Terrorism in 12 Violently Challenged States. *Political Geography*, *77*, Article 102125. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.102125

Ingram, Kiriloi (2021, Fall): Centralising Women in P/CVE and Peacebuilding Programme Design. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 28, 67-107. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/493

Iqbal, Khuram; Mehmood, Zahid (2021): Emerging Trends of On-Campus Radicalization in Pakistan. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, *16*(2), 141-156. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2021.1902551

Ives, Brandon; Breslawski, Jori (2022, May): Greed, Grievance, or Graduates? Why Do Men Rebel? *Journal of Peace Research*, *59*(3), 319-336. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433211014269

Jackson, Brian A. et al. (2019): Early-Phase Terrorism Prevention: Community Education, Engagement, Resilience, and Risk-Factor Reduction. In: *Practical Terrorism Prevention: Reexamining U.S. National Approaches to Addressing the Threat of Ideologically Motivated Violence.* [e-Book]. (RAND Research Reports, RR-2647-DHS). Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 95-122. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7249/RR2647

James, Natalie (2022): Countering Far-Right Threat Through Britishness: The Prevent Duty in Further Education. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *15*(1), 121-142. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2022.2031135

Jan, Qasim et al. (2022): Examining the Role of Pakistan's National Curriculum Textbook Discourses on Normalising the Taliban's Violence in the USA's Post 9/11 War on Terror in South Waziristan, Pakistan. *British Journal of Religious Education*, *44*(3), 246-255. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2022.2036102

Jaspersen, Johannes G.; Montibeller, Gilberto (2020, April): On the Learning Patterns and Adaptive Behavior of Terrorist Organizations. *European Journal of Operational Research*, *282*(1), 221-234. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2019.09.011

Javeid, Umer et al. (2023): The Effect of Terrorism on Continuing Education: Evidence from Pakistan. *Education Economics*, *31*(3), 376-396. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09645292.2022.2073584

Jerome, Lee; Elwick, Alex (2020): Teaching About Terrorism, Extremism and Radicalisation: Some Implications for Controversial Issues Pedagogy. *Oxford Review of Education*, *46*(2), 222-237. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2019.1667318 URL: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10083492

Jerome, Lee; Elwick, Alex; Kazim, Raza (2019, August): The Impact of the Prevent Duty on Schools: A Review of the Evidence. *British Educational Research Journal*, *45*(4), 821-837. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3527 URL: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10074194

Jiménez Ramos, María (2022): The Impact of the Narrative of Victimization: An Experiment with University Students in Spain. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *14*(4), 265-287. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2020.1856168

Johnson, Karin A. C. (2018, November): 9/11 and International Student Visa Issuance. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *22*(5), 393-413. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315318762524

Jugl, Irina (2022, Spring): Breaking up the Bubble: Improving Critical Thinking Skills and Tolerance of Ambiguity in Deradicalization Mentoring. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 30, 45-80. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/573

Kalim, Salma; Janjua, Fauzia (2019, February): #WeareUnited, Cyber-Nationalism During Times of a National Crisis: The Case of a Terrorist Attack on a School in Pakistan. *Discourse & Communication*, *13*(1), 68-94. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481318771448

Kam, Stefanie; Clarke, Michael (2021, May): Securitization, Surveillance and "De-Extremization" in Xinjiang. *International Affairs*, *97*(3), 625-642. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiab038

Kazmi, Zaheer (2022, October). Radical Islam in the Western Academy. *Review of International Studies*, *48*(4), 725-747. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210521000553

Keels, Eric; Benson, Jay; Widmeier, Michael (2021, November): Teaching from Experience: Foreign Training and Rebel Success in Civil War. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *38*(6), 696-717. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894220912976

Kenney, Michael (2020): A Community of True Believers: Learning as Process Among "The Emigrants". *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *32*(1), 57-76. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2017.1346506

Kettle, Louise; Mumford, Andrew (2017): Terrorist Learning: A New Analytical Framework. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7), 523-538. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1237224

Kfir, Isaac (2012, March): Islam in Post-9/11 Pakistan: The Role of Education in Heightening or Diminishing Pakistan's Security Dilemma. *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, *16*(1), 59-73. URL: https://www.proquest.com/openview/3a52867e5457c8caf72228b4fdff9e2a/1

Khan, Asad Ullah; Waqar, Ifrah (2021): Preventing Terrorism from Students of Extremist Madrasahs: An Overview of Pakistan's Efforts. In: Alex P. Schmid (Ed.): *Handbook of Terrorism Prevention and Preparedness.* [e-Book]. The Hague: ICCT Press, 270-289. URL: https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-01/Handbook_Schmid_2020.pdf

Kibris, Arzu (2015, June): The Conflict Trap Revisited: Civil Conflict and Educational Achievement. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *59*(4), 645-670. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002713516845

Kimhi, Shaul; Eshel, Yohanan (2012): Determinants of Students' Perceptions of Conventional and Unconventional War Threats. *Democracy and Security*, *8*(3), 228-246. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2012.710147

Köhler, Daniel; Fiebig, Verena (2019, June): Knowing What to Do: Academic and Practitioner Understanding of How to Counter Violent Radicalization. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *13*(3), 44-62. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-06/04---koehler-and-fiebig.pdf

Körner, Swen; Staller, Mario S. (2018): Pedagogy of Terrorism: Mujahid Guide Revisited. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, *13*(3), 332-344. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2018.1503700

Korotayev, Andrey; Vaskin, Ilya; Tsirel, Sergey (2021): Economic Growth, Education, and Terrorism: A Re-Analysis. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *33*(3), 572-595. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1559835

Krause, Peter et al. (2022, August-September): Knowing Is Half the Battle: How Education Decreases the Fear of Terrorism. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *66*(7-8), 1147-1173. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/00220027221079648

Kropiunigg, Rafael Milan; Kropiunigg, Laura (2023): The Link Between Singular Identities, Domestic Violence, and Violent Extremism: Exploring Insights, Lessons, and Potential Solutions Through the Lens of Mother Schools Model Implementations. In: Denis Suljić; Emma Allen (Eds.): *Exploring Trends and Research in Countering and Preventing Extremism and Violent Extremism.* Abu Dhabi: Hedayah, 102-108. URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/exploring-trends-and-research-in-countering-and-preventing-extremism-violent-extremism

Kurbanova, Lydia U. (2020, July): "Why Is it so Easy to Seduce Us?" Young Female Students' Narratives of Extremist Online Recruitment. *Russian Analytical Digest*, 255, 6-8. URL: https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/RAD255.pdf

Kutner, Samantha (2016, Summer): The Call for Component Analyses of the Saudi Arabian Risk Reduction Initiative: An Examination of Religious Re-Education's Role in the Deradicalization and Disengagement Process. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 7, 107-123. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/59

Kyriacou, Chris et al. (2017, July): British Muslim University Students' Perceptions of Prevent and its Impact on their Sense of Identity. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(2), 97-110. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197916688918 URL: http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/112695/1/Prevent_Manuscript.pdf

Lakhani, Suraj (2020): Social Capital and the Enactment of Prevent Duty: An Empirical Case-Study of Schools and Colleges. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *13*(4), 660-679. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2020.1810989

Lakhani, Suraj; James, Natalie (2021): "Prevent Duty": Empirical Reflections on the Challenges of Addressing Far-Right Extremism Within Secondary Schools and Colleges in the UK. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *14*(1), 67-89. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2021.1876550

Langer, Arnim; Godefroidt, Amélie; Meuleman, Bart (2017): Killing People, Dividing a Nation? Analyzing Student Perceptions of the Boko Haram Crisis in Nigeria. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(5), 419-438. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1214434

Ledoux, Sébastien (2022): In the Schools: Bringing Pupils into the National Community of Mourning. In: Florence Faucher; Gérôme Truc (Eds.): *Facing Terrorism in France: Lessons from the 2015 Paris Attacks.* (French Politics, Society and Culture). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature, 55-67. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94163-5_6

Lee, Benjamin; Knott, Kim (2022): Fascist Aspirants: Fascist Forge and Ideological Learning in the Extreme-Right Online Milieu. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *14*(3), 216-240. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2020.1850842

Lefebvre, Stéphane (2021): Academic-Intelligence Relationships: Opportunities, Strengths, Weaknesses and Threats. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, *16*(1), 92-103. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2021.1880020

Levitt, Matthew (2020, August): Breaking Hezbollah's "Golden Rule": An Inside Look at the Modus Operandi of Hezbollah's Islamic Jihad Organization. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *14*(4), 21-42. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/levitt.pdf

Lia, Brynjar (2008): Doctrines for Jihadi Terrorist Training. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *20*(4), 518-542. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546550802257226

Liht, Jose; Savage, Sara; Williams, Ryan J. (2013): Being Muslim, Being British: A Multimedia Educational Resource for Young Muslims. In: George Joffé (Ed.): *Islamist Radicalisation in Europe and the Middle East: Reassessing the Causes of Terrorism.* (Library of International Relations, Vol. 51). London: I.B. Tauris, 34-57.

Linebarger, Christopher (2016, September): Dangerous Lessons: Rebel Learning and Mobilization in the International System. *Journal of Peace Research*, *53*(5), 633-647. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343316653462

Liu, Chuyu (2019): Local Public Goods Expenditure and Ethnic Conflict: Evidence from China. *Security Studies*, *28*(4), 739-772. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2019.1631382

Loadenthal, Michael (2019): Introduction: Studying Political Violence while Indicted – Against Objectivity and Detachment. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *12*(3), 481-490. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1599167

Macnair, Logan; Frank, Richard (2017, Spring): Voices Against Extremism: A Case Study of a Community-Based CVE Counter-Narrative Campaign. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 10, 147-174. URL: http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/86

Madina, Irene G.; Bilbao, Galo; Bermudez, Angela (2020): Recognizing Victims of Political Violence: Basque Literary Narratives as an Ethical Tool. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *43*(6), 548-564. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1452808

Maloney, Sean M. (2015): Army of Darkness: The Jihadist Training System in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 1996–2001. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, *26*(3), 518-541. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2015.1006409

Manor, Yohanan; Mizrahi, Ido (2010, Spring): Hamas's Web School for Suicide Bombers. *Middle East Quarterly*, *17*(2), 31-40. URL: https://www.meforum.org/2675/hamas-web-school-suicide-bombers

Maraj, Arianne; Mahmut, Dilmurat; Ghosh, Ratna (2021, Summer): What Role Do French Society and its Education System Play in Promoting Violent Radicalization Processes? *Journal for Deradicalization*, 27, 238-283. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/469

Marcus, Raphael D. (2019): Learning "Under Fire": Israel's Improvised Military Adaptation to Hamas Tunnel Warfare. *Journal of Strategic Studies*, *42*(3-4), 344-370. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2017.1307744

Martin, Elaine (2011, December): Issues in Teaching Terrorism as Cultural Artefact. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(3), 451-458. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2011.623426

Massoumi, Narzanin; Mills, Tom; Miller, David (2020): Secrecy, Coercion and Deception in Research on "Terrorism" and "Extremism". *Contemporary Social Science*, *15*(2), 134-152. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2019.1616107

Masullo, Juan; O'Connor, Francis (2020): PKK Violence Against Civilians: Beyond the Individual, Understanding Collective Targeting. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *32*(1), 77-99. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2017.1347874

Matthews, Julie (2005): Visual Culture and Critical Pedagogy in "Terrorist Times". *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *26*(2), 203-224. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01596300500143179

Mattsson, Christer (2018): Caught Between the Urgent and the Comprehensible: Professionals' Understanding of Violent Extremism. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *11*(1), 111-129. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2017.1337327

Mattsson, Christer; Johansson, Thomas (2022): Schooling and Radicalization. In: *Radicalization and Disengagement in Neo-Nazi Movements: Social Psychological Perspectives.* (Routledge Studies in Countering Violent Extremism). Abingdon: Routledge, 51-64.

Mattsson, Christer; Säljö, Roger (2018): Violent Extremism, National Security and Prevention: Institutional Discourses and their Implications for Schooling. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, *66*(1), 109-125. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2017.1337870

Matusitz, Jonathan (2020): Transformative Learning. In: *Global Jihad in Muslim and Non-Muslim Contexts.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan / Springer Nature, 255-282. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-47044-9_11

Mazzei, Julie (2023): Science and Epistemology as Territory in Conflict: The U.S. Occupation and Violence Against Academics in Iraq. In: Paul Lorenzo Johnson; William Wittels (Eds.): *Militias, States and Violence Against Civilians: Civic Vice, Civic Virtue.* Abingdon: Routledge, 104-122.

