

Volume XI, Issue 4 August 2017

A JOURNAL OF THE

TRI **TERRORISM RESEARCH INITIATIVE**
Enhancing Security through Collaborative Research

Table of Contents

Welcome from the Editors.....1

Articles

Israel's Policy in Extortionist Terror Attacks (Abduction and Hostage Barricade Situations).....2

by Boaz Ganor

The Dawa'ish: A Collective Profile of IS Commanders.....16

by Ronen Zeidel

Assessing the Feasibility of a 'Wilayah Mindanao'.....29

by Joseph Franco

Awareness Trainings and Detecting Jihadists among Asylum Seekers: A Case Study from the Netherlands.....39

by Joris van Wijk and Maarten P. Bolhuis

Research Notes

Terrorism Events Data: An Inventory of Databases and Data Sets, 1968-2017.....50

by Neil G. Bowie

Toward Academic Consensus Definitions of Radicalism and Extremism73

by Astrid Bötticher

Central Asian Jihadists in the Front Line.....78

by Ely Karmon

Special Correspondence

Does the Proposed Cure Address the Problem? Examining the Trump Administration's Executive Order on Immigration from Muslim-majority Countries Using Publicly Available Data on Terrorism.....87

By Daniel Milton

The Islamic State after the Caliphate - Can IS Go Underground?95

By Thomas McCabe

Resources

Bibliography: Root Causes of Terrorism.....102

Compiled and Selected by Judith Tinnes

Recent Online Resources for the Analysis of Terrorism and Related Subjects.....143

Compiled and Selected by Berto Jongman

Academic Theses (Ph.D. and MA) on Terrorism and Counterterrorism-Related Issues, written in English between 2013 and 2017.....176

Compiled and Selected by Ryan Scrivens

Book Reviews

Marc Sageman. *Turning to Political Violence. The Emergence of Terrorism*.....193

Reviewed by Alex P. Schmid

Geoff Dean. *Neurocognitive Risk Assessment for the Early Detection of Violent Extremists*.....196

Reviewed by Leiya Lemkey and Daniel T. Wilcox

Joseph Daher. *Hezbollah: The Political Economy of Lebanon's Party of God*.....198

Reviewed by Richard C. Dietrich

Counterterrorism Bookshelf: 15 Books on Terrorism & Counterterrorism-Related Subjects.....200

Capsule Reviews by Joshua Sinai

Announcements

TRI Thesis Award 2016: Top Finalists Identified208

By the TRI Thesis Award Jury

About Perspectives on Terrorism.....210

Welcome from the Editors

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to announce the release of Volume XI, Issue 4 (August 2017) of *Perspectives on Terrorism* at www.terrorismanalysts.com. Our free scholarly online journal is a joint publication of the Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), headquartered in Vienna (Austria), and the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) at Leiden University, Campus The Hague (The Netherlands). Now in its eleventh year, *Perspectives on Terrorism* has more than 7,400 regular subscribers and many more occasional readers and website visitors worldwide. The Articles of its six annual issues are fully peer-reviewed by external referees while its Research Notes, Policy Notes, Special Correspondence and other content are subject to internal editorial review and quality control.

This issue features four Articles, three Research Notes, two Special Correspondences, three Bibliographic Resources, and eighteen Book Reviews.

Here are some of the highlights: In the Article section, Ron Zeidel, who created a unique database of some 600 past and present commanders of the Islamic State, reveals some of their backgrounds. Joseph Franco, provides a backgrounder on the IS *Wilayat* in the Philippines, based on his great familiarity with the local conflict situation. In the Research Note section, Neil Bowie provides us with a list of 60 databases in the field of terrorism studies, commenting on their specific features. Astrid Bötticher, who just completed her Ph.D. work at Leiden University, proposes new consensus definitions of ‘radicalism’ and ‘extremism’, based on her analysis of the history of ideas behind these concepts – showing that the two concepts should not be equated.

In the Special Correspondence section, two American commentators – Daniel Milton and Thomas McCabe - reflect on President Trump’s immigration ban for people from certain Muslim-majority countries and on what the Islamic State might do after the collapse of its so-called ‘caliphate’.

In the Resources section, the reader will find three bibliographic tools by Judith Tinnes, Berto Jongman, and Ryan Scrivens that allow our readers to keep up with the recent on- and offline literature on terrorism and related subjects.

This is followed by 18 book reviews by contributors Richard Dietrich, Leiya Lemkey and Daniel Wilcox, Joshua Sinai, and Alex Schmid.

Finally, in the Announcement section, we reveal the names of the two top finalists of the annual TRI Thesis Award and provide Abstracts of the winning doctoral dissertations.

This issue of the journal was prepared by Prof. Alex P. Schmid, Editor-in-Chief, in collaboration with Associate Editor, Prof. Gregory D. Miller, and with the support of Prof. James J.F. Forest, Co-Editor of *Perspectives on Terrorism*. On the IT side, Max Geelen at ISGA (Leiden University) provided technical support.

Articles

Israel's Policy in Extortionist Terror Attacks (Abduction and Hostage Barricade Situations)

by Boaz Ganor

Abstract

One of the most challenging type of terror incidents is that of an extortionist attack, such as hostage-taking and kidnappings. Extortion attacks require governments to evaluate a series of options for handling the incident, ranging from giving in to all of the terrorists' demands, to full-blown military-rescue operations. Since the 1970s, Israel has handled a number of extortionist attacks, using the Rabin Doctrine, which advocates rescue operations as a means of handling the attacks. This policy led to a shift in the kind of attacks being perpetrated against Israelis, with a shift from hostage-taking attacks to abductions. During extortionist attacks, decision-makers are faced with the dilemma of how to deter future terror attacks, while ensuring the safe release of hostages. This article illustrates the dilemmas that decision makers face during extortionist attacks, and will highlight the options that decisions makers have, using Israel's experience as a case study

Keywords: Extortionist attack, hostage situations, terrorism, Israel

Introduction

One of the most complex and problematic types of terror attacks that decision-makers around the world must contend with are extortion terrorist attacks.[1] An extortion terror attack, by its very nature, poses a difficult and ongoing challenge for decision-makers who must evaluate a series of options and make decisions that involve direct and immediate impact on human life. Extortion attacks include both hostage-barricade situations, as well as kidnapping attacks. The distinction between these two will be addressed in this article. For example, when a terrorist group attacks and takes hostages in a certain building or vehicle, threatens their lives and issues an ultimatum requiring compliance with a series of time-sensitive demands, authorities must make tough choices. The extreme circumstances of the attack present decision-makers with a series of difficult moral and practical dilemmas that must be addressed in a timely manner. It is imperative in these scenarios to strike a balance by deterring terrorist organizations from carrying out similar acts in the future while attempting to ensure the safety and rescue of the hostages in the current attack.[2] In other words, decision-makers must balance today's considerations with those of the future.

In their chapter "Hostage Taking, the Presidency and Stress" (1998), Margaret and Charles Hermann discussed the dilemma facing decision-makers in these situations. Decision makers must decide how to free the hostages, without succumbing to terrorists' demands or causing the death of hostages and without reducing the government's legitimacy. This dilemma is exacerbated by pressures of time, the media and public opinion. [3] In this context, one should remember that the mere occurrence of terrorist extortion attacks is proof of the security system's failure to thwart such attacks. Decision-makers are not interested in exposing this shortcoming further by failing to handle crises of this kind as they arise. Therefore, in crisis situations, leaders tend to agree to risky, dramatic moves that they would normally refrain from approving.

Martha Crenshaw states that terrorists choose extortion attacks since the state's military power and resources do not constitute an advantage in such situations.[4] Terrorist organizations use extortion attacks to achieve concrete goals (such as the release of imprisoned terrorists, ransom and pressuring the government), or for the sake of publicity itself. The government's response policy to an extortion attack will require evaluation of a number of factors such as: the terrorists' behavior, humanitarian considerations and future costs.

It is not only decision makers who face dilemmas during extortion attacks. Terrorists are also faced with a difficult dilemma during a hostage crisis, whether or not to kill hostages. Killing hostages actually impairs their ability to manage demands and increases the state's motivation to punish them. However, at the same time, it emphasizes the seriousness of their intentions and strengthens their position in the next event.[5] In order to ensure government cooperation with their demands, the hostage takers may reduce their demands and drop the price.

Despite the challenge terrorists face in extortion attacks, Hermann and Hermann noted that extortion attacks can be called "smart terrorism", since the terrorists control the situation, attract media attention over time, and force governments to recognize them during negotiations to release the hostages.[6] This event tests the government, the authority of the decision-makers and the country's international image. Leaders in democratic countries know that their manner of handling the hostage crisis will affect chances of re-election.[7] Crenshaw adds that prolonging a crisis involving hostages may increase the costs on both sides, while the success of negotiations depends on the existence of a common interest to both parties. The situation may therefore become more complicated when it comes to a crisis with more than two parties, for example, when hostages are citizens of a third country.[8]

The difficulty in handling of hostage crises cannot be overstated. Opinions on handling these situations are divided into two schools of thought: (1) the hardline approach and (2) the flexible approach. The two approaches differ primarily as an outcome of different political views and considerations of their proponents. Proponents of the hardline approach argue that fulfillment of terrorists' demands will be interpreted as surrender, encouraging others to carry out such attacks because of their proven effectiveness. Moreover, hardline thinkers claim that deterrence of future incidents can be achieved by capturing and imprisoning the captors, with no option of release, even in return for the release of hostages.[9] Released terrorists will rejoin the circle of violence and terrorism by taking an active part in future attacks. Although the government must protect future human life beyond the lives of the hostages, the government is obligated to consider the safety of thousands of others whose lives could be endangered by compliance with the terrorists' demands.[10] The hardline approach bases its argument not only on efficiency, but also on ethical considerations. It prioritizes the government's responsibility for security of the general public over a commitment to the security of a few civilian hostages and opposes arguments that everything must be done to bring about the release of unharmed hostages, and that the government is responsible for their fate. The hardline school sees any concession to the terrorists as a much greater security risk in the future.[11] Wilkinson emphasized that the foundation of the hardline policy is the requirement to hold a "consistent policy of maximizing the risk of punishment run by the terrorists and minimizing their potential rewards." [12] Bandura warned against over-reaction, in which an entire nation becomes hostage to a small group of terrorists and invites additional terrorist attacks. [13] This claim was made in 1970 against the Prime Minister of Japan, who instructed the payment of ransom demands to hostage kidnapers. According to critics, this led to a wave of further kidnappings.[14] One indicator of the state's possible adoption of the hardline approach is the existence of a special hostage rescue force in case of extortion terrorist attacks. Units of this type were established in a number of countries including Israel, the United States, Germany, Italy, India and others. Hoffman and Morrison note that while there are benefits to having a unit of this type, its very existence may influence decision-makers to favor a military solution to the hostage crisis, using the unit [15], rather than negotiating.

Opposing the "hardline" school of thought are advocates of the "flexible approach". This approach, said Wilkinson, includes "the will to make deals with terrorists to obtain the release of hostages and bring a quick end to any terrorist attack." [16] There is no uniform response to extortion attacks under the flexible school. Most who advocate a flexible position emphasize the presence of a spectrum of options for action, from an automatic rescue operation (without any willingness to negotiate) on one end, to immediate surrender to all terrorists' demands on the other. There are many strategies between these extremes that can be found to suit the conditions and circumstances of the particular case.[17] The main argument underlying the demand

for pragmatism on the government's part during hostage situations is that while deterrence must remain a central part of the state's operational counterterrorism arsenal, a number of flexible tactics may be adopted during a hostage crisis.[18] These tactics may include diplomatic steps, intelligence operations and prevention and deterrence measures, as well as economic and legal policies with international cooperation.[19]

It should now be clear that one of the most difficult choices facing decision makers in counterterrorism is whether to initiate a hostage rescue operation or comply with the terrorists' demands. The decision is, in fact, a choice between the lives of the hostages in the present and the lives of future victims who may be affected by the release of imprisoned terrorists. It is usually carried out under the duress of time, internal and external pressures [20], and in conditions of great uncertainty (such as the situation on the ground, the kidnappers' intentions and the real ability of the security forces). Furthermore, even if the location is known, decision makers must take into account that a rescue mission is not always viable, due to a lack of intelligence to assure that the rescue mission will have a high enough chance of success. And if that were not enough, the potential aftermath of the decision, which will include positive or negative public feedback, depending on the results.

Similar to all other decisions in the field of counterterrorism, in cases of extortionist terrorism the decision-maker must, in advance, consider and evaluate the costs and benefits of each one of the two main alternatives of action either responding to the terrorists' demands or implementing a hostage-rescue operation.

Among the advantages of a decision to comply with the terrorists' demands are these:

- **Release of the hostages** - This decision may be most effective in obtaining the release of hostages unharmed.
- **Protecting the lives of the hostages** - The willingness to accede to terrorists' demands could save hostages' lives during negotiations, stemming from the terrorists' desire not to hurt the "assets" of negotiations.
- **Political achievement of the decision-maker** - A peaceful solution to the crisis may lead to major political achievement for the decision-maker who reached a solution that ensured the hostages' safety (assuming that the price paid was "reasonable" in the public's eyes).
- **Preventing complication** - This can be achieved by the avoidance of risk to the assault counterterrorism unit. In a hostage barricade attack occurring on another country's sovereign territory, a decision to accede to terrorists' demands might prevent possible diplomatic and even military entanglement, in the case of the country's decision to conduct a rescue operation.
- **Preventing the "boomerang effect"** - A peaceful solution prevents motivating terrorist organizations and their allies from carrying out reprisal attacks in revenge of the killing or capture of their activists, the hostage takers.

These types of benefits should be measured against the potential costs of compliance with terrorists' demands:

- **Future risk to human life** - Terrorists released from prison may carry out additional attacks that harm the lives of many others.
- **Imitation and escalation** - The danger that due to an attack's success other organizations will choose to carry out similar attacks, thus increasing the number of extortion incidents.
- **Cost increase of future attacks** - The willingness to accept terrorists' demands may cause a rise in the cost threshold of future attacks.

- **Creation of a political crisis** - The release of jailed terrorists may be seen by the public - and presented by the opposition - as a surrender to terrorism, and in this context may develop into a political crisis (here, too, the scope of concessions made to terrorists by decision-makers is important).
- **Damage to public morale** - The message that might be communicated to the public when surrendering to terrorists' demands is that "terrorism wins" and could cause public demoralization.
- **Damage to the penal system** - The authority of the penal system might be damaged in the public's eyes as a result of releasing imprisoned terrorists sentenced to long prison terms. This may also cause counter-demands to release other prisoners by those who took the law into their own hands and conducted vigilante reprisal attacks following terrorist attacks.
- **Damage to the country's deterrence image** - Responding to terrorists' demands (including far-reaching ones such as the release of a large number of convicted terrorists or political concessions), may damage the country's deterrence capability in the eyes of other terrorist organizations and other enemies of the state.
- **Damage to the country's international status** - This may be expressed by the weakening of the country's moral foundation and legitimacy to demand that other countries not succumb to demands of terrorists in the future.

Israel's Policy in Situations of Extortionist Attacks

Over the years, Israel has faced two types of terror waves based on extortionist terrorism. The first wave of extortion attacks that challenged Israel occurred from the late 1960s to the end of the 1970s. This wave was marked by a series of attacks in which terrorist organizations infiltrated Israel (mostly through its northern border) and took control of buildings or buses, and hijacked planes headed to Israel, landing them in various international airports. Since the 1980s, most of the extortion attacks which have been conducted against Israel were abductions, in which terrorists kidnapped civilians or soldiers and held them in an unknown location, mostly outside of Israel's territory.

The transition to the second type of attack was largely a consequence of the Israeli government's counterterrorism policy, dictated by Yitzhak Rabin, during his first term as Prime Minister in the mid-1970s. Rabin's view was that Israel preferred rescue operations to release hostages captured by terrorist groups, even if the chance of securing their successful release was small, and even if there is a possibility of casualties among the hostages or rescue units. However, if it were impossible to achieve the release of hostages through a rescue operation, Israel would be willing to negotiate and respond to at least some of the terrorists' demands to secure the release of hostages. This came to be known as the Rabin Doctrine.

Over the years, extortion attacks against Israel were not intended solely to achieve the release of terrorists imprisoned in Israel and other countries, or to attract media attention and public opinion in Israel and internationally.[21] These attacks were also intended, among other things, to embarrass Israel, disrupt political processes in the region, demonstrate the terrorist organizations' ability to harm the fabric of Israeli life, and to force Israel to conduct negotiations with hostage takers, kidnappers and their dispatchers. For Palestinian factions, this was used as a method of forcing Israel's hand in and to *de jure* recognize the PLO.

Analysis of Israel's policy in dealing with extortion attacks in the 1970s shows that because the locations of each of these hostage attacks were known in Israel, and in most cases occurred on Israeli territory, Israel chose to end the event in a rescue operation, in accordance with the Rabin Doctrine. During these extortionist attacks, Israeli military forces quickly surrounded the building or facility where the hostages were held. Thus, Israel always had the option of terminating the event by using military force to conduct a rescue operation. This option was preferred, even if the expected results of the operation involved multiple casualties.

The list of extortionist attacks in the 1970s is extensive. One of the most well-known hostage situations of the decade was the Coastal Road Massacre which took place on March 11, 1978. A squad consisting of 11 terrorists, members of the Fatah terror group, infiltrated Israel using rubber boats, landing on Kibbutz Maagan Michael. They then reached the coastal road where armed terrorists seized control of two buses and gathered 71 hostages in one of them, including 30 children. The terrorists demanded the release of five incarcerated prisoners. The terrorists killed 38 civilians, including 13 children. During the rescue operation, nine terrorists were killed.[22]

In light of Israel's persistent policy to end the extortionist terror attacks using military-rescue operations, even when they involved paying a high price, during the 1970s, Israel forged an image of a country that stressed a hardline policy in hostage situations. Friedlander believes that Israel's tough policy led to reduced demands by terrorists during the extortion attacks in the 1970s, when terrorists demanded the release of 317 terrorists in the first event, and only five in the last. Initially, terrorists used these methods in attempt to undermine Israel's tough policies, so that the cost of a decision to respond militarily and not to comply with terrorist demands would rise, and the government would face public criticism in case of an operation's failure. [23]

However, Palestinian terrorist organizations quickly understood the Israeli policy and changed their method of attack accordingly. From the early 1980s onward, the wave of extortionist attacks carried out within Israel faded and were replaced by a wave of kidnapping attacks during which civilians and Israeli soldiers were snatched and taken to secret hiding places. This prevented Israel from being able to carry out military-rescue operations, due to the lack of intelligence on the hostages' location. In the absence of a chance to implement the Rabin Doctrine's military-rescue option, Israel found itself negotiating the release of hostages ending in transactions for the release of terrorists imprisoned in Israeli jails. The once-strict Israeli policy collapsed, and Israel surrendered to terrorists' demands in extortion attacks. Israeli decision-makers found themselves on a slippery slope. Terrorist demands only grew, with a loss of numerical proportion between the number of hostages held and the number of imprisoned terrorists that Israel was required to release in exchange for them. The breaking of the dam was not only reflected in the quantitative component of the requirements but the qualitative component as well. Israel was required to release arch-terrorists, convicted of mass murder of many civilians. Moreover, Israel released imprisoned terrorists for information on the health and well-being of the hostages, and for the return of the bodies of Israeli soldiers. From the mid-1980s, there were numerous hostage release transactions made. Among them was the November 23, 1983 exchange. During the 1982 Lebanon War, six infantry soldiers had been kidnapped by Fatah in Lebanon. In a deal with Fatah, the troops were exchanged for 4,765 Lebanese war detainees arrested for belonging to terrorist organizations and operations against the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Along with them, 65 terrorists imprisoned in Israel were released. Arguably the most well-known exchange occurred on October 18, 2011. After five years in captivity, IDF soldier Gilad Shalit, kidnapped by Hamas and held in Gaza for five years, was returned to Israel. In exchange, Israel released 1,027 convicted terrorists, including many convicted for life for murdering Israeli civilians.[24]

One of the key events that marked the change in Israel's policy of meeting terrorists' demands was the May 20th, 1985 Jibril Agreement. During the first Lebanon War, on September 4, 1982, Palestinian terrorists kidnapped eight Israeli soldiers stationed in Lebanon. The terrorists divided the captives, handing over six soldiers to Fatah and two to the Jibril Front. Escalation of violence between the rival Palestinian terrorist organizations in northern Lebanon and the exile of Arafat and his loyalists (who held the Israeli prisoners) to the city of Tripoli, led to the acceleration of negotiations with Fatah for exchanging the prisoners (fearing they would be injured by the heavy fire occurring there, or caught by pro-Syrian organizations, or be smuggled out of Lebanon). Indeed, on November 23, the six Israeli prisoners held by Fatah were exchanged for 4,500 terrorists and Lebanese nationals held by Israel in Lebanon.[25] The number of Palestinians and Lebanese exchanged for Israelis was grossly disproportionate. The primary reason for this exchange was the urgency

to release the Israelis, and the fact that the released terrorists were prisoners of war and not those engaged in terrorist attacks.

Compared to the deal with Fatah, negotiations between Israel and the Jibril Front for the release of the other two soldiers held by the organization were prolonged. Along the way, it became clear that the Jibril Front was also holding a third Israeli captive, Hezi Shai, captured during the Lebanon War. At the end of negotiations, the national unity government, headed by Shimon Peres, decided to release 1,150 terrorists (including those convicted of attacks with many victims) for the three soldiers. Released in this transaction, among others, were 380 life-term prisoners, including 76 that had actively participated in the murder of Jews, as well as 119 terrorists who took part in attacks that resulted in injuring Jews.[26]

The government's decision was in fact a direct extension of the Israeli policy on extortion by terrorist attacks as set forth by Yitzhak Rabin, according to which in the absence of a military-rescue option, Israel would be ready to release imprisoned terrorists in exchange for its hostages. But the government's decision violated several principles and "red lines" and created a dangerous precedent. There was no numerical ratio between the number of Israeli hostages released and the number of terrorists released in exchange. Israel accepted Jibril's demand, allowing him to exclusively determine who would be included on the list of released prisoners. In fact, the decisions were made by committees of prisoners inside Israeli jails, with priority given to lifers and prisoners of over a decade. The lists were transferred to Jibril and from there to the International Red Cross. Moreover, for the first time, Jibril was able to write a personal letter to each freed prisoner (in exchange for allowing General Amos Yaron to write to the three Israeli prisoners in Damascus).[27] But the worst Israeli concession of all was the Israeli government's agreement to release terrorists convicted of mass murder, defined as "terrorists with blood on their hands", agreeing that some of those released (about 600 terrorists) would return to live in their homes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under Israeli rule, rather than be deported to Arab countries. In retrospect, Israel's willingness to do so strengthened terrorist organizations and militant factions in the territories, and some of those released even returned to terrorist activity, leading and instructing attack cells.[28]

The Jibril Agreement caused severe public backlash. Critics argued that decision-makers were exposed to severe pressure by the hostages' families and did not have the power to resist. Statements made by decision-makers at the time, strengthened the arguments of detractors. Prime Minister Shimon Peres told the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that, "the decision to exchange terrorists was one of the most difficult ... but when meeting with the families, a lot of criteria was given a new dimension. It was so hard to see them suffer, so difficult." [29]

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin said on television:

"When I took office as Defense Minister, I saw it as a supreme moral duty, almost sacred, to ensure that for an IDF soldier sent to war ... and captured, everything would be done to bring him back. No doubt the price is heavy, but this has been the state's practice since its establishment. I would like to ask every citizen how he would expect me to act as defense minister if it were his son sitting captive." [30]

The dilemma the government was forced to deal with at that time was both moral and utilitarian. Government spokesmen emphasized the state's duty to return its soldiers to their borders and to do all it could to release hostages from the hands of terrorist organizations, even at a very high price. The claim was essentially based on two levels: the first was the value of human life and the government's responsibility for the welfare of its citizens, and the second was the government's special duty to rescue captured troops sent into battle against the enemy. Opponents of the Jibril Agreement argued that the state has a general duty to protect its citizens, and that by releasing a mass of terrorists with experience and motivation to kill Jews, the government endangered many more lives than the lives of three hostages. As to the question of utility, detractors thought, that the mere release of terrorists would deliver a negative message to terrorists, namely that terrorism wins and that in the event they were caught, they would eventually be released in one transaction or

another. The released prisoners would instill a new combative spirit among terrorist organizations, join the ranks of the terrorist organization, and contribute their experience and energy to the armed struggle.

In any case, the Jibril Agreement left its mark on the policies of Israel's war on terror. For years (actually until this writing) various terrorist organizations (Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and others), have tried to kidnap Israeli soldiers or civilians in the territories or in Lebanon, to force Israel to pay a similar price for their release.

Israeli Decision Makers' Positions on Release of Prisoners in Exchanged for Hostages

Senior Israeli decision-makers and former heads of Israel's security agencies present different approaches to the issue of releasing imprisoned terrorists in exchange for hostages kidnapped by terrorists.

Rehavam "Gandhi" Zeevi, former advisor to the Prime Minister on counterterrorism, who later served as a minister in the Israeli government (and was assassinated by terrorists in Jerusalem in 2001) said:

"In cases of abduction and extortion attacks we should be able to sacrifice kidnapped hostages in order not to give the opponent an accomplishment, because we need to make it clear to him that we will not give in. This was [former Prime Minister] Rabin's line until Entebbe - we do not give in to terrorism ... This is a moral issue for our troops and for the individual who is the object of attack. It's definitely ethical in the long-term national vision. So there won't be more of such actions. Otherwise, [the damage] will be a hundred-fold." [31]

In contrast, the former head of the Israeli Security Agency (the Shin Bet), Abraham Achituv, believed that it is the prerogative of decision-makers to pay, as requested by the terrorists, even if an exorbitant price is required for releasing hostages. He said,

"I was never asked. I always accepted the dictates of the political leadership and never resisted because I live with the feeling and belief that for the sake of saving one Jew I would have given anything ... In retrospect, when I think about it I am glad that decisions were dictated to me and that I did not have to make them [myself]. I would decide the same thing - to save a Jew I would go very far." [32]

About the dilemma of the future price paid in respect to saving hostages' lives, Achituv held that "we will solve that problem when it comes. For the time being, save the Jews. It's a matter of education." [33] Another Shin Bet chief and former Minister of Homeland Security, Avi Dichter, said that he knew the issue of releasing Israeli hostages from all angles:

"I was a fighter and there were more than a few situations when I found myself with a 50-50 chance of falling into captivity, or even being killed and remaining there as a corpse, hoping I would be returned. I sent people. And then I took part in making these decisions in the General Security Service and as a government minister, in the cabinet and [other] forums. I know it from all angles." [34]

Dichter believes, like his predecessor, Achituv, that there should be no red lines in negotiations for the release of hostages. According to him:

"I told Ehud Barak [at that time the Prime Minister and Defense Minister] not to draw red lines. If you say that you are doing everything to bring him [the captive] home, then don't draw a red line. Why draw a red line and then get entangled in it when you need to deviate from it? I do not want to draw red lines. My red line is to bring the boy home. That is my red line." [35]

Former Chief of Staff and Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz explained that Israeli decision-makers' considerations on this issue are not necessarily the consequence of cold rational consideration but are also heavily influenced by emotional considerations and pressure of Israeli public opinion.

“I maintain that Israelis have special DNA. Where does it come from? From the value of the sanctity of life. This is one of the most important values in Israel. It does not exist at this intensity in any other democratic country. It certainly does not exist in failed countries ... [therefore] I’m saying that we cannot make such decisions [red lines]. Even if we do, they would be very difficult to implement ... I would argue that we should continue to maintain the sanctity of life as part of our rules for waging war, dealing with enemies, and terrorism in general. We should make every effort to avoid kidnappings but in the end, we must pay the price, and in this matter I am very clear. I think that the sooner we make the [deal], the lower the price we pay. So do it close to the event.”[36]

In contrast, the former National Security Council Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Nitzan Nuriel, pointed to a decrease in sensitivity on this issue in Israeli society over the years. He wondered,

“What happened to us between Entebbe (1976) and Mumbai attack (2008)? In Entebbe there were hostages and we ran to rescue them. In Mumbai we had a hostage event that we had actually anticipated. What happened to us within those 30 years? If you analyze the [Israeli] ethos from Entebbe to Mumbai, you see that public opinion with regard to terrorism has become more tolerant. In what sense? In the sense of, ‘that’s life.’”[37]

Former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, explained that in the past (as part of retaliatory actions carried out by Israel in the Arab world in the 1950s after the occurrence of terrorist attacks on its territory), the problem of Israeli hostages was solved by creating a “prisoner bank”, by collecting prisoners as a bargaining tool in case of capture.

To the question of whether this method is applicable today, Sharon replied, “I do not know. I’m not sure it’s implementable today. The question is whether we are doing everything we can in this area. In the past we did not have any other leverage. It’s the only leverage we had. Today, [2000] the Government has [many] leverages.”[38]

Another former Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, did not rule out, in principle, the possibility of ending a terrorist extortion attack with a deal to release imprisoned terrorists, but he believed it should be set aside and used only in exceptional cases.[39]

Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir explained the complexity of the decision to release imprisoned terrorists in exchange of hostages. He said, “There are no rules that apply to all cases and all situations.” Referring to the Rabin Doctrine on attack and abduction, Shamir said:

“This was an attempt to create a formula. But no formula includes everything. It should be discussed openly, rationally and wisely. This [release of imprisoned terrorists] must not harm the overall war [on terrorism], it should not damage the morale of your population, and it is important not to encourage the enemy. There are many factors to consider; it’s not a decision that can be made quickly.”[40]

When Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was asked [1999] how he relates to the Rabin Doctrine, Netanyahu said, “I don’t accept Rabin’s policy on this issue because this is an open invitation abroad for kidnappings. A military-rescue option needs to be sought, or other options if there is no military one, for example, exertion of political pressure.”[41]

Netanyahu’s approach to the release of imprisoned terrorists is in line with the hardline approach to fighting terrorism. In his books, Netanyahu reiterated the need for “no surrender” in all cases of terrorists’ demands and to avoid the release of imprisoned terrorists in exchange for hostages. Netanyahu described the extortion terror situation as “a classic terror operation.”[42]

He extolled the virtues of “steadfastness” when confronting terrorist demands for the release of their comrades in exchange for hostages. According to him, “the more terrorists believe that such action [as military intervention] is likely, the less prone they will be to continue their siege... The belief in the certainty or likeli-

hood of military intervention has a tremendously inhibiting effect on hostage-taking.”[43]

In Netanyahu’s opinion, past experience has shown that consistent compliance with this hardline policy led ultimately to a reduction in the number of abduction - extortion attacks, and therefore, he stated that “the only sensible policy is a refusal to yield and a readiness to apply force.”[44]

Before he was elected Prime Minister in 1996, Netanyahu was disappointed with Israel’s position in this area over the previous decade. He argued that Israel, once a world leader in its war on terror policy, repeated its error of exchanging prisoners for hostages time after time. Netanyahu did not hide his criticism of past governments in this area. In his various roles, Netanyahu came out openly against any exchange deals made with terrorist organizations, and primarily against deals for the release of imprisoned terrorists in exchange for soldiers held by Fatah and Jibril’s Front in 1983 and 1985. Netanyahu also recommended this to US Secretary of State George P. Shultz when serving as Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations during the TWA hijacking event in Beirut in 1985. In this case it was learned that the kidnappers scattered the hostages around Beirut and threatened their lives if their demands were not met. Netanyahu says he advised Shultz to maintain a hardline approach towards terrorists, to make it clear to them that if they touched one hair on one head of the hostages, the United States would retaliate.[45]

Despite Netanyahu’s tough stance in his public statements, writings and advice to decision-makers in Israel and abroad, during an actual situation of terrorist extortion, his policy as Prime Minister was no different than that of those leaders whose policies he had criticized in the past.

Netanyahu’s main test case was the “Gilad Shalit” affair. Gilad was an Israeli soldier abducted on June 25, 2006 by a group of terrorists belonging to different organizations, headed by Hamas.[46] The terrorists infiltrated Israel from Gaza using an underground tunnel and attacked Shalit’s tank as he stood guard near the border. They then kidnapped him from the tank.[47] There was an enormous buildup of Israeli public pressure demanding acceptance of Hamas’ demands in order to bring about Gilad’s immediate release. The pressure was initially directed at Ehud Olmert’s government, and subsequently to the Netanyahu government. Mass rallies, demonstrations and public events attended by opinion leaders, singers and intellectuals were held. Hamas used sophisticated psychological warfare on the Israeli public and the Shalit family, but Olmert refused to give in. Only after the change of government did Netanyahu’s government agree to release 20 female Palestinian terrorists from Israeli jails in exchange for a three-minute video of Shalit, beseeching the Israeli government to respond to the terrorists’ demands.[48] On October 18, 2011 Prime Minister Netanyahu agreed to Hamas’ demands. After 1,941 days in Hamas captivity, Gilad was released in exchange for 1,027 Palestinian imprisoned terrorists, including many convicted of murdering Israelis.[49] In his first two years in office, Netanyahu adopted Olmert’s hardline approach in negotiations with Hamas, despite his criticism at the time of Olmert’s seemingly conciliatory stance. But after two years, alongside a sharp decline in Netanyahu’s popularity as Prime Minister and an assumption that Shalit’s release would improve his public image, Netanyahu paid a higher price than the one Olmert had refused to pay during his tenure [50]. Against this backdrop, former Prime Minister Olmert criticized Netanyahu’s decision on the Shalit issue, saying:

“I defined the level of concession I would be willing to make for his [Shalit] release, and nothing beyond it. Public opinion was clearly for the release and look what happened. Bibi exchanged him for 1,027 murderers, a much higher number than I agreed to. Look at the sympathy he got. The strength of public opinion attributed (to it). People danced in the streets. Two weeks before the end of my term in office, after the elections, while Netanyahu had already formed a coalition, I sent the head of the General Security Service to start negotiations through Omar Suleiman (head of Egyptian intelligence) with Hamas for Shalit’s release. The debate was on the release of 350 (terrorists). There was a point where I said – up to here ... I could have ended the matter then, and leave the government with people dancing in the streets, bearing me on their shoulders...to enjoy it. But I said no ... at the end, the true test of leadership is the test of a person’s ability to make the decision when he is thinking with a clear head.”[51].

Mossad chief and former adviser to the Prime Minister on counterterrorism, Meir Dagan, concluded this important debate by saying,

“The Jibril Agreement is a classic example of very straightforward negotiations with a terrorist organization. This is the most obvious event. We declared that we would not negotiate with terrorist organizations. We always did [it], and we continue to do it. One of Hamas’ goals today is to abduct Israeli soldiers, while their main goal is to release [imprisoned terrorists] despite Israel’s claims that we don’t make deals. They understand that at the moment of truth, when they have a good bargaining chip, they can play with these cards.”[52]

The Israeli government’s willingness to make deals with terrorist groups to free hostages for imprisoned terrorists and the public pressure put on the Israeli government to conduct these transactions in recent years can be understood against the backdrop of the “Ron Arad Trauma”. On October 16, 1986, as part of his reserve service, navigator Ron Arad flew his Phantom Aircraft on a sortie to attack terrorist targets in the Sidon region of Lebanon. A technical malfunction forced the pilot, Yishai Aviram, and the navigator, Arad, to bail out of the plane. Yishai was rescued immediately, while Arad was captured by the Amal Movement.[53] The organization demanded three million dollars and the release of 200 Lebanese prisoners and 450 Palestinian terrorists in exchange for the release of Arad, but the Israeli political leadership, perhaps influenced by harsh criticism over the price paid in the Jibril Agreement, did not agree to the demands.[54] The negotiations were terminated in 1988 after Arad was taken by *Amal* and could not be traced.

Arad’s disappearance, and rumors that he was transferred to Hezbollah, then to Iran, and probably murdered by his captors became the “Ron Arad Trauma” model, used by pressure groups in Israeli society to force governments of Israel to comply with the demands and the exaggerated costs that terror organizations made for the release of other captives.