McCauley, Clark; Moskalenko, Sophia; Van Son, Benjamin (2013, February): Characteristics of Lone-Wolf Violent Offenders: A Comparison of Assassins and School Attackers. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *7*(1), 4-24. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/characteristics-of-lone-wolf-violent-offenders.pdf

McClure, Kevin R. (2009, July): Madrasas and Pakistan's Education Agenda: Western Media Misrepresentation and Policy Recommendations. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *29*(4), 334-341. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2009.01.003

McCreight, Robert (2014): A Pathway Forward in Homeland Security Education: An Option Worth Considering and the Challenge Ahead. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, *11*(1), 25-38. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/jhsem-2013-0099

McDowell-Smith, Allison; Speckhard, Anne; Yayla, Ahmet S. (2017, Spring): Beating ISIS in the Digital Space: Focus Testing ISIS Defector Counter-Narrative Videos with American College Students. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 10, 50-76. URL: http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/83

McGlynn, Catherine; McDaid, Shaun (2019): Radicalisation and Higher Education: Students' Understanding and Experiences. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *31*(3), 559-576. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2016.1258637 URL: http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/30097

Michlig, Georgia J. et al. (2019): Providing Healthcare Under ISIS: A Qualitative Analysis of Healthcare Worker Experiences in Mosul, Iraq Between June 2014 and June 2017. *Global Public Health*, *14*(10), 1414-1427. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2019.1609061 URL: http://hopkinshumanitarianhealth.org/assets/documents/PAPER_4_PUBLISHED_Gilbert.pdf

Miller, David; Mills, Tom (Guest Eds.) (2011, December): Teaching About Terrorism. [Special Section]. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(3), 389-458. URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rter20/4/3

Miller, David; Mills, Tom (2011, December): Introduction: Teaching and Researching Terrorism – Pressures and Practice. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(3), 389-392. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2011.623410 URL: https://dmiller.info/images/docs/miller%20mills%20teaching%20and%20researching%20terrorism%20-%20pressures%20and%20practice%202011.pdf

Miller, David; Mills, Tom; Harkins, Steven (2011, December): Teaching About Terrorism in the United Kingdom: How it is Done and What Problems it Causes. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(3), 405-420. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2011.623416 URL: http://www.dmiller.info/images/docs/miller%20mills%20harkins-teaching%20about%20terrorism%20in%20the%20united%20kingdom%202011.pdf

Miller, David; Mills, Tom; Massoumi, Narzanin (Guest Eds.) (2020): Knowing Terrorism: Ethical, Methodological and other Challenges. [Special Issue]. *Contemporary Social Science*, *15*(2). URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rsoc21/15/2

Mills, John Thomas; Shondell Miller, DeMond (2015): Educating the Next Generation of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Professionals: Promoting Racial and Ethnic Understanding via Cultural Competence and Critical Race Theory. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, *10*(4), 466-480. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19361610.2015.1069542

Mills, Martin; Keddie, Amanda (2010, August): Cultural Reductionism and the Media: Polarising Discourses Around Schools, Violence and Masculinity in an Age of Terror. *Oxford Review of Education*, *36*(4), 427-444. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2010.494449

Mills, Tom; Massoumi, Narzanin; Miller, David (2020): The Ethics of Researching "Terrorism" and Political Violence: A Sociological Approach. *Contemporary Social Science*, *15*(2), 119-133. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2019.1660399

Misis, Marcos L.; Bush, Michael D.; Hendrix, Nicole (2017): An Examination of College Students' Fears About Terrorism and the Likelihood of a Terrorist Attack. *Behavioral Sciences of*

Terrorism and Political Aggression, *9*(2), 125-138. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2016.1187656

Mitchell, Michael R. (2016, Spring): Radicalization in British Columbia Secondary Schools: The Principals' Perspective. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 6, 132-179. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/46

Moffat, Adrienne; Gerard, F. Jeane (2020): Securitising Education: An Exploration of Teachers' Attitudes and Experiences Regarding the Implementation of the Prevent Duty in Sixth Form Colleges. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *13*(2), 197-217. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1629860 URL: https://westminsterresearch.westminster.ac.uk/item/qx460/securitising-education-an-exploration-of-teachers-attitudes-and-experiences-regarding-the-implementation-of-the-prevent-duty-in-sixth-form-colleges

Moffett, Katie; Sgro, Tony (2016, November): School-Based CVE Strategies. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *668*(1), 145-164. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716216672435

Mohammed, Idris (2021, September): Can New Policies Curtail Banditry in Northwestern Nigeria Amid the School Closure Crisis? *Terrorism Monitor*, *19*(18), 6-8. URL: https://jamestown.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/TM_September-24-2021.pdf

Molodikova, Irina; Galyapina, Victoria (2011): Islamic Education Among Chechens and Ingush: Pupils', Teachers' and Experts' Opinions. *Religion, State and Society*, *39*(2-3), 263-279. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09637494.2011.584711

Morris, Andrea Michelle (2024): Who Becomes a Foreign Fighter? Characteristics of the Islamic State's Soldiers. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *36*(2), 246-264. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2022.2144730

Morrison, John F. (2017): Copying to be Different: Violent Dissident Irish Republican Learning. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7), 586-602. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1237225 URL: https://repository.uel.ac.uk/item/84z97

Mostofa, Shafi Md; Doyle, Natalie J. (2019, October): Profiles of Islamist Militants in Bangladesh. *Perspectives on Terrorism, 13*(5), 112-129. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-06/Research%20note%202_5.pdf

Motwani, Nishank (2022, August): How Afghanistan's Overthrown Governing Elites Viewed the Violent Extremism Challenge. *CTC Sentinel*, *15*(8), 50-57. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/CTC-SENTINEL-082022.pdf

Moyaert, Marianne (2021): Wrestling with Scripture and Avoiding Violence in the University Classroom. In: Julia Snyder; Daniel H. Weiss (Eds.): *Scripture and Violence.* Abingdon: Routledge, 124-138.

Msall, Kyle A. (2017, Spring): Perceptions of Extremists and Deradicalization Programs Among University Students in Kuwait. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 10, 77-97. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/84

Mueller, John (2017, October): The Cybercoaching of Terrorists: Cause for Alarm? *CTC Sentinel*, *10*(9), 29-35. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CTC-Sentinel_Vol10Iss9-21.pdf

Mukhina, Svetlana A. et al. (2015, June): Future Teachers' Attitude to the Security Problem and Counter Terrorism. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 6*(3 S7), 405-410. URL: https://www.richtmann.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/view/6889

Munisteri, Joanne Patti (2018, April): Jihadi Generations: Strategies Used for Weaponizing Children (Part 1). *Small Wars Journal*, 4/2018. URL: http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/jihadi-generations-strategies-used-weaponizing-children-part-1

Munisteri, Joanne Patti (2018, April): Jihadi Generations: Strategies Used for Weaponizing Children (Part 2). *Small Wars Journal*, 4/2018. URL: http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/jihadi-generations-strategies-used-weaponizing-children-part-2

Nasser, llham; Abu-Nimer, Mohammed (2021): Forgiveness Education: Rationalization Among Arab Educators in the Middle East. In: Ajlina Karamehić-Muratović; Laura Kromják (Eds.):

Remembrance and Forgiveness: Global and Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Genocide and Mass Violence. (Memory Studies: Global Constellations). Abingdon: Routledge, 183-196.

Neal, Andrew W. (2019): University Free Speech as a Space of Exception in Prevent? In: Ian Cram (Ed.): *Extremism, Free Speech and Counter-Terrorism Law and Policy.* (Routledge Studies in Extremism and Democracy, Vol. 42). Abingdon: Routledge, 74-95.

Nesser, Petter (2008): How Did Europe's Global Jihadis Obtain Training for their Militant Causes? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *20*(2), 234-256. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546550801920758

Nouwen, Ward; Van Caudenberg, Rut; Clycq, Noel (2019): The Role of Religiosity in Students' Perceptions of Student-Teacher Relations, School Belonging and Valuing of Education. In: Noel Clycq et al. (Eds.): *Radicalisation: A Marginal Phenomenon or a Mirror to Society?* (CeMIS Migration and Intercultural Studies, Vol. 4). Leuven: Leuven University Press, 117-152.

Nwankpa, Michael (2017): Dialoguing and Negotiating with Terrorists: Any Prospect for Boko Haram? *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *9*(2), 106-124. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2016.1189445

Obamamoye, Babatunde F. (2018): Navigating the Enigma of Negotiating with a Jihadist Terrorist Group. *African Security*, *11*(4), 397-417. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2018.1560973

O'Donnell, Aislinn (2017, July): Pedagogical Injustice and Counter-Terrorist Education. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(2), 177-193. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197917698490

O'Donnell, Aislinn (2020): What Is an Educational Response to Extreme and Radical Ideas and Why Does it Matter? In: Alice Martini; Kieran Ford; Richard Jackson (Eds.): *Encountering Extremism: Theoretical Issues and Local Challenges.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 136-156.

Onat, Ismail et al. (2024): Fears of Cyberterrorism, Terrorism, and Terrorist Attacks: An Empirical Comparison. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *16*(2), 149-165. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2022.2046625

Onursal, Recep; Kirkpatrick, Daniel (2021): Is Extremism the "New" Terrorism? The Convergence of "Extremism" and "Terrorism" in British Parliamentary Discourse. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *33*(5), 1094-1116. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2019.1598391

Ouoba, Marie Madeleine; Lompo, Emmanuel (2022): Terrorism Violence: Assessing the Impact of Education Programs Through Mass Media on the Adoption of Security Measures in Burkina Faso. *Journal of Terrorism Studies*, *4*(2), Article 7. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7454/jts.v4i2.1055

Panjwani, Farid (2023, June): (DIS)Locating Meaning: Toward a Hermeneutical Response in Education to Religiously Inspired Extremism. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3), 452-461. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12585

Parkes, Jenny (2014): Countering Violence: The Role of the School. In: Colin Murray Parkes (Ed.): *Responses to Terrorism: Can Psychosocial Approaches Break the Cycle of Violence?* Hove: Routledge, 135-143.

Pauwels, Lieven; Schils, Nele (2016): Differential Online Exposure to Extremist Content and Political Violence: Testing the Relative Strength of Social Learning and Competing Perspectives. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *28*(1), 1-29. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2013.876414

Pavlović, Tomislav (2023, Spring): Being Capable, Yet Helpless, in an Egalitarian Society: Are More Educated Individuals Always Less Likely to Support Political Violence? *Journal for Deradicalization*, 34, 1-27. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/705

Pavlović, Tomislav; Moskalenko, Sophia; McCauley, Clark (2024): Two Classes of Political Activists: Evidence from Surveys of U.S. College Students and U.S. Prisoners. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *16*(2), 227-247. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2022.2064894

Pelletier, Alexandre (2021, April): Competition for Religious Authority and Islamist Mobilization in Indonesia. *Comparative Politics*, *53*(3), 525-547. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5129/00104152 1X15974471626004

Peracha, Feriha et al. (2022): Promoting Cognitive Complexity Among Violent Extremist Youth in Northern Pakistan. *Journal of Strategic Security*, *15*(1), 14-53. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.15.1.1943

Perkins, Brian M. (2015, March): Following the Peshawar School Attack, Pakistan Moves Against Domestic Terrorism. *Terrorism Monitor*, *13*(5), 5-7. URL: https://jamestown.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/TerrorismMonitorVol13Issue5_02.pdf

Perliger, Arie (2014, August): Terrorist Networks' Productivity and Durability: A Comparative Multi-Level Analysis. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *8*(4), 36-52. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/terrorist-networks%E2%80%99-productivity-and-durability-a-comparative-multi-level-analysis--arie-perliger.pdf

Perry, Damon L. (2019): Education and Arbitration: A Clash of Values Within Muslim Communities. In: *The Global Muslim Brotherhood in Britain: Non-Violent Islamist Extremism and the Battle of Ideas.* (Routledge Studies in Political Islam, Vol. 12). Abingdon: Routledge, 176-212.

Pervez, Muhammad Shoaib (Ed.) (2021): Educational Aspect. In: *Radicalization in Pakistan: A Critical Perspective.* (Routledge Advances in South Asian Studies). Abingdon: Routledge, 15-76.

Petkova, Elisaveta P. et al. (2017): Schools and Terrorism: Global Trends, Impacts, and Lessons for Resilience. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(8), 701-711. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1223979 URL: https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D8WM1DPM

Phonexayphova, Saythala Lay (2016, January-February): Lessons from Yusufiyah: From Black Hearts to Moral Education. *Military Review*, 1-2/2016, 102-107. URL: https://usarlatraining.army.mil/documents/71216/89620/Lessons+from+Yusufiyah+Military+Review+20160228.pdf

Piasecka, Shelley (2019): Performing PREVENT: Anti-Extremist Theatre-in-Education in the Service of UK Counter-Terrorism, a Freirean Analysis. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *12*(4), 715-734. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1615660 URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10034/622385

Pieri, Zacharias P. (2019): "Western Education Is Forbidden". In: *Boko Haram and the Drivers of Islamist Violence.* (Routledge Focus). Abingdon: Routledge, 48-68.

Price, David H. (2020): Questioning our Agency Inside Agencies: Rethinking the Possibility of Scholars' Critical Contributions to Security Agencies. *Contemporary Social Science*, *15*(2), 211-226. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2018.1426873

Puri, Nikhil Raymond (2010, October): The Pakistani Madrassah and Terrorism: Made and Unmade Conclusions from the Literature. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *4*(4), 51-72. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/the-pakistani-madrassah-and-terrorism-made-and-unmade-conclusions-from-the-literature-nikhil-raymond-puri-.pdf

Qaddour, Kinana (2017, October 13): Inside ISIS' Dysfunctional Schools: The Failure of the Group's Educational System. *Foreign Affairs.* URL: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/syria/inside-isis-dysfunctional-schools

Qadri, Hussain Mohi-ud-Din (2018, April): Foreign, Political and Financial Influences on Religious Extremism: A Study of Madrassas in Punjab, Pakistan. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, *10*(4), 5-11. URL: https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CTTA-April-2018.pdf

Qahfarokhi, Amir Sabzevar; Arani, Abbas Madandar; Kakia, Lida (2013): The Impact of Educational Systems on Political Violence in the Middle-East Region. In: Diane B. Napier; Suzanne Majhanovich (Eds.): *Education, Dominance and Identity.* (Comparative and International Education: A Diversity of Voices, Vol. 1). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 223-235. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-125-2_13

Qurashi, Fahid (2017, November): Just Get On with it: Implementing the Prevent Duty in Higher Education and the Role of Academic Expertise. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(3), 197-212. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197917716106 URL: https://salford-repository.worktribe.com/output/1330137/just-get-on-with-it-implementing-the-prevent-duty-in-higher-education-and-the-role-of-academic-expertise

Qureshi, Toaha; Marsden, Sarah (2010, July): Furthering the Counter-Narrative via Educational and Social Grassroots Projects. In: Eelco J. A. M. Kessels (Ed.): *Countering Violent Extremist Narratives.* The Hague: National Coordinator for Counterterrorism (NCTb), 132-143. URL: https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/2016-02/Countering-violent-extremist-narratives.pdf

Rahman, Mohammad Azizur (2016, Summer): The Forms and Ecologies of Islamist Militancy and Terrorism in Bangladesh. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 7, 68-106. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/58

Rajput, Sheraz Mustafa (2020, July): How does Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education Affect Global Terrorism? Fresh Evidence with International Panel Data. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, *12*(3), 139-150. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1108/JACPR-04-2020-0488

Ramsay, James D.; Renda-Tanali, Irmak (2018, September): Development of Competency-Based Education Standards for Homeland Security Academic Programs. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, *15*(3), Article 20180016. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/jhsem-2018-0016

Ramsay, Peter (2017, July): Is Prevent a Safe Space? *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(2), 143-158. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197917693022 URL: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/69205/1/Ramsay_Is%20Prevent%20a%20safe%20space_author_2017.pdf

Rasmussen, Maria (2017): Terrorist Learning: A Look at the Adoption of Political Kidnappings in Six Countries, 1968-1990. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7), 539-556. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1237226 URL: http://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/50944/Rasmussen_Terrorist_Learning_2016-10.pdf

Rawan, Bakht et al. (2018, April-June): Psychological Effects of Terrorism on Pakistani Society: A Study of PTSD of APS Peshawar Incident Among School-Going Children in Lahore. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology*, *10*(2), 41-56. URL: http://www.pjcriminology.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/3.pdf

Raza, Syed Sami (2015, June): After the Peshawar School Attack: Law and Politics of the Death Sentence in Pakistan. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, *7*(5), 22-27. URL: https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CTTA-June-2015.pdf

Razjouyan, Katayoon et al. (2022, May): War Experience, Daily Stressors and Mental Health Among the Inter-Taliban Generation Young Adults in Northern Afghanistan: A Cross-Sectional School-Based Study. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, *13*, Article 877934. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2022.877934

Reeves, Jane; Sheriyar, Alamgir (2015): Addressing Radicalisation into the Classroom – A New Approach to Teacher and Pupil Learning. *Journal of Education and Training*, *2*(2), 20-39. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5296/jet.v2i2.7129

Reinelt, Julia (2016, October): European Practice EXchange (EPEX) – Non-Theoretical Peer-to-Peer Learning Aiming at the Development, Improvement and Refinement of Deradicalisation Practice. *Interventionen*, 7, 38-39. URL: https://violence-prevention-network.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Interventionen_7-2016.pdf

Rezaei, Shahamak; Goli, Marco (2019): Recruitment to Radical Islam: Gangs, Jails, Universities, and Radical Muslims. In: *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Radicalisation.* Abingdon: Routledge, Chapter 27.

Richardson, Cara; Cameron, Paul A.; Berlouis, Katherine M. (2017-2018, Winter): The Role of Sport in Deradicalisation and Crime Diversion. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 13, 29-48. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/123

Rieger, Diana; Frischlich, Lena; Bente, Gary (2020, September): Dealing with the Dark Side: The Effects of Right-Wing Extremist and Islamist Extremist Propaganda from a Social Identity Perspective. *Media, War & Conflict*, *13*(3), 280-299. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635219829165

Risteska, Marija (2019): Through Redistribution, Recognition, Representation and Reconciliation in Education System Towards Building Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Republic of North Macedonia. In: Farangiz Atamuradova; Stuart Macdonald; Richard Burchill (Eds.): *Lessons from P/CVE Research: Innovative Methods, Challenges, and Good Practices.* [e-Book]. Abu Dhabi: Hedayah, 151-180. URL: https://hedayah.com/app/uploads/2021/09/File-61020196530-1.pdf

Robson, Jennifer; Hunt, Ruth (2021): Lecturing Within the Panoptic Scheme of Prevent in an English University. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *14*(4), 578-597. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2021.1996935 URL: https://repository.uel.ac.uk/item/89z12

Rodermond, Elanie; Weerman, Frank (2021): The Families of Dutch Terrorist Suspects: Risk and Protective Factors Among Parents and Siblings. *Monatsschrift für Kriminologie und Strafrechtsreform*, *104*(3), 271-282. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/mks-2021-0133

Royall, Elizabeth (2013, December): Winning Minds: The Role of Education in Securing Afghanistan. *Georgetown Security Studies Review*, *2*(1), 45-62. URL: https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/GSSR-Vol-2-No-1-Dec_27_2013.pdf

Rufaedah, Any; Erikha, Fajar; Tsaura Sjariati, Nida (2020): Re-Education for Terror Convicts: An Overview of Indonesia's Experience. In: Rohan Gunaratna; Sabariah Hussin (Eds.) (2020): *Terrorist Deradicalisation in Global Contexts: Success, Failure and Continuity.* (Routledge Studies in the Politics of Disorder and Instability). Abingdon: Routledge, 130-142.

Russell, Ian (2022): Degrees of Peace: Universities and Embodied Experiences of Conflict in Post-War Sri Lanka. *Third World Quarterly*, *43*(4), 898-915. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2022.2038129

Ruttig, Thomas (2021, March): Have the Taliban Changed? *CTC Sentinel*, *14*(3), 1-15. URL: https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CTC-SENTINEL-032021.pdf

Saeed, Luqman; Syed, Shabib Haider (2018): Insights into Selected Features of Pakistan's Most Wanted Terrorists. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *30*(1), 47-73. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2016.1142442

Sahar, Arif; Kaunert, Christian (2022, May): Desecuritisation, Deradicalisation, and National Identity in Afghanistan: Higher Education and Desecuritisation Processes. *European Journal of International Security*, *7*(2), 189-206. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2021.31 URL: https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/538A5F0AEB68FB17E3674F91D46C8C29/S2057563721000316a.pdf

Saiya, Nilay (2021, October): Who Attacks America? Islamist Attacks on the American Homeland. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *15*(5), 14-28. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-04/Article%202_12.pdf

Sajjad, Fatima Waqi (2019): Countering Radicalization Through Education: Global Policy Trends and the Case of Pakistan. In: Mubashar Hasan; Kenji Isezaki; Sameer Yasir (Eds.): *Radicalization in South Asia: Context, Trajectories and Implications.* New Delhi: SAGE Publications India, 198-225. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4135/9789353287825

Sajjad, Fatima Waqi (2023, August): A Subaltern Gaze on White Ignorance, (In)Security and the Possibility of Educating the White Rescue Plans. *Security Dialogue*, *54*(4), 337-355. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/09670106231165660

Salman, Nadine L.; Gill, Paul (2020, March-June): A Survey of Risk and Threat Assessors: Processes, Skills, and Characteristics in Terrorism Risk Assessment. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, *7*(1-2), 122-129. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000135

Samin, Nadav (2018, October): Saudi Primary Education and the Formation of Modern Wahhabism. *Die Welt des Islams*, *58*(4), 442-460. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/15700607-00584P02

Samuel, Thomas K. (2019): In Pursuit of a Degree; Being Pursued by Terrorists: Undergraduate Radicalisation in Selected Countries in Southeast Asia. In: Farangiz Atamuradova; Stuart Macdonald; Richard Burchill (Eds.): *Lessons from P/CVE Research: Innovative Methods, Challenges, and Good Practices.* [e-Book]. Abu Dhabi: Hedayah, 183-203. URL: https://hedayah.com/app/uploads/2021/09/File-61020196530-1.pdf

Samuel, Thomas K. (2021): At the Crossroads: Rethinking the Role of Education in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. In: Alex P. Schmid (Ed.): *Handbook of Terrorism Prevention and Preparedness.* [e-Book]. The Hague: ICCT Press, 165-206. URL: https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-01/Handbook_Schmid_2020.pdf

Sandford, Liam (2019, Summer): Exploring the Capabilities of Prevent in Addressing Radicalisation in Cyberspace Within Higher Education. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 19, 259-285. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/225

Sas, Marlies et al. (2020, March): The Role of Education in the Prevention of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Developing Countries. *Sustainability*, *12*(6), Article 2320. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/su12062320

Satterley, Shane; Rane, Halim; Rahimullah, Riyad H. (2023): Fields of Educational Interest and an Islamist Orientation in Australia. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *35*(3), 694-711. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2021.1970542

Savage, Sara et al. (2021, September): Addressing Social Polarization Through Critical Thinking: Theoretical Application in the "Living Well With Difference" Course in Secondary Schools in England. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, *9*(2), 490-505. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.7037

Savoia, Elena et al. (2019-2020, Winter): Evaluation of a School Campaign to Reduce Hatred. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 21, 43-83. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/277

Schlaffer, Edith; Kropiunigg, Laura; Kropiunigg, Rafael (2019): Mothers Preventing Violent Extremism: The Example of Mother Schools in Macedonia from Philosophy to Practice. In: Sara Zeiger et al. (Eds.): *Enhancing Women's Roles in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE).* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – E: Human and Societal Dynamics, Vol. 144). Amsterdam: IOS Press, 105-117. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3233/978-1-61499-947-8-105

Schlegelmilch, Jeff et al. (2017, Spring): Acts of Terrorism and Mass Violence Targeting Schools: Analysis and Implications for Preparedness in the USA. *Journal of Business Continuity & Emergency Planning*, *10*(3), 280-289. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7916/D8737304

Schmid, Alex P. et al. (2023, December): A Look at the State of Research on [Counter-]Terrorism and Violent Extremism. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *17*(4), 180-198. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-12/RN%201.pdf

Schmitt, Josephine B. et al. (2018): Critical Media Literacy and Islamist Online Propaganda: The Feasibility, Applicability and Impact of Three Learning Arrangements. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, *12*, Article a642. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4119/UNIBI/ijcv.642

Schuurman, Bart (2019): Topics in Terrorism Research: Reviewing Trends and Gaps, 2007–2016. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *12*(3), 463-480. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1579777