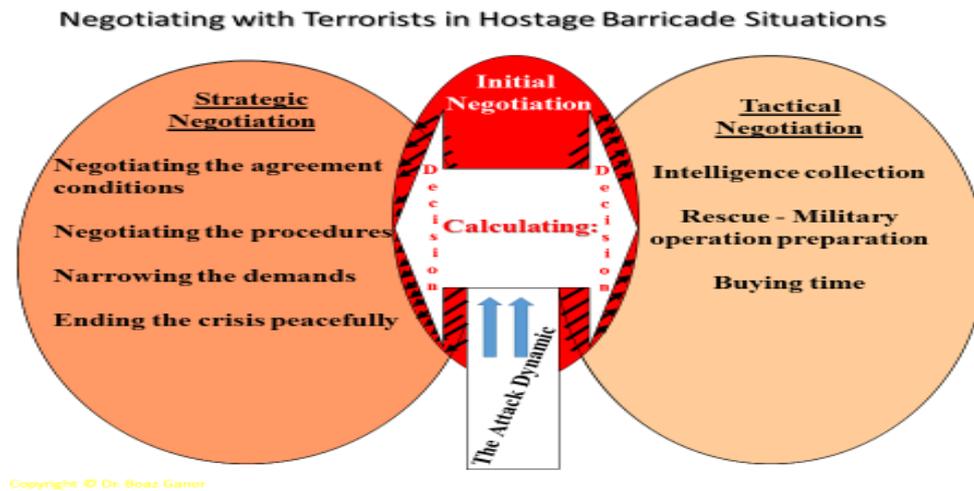
Tactical vs. Strategic Negotiations with Terrorists Holding Hostages

The strategy set forth by Yitzhak Rabin in the 1970s and adopted in many cases by Israeli governments in the following years, has to determine exactly when and under what conditions to end extortion incidents with one of two alternatives - compliance with terrorist demands or a military-rescue takeover operation. In fact, in both alternatives, there is a central place for conducting negotiations with terrorists holding hostages. When there was an intention to meet terrorists’ demands (in the absence of a military option), negotiations were essential and strategic, and designed to bring an end to the crisis through a deal with the kidnappers or their dispatchers. When the decision was to carry out a military-rescue takeover operation, tactical negotiations were used to achieve operational objectives in managing the crisis.

Figure 1 below, describes the three modes of negotiation in extortion attacks: Initial, tactical, and strategic negotiation. This analytical policy deals specifically with hostage-barricade situations, rather than kidnappings.

Initial negotiations start immediately upon the arrival of the military/law enforcement units at the scene or are conducted by professional negotiators trained specifically for that mission. Initial negotiation with terrorists is designed to stabilize the situation and calm the hostage takers by satisfying their immediate needs and the needs of the hostages (food, water, etc.), as well as to gather intelligence on the terrorists and the hostage situation. This type of negotiations is intended, among other things, to prolong the event in a controlled manner in order to enable Special Forces to prepare a military rescue operation. In general, initial negotiations are useful for both sides as they are serving the immediate needs of the hostage takers and the security forces.

Figure 1: Stages of negotiation in hostage situation



During the initial negotiations in combination with accumulated intelligence and the evolving situation, a decision should be made either to end the event with a military rescue operation or to comply with the terrorists’ demands. Some key factors that will influence this decision are the following:

- **The cost demanded by the terrorists:** What is the cost demanded by the hostage takers for the release of hostages? Are the claims realistic, limited, or do they require serious concessions from the government which may be impossible to fulfill?
- **Ultimatum:** Have the hostage takers presented an ultimatum to fulfilling its requirements, and how much time is left to fulfill them? What is the assessment of the behavior of the terrorists and how they are expected to behave at the expiration of the ultimatum?
- **Analysis of the terrorists’ attitude towards the hostages:** Is there a real and immediate threat to the safety of the hostages? Is there a danger that requires immediate intervention by the security forces?
- **Internal and external pressure:** In what circumstances would negotiations take place? Is there pressure from family members on the policymakers, and what are the characteristics of this pressure? Does the hostage situation require an immediate solution (due to injuries, for example)? Are there foreign nationals among them, and is external pressure being exerted on decision-makers to find a quick solution for their release, with no casualties among the hostages?
- **Evaluation of the possibility of overpowering the hostage takers by force:** Determining whether there is accurate intelligence on the location of the terrorists and their hostages. Do the security forces have the means, manpower and skills required to accomplish the mission?
- **What is the feasibility and expectation of success or failure of a military-rescue action, and what would success or failure mean in the event’s circumstances?** - Evaluating the chance of success of a military rescue operation, and on the basis of this assessment, examining the cost-benefit balance in cases of success or failure of the rescue operation.

At the end of the initial negotiation, a decision will be made whether to choose a military-rescue takeover operation or to comply with the kidnappers’ demands. Based on this decision, tactical or strategic negotiation will commence.

Tactical negotiation – Is aimed to buy time until the rescue operation is prepared. It is also meant to collect

operational intelligence on the hostage takers, and calm down the hostage takers.

Strategic negotiation – The purpose of strategic negotiations is to obtain the best and most rapid deal possible with the hostage takers or their dispatchers that would lead to the peaceful release of the hostages. At this stage, the negotiation should lead to the reduction of the demands of the terrorists, narrowing down the price which the state is forced to pay for the release of the hostages.

While the model presented appears somewhat static in the division it presents, the reality is that the negotiation approach may evolve dynamically as the incident progresses. In some cases, when circumstances change, or new intelligence is being gathered, the dynamics of the crisis might be changed and tactical negotiations may turn into strategic negotiations and vice versa.

Summary

One of the most complex and problematic types of terror attack are extortion attacks, abductions and hostage barricade situations. These types of attack present decision-makers with difficult ethical and practical dilemmas, the most important one being how to balance the desire to maintain deterrence so terrorist organizations won't carry out similar acts in the future with the need to ensure the safety and rescue of the hostages. Decision-makers are forced to choose between two alternatives, a military rescue operation or compliance with terrorists' demands. This choice is one of the most difficult and problematic dilemmas of counterterrorism because it does, in fact, present the need to choose between the lives of hostages and the lives of future victims who could be harmed due to the release of imprisoned terrorists. This decision is generally made under pressure, both internal and external, and in conditions of great uncertainty (about the situation on the ground, the kidnappers' intentions and the chance of success of an intervention by the security forces). And if that were not enough, the decision must be made in a very short time, and will win negative or positive public feedback, depending on the outcome. In terms of the terrorists, an abduction/extortion attack is likely to be carried out to achieve concrete objectives (release of imprisoned terrorists, ransom, demands for political or operational concessions, etc.), or for publicity and propaganda purposes.

Israel's tough public image as a country that does not surrender to the demands of terrorists has proven, in many cases, to be devoid of a solid foundation. Unlike other areas of counterterrorism warfare, Israel had a declared, though not necessarily written, strategy. This strategy was determined and formulated by former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin back in the 1970s with the guiding principle that as long as a military rescue option (however remote and dangerous it may be) exists, it is always to be preferred. In the absence of such an option, the government would negotiate with terrorists and should be prepared to accede to their demands in return for releasing hostages. Analysis of Israel's policy in the area of extortion attacks reveals that in the past, Israel has used a variety of methods to bring these crises to an end, starting with a readiness to give in to terrorist demands, or exerting various types of pressure on terrorist groups and on those who sent the terrorists and the states that support them, to military rescue operations by attack squads.

Israel's consistent policy that a military rescue option is preferable, has led to changes over the years in the characteristics of extortion terrorist attacks carried out by terrorist organizations and has produced a shift from hostage barricade attacks to abduction attacks. Contending with extortionist attacks is no easy feat for any government. Decision-makers have to weigh their options carefully, and decide between a military rescue operation or negotiating with terrorists for a possible release of the hostages.

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Notes

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The Dawa'ish: A Collective Profile of IS Commanders

by Ronen Zeidel

Abstract:

Based on the scrutiny of daily Iraqi newspapers, this article offers a collective profile of the commanders in the Islamic State (IS), the so-called Dawa'ish. From the highest level to the lowest ranks, Iraqis form the large majority of the commanders of IS in both Iraq and Syria. After determining the national background and discussing the role of non-Iraqis in the ranks of IS, the article focuses on the social, tribal, and regional backgrounds of the Iraqis in IS' ranks, providing in-depth information on the social and political background of IS in Iraqi society.

Keywords: Islamic State, Iraq, Ba'ath, terrorist profile

Introduction

This research is the first attempt to provide a comprehensive collective profile of commanders and leaders of the Islamic State (IS). The IS is a secretive organization and the available information, even on the top echelon of its leaders, is extremely scant. This article is based on an inventory of over 600 names of commanders and other functionaries of the IS, down to the level of local commanders in a small village. Together, the men in the files - many of them killed - constitute[d] the backbone of the IS. The study of such a large number of IS commanders produces a collective profile which offers a more accurate reflection of the nature of the IS than previous research.

As the study was based on Iraqi media, most of the information refers to IS commanders in Iraq. Unlike other studies of the IS command,[1]this study covers the entire period between 2006 and 2017. The collection of names continues and the inventory is updated daily. The main focus is on the Iraqis in the IS command, as they constitute the overwhelming majority on all levels of the organization. The research analyzes the ethnic origins of the Iraqi commanders, their previous occupations before 2003, their tribal affiliations and regional origins. All these categories help explain the intricate connections of the IS to Sunni society in Iraq - an issue that often remains unanswered and from which other questions derive: Is the IS a regionally based organization? Is it tribal? What is the background of its commanders? Where were they before 2003? How religious are they really? Finally, the research will examine the number of commanders serving or not serving in their places of origin, thus examining if the organization capitalizes on local cadres and encourages the surge of locally based groups or not.

Methodology

The research is based on the daily collection of names and information on IS administrators and commanders from the Iraqi press and media, in Arabic, for over a year. The names were verified by informed sources in Iraq. Further information, particularly on senior leaders, was collected from Western sources. The Iraqi newspapers used were two dailies, "Azzaman" and "al-Mada", known for being relatively independent (Azzaman is considered "moderate Sunni"). Both feature a daily report, covering the events of the war. Azzaman usually references the announcements of the various military spokesmen while al-Mada is more investigative. The Iraqi TV channels used for this research project are "al-Hurra" and "Anbar TV", the local station of the province of Anbar. The author avoided the official "al Iraqiya" and other channels serving as organs of parties and militias. The IS hardly provides information on its cadres; therefore the rare IS sources used here were official documents, courtesy of Aymenn al-Tamimi.[2]

The newspapers and media usually report the killing or arrest of a commander. For the purpose of this research, the fate of the commander is of secondary importance. What matters is his name or “*Nomme de Guerre*” (in Arabic *Kuniya*) and his role in the organization. Whereas the fate of that person cannot be verified immediately, there is no reason to doubt the credibility of the Iraqi sources with regard to the name, *Kuniya* and the role of the commander. In most cases, report on the killing of the commander in an airstrike would be part of a tediously long summary of the previous day’s military events. The commander would appear with his *Kuniya* and sometimes also with his real name. When the commander is senior, the Iraqi media would mention his pre-2003 biography. To avoid the risk of “fake names” entering the database, names were daily verified with informed sources in Iraq. Based on my experience and consultation with Iraqis, Iraqi sources providing information were graded according to their credibility: information by the Shi’ia militias was viewed as much less credible than information originating from the Iraqi Military Intelligence.

Names and *Kuniyas* can teach us a great deal about IS cadres. They usually indicate the nationality of the commander. In this category, *Kuniyas* in which the person states his nationality (e.g., Abu Tammam al-Sa’udi) are even more telling than real names. Names and *Kuniyas* often reveal the regional origin of a commander (e.g., Abu ‘Ali al-Anbari), but also the tribal affiliation of a person (e.g., Abu Arkan al-‘Ameri from the Albu ‘Amer tribe). Finally, names can also tell us something about the ethnic origin of a commander (e.g., Abu Muslim al-Turkmani). When all this information is compared with the area that was designated to that commander, the researcher can learn whether the person was posted in his place of origin or away from it. This requires a measure of familiarity with Iraq’s tribes and communities.

Some IS commanders have or had more than one *Kuniya*. There is always a risk of duplication in such an inventory. This is more often the case with senior commanders on which we have generally more information, often including the real name. They change, according to their whim, their *Kuniyas*, but the change would often be the use of a different name after the “Abu” and in that case would not make much of a difference - if it is the same person. Otherwise, the person would use a tribal *Kuniya* along with his regional or national one (e.g., Abu Nabil al-Anbari was also known as Abu Mughira al-Qahtani[3] and Abu Yazan al-Humairi; his real name was Wisam ‘Abd al-Zubeidi, indicating affiliation to the Zubeid tribe). Having more *Kuniyas* thus provides more information about a person. For lower ranking commanders only known by their *Kuniyas*, we will probably never know their real names. In most cases, these persons’ names are published only posthumously. Therefore, the chance that they reappear with a new name is slim. Regardless, there is no reason to doubt the information contained in their *Kuniyas*. A *Kuniya* or a name with no *Laqab* (surname) is useless, unless further information is given on the commander in question. If no further information exists, the person is classified as “unknown”.

A “commander” in this inventory would be anybody designated by the Iraqi media as such. The term used for low ranking commanders is “*Qiyadi*” and “*Qiyadi Bariz*” for mid-ranking or senior commanders. Often a *Qiyadi* is killed in an airstrike with his assistants. The number of his assistants is another indication of rank. If the exact role of the *Qiyadi* is mentioned, often with his IS title (Amir, Wali), we can derive his rank by that. This research project also covers non-military civil administrators of the IS: ministers, governors, Qadis, Muftis, heads of departments on all administrative levels, and ideologues. Again, this information was verified with informed sources in Iraq and was generally found to be accurate, with occasional errors regarding the exact role of the commander or whether he was killed or still alive. For the purpose of this study, what matters is that the person was indeed a commander, no matter how prominent. Unfortunately, no similar information exists on Syria, thus this study refers primarily to the IS in Iraq. Tables 1 and 2 provide information about the nationality of all known commanders and of those in the top echelon.

What emerges from the two Tables is that the overwhelming majority of IS commanders and leaders are Iraqis.[4] This can be seen on all levels from the top down. Although these figures mostly refer to Iraq, commentators tend to agree that the picture for Syria may not be very different.[5]

Table 1: Islamic State Commanders: Nationality

Iraqis:	345
Saudis:	38
Syrians:	27
Egyptians:	24
Chechens:	13
Tunisians:	13
Libyans:	8
Moroccans:	8
Europeans:	8
Jordanians:	6
Kurds:	5
Turks:	4
Palestinians:	3
Kuwaitis:	3
Other nationalities:	19
Unknown nationalities:	107
Total:	631

Table 2: Islamic State Top Echelons*: Nationality

Iraqis:	92
Syrians:	8
Saudis:	8
Egyptians:	3
Jordanians:	2
Chechens:	1
Tadjikis:	1
Europeans:	1
Unknown nationality:	13
Total:	129

* Positions listed in this category include the Caliph, ministers, governors (Wali), and senior military commanders (Amir) only.

Iraqis occupy most of the commanding positions in Iraq, but also in Syria and beyond - by 2015 some senior Iraqi commanders were sent to assist IS operatives in Libya. Basically, the IS is an Iraqi organization, created in the mayhem of post-2003 Iraq. Since the death of its founder, the Jordanian-Palestinian Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, in 2006, it was led by Iraqis and an Iraqi, Ibrahim 'Awwad Ibrahim al-Badri (Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi)

was responsible for its current transformation. Under his leadership, the organization settled in Syria and exploited the civil war there to triumphantly return to Iraq in June 2014.

Although pretending to be a global organization, the IS divides his members into natives of Iraq and Syria (*Ansar*) and Jihadis from other countries (*Muhajirin*), thereby implicitly acknowledging the dominance of those native from Iraq and Syria. The number of Syrian commanders is considerably smaller than the Iraqis. Surprisingly, Syrians are only the third nationality. This can be explained by the fact that in Syria rebel Sunnis have multiple other organizations to join, even for those with jihadi inclinations. Additionally, the IS has been a recent arrival to Syria. It arrived there with its Iraqi cadres. Many of its Iraqi commanders were more veteran than the Syrians or used that networking and their leadership skills to recruit other Iraqis - especially ex-Mukhabarat agents - thereby reinforcing the Iraqi contingency. Interestingly, most of the Syrians are confined to media work (the most prominent was Abu Muhammad al-‘Adnani - the spokesman of IS) and to the administration (the most prominent being Abu al-Athir al-‘Absi – the ex-governor of Syria, who, prior to his nomination, had also been involved in media work). Very few Syrians are military commanders in Iraq. While some Iraqis were senior governors in Syria, no Syrian so far has been a governor of a *Wilaya* [province] in Iraq. While the discussion of how ‘Iraqi’ the organization is in some other aspects is beyond the scope of this study, Tables 1 & 2 show that the predominance of Iraqis in IS ranks is not just numerical.

The relatively high number of Egyptians and Saudis is certainly connected to the IS heritage of ISI (Islamic State in Iraq) and its predecessor AQI (Al Qaeda in Iraq) which included a large number of recruits from both countries. ISI was at one moment in time even led by an Egyptian, Abu Ayub al-Masri, also known as “Abu Hamza al-Muhajir”. Some of the Saudis are Qadis and Muftis or commanders of the morality police (*Hisba*), providing IS with much needed familiarity with the Wahabi interpretation of the Shari’a. Saudis also figure as recruiters of suicide bombers. Among the smaller national contingents, Chechens, Tunisians and Libyans stand out. Chechens (the most prominent of them was the Georgian convert Abu Omar al-Shishani - commander of the “special battalions”) make the largest ethnic group, behind Arabs and Turkmen (more on these later when discussing ‘ethnic groups’). All of them are military commanders. Tunisian and Libyan commanders represent a large contingency of recruits from these countries in Iraq and Syria. They are both military commanders and functionaries in the IS administration. A large number of Libyans arrived in Iraq around 2003 and joined AQI[6]. Many more recruits moved to the core areas of the IS after 2011. However, none of them attained more than middle ranking positions. Significantly, jihadis from the West and from other parts of Europe are almost totally absent in our list of commanders.[7] Regardless of their notoriety in the West, they seem to be confined to the level of soldiers and suicide bombers of the IS, which is only logical given their low level of military skills and their lack of familiarity with the local environment.

Table 3: IS Iraqi Commanders: Ethnicity in Iraq

Sunni Arab:	319
Turkmen:	19
Kurds*:	7
Unknown:	4

*Kurds were not counted as Iraqis in Table 1. There is no certainty about the state origin of the 7 Kurdish commanders. Because they were active in Iraq, it is reasonable to assume they were all Iraqi Kurds.

Not surprisingly, almost all Iraqi commanders are of Sunni Arab ethnicity in Iraq. Yet the fact that IS is primarily a Sunni organization has not been appreciated properly. Most scholars debate whether the organization is primarily Salafi-Jihadi or ex-Ba’athist, forgetting that Sunnism is the main glue, not only for Iraqi members (Kurds and Turkmen are also Sunni), but for all the other members, regardless of their origins. A significant number of the commanders hail from countries in which the sectarian tensions are very much alive (Syria, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, etc.). This explains the blatant sectarian tone of IS propaganda. Ostensibly ethnic-blind, the IS is an Arab organization. Almost all the commanders (from the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe) are Arabs. Therefore, the organization maintains the hegemonic role of Arabs in Islam.

Among the three Sunni ethnicities in Iraq, the number of Turkmen commanders stands out. Furthermore, ten out of the fourteen were from the town of Tal’afar, west of Mosul. Turkmen are Iraq’s third largest ethnic group,[8] much smaller in numbers than the Kurds. Turkmen are divided almost equally along sectarian lines with the Sunnis having a majority of 60 percent. Tal’afar is located along the main road between Mosul and Syria, close to Kurdish areas and to the Yazidi enclave of Jabal Sinjar. Tal’afar profited from commerce with Syria and Turkey but had tense relations with its Kurdish and Yazidi neighbors. Shortly after the U.S. occupation of 2003, it became a center of, often cross-border, jihadist activity. In 2007, the U.S. Army deployed a large force to the town and established a civil administration there. When the Americans withdrew in 2011, the Jihadis returned. Before June 2014, Tal’afar was a mixed town in which Sunni and Shiite Turkmen coexisted with Christians, Kurds, Yazidis, Arabs and other communities. The taking of Tal’afar by ISIS in June 2014 was accompanied by the sectarian and ethnic cleansing of its population. The Shiite Turkmen were massacred or fled and so did all the others, turning Tal’afar into Iraq’s utmost IS stronghold. The Turkmen epitomize the merger of two groups of Iraqis that actually made the IS: the radical Islamists and the mid-ranking officers in the Ba’athist security services. They were also encouraged to join the IS by having some prominent members of their ethnicity in the senior command.[9]

Another town with significant representation among the commanders is Rawa in the western region of Anbar. Eight commanders are from Rawa and all bear the surname al-Rawi. The most prominent was probably Abu Du’aa al-Rawi, the Wali of Baghdad, killed in January 2016. Rawa, is an Iraqi town, whose population shares a regional and local, rather than a tribal, identity. Other towns with local identities are Tikrit, ‘Ana, Hit, al-Dur and Haditha. The number of commanders from Rawa is much higher, indicating a measure of local support in that town, which, by the time of writing these lines, is still under IS control.

Table 4: *Previous Occupations of Iraqi Commanders in the IS*

Students of Islam:	8
Members of Saddam Hussein’s security services:	47
Physicians:	3
Student:	1
Teacher:	1
Agronomist:	1
Worker:	1
Perfumer (‘Attar):	1
Farmer:	1
Engineer:	1
Unknown:	281

Table 4 refers to pre-2003 professional occupations of the Iraqi commanders; although the information is scarce, the two major groups are students of Islam and members of the Ba'athist security forces. After 2003, almost all the commanders shared the same life pattern of engagement in the "jihad" against the new central government and the American occupation force.[10] They were doing so in various organizations: some were members of AQI and constitute the Jihadi core of the IS. Others were members of the Ba'athist armed resistance who decided to join the IS, rather than JRTN (*Jaysh Rijal al-Tariqa al-Naqshbandiya* - The Army of the Men of the Naqshbandiya Order), the main armed organization of the Ba'athists. Almost all the IS commanders were inmates of the American prison camp, Camp Bucca, near Basra, which is where all their available snapshot photos were taken. Interestingly, most had not been regular mosque attendees before their arrest.[11] Some of the commanders were also imprisoned, first by the U.S. and later by the Iraqis, and held in high security prisons like Abu Ghraib, Badush, and Tikrit, from which they escaped in highly professional prison-break operations of the IS.[12] Most of them probably suffered some forms of torture by U.S. and Iraqi prison guards, humiliations which often also included sexual aspects. The question of the impact of torture on these men's motivation to join the IS and embark upon a vengeful crusade of violence has never been answered.

According to an IS document, in 2010, shortly after his election as leader of ISI, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi decided to accept a large number of ex-members of the Ba'athist security services after they underwent "repentance" (*Toba*) ceremonies.[13] This rather late merger, occurring shortly before the Syrian civil war of 2011, undoubtedly created the new model of ISIS. This was one of Baghdadi's first moves after becoming the leader in that same year. Baghdadi knew that ISI could not rely exclusively on the jihadists, who often lacked military experience. However, by taking the security servicemen on board, he accepted some risk since their networks and professionalism gave them the ability to oust him.

The foremost representative of the students of Islam in the organization is Baghdadi himself.[14] Two of his uncles served in Saddam Hussein's security services and may have facilitated the merger.[15] The foremost representatives of the members of the security services appear to have been Abu Muslim al-Turkmani, Baghdadi's deputy (killed in August 2015), Abu 'Ali al-Anbari, another deputy and commander of Syria (killed in December 2015), and Abu Bakr al-Anbari, head of the committee of security, defense and intelligence. From the information available, members of the security services outnumber the Iraqi students of Islam. They are all high-ranking members of the IS and can be found at the leadership level of the organization, in senior military command positions in both Iraq and Syria. They are the backbone of the IS. However, the claim that they were senior members of the Ba'athist apparatus is incorrect[16]: the senior members of the Ba'ath party were either arrested, tried and often executed, or joined the JRTN under 'Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri, forming a rather exclusive organization. Mainly middle-ranking and low-ranking officers of the security services joined ISI.[17] Most served in the General Intelligence (*Mukhabarat*) and the Army (possibly including the Republican Guards), very few served in the *Amn* and the more exclusive Special Security (*al-Amn al-Khass*), and other services. Under Saddam, the more exclusive services were entirely based on kinship and affiliation to the Albu Nasir, Saddam's own tribe. Saddam's family and tribe are underrepresented in the IS, which explains the absence of members of these services from its ranks.

What role do tribal affiliations play in IS? Table 5 offers some hints.

The question of IS' connection to Iraqi Sunni society puzzles scholars and remains a mystery. Unraveling the tribal origins of the commanders may help explain IS social basis, by focusing on one of Sunni society's basic elements: the tribe. If the IS is indeed working with, and through, the tribes, it could mean that it has a much stronger local support basis in the tribal lands of the Sunni periphery. The provinces of Anbar and Salah al-Din are almost completely tribal. It is not possible to control them without establishing relations with some of the tribes there. The overall picture emerging from Table 5 is one of a great tribal diversification, including at least 34 tribes.

Table 5: *Tribal Origins of Iraqi IS Commanders*

Jabur (Mosul and Kirkuk areas):	20
‘Ubeid (Kirkuk area)	14
Jumaila (Falluja area):	11
Albu Bali (Ramadi area):	8
Albu ‘Issa (Falluja area):	6
Dulaim (Anbar province):	5
Salman (Samawa area South West of Iraq):	4
Karabla (Western Anbar):	4
Saba’awiyeen (Mosul area):	4
Albu ‘Assaf (Ramadi area):	4
Jagha’ifa (Haditha area):	4
Janabiyeen (South of Baghdad):	4
Hiyaliyeen (Mosul area):	3
Albu Badri (From Samaraa, Baghdadi’s tribe):	3
Halabisa (Falluja area):	3
Bani ‘Izz (Diyala area):	3
Qaraghul (Anbar province):	2
Mushahada (north of Baghdad, Taji area):	2
Albu Fahd (Ramadi area):	2
Albu Nasir (Tikrit area, Saddam Hussein’s tribe):	2
Albu ‘Alwan (Falluja area):	2
Albu ‘Amer (Falluja area):	2
Gharir (South of Baghdad, Babylon province):	2
Albu Firaj (Anbar and Diyala):	2
Different tribes (one from each tribe):	51
Unknown:	151

In other words, the IS does not rely on a single tribe, and in most cases its commanders may not represent their tribes. So far, IS only had a modest success in recruiting entire tribes to work - or even just cooperate - with it, as reflected in Table 5. In relation to its size, the biggest tribe on the list is the Jumaila from the Falluja area. In July 2015, the Iraqi government announced that 33 tribal Shaykhs from Anbar who allegedly swore allegiance to the IS, were to be ostracized. The only one mentioned by name was Sheikh Rafi’ Mishhin al-Jumayli, a sheikh of the Jumaila and son of its paramount chief, indicating a measure of cooperation between a branch of the tribe and the IS organization.[18] According to the Iraqi daily newspaper “Al Mada”, the Jumaila was one of the Anbari tribes who were “neutral” between the government and IS,[19] again indicating that parts of the tribe may be more supportive of the IS. Historically, the Jumaila was the tribe of ‘Abd al-Salam and his brother ‘Abd al-Rahman ‘Arif, presidents of Iraq between 1963 and 1968. Their center is Karma, near Falluja, previously under IS control.[20] Their joining the IS may have been part of tribal party politics, preceding the taking of Falluja by the IS in February 2014. All of the Jumailis in the IS are military commanders posted in the territory of their own tribe. However, other parts of the Jumaila are actively involved in fighting the IS.[21]

The biggest tribal confederation (*Qabila*) among the commanders is the Dulaim from Anbar, with 21 tribesmen from various tribes of the confederation. The biggest tribe in that confederation, in terms of number of commanders, is a relatively small tribe, Albu Bali from Ramadi.[22] In August 2016, the Iraqi army recaptured the al-Khalidiya region, between Rammadi and Falluja, and the fiercest fighting took place in the village of Albu Bali. Available information suggests that this area was the first one occupied by the IS and its predecessors in Anbar already in 2005.[23] In general, the Dulaim ceased many years ago to act as a united confederation; it is more correct to consider each of its tribe separately. Yet, the commanders from the Dulaim appear to be the exceptions in their tribes since most of the tribes in the confederation, including the Albu Bali, support the government.[24]

At the head of the list in Table 5 stands the Jabur confederation. The Jabur is one of Iraq's biggest tribes: the overall number of Jaburis in Iraq is between 4 and 8 millions. Like all the major Sunni tribes (Dulaim, 'Ubeid, Shammar, al-'Azza), this tribe is taking an active part in fighting the IS and paid a heavy price for it. Some of the territories of the Jabur were under IS control, including the tribal center of Sharqat and Qiyara, south of Mosul. Yet, with such a big tribe it is impossible to control all its members, and thus six Jaburis reached positions of authority in the IS. The most senior Jaburi is Abu Fatima al-Jaburi who succeeded Abu Muslim al-Turkmani as Baghdadi's deputy and governor of Iraq.[25] Having such a prominent Jaburi in the organization may have prompted others to join.[26] The same can be said about another major Sunni tribe, 'Ubeid. This tribe is more concentrated geographically than all the other tribes, living in the area of Hawija, west of Kirkuk and at the time of this writing still under IS control. It is said that this tribe, which experienced a massacre of demonstrators from the hands of the Iraqi Army in April 2013, was even closer to cooperation with the IS, but the IS rejected its advice to continue the attack south towards Baghdad in July-August 2014, and instead attacked the Kurds and assassinated prominent members of the 'Ubeid. Since then, there is a "blood" feud between this tribe and the IS and it is actively involved in fighting within the ranks of the tribal paramilitary units east of Mosul. The most senior 'Ubeidi was 'Aasi 'Ali al-'Ubeidi, IS commander in chief (*Ra'is Hay'at al-Arkan*) and second deputy of Baghdadi (killed in January 2016).[27]

By contrast, the Albu Badri - Baghdadi's tribe - has a modest share among the commanders and leaders. The Albu Badri is more like an extended family from Samaraa than a tribe. Compared with all the aforementioned tribes, the Albu Badri were not known as military officers or members of the security services. As "*Sada*" (claiming to be descendants of the Prophet), they were known for their religious standing and their high level of education.[28] This may explain their modest representation in the essentially military command of IS. However, it also shows that, unlike Saddam Hussein, Baghdadi is not trying to impose nepotism. Saddam Hussein's tribe, the Albu Nasir, and other tribes from Tikrit, are also under-represented in the IS command. It is claimed that after the occupation of Tikrit by the IS in June 2014, the Albu Nasir were the first local tribe to swear allegiance and 38 members of the tribe joined the IS.[29] However, for some unknown reasons, they never reached senior commanding positions. The most notorious member of Saddam's family to join the IS is Ayman Saba'awi Ibrahim al-Hasan, son of Saba'awi Ibrahim, Saddam's step brother and former head of the Mukhabarat.[30] When the government retook Tikrit in April 2015, those who had joined the IS faced calls for a social boycott by the local population, which may also explain the disenchantment of remaining in the IS.

That so many Iraqi IS commanders use their tribal surname is a sign of their boasting of their tribal affiliation rather than hiding it. The list of tribes represented in the IS command shows that the organization contain members of almost all of Iraq's major Sunni tribes, and as such is representative of the Sunni periphery. The fact that these tribes fight against the IS has not prevented members of the tribes from joining the IS, individually or in small groups. Significantly, tribal representation is diversified and no single tribe is predominant. This can explain the permission to use the tribal (and as we shall see later, also the regional) surnames.[31] Arguably, not relying on traditional social units, such as the tribe, the IS is a more "modern" organization than some of its rivals - namely the tribal militias, the Iraqi army, and the Kurdish Peshmerga.

Table 6: Regional Origins of Iraqi IS Commanders

West of Iraq (Anbar):	110
North of Iraq (Mosul, Kirkuk, Tel'afar):	113
Baghdad:	7
Center of Iraq (Samaraa, Tikrit, Diyala):	28
South:	13
Unknown:	74
Total:	345

Table 6 reveals that the overwhelming number of IS Iraqi commanders are from the province of Anbar and the Arab north of Iraq. This is not surprising since these areas are under IS control and border with Syria. These areas suffered from marginalization and discrimination in the allocation of funds from the Iraqi central government to Sunni areas. For years, their development lagged behind other regions in Iraq. Lacking oil, men from these regions used to serve in the army and the security services, and the local economy of the areas was totally dependent on funds from Baghdad. The province of Anbar, Iraq's largest in territorial terms, provides the highest number of commanders, despite being Iraq's smallest in terms of population. This province was the center stage of the "Iraqi Resistance" and saw the rise of the "Sahwa" - tribal militias. During the years of the Sunni revolt against the Americans (2003-2008), part of the tribes in this province were actively involved in the revolt and ensconced ISI, while other tribes (Albu Fahd, Albu Nimr, Albu Risha among others) initiated the formation of the "Sahwa" to combat the rebels. To a large extent, the province is still scarred by this divide. Many of the Anbaris who joined the IS were members of the security forces before 2003. By joining radical organizations, they were interested in perpetuating Sunni rule and regain their previous influence in post-2003 Iraq. None of them ever joined the U.S.-trained "Sahwas". In fact, the tribal alignment in Anbar today closely follows that which existed during the repression of the "Iraqi Resistance" and ISI in 2006 - 2007.[32] Therefore, the claim that the predominance of Anbaris in the IS has anything to do with the "abandonment" of the tribal militias by the U.S. is incorrect. Interestingly, the central part of Iraq is under-represented with the IS. The IS never held the provinces of Salah al-Din and Diyala, constituting the country's center, for a longer period, which reflects the lukewarm reception of the local population as well as the prevalence of IS's rivals vying for the Sunni support. The rather marginal number of Baghdadis is another indication of the peripheral nature of the IS.[33]

Table 7: Matching the Regional Origins with Locations of Service

Commanders (Governors, military commanders, civil administrators on a local level)NOT serving in their places of origin:	199
Commanders serving in their places of origin:	154
Unknown:	154
Total:	507

The level of commanders and leadership examined in Table 7 forms the heart of the Islamic State. They are the administrators who connect the leadership to the population and form the military commanders protecting regions occupied by the IS. To a large extent, the legitimacy of the IS rests on their shoulders. It

is therefore surprising to note that so many of these men serve away from their places of origin. These are not only Iraqis serving in other regions of Iraq, but frequently Arab militants serving away from their home countries. A military commander away from his place of origin will often face difficulties controlling his forces, while a civil administrator would not be able to win respect from the local population. Iraqi society is sensitive to the presence of strangers, even peasants from the nearby rural areas were considered strangers in some places[34] - let alone non-Iraqis. In extreme cases, the locals would revolt against the foreigners, challenging the entire IS apparatus. Thus, Sa'd al-'Ubeidi, the supreme commander of IS forces in Ramadi, who was hated by the locals for his violence, was not able to organize an effective local defense to prevent the reoccupation of Ramadi in December 2015.[35] In more extreme cases, the locals even assassinated the IS commander. This happened recently in Sharqat, south of Mosul.[36] It is possible that this alienation between IS cadres and the local population drives some of the commanders to use excessively repressive tactics.

Conclusions

The original aim of this research inventory was to refocus attention from some prominent figures in IS' command, who, due to being outstanding, receive excessive attention and create a distorted image of the IS command. The excessive focus on Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and even more so on Abu Muhammad al-'Adnani, Abu Omar al-Shishani and the western mujahideen, like "Jihadi John" and 'Abd al Hamid Aba'ud, create an image of a fanatic and deeply ideological organization with a strong commitment to global Jihad, embracing warriors from all over the world. Based on an inventory of over 600 commanders at all levels, this research shows that the IS - at least in the core areas of Iraq and Syria - is essentially an Iraqi organization. Its senior command is almost entirely Iraqi.

The collective profile of the Iraqis in the IS shows that almost all are Sunni Arabs, with an impressive representation of the Sunni Turkmen minority. Many of the senior commanders were low- or mid-ranking officers in Saddam Hussein's security services, who joined the IS on Baghdadi's invitation and initiative, as late as 2010. They are not particularly religious. Many started attending mosques only in the 1990s when the state promoted more religiosity under the "faith campaign" (*al-Hamla al-Imaniya*). Their contribution to the IS in terms of military capacities, networking, governance, and repression was particularly valuable.

The commanders come from a large number of Sunni tribes, reflecting the diversified tribal map of Sunni Iraq. Yet the organization does not seem to be working with tribes regularly and in most cases tribesmen joined the IS individually, rather than as a group under orders from their sheikh. Baghdadi did not try to use his tribe to create a power basis, and unlike the Ba'athist security services, from which many of the senior cadres hailed, the IS organization is not nepotistic or monopolized by one tribe.

A significant number of Iraqi commanders hail from the province of Anbar in the west of Iraq and the provinces of the Arab north. Anbar was the cradle of the "Iraqi Resistance" in 2003-2008. Its repression by the U.S. and the U.S.-backed tribal militias in 2007 left the province deeply divided and this strife was exacerbated by the Sunni protests of 2013-2014. The city of Falluja in Anbar was the first Iraqi city to be occupied by IS in February 2014. Anbar and the Mosul area border on Syria and thus could benefit from the elimination of national but artificial borders. In comparison, the number of commanders from other Sunni areas is more modest.