Schuurman, Bart (2020): Research on Terrorism, 2007–2016: A Review of Data, Methods, and Authorship. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *32*(5), 1011-1026. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1439023

Schuurman, Bart; Carthy, Sarah L. (2023): The Makings of a Terrorist: Continuity and Change Across Left-, Right- and Jihadist Extremists and Terrorists in Europe and North-America, 1960s-Present. *Deviant Behavior*, *44*(6), 953-974. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2022.2118088

Schuurman, Bart; Carthy, Sarah L. (2023, June): Who Commits Terrorism Alone? Comparing the Biographical Backgrounds and Radicalization Dynamics of Lone-Actor and Group-Based Terrorists. *Crime & Delinquency.* Advance Online Publication. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/00111287231180126

Scott-Baumann, Alison (2017, July): Ideology, Utopia and Islam on Campus: How to Free Speech a Little from its own Terrors. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(2), 159-176. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197917694183

Seib, Philip (2019, April): US Public Diplomacy and the Terrorism Challenge. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, *14*(1-2), 154-168. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/1871191X-14011012

Shakeel, Hira; Mahsud, Irfan; Hussain, Sajjad (2020, October-December): The Challenge to Madrassa Reforms in Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology*, *12*(3), 122-134. URL: http://www.pjcriminology.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/8-The-Challenge-to-Madrassa-Reforms-in-Pakistan.pdf

Shanaah, Sadi; Heath-Kelly, Charlotte (2023): What Drives Counter-Extremism? The Extent of P/CVE Policies in the West and their Structural Correlates. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *35*(8), 1724-1752. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2022.2080063

Sieckelinck, Stijn; Kaulingfreks, Femke; De Winter, Micha (2015, September): Neither Villains Nor Victims: Towards an Educational Perspective on Radicalisation. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, *63*(3), 329-343. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2015.1076566 URL: https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/sieckelinck_kaulingfreks_winter_neither_villains_nor_victims.pdf

Singh, Rashmi (2017): A Preliminary Typology Mapping Pathways of Learning and Innovation by Modern Jihadist Groups. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *40*(7), 624-644. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1237228

Siqueira, Kevin; Arce, Daniel (2020, June): Terrorist Training: Onsite or Via the Internet? *European Journal of Political Economy*, *63*, Article 101878. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2020.101878

Sirry, Mun'im (2020): Muslim Student Radicalism and Self-Deradicalization in Indonesia. *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, *31*(2), 241-260. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2020.1770665

Sjøen, Martin M. (2019, Fall): When Counterterrorism Enters the Curriculum: How the Global War on Terror Risks Impairing Good Education. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 20, 156-189. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/253

Sjøen, Martin M. (2023): Taking the "Terror" out of "Terrorism": The Promise and Potential of Fear-Reducing Education. *Journal of Social Science Education*, *22*(1). DOI: https://doi.org/10.11576/jsse-5360

Sjøen, Martin M.; Jore, Sissel H. (2019): Preventing Extremism Through Education: Exploring Impacts and Implications of Counter-Radicalisation Efforts. *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, *40*(3), 269-283. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2019.1600134

Sjøen, Martin M.; Mattsson, Christer (2020): Preventing Radicalisation in Norwegian Schools: How Teachers Respond to Counter-Radicalisation Efforts. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *13*(2), 218-236. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1693326

Skare, Erik (2022, Spring): Affluent and Well-Educated? Analyzing the Socioeconomic Backgrounds of Fallen Palestinian Islamist Militants. *The Middle East Journal*, *76*(1), 72-92. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3751/76.1.14

Slayton, Caleb (2014, August): Education on Islam for Special Forces Needs an Overhaul: Africa as a Case Study. *CTX*, *4*(3), 21-33. URL: https://nps.edu/documents/110773463/120130378/CTX+Vol+4+No+3.pdf

Slayton, Caleb (2016, February): Language Skills for the Special Forces Operator: Access and Information in the African Permissive Environment. *CTX*, *6*(1), 26-32. URL: https://nps.edu/documents/110773463/120117464/CTX+Vol+6+No+1.pdf

Smith, Carter F.; Harms, Joshua (2018, March): The Threat of Street Gangs, Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs, and Domestic Terrorist/Extremist Groups with Military-Trained Members. *Small Wars Journal*, 3/2018. URL: https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/threat-street-gangs-outlaw-motorcycle-gangs-and-domestic-terroristextremist-groups

Soules, Michael J. (2022): Martyr or Mystery? Female Suicide Bombers and Information Availability. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *45*(1), 62-91. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1697024

Sowell, Kirk H. (2017, December): Downplaying Jihad in Jordan's Educational Curriculum, 2013-2017. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *11*(6), 154-166. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/1320176-downplaying-jihad-in-jordan%E2%80%99s-educational-curriculum-2013-2017-by-kirk-sowell.pdf

Speckhard, Anne; Yayla, Ahmet S. (2015, December): Eyewitness Accounts from Recent Defectors from Islamic State: Why They Joined, What They Saw, Why They Quit. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *9*(6), 95-118. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-06/Research%20 Note%203_0.pdf

Spiller, Keith; Awan, Imran; Whiting, Andrew (2018): "What does Terrorism Look Like?": University Lecturers' Interpretations of their Prevent Duties and Tackling Extremism in UK Universities. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *11*(1), 130-150. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17 539153.2017.1396954

Spleeters, Damien (2019, October): Operation Marksburg: Frontline Field Investigation and the Prosecution of Terrorism. *CTC Sentinel*, *12*(9), 21-27. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/ wp-content/uploads/2019/10/CTC-SENTINEL-092019.pdf

Spracher, William C. (2017): National Intelligence University: A Half Century Educating the Next Generation of U.S. Intelligence Community Leaders. *Intelligence and National Security*, *32*(2), 231-243. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2016.1248316

Steadman, Amy; Grace, Jamie; Roberts, Rhiannon (2020): The "Choice to Challenge" Extreme Views in the Classroom? Counter-Radicalisation and the Prevent Agenda in the University Context. In: Babak Akhgar; Douglas Wells; José María Blanco (Eds.): *Investigating Radicalization Trends: Case Studies in Europe and Asia.* (Security Informatics and Law Enforcement). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 237-260. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-25436-0_11

Stenersen, Anne (2008): The Internet: A Virtual Training Camp? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *20*(2), 215-233. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546550801920790

Stenersen, Anne (2013, February): "Bomb-Making for Beginners": Inside an Al-Qaeda E-Learning Course. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *7*(1), 25-37. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/ default/files/2023-06/%E2%80%98bomb-making-for-beginners%E2%80%99-inside-al-al-qaeda-e-learning--anne-stenersen.pdf

Stenersen, Anne (2019): Improved Terrorist Practical Learning Potentials from Internet-Based Platforms. In: Anthony Richards (Ed.) et al.: *Jihadist Terror: New Threats, New Responses.* London: I.B. Tauris, 179-188.

Stevens, David (2023, June): Recasting "Fundamental 'British' Values": Education, Justice, and Preventing Violent Extremism. *Educational Theory*, *73*(3), 355-375. DOI: https://doi. org/10.1111/edth.12584

Stohlman, Shelby; Konold, Timothy; Cornell, Dewey (2020): Evaluation of Threat Assessment Training for School Personnel. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, *7*(1-2), 29-40. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000142

Streitwieser, Bernhard; Allen, Kristen; Duffy-Jaeger, Kathryn (2019, Spring): Higher Education in an Era of Violent Extremism: Exploring Tensions Between National Security and Academic Freedom. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 18, 74-107. URL: http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/ jd/article/view/187

Sude, Barbara H. (2021): Prevention of Radicalization to Terrorism in Refugee Camps and Asylum Centers. In: Alex P. Schmid (Ed.): *Handbook of Terrorism Prevention and Preparedness.* [e-Book]. The Hague: ICCT Press, 238-269. URL: https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/ files/2023-01/Handbook_Schmid_2020.pdf

Sukarieh, Mayssoun; Tannock, Stuart (2016, April-June): The Deradicalisation of Education: Terror, Youth and the Assault on Learning. *Race & Class*, *57*(4), 22-38. DOI: https://doi. org/10.1177/0306396815621236

Suyanto, Bagong; Sirry, Mun'im; Sugihartati, Rahma (2022): Pseudo-Radicalism and the De-Radicalization of Educated Youth in Indonesia. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *45*(2), 153-172. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1654726

Syed, Shabib Haider; Saeed, Luqman; Martin, Roger P. (2015): Causes and Incentives for Terrorism in Pakistan. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, *10*(2), 181-206. DOI: https://doi. org/10.1080/19361610.2015.1004606

Szukala, Andrea (2023): Civic Education and Defensive Republicanism in France After the Assassination of Samuel Paty. *Journal of Social Science Education*, *22*(1). DOI: https://doi.org/10.11576/jsse-6237

Taquechel, Eric F.; Lewis, Ted G. (2017, October): A Right-Brained Approach to Critical Infrastructure Protection Theory in Support of Strategy and Education: Deterrence, Networks, Resilience, and "Antifragility". *Homeland Security Affairs*, *13*, Article 8. URL: https://www.hsaj.org/articles/14087

Templin, James D. (2015, June): Religious Education of Pakistan's Deobandi Madaris and Radicalisation. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, *7*(5), 15-21. URL: https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CTTA-June-2015.pdf

Tesfaye, Beza (2017, January): Critical Choices: Assessing the Effects of Education and Civic Engagement on Somali Youths' Propensity Towards Violence. In: Lilah El Sayed; Jamal Barnes (Eds.): *Contemporary P/CVE Research and Practice.* [e-Book]. Abu Dhabi / Perth: Hedayah / Edith Cowan University, 134-153. URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/contemporary-p-cve-research-and-practice

Theriault, Jordan; Krause, Peter; Young, Liane (2017): Know Thy Enemy: Education About Terrorism Improves Social Attitudes Toward Terrorists. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *146*(3), 305-317. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0000261

Thornton, Rod (2011, December): Counterterrorism and the Neo-Liberal University: Providing a Check and Balance? *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *4*(3), 421-429. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2011.623419

Tiflati, Hicham (2016, Spring): Western Islamic Schools as Institutions for Preventing Behavioral Radicalization: The Case of Quebec. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 6, 180-205. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/47

Tize, Carola et al. (2021, October): Charlie Hebdo as a Critical Event in a Secondary School: Muslim Students' Complex Positioning in Relation to the Attack. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, *58*(5), 632-644. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461520903814

Tominaga, Yasutaka (2018, June): There's No Place Like Home! Examining the Diffusion of Suicide Attacks Through Terrorist Group Locations. *Applied Spatial Analysis and Policy*, *11*(2), 355-379. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s12061-016-9219-x

Torok, Robyn (2010): "Make a Bomb in your Mums Kitchen": Cyber Recruiting and Socialisation of "White Moors" and Home Grown Jihadists. In: Security Research Centre, Edith Cowan University (Ed.): *Proceedings of the 1st Australian Counter Terrorism Conference, Edith Cowan University, Duxton Hotel, Perth, Western Australia, November 30 – December 2, 2010*, 54-61. URL: https://ro.ecu.edu.au/act/6/

Tuntivivat, Sudarat (2016): The Inter-Relationship Between Violence and Education Amidst Armed Conflict in Southern Thailand. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, *8*(4), 269-278. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1108/JACPR-04-2016-0222

Turner, James et al. (2020, September): First Responders' and Librarians' Intention to Use Web-Based Resources for Response Information During Biological, Chemical, and Radiological Terrorism Events. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, *17*(3), Article 20190030. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/jhsem-2019-0030

Underwood, Maureen; Kalafat, John; Spinazolla, Nicci (2007): Children and Terrorism: A Family Psychoeducational Approach. In Bruce Bongar (Ed.): *Psychology of Terrorism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 311-337.

Unfried, Kerstin; Kis-Katos, Krisztina (2023, November): The Heterogeneous Effects of Conflict on Education: A Spatial Analysis in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Peace Research*, *60*(6), 968-984. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433221099557

Vale, Gina (2020, January): Piety Is in the Eye of the Bureaucrat: The Islamic State's Strategy of Civilian Control. *CTC Sentinel*, *13*(1), 34-40. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CTC-SENTINEL-012020.pdf

Vallinkoski, Katja; Benjamin, Saija (2023): From Playground Extremism to Neo-Nazi Ideology – Finnish Educators' Perceptions of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism in Educational Institutions. *Journal of Social Science Education*, *22*(1). DOI: https://doi.org/10.11576/jsse-5288

Vallinkoski, Katja; Benjamin, Saija; Elliott, Kathlyn (2022-2023, Winter): "By Correcting Disinformation and Encouraging Them Towards Tolerance" – Finnish Educators' Considerations of PVE-E. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 33, 181-220. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/675

Van Brunt, Brian; Murphy, Amy; Zedginidze, Ann (2017, September): An Exploration of the Risk, Protective, and Mobilization Factors Related to Violent Extremism in College Populations. *Violence and Gender*, *4*(3), 81-101. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1089/vio.2017.0039

van Leeuwen, Lennart; Weggemans, Daan (2018, August): Characteristics of Jihadist Terrorist Leaders: A Quantitative Approach. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *12*(4), 55-67. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-06/research%20note%201_2.pdf

Van Nieuwenhuyse, Karel (2019): Going Beyond Eurocentric Us-Them Thinking in History Education: Multiperspectivity as a Tool Against Radicalisation and for a Better Intercultural Understanding. In: Noel Clycq et al. (Eds.): *Radicalisation: A Marginal Phenomenon or a Mirror to Society?* (CeMIS Migration and Intercultural Studies, Vol. 4). Leuven: Leuven University Press, 215-242.

Veenkamp, Ivo; Zeiger, Sara (2015): Countering Violent Extremism: Program and Policy Approaches Relating to Youth Through Education, Families and Communities. In: Marco Lombardi et al. (Eds.): *Countering Radicalisation and Violent Extremism Among Youth to Prevent Terrorism.* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – E: Human and Societal Dynamics, Vol. 118). Amsterdam: IOS Press, 151-163. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3233/978-1-61499-470-1-151

Vejvodová, Petra; Mareš, Miroslav (2015): The Risk of Terrorist and Violent Extremist Attacks Against Schools. In: Denis Caleta; Vesela Radović (Eds.): *Comprehensive Approach as "Sine Qua Non" for Critical Infrastructure Protection.* (NATO Science for Peace and Security Series – D: Information and Communication Security, Vol. 39). Amsterdam: IOS Press, 59-66. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3233/978-1-61499-478-7-59

Verwimp, Philip (2016, December): Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq and the Socio-Economic Environment they Faced at Home: A Comparison of European Countries. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *10*(6), 68-81. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/607-foreign-fighters-in-syria-and-iraq-and-the-socio-economic-environment-they-faced-at-home-a-comparison-of-european-countries-by-philip-verwimp.pdf

Vicziany, Marika (2009): Understanding the 1993 Mumbai Bombings: Madrassas and the Hierarchy of Terror. In: P. R. Kumaraswamy; Ian Copland (Eds.): *South Asia: The Spectre of Terrorism.* New Delhi: Routledge, 47-78.

Waghid, Yusef (2014): Islam, Democracy and Education for Non-Violence. *Ethics and Education*, *9*(1), 69-78. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17449642.2014.890327

Wagner, Bernd (2021, May): Die Botschaft: Ehemalige Rechtsextreme in der schulischen Bildung – Eine Erfahrungsskizze. *JEX*. URL: https://journal-exit.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Journal_Mai_21_BW.pdf

Wagstaff, William A.; Jung, Danielle F. (2020): Competing for Constituents: Trends in Terrorist Service Provision. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *32*(2), 293-324. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2017.1368494

Wainscott, Ann Marie (2015): Defending Islamic Education: War on Terror Discourse and Religious Education in Twenty-First-Century Morocco. *The Journal of North African Studies*, *20*(4), 635-653. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2015.1041108

Walsh, Maria; Gansewig, Antje (2019-2020, Winter): A Former Right-Wing Extremist in School-Based Prevention Work: Research Findings from Germany. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 21, 1-42. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/275

Walsh, Maria; Gansewig, Antje (2021, Summer): Long-Term Experience Means Professionalization – Or Does It? An In-Depth Look on the Involvement of Former Extremists in German Prevention and Education. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 27, 108-145. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/463

Waltman, Michael S. (2014, July): Teaching Hate: The Role of Internet Visual Imagery in the Radicalization of White Ethno-Terrorists in the United States. In: Carol K. Winkler; Cori E. Dauber (Eds.): *Visual Propaganda and Extremism in the Online Environment.* [e-Book]. Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute (SSI); U.S. Army War College Press, 83-103. URL: https://press.armywarcollege.edu/monographs/946

Webb, Emma (2018, October): Islamist Use of the UK's Education and Charitable Sectors. In: Henry Jackson Society (HJS) (Ed.): *Radical Islam Anthology.* London: Henry Jackson Society (HJS), 69-74. URL: https://henryjacksonsociety.org/publications/radical-islam-anthology

Weimann, Gabriel (2009, November): Online Training Camps for Terrorists. *InSITE*, *2*(9), 14-18. URL: https://sitemultimedia.org/docs/inSITE_Nov_2009.pdf

Welch, Tyler (2018): Theology, Heroism, Justice, and Fear: An Analysis of ISIS Propaganda Magazines Dabiq and Rumiyah. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways toward terrorism and genocide*, *11*(3), 186-198. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2018.1517943

West, Levi; Campion, Kristy (2021): Teaching Terrorism and Practitioners: Context, Capabilities, and Connectivity in Counter-Terrorism Knowledge and Networks. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, *16*(1), 75-91. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2021.1889018

West, Sunguta (2016, January): Al-Shabaab Recruitment from Kenyan Universities Alarms Officials. *Terrorism Monitor*, *14*(1), 6-8. URL: https://jamestown.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TerrorismMonitorVol14Issue1_03.pdf

Wigmore, David (2020, Winter): Teaching Mass Atrocity Precursor Recognition and Early Warning Skills to U.S. Officials. *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, *44*(1), 49-66.

Wilner, Alex S.; Dubouloz, Claire-Jehanne (2010, February): Homegrown Terrorism and Transformative Learning: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Understanding Radicalization. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, *22*(1), 33-51. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/14781150903487956

Wilner, Alex S.; Dubouloz, Claire-Jehanne (2011): Transformative Radicalization: Applying Learning Theory to Islamist Radicalization. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *34*(5), 418-438. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2011.561472

Wilner, Alex S.; Dubouloz, Claire-Jehanne (2020): Radicalization as Transformative Learning: A Theoretical and Illustrative Exploration. In: Derek M. D. Silva; Mathieu Deflem (Eds.): *Radicalization and Counter-Radicalization.* (Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance, Vol. 25). Bingley: Emerald, 37-54.

Windisch, Steven; Logan, Michael K.; Ligon, Gina Scott (2018, April): Headhunting Among Extremist Organizations: An Empirical Assessment of Talent Spotting. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *12*(2), 44-62. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/04-headhunting-among-extremist-organizations-an-empirical-assessment-of-talent-spotting-by-gina-ligon-michael-logan-and-steven-windisch.pdf

Winkler, Carol; Pieslak, Jonathan (2018): Multimodal Visual/Sound Redundancy in ISIS Videos: A Close Analysis of Martyrdom and Training Segments. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, *13*(3), 345-360. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2018.1503701

Wolf, Anne (2014, June): The Radicalization of Tunisia's Mosques. *CTC Sentinel*, *7*(6), 17-20. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/CTCSentinel-Vol7Iss6.pdf

Wolton, Suke (2017, July): The Contradiction in the Prevent Duty: Democracy vs "British Values". *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, *12*(2), 123-142. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197917693021

Woodward, Mark et al. (2010, October): Muslim Education, Celebrating Islam and Having Fun as Counter-Radicalization Strategies in Indonesia. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *4*(4), 28-50. URL: https://pt.icct.nl/sites/default/files/import/pdf/muslim-education-celebrating-islam-and-having-fun-as-counter-radicalization-strategies-in-indonesia-mark-woodward-inayah-rohmaniyah-ali-amin-diana-col.pdf

Xu, Jie; Zhuang, Jun (2016): Modeling Costly Learning and Counter-Learning in a Defender-Attacker Game with Private Defender Information. *Annals of Operations Research*, *236*(1), 271-289. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10479-014-1722-3

Yusuf, Huma (2016, February): University Radicalization: Pakistan's Next Counterterrorism Challenge. *CTC Sentinel*, *9*(2), 4-8. URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/CTC-SENTINEL-Vol9Iss29.pdf

Zahid, Farhan (2015, January): The Pakistani Taliban After the Peshawar School Attack. *Terrorism Monitor*, *13*(1), 3-5. URL: https://jamestown.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/TerrorismMonitorVol13Issue1_01.pdf

Zahid, Farhan (2017, November): Radicalisation of Campuses in Pakistan. *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, *9*(11), 12-15. URL: https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/CTTA-November-2017.pdf

Zarychta-Romanowska, Kamila; Szostak, Maciej; Boćko, Piotr (2024): Creating Captain Europe: The Contribution of Academia in the Creation and Training of New European Border and Coast Guards. In: Scott N. Romaniuk; Christian Kaunert; Amparo Pamela H. Fabe (Eds.): *Countering Terrorist and Criminal Financing: Theory and Practice.* Boca Raton: CRC Press, 311-328.

Zeiger, Sara (2019): Creating "Safe" Spaces for Dialogue and Discussion: The Impact of a Preventing Violent Extremism Through Education (PVE-E) Intervention in Uganda. In: Farangiz Atamuradova; Stuart Macdonald; Richard Burchill (Eds.): *Lessons from P/CVE Research: Innovative Methods, Challenges, and Good Practices.* [e-Book]. Abu Dhabi: Hedayah, 207-226. URL: https://hedayah.com/app/uploads/2021/09/File-61020196530-1.pdf

Zekulin, Michael (2021): From Inspire to Rumiyah: Does Instructional Content in Online Jihadist Magazines Lead to Attacks? *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, *13*(2), 115-141. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2019.1707848

Zenn, Jacob (2016, May): Boko Haram: Two Years on Shekau and Buhari Still Face Pressure Over the Chibok Schoolgirls. *Terrorism Monitor*, *14*(10), 8-11. URL: https://jamestown.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Terrorism_Monitor_Volume_XIV_Issue_03.pdf

Zenn, Jacob (2020): Boko Haram's Conquest for the Caliphate: How Al Qaeda Helped Islamic State Acquire Territory. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *43*(2), 89-122. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1442141

Zenn, Jacob (2023, December): Brief: University Catholic Service Bombing Raises Fears of Abu Sayyaf Resurgence in the Philippines. *Terrorism Monitor*, *21*(24). URL: https://jamestown.org/program/brief-university-catholic-service-bombing-raises-fears-of-abu-sayyaf-resurgence-in-the-philippines

Zenz, Adrian (2018, May): New Evidence for China's Political Re-Education Campaign in Xinjiang. *China Brief*, *18*(10). URL: https://jamestown.org/program/evidence-for-chinas-political-re-education-campaign-in-xinjiang

Zenz, Adrian (2019): "Thoroughly Reforming Them Towards a Healthy Heart Attitude": China's Political Re-Education Campaign in Xinjiang. *Central Asian Survey*, *38*(1), 102-128. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/02634937.2018.1507997

Ziolkowski, Britt (2018, June): Erziehung auf Salafistisch. *Die Kriminalpolizei*, 2018 / Juni. URL: https://www.kriminalpolizei.de/ausgaben/2018/juni/detailansicht-juni/artikel/erziehung-auf-salafistisch.html

Zuschke, Amelie (2015, Summer): Extremismus im Klassenzimmer – Theoretische Chancen und Möglichkeiten des Politikunterrichtes. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 3, 135-148. URL: https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/19

Grey Literature

Abdel Jelil, Mohamed et al. (2018, March): *Unemployment and Violent Extremism: Evidence from Daesh Foreign Recruits.* (World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 8381). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10986/29561

Afzal, Madiha (2015, April): *Education and Attitudes in Pakistan: Understanding Perceptions of Terrorism.* (USIP Special Report 367). URL: https://www.usip.org/publications/2015/04/education-and-attitudes-pakistan

Afzal, Madiha (2015, October 19): What's the Relationship Between Education, Income, and Favoring the Pakistani Taliban? *Future Development.* URL: https://www.brookings.edu/articles/whats-the-relationship-between-education-income-and-favoring-the-pakistani-taliban

Afzal, Madiha (2020, April): *From "Western Education is Forbidden" to the World's Deadliest Terrorist Group: Education and Boko Haram in Nigeria.* (Brookings Report). URL: https://www.brookings.edu/articles/from-western-education-is-forbidden-to-the-worlds-deadliest-terrorist-group