At present (summer of 2017), the IS is losing ground in Iraq and Syria. In Mosul, IS men of both local and foreign origins, have been holding the local population in the old city as "human shields" and shoot those who try to escape. One of the reasons for the collapse of the IS is the fact that so many commanders and administrators are posted away from their places of origin. If many in Mosul were happy to see the hated, non-local, mainly Shi'ia units of the Iraqi army leave the city in June 2014, they soon found that they were traded for Turkmen commanders of the IS or even worse, non-Iraqis, especially Libyans. The presence of

non-Iraqi Arabs was immediately felt and often resented. There is an innate tension between the IS's modern aspects and some traditional features of Iraqi Sunni society. By not relying on a single tribe, the IS posed as a more "modern" organization than its rivals. Additionally, despite the predominance of Anbaris, the IS does not work along regional lines, avoiding giving preference to commanders from one region. The need to control populations efficiently and avoid the creation of regional power bases, inevitably led to tensions and undermined IS effort to achieve legitimacy in the eyes of the local population.

The Iraqi "shadow men" at the center of this inventory of commanders are the backbone of the IS. They are sustaining, within the organization, what Charles Tripp termed "the shadow state" in Iraq.[37] The essence of their activity is to maintain power in the hands of veterans of the security services by the use of repression and terror. Although many of the commanders on which this study was based have in the meantime been killed, other Iraqis form the most coherent group to head the IS, at least in Iraq, after Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's presumed death. To a large extent, the future of the IS lies in their hands.

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Notes

[1] See, for example, Craig Whiteside, "A Pedigree of Terror: The Myth of the Baathist Influence in the IS Movement", *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol.11, issue 3 (June 2017) which focuses almost exclusively on the 2006 - 2010 period and discusses only prominent leaders.

[2] See for example: Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "The Archivist: Stories of the Mujahideen: Unseen Islamic State Biographies of Outstanding Members"; URL: http://www.rubincenter.org/2016/08/the-archivist-stories-of-the-mujahideen-unseen-islamic-state-biographies-of-outstanding-members/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=%20Rubin%20Newsletter%2C%20August%2025%2C%202016; accessed 25 August 2016.

[3] Saudis usually use the surnames "Qahtani" or "Jazrawi", possibly because of the sensitivity of the surname "Sa'udi" - but not in all cases.

[4] For the famous tree of IS senior commanders see: Hisham al-Hashimi, "Revealed: The Islamic State "cabinet" from Finance Minister to Suicide Bomb deployer"; *Telegraph*, 9 July 2014; URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/10956193/Revealed-the-Islamic-State-cabinet-from-finance-minister-to-suicide-bomb-deployer.html> accessed 29.2.2016. This list is already dated.

[5] Conversation with Aymenn al-Tamimi, Haifa 22 February 2016.

[6] See the "Sinjar Files" captured by the U.S. Army in Sinjar, 2007. Joseph Felter and Brian Fishman, "Al Qaida's foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Files," *Combating Terrorism Center*, West Point, 2007. p.8; accessed 1 March 2016

[7] Only eight commanders, out of the total number, had Western citizenship: mostly were of French or Algerian origins. The most senior was Abu Bakr Bin Habib al-Hakim, a French of Algerian origin, who was military commander of the al-Raqqa region and was reportedly killed in a Coalition airstrike. *Al-Mada* 16 April 2017. One was a Qadhi with French citizenship in the province of Nainawa; he was reportedly killed (*Azzaman*, 24 March 2016). The other was Abu Ibrahim al-Baljiki (a Belgian), in charge of recruitment in Europe, who was reportedly killed in Mosul (*Al-Mada*, 6 June 2016). Another was a French man of Algerian origins, who was Sharia instructor of one of the IS brigades; he was killed in Mosul. (Hisham al-Hashimi's Facebook site, 11 February 2017). Another was "Abu Omar al-Hollandi", a Dutch convert, who was in charge of the foreign fighters in Mosul and was reportedly killed there (*Azzaman*, 13 January 2017). Another was Rasheed Qasim, a French of Algerian origins, who was a Sharia instructor in a military unit in Mosul and was reportedly killed there.

[8] Zahid al-Bayati, "Turkmen: The Third Largest Ethnic Group in Iraq", in: Sa'ad Saloum (Ed.), *Minorities in Iraq* (Arabic and English), Baghdad: Masarat, 2013. p. 145. Their numbers are estimated at less than 1 percent of the population.

[9] The most senior Turkmen was Abu Muslim al-Turkmani, al-Baghdadi's deputy; he was killed by a U.S. air strike in August 2015. Turkmani was a middle-rank officer of Saddam's Mukhabarat; his real name was Fadil al-Hayali (*Haaretz*, 24 August 2015; *Azzaman*, 22 July 2015; *Almada*, 13 December 2015). He was replaced by another Turkmen, Abu 'Alaa al-'Afari, whose real name was 'Abd al-Rahman al-Qaduli, a long time Jihadi with experience acquired in Afghanistan and a previous teacher, killed in March 2016 by a U.S. airstrike in Syria (Albashir 'abd al rahman, "Man Huwa 'Abd al-Rahman al-Qaduli" *Al-Ray al-Yawm*, 25 March 2016); URL: <http://www.raiaalyoum.com/?p=412383>. Other prominent Turkmen are Hamad Za'lan al-'Afari, the Minister of Finance, reportedly killed in Mosul, Khalid al-'Afari, the Minister of Education and Abu 'Abd al-Majid al-'Afari, the Governor (Wali) of Nainawa (Mosul province) (*Azzaman*, 25 June 2015; *Niqash* 11 September 2014; *Azzaman*, 29 August 2015).

[10] The IS hardly provides biographical data on its members. The Ba'athist past of many of them is a source of embarrassment for the organization and in the rare cases of IS obituaries, it is totally ignored, See the obituary for Abu Nabil al-Anbari in Aymenn al-Tamimi, "Eulogy to Abu Nabil al-Anbari: Islamic State Leader in Libya" (*MERIA, Rubin Center*, 7 January 2016; URL: http://www.rubincenter.org/2016/01/eulogy-to-abu-nabil-al-anbari-islamic-state-leader-in-libya/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Rubin%20newsletter,%20Jan.%2013,%202016). The only sources for biographic information on the occupations of IS Iraqi commanders before 2003 is the Iraqi press or informed observers, such as Hisham al-Hashimi. We know more about prominent commanders than about the others

[11] This is from a U.S. military study of imprisoned insurgent suspects. Jeffrey Azarva, "Is U.S. Detention Policy in Iraq Working", *Middle East Quarterly*, 16, (2009), pp. 5 - 14.

[12] For example see: *Azzaman*, 9 January 2016 on 'Aasi 'Ali al-'Ubeidi and Aymenn al-Tamimi on Abu Nabil al-Anbari, Al-Tamimi, "Eulogy".

[13] This document was translated by Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "An Account of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and Islamic State Succession Lines" (*GLORIA, Rubin Center*, 25 January 2016; URL:

http://www.rubincenter.org/2016/01/an-account-of-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-islamic-state-succession-lines/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Rubin%20Newsletter.%20February%201,%202016.

[14] On the biography of Baghdadi see: William McCants, "The Believer" Brookings Institute, 1 September 2015; URL: http://www.brookings.edu/research/essays/2015/thebeliever?utm_campaign=brookings-essay&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=21719798&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9153QtBn--u2iT-e9ObIKCAY18EnQySEs83Lc8WjT_bF33nTnkTPJQtaAr80Bu3g0o1p20iWJ33kv8rZTZLepaGaM95w&hsmi=21719798.

[15] Ibid.

[16] I agree with Craig Whiteside (see note 1) that the IS should by no means be branded a "Ba'athi or ex-Ba'athi organization" as far as its *ideological* facet is concerned. The members of the security forces of the previous regime have never been hard-core Ba'athist even before 2003 and their loyalty to Saddam was also doubtful, both before and after 2003. Saddam Hussein is not the "godfather" of the IS. Yet the sheer number of previous regime elements in IS' ranks is staggering. We know too little about the inside circles of IS leadership to be able to conclude, as Whiteside did, that it was always the Salafis who commanded the officers. A different approach in which the IS organization is divided into a religious branch and a military branch, like, for example, Hamas, is more plausible.

[17] The highest-ranking officer who joined ISI was Abu Bakr al-Anbari, a lieutenant general (*Liwa*) in Saddam's army. There were hundreds of similar ranking officers in Saddam's army

[18] *Azzaman*, 15 July 2015. His father , Shaykh Mishhin, later ostracized him for his act(*Al Mada* 29 May 2016; URL: <http://www.almadapaper.net/ar/news/510952/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84%D9%88%D8%AC%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B4%D8%AF-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D8%AF%D8%AE%D9%88%D9%84%D9%87%D8%A7-%D9%88> .

In June 2016, following the taking of Falluja, Rafi' was apprehended by the Iraqi forces; URL: <http://www.almadapaper.net/ar/ViewPrintedIssue.aspx?PageID=20284&IssueID=2069>).

[19] *Al Mada*, 29 November 2015.

[20] For more on the Jumaila, see: Khashi' al-Ma'adidi, *A'ali al-Rafidain* (The Nobles of Mesopotamia), Baghdad: Dar al-Shu'un al-Thaqafiya al-'Amma, 1990. Vol.3. pp. 309 - 316.

[21] For example, Col. Juma'a Faza' al-Jumaili, commander of a brigade of the, predominantly Shiite, "*Hashd al-Sha'bi*" in the Karma front, near Falluja: the tribal domain of the Jumaila(*Al Mada*, 1 March 2016).

[22] According to Ma'adidi, it is a sub-tribe of the Albu 'Ubaid of the Dulaim confederation.- Ma'adidi, op. cit., p. 67. In this tribe, mobilization appears to be based on tribal and family connections. See the case of Mahir al-Bilawi, the military commander of Falluja, killed in May 2016. He was connected to another senior commander from his tribe, Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Bilawi. Four of his brothers are also Dawa'ish and even his father is the head of the IS Shar'ia courts in Anbar (*Al Mada*, 29 May 2016) ; URL: <http://www.almadapaper.net/ar/news/510884/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%B4-%D9%8A%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%AE%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84%D9%88%D8%AC%D8%A9-%D9%88%D9%85%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%AD>, accessed 29 May 2016).

[23] URL: <http://www.almadapaper.net/ar/news/516057/%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B7%D9%84%D9%82-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AC%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1>

Words of the Shaikh of the Albu Fahd in that report suggest that IS presence in that area may also be connected to tribal conflicts between the pro-government Albu Fahd and the Albu Bali and Albu Kan'an.

[24] *Al Mada* 29 November 2015. According to this source, the only tribes of the Dulaim which are "neutral" are the Albu 'Assaf and Albu Mar'i.

[25] Al-Tamimi, "An Account"; URL: http://www.rubincenter.org/2016/01/an-account-of-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-islamic-state-succession-lines/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Rubin%20Newsletter.%20February%201,%202016.

[26] A recent release of IS forms from Mosul and its periphery shows that a large number of Jaburis served in the IS police force. The Jaburis outnumber any other tribe in the lists, showing that they were even more strongly represented among ordinary IS policemen. Significantly, these forms were taken from areas in which the Jaburis are native; URL: https://twitter.com/iraqi_day/status/878585847896997889?s=03 (accessed 26 June 2017). I am grateful for Adam Hoffman for pointing out to me this link.

[27] *Azzaman*, 9 January 2016; *Al Mada* 12 January 2016.

[28] Thus, the head of the tribe in the 1990s, Dr. 'Abd al-Latif al-Badri was a surgeon. *Al Jumhuriyya*, 22 March 1993.

[29] URL: www.Niqash.org, 22 October 2015.

[30] *Al Mada*, 13 December 2015. Saba'awi was executed by the government.

[31] It brings to mind the famous ban on the use of surnames introduced by the Baa'th party in 1976 to mask the predominance of Tikritis.

[32] See *Al Mada*, 29 November 2015.

[33] Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was born and raised in Samaraa. He adopted the surname Baghdadi because he moved with his family to Baghdad and studied there. In this article, he is, however, counted as a Samara'ai.

[34] Aymenn al-Tamimi visited Mosul on March-April 2017 and quoted a relative who claimed that most members of the IS in Mosul were from nearby rural areas and that this often created friction. Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, "Journeys to Mosul"; URL: [http://www.rubincenter.org/2017/06/journeys-to-mosul/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MERIA,%20v20n3%20\(Winter%202016\),%20complete](http://www.rubincenter.org/2017/06/journeys-to-mosul/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MERIA,%20v20n3%20(Winter%202016),%20complete); accessed 26 June.

[35] *Al Mada*, 7 January 2016.

[36] *Azzaman*, 27 February 2016, *Al Mada*, 28 February, 2016.

[37] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*. Cambridge: CUP, 2010 (3rd edition), pp.259 - 267.

Assessing the Feasibility of a ‘Wilayah Mindanao’

by Joseph Franco

Abstract

Philippine-based militants led by Isnilon Hapilon are continuing their efforts to build an Islamic State presence in Central Mindanao. The Battle for Marawi has demonstrated how conflict-affected areas, specifically in the Lanao del Sur province, are favourable to the entry of foreign jihadists. These individuals may decide to join IS-affiliated groups in the Philippines instead of travelling to the Middle East. As the IS core faces increasing pressure from coalition forces, Mindanao could serve as a halfway house for Katibah Nusantara fighters seeking to hone their combat skills before returning to their countries of origin. Denying space to a potential ‘wilayah Mindanao’ rests on the success of the peace process with mainstream Filipino Muslim groups.

Introduction

The ongoing Battle for Marawi has cast harsh light on the state of internal security in the Southern Philippines. As the fighting continued to rage for more than two months, it is clear that a paradigm shift has occurred in the conflict-affected areas of Mindanao. Lanao del Sur Province (LDS) has always been the hotbed of Filipino Muslim militancy in mainland Mindanao. However, the Battle for Marawi was unprecedented in terms of its urban nature and the scale of the fighting.

This article highlights the utility of Mindanao training camps to the increasingly decentralized orientation of the so-called Islamic State (IS). It must be stressed that IS-inspired militants were not the first foreign elements who sought to exploit the ungoverned spaces found in Mindanao. Rather, IS-pledged militants were able to leverage emerging technologies such as social media to “sell” Mindanao as a destination for martyrdom and expeditionary jihadist violence. This article will also trace how IS-related themes and visuals influenced the indigenous Philippine terrorist propaganda. The conclusion addresses the future of the emerging transnational Southeast Asian militant network after the guns fall silent in Marawi.

The Battle for Marawi

The Battle for Marawi started on 23 May 2017 after an *in extremis* operation by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to capture Isnilon Hapilon, the designated *emir* or leader of IS-pledged militants in Mindanao. The raid immediately degenerated into a confused gun battle with hundreds of Maute Group (MG) members, Filipino militants and foreign fighters emerging from prepared positions across the city. As fighting raged into the month of August, Marawi remains desolate with 90 percent of the civilian population displaced to nearby municipalities and towns. More than 500 MG members and other jihadists have died as of early August 2017 along with 125 members of the security forces.[1]

Contrary to the earlier stages of the battle, the AFP has stopped issuing self-imposed deadlines for when the two remaining Maute-held *barangays* or villages will be cleared. The Philippine government has likewise pushed for the extension of martial rule beyond the 60 days provided for in the Constitution. Proclamation No. 216 suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* and placed Mindanao under martial rule.[2] More than a month ago, the Supreme Court of the Philippines upheld the state of martial law declared in Mindanao.[3]

It has been belatedly admitted by the security forces that the Maute Group and its allies were “underestimated”. [4] The Maute and its allies had time to plan a takeover of Marawi city, which included casing the headquarters of the Philippine Army’s 103rd Infantry Brigade and a safe house of a military intelligence group covering Marawi.[5] Had the 23 May raid not occurred, the militants intended to take over the city on 26 May 2017,

during the holy Muslim month of Ramadan. So while the Philippine military may have seized tactical surprise, it was offset by the strategic surprise attained by the MG.

IS Mindanao: From Basilan to Lanao?

In late January 2017, Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana reported that 15 IS-affiliated terrorists were killed after a night-time airstrike in Central Mindanao.[6] Among the reported fatalities was an Indonesian national identified only as Mohisen. Also wounded in the strike was Isnilon Hapilon, leader of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) Basilan faction and leader of IS-pledged militants in the Philippines. Hapilon's faction moved from Basilan province to Butig municipality, LDS, as part of an initial overture to establish a permanent IS presence in the Philippines. Lorenzana remarked that Hapilon acted on the "behest of the ISIS people in the Middle East" to check whether the area would be a viable place for a *wilayah* (province of IS).[7] Lorenzana's blithe assessment reflects Manila's dated appreciation of how IS operates when compared to more traditional terrorist organizations.

The expansionary model espoused by Lorenzana, where Filipino groups passively receive orders from the IS core, is more aligned with how Al Qaeda historically worked with its affiliates. Daniel Byman argued that Al Qaeda sought affiliates to achieve its strategic goal of fighting the "far enemy" or countries supporting "apostate" Arab regimes.[8]

In comparison, the IS model for expansion followed the idea of *baqiya wa tatamaddad* (Arab for 'remaining and expanding'), which was focused on "fighting locally" and "instituting limited governance".[9] IS *wilayahs* are premised in the ability of militants to exercise governance through armed coercion. IS decentralization is the culmination of the process AQ underwent in the late 2000s as it reeled from US military pressure.[10] For IS, therefore, affiliates outside of the Syria-Iraq region served as potential showpieces of Islamic governance first, expeditionary fighters second.

This appreciation of the necessity of situating global IS ideology in local contexts drove Hapilon to select Butig municipality in Lanao del Sur as the rallying point for other IS-pledged Filipino militants. While it remains debatable how much direct operational guidance the IS core gave to Hapilon, what is clear is that the mindset of some jihadist militants in Mindanao has changed beyond the top-down influence of AQ operatives.

Hapilon needed the clout of the Maute Group (MG) in LDS. Members of the MG pledged allegiance to IS caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in April 2015 and subsequently referred to themselves as "IS Ranao" in online chat applications.[11] To LDS residents, they are simply the 200-strong "*grupong ISIS*" or "group of ISIS".[12] On 24 November 2016, the MG made international headlines by issuing a statement and raising an IS flag in front of the disused Butig municipal hall.[13] Hapilon appeared convinced that the MG would be a useful ally, with the latter's ability to wage a protracted guerrilla campaign against government forces.

A More Viable 'Wilayah Mindanao'?

Attempts to establish a permanent presence for foreign jihadists in Central Mindanao have historical precedents. In 1994, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) built training camps for foreign jihadists with seed funding from Al Qaeda.[14] From 1996-1998, the camps trained hundreds of Southeast Asians, mostly from Indonesia, before they were dismantled after the 2000 "all-out war" against the MILF by the Philippine President Joseph Estrada.[15]

As AQ influence waned, the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) used pre-existing connections between Indonesian AQ militants and the MILF to build their own training camps in Central Mindanao. From 2003 to 2005, JI successively built and occupied a camp in Mt. Cararao and Camp Jabal Huda.[16] Khadaffy Janjalani, then

leader of the ASG, sensed an opportunity to consolidate forces with the JI in Central Mindanao but his group was interdicted by a joint MILF-Philippine military operation.[17]

The ASG's repeated attempts to relocate to Central Mindanao indicate awareness of the difficulties in sustaining a large armed presence in Basilan. Basilan's location in Western Mindanao is arguably more accessible for Indonesian and Malaysians planning a *hijrah* (migration). Hapilon traded Basilan's proximity to the Philippines' maritime borders for the more defensible location of Butig municipality. Compared to the constricted geography of Basilan, Lanao del Sur's complex terrain offers more obstacles against government forces.

For militants, the defensive depth of Central Mindanao is complemented by its abundance of resources. The JI training camps were set within rich and well-irrigated farmland, which allowed for indefinite sustainment of trainees and cadres. Agricultural produce sourced from farming communities controlled by militants find a ready market in the urban centres of Mindanao. The MILF, for example, were even able to charge above-market rates for harvested rice, by flaunting their weapons and subtle coercion.[18]

Selling Mindanao to Southeast Asian Jihadists

Hapilon's stature as an effective leader for IS fighters and supporters in Southeast Asia rests on forging the security and resources potential of Central Mindanao into a functioning base. The Battle for Marawi has most likely provided a beacon for would-be jihadist pilgrims to aspire to, notwithstanding the actual outcome of the battle.

In the long run, the ascension of new *wilayahs* is mutually beneficial for the IS leadership and would-be *wilayah* emirs for it demonstrates that IS is succeeding in its divine mission, while obscure jihadist groups get a chance to "sign up for the hottest thing".[19] Even the threat of a future *wilayah* could be useful for jihadist groups such as the Hapilon faction, short of an actual declaration by Baghdadi or other senior members of the IS core. In November 2014, *Dabiq* issue no. 5 mentioned that the pledge from Philippine groups had been accepted but like some other countries had "delayed the announcement of their respective [*wilayah*]..."[20]

There appears to be tacit recognition within the IS leadership that Southeast Asian groups continued to have no "infrastructure of control" that could be the basis for a formal *wilayah*, albeit such an assessment could change in the months following the end of the crisis in Marawi.[21] Al-Baghdadi's alleged choice of the Southern Philippines as "the ISIS' base" in Southeast Asia appears intentionally vague.[22] This appears consistent with the assessment that IS may have abandoned its *wilayah*-based expansion model, which is premised on the idea of "remaining and expanding".[23] This strategic ambiguity allows Hapilon the discretion to consolidate his influence. In a June 2016 video, Malaysian Abu Aun al-Malysi along with other unidentified Indonesian and Filipino militants, exhorted followers to join their "brothers" in Mindanao.[24]

It must be noted however, that the call did not mention the establishment of a *wilayah*. Instead of being declared a "wali", Hapilon was referred to as a "emir" or leader of an IS "division", with the Philippines being considered part of "the land of jihad" and not as the "land of the caliphate".[25] The reluctance of the IS leadership to declare a *wilayah* is probably due to the current inability of Hapilon's faction to exercise de facto governance. [26] At present, cooperation among jihadist groups in the Philippines occurs through ad hoc arrangements. [27] Even without the full *wilayah* designation, Hapilon and his followers appear set in producing indigenous propaganda content that promotes the existence of an actively fighting IS division.

Connections Through IS-influenced Propaganda

As of this writing, slick propaganda content which repackages the gritty footage coming out of Marawi has yet to emerge. It can only be assumed that edited propaganda videos will emerge in line with trends in indigenous Philippine propaganda discussed below.

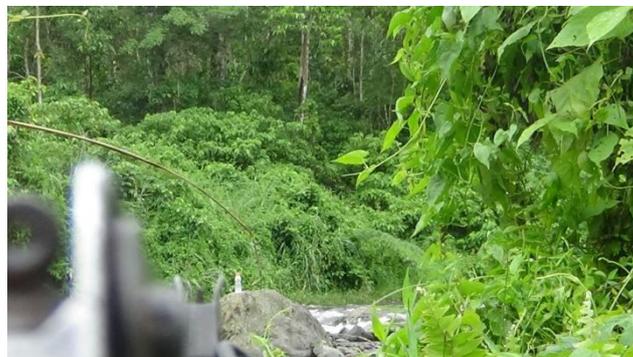
Two channels, moderated by Filipino-speaking users, were active in producing original content from June-August 2016. The “IS Philippines Supporters” channel during its one-month long existence (July 2016) had around 70 members. Content shared on the channel was focused on previous activities by Isnilon Hapilon, specifically meetings leading up to the January 2015 pledge. Its content changed to dispatches depicting training activities by “IS Lanao” forces [28] and showcasing *ghanimah* (“spoils of war”) seized from government troops (Figure 1).[29]

While “IS Philippines Supporters” was active, another Telegram channel named after “IS Lanao” also operated from May to August 2016). The focus of IS Lanao’s output was on content depicting marksmanship training by armed men in a riverine area (Figure 2).[30]

Figure 1: “*Ghanimah*” captured from Army sergeant assassinated in Marawi City, LDS



Figure 2: *Marksmanship training in LDS*



Propaganda material produced in Mindanao and distributed via messaging apps can also be a key indicator of the depth and breadth of jihadist connections. Prior to Hapilon’s designation as wali for IS forces in Southeast Asia, there were already signs of symbolic connections in place. Philippine militants’ mimicry of Amaq Agency-style content was not only an aesthetic choice but was intended to draw in Southeast Asia-based sympathisers familiar with IS propaganda.

The first instance of this mimicry could be found in an MG video circulated in April 2016. In the video, two of six kidnapped sawmill workers were beheaded.[31] The sawmill workers were dressed in orange garments, imitating the orange jumpsuits that feature prominently in gory IS videos.[32] Subsequently, the images were circulated among Telegram accounts with Arabic script overlays. Those edited photos were then recirculated by Amaq Agency, an online propaganda outlet associated with IS.[33]

An important function of IS-influenced content is to provide Filipinos active on chat applications with talking points to discuss with other “jihobbyists” in Mindanao and overseas.[34] The shift in propaganda aesthetics

towards the Amaq template underscores the changing motivations for producing content. For content disseminated via Telegram, there is a deliberate attempt to package the content to look like “official” IS material. The template is as follows: (1) 15-45 seconds of generic IS computer-generated imagery (CGI) consisting of logos and black flags; (2) 5 to 7 minutes of ASG footage; (3) 15-30 seconds of additional IS-themed CGI; all overlaid with (4) subtitles.[35]

In comparison, pre-IS indigenous propaganda involved straightforward videos designed to act as “proof-of-life” videos for kidnap-for-ransom (KFR) activities. The only group that appears to produce KFR-related videos is the ASG faction in Sulu (ASG-Sulu) headed by Hatib Sawadjaan. Online material depicting the executions of Canadian hostages John Ridsdel and Robert Hall (Figure 3), were free of distinctive markers found in IS videos such as CGI/animated logos, watermarks or *nasheed* audio tracks.[36]

Figure 3: Execution of Robert Hall



Only a crude reproduction of an IS flag could be seen in the Ridsdel and Hall videos. These proof-of-life/KFR videos were not as widely disseminated on Telegram channels frequented by IS sympathisers. The lack of IS branding has limited the reach of such propaganda, demonstrating the utility of Amaq-style aesthetics.

The content of IS-influenced indigenous propaganda also provides clues to novel techniques and tactics that were imparted to Filipino militants from overseas. IS in Syria and Iraq demonstrated that it is possible to use consumer-grade quadcopter drones to deliver lethal payloads.[37] In the Philippines, MG members documented a test flight of their surveillance drone (Figure 4).[38] The device in question is a simple glider-type drone which is less sophisticated than the quadcopters used by IS to drop grenades. It is currently unknown if the MG were able to progress from rudimentary surveillance drones to the quadcopter bombers of IS in Iraq/Syria.[39]

Figure 4: Drone launch by Filipino jihadists



A New Southeast Asia Alumni Network

With Isnilon Hapilon as IS leader in Mindanao, there is a greater chance that displaced Southeast Asian foreign fighters from the KN would have a figurehead to seek out and follow. Hapilon’s history and stature as one of the founders of the Abu Sayyaf in the late 1990s has been buttressed by his pledge of allegiance to IS.

There is already concern that when foreign fighters return to the region “they will build a kind of alumni network, like the fighters from Afghanistan nearly two decades ago”.[40] The Philippines, with its lax security legislation, may prove to be a better option for Malaysians escaping the re-capture of Mosul and Raqqa. Indonesian and Malaysian fighters returning from the Katibah Nusantara (KN) may find Central Mindanao a more inviting prospect than returning to their home countries.

The most established networks are from Malaysia. A recently disrupted plot uncovered that Sabah was slated to be the transit point for Southeast and South Asian militants keen to join Hapilon and his Malaysian backer Dr. Mahmud Ahmad. Ahmad was formerly a faculty member of the University of Malaya and is suspected to be the financier of Malaysian foreign fighters in Mindanao. Malaysia’s Special Branch was able to disrupt the plot, when it arrested four suspects trying to recruit new IS members from Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Myanmar.[41] Malaysia has legislation that covers membership with terrorist organisations overseas.[42] From Indonesia, the networks to infiltrate the southern Philippines appear to be headed by Bahrun Naim.[43]

Thinking Beyond the Battle for Marawi

The Battle for Marawi has raised fears of copycat attacks against other targets in the Philippines and other places in Southeast Asia. Southeast Asians fighting in urban areas in Syria and Iraq now have a template to apply those lessons in the tropical cities of their home countries. On the other hand, the rural environment of Mindanao is a close match to the climate and terrain of both Indonesia and Malaysia. The combination of newly-acquired urban combat skills and previously acquired jungle warfare capabilities by militants can be a potent mix against state security forces in Southeast Asia.

As early as April 2016, Hapilon’s faction, together with foreign nationals, launched what some observers claimed as being the first IS attack on Philippine soil.[44] ASG fighters along with foreign fighters ambushed troops from the 55th Infantry Battalion. Killed were 18 soldiers and 26 militants, including the Moroccan bomb maker Mohammad Khattab. Amaq propagandists claimed 100 soldiers were killed in Basilan during the 9th of April attack (Figure 5).[45]

Figure 5: Amaq Agency infographic on alleged Philippine military casualties



This new alumni network can take advantage of the “terrorist transit triangle” area comprised of the borderlands of Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines surrounding the Sulawesi Sea.[46] The triangle is also known for the ease of movement for other undocumented individuals. For example, General Santos City in Eastern Mindanao is a known ingress point for Indonesian militants but has limited intelligence coverage available.[47] This distinct geography and border configuration once provided Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) a conducive environment for the movement of logistics to launch its attacks.[48]

Weapons from Central Mindanao first arrived in Indonesia’s Ambon province during the height of the sectarian conflict there.[49] Firearms were moved through established smuggling routes emanating from Mindanao, passing through Manado in Northern Sulawesi and then onwards to Ambon. While the sectarian conflict there has diminished, the corridors remain active. The late Santoso’s East Indonesia Mujahideen continued to use this route, acquiring several firearms, including grenade launchers, in 2014.[50] Less established are the routes to smuggle arms into Malaysia, perhaps due to the smaller number of firearms involved. Rather than relying on smuggling networks, weapons are simply ferried by fishing boats plying the waters between Tawau in Sabah state and Mindanao.[51]

Severing Connections

The multi-faceted connections between Filipino and Southeast Asian militants pose an inherently complex problem. The AFP Development Support and Security Plan (DSSP) *Kapayapaan* (“Peace”) continues to prescribe the use of intelligence-driven, combat operations against terrorist groups like the ASG. Combat operations continue to take precedence over negotiations at the tactical level. The Battle for Marawi highlighted tactical capabilities of the Philippine armed forces such as the use of precision guided munitions, embedded forward air control, and joint special operations - all in a massive urban operation.

It is at the strategic-level where Manila’s response falters due to the absence of a nationwide countering violent extremism (CVE) strategy. No Philippine presidency has formulated a comprehensive CVE initiative to counter Islamist terrorism in the Philippines that brings together civilian and military stakeholders. On the ground, the military relies on community development and infrastructure building to win ‘hearts and minds’. These efforts, however, are designed around countering the long-lasting secular Communist insurgency.

Another complicating factor for the military’s approach is its very limited capability to secure the porous southern borders. The immediate solution is to strengthen regional cooperation. Joint maritime patrols to secure the Sulawesi and Sulu Seas have been reinvigorated after the 3rd Trilateral Defence Minister’s Meeting in August 2016.[52] Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines came to the agreement in response to a series of kidnappings that victimised Indonesian and Malaysians citizens.

Denying Hapilon the opportunity to consolidate IS influence in the Philippines hinges on the successful peace negotiations between the Manila government and the MILF, more than on the defeat of the IS-inspired militants entrenched in Marawi. Failed peace negotiations may drive the younger generation of secessionists into the arms of jihadists, especially with the propaganda boon provided by the Battle for Marawi. President Rodrigo Duterte’s restart of the stalled Mindanao peace process by reconstituting the Bangsamoro Transition Commission in February 2017 is an important first step. Making sure that the draft Bangsamoro Basic Law passes into law is the next critical juncture for the Duterte Administration.[53]

Beyond a political settlement, the Philippines must look ahead for new avenues to defeat the extremist ideology being pushed by the ASG and MG. A nationwide CVE programme tailored to the distinct human and social terrain of Mindanao is long overdue. Initiatives similar to disengagement programmes aimed at Communist insurgents could be a potential starting point.

The reconstruction of Marawi is being planned even before the city is cleared. More than half of the AFP's engineering units will be tasked into one Joint Engineering Task Force to implement the national government's rehabilitation plan.[54] Rebuilding Marawi, especially its ravaged commercial centre will be a costly endeavour. The Battle for Marawi has surpassed the damage of previous episodes of urban combat in the southern Philippines such as the 2013 Zamboanga Crisis.[55]

Conclusion

Existing linkages among Southeast Asian jihadists make Mindanao vulnerable to infiltration by returning foreign fighters. Mindanao's porous borders further facilitate the movement of jihadists keen to link up with Hapilon's faction, whether they are returnees or new recruits from Southeast Asia.

The Battle for Marawi is an indication that the transnational jihadist threat has come to roost in Mindanao. Parallels are already being drawn between the destruction in Marawi and previously IS-held cities such as Mosul in Iraq. Increased IS influence in Mindanao was overlooked by security services in Mindanao.

As the IS core buckles under pressure in Iraq and Syria, it will try to expand its influence more subtly. IS command and control of affiliated groups is shifting from the centralised *wilayah* system to a more dispersed division system. Direct operational links and the financing of terror plots through the *wilayah* system are more susceptible to detection by security services.

In comparison, a loose network composed of IS divisions would be more resilient against counter-terrorist activities as seen in Marawi. A decentralised network of divisions will also serve as a wider platform for propaganda production and dissemination. Creating a wider propaganda footprint would complement the IS call for more lone wolf attacks.

Rather than an outright threat reduction, the fall of Mosul and Raqqa may only herald a new phase of jihadist violence in Southeast Asia. The Battle of Marawi may just be the harbinger for future incidents of urban jihadist combat.

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Notes

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Awareness Trainings and Detecting Jihadists among Asylum Seekers: A Case Study from The Netherlands

by Joris van Wijk and Maarten P. Bolhuis

Abstract

Dutch frontline professionals who work with asylum seekers receive awareness training to assist them in identifying possible signs of jihadist convictions. During these training sessions, they are provided with a complex, ambiguous, and multi-interpretable advice on how to detect such convictions. Based on interviews with respondents working in the immigration process and with the Dutch intelligence services (AIVD and MIVD), this article discusses how these trainings are translated into practice and to what extent the alerts shared by frontline professionals are relevant in the actual identification of jihadism. It concludes that it is as of yet unknown whether such trainings are useful, effective, and/or efficient. They might even have negative consequences such as over-reporting and stigmatization. It is therefore imperative to perform empirical and evidence-based studies that evaluate the effects of available training and tools.

Keywords: asylum, jihadism, frontline professionals, awareness training, signs, indicators

Introduction

Since the end of 2014, a broad political debate has emerged in Europe about asylum-seeking migration and jihadism-related risks. Where national security agencies and other experts initially expressed themselves in cautious terms about the risk that jihadists would make use of the migratory flows to enter Europe, this changed after the attacks in Paris in November 2015.[1] The subsequent knife attack by an Afghan asylum seeker in a German train in the summer of 2016,[2] the lorry attack by a Tunisian asylum seeker in Berlin later that same year[3] and a lorry attack by an Uzbek asylum seeker in Stockholm in 2017[4] only strengthened interest in the ‘asylum-jihadism-nexus’. Currently, security experts acknowledge at least three risks:

- (i) jihadists travelling with the migratory flows into Europe (and applying for asylum);
- (ii) recruitment with jihadi intent amongst asylum seeker populations and
- (iii) the radicalization of asylum applicants during their stay at reception centres.[5]

There is a longstanding and rich societal and academic debate on how (non-)government actors in the margin of their normal line of duties can assist in preventing terrorism.[6] A recent questionnaire by the European Migration Network (EMN)[7] demonstrates that many European countries have been introducing initiatives to train frontline professionals working with asylum seekers in detecting possible jihadists amongst incoming migrants. These workers are somehow expected to ‘spot’ jihadists or processes of radicalization. Yet is this possible? The academic literature argues that it is challenging, if not impossible, to identify terrorists on the basis of their expressions, appearance and/or behaviour.[8]

This article discusses a variety of challenges related to training frontline professionals in detecting jihadism amongst asylum seekers. Taking the Netherlands as a case study, it discusses:

- 1) the structural setup of the information exchange relating to jihadism in the immigration process;

- 2) how Dutch frontline professionals working with asylum seekers are trained and/or equipped to identify possible indications of jihadism;
- 3) how the trainings and tools translate into actual practice;
- 4) to what extent the alerts that frontline professionals share are deemed relevant by the Dutch General and Military Intelligence and Security Services (AIVD and MIVD respectively (hereafter referred to as 'Security Services')); and
- 5) whether or not Security Services can and should store all alerts they receive.

The findings of this study are not only relevant for academics and professionals working in the field of migration, but also in relation to other sectors where frontline professionals receive awareness trainings on jihadism. As many other European countries currently develop or work with comparable awareness trainings, this contribution caters to an international audience. The article concludes that frontline professionals working with asylum seekers receive complex, but ambiguous and multi-interpretable advice on how to detect signs of jihadist convictions, and finds that it is yet unknown to what extent existing trainings and tools are useful, effective, and/or efficient. It is imperative to perform empirical and evidence-based studies that evaluate the effects and pros and cons of trainings and tools that aim to create awareness about jihadism amongst frontline professionals.