Afzal, Madiha (2021, January): *A Global Effort to Counter Extremism Through Education.* (Brief; Brookings Blueprints for American Renewal & Prosperity project). URL: https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-global-effort-to-counter-extremism-through-education

Ahmed, Kawser; Fergusson, James; Salt, Alexander (2014, November): *Perceptions of Muslim Faith, Ethno-Cultural Community-Based and Student Organizations in Countering Domestic Terrorism in Canada.* (TSAS Working Paper Series, No. 14-12). URL: https://www.tsas.ca/publications/perceptions-of-muslim-faith

Ahmed, Mubaraz; Comerford, Milo; El-Badawy, Emman (2016, April): *Milestones to Militancy: What the Lives of 100 Jihadis Tell us About a Global Movement.* (Tony Blair Institute for Global Change Report). URL: https://www.institute.global/insights/geopolitics-and-security/milestones-militancy-what-lives-100-jihadis-tell-us-about-global-movement

Ahmed, Zahid Shahab (2017, March): *Peace Education in Pakistan.* (USIP Special Report 400). URL: https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/03/peace-education-pakistan

Alfano, Marco; Goerlach, Joseph-Simon (2023, October): *Instrumenting the Effect of Terrorism on Education in Kenya.* (IZA Discussion Paper No. 16544). URL: https://ssrn.com/abstract=4612230

Almohammad, Asaad (2018, February): *ISIS Child Soldiers in Syria: The Structural and Predatory Recruitment, Enlistment, Pre-Training Indoctrination, Training, and Deployment.* (ICCT Research Paper). DOI: https://doi.org/10.19165/2018.1.02

Amnesty International (2020, May): *"Nowhere Is Safe for Us": Unlawful Attacks and Mass Displacement in North-West Syria.* (Report MDE 24/2089/2020). URL: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/2089/2020/en

Amnesty International (2020, July): *Legacy of Terror: The Plight of Yezidi Child Survivors of ISIS.* (Report MDE 14/2759/2020). URL: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde14/2759/2020/en

Amnesty International (2022, July): *Death in Slow Motion: Women and Girls Under Taliban Rule.* (Report ASA 11/5685/2022). URL: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa11/5685/2022/en

Anderson, Kara (2016, January): *"Cubs of the Caliphate": The Systematic Recruitment, Training, and Use of Children in the Islamic State.* (ICT Articles). URL: https://www.ict.org.il/UserFiles/ICT-Cubs-of-the-Caliphate-Anderson.pdf

Arifi, Besa (2022, September): *Education in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism: Considerations for the Western Balkans.* (RESOLVE Network Policy Note; Western Balkans Series). DOI: https://doi.org/10.37805/pn2022.1.wb

Bald, John et al. (2010, November): *Faith Schools We Can Believe In: Ensuring that Tolerant and Democratic Values Are Upheld in Every Part of Britain's Education System.* (Policy Exchange Report). URL: https://policyexchange.org.uk/publication/faith-schools-we-can-believe-in-ensuring-that-tolerant-and-democratic-values-are-upheld-in-every-part-of-britains-education-system

Barak, Michael (2016, March): *The Al-Azhar Institute – A Key Player in Shaping the Religious and Political Discourse in Egypt.* (ICT Jihadi Monitoring Group Insights). URL: https://ict.org.il/the-al-azhar-institute-a-key-player-in-shaping-the-religious-and-political-discourse-in-egypt

Barclay, Jack (2011, December): *Strategy to Reach, Empower, and Educate Teenagers (STREET): A Case Study in Government-Community Partnership and Direct Intervention to Counter Violent Extremism.* (Global Center on Cooperative Security Policy Brief). URL: https://www.globalcenter.org/resource/strategy-to-reach-empower-and-educate-teenagers-street-a-case-study-in-government-community-partnership-and-direct-intervention-to-counter-violent-extremism

Barnett, James; Maher, Shiraz; Winter, Charlie (2021): *Literature Review: Innovation, Creativity and the Interplay Between Far-Right and Islamist Extremism.* (ICSR / NCITE Report). URL: https://icsr.info/2021/03/23/literature-review-innovation-creativity-and-the-interplay-between-far%e2%80%91right-and-islamist-extremism

Bast, Sarah; DeSimone, Victoria (2019, September): *Youth Violence Prevention in the United States: Examining International Terrorists, Domestic Terrorists, School Shooters, and Gang Members.* (CSIS International Security Program Report). URL: https://www.csis.org/analysis/youth-violence-prevention-united-states

Bazoobandi, Sara (2024, April): *Purification of the Higher Education System and Jihad of Knowledge in Iran.* (GIGA Focus Middle East, No. 3). URL: https://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/publications/giga-focus/purification-of-the-higher-education-system-and-jihad-of-knowledge-in-iran

Bhatia, Kartika; Ghanem, Hafez (2017, March): *How Do Education and Unemployment Affect Support for Violent Extremism? Evidence from Eight Arab Countries.* (Brookings Global Economy & Development Program Working Paper 102). URL: https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-do-education-and-unemployment-affect-support-for-violent-extremism

Busher, Joel et al. (2017, July): *What the Prevent Duty Means for Schools and Colleges in England: An Analysis of Educationalists' Experiences.* (Aziz Foundation Report). URL: https://www.azizfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/What-the-Prevent-Duty-means-for-schools-and-colleges-in-England.pdf

Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence (CPRLV) (2016): *Radicalization Leading to Violence in Quebec Schools: Issues and Perspectives.* (Analytical Report). URL: https://info-radical.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/rapport-cprlv.pdf

Clifford, Bennett (2018, October): *Trucks, Knives, Bombs, Whatever: Exploring Pro-Islamic State Instructional Material on Telegram.* [Audio File]. (SMA Speaker Session). URL: https://nsiteam.com/tech-and-terrorism-examining-the-medium-and-the-message-and-trucks-knives-bombs-whatever-exploring-pro-islamic-state-instructional-material-on-telegram

Cohen, Eyal Tsir (2019, May): *Pushing the Jihadist Genie Back into the Bottle: How to Counter the Ongoing Terrorist Threat.* (Brookings Policy Brief). URL: https://www.brookings.edu/research/pushing-the-jihadist-genie-back-into-the-bottle-how-to-counter-the-ongoing-terrorist-threat

Copeland, Simon (2023, November): *Narratives, Techniques, and Pathways: How the Islamic State Khorasan Province Recruits Afghan Students Online.* (CREST Short Report). URL: https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/how-the-islamic-state-khorasan-province-recruits-afghan-students-online

Davies, Lynn (2018, January): *Review of Educational Initiatives in Counter-Extremism Internationally: What Works?* (The Segerstedt Institute Report 5). URL: http://hdl.handle.net/2077/66726

Daymon, Chelsea; de Roy van Zuijdewijn, Jeanine; Malet, David (2020, April): *Career Foreign Fighters: Expertise Transmission Across Insurgencies.* (RESOLVE Network Research Report). DOI: https://doi.org/10.37805/ogrr2020.1.cff

de Vries, Dennis; Broeders, Boy (2021, September): *Education and Youth Work: Towards an Effective Collaboration.* (RAN Conclusion Paper). URL: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/publications/ran-ye-education-and-youth-work-towards-effective-collaboration-online-meeting-08-09-april-2021_en

Dolnik, Adam (2007): *Negotiating the Impossible? The Beslan Hostage Crisis.* (RUSI Whitehall Report 2-07). URL: https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/whitehall-reports/negotiating-the-impossible-the-beslan-hostage-crisis

El Benni, Ammar; Troncota, Cristian (2018, April): *The Need for a Closer Collaboration Between Education Institutions and Law Enforcement Agencies to Prevent Radicalisation.* (RIEAS Article). URL: https://rieas.gr/researchareas/terrorism-studies/3311-the-need-for-a-closer-collaboration-between-education-institutions-and-law-enforcement-agencies-to-prevent-radicalisation

European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS) (2019, April): *How Pakistani Madrassas Contribute to Radicalization Dynamics and Religious Terrorism in Indian Administered Jammu & Kashmir.* (Study Paper). URL: https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/how-pakistani-madrassas-contribute-to-radicalization-dynamics-and-terrorism-in-indian-j-and-k

European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS) (2022, September): *The Securitization of Education in Afghanistan: Trajectories of Public and Private Education in Afghanistan and its Gendered Impacts.* (EFSAS Article No. 8). URL: https://www.efsas.org/publications/articles-by-efsas/the-securitization-of-education-in-afghanistan

FATA Research Centre (FRC) (2015, September): *Madrassa Education and its Relevance in the Current Discourse of Extremism in FATA.* (Guest Lecture Report). URL: https://frc.org.pk/publications/madrassa-education-and-its-relevance-in-the-current-discourse-of-extremism-in-fata

Ford, Katie (2016, March): *Policies and Responsibilities for Governing Violent Extremism at Ontario Universities.* (TSAS Working Paper Series, No. 16-01). URL: https://www.tsas.ca/publications/policies-and-responsibilities-for-governing-violent-extremism-at-ontario-universities

Francis, Matthew (2015, June): *What Can Schools Do About Radicalisation?* (Radicalisation Research Guide). URL: https://radicalisationresearch.org/research/what-can-schools-do-about-radicalisation

Fraser, Alan; Sinisalo, Laura-Maria (2022): *Manifesto for Education.* (2nd ed.). (RAN Publication). URL: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-04/ran_manifesto_for_education_2nd_edition_2021_en.pdf

Ghosh, Ratna et al. (2020): *Preparing Professionals to Dialogue About Extremism and Radicalization: A Look at the ERC Programs at McGill University and University of Quebec in Montreal.* (TSAS Research Report RB 2020-01). URL: https://www.tsas.ca/publications/preparing-professionals-to-dialogue-about-extremism-and-radicalization-a-look-at-the-erc-programs-at-mcgill-university-and-university-of-quebec-in-montreal

Giustozzi, Antonio (2023, May): *An Unfamiliar Challenge: How the Taliban are Meeting the Islamic State Threat on Afghanistan's University Campuses.* (RUSI Emerging Insights). URL: https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/emerging-insights/how-taliban-are-meeting-threat-afghanistans-campuses

Giustozzi, Antonio; Franco, Claudio (2011, December): *The Battle for the Schools: The Taleban and State Education.* (AAN Thematic Report 08/2011). URL: https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/special-reports/the-battle-for-schools-the-taleban-and-state-education

Giustozzi, Antonio; Franco, Claudio (2013, June): *The Ongoing Battle for the Schools: Uprisings, Negotiations and Taleban Tactics.* (AAN Briefing Paper 02/2013). URL: https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/special-reports/the-ongoing-battle-for-education-uprisings-negotiations-and-taleban-tactics-2

Gonzalez, Gabriella C. et al. (2015, March): *Higher Education Benefits for Post-9/11 Military Service Members and Veterans.* (RAND Testimonies, CT-428). URL: https://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT428.html

Havlicek, Jan (2019): *Inside the Islamic State's Radicalization and Recruitment Machinery of Sudanese Medical Students.* (CTEC Paper). URL: https://www.middlebury.edu/institute/academics/centers-initiatives/ctec/ctec-publications-0/inside-islamic-states-radicalization-and

Henry Jackson Society (HJS); Student Rights (2017, March): *Mitigating the Risks? An Assessment of University Speaker Policies: A Student Rights Briefing.* URL: https://henryjacksonsociety.org/publications/mitigating-the-risks-an-assessment-of-university-speaker-policies

Hiraal Institute (2018, May): *The Fighters Factory: Inside Al-Shabaab's Education System.* (Report). URL: https://hiraalinstitute.org/the-fighters-factory-inside-al-shababs-education-system

Hoinathy, Remadji; Eizenga, Daniel (2019, February): *The State of Secularism in Chadian Higher Education: Testing Perceived Ties to Violent Extremism.* (Resolve Network Research Brief No. 2; Lake Chad Basin Research Series). URL: https://www.resolvenet.org/research/state-secularism-chadian-higher-education-testing-perceived-ties-violent-extremism

Horgan, John G. et al. (2016, June): *Across the Universe? A Comparative Analysis of Violent Behavior and Radicalization Across Three Offender Types with Implications for Criminal Justice Training and Education: Final Report.* (Research Report submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice). URL: https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/249937.pdf

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2014): *"Those Terrible Weeks in their Camp": Boko Haram Violence Against Women and Girls in Northeast Nigeria.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/10/27/those-terrible-weeks-their-camp/boko-haram-violence-against-women-and-girls

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2016, April): *"They Set the Classrooms on Fire": Attacks on Education in Northeast Nigeria.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/04/11/they-set-classrooms-fire/attacks-education-northeast-nigeria

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2019, May): *Protecting Schools from Military Use: Laws, Policies, and Military Doctrine.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/05/27/protecting-schools-military-use/law-policy-and-military-doctrine

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2020, May): *"Their War Against Education": Armed Group Attacks on Teachers, Students, and Schools in Burkina Faso.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/05/26/their-war-against-education/armed-group-attacks-teachers-students-and-schools

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2020, June): *"I Want to Continue to Study": Barriers to Secondary Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/06/26/i-want-continue-study/barriers-secondary-education-syrian-refugee-children-jordan

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2020, June): *"You Have No Right to Complain": Education, Social Restrictions, and Justice in Taliban-Held Afghanistan.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/06/30/you-have-no-right-complain/education-social-restrictions-and-justice-taliban-held

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2021, December): *"They Are Destroying Our Future": Armed Separatist Attacks on Students, Teachers, and Schools in Cameroon's Anglophone.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/12/16/they-are-destroying-our-future/armed-separatist-attacks-students-teachers-and

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2023, November): *"Tanks on the Playground": Attacks on Schools and Military Use of Schools in Ukraine.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/11/09/tanks-playground/attacks-schools-and-military-use-schools-ukraine

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2023, December): *"Schools are Failing Boys Too": The Taliban's Impact on Boys' Education in Afghanistan.* (Report). URL: https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/12/06/schools-are-failing-boys-too/talibans-impact-boys-education-afghanistan

Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) (2017, November): *Post-Marawi Lessons from Detained Extremists in the Philippines.* (IPAC Report No.41). URL: https://understandingconflict.org/en/publications/post-marawi-lessons-from-philippine-detainees

Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) (2018, February): *Extremists in Bandung: Darul Islam to ISIS – And Back Again?* (IPAC Report No. 42). URL: https://understandingconflict.org/en/publications/Extremists-in-Bandung-Darul-Islam-to-ISIS-and-Back-Again

Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) (2020, February): *Learning from Extremists in West Sumatra.* (IPAC Report No. 62). URL: https://understandingconflict.org/en/publications/Learning-From-Extremists-in-West-Sumatra

Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) (2022, November): *Jemaah Islamiyah's Military Training Programs.* (IPAC Report No. 79). URL: https://understandingconflict.org/en/publications/JI-military

International Crisis Group (ICG) (2014, June): *Education Reform in Pakistan.* (Asia Report N°257). URL: https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/pakistan/education-reform-pakistan

International Crisis Group (ICG) (2018, April): *Preventing Boko Haram Abductions of Schoolchildren in Nigeria.* (Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°137). URL: https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/b137-preventing-boko-haram-abductions-schoolchildren-nigeria

International Crisis Group (ICG) (2020, July): *How to Shield Education from Al-Shabaab in Kenya's North East.* (Africa Briefing N°159). URL: https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/kenya/b159-how-shield-education-al-shabaab-kenyas-north-east

International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT)'s Jihadi Websites Monitoring Group (2009, April): *Training Jihad Activists via the Internet.* (JWMG Insights). URL: https://ict.org.il/UserFiles/JWMG_Training_Jihad_Via_the_Internet.pdf

Jackson, Ashley (2018, June): *Life Under the Taliban Shadow Government.* (ODI Report). URL: https://odi.org/en/publications/life-under-the-taliban-shadow-government

Jackson, Ashley; Amiri, Rahmatullah (2019, November): *Insurgent Bureaucracy: How the Taliban Makes Policy.* (USIP Peaceworks, No. 153). URL: https://www.usip.org/publications/2019/11/insurgent-bureaucracy-how-taliban-makes-policy

Jailobaeva, Kanykey et al. (2020, February): *Research on the Role of Educational Institutions in Building Resilience of Adolescents to Radicalisation and Violent Extremism in the Kyrgyz Republic.* (EFCA / Hedayah Report). URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/research-educational-institutions-building-resilience-kyrgyzstan

Jordan Media Institution (JMI) in collaboration with Amani Jarrar (2021, February): *Enhancing Jordanian Media's Ability to Combat Extremism and Terrorism Through Media Literacy, Quality of Content, and Media Performance.* (JMI / Hedayah Training Guide). URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/enhancing-jordanian-medias-ability-to-combat-extremism-and-terrorism-through-media-literacy-quality-of-content-and-media-performance

Kendhammer, Brandon; Ousmanou, Adama (2019, February): *Islam, Higher Education, and Extremism in Cameroon.* (RESOLVE Network Research Brief No. 1; Lake Chad Basin Research Series). URL: https://www.resolvenet.org/research/islam-higher-education-and-extremism-cameroon

Khan, Selina Adam (2015, September): *Deradicalization Programming in Pakistan.* (USIP Peace Brief 193). URL: https://www.usip.org/publications/2015/09/deradicalization-programming-pakistan

Kimaiyo, Timothy; Suleiman, Khadija; Zeuthen, Martine (2023, November): *Lessons Learned from Student-Led Initiatives to Prevent Violent Extremism in Kenyan Universities.* (RUSI Policy Brief). URL: https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/policy-briefs/lessons-learned-student-led-initiatives-prevent-violent-extremism-kenyan-universities

Kovacs, Amanda (2014, October): *Saudi Arabia Exporting Salafi Education and Radicalizing Indonesia's Muslims.* (GIGA Focus International No. 7). URL: https://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/publication/saudi-arabia-exporting-salafi-education-and-radicalizing-indonesia%E2%80%99s-muslims

Krasenberg, Jordy; Lenos, Steven; Sterkenburg, Nikki (2019, June): *RAN EDU Academy: Far-Right Extremism in the Classroom.* (RAN Ex Post Paper). URL: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-edu/docs/ran_edu_academy_far-right_extremism_in_classroom_berlin_13-14_062019_en.pdf

Lee, Benjamin; Knott, Kim (2017, March): *Ideological Transmission I: The Family and Ideological Transmission.* (CREST Report). URL: https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/family-ideological-transmission

Lee, Benjamin; Knott, Kim (2017, November): *Ideological Transmission II: Peers, Education and Prisons.* (CREST Report). URL: https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/peers-education-prisons

Lee, Benjamin; Knott, Kim (2018, September): *Ideological Transmission III: Political and Religious Organisations.* (CREST Report). URL: https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/political-religious-organisations

Lee, Benjamin; Knott, Kim (2020, December): *How and Why Ideologies Are Shared and Learned.* (CREST Guide). URL: https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/how-and-why-ideologies-are-shared-and-learned

Lin, Christina (2014, October): *Lee Kuan Yew: To Stop Terrorism, Go After the Queen Bees (Preachers).* (ISPSW Strategy Series: Focus on Defense and International Security, Issue No. 298). URL: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/184834/298_Lin.pdf

Littlewood, Charlotte (2023, April): *Anti-Hindu Hate in Schools.* (HJS Research Brief). URL: https://henryjacksonsociety.org/publications/anti-hindu-hate-in-schools

Long, Robert (2018, December): *Counter-Extremism Policy in English Schools.* (House of Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP 07345). URL: https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7345

Macaluso, Agnese (2016, October): *From Countering to Preventing Radicalization Through Education: Limits and Opportunities.* (The Hague Institute for Global Justice, Working Paper 18). URL: https://thehagueinstituteforglobaljustice.org/portfolio/from-countering-to-preventing-radicalization-through-education-limits-and-opportunities

Malobisky, Jessica; Moeder, Riley (2023, December): *Education Wars: The Destabilizing Effect of Violent Extremist Attacks on Schools in Africa.* (New Lines Institute Analysis). URL: https://newlinesinstitute.org/state-resilience-fragility/education-wars-the-destabilizing-effect-of-violent-extremist-attacks-on-schools-in-africa

Martin-Rayo, Francisco (2011, June): *Countering Radicalization in Refugee Camps: How Education Can Help Defeat AQAP.* (Dubai Initiative Working Paper). URL: https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/countering-radicalization-refugee-camps-how-education-can-help-defeat-aqap

Mihailović, Zorica; Hadžibegović, Elvira (2023, April): *Dealing with Extremism in an Educational Environment in the Western Balkans.* (RAN Expert Paper). URL: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/whats-new/publications/dealing-extremism-educational-environment-western-balkans-march-2023_en

Miller, Erin (2014, December): *Terrorist Attacks on Educational Institutions.* (START Background Report). URL: https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/terrorist-attacks-educational-institutions

Mirahmadi, Hedieh (2014, April): *Women's Education: Promoting Development, Countering Radicalism.* (Testimony submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, April 3, 2014). URL: https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/womens-education-promoting-development-countering-radicalism

Nordbruch, Götz (2016, December): *The Role of Education in Preventing Radicalisation.* (RAN Issue Paper). URL: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/role_education_preventing_radicalisation_12122016_en.pdf

Nordbruch, Götz; Sieckelinck, Stijn (2018, October): *Transforming Schools into Labs for Democracy: A Companion to Preventing Violent Radicalisation Through Education.* (RAN Policy Paper). URL: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2019-04/ran_edu_transforming_schools_into_labs_for_democracy_2018_en.pdf

O'Connor, Ciarán et al. (2023, October): *Active Clubs: The Growing Threat of "White Nationalism 3.0" Across the United States.* (ISD Insight Brief). URL: https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/active-clubs-the-growing-threat-of-white-nationalism-3-0-across-the-united-states

Olidort, Jacob (2016, August): *Inside the Caliphate's Classroom: Textbooks, Guidance Literature, and Indoctrination Methods of the Islamic State.* (The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus 147). URL: https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/inside-caliphates-classroom-textbooks-guidance-literature-and-indoctrination

Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) (2022, March): *Countering Violent Extremism on Campuses: A Faculty-Oriented Policy Brief.* URL: https://www.pakpips.com/article/book/6856

Pate, Amy; Jensen, Michael; Miller, Erin (2015, April): *Al-Shabaab Attack on Garissa University in Kenya.* (START Background Report). URL: https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/al-shabaab-attack-garissa-university-kenya

Prinzjakowitsch, Werner (2018, November): *Annex to RAN's Manifesto for Education: The Role of Non-Formal Education in P/CVE.* (RAN YF&C Issue Paper). URL: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-yf-and-c/docs/role_of_non-formal_education_in_pcve_112018_en.pdf

Qaddour, Kinana; Husain, Salman (2022, March): *Syria's Education Crisis: A Sustainable Approach After 11 Years of Conflict.* (MEI Policy Analysis). URL: https://www.mei.edu/publications/syrias-education-crisis-sustainable-approach-after-11-years-conflict

Rassler, Don et al. (2013, April): *The Fighters of Lashkar-e-Taiba: Recruitment, Training, Deployment and Death.* (CTC Occasional Paper Series). URL: https://ctc.usma.edu/the-fighters-of-lashkar-e-taiba-recruitment-training-deployment-and-death

Reed, Alastair; Ingram, Haroro J. (2017, May): *Exploring the Role of Instructional Material in AQAP's Inspire and ISIS' Rumiyah.* (Paper presented at the 1st European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC) conference on online terrorist propaganda, 10-11 April 2017, at Europol Headquarters, The Hague). URL: https://www.icct.nl/publication/exploring-role-instructional-material-aqaps-inspire-and-isis-rumiyah

Reynolds, Louis; Scott, Ralph (2016, December): *Digital Citizens: Countering Extremism Online.* (DEMOS Report). URL: https://demos.co.uk/project/digital-citizens

Schwartz, Matthew (2011): *Al-Qaida's Use of the Internet for Explosives Instruction: Discerning the Threat and Recommendations for International Action.* (Working Paper). URL: https://criticaloversight.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/matthew-schwartz_working-paper_alqaida_internet_instruction_vii.pdf

Sergeant, Gray; Sutton, Rupert (2016, May): *A Model External Speaker Policy: Assessing the Risks Posed by External Speakers On-Campus.* (Policy Paper; HJS / Student Rights). URL: https://relayto.com/the-henry-jackson-society/1MRdtxNN

Siddique, Qandeel (2009, July): *Weapons of Mass Instruction? A Preliminary Exploration of the Link Between Madrassas in Pakistan and Militancy.* (FFI-rapport 2008/02326). URL: https://ffi-publikasjoner.archive.knowledgearc.net/bitstream/handle/20.500.12242/2251/08-02326.pdf