Methodology

Being aware of the many different definitions and interpretations of the concepts 'jihadism' and 'radicalization',[9] this study follows the definitions by the Dutch National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV, hereafter referred to as 'National Coordinator'). 'Jihadism' is understood to be "an ideological movement within political Islam based on a specific interpretation of the Salafist doctrine and on the ideas of Sayyid Qutb striving, by means of armed struggle (jihad), to gain global domination of Islam and the re-establishment of the Islamic state (caliphate)".[10] 'Radicalization' is defined as "the (active) pursuit and/or support of radical changes in society, which may endanger (the existence of) the democratic order (target), possibly with the use of undemocratic methods (means) which may prejudice the functioning of the democratic order (effect)".[11] Processes of radicalization and recruitment are considered to be interlinked. Recruitment processes are regarded to be a form of directing individuals towards radicalization, with the aim of developing this radicalization in a violent direction.[12]

The data presented in this article was gathered in the context of a study carried out at the request of the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice. The report, which discusses how frontline professionals try to detect jihadism in the Dutch immigration process, was published in November 2016 and is available in the Dutch language only.[13] Apart from an analysis of relevant academic literature, policy documents, and training material, the main source of data stems from semi-structured interviews with 49 respondents working for organizations involved in the immigration process. This includes interviews with policy makers as well as practitioners. In the context of this article, we focus in particular on the information provided by one respondent working for the Dutch National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV), six respondents working for the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND - hereafter referred to as 'Immigration Services'), twelve respondents working for the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA - hereafter referred to as 'Reception Agency') and two respondents working for the AIVD and MIVD.

The respondents were recruited through snowball sampling, based on availability. We started interviewing a limited number of policy makers and subsequently were brought into contact with frontline workers. Interviews lasted between one and three hours, took place at the offices of the respondents and were not

taped. Instead, we made notes and shared interview reports with the respondents for approval. During the interviews, we used a topic list; the interviews had a semi-structured character. All respondents were guaranteed anonymity.

The context in which the research was conducted can be characterized as dynamic. During and since the period of data gathering, Europe has witnessed several more terrorist attacks. For this reason, it is important to place the findings of this study into context. It cannot be ruled out that respondents would by now express themselves differently or that the described practice has in the meantime been subject to some changes.

The fact that we selected the respondents by means of a convenience sample and the fact that we only interviewed a limited number of respondents means that the study is not representative and should therefore be considered exploratory in nature. The views and opinions expressed by respondents are not necessarily representative of the main perspectives within these organizations, but are nonetheless useful as they do illustrate the types of challenges associated with training frontline professionals in detecting jihadism amongst asylum seekers.

The Organizational Arrangements for Sharing Information

The Netherlands does not have a single integrated design for the identification of jihadism in the immigration process. Instead, over the years, various measures and methods were adopted and introduced with the aim of improving and facilitating the identification of national security-related matters, jihadism being one of those. Over the past years, agreements were made and covenants drawn up to facilitate information exchange between the Immigration Services, the Reception Agency, and the Repatriation and Departure Service (DT&V, hereafter referred to as 'Repatriation Service') on the one hand, and the Security Services on the other hand. Between the Immigration Services, the Reception Agency, and the Repatriation Service, a 'reporting structure' was set up for matters related to national security, including possible signs relating to jihadism. Signs identified by professionals working within these three organizations can, by means of an alert, be sent to liaison officers of the Immigration Services who can refer these alerts to the Security Services. Employees of the Reception Agency are required to also share signs with the local police.

Identifying Jihadism: Passive Detection and the Use of Indicators

Frontline professionals working with asylum seekers are expected to engage in, what Schuurman et al. refer to as, the 'passive detection' of terrorism.[14] Whereas 'active detection' takes place by law enforcement or intelligence services during ongoing criminal or intelligence investigations, passive detection is done by (non-)government actors in the margin of their normal line of duties. A quick scan of academic literature shows that differentiating possible terrorists from non-terrorists in the context of passive detection is challenging. As Rae indicates, "the most prevalent method of attempting to achieve distinction between these two groups is to establish a set of psychological, socio-economic, physical, and/or racial attributes that mark one from the other." [15] Ideally, actors engaged in passive detection can be provided with a list of characteristics of terrorists – what they look like, where they come from, what kind of personality they have – which would allow them to make an assessment of which cases are relevant to bring to the attention of Security Services. Yet, many authors highlight that it is extremely complex to identify terrorists or jihadists on the basis of expressions, appearance, and/or behaviour and that there are other ethical and societal problems associated with profiling such as criminalising specific populations and racial stereotyping.[16]

As Sageman points out: "There's really no profile, just similar trajectories to joining the jihad." [17] And even with respect to the possibility of identifying or detecting such trajectories, reservations have been expressed. Radicalization processes are not always linear and deterministic in nature and factors that may indicate radicalization should always be assessed interdependently.[18] Persons who 'flirt' with radicalization do

not irrevocably radicalize, while people who radicalize do not necessarily engage in violence.[19] The use of indicators to promote passive detection of possible jihadists or radicalization is therefore controversial. The efficiency and effectiveness of such indicators are questioned, as well as the extent to which the potential benefits of detection of certain indications outweigh possible adverse consequences, such as over-reporting or stigmatization. When individuals who follow a conservative interpretation of Islam experience negative consequences from being labelled possible jihadists, this can – potentially fuelled or promoted by extremist groups – even contribute to actual radicalization.[20]

The Dilemma

With the increased influx of asylum seekers from the Middle East, in November 2014 the Immigration Services and the Reception Agency started an ‘awareness tour’ to inform frontline professionals working with asylum seekers about issues of national security, with a specific focus on jihadism. Our study indicates that those responsible for developing awareness trainings and tools to help frontline professionals identify jihadism were – and still are – confronted with a dilemma. On the one hand, dominant actors in the security domain indicate that there are inherent limitations to ‘checklists’ or ‘lists of indicators’ as tools for identifying a possible jihadist mind-set. Respondents representing the National Coordinator as well as the Security Services (AIVD and MIVD) expressed serious reservations to using indicators as tools for passive detection (R7, R11, R51). They pointed out that jihadism comes in many forms and shapes and that it is unlikely that someone who comes to Europe with the aim to carry out an attack would be ‘recognizable’ by means of his/her expressions, appearance, and/or behaviour. They further acknowledge that the use of indicators could lead to an increase of irrelevant alerts (false positives) and further stigmatization of particular groups.

On the other hand, politicians and society at large expect organizations working with asylum seekers to act as a ‘first line of defence’ against the threat of terrorism and to actively try to identify possible jihadists. During periods of a large influx of asylum seekers, the frontline professionals working for these organizations are first and foremost occupied with their primary tasks, namely the processing of asylum claims (Immigration Services) and counselling and supervising asylum seekers during their stay in an asylum centre (Reception Agency). If, on top of that, they are also expected to engage in passive detection of jihadism, they should, ideally, be provided with concrete tools, such as indicators, which can give them guidance in detecting possible jihadism. Concrete tools on ‘how to recognize a jihadist’ are desired in particular by frontline professionals who, due to the nature of their work, only have a short time with asylum seekers, such as staff members of the Immigration Services who interview asylum seekers to assess the validity of their claims.

The Compromise

The result of this dilemma is a compromise, if not a contradiction. Frontline professionals in the Netherlands are given a complex, ambiguous, and multi-interpretable message. For example, with the proviso that there is no single list of indicators or profile on the basis of which a possible jihadist can be recognized, during awareness training and on the intranet, staff of the Immigration Services are provided with a list of indicators which ‘require alertness’. Reference is made to certain types of behaviour (e.g. denying shaking a female staff member’s hand, avoiding eye contact), specific language (Salafist jargon), or specific characteristics with regard to appearance (certain types of clothing, tattoos) which may give away that someone is a jihadist. On the intranet and during trainings, it is at the same time emphasized that all these factors should be seen in conjunction (interdependently) and that these may ‘of course’ also be an indication of something other than jihadism or terrorism. Staff members are furthermore advised to trust their ‘professional intuition’ or their ‘gut feelings’, to discuss suspicions with their colleagues, and to make their suspicions as concrete as possible before issuing an alert (R3).

A similar message is conveyed during trainings for staff of the Reception Agency (R5). These trainings, however, focus more explicitly on factors which can possibly indicate processes of radicalization, rather than identifying incoming jihadists as such (which is more the focus of trainings provided by the Immigration Services). It is, for example, emphasized that people who radicalize may stop drinking alcohol, isolate themselves, and/or start working out their bodies very actively. Unlike the Immigration Services, the Reception Agency does not provide a list of indicators on its intranet.

Staff members of the Immigration Services as well as the Reception Agency are explicitly told that in case of doubt they should always issue an alert. They are told that they themselves are not expected to assess whether something they deem remarkable or suspicious could be relevant in the context of detecting jihadists, or other issues such as human trafficking or an asylum seeker's possible involvement in war crimes. As one representative of the Bureau for Security and Integrity of the Reception Agency said, staff members are expected to issue an alert, while the determination of whether or not the alert is relevant for national security is the responsibility of other parties (R5).

Passive Detection in Actual Practice

Various respondents indicated that the information provided during the awareness trainings was useful and provided them with a 'perspective for action' (RF 42, RF43). The statements of some other respondents, however, illustrate that they had at times difficulties in translating the complex message they received during the training into actual practice. One staff member of a reception facility remembers that shortly after a training session many colleagues were extremely wary:

"We were told that if someone suddenly starts to work out very often, this could possibly be an indication of something. The result was that the everyone in the team was on edge when a resident started exercising." (RF30)

The above suggests that these frontline professionals may have had difficulties in actually utilizing the ambiguous messages delivered during trainings. The comments by another staff member, who took part in another training session, indicate that trainings were in some instances seen as being too nuanced or ambiguous:

"Last year we had a training, when it was all really in the news, when that video of Jihadi John was published. (...) In the morning we were shown short videos, for example of a man waiving an Islamic State flag inside an asylum centre, the afternoon session consisted of the instructors asking us 'what do you think you can do to detect certain possible signs' (...), while everyone was thinking 'I want to hear what we need to do.' (...) Finally, we had to come up with solutions ourselves... But I actually also don't know if there is much more to be said about it (...). After the training, the conclusion basically was that you cannot detect it. Everyone had questions and came for answers, but the overall conclusion was, you cannot see it. Someone may have a beard or wear a **djellabah**, but it doesn't mean anything. Afterwards everyone felt like, 'it was a nice training, but no answers...'" (RF42)

In the context of this study we have not been in a position to do a systematic analysis of the different types of signs that have over the years been forwarded to liaison officers as such information is confidential. But since various respondents provided illustrations of signs they had been given we do have some anecdotal information which gives an idea of the wide variety of the content of these signs. For example, when asked what type of signs (s)he would share, a representative of the Immigration Services who has a coordinating role in identifying threats to national security agencies and in that capacity screens social media profiles of asylum seekers, stated:

“For instance, you see a picture of a man holding hands with his lover. On another picture you see the same man with a Kalashnikov in his hand and in army fatigues. That’s a sign we will forward.” (RF33)

A colleague added:

“Or if someone ‘likes’ video clips of decapitations on Facebook or shares such clips.” (RF35)

An employee of the Reception Agency mentioned:

“We noticed that some people often gathered at a certain caravan [the type of housing at that asylum centre]. (...) When you entered the caravan you noticed they were watching a clip on an iPad and then suddenly stopped. If they would be watching some sort of TV show, you’d not expect them to stop watching. So if they suddenly stop the clip, you get the feeling ‘something is not right here’ (...) Another example: Last year I received a message from someone living in the village next to the centre. He had noted that someone from the reception centre often went to the fitness centre in army fatigues and told me the man was exercising very intensively, almost every day. I reported this.” (RF28)

Staff members working at another reception facility remembered that they were approached by a resident who told them that a group of other residents came together each evening to watch video clips. The staff members themselves already thought these residents were behaving awkwardly and started to monitor them more closely:

“It occasionally happened that those residents gathered at the square, or were hanging around in front of the reception. They had an awkward way of acting, distancing themselves from us. They were checking out staff of the reception centre, rather than the other way around.” (RF43)

“One of them was always standing outside, on the balcony. We at times do general inspections of the rooms and ... we also wanted to check his apartment. (...) They were not happy with this. One quickly ran to another room to do something. That is very awkward, these are all possible signs.” (RF42)

Examples of signs that, according to our respondents, relate to possible recruitment activities at reception centres include a report that residents were transported with minivans from a reception centre to a mosque in the south of the country which is known to be very conservative (R5). In 2015 an employee of a reception centre reported that asylum seekers were told that they could get on a bus to Paris to demonstrate against the Iranian government for five Euros. For the Bureau of Security and Integrity of the Reception Agency, this report was a reason to inform the liaison officer:

“I said ‘those people can be bombarded with whatever message for five hours.’ My grandmother was once foisted a far too expensive anti-rheumatic blanket in a similar vein. I thought: ‘this might be a strategy.’ That message has eventually been shared with all the other organisations involved in the immigration process.” (R5)

Relevance of the Alerts

The above examples illustrate that the liaison officers of the Dutch Immigration Services receive a potpourri of alerts, ranging from hearsay information that an asylum seeker has started exercising intensively, the presence or approval of certain pictures on asylum applicants’ social media profiles, to information about organized transports to conservative mosques. Based on their professional experience, liaison officers may decide not to forward a given alert to the Security Services, but instead forward it to other relevant

bodies, such as a specific unit dealing with identifying possible war criminals, to exclude them from refugee protection.[21] Yet, since late 2014 the liaison officers do not take too much risk in this regard and in principle refer all alerts that are possibly related to jihadism to the Security Services (R3).

The number of alerts that the liaison officers referred to the Security Services has, over the past three years, increased significantly. In 2015, there was almost a four-fold increase compared to 2014 and an almost six-fold increase compared to 2013.[22] This could be explained by either the increase in the number of asylum seekers, or the increased awareness on matters of national security amongst frontline professionals – or by a combination of these factors. Whether, and to what extent, these alerts are of any use to the Security Services is difficult to assess. For the time being, the increased number of alerts has, according to the liaison officer of the Immigration Services (R3), not led to a significant increase of individual official notices (*individuele ambtsberichten*) by the Security Services.[23] Such adverse security assessments, based on alerts from frontline professionals working with asylum seekers are, as a respondent of the AIVD mentioned, ‘the odd one out’ (R11). Providing an individual official notice is typically only possible if such alerts can be combined with other tangible intelligence, and as asylum seekers are new to the Netherlands, information from the alerts often cannot be linked to any existing intelligence. It is furthermore often not allowed, or not possible, to request additional information about asylum seekers from foreign services, such as the country of origin. For this reason, alerts from frontline professionals working with asylum seekers often do not give the Security Services much perspective to act directly (R11).

However, the number of negative security assessments is certainly not the only criterion to ‘measure’ the usefulness of alerts. The Security Services indicate that they definitely do appreciate receiving these alerts, as these are stored for future reference. A respondent of the AIVD noted that alerts from staff members of the Reception Agency are generally regarded more useful than alerts received from frontline professionals working at the Immigration Services, as asylum interviews take place in a formal setting in which applicants are more likely to provide politically correct answers. Professionals working in reception centres have contact with asylum seekers over a longer period of time and more often get in touch with them when they are ‘off guard’ (R11).

Can and Should all Alerts be Stored?

Although the Security Services indicated that they welcome alerts as these can be stored for future reference, it is questionable to what extent they are always allowed to do so. On the basis of the Law on the Intelligence and Security Services (WIV), information relating to someone’s religion may only be stored in addition to other data, and only in so far as it is inevitable for the purpose of the data processing.[24] The Security Services acknowledged that they are not allowed to store an alert which exclusively refers to someone’s religious beliefs, but interpret the WIV in such a way that they do feel free to store indications that someone holds a radical conservative interpretation of Islam, e.g. combined with the fact that he comes from Syria and has travelled with a false passport (R11). A question that is open to debate, is where to draw the line in this respect. How much or what type of additional information ‘suffices’ to store information about someone’s religion? As described above, some alerts (merely) refer to the fact that asylum seekers are transported to a mosque which is known for propagating a conservative interpretation of Islam. If an asylum seeker from Syria makes use of such transport, would that fact alone be sufficient to be registered and stored in the systems of the Security Services? And what if the asylum seeker originates from, say, Afghanistan or Tunisia (countries the attackers in the two most recent attacks in Germany originated from)? With the widely differing profiles of people involved in recent attacks,[25] answering such questions is increasingly difficult. Whether or not this issue is specific to the Dutch context we do not know. However, we can hardly imagine this is not a point for discussion in other jurisdictions.

Apart from the question whether the Security Services *can* store information from alerts, it is also debatable whether the Security Services actually *should* store all information they receive, even if they are allowed to do so. There is an intrinsic tension in weighing public safety interests against the privacy of the person concerned and the potentially negative consequences counter terrorism measures may have.[26] What exactly are the implications when the Security Services store someone's details for future reference? How exactly could that affect his or her future legal proceedings or perhaps his or her career? If frontline professionals working with asylum seekers are told that in case of doubt they should always issue an alert, one could argue the Security Services have an extra responsibility to treat information from those alerts with great caution. If a well-meaning frontline professional reports that asylum seeker X is acting 'awkwardly' because he goes to the gym every day, the possibly positive consequences of storing such information for the Security Services' information position should be weighed against the possibly negative consequences for the individual's career. As of yet, it is unclear whether and how such a balancing test is carried out. An additional repercussion of enhanced information storing is that it may also have negative consequences for the Security Services themselves. With that, it becomes more likely that perpetrators of future attacks are to be found in one or another database, without having been closely monitored. Should an attack takes place and it turns out the attacker 'was known to the Security Services', this might lead to a damaged reputation and loss of trust in the Security Services.

Conclusion

Taking the Netherlands as a case study, this article discussed some of the challenges raised by training frontline professionals working with asylum seekers to detect jihadists or processes of radicalization. On the one hand, politicians and society at large expect frontline professionals to proactively identify possible jihadists. As these professionals often only have short contacts with asylum seekers, providing them with concrete tools such as indicators on how to identify a possible jihadist appears to make good sense. On the other hand, experts in the security domain – including those developing such trainings – are well aware of the limitations and risks associated with the use of such tools, namely an increase of false positives and stigmatization.

The result is that frontline professionals are given complex, but ambiguous and multi-interpretable messages. Caseworkers of the Immigration Services, for example, are provided with concrete indicators of possible jihadism related to specific behaviour or appearances, but are also made aware of the limitations of these indicators. In addition, it is emphasized that they should trust their professional intuition or 'gut feeling', discuss suspicions with colleagues and that, in case of doubt, they should always issue an alert. Although this study could not make a systematic analysis of the type of information which is in actual practice shared with the Security Services, anecdotal information by our respondents indicates that there is wide variation in the content of the alerts.

Beyond the Netherlands, the jihadism-asylum nexus will undoubtedly continue to feature prominently in discussions on counter-terrorism policies. The EMN-questionnaire referred to earlier, illustrates that various European countries seek to train frontline professionals in detecting possible jihadists hiding among bona fide incoming migrants. Measures typically include awareness-raising campaigns (e.g. United Kingdom, Belgium) and specialised trainings for frontline professionals to identify potential threats (e.g. Belgium, Finland, Germany, Norway).[27] However, as this article demonstrates, developing appropriate tools and training is far from easy. Providing such trainings should only be done if it is useful, effective, and/or efficient. There is a potential for conflict and confusion amongst relevant actors regarding the usefulness, necessity, and desirability of providing (concrete) indicators to frontline professionals as guidance in identifying possible jihadism.

Having assessed the Dutch situation, we have no doubt that all parties involved – from those developing the training programmes to the frontline professionals issuing the alerts, all the way to the Security Services who are tasked to interpret the alerts – sincerely and seriously try to find a balance between the importance of detecting possible jihadists on the one hand and the risk of stigmatizing (certain) asylum seekers on the other hand. Yet precisely because the issue is so complex, it is striking to note that so far very few empirical and/or comparative studies have been undertaken to properly evaluate the effects, benefits and costs of the available training offered and tools provided.[28] This is not exceptional. Eijkman & Roodnat recently argued that countering terrorism as well as countering (violent) extremism has been the subject of thorough empirical research to a very limited extent.[29]

To improve the effectiveness of awareness trainings on the detection of jihadism - in the Netherlands, but certainly also in other countries - it is imperative to engage in more empirical research which can answer, amongst others, the following questions:

What type of signs do frontline professionals typically share with intelligence and security services?

How do these alerts relate to the information provided during trainings or in tools such as indicator lists?

Are there situations of ‘over-reporting’ and what consequences does this have?

What type of alerts have proven – or are considered by the Security Services – to be the most relevant?

How often is information from alerts *not* stored and for what reasons?

Are there any concrete examples of alerts having led to stigmatization or other negative consequences?

Such questions are not only relevant in relation to the asylum-jihadism nexus, but could indeed also be asked with respect to awareness programmes for teachers, social workers, or probation officers. To our knowledge, empirically grounded evaluation studies of awareness trainings on jihadism and/or radicalization that seek to answer such questions do not, or hardly, exist. Illustrative in this regard is that the two available evaluation studies in the Netherlands on awareness training elaborate the content of the trainings and participants’ reflections on the trainings (whether they believe the training is useful), but are silent about the actual effects and pros and cons of the trainings themselves.[30]

We are aware of the tremendous complexities connected to a study into the questions raised above. First and foremost, all the relevant information that needs to be analysed is, for various legitimate reasons, strictly confidential. If not carefully edited, a publicly available publication on this issue could have serious security implications and such a study is politically highly sensitive indeed. Defining the relevant concepts will be challenging: when, for example, can an alert be considered to be a form of ‘over-reporting’ or a ‘false alarm’? Yet such complexities should be no excuse for not engaging in such a study altogether. Whatever the set-up of such a study and whoever will perform it – perhaps insiders who already have a security clearance are even better positioned than external researchers – empirical and evidence-based studies that evaluate the effects of available training programs and toolkits are direly needed. Hundreds, if not thousands, of frontline professionals currently receive training on how to identify jihadism, but we know little about the results. Only sound evaluations allow us to learn lessons for more finely-tuned approaches in the future.

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Notes

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- [2] "German train attack: IS releases video of 'Afghan knifeman'", *BBC*, 19 July 2016, URL: <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36832909>>.
- [3] P. Oltermann, "Berlin attack: security services feared suspect would commit 'act of violence'", *The Guardian*, 22 December 2016, URL: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/21/berlin-attack-german-police-leads>>.
- [4] A. Ringstrom & J. Hellstrom, "Suspect in Stockholm truck attack admits terrorist crime", *Reuters*, 11 April 2017, URL: <<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-swe-den-attack-suspect-detention-idUSKBN17D0UD>>.
- [5] See e.g. with respect to threat 1.) "German spy agency says ISIS sending fighters disguised as refugees", *Reuters*, 5 February 2016, URL: <<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-security-idUSKCN0VE0XL>>; threat 2.) "Changes in modus operandi of Islamic State terrorist attacks", Europol, Review held by experts from Member States and Europol on 29 November and 1 December 2015, The Hague, 18 January 2016, p. 3, 5, URL: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/changes_in_modus_operandi_of_is_in_terrorist_attacks.pdf>; and threat 3.) "Norway's PST wary of asylum centre radicalization", *The Local*, 31 March 2016; URL: <<http://www.thelocal.no/20160331/norway-intelligence-agency-closely-watching-asylum-centres>>. All three threats are acknowledged in the July 2016 Threat Assessment by the Dutch National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV), see: "Samenvatting Dreigingsbeeld Terrorisme Nederland 42, juli 2016", Bijlage bij Brief van de Minister van Veiligheid en Justitie, Kamerstukken 29 754, nr. 390, 11 July 2016, p. 5.
- [6] See e.g. "RAN POL's Guide on Training Programmes for Police Officers in Europe". London: The Institute for Strategic Dialogue, September 2016; The role of civil society in counter radicalisation and de-radicalisation, PPN Working Paper, 2010; Y. Meah & C. Mellis, *Recognising and Responding to Radicalisation: Considerations for Policy and Practice through the Eyes of Street-Level Workers*. 2008, Amsterdam: RecoRa.
- [7] Available via URL: <http://www.emnetherlands.nl/Actueel/Actualiteitoverzicht/2016/Hoe_identificeren_andere_landen_jihadisten_in_de_asielprocedure>.
- [8] See e.g. M. Sageman, "Understanding terrorist networks, Foreign Policy Research Institute", E-note, 1 November 2004; URL: <<http://faculty.maxwell.syr.edu/rdenever/internationalsecurity/sageman.pdf>> and T. Veldhuis & E. Bakker, "Causale factoren van radicalisering en hun onderlinge samenhang", *Vrede en Veiligheid*, 36, 2007, pp. 448 - 470.
- [9] On the different definitions on jihadism and, in particular, radicalization, see e.g. A.P. Schmid, "Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review", ICCT, The Hague, March 2013.
- [10] NCTV, "Actieplan Integrale Aanpak Jihadisme", 29 August 2014, p. 31, URL: <<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/rapporten/2014/08/30/actieprogramma-integrale-aanpak-jihadisme/a5-nctvjihadismedef3-lr.pdf>>. Translation by authors.
- [11] See URL: <<https://www.nctv.nl/onderwerpen/tb/watisterrorisme/radicalisering-rekrutering/>> (Translation by authors).
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- [21] This happens on the basis of article 1F Refugee Convention. More information on the application of article 1F Refugee Convention, see e.g. URL: <<https://cicj.org/research/escaping-justice/>>.
- [22] Absolute figures are not publicly available. It should be noted that these signs relate to national security in the broadest sense, not to jihadism specifically. It should also be taken into account that the number of asylum applications in the Netherlands between 2013 and 2015 has quadrupled.
- [23] In the Netherlands, being considered a threat to national security can be a reason to deny or revoke a legal status on the basis of Article B1/4.4 Vc 2000. For more information, see M.P. Bolhuis, H. Battjes, & J. van Wijk, "Undesirable but Unreturnable Migrants in the Netherlands", *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, forthcoming; URL: doi: 10.1093/rsq/hdw019.
- [24] Article 13 (3) and (4) Wet op de Inlichtingen en Veiligheidsdiensten 2002.
- [25] For instance, the attacks in Paris in November 2015 were committed by both French nationals and recently arrived immigrants.
- [26] See: Q. Eijkman & J. Roodnat, "Beware of Branding Someone a Terrorist: Local Professionals on Person-Specific Interventions to Counter Extremism", *Journal*

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[27] Available via URL: <http://www.emnnetherlands.nl/Actueel/Actualiteitenoverzicht/2016/Hoe_identificeren_andere_landen_jihadisten_in_de_asielprocedure>.

[28] For a critical review of evaluations on the effects of awareness trainings in the Netherlands, see: J. van Wijk & M. Bolhuis, 2016, op.cit., pp. 84-85.

[29] Q. Eijkman & J. Roodnat, "Beware of Branding Someone a Terrorist: Local Professionals on Person-Specific Interventions to Counter Extremism", *Journal for Deradicalization*, Spring 2017 (10), p. 177.

[30] See: T. Pels, M. de Gruijter & C. Middelkoop, *Evaluatie trainingen Amsterdamse professionals in het herkennen en omgaan met radicalisering*, Utrecht: Forum/Verwey Jonker Instituut, 2008, and: M. Glaudé, J. Meijer, I. Breetvelt & C. Felix, "Evaluatie naar de training Potentieel Gewelddadige Eenlingen", *Onderzoek in opdracht van het Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie, NCTV*. Amsterdam: Kohnstamm Instituut, 2014.

Research Notes

Terrorism Events Data: An Inventory of Databases and Data Sets, 1968-2017

by Neil G. Bowie

Abstract

This Research Note presents 60 key databases, data sets and chronologies on terrorism events data developed since 1968. It describes design characteristics of these quantitative data collections and points to their usefulness for research on terrorism and counter-terrorism. The information presented here is divided into three categories:

(i) Academic, Think Tank and Independent Databases (n =43)

(ii) Commercial Databases (n = 10) and

(iii) Governmental Databases (n = 7).

In a few cases, the scope of the datasets includes related forms of armed conflict. In most cases, there are clickable links to the data storage sites. All website links have been validated as of 11 August 2017.

Keywords: terrorism, counter-terrorism, databases, datasets, chronologies

Introduction

The author of this Research Note published in 2011 an inventory of major databases on terrorism.[1] It contained a description of twenty databases. The current inventory lists three times as many, but describes them in much less detail.[2] Some of these datasets take terrorist *incidents* as main units of analysis, others are more interested in the terrorist *actors* (mainly terrorist groups). Yet others focus on *attack type* (e.g. hijackings). Databases where victims are the main focus are still rare (e.g. items 5, 17, 43). The same goes for databases that focus on state terrorism (e.g. item 31). Most of the databases are constructed on the basis of open source information - in most cases media reports - in many ways a problematic source since it presupposes, among other things, freedom of the press and presence of local journalists or foreign correspondents willing and able to cover terrorist events. The most basic form of data listings consists of chronologies (e.g. items 7, 8, 32); the more sophisticated relational databases contain multiple coded variables which can be analysed in various combinations and allow geographical and graphic visualizations e.g. item 19). Given the data processing problems, there is usually a time-lag of one year or more between recordings of data and their presentation in aggregate form.

The present list of databases should allow researchers comparisons between (some) of their elements. This can increase confidence (or mistrust) in quantitative findings. A recent example of this has been provided by Brian J. Phillips who tested the hitherto unchallenged claim by David C. Rapoport that up to 90 percent of all terrorist groups do not survive beyond their first year of operations. Prof. Phillips compared studies based on the eight largest databases covering the period 1968 - 2013 and found that none of the databases could confirm Rapoport's educated guess made 25 years ago. In fact, the results regarding the survival rate of terrorist groups beyond their first year ranged from 24 to 74 percent, with the average being 52 percent.[3]

Despite shortcomings, databases are useful in many ways. There are, for instance, strong indications that some acts of terrorism that are receiving saturation coverage in the media are contagious, with one group (or lone actor) imitating tactics (e.g. driving trucks into groups of people) learned from others. Datasets on

geographically separated incidents can reveal worldwide terrorist campaigns directed via social media and made 'attractive' to would be imitators by the reward of mass media coverage.

The present list covers only open source datasets. How they compare to restricted, classified datasets held by governments is largely unknown. Presumably intelligence agency datasets, based on secretly obtained information, focus strongly on individual terrorists, terrorist groups and networks and their financial, logistical, operational and (rogue) state supporters. What they are unlikely to cover is the counter-terrorism operations of state actors (see items 10,11,15). Terrorist campaigns and counter-terrorist campaigns interact but to study that interaction one needs comparable longitudinal data on both non-state and government actions and reactions. Most databases covered here originate in the Western world (esp. USA, UK and Israel). Many focus more on international terrorism than on domestic terrorism while a few provide regional coverage (e. g. item 36). Africa (except North Africa) receives little coverage while Europe receives much. There is only one database that covers state terrorism (item 31). The attribution for responsibility for acts of terrorism in insurgencies, irregular warfare and in other forms of armed conflict is difficult and coverage in most databases is uneven or even totally absent.

Maintaining databases is time-consuming and costly and several databases have been discontinued due to lack of funding, political pressure or the departure of the driving spirit behind them. Missing, incomplete or untrustworthy data plague many databases and detract from their reliability – which makes cross-checking between databases all the more mandatory for researchers. Despite such shortcomings, aggregate data are significantly valuable as they allow trend analyses and, to some extent, even forecasting. The integration of major datasets with artificial intelligence holds great promise for terrorism prevention.

The databases and data sets presented below are not a definitive listing of all terrorism events data sets but offer a representative cross-section of what is currently available to researchers in terrorism studies. Additional terrorism databases and data sets will be listed in a future Research Note in this journal by the same compiler.

(i) Academic, Think Tank and Independent Databases

1. Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED)

Host Institution: University of Surrey, United Kingdom. The ACLED data set is directed by Professor Clionadh Raleigh (University of Sussex).

Scope: Political violence and protest in Africa (1997 – Present) and Asia from 2010.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.acleddata.com>

E-Mail: <http://acleddata.com/contact/>

Summary: The ACLED data set comprises political violence data from Africa, both historical and real-time, covering the period 1997 until the present. In addition, data covering Asia from 2010 onwards is currently being coded. The data set also provides real-time updates. The ACLED project produces an annual data set. Events data includes: date, location, type of violence and actors.

2. The ASN Safety Database

Host Institution: The Aviation Safety Network. (International Collaboration).

Scope:Logs airliner, military transport aircraft and corporate jet aircraft safety occurrences.

Access: Free.

Website: <https://aviation-safety.net/>

E-Mail: <https://aviation-safety.net/about/contact.php>

Summary: The ASN Safety Database has over 21,162 logged safety occurrence incidents dating back to 1919. Records coded, relate to hijackings, airline accidents and other incidents. Sources used to populate the database include data from official Government authorities, safety boards, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

3. Big, Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) Database 1 - Lethality Data, 1998-2005.

Host Institution: The Project on Violent Conflict (PVC) Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy, University of Albany, State University of New York (SUNY), United States.

Scope: Terrorist groups, ideologies, fatalities, religion.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.albany.edu/pvc/data.shtml>

E-Mail: rg8097@albany.edu

Summary: The Big, Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) Database's principal focus is on terrorist organisational characteristics. The database is divided into two data sets. BAAD1 codifies the activities of 395 terrorist organisations between 1998 and 2005. BAAD2 codifies the organisational variables of terrorist groups, for example: size, structure, ideology, financial support and social network data. Further development of the BAAD datasets in conjunction with the University of Maryland's National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) is now available via their new Big, Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) online platform. See: <https://www.start.umd.edu/baad/database>

4. BBC News Database of Jihadists

Host Institution: British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), London, United Kingdom.

Scope: Database of United Kingdom individuals successfully prosecuted since 2014 for Jihadist activities and individuals who have died or are in the Syria or Iraq region.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-32026985>

E-Mail: N/A

Summary: This interactive BBC News database presents users with a series of interactive filters detailing individuals who have either been convicted, have died or are still at large in the Syria/Iraq region in connection with jihadist activities. The filters include, for example, runaway teenagers, suicide bombers, female extremists and returnees among several other search criteria. A short synopsis of each case is generated by the database, with hyperlinks to BBC News website pages. The database contains 269 jihadists. The database is generated from open source material and BBC research.

5. B'Tselem Statistical Data Sets

Host Institution: B'Tselem - The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, Jerusalem, Israel.

Scope: Fatalities on Palestinian, Israeli and third party nationals killed in conflict between Israel and Palestinians.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.btselem.org/statistics>

E-Mail: Mail:@btselem.org

Summary: The B'Tselem Statistical Data Sets records fatalities resulting from the on-going conflict between Israel and Palestinians. Key variables include the name of the person(s) killed, residence, event date, location and the agent that caused the fatality. The database records incidents since 2000. Further detailed statistical data on fatalities are listed within B'Tselem's website.

6. Canadian Incident Database (CIDB)

Host Institution: Canadian Network for Research on Terrorism, Security and Society (TSAS), Canada.

Scope: Incidents of terrorism and extreme crime incidents in Canada from 1960 onwards.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.extremism.ca/default.aspx>

E-Mail: N/A Twitter: @tsasnetwork

Summary: The Canadian Incident Database (CIDB) provides data on terrorism and extreme crime incidents in Canada dating back to 1960. Source data is un-classified. The CIDB project was developed in conjunction with the Canadian Safety and Security Program's (CSSP) National Security Data Initiative (NDSI). Five Canadian Universities work with the TSAS CIDB to support the database: Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia, the University of Waterloo, Carleton University and the Université de Montréal.

7. Chronology of *Jihadism* in Western Europe 1994–2007: Planned, Prepared and Executed Terrorist Attacks

Host Institution: [Academic Publication] *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 31, Iss. 10, 2008, pp.924-946. Taylor & Frances Online.

Scope: *Jihadism* in Western Europe 1994 – 2007.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10576100802339185>

E-Mail: N/A

Summary: This Chronology of *Jihadism* in Western Europe 1994-2007, prepared by Petter Nesser, lists attacks by *salafi-jihadis* (attempted and executed attacks), using open source material.

8. Chronological List of Armenian Terrorist Activities from 1918 to 1989

Host Institution: Armenian Genocide Resource Center.

Scope: Armenian terrorist activity 1918-1989.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://armenians-1915.blogspot.com/2009/01/2694-chronological-list-of-armenian.html>

E-Mail: See website..

Summary: This blog site holds a collection of resources on Armenian terrorist activity including a Chronology of Armenian Terrorist Activities from 1918-1999. Other source material includes historical newspaper screen shots from the 1800's onwards and research papers related to Armenian activities.