Smith, Scott S. (2020, April): *Service Delivery in Taliban-Influenced Areas of Afghanistan.* (USIP Special Report No. 465). URL: https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/04/service-delivery-taliban-influenced-areas-afghanistan

Sounaye, Abdoulaye; Malefakis, Medinat Abdulazeez (2019, April): *Religious Politics and Student Associations in Nigeria: The Case of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.* (RESOLVE Network Research Brief No. 3; Lake Chad Basin Research Series). URL: https://www.resolvenet.org/research/religious-politics-and-student-associations-nigeria

Sutton, Rupert (2015, July): *Preventing Prevent? Challenges to Counter-Radicalisation Policy on Campus.* (Report; HJS / Student Rights). URL: https://henryjacksonsociety.org/publications/preventing-prevent-challenges-to-counter-radicalisation-policy-on-campus

Syria Justice and Accountability Centre (SJAC) (2023, September): *Killing the Future: Targeting Schools by the Syrian Government.* (Report). URL: https://syriaaccountability.org/killing-the-future

Tho Seeth, Amanda (2015): *Zwischen Demokratisierung und Gewalt: Universitäten in Nordafrika seit 2011.* (GIGA Focus Nahost No. 7). URL: http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-446785

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2016): *A Teacher's Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism.* DOI: https://doi.org/10.54675/XRJK7971

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2017): *Preventing Violent Extremism Through Education: A Guide for Policy-Makers.* DOI: https://doi.org/10.54675/BAUW5133

Vestenskov, David (2018, February): *The Role of Madrasas in Pakistan: Achieving Integration of Madrasa Graduates into Society.* (Royal Danish Defence College Policy Brief). URL: https://research.fak.dk/esploro/outputs/workingPaper/The-role-of-Madrasas-in-Pakistan/991815956403741

Wallner, Claudia (2020, June): *Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Through Education Initiatives: Assessing the Evidence Base.* (RUSI Occasional Paper). URL: https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/occasional-papers/preventing-and-countering-violent-extremism-through-education-initiatives-assessing-evidence-base

Webb, Emma (2017, April): *Spotting the Signs: Identifying Vulnerability to Radicalisation Among Students.* (Henry Jackson Society / Student Rights Report). URL: https://henryjacksonsociety.org/publications/spotting-the-signs-identifying-vulnerability-to-radicalisation-among-students

Wöllenstein, Julia; Duque, Elena Silva (2022, May): *Developing Resilience as an Approach to Dealing with the Influences of Problematic Informal and Non-Formal Education in Schools: A Practical Guide for First-Line Practitioners.* (RAN Handbook). URL: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/whats-new/publications/developing-resilience-approach-dealing-influences-problematic-informal-and-non-formal-education_en

Woltman, Pomme; Zuiderveld, Esther; Broeders, Boy (2021, October): *Education and Youth Work: Working with Community Figures both Inside and Outside Schools.* (RAN Conclusion Paper). URL: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/whats-new/publications/ran-ye-meeting-working-community-figures-both-inside-and-outside-schools-05-06-october-2021_en

Working Group for "Education for Preventing Violent Extremism" (EPVE); Hedayah (2019): *Education for Preventing Violent Extremism (EPVE).* (Working Group Paper). URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/education-for-preventing-violent-extremism-epve-working-group-paper

Zaidi, Syed Manzar Abbas (2013, March): *Madrassa Education in Pakistan: Controversies, Challenges and Prospects.* (SISA Report No. 3 - 2013). URL: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311913131_Madrassa_Education_in_Pakistan_Controversies_Challenges_and_Prospects

Zeiger, Sara; Mattei, Cristina; Nettleton, Laura (2019): *Projecting the Impact of a Program on Preventing Violent Extremism Through Education in Uganda.* (Report; Hedayah / UNESCO IICBA / UNESCO / Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Uganda). URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/projecting-the-impact-of-a-program-on-pve-through-education-in-uganda

Zeiger, Sara et al. (2014, December): *Education and Countering Violent Extremism.* (Hedayah CVE Research Brief 2). URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/cve-research-brief-2-education-and-cve

Zeiger, Sara et al. (2021, April): *The ISIS Files: Rehabilitating Children of ISIS: Extracting Recommendations from the Education-Related ISIS Files.* (Hedayah / GW Program on Extremism Report). URL: https://hedayah.com/resources/isis-files-recommendations

Judith Tinnes has a background in Information Science. Dr Tinnes works for the Leibniz Institute for Psychology (ZPID) in an open-access publishing programme for scholarly journals. Additionally, she serves as Information Resources Editor to 'Perspectives on Terrorism'. In her editorial role, she regularly compiles bibliographies and other resources for Terrorism Research and runs the execution monitoring project 'Counting Lives Lost' (CLL).

NB: All websites were last visited on 05.05.2024. For an inventory of previous bibliographies, see: https://archive.org/details/terrorism-research-bibliographies

Counter-Terrorism Bookshelf: Three Books on Terrorism & Counter-Terrorism-Related Subjects

Joshua Sinai*

Abstract: So many books are published on terrorism- and counter-terrorism-related subjects that it is difficult to catch up on a large backlog of monographs and volumes received for review. In order to deal with this backlog, this column consists of capsule reviews of three books.

*Corresponding author: Joshua Sinai, Perspectives on Terrorism, email: joshua.sinai@comcast.net

Richard J. Chasdi, *Corporate Security Surveillance: An Assessment of Host Country Vulnerability to Terrorism* (Cham, Switzerland, Springer, 2024), xxiv, 448 pp., US $ 129.99 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-3-0313-9549-9.

This is an innovative, methodologically and empirically-based comprehensive handbook that provides security practitioners with a tool kit to assess the terrorist risk environments that challenge corporations' operations in highly volatile countries. The author's framework is applied to five country case studies: Brazil, India, Mexico, South Africa and Thailand. These countries experienced a high rate of terrorist and organised criminal risks, to begin with, but they were selected because they host a large number of foreign corporations, thus making this study of special interest to Western security practitioners in particular. This makes it possible for the author to apply his quantitative and qualitative scoring framework, which he terms the Terrorist Assault Business Vulnerability Index (TABVI), to examine the terrorism risk facing them in terms of the local terrorist groups' targeting preferences, companies' vulnerabilities, and strategic responses that are required to mitigate the threats challenging them. In some of these countries, the author points out that organised criminal groups are a more lethal risk, so the distinction in their targeting objectives is incorporated into the TABVI framework.

The book's first two chapters discuss the TABVI framework. The framework is then applied in the succeeding five country case study chapters, each presenting an introductory conflict framework and listing of the local terrorist (and where relevant, criminal) groups, their extremist/illegal agendas and attack incidents against that country's business and critical infrastructure sector. Based on the author's empirical data, the overall TABVI threat environment in each country is scored, with the respective industry sub-category sectors, such as energy/alloy, construction, banking/finance, telecommunications, hospitals/medical facilities, and newspapers/print, rated along a continuum of highest to lowest risk.

The concluding chapter presents the author's numerous findings. In addition to presenting the study's aggregate TABVI scores, these include the finding that in Mexico and Brazil, "hybrid" criminal organisations such as "drug kingpins account for much of the business-related terrorism chronicled" (p. 401), while India, South Africa and Thailand "are examples of more traditional systems where traditional terrorist groups or proto-groups are involved with terrorism" (pp. 401-402). Another finding is that effective scanning of a threat environment needs to consider "political and economic events, and historical processes with profound and lasting influence" (p. 407). The author is a Professorial Lecturer in the Department of Political Science at George Washington University, Washington, DC.

Caroline Logan, Randy Borum and Paul Gill (Eds.), *Violent Extremism: A Handbook of Risk Assessment and Management* (London, England, UK: UCL Press/Distributed by University of Chicago Press, 2023), 318 pp., US $ 60.00 [Hardback], US $ 35.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-8000-8198-7.

Countering violent extremism (CVE) is crucial to a government's counter-terrorism campaign. Effective CVE is capable of identifying, tracking and pre-empting susceptible individuals who might be on the pathway to violent extremism either by arresting or deradicalising them during the formative pre-incident phases. Such phase-based diagnostic tools are also used to reverse engineer a violent extremist's trajectory into violence to produce findings on intervention points that could have been identified for early law enforcement pre-emption but were missed. In this important volume, the editors have assembled a team of practitioners and academic

experts on CVE, which includes their work and presents the latest diagnostic frameworks and methodologies to examine these issues.

With the volume's contributors presenting several risk management frameworks on violent extremism, the chapter by Paul Gill and Bettina Rottweiler is especially noteworthy as it outlines ten leading theoretical models in a comprehensive table (pp. 25-27). The table summarises the models by author, theory or evidence (i.e., socio-psychological theories or field research), stages in radicalisation (i.e., grievance, conversion, indoctrination, recruitment, and mobilisation), the end-stage (i.e., violent action), and type of model (i.e., whether it is a linear or non-linear progression). This is followed by Randy Borum's chapter on "Mapping the Terrain: The Current State of Risk and Threat Assessment Practice in the Violent Extremism Field," which presents a handy table (pp. 45-47) that outlines the protocols involved in conducting a risk assessment, such as data gathering, and correlating and triaging the risk factors and the protective factors that might restrain a susceptible individual from continuing along the radicalisation trajectory. Also valuable is the table that provides a risk score to assess the severity degree of risk factors, as slight, moderate, or large (pp. 60-61). In the next chapter, "Risk Communication and Risk Assessment Guidance for Violent Extremism Involvement," Borum presents additional diagnostic tools, including the well-known "Violent Extremism Risk Assessment," version 2 revised (VERA-2R) (pp. 91-92), which rates risk factors such as beliefs, social context, past action, commitment and motivation, protective and risk-mitigation indicators, criminal history, and mental disorder along a continuum of low, moderate or high, with protective factors reverse-coded.

The subject of countering violent extremism is examined in the chapter by Michele T. Pathe and Frank R. Farnham, "Multiagency Strategies to Prevent Violent Extremism: Implementation and Evaluation." The components of several intervention programs are discussed, including the progressively escalating referral criteria of the 'beginners' fixated, pathological grievance, and the critically significant extremist, which would require mental health or law enforcement intervention (p. 227).

Caroline Logan is the lead consultant forensic clinical psychologist at the Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust and an honorary senior lecturer at the University of Manchester in England. Randy Borum is director of the School of Information (iSchool) and director of intelligence and national security studies at the University of South Florida. Paul Gill is a security and crime science professor at University College London, England.

Janja Lalich, *Take Back Your Life: Recovering from Cults and Abusive Relationships* [Third edition] (Walnut Creek, CA: Lalich Center on Cults & Coercion, 2023), 426 pp, US $ 22.13 [Paperback], ISBN: 979-8-9892-2790-7.

Cults and terrorist groups share many characteristics in common, such as indoctrinating their radicalised members into believing that their in-group's existence is threatened by a demonised and illegitimate out-group (i.e., the adversary society), which needs to be destroyed. Dr. Lalich is a leading authority on cults, so this third edition of her highly regarded book is a valuable contribution to the literature on cults in all dimensions. Like terrorist groups, the author writes, "cults are fuelled by a belief in changing society, revolution, overthrowing the perceived enemy or getting rid of evil forces" (p. 15). For counterterrorism practitioners, it is therefore crucial to understand the characteristics and motivations of cult groups and the methods required to de-radicalise their members and reintegrate them into society.

Like their terrorist group counterparts, the author writes, cults are distinguished by three characteristics: members who "are expected to be excessively zealous and unquestioning in their commitment to the identity and leadership of the group," their willingness to be "manipulated and exploited," and the need by members to accept that "Harm or the threat of harm may come" to them as part of their involvement with the group (p. 11), which, in the case of terrorists, consists of the possibility of arrest or death.

In a valuable chapter on "Leaving a Cult," the author outlines five methods: walking away ("walkaways"), being thrown out ("castaways"), losing the leader through death or overthrow, finding out that the group has collapsed, or to be counselled out by a supportive therapist (often at the instigation of family members) (p. 113). This is followed by chapters on the post-cult aftermath in terms of "Taking Back Your Mind", "Dealing with the Aftereffects," and other psychological aftermaths that must be dealt with. These chapters are accompanied by numerous case studies, including personal accounts of those who have effectively transitioned from cult membership to the "normal" world.

The author is a Professor Emerita of Sociology and the Founder and CEO of the Lalich Centre on Cults and Coercion in northern California.

Dr Joshua Sinai, Associate Editor, is the Book Reviews Editor of 'Perspectives on Terrorism'.

PT