9. Conflict Archive on the INternet (CAIN) Conflict and Politics in Northern Ireland

Host Institution: Ulster University, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Scope: Information and source material on conflict and politics in Northern Ireland since 1968.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/>

E-Mail: <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/eMail:/geneMail:.htm>

Summary: The CAIN archive originally founded in 1996, provides a large array of data sets, databases, bibliographies and conflict studies on the conflict in Northern Ireland since 1968. Recent additions to the archives include photographic images and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) with area maps of deaths related to the conflict. In addition, public records connected to the conflict and commemoration of survivors and victims is also held within the CAIN archive.

10. Comprehensive Database of African Counter-Terrorism Law and Policy

Host Institution: The Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Pretoria, South Africa.

Scope: African counter-terrorism law, policy, technical and training issues.

Access: Free.

Website: <https://issafrica.org/ctafrika/african-national-legislation>

E-Mail: iss@issafrica.org

Summary: The Comprehensive Database of African Counter-Terrorism Law and Policy holds a wide-ranging collection of legislation relating to counter-terrorism in the continent of Africa. In addition, the database contains policy documents, regional and international instruments, training manuals and technical

assistance. The database can be queried using the variables: keywords, title, language, country and year. Documents produced are in .PDF format.

11. Countermeasures against Extremism and Terrorism (CoMET) Database

Host Institution: START National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, University of Maryland, Maryland (MD), United States.

Scope: Records countermeasures by government and non-government agencies against terrorist and extremist activity.

Access: Upon request.

Website: <http://www.start.umd.edu//news/new-database-provides-insights-terrorism-countermeasures>

E-Mail: infostart@start.umd.edu

Summary: The Countermeasures against Extremism and Terrorism (CoMET) Database logs countermeasures by both Government and non-government actors against the operations of UK Home-grown Islamic Violent Extremist (HIVE-UK), al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Anti-Abortion Extremists (AAE) in the United States. Statistical data is also produced.

12. Criminal Proceedings: A Timeline of U.S. Terror Cases

Host Institution: Anti-Defamation League (ADL). United States.

Scope: American Muslim extremists charged, convicted or sentenced on terrorism related offences.

Access: Free.

Website: http://archive.adl.org/main_Terrorism/american_muslim_extremists_criminal_proceedings.htm?Multi_page_sections=sHeading_2

E-Mail: <http://support.adl.org/site/PageNavigator/contactus.html>

Summary: Criminal Proceedings: A timeline of U.S. Terror Cases is produced by the United States Anti-Defamation League (ADL). The timeline covers the period 2002-2012 and lists American Muslim extremists who have been charged with terrorism-related incidents. It also includes individuals convicted and sentenced. Each respective yearly list provides chronological entries of terrorism-related criminal proceedings.

13. Critical Infrastructure Terrorist Attack (CrITerA) Database

Host Institution: Center for Terrorism and Intelligence Studies (CETIS), San Jose (CA), United States.

Scope: Terrorist attacks against critical infrastructure.

Access: Contact CETIS.

Website: <http://www.cetisresearch.org/research.htm>

E-Mail: blair@cetisresearch.org

Summary: The Critical Infrastructure Terrorist Attack (CrITerA) Database codes terrorist attacks against critical infrastructure. The database does not record every terrorist incident against critical infrastructure. The CrITerA database holds in excess of 3,000 cases covering the temporal period 1933 until present day.

14. Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) Harmony Database

Host Institution: The Combating Terrorism Center (CTC), United States Military Academy at West Point, New York (NY), United States.

Scope: Inner-functioning of al-Qa'ida and associate movements.

Access: Free.

Website: <https://ctc.usma.edu/programs-resources/harmony-program>

E-Mail: <https://ctc.usma.edu/contact>

Summary: The CTC Harmony database program allows analysts and researchers to access material sourced from the U.S. Department of Defence's Harmony database. The program's aim is to contextualise primary source material related to the inner functions of al-Qaida, its associates and related terrorism and security issues. The database contains thousands of documents, personal letters and multimedia. The CTC produce analytical reports to accompany respective material. The Harmony material was acquired during operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and other military theatre. The CTC acknowledges that the material collected for the Harmony database was not collected on a scientific basis.

15. Counter-Terrorism Initiatives (African Union) Resource Database

Host Institution: Canadian Global Security. Canada

Scope: Counter-Terrorism policy oriented research within the African Union

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.canadianglobalsecurity.com/project/ctiau/>

E-Mail: aedgar@wlu.ca

Summary: The Counter-Terrorism Initiatives (African Union) Resource Database allows users to filter and search for policy orientated Counter-terrorism initiatives within the African Union.

16. Database on Terrorism in Germany (DTG)

Host Institution: German Institute on Radicalization and De-Radicalization Studies, Germany.

Scope: Right-wing extremism and Jihadism in Germany.

Access: Contact Institute.

Website: <http://www.girds.org/projects/database-on-terrorism-in-germany-right-wing-extremism>

E-Mail: contact@girds.org

Summary: The Database on Terrorism in Germany (DTG) focuses on two main streams: right-wing extremism (DTGrwx) and Jihadism terrorism in Germany (DTG-JI). The database contains quantitative data incidents on right-wing terrorism (explosive incidents). Variables include data on right-wing arson attacks, murders, kidnappings, extortions and robberies – all dating back from 1971- present. Data on right-wing terrorist actors are also held (1963 - present). The database holds qualitative data including media reports, court verdicts and interviews with victims and perpetrators.

17. Domestic Terrorist Victims Dataset (Version 1)

Host Institution: Luis de la Calle and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, Centre for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Fundación Juan March, Madrid, Spain.

Scope: Domestic Terrorism Killings, Western Europe (1965-2005).

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.march.es/ceacs/proyectos/dtv/datasets.asp>

E-Mail: <http://www.march.es/ceacs/proyectos/dtv/people.asp>

Summary: The Domestic Terrorist Victims dataset (Version 1) has coded 4,955 terrorist killings in Western Europe over a temporal period of thirty years (1965-1995). Data set variables include location, date, victim name(s), perpetrators (terrorist group), and method of killing. Source data is derived from monographs, local media and victims lists.

18. Global Pathfinder

Host Institution: International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore.

Scope: Global terrorism and political violence, with specific emphasis on Asia-Pacific.

Access: Subscription-based.

Website: <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/research/icpvtr>

E-Mail: isngsp@ntu.edu.sg

Summary: The Global Pathfinder database holds a large array of data, particularly focusing on the Asia-Pacific region. This includes: terrorism events data, terrorist group profiles, counter-terrorism literature, training manuals and legal documentation. Reports, graphs and statistical data can also be generated.

19. Global Terrorism Database (GTD)

Host Institution: START National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. University of Maryland, Maryland (MD), United States.

Scope: Domestic and International Terrorism.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

E-Mail: infostart@start.umd.edu

Summary: The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) contains in excess of 170,000 terrorist incidents, covering the period 1970-2016. The data is unclassified. The early data for the GTD was sourced from the former Pinkerton's Global Intelligence Services (PGIS) database (1970-1993). Building upon this foundation, the GTD was developed as a terrorism events database in its own right codifying events data retrospectively and in real-time. The GTD provides a detailed array of events data, incident summary and graphical functions. Further additions to the GTD include data sets previously held by the National Counterterrorism Center's (NCTC) Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS).

20. Global Terrorism Index 2016

Host Institution: Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), Sydney, NSW, Australia.

Scope: Summary of trends and patterns in terrorism covering the period 2000-2015 worldwide.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2016.2.pdf>

E-Mail: info@visionofhumanity.org

Summary: This annual publication by the Institute for Economics and Peace (Sydney, NSW, Australia) provides a large collection of statistical data and commentary derived from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), at the University of Maryland. A comprehensive series of indexes ranks 163 countries and their impact upon terrorism.

21. The IAEA Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB)

Host Institution: International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, Austria.

Scope: Monitors and records illicit trafficking of radioactive and nuclear materials world-wide.

Access: Restricted.

Website: <http://www-ns.iaea.org/security/itdb.asp>

E-Mail: official.Mail:@iaea.org

Summary: Established in 1995 by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB) records illicit trafficking and movement incidents relating to radioactive and nuclear material as well as any other unauthorised activity. Primarily, the database's remit is to prevent nuclear and radiological terrorism, and act as a system of alert to enhance overall systems of nuclear security.

22. The International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, ICT's Incidents and Activists Database

Host Institution: International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT), Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya, Israel.

Scope: Domestic and International Terrorism.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.ict.org.il/ResearchPublications/DatabaseReports/tabid/380/Default.aspx>

E-Mail: <http://www.ict.org.il/AboutICT/ContactUs/tabid/60/Default.aspx>

Summary: Dating back to 1975, the ICT Database is one of the longest established databases on terrorism. The database holds in excess of 33,000 terrorist and counter-terrorist incidents. Reports generated from the ICT database contain a mixture of statistical data, chronological listings of terrorism events, narrative commentary and terrorism and counter-terrorism related news and regional developments.

23. Hate Symbols Database

Host Institution: Anti-Defamation League (ADL). United States.

Scope: White supremacist groups, movements and hate groups.

Access: Free.

Website: <https://www.adl.org/education/references/hate-symbols?page=1>

E-Mail: <http://support.adl.org/site/PageNavigator/contactus.html>

Summary: The Hate Symbols Database provides a series of hate symbols representing white supremacist groups and movements, including for example neo-Nazi groups and other violent extremists. The website explains the importance of symbols/flags and group identity as part of a wider form of communiqué. Also see [E-https://www.adl.org/what-we-do/combat-hate/extremism-terrorism-bigotry](https://www.adl.org/what-we-do/combat-hate/extremism-terrorism-bigotry)

24. Iraq Body Count

Host Institution: Conflict Casualties Monitor LTD, London, United Kingdom.

Scope: Solely civilian violent deaths from the post-invasion of Iraq 2003.

Access: Free.

Website: <https://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/>

E-Mail: analyst@iraqbodycount.org

Summary: The Iraq Body Count (IBC) records solely civilian violent deaths from 2003 onwards in the post-invasion period of the Iraq war of 2003, as a result of military intervention by the United States and some of its allies.

25. Data Set: ISVG Violent Extremism Knowledge Base (VKB)

Host Institution: Institute for the Study of Violent Groups,

University of New Haven, Connecticut, (CT), United States.

Scope: Violent extremism and transnational crime.

Access: Upon request.

Website: <http://www.isvg.org/capabilities-database-structure.php>

E-Mail: info@isvg.org

Summary: The ISVG relational database contains over 1500 variables relating to violent extremism and transnational crime. Open source data populating the database is eclectic. Information ranges from news media, private sector intelligence data, government and non-governmental (NGO) reports to court papers and third party data sets. The relational design of the database permits link association across the 223,000 incidents logged worldwide. A range of advanced functional operations provide temporal, link association, statistical and geographical visualisations.

26. John Jay and ARTIS Transnational Terrorism Database

Host Institution: The City University of New York, United States.

Scope: Islamist terrorists and associates.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://doitapps.jjay.cuny.edu/jjatt/index.php>

E-Mail: terrorism@jjay.cuny.edu

Summary: The John Jay and ARTIS Transnational Database codes Islamist terrorists and associates who have committed acts of terrorism as part of a “core” network. The database codifies individuals based on their level of contribution to an attack. The database contains information on individual attributes, attack network data and terrorist group evolution data. The data sets are available in a .CSV and .XLS format, with accompanying codebooks. The project was funded by the United States Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR).

27. MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base

Host Institution: Oklahoma City National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT), Oklahoma, (OK), United States.

Scope: Domestic and international terrorism.

Access: Database dis-banded and ceased operating March 2008.

Website: N/A.

E-Mail: N/A.

Summary: The MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base (TKB) was an early pioneer in the operation of publicly available truly functioning terrorism knowledge bases. Despite the short life of the TKB (2004-2008) its content was detailed and highly interactive. Comprehensive data coverage included terrorist groups, group histories, affiliations, terrorism events data, and maps.

28. Monterey WMD Terrorism Database

Host Institution: Center for Nonproliferation Studies' WMD Terrorism Research Program, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, California, (CA) United States.

Scope: Incidents relating to acquisition, possession, the threat and use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) by sub-state actors.

Access: Restricted.

Website: <http://wmddb.miis.edu/>

E-Mail: wmdt@miis.edu

Summary: The Monterey Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Database codifies incidents by sub-state actors who acquire, possess, threaten and use Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The database holds in excess of 1100 events dating back to 1900. Specific types of incidents would relate to the use of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials (CBRN). The WMD Terrorism Database is hosted and operated by the Center for Nonproliferation Studies, at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, Monterey, California, United States.

29. MPAC Post 9/11 Terrorism Incident Database

Host Institution: Muslim Public Affairs Council, Washington, D.C., United States.

Scope: Muslim and non-Muslim extremist acts and threats against the United States post 9/11.

Access: Free.

Website: <https://www.mpac.org/publications/policy-papers/post-911-terrorism-database.php> [Publication]

E-Mail: contact@mpac.org

Summary: The MPAC Post 9/11 Terrorism Incident Database contains two respective data sets on Muslim and non-Muslim acts and threats against the United States post 9/11. Recently, a third data set codifying Muslim extremist plots since the election of President Barack Obama has been added. The Muslim data set codifies incidents and plots originating both within and-out with the United States. The non-Muslim data set only records plots and terrorist events originating within the United States.

30. Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) Database on Terrorist and Serious Criminal Attacks Against Public Surface Transportation

Host Institution: Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology (S&T) National Transportation Security Center of Excellence (NTSCOE), United States.

Scope: Attacks on public surface transportation.

Access: Contact Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI)

Website: <https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Database%20Gives%20Insight%20to%20Public%20Surface%20Transportation%20Attacks-MTI-Nov2013.pdf>

[Publication]

E-Mail: universityprograms@hq.dhs.gov

Summary: The MTI Database records terrorist attacks and serious crime on surface public transportation systems worldwide. The frequency and lethality of attacks are among many variables coded, as well as the

location of bus/train stations and the type of devices used to carry out attacks. The first chronologies of public surface transportation attacks were published by MTI/NTSC in 1997. Data held dates back over forty years, detailing over 3,000 incidents.

31. Political Terror Scale (PTS)

Host Institution: University of North Carolina at Asheville, North Carolina, (NC), United States.

Scope: State terrorism and political violence worldwide.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.politicalterroryscale.org>

E-Mail: mgibney@unca.edu

Summary: Covering the period 1976-2014, the Political Terror Scale (PTS) measures annual levels of terrorism and political violence perpetrated by the state. The PTS scale ranges from Levels 1-5, with Level 5 the highest rating for political terror by the state against populations. In particular, the PTS places high importance on the level of physical integrity violations by the state.

32. Political Violence and Terrorism in Modern America: A Chronology

Host Institution: [Book Publication] Christopher Hewitt, *Political Violence and Terrorism in Modern America: A Chronology*. Praeger Security International (2005)

Scope: Chronology 1954-2005.

Access: N/A

Website: <http://www.abc-clio.com/Praeger/product.aspx?pc=D5598C>

E-Mail: N/A

Summary: A basic chronology of terrorist events in the United States and Puerto Rico (1954-1995).

33. Profiles of Incidents involving CBRN by Non-state actors (POICN) Database

Host Institution: START National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. University of Maryland, Maryland, (MD), United States.

Scope: Terrorism events data related to CBRN agents.

Access: Contact START.

Website: <http://www.start.umd.edu/start/announcements/announcement.asp?id=412>

E-Mail: infostart@start.umd.edu

Summary: The POICN database is an open-source fully relational database recording terrorism events data with reference to Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) material and related weapons.

34. Replication Data: Revolutionary Terrorism in the Developed World, 1970-2000

Host Institution: [Publication] Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, “Revolutionary Dreams and Terrorist Violence in the Developed World: Explaining Country Variation”, *Journal of Peace Research*, 46 (5) 2009: 687-706.

Scope: See summary below.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.march.es/ceacs/proyectos/dtv/datasets.asp>

E-Mail: <http://www.march.es/ceacs/proyectos/dtv/people.asp>

Summary: The replication files and accompanying information used in this publication can be found at the web site cited above.

35. Replication Data: Rebels Without a Territory. An Analysis of Non-Territorial Conflicts in the World, 1970-1997.

Host Institution: [Publication] De la Calle, Luis and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca. 2012. “Rebels Without a Territory. An Analysis of Non-territorial Conflicts in the World, 1970-1997”. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Online first: April 18, 2012.

Scope: See summary below.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.march.es/ceacs/proyectos/dtv/datasets.asp>

E-Mail: <http://www.march.es/ceacs/proyectos/dtv/people.asp>

Summary: The replication files and accompanying information used in this publication can be found at the web site cited above.

36. South Asia Terrorism Portal

Host Institution: Institute for Conflict Management, New Delhi, India.

Scope: South Asia: domestic and international terrorism events data.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.satp.org>

E-Mail: icm@satp.org

Summary: The South Asia Terrorism Portal serves a large geographic expanse. Spatial coverage of terrorism events data is wide, ranging from Pakistan to Nepal and India to Sri Lanka among others. The SATP includes chronologies, statistical data, maps, graphs and detailed commentary on terrorist events within the region. A series of weekly, monthly and yearly reports is produced. The SATP was founded in 2000.

37. Terrorism, Counterterrorism and Radicalization (Research Database)

Host Institution: Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism (CTC), Leiden University, The Hague, The Netherlands.

Scope: Database of research projects on Terrorism, Counterterrorism and Radicalization in the Netherlands.

Access: Registration Required.

Website: <http://www.terrorismdata.leiden.edu>

E-Mail: infodatabase@campusdenhaag.nl

Summary: The research database Terrorism, Counterterrorism and Radicalization holds an extensive array of terrorism, counterterrorism and radicalization projects underway in The Netherlands. The key categories are: Divisions (Counterterrorism, Future forecasts, Polarization, Radicalization, Terrorism and Flemish-Dutch Network of the Terrorism Research Initiative), Researchers, Organizations and Groups, Areas (Geographic), Categories, Time Frames and Academic Disciplines.

38. The Terrorism and Extremist Violence in the United States (TEVUS) Database

Host Institution: START National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. University of Maryland, Maryland, (MD), United States.

Scope: Behavioural, geographic and temporal characteristics of extremist violence in the United States.

Access: Request form - <http://www.start.umd.edu/tevus-portal-access-request>

Website: <http://www.start.umd.edu/tevus-portal>

E-Mail: infostart@start.umd.edu

Summary: The TEVUS database contains open-source data compiled from four related databases, dating back to 1970. These are The American Terrorism Study (ATS), The Global Terrorism Database (GTD), The U.S. Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) and the Profiles of Perpetrators of Terrorism in the United States (PPT-US). Key coded variables include incidents, temporal, behavioural and geographic characteristics of terrorism and extremist violence within the United States. Extensive other units of analysis can be queried on the database including: pre-incident activities and the identification of relationships between, for example, terrorist perpetrators and event incidents.

39. The Terrorism & Preparedness Data Resource Center (TPDRC)

Host Institution: University of Michigan's Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), Michigan (MI), United States.

Scope: Domestic and international terrorism data.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/content/NACJD/guides/tpdrc.html>

E-Mail: nacjd@icpsr.umich.edu

Summary: The Terrorism & Preparedness Data Resource Center (TPDRC) is a central archive and distribution mechanism for data generated by Government, NGO's and researchers on domestic and international

terrorism. Among a wide array of materials the TPDRC holds is data on international terrorism incidents, terrorist organisations, victim data and responses to terrorism.

40. Terrorism in Western Europe Events Data (TWEED)

Host Institution: Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen, Norway.

Scope: Internal Terrorism within 18 Western European Countries.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://folk.uib.no/sspje/tweed.htm>

E-Mail: jan.engene@isp.uib.no

Summary: This data set covers terrorist events data in eighteen Western European countries for the period 1950-2004. The TWEED data set covers internal terrorism events and excludes international acts of terrorism. Data used to populate the TWEED data sets is exclusively sourced from *Keesing's Records of World Events*. The TWEED data set can be downloaded in SPSS format via the TWEED **website**. The code-book for the data set is also available from the **Website**.

41. United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB), 1990-2010

Host Institution: START National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. University of Maryland, Maryland, (MD), United States.

Scope: Violent and non-violent criminal behaviour associated with far right-wing extremists groups in the United States.

Access: Contact START.

Website: <http://www.start.umd.edu/research-projects/united-states-extremist-crime-database-ecdb-1990-2010>

E-Mail: infostart@start.umd.edu

Summary: The United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) 1990-2010 contains data on all publicly known violent and financial crimes by extremists with a connection or association with al-Qa'ida and AQAM – its associated movement. The database also codifies data on other extremist groups who form some association with Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Animal Liberation groups. The database is relational in design. Key variables include actual incidents, perpetrators, victims and related organisations.

42. United States Political Violence Database

Host Institution: See: *Dynamics of political instability in the United States, 1780-2010. Journal of Peace Research*, 1-15, Sage (2012).

Scope: Political Violence events in the United States (1780-2010).

Access: Free.

Website: http://peterturchin.com/PDF/Turchin_JPR2012.pdf

E-Mail: N/A

Summary: The United States Political Violence Database is an amalgam of other research data and the authors own research. It codes political violence events data in the United States, such as acts of terrorism, lynching and riots for the period 1780-2010.

43. Victims of ETA dataset (2007)

Host Institution: Luis de la Calle and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, Centre for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Fundación Juan March, Madrid, Spain.

Scope: All fatalities cause by Basque Nationalist Terrorist Organisation (1960-2006).

Access: Free.

Website: <http://ic3jm.es/investigacion/dtv/datasets.asp>

E-Mail: <http://www.march.es/ceacs/proyectos/dtv/people.asp>

Summary: This data set records the 834 incidents of individuals killed between by the Basque Nationalist Terrorist Organisation (ETA) between 1960-2006. The key unit of analysis is fatality.

(ii) Commercial Databases

44. Armed Conflict Database

Host Institution: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), London, United Kingdom.

Scope: Armed conflict world-wide, international and domestic terrorism events, insurgencies and civil wars.

Access: Subscription based.

Website: <https://acd.iiss.org>

E-Mail: via website.

Summary: The Armed Conflict Database (ACD) is a subscription based service covering international conflict, internal conflict and terrorism, dating back to 1997. The ACD provides a series of interactive web maps with accompanying variables, statistics and reports. In addition, advanced query and report functionality is provided. The database holds in excess of seventy conflict/terrorism data sets worldwide.

45. DOTS (Data on Terrorist Suspects) linked to ITERATE (International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events)

Host Institution: Vinyard Software Inc., Dunn Loring, Virginia (VA), United States.

Scope: International terrorism and transnational terrorism.

Access: Commercial data sets – payment required.

Website: <http://www.vinyardsoftware.com>

E-Mail: vinyardsoftware@hotmail.com

Summary: The Data on Terrorist Suspects (DOTS) data sets consists of a compendium of terrorist related information. This includes: biographic details on terrorist group leaders, individual perpetrators, alleged detainees and defendants, aliases, conspirators and kunya's. The data is linked to variables primarily in ITERATE and other sources for the temporal period 1960-2016.

46. Global Extremism Monitor

Host Institution: Centre on Religion & Geopolitics (CRG) London, United Kingdom.

Scope: Tracks violent religious extremism and state responses globally.

Access: Free.

Website: <http://www.religionandgeopolitics.org/global-extremism-monitor>

E-Mail: info@religionandgeopolitics.org

Summary: The Global Extremism Monitor provides a monthly report in .PDF format detailing violent religious extremism and state responses to religious extremism. The reports provide, for example, detailed statistics on incidents, fatalities, graphical data and detailed contextualised narrative on areas of high intensity religious extremist activity throughout the world.

47. International Security & Counter-Terrorism Reference Center (ISCTRC)

Host Institution: EBSCO Information Services, Ipswich, Massachusetts (MA), United States.

Scope: Terrorism and conflict data (domestic and international) and risk management.

Access: Subscription based service.

Website: <https://www.ebsco.com/products/research-databases/international-security-counter-terrorism-reference-center>

E-Mail: <https://www.ebsco.com/contact>

Summary: The EBSCO International Security & Counter-Terrorism Reference Center (ISCTRC) full-text database is an open-sourced repository of data and information on conflict, terrorism, domestic security and risk management information. The database contains a wide variety of terrorism and homeland security related material including academic journals, books, reports, news feeds and summaries on individuals and organisations.

48. IntelCenter Database (ICD)

Host Institution: IntelCenter, Alexandria, Virginia (VA), United States.

Scope: International and domestic terrorist events, rebel incidents, country and groups/individual profiles.

Access: Subscription Required.

Website: <https://intelcenter.com/>

E-Mail: info@intelcenter.com

Summary: The IntelCenter Database (ICD) holds in excess of 220,000 records on terrorism events and related areas. Some of the key ICD variables include: incident(s), photos/video, geospatial data, group profiles, logos and analysis documentation. Information is updated 24 hours a day, and includes client alert notification of significant terrorism events.

49.ITERATE (International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events)

Host Institution: Vinyard Software Inc., Dunn Loring, Virginia (VA), United States.

Scope: International Terrorism and transnational terrorism.

Access: Commercial data sets – payment required (US \$ 50.- per annual dataset).

Website: <http://www.vinyardsoftware.com>

E-Mail: vinyardsoftware@hotmail.com

Summary: The ITERATE (International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events) is one of the longest established data sets on international and transnational terrorism. The collection of ITERATE data sets covers terrorism events (textual data) from 1960-2007 and coded data from 1968-2016. The textual data form part of a series of periodic chronologies on terrorism published from 1968 onwards, available from Vinyard Software. The accompanying numeric data sets on terrorism and transnational terrorism events data is made up of four files: COMMON file, FATE file, HOSTAGE file and SKYJACK file. The data sources for these files are sourced from the ITERATE chronologies. A wide range of official Government sources and media sources are used to populate the data sets.

50. Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre, Event Database

Host Institution: IHS Markit, London, United Kingdom.

Scope: Non-state armed group events (domestic and international terrorism and insurgency).

Access: Commercial database – payment required.

Website: <https://www.ihs.com/products/janes-terrorism-insurgency-intelligence-centre.html>

E-Mail: <https://www.ihs.com/about/contact-us.html>

Summary: The Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre's Events Database dates back to 1997. The key unit of analysis is the terrorist and insurgent event. Other variables include target, location, group information and number of casualties. In addition, subscription to the database provides other data such as country briefings, terrorist and insurgency group profiles, subject matter analysis and visualisation tools.

51.The Risk Advisory Terrorism Tracker

Host Institution: Risk Advisory Group plc/Aon, London, United Kingdom.

Scope: Domestic and international terrorism.

Access: Commercial database.

Website: <https://www.terrorismtracker.com>

E-Mail: terrorismtracker@riskadvisory.net

Summary: The Risk Advisory Terrorism Tracker is a commercial database of worldwide terrorism events and terrorist plots. The temporal range for the database starts from the 1st January 2007 and is on-going. Each coded terrorist incident is geo-tagged to permit visual mapping of events. Timeline functionality and trend analysis is incorporated into the database's functionality. The Terrorism Tracker database is produced in conjunction with the risk management company Aon plc.

52. Terrorism and Political Violence Risk Map 2016

Host Institution: Aon Plc. London, United Kingdom.

Scope: The unit of analysis measures risk of political violence towards international business.

Access: Free. [Publication]

Website: <http://www.aon.com/terrorismmap/>

E-Mail: scott.bolton1@aon.com

Summary: The Aon Terrorism and Political Violence Risk Map provides data and information on the risk of terrorism and political violence across six countries specifically: Egypt, France, India, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United States, and other country data generally. Key areas of risk are measured against such variables such as: TPV Risk Rating, Key Belligerents, Terrorism Casualties and Comparable Security Environments.

53. Terror Attack Database

Host Institution: OodaLoop, Washington D.C., United States.

Scope: Terrorist Attacks Worldwide.

Access: Commercial Database – payment required.

Website: <https://www.oodaloop.com/category/attack/>

E-Mail: <https://www.oodaloop.com/general-inquiry/>

Summary: The Terror Attack Database formerly run by Terrorism.com holds in excess of 10,000 terrorism incidents.

(iii) Governmental Databases

54. Counter-Terrorism Statistics (Operation of Police Powers under the Terrorism Act 2000) United Kingdom

Host Institution: The Home Office, Office of the National Coordinator of Terrorist Investigations (United Kingdom).

Scope: Series of statistical data on terrorism arrests and their outcomes.

Access: Free.

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/counter-terrorism-statistics>

E-Mail: N/A

Summary: The Home Office (United Kingdom) produce an extensive series of quarterly statistical data reports relating to the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT). The data includes arrests and outcomes of arrests. Further break-down of data on stop and searches is also provided. The format is a mixture of narrative analysis and statistical data tables available in various OpenDocument formats.

55. Country Reports on Terrorism 2016

Host Institution: United States Department of State, Washington D.C. United States.

Scope: Domestic and International Terrorism.

Access: Free. [Publication]

Website: <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/272488.pdf>

E-Mail: <https://register.state.gov/contactus/>

Summary: The U.S. State Departments Country Reports on Terrorism is an annual publication, first produced in 2004. The format is mainly a narrative account of terrorism events by country. It also documents issues on legality, state sponsored terrorism, Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD), terrorist 'safe havens' and State Department 'Designated Foreign Terrorist Organisations' (FTO). The Country Reports replaced, in 2004, the State Departments Patterns of Global Terrorism. The U.S. State Department is required by law to present the report to Congress by the 30th of April each year. In addition, the Country Reports on Terrorism is accompanied by an Annex of Statistical Information, including analysis. Since 2012, this has been produced by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). See: <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/272485.pdf>

56. The European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) 2017

Host Institution: Europol, The Hague, The Netherlands.

Scope: Terrorism events within the European Union

Access: Free. [Publication and on-line]

Website: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/tesat2017.pdf>

E-Mail: See Europol website: <https://www.europol.europa.eu>

Summary: The European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) is compiled by Europol from data provided by the European Union's respective law enforcement and intelligence agencies. It is an annual publication. TE-SAT originated as a response to counter-terrorism responses to the 9/11 attacks on the United States in 2001. In addition to providing statistical data on terrorism events and data on arrest of suspects within the European Union, TE-SAT also provides narrative commentary on a wide range of terrorism related issues. These include: single-issues, right-wing terrorism, left-wing terrorism, religiously inspired terrorism and ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism.

57. Listed Terrorist Entities

Host Institution: Public Safety Canada (Canadian Government), Canada.

Scope: Lists groups or individuals deemed by the Canadian Government to be associated with terrorism.

Access: Free.

Website: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrct/cntr-trrrsm/lstd-ntts/index-en.aspx>

E-Mail: - See: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/bt/cntct-en.aspx>

Summary: The publicly accessible Listed Terrorist Entities provides information on groups and individuals deemed under Canadian legislation (the Anti-Terrorism Act) to be associated with terrorism. Key public information provided includes: aliases of groups or individuals, a description of the groups or individuals, a listing date and a review date. Individuals or groups officially listed are subject to potential seizure/restraint and can also include the forfeiture or seizure of assets. For detailed criteria for inclusion in the Listed Terrorist Entities see Public Safety Canada website. An agreed entity eligible for the Listed Terrorist Entities is also published in the Canada Gazette (<http://www.gazette.gc.ca>).

58. The RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents (RDWTI)

Host Institution: The RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, California, United States.

Scope: Domestic and International Terrorism

Access: Free.

Website: <https://www.rand.org/nsrd/projects/terrorism-incidents.html>

E-Mail: <http://www.rand.org/nsrd/projects/terrorism-incidents/about/contact.html>

Summary: The RDWTI is among the longest established and comprehensive data sets on domestic and international terrorism. The original RAND data sets on terrorism events data were established in 1972 and were known as The RAND Terrorism Chronology. The project was the result of a request to RAND from the United States Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism, following the 1972 Munich Olympic massacre and terrorist attacks on Lod Airport, Israel by the Red Army terrorist group. The data sets coded so far (in excess of 40,000 entries) cover the period from 1968-2009. Although The RAND Corporation owns the data sets, other organisations have periodically hosted the RDWTI, including the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV) at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland (1994-1998) and the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, Oklahoma (MIPT).

59. Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE)

Host Institution: National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), Washington D.C., United States.

Scope: United States Government's central repository of information on international terrorist identities.

Access: Restricted.

Website: https://www.dni.gov/files/Tide_Fact_Sheet.pdf

E-Mail: nctcpao@nctc.gov

Summary: The Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) serves as the United States Government's (USG) key central database and knowledge bank on international terrorist identities – both known and suspected. The TIDE system also feeds information into the United States Terrorist Screening Center (TSC)

with near real-time datasets of terrorist identifiers. The NCTC provides advisories and recommendations to the Terrorist Screening Center's watchlist's from the TIDE Datamart.

60. Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS)

Host Institution: National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) Washington, D.C. United States.

Scope: Domestic and International Terrorism.

Access: Database now closed. The WITS data sets were transferred to the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) program at START, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. University of Maryland, Maryland, United States

Website: [Database is now incorporated into GTD]: <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

E-Mail: N/A

Summary: The Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS) was developed and operated by the National Counterterrorism Center from 2004-2010 until it ceased operation in 2012. The WITS database provided the U.S. State Department with the statistical and quantitative data on domestic and worldwide terrorism events data, as required by law, and to be submitted to the U.S. Congress annually. The WITS database evolved into a sophisticated relational database system with advanced graphical functionality. Data sourced from the WITS database formed the core data for the NCTC's annual publication: The National Counterterrorism Annual Report on Terrorism. The data from WITS was subsequently integrated into the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) under the auspices of the University of Maryland's START - National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism project.

About the Author: Neil G. Bowie is an independent scholar, specialising in the analysis of terrorism and counter-terrorism databases. He holds a Ph.D. from the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV) at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. Dr. Bowie also holds degrees from the Universities of Aberdeen, Strathclyde and from Edinburgh's Napier University. He can be reached at: neil.bowie1@btinternet.com.

Notes

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Towards Academic Consensus Definitions of Radicalism and Extremism

by Astrid Bötticher

Abstract

Radicalism and extremism are frequently (mis-)used concepts. The meaning of these terms is vague and the boundaries between them and between either of these terms and mainstream political thoughts and practices are unclear. While there are no legal definitions of extremism or radicalism in most countries, there are nevertheless many governmental programs that deal with [Countering] Violent Extremism (CVE) and [De-]Radicalisation since both imply a turn to a specific form of political violence: terrorism. This Research Note presents the outcome of terminological and conceptual analyses of definitions of extremism and radicalism as utilised (mainly, but not exclusively) in Germany. The objective was to develop academic consensus definitions of these terms comparable to the approach developed by Alex P. Schmid for reaching an Academic Consensus Definition of Terrorism.[1]

Keywords: Extremism, Radicalism, Terrorism, Radicalisation, Germany

Introduction

In a recent doctoral dissertation, the author of this Research Note surveyed and synthesized the German discussion on extremism and radicalism.[2] Utilising Reinhart Koselleck's approach of conceptual history[3], it could be demonstrated that, in terms of histories of ideas, radicalism and extremism stem from different socio-political (party) movements.[4] In addition to the study of the historical evolution of the use of these two terms, a second methodology was utilized – Giovanni Sartoris' method of concept analysis.[5] This part of the analysis was based on a collection of definitions from various sources such as schoolbooks, lexica, and compendia. In addition, definitions from several academic disciplines (political science, sociology, criminology, historical studies, jurisprudence) were collected for both radicalism and extremism. This enabled the identification of definitional elements which were categorised in matrices. The ordering of definitional elements and the analysis of their structural properties allowed the author to obtain a picture of extremism and radicalism within the (social) sciences. In addition, definitions from state security-related institutions in Germany were also included in the analysis.

Towards a Consensus Definition of Extremism

While radicalism as a term has been around since at least the 18th century, extremism is of more modern origin. In Germany, it entered the authoritative "Duden" dictionary only in 1942. The postwar "Verfassungsschutz" (the Office for the Protection of the Constitution - the German domestic intelligence service), began using the term extremism in 1974.[6] In the late seventies, the term was first introduced as a scientific concept by Manfred Funke[7], followed by others in the 1980s. For most of them, the term denoted a fundamental opposition to core values of the West German constitution, as reflected in a number of verdicts of the federal constitutional court since the 1950s against the (Sozialistische Reichspartei Deutschlands) SRP, a successor party of the Hitler era National Socialists, and against a Moscow-directed Communist party. Extremism as a concept, however, never fully escaped the political debate in Germany, postponing the emergence of a more neutral social science conceptualisation.

In the Anglo-Saxon world, the discussion on extremism dates back to the First World War. [8] The precursor term of extremism, "extremite", was already used by Bishop Stephen Gardiner in 1546 to describe his enemies.[9] William Safire named Joseph Worcester's dictionary from 1846 as an early source. However, it is widely held that US Senator Daniel Webster popularized the term; he used it to describe the most violent

proponents in the (anti-)slavery debate at the time of the American civil war.[10] The term experienced a revival a century later in the 1960s, with John L. Carpenter, Edgar Metzler, Walter B. Mead, Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab among others using it.[11] At that time, empirical approaches were developed for better conceptualisations. In the 1990s, Manus Midlarsky finally elaborated a seminal theoretical framework based on ideology, narration and group-think.[12] With roots in empirical, inductive research and with the objective to explain descriptively how political extremism emerges - why and how individuals and groups of people become violent, and what ingredients are needed to lead them to political violence - Midlarsky's magisterial work has no intellectual counterpart in the German academic discussion.

While some authors use the term 'non-violent extremism' for Islamist fundamentalists who are not active jihadists, holding extremist views without the political will to translate thoughts into action might be more a question of circumstances and opportunities than principles.

With regard to 'extremism', the following consensus definition,[13] derived on the basis of two distinct analytical methodologies developed by R. Koselleck and G. Sartori, is proposed:

Extremism characterises an ideological position embraced by those anti-establishment movements, which understand politics as struggle for supremacy rather than as peaceful competition between parties with different interests seeking popular support for advancing the common good. Extremism exists at the periphery of societies and seeks to conquer its center by creating fear of enemies within and outside society. They divide fellow citizens and foreigners into friends and foes, with no room for diversity of opinions and alternative life-styles. Extremism is, due to its dogmatism, intolerant and unwilling to compromise. Extremists, viewing politics as a zero-sum game, tend - circumstances permitting - to engage in aggressive militancy, including criminal acts and mass violence in their fanatical will for gaining and holding political power. Where extremists gain state power, they tend to destroy social diversity and seek to bring about a comprehensive homogenisation of society, based on an often faith-based ideology with apocalyptic traits. At the societal level, extremist movements are authoritarian, and, if in power, extremist rulers tends to become totalitarian. Extremists glorify violence as a conflict resolution mechanism and are opposed to the constitutional state, majority-based democracy, the rule of law, and human rights for all.

Towards a Consensus Definition of Radicalism

As noted earlier, radicalism as a term is older than extremism and has, in the course of more than two hundred years, undergone changes of meaning. The term was originally used in medicine and came to describe a political attitude in the late 1790s. The concept spread from a then-progressive post-1688 Glorious Revolution England to the Enlightenment in 18th century France, reaching Germany only in the 19th century. In terms of content, it generally became a marker of enlightened, liberal to left-wing political tenets, opposing reactionary political establishments. Radicalism became a political doctrine inspiring republican and national movements committed to individual and collective freedom and emancipation, directed against the monarchic and aristocratic post-1815 status quo. At that time, radicalism was mostly anti-clerical, anti-monarchist and definitely pro-democracy. Some of its demands (like female suffrage) have become mainstream ideas and were realised in most parts of the world during the 20th century. Political opponents often sought to portray radicalism as a revolutionary, mainly left-wing, - and lately religious - subversive force. However, historically, in terms of political parties embracing its tenets, radicalism is more closely linked to a progressive reformism than to utopian extremism, whose glorification of mass violence radicals generally rejected.

On the basis of the findings derived from the use of the two methodologies (Koselleck's and Sartori's), a short academic consensus definition of radicalism[14] can be suggested along these lines:

Radicalism refers to a political doctrine embraced by socio-political movements favouring both

individual and collective freedom, and emancipation from the rule of authoritarian regimes and hierarchically-structured societies. In that sense radicalism, advocating sweeping political change, represents a form of hostility against the status quo and its establishment. Often, its initial milieu is found among the sons and daughters of a bourgeois elite, young people who identify with, and seek to improve, the social conditions of larger sections of the population. Historically, radical political parties were key drivers in the progress towards greater democracy in a number of states. Radicalism as an ideological mindset tends to be very critical of the existing status quo, pursuing the objective of restructuring and/or overthrowing outdated political structures. By their opponents, radicals are often portrayed as violent; but this is only partly correct, as radicalism tends to be associated historically more with a progressive reformism than with utopian extremism, whose glorification of violence it rejects. Radicalism is emancipatory and does not seek to subjugate people and enforce conformity like extremism does. Radical narratives contain utopian ideological elements, but they do not glorify a distant past. Although unwilling to compromise their ideals, radicals are open to rational arguments as to the means to achieve their goals. Unlike extremists, radicals are not necessarily extreme in their choice of means to achieve their goals. Unlike extremists who reject the extremist label, radicals also self-define themselves as radicals.

Key Distinctions between Radicalism and Extremism

Radicalism and extremism both refer to socio-political forces that exist at the edges of liberal-democratic societies. Several elements can help us distinguish one from the other:

1. Radical movements tend to use political violence pragmatically and on a selective basis, while extremist movements consider violence against their enemies as a legitimate form of political action and tend to embrace extreme forms of mass violence as part of their political credo.
2. Both ‘-isms’ contain a narrative reference to what lies beyond the present. In the case of extremism, there is a strong palingenetic element; radicalism looks more at a golden future for all rather than seeking to restore an allegedly golden past for adherents of its own creed.
3. Extremism is, by its very nature, anti-democratic; it seeks to abolish constitutional democracy and the rule of law. Radicalism is emancipatory and not *per se* anti-democratic. Extremist movements cannot be integrated into liberal-democratic societies due to their intolerance towards ideologies other than their own. Democracies can live with radicals but not with uncompromising, aggressive extremist militants.
4. Extremists openly confront the notion of universal human rights and those institutions that serve to uphold them for all. Radicalism is not opposed to equal human rights; historically, progressive radicals have sought to extend human rights to the underprivileged.
5. Extremists want to close the open marketplace of ideas. Radicals, while advocating a path of action that differs greatly from the continuation of the status quo, do not seek to close open societies and destroy diversity in society the way extremists do. Contrary to radicalism, extremism is extreme in both its goals and the choice of means to reach them.
6. Radicalism stands in rebellious opposition against the establishment; extremism, on the other hand, is directed not only against the establishment but against all those who do not embrace its dogmatic recipe for a transformation of society.
7. When numerically weak, radicals can withdraw from mainstream society into a form of intransigent isolationism / niche culture, co-existing with plural societies and not continuously seeking a direct confrontation with mainstream society. On the other hand, extremists engage in provocative and aggressive interventions against the established order.

8. Extremism is characterized by a particularistic morality valid only for its own members. Radicalism is oriented more towards a universal morality.
9. The concept of extremism is closely linked to authoritarian dictatorships and totalitarianism. Historically, radicalism has been more egalitarian and less elitist while extremists are supremacists opposed to the sovereignty of common people.
10. Radicalism draws strongly on the political legacy of the 18th century Enlightenment, with its ideas of human progress and its faith in the power of reason. Extremism, on the other hand, is linked to an irrational, usually religious and fanatical belief system, that claims a monopoly of truth on the basis of which it seeks to transform society according to its retrograde vision.

Conclusion

Attempting to re-define essentially contested and frequently (ab-)used and fuzzy concepts like radicalism and extremism from an academic perspective - that is without any political definition- may look like an exercise in futility. Both radicalism and extremism are situated at some distance from the middle ground - politically moderate, mainstream positions in democratic societies. The centrist position in the political playing field might, however, be shifting too which makes the exercise of defining the radicalist and extremist outliers more difficult. What has emerged from this definitional exploration is that radicalism can be situated at the edges of the democratic consensus while extremism lies outside. Although the meanings of these two contested concepts may at times overlap to a certain extent, they should not be equated. Confronted with radicalism, democratic political systems have shown an ability to absorb radical demands by way of arriving at reasonable compromises. Confronted with extremism, democratic systems and plural societies cannot compromise with dogmatic demands based on faith-based ideological constructs that have no sound basis in social realities.

The links between radicalism and terrorism are much weaker than those between extremism and terrorism. In that sense, the use of the term 'radicalisation' to denote a turn towards a specific form of political violence, namely terrorism, is unfortunate – but probably nevertheless irreversible in the current public political discourse. The danger is that all forms of radical rebellion – even legitimate resistance against corrupt and violent authoritarian regimes - are disqualified as illegitimate extremism. This has the dangerous potential effect of driving pro-democracy radicals into the arms of anti-democratic extremists. Many threatened authoritarian regimes tend to favour the equation of radicalism with extremism, as it allows them to claim that the only choice in the current geo-political situation is the one between the relative stability only they can supposedly offer and violent extremism in the form of jihadist terrorism.

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Notes

[1] Alex P. Schmid. The Revised Academic Consensus Definition of Terrorism (2011). *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 6, Issue 2 (2012); URL: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/schmid-terrorism-definition/html>. - For background, see: Alex P. Schmid (Ed.) *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research* New York and London: Routledge, 2011, pp. 86 - 87; Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman. *Political Terrorism. A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literatures*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005, p. 28.

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[13] For a longer version of my proposed consensus definition of extremism, see: Astrid Bötticher. *Radicalism and Extremism – Conceptualisation and Differentiation of two Controversial Terms in the German Debate* (written in German, with English summary). Leiden: ISGA, 2017 (422 pp.), p. 340; available at URL:<https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/49257/FullText.pdf?sequence=1>

[14] For a longer version of my proposed consensus definition of radicalism, see: Astrid Bötticher. *Radikalismus und Extremismus*, op. cit., pp.335 - 336.

Central Asian Jihadists in the Front Line

by Ely Karmon

Abstract

Since the beginning of 2017, a string of jihadist terrorist attacks involved Central Asian citizens, mainly of Uzbek and Kirgiz origin, notably in Turkey, Russia and Sweden. Another element, which should not be underestimated, are the Uighur jihadists, original from the Xinjiang Region in China. The final demise of the Islamic State, the disappearance of its territorial base and the pressure of the various coalition forces in Iraq and Syria on the surviving foreign fighters, will compel them to flee to ungoverned states, like Yemen and Libya, but for the various Central Asian jihadists, Afghanistan and the Pakistan tribal areas seem the most suitable refuge. From there they can swarm in case of need for attacks into Europe, Central Asia, China, India and beyond.

Keywords: Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Russia, China, Europe, Central Asian jihadists

Introduction

Since the beginning of 2017, a string of jihadist terrorist attacks involved Central Asian citizens, mainly of Uzbek and Kirgiz origin. The latest noticeable attacks were the April 2017 bombing of St. Petersburg's Metro and the ramming of a stolen truck into a crowd in central Stockholm, Sweden. Interestingly, in three major cases there is a Turkish connection to the terrorists involved.

The St. Petersburg Metro Attack

On 3 April 2017, an explosive device contained in a briefcase detonated in the Saint Petersburg Metro, killing 15 people and injuring at least 45 others. A second explosive device was found and defused. Authorities in Kyrgyzstan informed that the suspected perpetrator, Akbarzhon Jalilov, was an ethnic Uzbek born in the southern city of Osh (Fergana Valley, Kyrgyzstan) but was a citizen of Russian Federation and had lived there since the age of 16.

Chinara Esengul, an expert on radical Islam based in Kyrgyzstan, said that according to official figures, about 850 people from Kyrgyzstan have joined the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. There are hundreds of thousands of Central Asian emigres living and working in the Russian Federation.[1]

A search of the apartment rented by Jalilov uncovered double-sided tape, metallic foil, and "other objects" similar to those comprising the unexploded device, which indicates that Jalilov assembled both explosive devices in the apartment.

The Fontanka.ru agency said Jalilov had traveled to Syria in 2014 and trained with Islamic State militants. The report said that Russian investigators had ascertained that the device used in the subway attack bore the hallmarks of "Syrian know-how," specifically traces of burned sugar.[2]

One theory, investigated in conjunction with the Kyrgyz National Security Committee, is that Jalilov might have committed the attack under the influence of the *Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad* terror group, which operates in Syria. The group includes hundreds of Uzbeks, including those who used to live in Kyrgyzstan's Osh Region. In 2016 Kyrgyz security services had carried out a large-scale operation in the region against militants who had returned from Syria and were actively recruiting new members and preparing terrorist attacks. The Osh court banned the group as a terrorist organization. The militants then went underground and set up online recruiting operations.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) detained near Moscow Abror Azimov from former Soviet Central Asia, born in 1990. He was accused as one of the organizers of the attack, and the one who had trained Jalilov. [3] However, Azimov refused to admit his guilt in court during the hearing.

By the end of April, the FSB arrested 12 people of Central Asian descent in the Kaliningrad region suspected of involvement with the Jihad-Jamaat Mujahedin extremist group. The alleged leader of the cell was placed by Uzbekistan on a Wanted List for extremist crimes.

Two suspected supporters of the ISIS, who were planning a "high-profile" terror attack in Russia's Far East, were arrested on April 26 in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, a city on the Pacific island of Sakhalin. One of the two suspects is from a Central Asian state while the other is a citizen of Russia.[4]

Stockholm, Sweden

On April 7, 2017, Rakhmat Akilov, a 39-year-old Uzbek man, rammed a stolen truck into a crowd in central Stockholm, killing five people and wounding 15. Bomb disposal experts found an improvised explosive device packed into a suitcase inside the hijacked beer truck. It is not known why the IED failed to detonate.

Speaking in a mixture of Russian and Swedish, the suspect confessed to the crime as soon as he was apprehended. Akilov's Swedish residency application had been rejected in 2016 but police said there was nothing to indicate he might be planning an attack. Akilov was known to the police and posted ISIS jihadist propaganda on social media.

An Uzbek man, living at the same address as Akilov, ran a cleaning company that was part of a 2015 police investigation into an Uzbek crime ring in the Stockholm area which was alleged to have generated significant sums of money for ISIS. Five people were charged and three were convicted on grounds of financial impropriety.[5]

Swedish Radio News has discovered links on the Russian social media website *Odnoklassniki* between the suspected Stockholm terrorist and a network around a jihadist leader, Abu Saloh, who was wanted by Interpol for terror financing and a suicide attack in 2016 in Kyrgyzstan. Extremists use *Odnoklassniki* accounts as go-betweens to connect violent jihadists and possible recruits – especially focusing on Central Asian migrant workers like Rakhmat Akilov. According to a source within the Russian police, the suspected organizer of the attack is none other than Abu Saloh.[6]

In November 2015, a group of Uzbek citizens arrested in Uzbekistan's capital, Tashkent, were allegedly planning to go to Syria to join the *Jannat Oshiqdari* (Loving Paradise) group in Syria. *Jannat Oshiqdari* is also known as *Tawhid wal-Jihad* (TWJ), an Uzbek-led group based in Syria's Aleppo province. TWJ had pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda and runs a propaganda operation that broadcasts its activities in Syria. The group has two websites, a Facebook page, and a YouTube channel on which it posts professionally made videos with footage of battles in which TWJ militants are fighting, as well as speeches by the group's leader, Abu Saloh.[7]

The Turkish Connection

According to a senior Turkish official, Akbarzhon Jalilov, the man who blew up the St. Petersburg metro wagon, had entered Turkey in late 2015 and was deported to Russia in December 2016 because of immigration violations. While in Turkey, Jalilov "was deemed suspicious due to some connections he had, but no action was taken as he had not done anything illegal and there was no evidence of wrongdoing." [8]

Turkish authorities detained Rakhmat Akilov, the Uzbek national suspected of mowing down pedestrians with a truck in Stockholm on April 7, while he tried to join the ranks of ISIS in Syria in 2015. Given his

refugee status, he was deported back to Sweden. Uzbek authorities had added Akilov to an international Wanted List in late February, after a criminal case based on “religious extremism” was opened against him.

However, the Turkish roots of Central Asian jihadists are deeper and broader than the cases in St. Petersburg and Stockholm attest.

Attack on Istanbul’s Main Airport

On June 28, 2016, three assailants, armed with AK-47 rifles, became involved in a firefight with security and police near Istanbul Atatürk Airport’s x-ray security checkpoint, after which at least two of the gunmen detonated suicide bombs, leaving 43 people dead and some 200 injured.

A senior Turkish official identified the three suicide attackers as nationals of Russia, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Two suicide bombers were identified as Vadim Osmanov and Rakhim Bulgarov, while the third was never named.

U.S. Rep. Michael McCaul, Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security, claimed that Akhmed Chatayev, commander of the Chechen battalion in Syria, directed this attack at Istanbul’s airport. The CIA and White House declined to comment on McCaul’s assertion. Turkish officials were also not able to confirm Chatayev’s role. The *Sabah* newspaper, which is close to the Turkish government, said police had launched a manhunt for him. The 35-year-old militant had fought in Chechnya against Russian forces in the early 2000s before fleeing to the West. He was placed on the U.S. list of suspected terrorists in 2015. Although no one has claimed responsibility for the airport attack, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that ISIS was “most probably” behind it.[9]

After the airport attack, authorities arrested 42 suspects, with four more still on the run. Those held, including suspects from Russia, Algeria and Turkey, are due to go on trial in November 2017. The authorities have said a large number of those linked to the attack are from ex-Soviet Central Asia or from Russia’s mainly Muslim northern Caucasus region.[10]

The investigation into the Istanbul airport attack has revealed the Islamic State ran a training center in Turkey, which the airport attacker Vadim Osmanov had attended. This center was used for the initial training of foreign fighters coming to Turkey to join the Islamic State and also to arrange their transfers to Syria.[11]

The Istanbul Reina Nightclub Attack

Contrary to the investigation in the Istanbul airport bombings, the attack on the Reina nightclub in Istanbul, on December 31, 2016, has provided important information about the wide network and deep implantation of Central Asian jihadists on Turkish territory. The attack was carried out eight weeks after Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi had called for all-out war against Turkey in an audio released on November 2, 2016.

On January 16, 2017, after a massive manhunt, the Reina attacker, identified as Uzbek national Abdulkadir Masharipov (alias Muhammed Horasani) from a small town in Kyrgyzstan with a predominantly Uzbek population, was finally captured alive in Istanbul. Investigations revealed that he had been directed to launch the attack by a senior Islamic State operative in Raqqa, Syria, and had been provided logistical and financial support in Istanbul by a large Islamic State network operating clandestinely in the city.[12]

Born in 1983, Masharipov had graduated from Fergana State University in Uzbekistan with a major in physics and a minor in computer science. He has been involved with jihadi terrorist organizations since 2011, according to information provided to Interpol by Uzbekistan, where he was a known terrorist and subject to

a national arrest warrant. He speaks Uzbek, Arabic, Chinese, and Russian. Masharipov told investigators that he had received military training at an al-Qaida camp in Afghanistan after traveling there in 2010. At some later point, while he was in Pakistan, Masharipov became a member of the Islamic State, pledging allegiance to Abu-Bakar al-Baghdadi.[13]

About a year before the Reina attack, he had been given orders by an Islamic State emir in Raqqa to travel to Turkey to establish himself, along with his wife and two children, in Konya - a city in the middle of Turkey - and await further orders. It appears that at some point, while he was in Pakistan, he had established remote contact with the group's leadership in Syria. According to his statement to the police, after traveling from Pakistan, Masharipov was arrested inside Iran and detained there for over a month before Iranian authorities deported him in January 2016 across the Iranian-Turkish border, without informing the Turkish police or customs agents.

Masharipov arrived in Konya, central Turkey, with his family at the beginning of 2016, assuming the name Ebu Muhammed Horasani. Police reportedly found Masharipov along with his four-year-old son at the home of a Kyrgyz friend in the city. His friend was also detained, along with three women. In the apartment, police found two aerial drones, two handguns, several cell phone SIM cards, and \$197,000 in cash.[14] Masharipov is believed to be part of a sleeper cell to which several Uighurs, Syrians and Daghestanis also belonged.[15]

According to Masharipov's testimony, on December 25, 2016, he was directed, via the messaging app *Telegram*, by Islamic State emir in Raqqa Abu Shuhada, responsible for Islamic State operations in Turkey, to launch an attack on New Year's Eve in Istanbul. Masharipov claimed he was provided before the attack with an AK-47 assault rifle, six loaded magazines and three stun grenades by an Islamic State member, whose name was never made known to him.

Masharipov's wife was detained in an operation that captured 11 suspects on January 12, 2017. Nurullayeva stated that her husband left their Istanbul lodgings three days before the attack and that she and their daughter were then transferred to an Islamic State safe house by Islamic State members. It was later revealed that Russian authorities had arrested Nurullayeva in 2011 on charges of being a member of a terrorist organization.[16]

Hurriyet reported that an ISIS cell of Uzbeks, operating in the central region of Konya, provided Masharipov with support. Uzbek fighters have become deeply embedded in ISIS and have fought alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan. They are also said to have secret outposts in some major Russian cities as well as having ties to Muslim extremists in China.[17]

In March 2017, Turkish Police detained in Istanbul's Kağıthane district two ISIS suspects who held Uzbekistani citizenship. They were planning a "major attack similar to the Reina nightclub." Police seized in their apartment two Kalashnikov rifles with two full chargers with 500 bullets, and also found numerous digital and written documents containing information about the terrorist group.[18]

The Central Asian Jihadists in Syria and Iraq

Already by the end of 2014, it was estimated that there were between one and three thousand Caucasians fighting alongside armed groups within Syria and Iraq (whether affiliated to IS or the al-Nusra Front). The Caucasians are divided between those who have arrived from Chechnya, Georgia, Daghestan or Azerbaijan, and those who migrated from countries of asylum like Europe and Turkey. Most of the Chechen fighters living in Europe went to the Arab world during 2012 and 2013. Some proceeded from Grozny to Turkey, while others used Bosnia and Kosovo as their transit routes. Chechens have become an important element of ISIS, despite their small numbers in comparison with other ethnic groups. In Syria and Iraq there are four

active groups, some under the banner of the ISIS and others belonging to the al-Nusra Front (the al-Qaeda faction in Syria), while still others operate independently.[19]

According to recent reports, 6,000 militants from Central Asia and the Caucasus have already been enlisted in ISIS ranks. The largest radical group in Uzbekistan, *Imam Bukhari Jamaat*, has joined ISIS in Syria. Experts say there are over one thousand Uzbek and Tajik militants still fighting under the banner of ISIS.[20]

The Chechens in Syria represent a domestic security problem in Europe and Turkey, because many originate from the diaspora. Considerable numbers come from Georgia and Turkey, but there are also dozens from Austria and France and fewer from Belgium, Scandinavia and Germany.

In October 2016, police in Germany had conducted raids in five regions as part of a probe into alleged extremism by asylum-seekers from Chechnya. It was part of an investigation which began against a 28-year-old Russian of Chechen origin who was suspected of “preparing an act of violence against the state.” The Chechen jihadist scene in Berlin is substantial and high-profile. Chechen groups in Syria trained foreigners, including Germans of different ethnic origins, following a long tradition of sympathy for Chechnya among German jihadists.[21]

The fighters coming from Central Asia to Syria, especially the Uzbeks, possess extensive practical expertise of warfare due to their participation in various theatres of war, such as Afghanistan and Pakistan. Many of them have undertaken numerous operations at the local and regional levels in the past. The *Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan* was the most prominent Central Asian group active in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It has been decimated after the US coalition occupied Afghanistan. Most of the Uzbek fighters taking part in Syria’s jihad have come from their countries of exile, particularly Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.[22]

Another element, which should not be underestimated, are the Uighur jihadists, originating from the Xinjiang region in China.

Rami Abdurrahman, who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said there are about 5,000 Chinese fighters in Syria, who, together with their families, add up to 20,000 people. Li Wei, a terrorism expert at China’s Institute of Contemporary International Relations, believes the real numbers are much lower, about 300 Chinese fighters who brought with them about 700 family members. Some have joined al-Qaida’s branch in the country previously known as al-Nusra Front, others paid allegiance to ISIS and a smaller number joined factions such as the *Islamist Ahrar al-Sham*. The majority of Chinese jihadis are with the *Turkistan Islamic Party* (TIP), a very secretive organization. They are organized, battled-hardened and have been instrumental in ground offensives against regime forces. They are active in parts of Idlib and in the strategic town of Jisr al-Shughour, as well as the Kurdish Mountains in the western province of Latakia. [23]

Christina Lin, an expert in China-Mideast relations at SAIS-Johns Hopkins University, sustains that while from the 1990s to the late 2000s, China’s terrorist threats were largely localized in Xinjiang and bordering countries, especially Afghanistan and Pakistan, after Uighur militants based in AfPak began to migrate to Syria in 2012, the Middle East became the “forward front for China’s War on Terror.” There was an increase of terrorist attacks in China (e.g. in Beijing 2013, and in Kunming and Urumqi in 2014) directed from abroad.

Lin mentions the August 14, 2016 deal by China to provide humanitarian aid, military training, and intelligence sharing with the Syrian government, as a possible trigger to the August 30 suicide bomb attack on the Chinese embassy in Kyrgyzstan. According to Bishkek authorities, the terrorist attack was ordered by Uighur jihadists in Syria, financed by the rebranded a *Jabhat Fatah al-Sham* (JFS, former *Jabhat al-Nusra*), coordinated from Turkey, and carried out by a member of the *Turkistan Islamic Party* (TIP/ETIM).[24]

Afghanistan as new/old Base

After the demise of ISIS and the destruction of the Caliphate as a territorial entity, many foreign fighters, especially those from Caucasus, Central and Southeast Asia will either return home or more probably will flow to the “liberated” territories in Afghanistan and the Pakistan tribal areas - a revival of the 1990s situation. They will try to build an ISIS territorial basis there but many will probably strengthen the ranks of al-Qaeda in the region as its ally, the Taliban, has successfully weakened the pro-ISIS groups that tried to challenge it in the region.[25]

On January 26, 2015, Abu Muhammed al-Adnani, Islamic State’s chief spokesperson, declared the establishment of Wilayat Khorasan, a IS province “encompassing Afghanistan, Pakistan and other nearby lands.” Wilayat Khorasan has pursued a campaign of expansion and consolidation in the region, mostly in eastern and southeastern Afghanistan. The group, however, has experienced several setbacks on the battlefield.

The most crushing defeat suffered by Wilayat Khorasan was the annihilation of the *Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan* (IMU), which had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in August 2015. In October 2015, the Taliban established a special unit, comprised of highly skilled and experienced militants, to combat ISIS and by December 2015 had killed hundreds of IMU fighters in Zabul, including its emir, Uthman Ghazi. Taliban militants, Afghan security forces, and local militias have also chipped away at Wilayat Khorasan-held territory in Nangarhar province along the Pakistani border.[26]

General John Nicholson, the most senior US commander in Afghanistan, has claimed American efforts have killed about one-third of ISIS fighters, including its leader, Hafiz Saeed Khan, in a drone strike in August 2016, and shrunk its territory in Afghanistan by two-thirds.[27]

However, ISIS has not given up its attempt to implant itself in Afghanistan and has recently carried out a series of deadly operations. It claimed responsibility for an attack (with over 80 killed) on a peaceful demonstration by Hazara protesters in the Afghan capital Kabul in July 2016, and also on a Shiite mosque in Kabul in June 2016, with the intention to inflame sectarian tensions. In March 2017, ISIS gunmen dressed as medics fought security forces for hours in an assault on a military hospital in the Afghan capital, killing 38. By the end of May 2017, in one of Afghanistan’s worst terrorist attacks ever, at least 150 people were killed and 300 others, including women and children, were injured in the huge suicide explosion in the Kabul diplomatic quarter, near the Germany Embassy and the Afghan presidential palace.

The rise of ISIS in Afghanistan poses serious security concerns for Russia, according to a September 2016 statement by Zamir Kabulov, the Russian Foreign Ministry’s director of the Second Asian Department in Afghanistan. Kabulov claimed that about 2,500 ISIS combatants are in Afghanistan and the organization is preparing to expand from Afghanistan into other Central Asian countries and Russia, giving Moscow reasons to worry.[28]

IS’ Khorasan Province consists mainly of disgruntled former Taliban and insurgents from South and Central Asia, who represent a key pillar of support for the ISIS’s affiliate. Among them, the Uzbek militants show growing assertiveness. The son of Tahir Yuldashev, the powerful Uzbek leader of the outlawed *Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan*, who was killed in a US missile strike in Pakistan in 2009, is leading efforts to help expand ISIS influence in Afghanistan. According to Anatol Lieven, a regional expert at Georgetown University’s Qatar campus, the number of Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmen and other fighters from the former USSR living in Afghanistan range from 6,000 to 25,000, many of them are intermarried with Afghans of a similar ethnic background.[29]

The Uighurs' Growing Footprint

Since 2010, Uighurs were involved in several international terrorist plots. In July 2010, three men were arrested in Norway for plotting terror attacks in Europe, an Iraqi Kurd named Shawan Sadek Saeed Bujak, Bujak, an Uzbek national named David Jakobsen, and a Norwegian citizen of Uighur origins named Mikael Davud, arrived in Norway in 1999. A European intelligence official said the three men were members of TIP. [30]

Bahrin Naim, a major Indonesian jihadist, plotted several terrorist attacks against the police and other targets in Indonesia since 2015. He created in September 2015 a terrorist cell in Bekasi, in West Java, which included Arif Hidayatullah, and Faris Abdullah Cuma (alias Ali), a Uighur. Naim also ran a cell in Batam, dedicated to smuggle Uighur terrorists into Indonesia for training in Poso and bombing operations in Java. It also arranged outbound trips for Indonesians who wanted to join ISIS in Syria.[31]

In Bangkok, on August 17, 2015, 20 people were killed in a pipe-bomb attack at the Erawan Shrine, a popular destination for Chinese tourists, and most of the bombing's victims were ethnically Chinese. However, even after two suspects had been caught - both of them ethnic Uighurs - the Thai authorities initially refused to confirm their Chinese nationality, and insisted they were merely part of a people-smuggling gang frustrated over police operations constricting their business. This official story has remained unchanged to this day, notwithstanding the discovery of large quantities of bomb-making materials in the same apartment where Bilal Mohammed, the first suspect, had been apprehended. Earlier in 2015, Thailand had deported around 100 Uighurs back to China after they had escaped to Thailand with hopes of reaching refuge in Turkey.[32]. The attack on the Erawan Shrine is likely to have been in revenge for this deportation.

In December 2016, five people were killed in the remote county of Karakax, in Xinjiang, after attackers drove a vehicle into the Communist Party compound and set off an explosive device. The five fatalities include the four attackers, who were shot in the incident.[33]

In mid-February 2017, eight people were killed in Pishan county in southern Xinjiang, including three knife-wielding assailants, in one of the latest outbreak of violence in the region. Local security forces have put Pishan under lockdown. At least two Uighurs have been detained for sharing videos of the scene. The official statement about the incident did not say whether the assailants were linked to ETIM.[34]

Two weeks later, Uighur jihadists posted a video in western Iraq in which they vow to return home and “shed blood like rivers” - the first ISIS threat against Chinese targets. The video showed fighters, including heavily armed children, giving speeches, praying, and killing “informants.”[35]

Michael Clarke, a specialist on Xinjiang at the Australian National University, asserted that it is the first time Uighur militants have claimed allegiance to ISIS. He suggested that the video could indicate a possible split among Uighur fighters, as it included a warning to those fighting with the al-Qaeda-aligned Turkestan Islamic Party in Syria.

In April, a suspected terrorist accused by the authorities of organizing terrorist operations overseas, was arrested in an armed raid in China's Hainan province. The suspect was said to have led a major group in Turkey. “When he was in Turkey, he had a team of more than 100 people under his command,” Wu Tengfei, a member of the anti-terror squad which carried out the arrest, told state television. China is concerned that a growing number of Uighurs have gone to Syria and Iraq to receive terrorist training through Southeast Asia and Turkey after leaving the country illegally through its southern borders.[36]

Conclusion

It is possible that the involvement of Central Asian foreign fighters in attacks in Europe and Russia is the result of the great reservoir of these jihadists with fighting experience in Syria, Iraq, Turkey and Afghanistan; the relative ease of receiving asylum refugee status in Europe; and the difficulty of law enforcement agencies to monitor this big mass of jihadists speaking “strange” languages.

The final demise of the Islamic State, the disappearance of its territorial base and the pressure of the various coalition forces in Iraq and Syria on the surviving foreign fighters, will compel them to flee to ungoverned states, like Yemen and Libya. However, for the various Central Asian jihadists, Afghanistan and the Pakistan tribal areas would appear to be the most suitable places of refuge.

From there they can swarm (if ordered to attack) into Europe, mainly Scandinavia and Germany, Russia, the Central Asian Muslim republics, China and India, South-East Asia and beyond.

Russia will have to pay special attention to this new/old threat. One of the critical challenges faced by Russia and its affected European neighbors, however, is the problem of intelligence sharing and operational cooperation against a common enemy under current circumstances in light of the tensions created between Russia and the West as a result of Russia’s interventions in Ukraine and Syria and the sanctions against the Russian Federation.

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Special Correspondence

Does the Cure Address the Problem? Examining the Trump Administration's Executive Order on Immigration from Muslim-majority Countries Using Publicly Available Data on Terrorism[1]

by Daniel Milton

Abstract

This Research Note offers an empirical examination of the threat from terrorism abroad in the context of the Trump Administration's executive order restricting entry into the United States from certain Muslim countries. More specifically, it compares the number of foreign fighters coming from and the number of terrorist attacks in the countries listed in the executive order to the next highest producers of fighters and locations for terrorist attacks. The result is that, while some of the countries listed in the order have shown that they produce foreign fighters and experience terrorist activity, they are certainly not the only or most egregious targets under this standard.

Keywords: Trump, Terrorism, Travel Restrictions, Foreign Fighters, United States, Muslim countries

Introduction

On January 27th, 2017, just seven days after being sworn in as the 45th President of the United States, President Donald Trump signed an executive order titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States." Among other effects, this executive order limited the ability of individuals from seven different countries to travel to the United States. After both public criticism and judicial proceedings, the executive order was revised and issued anew on March 6, 2017, this time with only six countries named. Following additional legal challenges, the order has remained frozen in judicial proceedings, with part of the order allowed to proceed while the U.S. Supreme Court decides the issue.

Despite the controversy surrounding the Trump Administration's executive order, there has not been an attempt to use data on terrorist activity to examine whether or not the underlying rationale for limiting travel for the seven countries on the Administration's list holds up to empirical scrutiny. Is there empirical evidence supporting the inclusion of Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Somalia, Libya, and Yemen on a list of countries from which terrorists are likely to come?[2] And, perhaps most contentiously, does the evidence support including those countries while excluding others? This Research Note attempts to examine those questions.

One reason such an evaluation has not been conducted previously in the open-source literature is the lack of available data that specifically focuses on issues of terrorist travel and credible plots against the U.S. homeland. Another is the simple fact that it is difficult to predict terrorist activity. While this Research Note cannot remedy the problem of prediction, it does analyze data in an effort to examine the threat emanating from abroad as it relates to the Administration's recent executive order. It does this by comparing two sources of publicly available data on terrorist operatives and terrorist activity in the seven countries originally listed in the Administration's executive order with countries that were not listed in the order.

This text proceeds as follows. It first briefly examines both sides of the debate on the issue of the Administration's executive order. The article then turns to the analysis, which starts with a discussion of the strengths and limitations of the data and then examines the data on foreign fighters and terrorist attacks. It finds that, while some of the countries on the Administration's list have produced foreign fighters and

suffer from terrorist violence, others do not. In addition, some countries that experience large outflows of foreign fighters and terrorist attacks are not on the Administration's list. In short, the examination of publicly available data provides only mixed support for the executive order. This Research Note then concludes with brief comments about protecting the U.S. homeland from the threat of terrorist attacks.

The Travel Restrictions Debate

As is the case with most complicated issues, there are various rationales on each side of the debate in relation to the travel-related restrictions imposed by the executive order.[3] Three particular arguments help set the stage for the analytic approach taken in this Research Note.

The first is that curtailing entry into the U.S. by individuals from Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Somalia, Libya, and Yemen is necessary to protect the U.S. from terrorists and terrorist groups that would come to the U.S. from abroad and do us harm. This argument assumes that the mere presence of terrorist groups and operatives in these locations makes them potentially threatening to the U.S. specifically and to the global community more broadly. Note that, under this rationale, it is the underlying instability and presence of terrorist groups in these countries that forms the rationale for preventing travel by individuals from these countries.

The second is that the order omits countries whose nationals have historically played a role in perpetrating terrorist attacks against the U.S. This point tends to revolve around the most emotionally charged and tragic terrorist event in American history: the September 11th 2001 attacks. In making this point, some reference the fact that none of the 9/11 hijackers came from the aforementioned countries, implying that the executive order is flawed. In countering this argument, one Administration official noted in an interview with CNN that the world has changed since 9/11 and that the executive order was meant to deal with current threats, not what happened in 2001.[4] The fact that the 9/11 hijackers came from particular countries, the counter-argument goes, is not sufficient evidence to target those countries in the here and now. The issue is whether or not the executive order appropriately strikes the balance between the past and the present when it comes to evaluating the threat posed by terrorist actors today. More recent data that expands beyond one incident may be useful in helping achieve this purpose.

The third argument is that outward facing travel restrictions ignore the homegrown aspect of the terrorist threat. Several reports and studies have pointed to a recent increase in such incidents on the part of a wide variety of groups, from violent jihadists to violent racists.[5] However, some research has also suggested that the domestic threat, particularly that which stems from Muslim Americans, is not as likely as some may posit. [6]

Although the homegrown argument is important to evaluate, there are two reasons it is not discussed in detail here. First, there is a more robust amount of discussion and research on this topic. Based on this research, it seems clear that, although there is debate about the size of the homegrown terrorist threat, the threat is something that exists and should be a focus for the intelligence community and law enforcement professionals. Second, the existence of a homegrown threat does not mean there is no external threat. However, comparatively less discussion has been devoted to evaluating the foreign threat rationale outlined in support of the travel restrictions. This Research Note remedies that and examines publicly available, empirical evidence to help evaluate the claim that the countries on the Administration's list pose the greatest foreign terrorist danger to the U.S.

Using Publicly Available Data to Assess the Terrorist Threat to the United States

Although the ideal data to evaluate the rationale underlying the Administration's executive order is not publicly available, there are some data sources that can offer insight into this question. The use of publicly

available data is not without its limitations. For example, the data often has a certain time lag, meaning it is a bit dated by the time it is used for analysis. Additionally, academics have noted the many challenges of collecting terrorism data from news reporting.[7] Another limitation of the data used here is that it is based on attacks and fighter profiles, but it obviously cannot tell us specifically from whom and where attacks will actually come.[8] Terrorism, after all, is a dynamic phenomenon.

In short, while not identifying with exactness the most prominent threat of terrorism faced in real time, publicly available data does provide the opportunity for a more informed discussion about whether limiting the entry of individuals from the seven countries is consistent with the threat as illustrated by recent experience with terrorism. Using this data is not a substitute for more recent or detailed intelligence reporting, but can serve to stimulate public debate by providing a greater level of clarity on where threats may come from and what some challenges are in trying to deal with those threats.

Given the focus in the Administration's executive order regarding Syria, the ongoing Syrian civil war seems like a good place to begin an assessment of the threat posed by terrorists to the U.S. When it comes to threats emanating from Syria that have the potential to impact the U.S. homeland, one prominent topic of concern is that of foreign fighters.

According to the U.S. State Department, more than 40,000 individuals from over 120 countries have come to Syria to fight for one of the many opposition groups.[9] Part of the Administration's concern about Syria is the fact that many individuals have gone there to fight with groups that view the U.S. as an enemy. Those who make it to groups such as the Islamic State likely receive a religious indoctrination in the group's worldview, as well as practical experience using weapons and fighting.

Looking at detailed information on foreign fighters could provide an interesting assessment of at least two components of the terrorist threat. The most obvious is that such data could speak to the scope of the threat posed by the eventual return of these foreign fighters. One of the most prominent concerns is that returning fighters, having been further radicalized and trained by groups like the Islamic State, will be able carry out more effective attacks in their homelands or in other countries to which they may travel.[10]

The second issue to which this data speaks is a bit more obscure, but equally important. The data, by identifying which countries have challenges with radicalized individuals leaving to become foreign fighters, also provides a proxy for understanding where the Islamic State's narrative appears to have gained significant traction. Countries with a large foreign fighter problem are more likely to have a domestic radicalization problem. When it comes to the threat posed to the U.S., it will ultimately matter little to the public if the terrorist carrying out the attack came from Iraq and Syria or was radicalized in Germany and came directly to the United States.[11]

The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point conducted an analysis of the foreign fighter threat using data from the Islamic State's own foreign fighter entry forms. This data, which was obtained from *NBC News*, gives an inside look into the organization's recruitment profile, and, by extension, where the threat comes from. To help answer the question at hand, I took the CTC's public report and identified what percentage of the foreign fighters came from the seven countries identified in the executive order. This information appears in Table 1.

It should be noted that Iraq and Syria are not represented in Table 1 because the data likely did not contain a representative amount of fighters from those countries. This is due to the fact that the data focused mainly on *foreign* fighters, whereas most Iraqis and Syrians would be considered *local* fighters.

Given that caveat, a couple of interesting findings emerge. First, the countries listed in the executive order contribute a relatively small number of overall number of fighters. More precisely, the five countries for which we have data contribute about 4% of the foreign fighters. Second, of those five countries, only Libya seems

to provide a substantial number when their population is taken into consideration. This should not come as a surprise, given that Libya was also a key provider of fighters to the Iraqi insurgency that peaked in 2006 - 2007.[12]

Table 1: *Number of Foreign Fighters in Seven Countries Listed in Executive Order*

EO Countries	Number of Foreign Fighters	Fighters Per Million Citizens	Percentage of CTC Documents
Iraq	N/A	N/A	N/A
Syria	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sudan	7	0.18	Less than 1%
Iran	17	0.22	Less than 1%
Somalia	1	0.1	Less than 1%
Libya	106	16.94	3%
Yemen	25	0.95	1%

For comparison, the same procedure was repeated for the top seven producers of foreign fighters in the CTC report (in terms of the absolute number of records), provided they were not on the Administration's list of countries. It is interesting to note that, in terms of the absolute number of fighters, not a single one of the five countries listed by the Administration is in the top seven foreign fighter producing countries, which are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: *Number of Foreign Fighters in Top Seven Countries Not Listed in Executive Order*

Top Remaining Countries	Number of Foreign Fighters	Fighters Per Million Citizens	Percentage of CTC Documents
Saudi Arabia	797	25.8	20%
Tunisia	640	58.2	16%
Morocco	260	7.66	7%
Turkey	244	3.21	6%
Russia	210	1.46	5%
Egypt	194	2.17	5%
China	167	0.12	4%

These seven countries account for 63% of the records in the CTC dataset. That represents a far greater amount of foreign fighters than do the countries on the Administration list. Even if one limited the comparison five countries, such a procedure still captures 27% of all fighters at the lower end (if the calculation uses the bottom five countries in Table 2) and 54% on the high end (if the top five countries are included). In short, if the worry is that those who have traveled to fight on behalf of the Islamic State may

eventually return or otherwise threaten the U.S., the five countries listed in the executive order would not seem to be of highest priority based on these numbers.

While each of these countries and their respective security challenges when it comes to terrorism deserves a much more in depth treatment than can be undertaken in this Research Note, just a few brief observations are offered here. Saudi Arabia tops the list. Taken together with the fact that 15 of the 19 hijackers on 9/11 came from Saudi Arabia in 2001, the sizable number of foreign fighters leaving the country and going to fight in Syria speaks to the continuing radicalization challenge faced by the Saudi Arabian government and to their difficulty in preventing travel. Tunisia, which experienced the highest per capita outflow of foreign fighters in the database, has been challenged by political and economic issues at home. Turkey, an aspirant to the Visa Waiver Program, stands out as a uniquely challenging case. It has been an at times frustrating partner in the fight against the Islamic State, even as it continues to arrest large numbers of “radicals” within its borders.[13] Russia and China’s place on the list is primarily due to the flow of individuals from their respective restive regions that are home to violent jihadist groups (Chechnya and Xinjiang).

Also worth mentioning and potentially of equal concern, but not present in Table 2, is the sizable number of foreign fighters who have traveled from Europe to join the Islamic State. If we take the top five European countries in the CTC dataset (France, Germany, United Kingdom, Belgium, Denmark), the total number of foreign fighters is 304, or about 7.6% of the total dataset. This is a greater proportion than that obtained by grouping together the five countries covered by the executive order. This raises the question about whether the attempt to limit travel from certain countries actually makes the country that much safer, given that the threat appears to be spread among a wider range of countries. Indeed, some of the countries that have produced large numbers of foreign fighters receive no scrutiny in the executive order.

Of course, this is just data related to foreign fighters. What can be said about the problem of terrorism more holistically? An assessment of which countries are currently the “hot zones” as far as terrorism goes may be more in line with the seven countries with which the Administration has expressed the most concern. Fortunately, data on terrorist activity around the world is available through the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), which is maintained by the University of Maryland’s National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). Using this dataset, data was collated on terrorist activity in every country around the world for the two most recent years in the database (2014-2015). The data for the countries listed in the Administration’s executive order can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Number of Terrorist Attacks in Seven Countries Listed in Executive Order

EO Countries	Number of GTD Attacks (2014-2015)	% of Total (2014-2015)
Iraq	6668	21%
Syria	813	3%
Sudan	315	1%
Iran	19	Less than 1%
Somalia	1269	4%
Libya	1272	4%
Yemen	1429	5%

The second column shows the number of attacks that occurred in each country from 2014 to 2015. The third column shows the proportion of a country’s attacks as a percentage of all terrorist attacks worldwide in the GTD during that two year span. The results of this simple comparison are telling. Iraq pops as being the location in which 21 percent of all terrorist attacks around the world took place, the largest single number for any other country.[14] After accounting for Iraq, however, the percentage covered by the remaining six countries listed in the Administration’s executive order drops quite a bit. In absolute numbers, however, there is no denying that just about every single one of these countries has some form of a terrorism problem. This may lead some to conclude that preventing travel from these countries in which terrorism occurs so frequently makes good policy sense.

An important caveat needs to be made here. It is entirely probable that the number of terrorist attacks that occurred in 2016 in these countries is even higher than it was for the 2014 - 2015 time period. Each of these countries, with the exception of Iran, remains locked in intense internal armed conflict.

But what of the rest of the countries that were not included in the executive order? Table 4 lists the next seven largest countries in terms of the number of attacks that took place in their borders, as well as how much each country’s number of attacks represents as a proportion of the number of all terrorist attacks in the GTD database.

Table 4: *Number of Terrorist Attacks in Top Seven Countries Not Listed in Executive Order*

Top Remaining Countries	Number of GTD Attacks (2014-2015)	% of Total (2014-2015)
Afghanistan	3746	12%
Pakistan	3382	11%
India	1742	6%
Ukraine	1528	5%
Nigeria	1350	4%
Philippines	1314	4%
Egypt	928	3%

A look at the countries in Table 4 certainly raises questions. Afghanistan and Pakistan, where the United States continues to conduct counterterrorism strikes to limit the ability of al-Qa’ida to carry out attacks around the world and to protect the U.S. troops stationed in theater, are places of prominent concern. The 2010 Times Square bombing attempt had its roots in Pakistan. Nigeria is home to one of the most violent terrorist groups in the world, Boko Haram.[15] Egypt is the home to a very potent affiliate of the Islamic State, known as the Islamic State - Sinai. This group has reportedly carried out attacks against U.N. peacekeeping forces and claimed responsibility for downing an airliner.[16] Finally, the Philippines has recently been the scene for dramatic developments, particular in the southern city of Marawi.[17] In short, there seem to be plenty of areas of concern beyond the countries listed in the executive order when it comes to potential terrorist threats facing the homeland.

Conclusion

This Research Note utilized publicly available data in an effort to evaluate part of the rationale underlying the Trump Administration's executive order limiting travel by individuals from certain countries into the U.S. The simple data analysis used here provided only mixed support for the Administration's executive order. Some of the countries in the Administration's list of travel restrictions indeed have a terrorist problem. In others, the threat posed by terrorism is less clear. The same is true for countries not on the list; some have severe terrorism challenges, others do not.

To be clear, the argument here is not that travel restrictions need to be implemented in relation to a wider array of countries. Nor is it that such policies are failed from the start. Instead, the main takeaway from this examination of publicly available data is that if policymakers mistake the seven countries listed in the Administration's order as the sole or primary source of our terrorism problems, then the risk of being blindsided by terrorist threats coming from other locations and through other avenues is increased. Beyond that point, simply restricting or cutting off travel completely (particularly once the broader nature of the threat is correctly diagnosed) is not likely the most feasible or effective solution, practically or politically. Limiting the threat posed by terrorists from abroad will require an array of policy solutions that address each stage of the process whereby an individual radicalizes, trains, travels, obtains materials, and ultimately carries out an attack against the U.S.

Of course, many of these solutions focus on the possibility of terrorism coming from the outside into the U.S. As noted earlier, however, the terrorism threat the U.S. faces has a significant domestic manifestation that is not limited to a particular ideology. While assessing the domestic threat of terrorism is beyond the scope of this Research Note, addressing it will almost certainly require different counterterrorism tools than those applied to prevent the transnational component. To make matters even more complicated, often the domestic and transnational components intersect, creating additional challenges for U.S. counterterrorism efforts that may not work seamlessly across these gaps.

In short, while it may be appealing to think that the threat is limited by geography, combating terrorism is challenging precisely because terrorism simply cannot be contained through one policy instrument or dealing with a small number of countries. Designing policies that effectively combine multiple facets of the U.S. government's counterterrorism capabilities towards this global threat is the key to achieving the desired measure of security.

N.B.: *The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not of the U.S. Military Academy, the Department of the Army, or any other agency of the U.S. Government.*

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Notes

[1] The author would like to thank Brian Dodwell, Bryan Price, and Dakota Foster for their comments and critiques on earlier versions of this note. It is much improved because of their feedback.

[2] Iraq was removed in the Administration's revision of the original executive order. However, for purposes of this article, it was considered together with the remaining six countries in the executive order.

- [3] For a look at the legal debate of the order's constitutionality, see Rivkin, D.B., Tumlin, K., & Downie, J. (2017). "Is President Trump's Executive Order Constitutional?" *Washington Post*, 6 February. URL: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/is-president-trumps-executive-order-constitutional/2017/02/06/26ee9762-ecc1-11e6-9973-c5efb7ccfb0d_story.html. For an overview of other impacts of the order, see Calamur, K. (2017). "What Trump's Executive Order on Immigration Does – and Doesn't Do." *Atlantic*, 30 January. URL: <https://www.theatlantic.com/news/archive/2017/01/trump-immigration-order-muslims/514844/>.
- [4] For one example of a debate over the 9/11 hijackers and the Administration's rebuttal on this point, see <http://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2017/02/06/cuomo-gorka-spar-over-ban-newday.cnn>.
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- [8] To be fair, classified data cannot tell us which individuals are likely to pose a threat either. This has more to do with the fact that terrorism has proven to be an attractive tactic for a wide range of individuals across different demographic groups, nationalities, and ideologies. In other words, research to this point has not found the profile of a terrorist, if it exists. Horgan, J. (2003). *The Psychology of Terrorism*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- [9] The number of fighters and the diverse nature of their origins is staggering. These numbers come from a 2016 State Department press conference, which is available at URL: <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/06/258013.htm>.
- [10] That foreign fighters pose a threat is clear. What is less clear is how much of a threat they pose and whether or not that threat is changing over time. See: Byman, D. and Shapiro, J. (2014). *Be Afraid, Be A Little Afraid: The Threat of Terrorism from Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.; Byman, D. (2015). "What Do The Paris Attacks Tell Us About Foreign Fighters?" *Washington Post*, 16 November. URL: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/11/16/what-do-the-paris-attacks-tell-us-about-foreign-fighters/>.
- [11] That said, from a practical standpoint, research has suggested that returnees are more effective at carrying out operations than those who are not veterans of foreign campaigns. Hegghammer, T. (2013). "Should I Start or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists' Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting." *American Political Science Review* 107(1), 1 - 15.
- [12] A recent report from the CTC compared the flow of foreign fighters during 2006-2007 timeframe to the flow that came more recently into Syria to support the Islamic State. Dodwell, B., Milton, D., & Rassler, D. (2016). *Then and Now: Comparing the Flow of Foreign Fighters to AQI and the Islamic State*. West Point, NY: Combating Terrorism Center. URL: <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Then-and-Now.pdf>.
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- [17] Paddock, R. and Villamor, F. (2017). "Destroying a Philippine City to Save It From ISIS Allies." *New York Times*, 13 June. URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/13/world/asia/marawi-philippines-islamic-state.html>.

The Islamic State After the Caliphate - Can IS Go Underground?

by Thomas R. McCabe

Abstract

While ISIS may intend to resume its underground existence in Syria and Iraq as the ISIS statelet is about to be defeated, this may turn out to be significantly more difficult than many expect. At first glance, the postwar environment may appear fertile for ISIS to pursue such a strategy, but other factors – widespread factional and popular hostility to ISIS and the loss of theological/ideological and functional legitimacy due to defeat - will make it difficult for IS cadres and rank and file to go underground. It will be especially difficult for many of the foreign fighters - in particular Western foreign fighters - who joined ISIS to go underground.

Keywords: Islamic State, Future ISIS, Syria, Iraq

Introduction

The ISIS “caliphate” is on the path to losing open control of the core territory it currently still dominates, first in Iraq and later in Syria, where it is evidently preparing a redoubt in eastern Syria.[1] The obvious question is: what will happen after that? What will happen to ISIS after the Caliphate is defeated? An obvious major concern is that ISIS will return to the underground from whence it came and continue the war from there. [2] This author, however, argues that this would be difficult. At first glance the postwar environment may appear fertile for such a move, yet countervailing factors are likely to make it difficult for ISIS fighters to go underground. This is especially likely to be the case for many of the foreign fighters, in particular Western foreign fighters, who joined ISIS (or other jihadi groups fighting in Syria).[3]

How Effectively can ISIS go Underground?

While ISIS cadres have evidently made considerable preparations for resuming underground operations,[4] how effectively they will be able to do so depends on at least four major factors. These are: (i) how effectively the Syrian and Iraqi Governments reestablish stable governance and security - above all whether or not they can identify and root out the ISIS infrastructure;[5] (ii) whether those governments can reintegrate the Sunni Arabs at the core of the revolt in Syria and Iraq; (iii) the practical realities of going underground; and (iv) whether ISIS will be able to maintain its declared legitimate authority if underground.

(i) Reestablishing Stable Governance and Security

This means the governments in question will be able to reestablish/impose and maintain some kind of effective control over areas previously held by ISIS and/or other insurgents. If the governments manage to do this, it will make it much harder for ISIS (and other subversive groups) to go underground and remain functional. But this task will be extraordinarily difficult and the degree to which the Syrian and Iraqi Governments are successful remains an open question.

For a start, the defeat of the ISIS statelet will not necessarily mean the end of the wars in Syria and Iraq. There are ample opportunities for additional wars in the aftermath, driven by rival nationalisms: Turkey is talking about enlarging its borders,[6] (the Iraqi Kurds may already be doing so [7]), while there are factional rivalries, and competing ambitions between regional states.[8] Syria, in particular, is a proxy theatre of war for several states in the region, where the sponsors appear ready to fight to their last local ally. Sunni states may continue their support of Sunni factions as a way of distracting Iran, as Iran has done to the Saudis and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen.[9] Further, the Middle East may be in the opening round of multiple

civil wars within Islam, both between Shia and Sunni Islam, between Shia factions, and among Sunni jihadist groups. These wars are likely to be protracted and bloody; they will further increase religious polarization (and bloody-mindedness) within the region and within Islam as a whole, and will further devastate parts of the Middle East.

Next, both the Syrian and Iraqi governments are fragile. While the near-collapse of the Iraqi government and security forces in the face of ISIS has been widely noted, the collapse of the Syrian government and military in the face of ISIS and other insurgent groups was even more comprehensive. The Iraqi and Syrian governments have, at most, only partially recovered. Many of the forces nominally aligned with those governments are factional militias that serve their own agendas and/or the agendas of their foreign sponsors, and are not controlled by the national, central governments.[10] This is most prominent in Iraq, where the Kurds formed effectively an autonomous government, and at least major parts of the Popular Mobilization Forces militias, created in the aftermath of the Iraqi security collapse of 2014, are under Iranian control. [11] This is also the case in Syria, where its Kurdish population desires autonomy and where many militias function independently.[12] Will these forces accept and support government policies with which they (and/or the patrons on which they depend) do not agree?[13] Or are they more likely to pursue their own agendas?

(ii) *Reintegration of the Sunni Arabs - an Open Question*

While the Assad regime and the Iraqi government have made some efforts in that direction, things do not look promising, to put it charitably. The wars against ISIS and other insurgent groups in Syria and Iraq will continue to be hard-fought and brutal and, especially in Syria, protracted. This is likely to be followed by a vindictive peace in an atmosphere characterized by religious polarization,[14] widespread individual and group hatred, desire for revenge,[15] and the desire to extract concessions from the loser.

In Syria, it is unclear how much the Assad regime will try to reconcile the Sunni Arabs (while it has shown some degree of flexibility with secular rebels, it shows no sign of being willing to do so with the various jihadi groups).[16] Assad made clear his intent to militarily reconquer all of Syria,[17] and we must expect that he is prepared to continue using the same brutal tactics used so far,[18] and will then consolidate his control with similar methods. Assad is not only prepared to win ugly but undoubtedly prefers to win that way, since his obvious aim is not only to win the war but to intimidate the survivors (that you cannot kill your way out of an insurgency is a Western conceit that much or most of the rest of the world, especially the Russians and the Middle Eastern rulers, dismisses with contempt - after all, that is precisely what Assad's father did to put down a previous rebellion in the early 1980s). The people in the areas the Assad regime is trying to reconquer undoubtedly view the war as indiscriminate violence targeting the civilian population.[19]

In Iraq, there is no consensus as to what will come after the anti-ISIS war,[20] and many of the Sunni Arabs expect the worst.[21] Prime Minister al-Abadi made some efforts to reconcile the Sunni Arab minority,[22] but the Iraqi government has been reluctant, or even unwilling, to empower moderate Sunni Arab forces, and it is uncertain how much more Abadi will be able to do. While it is to be hoped that military success against ISIS will strengthen his position, he barely controls his own government and remains vulnerable to a no-confidence vote or removal after the 2018 election. Either outcome could bring back to power former Prime Minister al-Maliki, whose anti-Sunni sectarian policies contributed to the rise of ISIS in the first place. Abadi has limited or no control over many of the Shia militias of the Popular Mobilization Forces, who, as previously noted, are frequently supported or controlled by Iran and are, functionally speaking, often Shia jihadis driving a sectarian agenda. Meanwhile, it is reasonable to expect that popular sentiment among the Shia and Kurdish populations favors punishing the Iraqi Sunni Arabs for supporting, or at least for failing to oppose, ISIS.[23] The governor of Nineveh Province announced his intent to lock up ISIS members and expel the rest of their families from Iraq,[24] which under the circumstances could be used as a policy of revenge against the Sunni Arabs.

The next question is how much reconstruction the Iraqi and Syrian governments will be able and willing to undertake. The portions of Iraq and Syria that ISIS controlled will be economically, socially, and physically devastated, both by ISIS rule,[25] and by the wars to drive out ISIS.[26] They are likely to be further devastated in whatever violence follows the wars against ISIS. There are millions of refugees that the Assad regime in particular is likely to be reluctant to resettle or allow to return.[27] Both the Iraqi and Syrian Governments are effectively bankrupt. Assad's war in Syria is largely funded by Iran,[28] and his Russian and Iranian patrons are unlikely to be inclined or able to fund the enormous costs of Syrian reconstruction - estimated to be \$150-180 billion as of April 2016-.[29] The Abadi Government in Iraq has ambitious recovery plans, but whether it can carry them out or fund them remains to be seen.[30] How much postwar support Iraq will get from the United States is also uncertain -- the Trump Administration may be signaling that it wants to disengage after the ISIS statelet is destroyed.[31] Since Iraq and Syria are dominated by Shias and aligned with Iran (in the Iraq case) or are dominated by Iran (Syria), the Sunni Arab oil states are unlikely to fund either of them, and the rest of the international community will rapidly show donor fatigue if it does not already have it.[32] Ultimately, to whatever degree the Syrian and Iraqi Sunni Arabs manage - or are allowed - to recover it may be in spite of the policy of their governments rather than because of it.

Finally, there remains the problem of corruption. ISIS-connected people may simply be able to buy their way out of trouble.[33]

Requirements Necessary to Function from the Underground

The requirements necessary for functioning effectively from the underground may well work against ISIS. While the two previous sets of factors create or preserve an atmosphere of Sunni grievance that ISIS and other insurgent groups, including al Qaeda, could theoretically exploit, how effectively ISIS will do so remains unknown.

As foreign fighters are killed or captured or flee and are not replaced, ISIS will revert to being increasingly reliant on Syrian and (especially) Iraqi manpower. While Syrian and Iraqi ISIS members who survive the final battles may be able to return to underground operations, it will be difficult for many of the surviving foreign fighters, who provided much of the core strength of ISIS, to do so. They are, after all, foreigners. This will especially apply to the thousands of foreign fighters who came from outside the Arab world, in particular, to many Western foreign fighters and fighters from Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and areas of the former Soviet Union, who are likely to speak poor Arabic at best, and do not look Arabic. For that matter, Arabs with non-Syrian or non-Iraqi Arabic accents will receive special attention from the security authorities.

Next, they will be pursued into the underground by the various local, regional, and world security services who will be trying to identify, locate, and eliminate ISIS holdouts. In the Mosul campaign alone, the Iraqi Government has over 30,000 names on its list of suspects.[34] When dealing with suspects, we should expect the local and regional services, in particular those of the Assad regime, to err on the side of excess.[35]

Further, in the course of its war and its rule, ISIS made many enemies who will be out for revenge. Syria, in particular, has a multi-sided civil war, with ISIS fighting numerous other anti-Assad factions, including nationalists and various other jihadis.[36] The situation is equally complex in Iraq.[37] Since ISIS has generally ruled as conquerors and brutally imposed its system at the expense of other factions, even previous allies, there will likely be little love lost between ISIS and those other factions upon ISIS' retreat. In particular, ISIS and the Al Qaeda factions in Syria spent extensive time and effort killing each other. [38] It will not be surprising to see these conflicts continue underground.

Finally, popular resentment of ISIS's brutal tactics will produce numerous personal grudges to be settled. An obvious way to do it will be to turn in any identified ISIS fighters to security forces.[39] Any financial rewards

for such identifications would be a further incentive. Or if they consider government screening to be too lenient, individuals or tribes may target ISIS members for revenge killings if given the chance.[40]

For these reasons, ISIS is unlikely to have the rather favorable atmosphere that enabled its cadres to rebuild their underground structure the last time, as especially happened in Mosul,[41] where ISIS's predecessor organization, Al Qaeda in Iraq/Islamic State of Iraq, was never really dug out even when the US military was present in force.[42] Under these circumstances, many ISIS survivors are likely to give priority to their own individual survival, rather than continuing the war.

Will ISIS be Able to Claim that it Retains the Right to Rule?

By the time ISIS tries to return to the underground, much of its narrative will be discredited - the ISIS leadership will only be able to spin defeat for so long before it is obviously double-talk for losing.[43] Much of the support ISIS has received, especially foreign support, was due to its claim to be a genuine state in control of territory, and its early success in routing its enemies - when ISIS could credibly claim to be living up to its motto of "Remaining and Expanding." [44] The self-proclaimed "Caliph" Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi claimed his position by right of conquest.[45] Since these successes were considered by many as a physical manifestation of the favor of Allah, what will happen when those successes and conquests are gone, and ISIS has obviously lost? At which point will it become impossible to ignore that Allah is not intervening on their behalf, that the state al-Baghdadi claims to rule is no longer on the map, and it becomes obvious that he was just another murderous would-be tyrant trying to carve out an empire of shattered states and ravaged peoples? Obviously, he will no longer be able to claim leadership of the global jihadi movement, let alone the world's Muslims. Compounding the loss of religious legitimacy, ISIS will also lose functional legitimacy by losing a war and bringing devastation to the people on whose behalf the war was supposedly fought.

Conclusions and Implications

While ISIS may intend to retreat to the underground in Syria and Iraq as the ISIS statelet is defeated, doing so may turn out to be significantly more difficult than many expect. At first glance, the likely postwar environment of massive destruction, ineffective governance, lack of security, and repression of the Sunni Arabs may appear fertile for ISIS to pursue such a strategy, but other factors - widespread factional and popular hostility to ISIS and the loss of theological/ideological and functional legitimacy due to defeat - will make it difficult for them to do so. It will be especially true for many of the foreign fighters, in particular the Western foreign fighters, who joined ISIS.

The effect of retreating to the underground is not likely to stop there. ISIS supposedly claimed that it will take a generation after it loses control of all territory to kill the idea of ISIS.[46] For most ISIS adherents, it is likely to take much less time than that. While the romantic appeal of "the Lost Cause" may retain residual appeal to its more fanatical supporters,[47] it is much more difficult to argue from failure than from success. Those attracted to the physical and psychological manifestations of the "caliphate" (the adventure of being a warrior for Allah and licensed outlaw, the availability of sex slaves for young men, the expectation of living in a truly Islamic utopia, among other 'attractions' [48]) are likely to lose interest in ISIS rapidly.[49]

Unfortunately, things do not end there. That ISIS will be less of a threat than commonly supposed does not mean it will not be a threat at all. ISIS is not the only force of jihadis in the field.[50] In particular, as shown by the formation of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, al Qaeda's latest manifestation in Syria,[51] al Qaeda has modified its strategy, and is pursuing a long game of trying to sink roots into the society where it is operating while pursuing the jihadization of that society from the ground up.[52] This means it will not face many of the same challenges as ISIS. Beyond that, on the global strategic scale, as ISIS is defeated we can expect al Qaeda to reassert its claim to leadership of the global jihadi movement while attempting to selectively take over ISIS

personnel and networks.[53] This annexation is most likely to happen if and when Baghdadi is killed, upon which the pledges of personal allegiance (*bay'at*) given to him as ‘caliph’ are automatically dissolved. How many of his previous adherents, both in the region and in the worldwide jihadist movements, will be taken over by al Qaeda?

In summation, while destroying the ISIS “caliphate” may be a significant victory, it will not be a decisive one. The worldwide jihadist insurgency will go on.

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N.B. This ‘Special Correspondence’ should not be considered as reflecting the opinion of any agency of the U.S. Government.

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Resources

Bibliography: Root Causes of Terrorism

Compiled and Selected by Judith Tinnes

[Bibliographic Series of Perspectives on Terrorism - BSPT-JT-2017-4]

Abstract

This bibliography contains journal articles, book chapters, books, edited volumes, theses, grey literature, bibliographies and other resources on root causes of terrorism (i.e., the spectrum of factors which trigger, catalyse, or sustain terrorist activities by individuals or groups). Although focusing on recent literature, the bibliography is not restricted to a particular time period and covers publications up to July 2017. The literature was retrieved by manually browsing more than 200 core and periphery sources in the field of Terrorism Studies. Additionally, full-text and reference retrieval systems were employed to expand the search.

Keywords: bibliography, resources, literature, root causes of terrorism, roots, reasons, factors, motivations, drivers, catalysts, breeding grounds, radicalisation processes

NB: All websites were last visited on 23.07.2017. - See also: Note for the Reader at the end of this literature list.

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Note

Whenever retrievable, URLs for freely available versions of subscription-based publications have been provided. Thanks to the Open Access movement, self-archiving of publications in institutional repositories or on author homepages for free public use (so-called Green Open Access) has become more common. Please note, that the content of Green Open Access documents is not necessarily identical to the officially published versions (e.g., in case of pre-prints); it might therefore not have passed through all editorial stages publishers employ to ensure quality control (peer review, copy and layout editing etc.). In some cases, articles may only be cited after getting consent by the author(s).

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Recent Online Resources for the Analysis of Terrorism and Related Subjects

Compiled and Selected by Berto Jongman

The items included below surfaced online in June and July 2017. They are categorised under these headings:

1. Non-Religious Terrorism: Actors, Groups, Incidents and Campaigns
2. Religious (mainly Jihadi) Terrorism: Actors, Groups, Incidents and Campaigns
3. Terrorist Strategies and Tactics
4. Conflict, Crime and Political Violence other than Terrorism
5. Counter-Terrorism – General
6. Counter-Terrorist Strategies, Tactics and Operations
7. State Repression and Civil War at Home and Clandestine & Open Warfare Abroad
8. Prevention and Preparedness Studies (including Countering Violent Extremism, De-Radicalization, Counter-Narratives)
9. Intelligence
10. Cyber Operations
11. Risk & Threat Assessments, Forecasts, Analytical Studies
12. Also Worth Reading

N.B.: Recent Online Resources will be regular feature in future issue of Perspectives on Terrorism

1. Non-Religious Terrorism: Actors, Groups, Incidents and Campaigns

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Academic Theses (Ph.D. and MA) on Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Related Issues, written in English between 2013 and 2017

Compiled and Selected by Ryan Scrivens

Introduction

This bibliography contains doctoral dissertations (Ph.D.) and Master (MA) Theses on issues relating to terrorism and counter-terrorism. Titles were retrieved manually by browsing the Open Access Theses and Dissertations (OATD) database, using the search term 'terrorism'. More than 2,500 entries were evaluated, of which 238 were ultimately selected for this list. All theses are open source. However, readers should observe possible copyright restrictions. The title entries are 'clickable', allowing access to full texts.

Bibliographic entries are divided into the following sub-sections:

1. Terrorism Actors, Groups, Incidents, and Campaigns
2. Counter-Terrorism Strategies, Tactics, and Operations
3. Counter-Terrorism Policy, Legislation, Law, and Prosecution
4. Terrorism and the Media, Representations, and Public Opinion
5. State Repression and Civil War
6. Terrorism and the Internet
7. Terrorism and Gender

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About the Compiler: **Ryan Scrivens** is Associate Theses Research Editor of *Perspectives on Terrorism* and Coordinator of the Canadian Network of Ph.D. Theses Writers of the Terrorism Research Initiative. Ryan is also a Ph.D. Candidate in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University. The title of his thesis is *Understanding the Collective Identity of the Radical Right Online: A Mixed-Methods Approach*. It will be defended in September 2017.

Book Reviews

Marc Sageman. *Turning to Political Violence: The Emergence of Terrorism*.

Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017; 496 pp. US \$ 49.95; £ 43. [Hardcover] ISBN: 978-0-8122-4877-7.

Reviewed by Alex P. Schmid

Marc Sageman, a forensic psychiatrist and former intelligence officer, is the author of seminal, though not uncontroversial, works like *Understanding Terror Networks* (2004) and *Leaderless Jihad* (2008). [His last book, *Misunderstanding Terrorism* (2016) was reviewed in this journal in the February 2017 issue.] In his latest book, he looks at two hundred years of mainly European political violence in an effort to explain radicalisation to terrorism, including what he terms 'neojihadi' campaigns against the West.

Sageman's new volume, which has been in the making for a decade, contains eight chapters. The first and the last chapter (incl. its Appendix) are mainly conceptual and theoretical while six chapters cover case studies on 'The French Revolution and the Emergence of Modern Terrorism' (chapt. 2); 'Political Violence from the Restoration to the Paris Commune' (chapt.3); 'The Professionalization of Terroristic Violence in Russia' (chapt. 4); 'Anarchism and the Expansion of Political Violence' (chapt. 5); 'The Specialized Terrorist Organization: The PSR [Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party's] Combat Unit 1902-1908' (chapt. 6); and, 'Banditry, the End of a World, and Indiscriminate Political Violence' (chapt. 7). The case studies in these chapters are partly based on primary sources (e.g. from archives and trial transcripts) which allows the author precise process tracing of the evolution of terrorist lone and group actors. These painstakingly detailed historical descriptions provide fascinating reading and make the volume well worth reading even if one can have reservations about Sageman's conceptual and theoretical framework.

Sageman uses the phrase 'turning to political violence' for what is commonly (but also somewhat misleadingly) termed 'radicalisation' – "the acquisition of extreme or radical ideas and ... the readiness to use violence" (p.9) – two distinct but related elements. The author also largely avoids the use of the term 'terrorism', preferring instead 'the more neutral expression political violence' (p.13). In the view of this reviewer this is a problematical choice since political violence is a very broad and vague concept and Sageman's definition of political violence as "the deliberate collective attempt to use force against people or objects for political reasons" (p.14) does not narrow it very much (this definition could even cover governmental violence). Sageman's definition of terrorism as "a categorization of out-group political violence during domestic peacetime" (p.12) has the advantage that it refers – unlike most other definitions – to a 'defining agent' (p.11) as he notes that "The term *terrorism* is commonly used by a public that identifies with the state and its agents" (p.13). Whatever one may think of Sageman's terminological choices, these do not negatively affect the high quality of his analyses in the historical case studies.

While many contemporary analysts of terrorism appear to be ignorant of two hundred years of history of modern terrorism, holding that history can teach us little about terrorism in the age of the Internet, Sageman holds the opposite view. He believes that contemporary terrorist groups can indeed be compared to pre-1914 groups and that a Social Identity Perspective (SIP) explains the doings of both older and newer groups, including religious terrorists. Equipped with a theory that claims to explain the transition of an individual from a 'normal social identity' to a 'politicized social identity' (involving identification with an imagined or real community), and then to a narrower 'martial social identity' (p.39), Sageman outlines the conditions for the emergence of political violence from a peaceful political protest community, to a self-categorization of some of its members as (revolutionary) soldiers. He postulates that "This self-categorization into a martial social identity occurs under three conditions: escalation of the conflict between two groups, including a

cumulative radicalization of discourse; protestors' disillusionment with nonviolent tactics; and moral outrage at state aggression against the community" (p.29). He correctly notes that "...political violence often erupts at the tail end of a legal political protest campaign" (p.33) – one of his many perceptive, though not always equally original, observations (Ted Gurr had noticed this before him). Rejecting both rational choice theory and the role of ideology as major explanations for the emergence of historical campaigns of political violence ("In the turn to political violence, identity trumps ideology and self-interest" – p. 375), Sageman, develops, based on the modern history of terrorism, a model that, in his view, can also be applied to contemporary neojihadi campaigns against the West (p.361).

In the Appendix ('Testing the Social Identity Perspective Model of the Turn to Political Violence' (pp.377-384) he adds newer cases to the ones discussed in chapters 2 - 7, arriving at a total sample of 34 campaigns. As test instrument for this diverse sample covering two centuries, spanning four continents, including Muslim, Buddhist and Christian perpetrators with backgrounds as republicans, socialists, royalists, nationalists, anarchists, neo-fascists and Islamists conducted in agrarian, industrialized and post-industrial societies targeting liberal democracies, absolute autocracies and imperialist regimes among others, he uses Charles Ragin's qualitative comparative analysis fuzzy sets methodology (p.377). Thus, he arrives at the equation:

PPC + ESC (including CRD) + Disil + MO -> MS-C -> Political Violence

whereby **PPC** stands for political protest community, **ESC** stands for mutual escalation between the PPC and state, **CRD** stands for cumulative radicalization of discourse; **Disil** stands for disillusionment with nonviolent tactics to redress grievances; **MO** indicates recent moral outrage at out-group aggression and **MS-C** indicates martial self-categorization into soldiers defending their PPC.

With the help of this formula, he seeks to test his Social Identity Perspective (SIP) against rational choice theory explanations and those based on ideology as drivers of political violence. Sageman finds that 91 percent of the 34 campaigns of political violence support his SIP model in terms of martial self-categorization (p.379). In all but two of the 34 campaigns he found that a political protest community preceded radicalization (ibid.). Sageman also concludes that the rest of his model was generally supported. He found, for instance, that "Disillusionment with nonviolent protest as a major contributor to the turn to political violence is supported in about 80 percent of the cases (...) Moral outrage as a factor for political violence is supported in about 70 percent of the cases" (p.382). Finding such strong overall support for his SIP model, the rival models he 'tested' with the same dataset scored far lower: the ideological thesis was supported in only about 30 percent of the cases and rational choice theory was supported only in 12 percent of the cases (p.383). Based on the above, Sageman finishes his *tour de force* with supreme confidence: "In conclusion, this survey supports the use of the social identity model to understand the turn to political violence" (p.384). Has Sageman discovered the holy grail of radicalisation and solved its mystery? The 'proof' he offers in mere eight pages in the Appendix opens more questions than it answers. The key table 'Campaigns of Political Violence' on pp. 380-381 codes his six variables and the two single rival explanation variables with only the following sentence to describe the coding: "To test the model, I use Charles Ragin's qualitative comparative analysis using fuzzy sets. For each variable, a score of 1.0 indicates full membership in the fuzzy set defined by it. Anything less than 0.5 would indicate a less than half membership in that set and therefore would not support the model. Each estimate is a rough average of all the violent participants in each campaign of political violence." (p.377) While Sageman's six-factor model derived from his own case materials is plausible, its general usefulness remains untested.

Turning to Political Violence is an ambitious work of 'grand design' and offers plenty of food for thought. It should provide a basis for replication studies, allowing alternative testing of his SIP theory, based on a larger sample than the 34 campaigns and using other instruments than Ragin's 'Fuzzy-set Social Science' as testing tool. With this volume Marc Sageman again excels in challenging colleagues in the field of terrorism studies and we should all be thankful for his provocation.

About the Reviewer: Alex P. Schmid is Editor-in-Chief of *Perspectives on Terrorism*.

Geoff Dean. *Neurocognitive Risk Assessment for the Early Detection of Violent Extremists*

New York, NY: Springer (Springer Briefs in Criminology), 2014, xvii+112 pp., ISBN 978-3-319-06718-6. US \$ 54.99 [Paperback]

Reviewed by Leiya Lemkey and Dan Wilcox

In *Neurocognitive Risk Assessment for the Early Detection of Violent Extremists*, Geoff Dean provides an excellent overview of the challenges that professionals face when assessing extremists and those who commit terrorist offences. The author identifies varying problems and complexities within this field, including a lack of agreement about the definition of terrorism. The book begins by examining the inadequacy of conventional risk assessment tools and moves on to specialised instruments like the VERA (Violent Extremist Risk Assessment), a 28-item risk assessment checklist consisting of both static and dynamic factors. The RAT (Risk Assessment Toolbox) is also reviewed; a tool designed to evaluate extremist behaviours, from right- and left-wing militants to 'school shooters'. The author considers the challenge of 'false positives' in employing these tools e.g. distinguishing between those with an intention to engage in terrorist acts and those who score high but do not engage in violence.

This book explores indicators of risk, with the author's model incorporating careful consideration of neurocognitive processes associated with violent extremism. Geoff Dean explains that perceptions provide a gateway to the development of violent ideation. He writes that neuroplasticity, the brain's ability to change as a result of experience, gives rise to an interplay between cognitive processes and brain-based neuro-mechanisms (p. 35). He notes that repeated reinforcement of identification with extremist perceptions promotes the development of firmly held beliefs about the acceptability of violent and extremist views. He explains that this results in the establishment of a radicalised mind-set. At this stage, the individual is primed for violent action and shielded by rationalisations and justifications for extreme behaviours. The author notes the cyclical nature to this process, indicating that disillusionment may follow and affect the perpetrator's mind-set. However, he does not equate this to de-radicalisation. Rather, it is described as a spiralling process that may abate and re-emerge (p. 43).

Dean emphasizes that risk assessment is particularly challenging when posing the question 'how do you assess someone who is normal', but through the above process, has become radicalised? He dismisses the notion that extremists suffer from mental illness and holding that mentally unstable people do not 'make good terrorists' as they lack discipline, self-control and mental stamina – elements that are commonly found in extremists (p. 30). He asserts that violent extremism is a product of a 'normal brain' that has become neurologically wired into dysfunctional patterns of thinking that principally relate to attitudes acquired over time. He thereby focuses on attitude-based markers that distinguish violent extremists from typical anti-social offenders and explores this comprehensively within his model.

Dean examines the construct of neuro-cognition, described as a multi-layered mapping that reflects a dynamic interplay between brain-based neuro-firing patterns in the pre-frontal cortex and the mind-based cognitive pathways of consciousness. He explores the way this process influences the selective assimilation of knowledge, a personalised sense of understanding and utilization of information gathered at the 'cognitive mind' level. Within this, he asserts that the brain's architecture can shift in negative or positive directions in response to intrinsic or extrinsic influences. He explains that this feature of neuroplasticity is a key contributory element in adopting an extreme perspective, resulting from the establishment of fixed brain-based neuro-firing patterns that promote radicalised thoughts and behaviours. He notes that these cognitive pathways can be strengthened or weakened and discusses 'mirror neurons' that fire when someone sees/hears another person performing an action that resonates with their belief set, as well as when they engage in such an action. Here, the influence of exposure to terror-related videos and emotionally charged radical oratory serve as

prime examples. He details the 'firing and wiring' phenomenon, noting that, repetition, affective arousal and attentional focus serve as mediating factors in the process of reinforcing neuro-connections and pathways (p. 35).

The author makes good use of diagrams to explain various models, with a particular focus on RAT, which is used for the early detection of individuals who have the potential to engage in violent acts. The RAT test battery includes the RAVE (Risk Assessment for Violent Extremism) as well as a Structured Professional Judgement tool designed to help the professional explore dynamic and static factors, reflecting perceptions and beliefs within the assessment process. He points out that violent extremists read the same literature as academics; therefore, some aspects of the RAT have not been published.

The volume concludes with case studies wherein professionals analyse risk-based case scenarios. The author notes that accurate identification of persons of interest was worryingly low. Based on this, he questions whether trained professionals without more effective assessment tools can make a valid contribution to risk management of violent extremists.

This book focuses its attention on the behaviour of violent extremists though, in the reviewers' opinion, it also offers important clinical insights with regard to the wisdom of labelling individuals who engage in problematic behaviours as simply mentally unstable or disturbed. This volume is highly recommended to those involved in research or clinical practice where extreme behaviours or beliefs are recurring issues of concern.

About the Reviewers: *Leiya Lemkey is Forensic Psychologist in training, University of Birmingham; Daniel T Wilcox is Consultant Clinical and Forensic Psychologist at Wilcox Psychological Associates Ltd, and is affiliated with University of Nottingham and University of Birmingham, UK.*

Joseph Daher. *Hezbollah: The Political Economy of Lebanon's Party of God*.

London: Pluto Press, 2016); 320 pp., ISBN 978-0-7453-3689-3. US \$ 30.00.

Reviewed by Richard C. Dietrich

In his conclusion to the section on Hezbollah in *A High Price: The Triumphs & Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism*, Daniel Byman writes:

Perhaps more than any other group discussed in this book, the label *terrorist* doesn't do justice to Hizballah. The label is not wrong: the group has done many terrorist attacks in the past, and even today some of its activities fall under the rubric of terrorism. But for Israel, Hizballah's military capabilities are a more serious concern, while for Lebanese and U.S. policy in Lebanon, the organization's political influence is of most concern. When combating Hizballah, its broader dimensions must always be taken into account.[1]

Joseph Daher's work, *Hezbollah: The Political Economy of Lebanon's Party of God*, is a masterful study of those broader dimensions. In the Introduction (p. 3) Daher states that his objective is "to understand Hezbollah through a historical and materialist understanding of Political Islam, tracking the evolution of the organization's structures and relationship within the wider political system, and locating this evolution within the changing class and state formation in Lebanon." He justifies his historical materialist approach, which focuses on understanding an organization by examining its underlying economic base, by stating (p. 4) that Hezbollah's "... actual practices can best be understood as harmonious with – and reflective of – the nature of the capitalist environment in which it operates." By concentrating less on the organization's military wing, operations, and ideology, but rather on Hezbollah's evolving place in and relations with Lebanon's society and economy, as well as the organization's responses to the Arab spring, Daher presents a far more nuanced depiction of Hezbollah than is found in most other works.

The book is divided into seven chapters, each with a clearly defined topic. Chapter 1 provides the historical context for Hezbollah's emergence, covering events from the French Mandate to the end of the Civil War (1920-1990). In particular, it focuses on the origins of sectarianism in Lebanon and its influence on Lebanese politics and society. The effects of the Civil War on Lebanon's Shi'a population is another area of emphasis, since Hezbollah's emergence in 1985 occurred in the context of the Civil War (1975-1990).

Chapter 2 covers the period from 1990 to 2016, with emphasis on developments in Lebanon's political economy in general, and the Shi'a population in particular. Daher describes how neoliberal policies, specifically (p. 70) "attracting financial flows from outside with a focus on urban reconstruction as a main sectoral pivot of economic growth", exacerbated the pre-existing economic inequality and regional disparity found in Lebanon, and he examines Hezbollah's stance on the sectarian political system and economic policy. He argues that Hezbollah consistently supports such policies, even when doing so negatively affects the poor.

In the next chapter, Daher traces the effects of those neoliberal policies described in the second chapter on the Shi'a. He follows the emergence of a new Shi'a bourgeoisie, but also shows that not all Shi'a benefitted from Lebanon's economic policies. He examines the relationship between the Shi'a bourgeoisie and Hezbollah and the changes in Hezbollah's base of support among the Shi'a.

Chapter 4 focuses on the growth of Hezbollah, and the means by which it gained dominance among the Shi'a. Daher focuses on the party's organization and network of social services, particularly those related to social support, religious institutions, media and culture, and education and youth.

In chapter 5, Daher examines the relationship between Hezbollah and Lebanese labor unions. After tracing the history of trade unions in Lebanon, he provides examples of Hezbollah's attitude towards labor

movements to illustrate the party's problems in attempting to be a representative of both poor Shi'a and the more affluent Shi'a who constitute an increasingly important part of Hezbollah's social base.

Chapter 6 discusses Hezbollah's armed wing and military activities. This chapter is understandably short since the author's focus is on Hezbollah's economic and political activities, and not the organization's armed capabilities. Nonetheless, the chapter does examine Hezbollah's activities against Israel, as well as Hezbollah's use of its military against other groups in Lebanon, and to ensure its security in the region. Although Hezbollah's capacity for conducting various types of violent operations is not the author's primary area of interest, Daher's failure to mention, even in passing, Hezbollah's role in the assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq al-Hariri in February 2005, and its suspected role in the deaths of prominent witnesses and investigators, such as police captain Wissam Eid, is a rather glaring omission.[2]

The final chapter, Chapter 7, Daher devotes to Hezbollah's responses to the Arab Spring, which began in December 2010 and January 2011, and then subsequent developments in the Arab world up to 2016. In particular, this chapter examines the repercussions of Hezbollah's continued deepening involvement in Syria on sectarian tensions in Lebanon, and on Hezbollah's relations with Iran and Hamas.

What Daher has done is document Hezbollah's continuing transformation from being the champion of Lebanon's Shi'a population and a political outsider to being, in many ways, a political actor much like other political parties and interest groups in Lebanon. While Hezbollah's organization in general, and its military wing in particular, make it distinctive from more typical political parties, this book provides a well-documented picture of Hezbollah as an organization that has become an important part of Lebanon's economy and sectarian political system. This is a perspective on Hezbollah that is generally missing from works that tend to concentrate on its armed activities.

Joseph Daher's work is a pleasure to read as well as being immensely informative. His prose is clear and flowing, and his arguments are logically organized and well supported. In fact, the reference section is one of the particularly outstanding features of this book. Clearly, Daher has not only thoroughly researched his topic, but he has done so utilizing sources in English, French and Arabic, providing an especially broad perspective. *Hezbollah: The Political Economy of Lebanon's Party of God* is essential reading for anyone interested in gaining a more complete understanding of Hezbollah, or present day Lebanese politics.

About the Reviewer: Richard Dietrich, Ph.D., is a lecturer at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.

Notes

[1] Daniel Byman, *A High Price: The Triumphs & Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p.265.

[2] For more information see Ronen Bergman, "The Hezbollah Connection", *The New York Times* (15 February 2015) available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/15/magazine/the-hezbollah-connection.html> (accessed 2 August 2017)

Counterterrorism Bookshelf:

15 Books on Terrorism & Counterterrorism-Related Subjects

Capsule Reviews by Joshua Sinai

This column consists of capsule reviews of books from various publishers.

Daniel Alati, *Domestic Counter-Terrorism in a Global World: Post 9/11 Institutional Structures and Cultures in Canada and the United Kingdom* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 218 pp., US \$ 149.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-1386-8450-8.

This is an authoritative legal examination of the responses to terrorism in Canada and the United Kingdom since 2001, explaining how and why they are the product of legal and political structures and cultures in the two jurisdictions. In particular, it examines how both countries have applied the United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1373, of September 28, 2001, which established the Security Council's Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) to monitor member-state compliance with its provisions. The author notes several problematic trends in the two countries, such as the impact of their relationship with the United States in affecting their counter-terrorism (CT) measures, the use of CT judicial measures outside regular criminal law, the enactment of sprawling CT legislation without full parliamentary scrutiny, the use of secret evidence in a variety of legal CT contexts, and, in what is most troublesome to the author, the impact of major terrorist incidents in producing more restrictive and less scrutinized CT measures. Significant trials of terrorist suspects in both countries are also used to analyze how they complied with judicial measures that are meant to guarantee due process and civil liberties. The author is Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminology at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada.

Rachel Avraham, *Women and Jihad: Debating Palestinian Female Suicide Bombings in the American, Israeli and Arab Media* (New York, NY: Gefen Books, 2016), 354 pp., US \$ 14.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-9-6522-9903-1.

This book offers an innovative approach to analyzing the rationale and media impact of the use by terrorist groups of female operatives to carry out suicide bombings against their adversaries. The case of Palestinian terrorist groups is highlighted, particularly during the Second Intifada period (2002 – 2005), with the attacks by eight Palestinian female operatives used to assess how they achieved publicity for their cause as their attacks were reported in Israeli, American, and Arab media accounts. An interesting finding is that female suicide bombers were receiving “up to eight times more publicity than male suicide bombers and the coverage of them tends to be more favorable to the Palestinian terrorist organizations”(p. iv). To analyze these issues, the book's chapters cover topics such as defining terrorism (with Bruce Hoffman's definition highlighted as it emphasizes terrorism as “a violent act that is conceived specifically to attract attention and then through the publicity it generates to communicate a message” – p. 23); the role of Islamism in justifying suicide terrorism; the ideologies behind the Palestinian terrorist groups that conduct suicide bombings, specifically, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades; profiles of the eight Palestinian female suicide bombers highlighted in the study; and how these female suicide bombings were covered in the Arab, Israeli, and American media. With terrorism and the media, as the author cites Abraham Miller's observation that they “are entwined in an almost inexorable, symbiotic relationship”(p. 299), the author finds that “the Arabic language media coverage would overtly justify and glorify the actions of the suicide bombers, while American media coverage would more often rationalize the hardships that prompted the Palestinian female suicide bomber to blow herself up while refraining from condoning suicide bombings”(p.300). The Israeli media, by contrast, were less likely than the American to note motivating factors, yet were still more likely to mention the factors prompting the female suicide bombers had the suicide bomber been a male”(p. 300). The author concludes that appropriate media coverage of terrorist attacks needs to avoid being exploited

by terrorist groups by providing them “sympathetic coverage” (p. 304). Related to the author’s discussion of media coverage of Palestinian suicide terrorism, is a separate chapter in the book entitled “Standing Up to Terror Appeasement”. It recounts the author’s experience as an MA graduate student in Middle Eastern studies at Ben Gurion University, which she describes as “notorious in Israel for being dominated by radical leftists,” where she encountered the faculty’s “appeasement” in their discussion of Palestinian terrorism. In spite of such bias, she persevered in her studies and received her MA degree from the university. The book lacks an Index, but is an important contribution to the literature on the relationship between terrorism and the media of communications. The author, an American who immigrated to Israel, is a senior media research analyst at the Center for Near East Policy Research and a correspondent for the Israel Resource News Agency.

Cathy Scott-Clark and Adrian Levy, *The Exile: The Stunning Inside Story of Osama Bin Laden and Al Qaeda in Flight* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2017), 640 pp., US \$ 30.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-6204-0984-8.

This is a comprehensive, and detailed account of al Qaida’s leaders, their activities, personal lives (including, in the case of Usama bin Laden, his polygamous marriages and numerous children) prior to 911, its aftermath, and the events leading up to bin Laden’s killing at his hideaway in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1, 2011. The London-based authors, who are veteran investigative journalists and documentary producers, had travelled to the locations covered in the book’s account, particularly in Pakistan, where they interviewed many of the government officials, journalists, and others involved in countering al Qaida, making this a lively, insider account of what had actually happened on the ground from the perspectives of the terrorists and the counter-terrorism agencies pursuing them. Also covered are the impact of bin Laden’s death on al Qaida and its affiliates, the strained relations between Ayman al-Zawahiri, bin Laden’s successor, and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State, including how the IS succeeded in dominating the jihadi insurgency in Syria. There is much to commend in this authoritative account, with the book’s sections written in chronological order, beginning in May 1996, when bin Laden and his al Qaida group moved back to Afghanistan, and ending in September 2016 in Syria. The authors conclude with a pessimistic observation by a former U.S. State Department counterterrorism coordinator, that “Eliminating the [Islamic State – JS] caliphate will be an achievement...But more likely it will just be the end of the beginning rather than the beginning of the end” (p. 504). Also valuable are the brief biographies of the major persons featured in the book.

George Joffe, (Ed.), *Islamist Radicalisation in Europe and the Middle East: Reassessing the Causes of Terrorism* (New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 320 pp., US \$ 120.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-8488-5480-2.

This edited volume is based on the proceedings of a conference on drivers into Islamist radicalization at the onset of the Arab Spring (with a paper also presented on Jewish religious extremism in Israel) held at the University of Cambridge in June 2009. As explained by this volume’s editor, the purpose of this publication is to “examine those drivers, rather than the outcomes they might produce...” (p. 2). While this objective is clear, once the editor begins to define the contributors’ interpretation of the concepts of radicalization and extremism, it is at this point that the volume begins to veer off course. This is due to the fact that their interpretation of radicalization as “contrasted with the parallel concept of extremism” (p. 2), makes, in the view of this reviewer, no sense, as a widely accepted definition of these two concepts in the academic literature is that radicalization is a process that leads at the end point either to non-violent extremism or violent extremism. It is also possible that an individual’s or a group’s radicalization pathway can cease at any point along this trajectory. In another problematic use of the term radicalization, the volume’s editor contrasts it with extremism, which he defines as “the active adoption of an ideology, and the praxis associated with it, to both delegitimize and then to eliminate the state and its associated elites through violence” (p. 3). Thus, instead of contrasting the end-points of the radicalization process either as *non-violent extremism* or *violent extremism*, he posits radicalization as *non-violent extremism* and extremism as *violent extremism*.

This confusion in the introductory chapter's conceptual framework is highlighted because it affects the way the volume's contributors apply these concepts to their respective case studies, with the exception of the chapter by Ayla Gul on "Ethnic Radicalisation: Kurdish Identity as Extremism in the Hegemonic Discourse of Turkey," which explains radicalization as a "path" involving "a search for identity at a moment of crisis" (p. 247). The other chapters cover topics such as profiling the British Islamists Ziauddin Sardar and Ed Husain (who had abandoned his earlier extremism), the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Syria, extremism in Iraq, resistance in Iran, and political Islam in the Gulf Region. In another of the volume's shortfalls, some of the chapter authors over-use academic jargon, such as Roxane Farmanfarman's "Reluctant Radicals: Hearts and Minds Between Securitisation and Radicalisation," which defines radicalization in a difficult to comprehend way as "contestation by the Other in response to what is perceived as a discursively produced existential threat, and therefore rendered a security issue for the identity community in question and, in mirror form, for the (larger) society producing the contested hegemonic discourse. In this reading, radicalization of a community is frequently a reflexive process, constituted by, but like-wise, constituting a threat" (p. 95). Interestingly, the most clearly written chapter is Clive Jones's "Israel's Insurgent Citizens: Contesting the State, Demanding the Land," with his discussion at least addressing the pathway of radicalization into non-violent extremism/violent extremism as driven by a "volatile mix of a shared sense of communal deprivation, social alienation and an extreme interpretation of *Hillul Hashem* [i.e., desecrating the name of God – JS] which carries the potential to visit bloody violence upon Palestinians and Israelis alike" (p. 209). The volume's editor is Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge, in the UK.

Elisabeth Kendall and Ewan Stein (Eds.), *Twenty-First Century Jihad: Law, Society and Military Action* (New York, NY: I.B. Taurus, 2017), 336 pp., US \$ 120.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 29.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-7845-3671-8.

The contributors to this volume examine, from a multidisciplinary perspective, the concept of jihad as it has been applied throughout the ages, ranging from spiritual struggle and self-defense to mobilizing for holy war against adversaries. Following the editors' introductory overview on "Contextualizing Twenty-First Century Jihad," the volume is divided into three parts: Part I, "Historical Antecedents of Contemporary Jihad" (e.g., "Divine Authority and Territorial Entitlement in the Hebrew Bible and the Qur'an" and "The 'Greater' Jihad in Classical Islam"); Part II, "Jihad in Modern Politics and Society" (e.g., "Sectarian Violence as Jihad," approaches to jihad by al Qaida, the Muslim Brotherhood, and others); and Part III, "Representations of Jihad in Modern Culture" (e.g., "Yemen's Al-Qa'ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad," "Hollywood and Jihad," and "The Appeal of Yusuf al-Qaradawi's Interpretation of Jihad"). While this anthology lacks critical perspectives on jihad (for example, how jihad is an anti-modernization concept), it nevertheless is recommended as a useful resource for understanding how jihad is interpreted by these academic specialists. Elisabeth Kendall is Senior Research Fellow in Arabic and Islamic Studies, Oxford University, and Ewan Stein is Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the School of Social and Political Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

Zieva Dauber Konvisser, *Living Beyond Terrorism: Israeli Stories of Hope and Healing* (Jerusalem, Israel/New York, NY: Gefen Publishing House, 2014), 356 pp., US \$ 26.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-9-6522-9643-6.

This is an important account, within the Israeli context, of the psychological and emotional consequences facing those who survive terror attacks, including their impact beyond the victims and their families to wider circles in society. These issues are examined by answering questions such as: "How do Israeli survivors and families of survivors and victims live with the constant threat of terrorism and the social and economic disruptions of their lives? How do they develop coping skills and adapt to their situation? What do these changes look like and how are they manifested? What accounts for the fact that so many of them did as well as they did? Was their recovery due to certain pre-trauma personality traits and inner resources and/or to their post-trauma environment – their families, their communities, and the organizations with which they

had contact?”(p. 262). These questions were posed to the study’s sample of twenty-four Israelis who had survived Palestinian terrorist attacks between 2001 and 2003, with the interviews conducted in 2004, with follow-up interviews held in 2007 and 2013. The book consists of an introductory overview of terrorism and its impact on its victims and others in society, which is followed by an account of the personal stories of the survivors. The concluding chapter presents the author’s findings, for example, that with the help of support networks, such individuals can experience post-traumatic stress as well as post-traumatic growth and resilience(p. 262). The Appendices include an explanation of the study’s research methodology, a chronology of major events in the Arab-Israeli conflict, a glossary and a selected bibliography. The author is a Fellow of the Institute for Social Innovation at Fielding Graduate University, in Santa Barbara, CA.

Malcolm Nance and Chris Sampson, *Hacking ISIS: How to Destroy the Cyber Jihad* (New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing, 2017), 320 pp., US \$ 27.99 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-5107-1892-0.

This is a well-researched and detailed reference resource about how the Islamic State (IS/ISIS) operates in cyberspace and the measures being employed to counter and defeat what the authors term “cyber jihad.” The book’s chapters cover topics such as the history of the cyber jihad (e.g., from al Qaida in Iraq to the Islamic State of Iraq); the cyber caliphate’s “spy chain of command” (the media propagation teams and media council); the extent of its cyber battlespace (e.g., the surface web, the deep web, and the dark web); its applications such as Telegram, Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, and others; the software used by the global jihadists, such as end-to-end encrypted messaging apps (e.g. WhatsApp); its official and “wannabe” cyber warrior units, such as online jihadi groups, the Islamic State Hacking Division; its video media structure, video themes, and magazines; the involvement of women in the cyber jihad; and the appeal of the cyber jihad to lone wolves. The final chapters discuss the anti-ISIS’s cyber campaign (e.g., the online campaigns against ISIS by the United States, other countries, and social media corporations, such as Facebook and Twitter, and even a counter-ISIS campaign by the Anonymous hacker community); and intelligence tools that are used to counter ISIS’s websites, such as counter-narratives, the use of malware, and trolling. In the conclusion, the authors insightfully point out that “the destruction of ISIS will be a historic achievement, but the by-product will be a less centralized terror group that will rely much more on inspiring terror attacks rather than planning them and deploying cells”(p. 250). As a result, they foresee a rise in attacks by lone wolves, “who dream up a plan and then execute it without saying a word or leaving a deep digital footprint, [which] are extremely difficult to detect”(p. 250). It is such insights and an encyclopedic listing of entries on ISIS’s operations in cyberspace that make this book an indispensable reference resource for analyzing latest trends in cyber jihad and how to counter it at the governmental and private sector levels. Both authors are veteran terrorism and counterterrorism experts and executive leaders of the research institute TAPSTRI – Terror Asymmetrics Project on Strategy, Tactics, and Radical Ideologies.

Naim Qassem [Translated from the Arabic by Dalia Khalil], *Hizbullah: The Story From Within* (London, UK: Saqi, 2007), 464 pp., US \$ 29.95 [Hardcover], US \$ 16.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-8635-6699-8.

This is a sympathetic account of Hizbullah’s origins, evolution, political agenda, and future direction by one of the organization’s founding members, who had served as its Deputy Secretary-General beginning in 1991. The book’s seven chapters discuss topics such as Hizbullah’s vision and goals; its organization and public work projects; key milestones in its history; its position towards the Palestinian cause; issues such as its approach to participating in Lebanon’s state institutions and parliamentary elections, and kidnapping foreigners; regional and international relations, such as relations with Iran, Syria, other Arab regimes, the United States, and Western Europe; and the organization’s future in terms of the “persistence of resistance” against Israel, and future expectations. The Appendix includes Hizbullah’s 1992 election program. This book is recommended as an official resource on Hizbullah.

Anthony Sadler, Alek Skarlatos, Spencer Stone, with Jeffrey E. Stern, *The 15:17 to Paris* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2016), 256 pp., US \$ 25.99 [Hardcover], US \$ 15.99 [Paperback], ISBN: 9781610398190.

This is a dramatic account of the events in the lives of three American friends from California (two of whom were off-duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces) that led to the attack by Ayoub El-Khazzani, an ISIS-inspired jihadi terrorist, who had boarded train #9364 in Brussels, bound for Paris, on August 21, 2015, on which all four were passengers. With El-Khazzani launching his attempted shooting and knifing attack, the three Americans who were in the same train car, succeeded in overpowering him, thereby preventing a potential mass casualty incident. This book was written by Jeffrey Stern, a professional journalist, in collaboration with the three Americans. Interspersed in the account are italicized sections that discuss El-Khazzani's background and pathway into becoming an Islamist terrorist, which on their own are a valuable resource for understanding how such Muslim individuals living in the West who feel for a variety of reasons, whether legitimate or not, that their marginalized lives can be uplifted by striking against their European adversaries on behalf of their jihadi cause. As a result of their bravery, the three Americans were awarded numerous honors and medals in France and the United States, including ceremonies in their honor in the White House and the Pentagon.

Mike Smith, *Boko Haram: Inside Nigeria's Unholy War* (New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 272 pp., US \$ 29.95 [Hardcover], US \$ 15.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-7845-3553-7.

This is a well-informed and detailed account of the origins, activities, and objectives of Boko Haram, which is based in Northern Nigeria but operates throughout the country. The book's author is a foreign correspondent for the Agence France-Presse (AFP) news agency, who had served as its bureau chief in West Africa from 2010 to 2013. One of the difficulties in covering Boko Haram, the author explains, is that "Even the name Boko Haram is something of an illusion. Roughly translated to mean 'Western education is forbidden,' it was given to the group by outsiders based on their understanding of the budding sect and its beliefs" (p. 12). To understand the group, the author explains that "It is best to think of Boko Haram as an umbrella term for the insurgency and the violence that has come with it, with an unclear number of cells or factions carry out attacks. Foot soldiers may be shared or recruited as needed, drawn from the massive population of desperate young men vulnerable to extremist ideas and perhaps attracted to the money and support the group can provide. Any kind of true organization may exist only at the very top, with limited cooperation between the various cells" (p. 13). There are limited prospects to resolve the Boko Haram insurgency, the author concludes, because "The problem is nothing less than the current state of Nigeria and the way it is being robbed daily – certainly of its riches, but more importantly, of its dignity" (p. 211).

Robin Brooke-Smith, *Storm Warning: Riding the Crosswinds in the Pakistan-Afghan Borderlands* (New York, NY: The Radcliffe Press/An Imprint of I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 2013), 288 pp., US \$ 55.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-7807-6408-5.

This is a fascinating first-hand account by a former Principal of the British-established Edwardes College in Peshawar, Pakistan, of the growing influence of the Taliban and other extremist Islamist groups and the complicity of the Pakistani military and intelligence agencies in tolerating their militant activities in the strategically important Afghan-Pakistan borderlands in the period preceding 9/11 until the author was ordered to return to England in 2004. Among the book's numerous insights about the causes of the serious political crises facing contemporary Pakistan is a prescient observation in the 1990s by Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, a retired Pakistani army general and a former foreign minister, who was one of the author's friends, that "The Americans have left a power vacuum in Afghanistan and they are now playing with the fire. They gave huge financial and logistical support to the mujahedeen, in their fight to remove the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, but now they have walked away or at least they don't seem to know what to do. Into the void come the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Clinton doesn't seem to know what to do. The CIA is focusing on Bin

Laden, but will not support his enemy the Northern Alliance. They are trying to use special hit squads from Pakistan to try to capture or kill Bin Laden. The emerging al-Qaeda network is extending its power and influence and its nerve centres are right under your nose in Peshawar and NWFP and just across the border in Afghanistan.”(p. 137). In another insightful comment, the author’s friend Abubakar Siddique, a Pakistan academic, observed, when they met in London in 2010, that “The once promising social change, modernity and development [in the cross-border region – JS] have all been set back decades by senseless violence.”(p. 277). Such insights and the author’s account of his own experiences in the region within the broader context increasing Islamist militancy engulfing the region, make this book invaluable for understanding the seemingly insurmountable problems facing the Afghan-Pakistan borderlands. The author is currently an England-based writer and international educational consultant.

Ali Soufan, *Anatomy of Terror: From the Death of Bin Laden to the Rise of the Islamic State* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017), 384 pp, US \$ 27.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-3932-4117-4.

In this sweeping, comprehensive, and interesting account, the author, a former FBI Special Agent who was one of the first to investigate al Qaida prior to 9/11, focuses on key individuals responsible for the evolution and current state of al Qaida and the Islamic State. As the author explains, through tracing important figures such as Usama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri (his long-time deputy and the group’s current leader), Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian militant who established the organization that would become the Islamic State (IS), and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, its current ‘caliph’, and others, “we will trace the transformation of al-Qaeda as an organization, the simultaneous development of bin Ladenism into a far more potent and lethal force, the rise and decline of the Islamic State, and the impending resurgence of al-Qaeda”(p. xviii). There is much to commend in this account, including the author’s discussion of the Islamic State’s attempt to implement their doctrinal *Management of Savagery’s* three phases of establishing an Islamic Caliphate (terrorism, insurgency, and establishment of a proto-state), with the prospect for the third phase currently being rolled back by coalition adversaries, which will result in its reverting to the terrorism phase. The concluding chapter presents the author’s recommendation for countering the Islamic State, which is based on four measures: exposing this movement’s “basic hypocrisy,” utilizing effective spokesmen, such as rehabilitated former extremists in counter-narrative campaigns, “inoculating” the population that supports them with “the tools of critical thinking to resist false narratives and identify true ones”, and offering them rehabilitation programs to help them re-integrate in their societies(pp. 297-300). The author is the CEO of The Soufan Center, a consultancy on counterterrorism, in New York City.

Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qaida in Afghanistan* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 300 pp., US \$ 99.99 [Hardcover], US \$ 29.99 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-1398-7150-1.

In this well-researched and detailed account, the author explores what she terms a paradox about al Qaida: “If al-Qaida was an international terrorist network bent on destroying the United States, why did it spend so many resources on training and fighting in Afghanistan?”(p. 2). The answer, the author explains, is that “al-Qaida in 1996-2001 followed a dual strategy. Although a small part of al-Qaida carried out international terrorist attacks, the larger part was involved in building a resilient organization....[which – JS] would play a crucial part in the next stage of al-Qaida’s battle, which was to oust Arab dictators in the Middle East and install Islamic regimes in their place”(p. 2). To examine this thesis, the book focuses on al Qaida’s activities and priorities in Afghanistan during the period from 1988 to 2001. The book’s chapters examine topics such as al Qaida’s establishment in 1988, its involvement in the Afghan civil war from until 1996, Usama bin Laden’s return to Afghanistan in 1996, the relationship between al Qaida and the Taliban, al Qaida’s training camps under the Taliban, and al Qaida’s international terrorist campaign. The concluding chapter discusses the evolution of al Qaida’s “dual strategy” in Afghanistan and its strategic reasoning behind its attacks against the United States on 9/11. The author concludes that 9/11 represented bin Laden’s belief that “al-Qaida was

the vanguard of the Islamic revolution. The strategy said that war against the United States was an absolutely necessary step toward Islamic revolutions in the Middle East” (p. 175). With the Islamic State (IS) [which is intentionally not discussed by the author] assuming primacy in global jihadism, it appears that contrary to bin Laden’s projection, it is IS, but not al Qaida (which is led by the uncharismatic Ayman al-Zawahiri), that appears to have become the ideological and military vanguard for the global jihadi movement. The author is a Senior Research Fellow at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI) in Norway.

Archana Upadhyay, *India’s Fragile Borderlands: The Dynamics of Terrorism in North East India* (New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 288 pp., US \$ 110.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-8451-1586-9.

This is a well-researched and detailed account of the types of terrorist threats confronting the North East Indian regions and the nature of the government’s counter-terrorism campaign against these insurgencies. As described by the author, the regions of North East India constitute 7.9 percent of India’s total land space, and comprise the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The book is divided into four thematic parts: Part I, “Theorizing Terrorism: Attempts and Pitfalls” (e.g., definition, motivating factors, contemporary terrorism, and terrorism and insurgency); Part II, “India’s North Eastern Borderlands and the Dynamics of Terrorism” (e.g., the nature of the terrorist threats posed by tribal, ethnic, and criminal groups; an overview of the conflicts within the North Eastern regions; cross-border linkages involving Bangladesh, Burma, China, Pakistan, Thailand, Nepal and Bhutan; the country origins of the procurement of weapons into the region; and the nature of illegal migration from Bangladesh and Islamic militancy, which is a fallout of the population surge across India’s porous borders); Part III, “The Road Ahead” (e.g., the government’s response measures, attempts at peacemaking, and the author’s proposal for a “Comprehensive Regional Security Framework”); and Part IV, “Appendices” (a compilation of significant historical documents, such as peace accords and anti-terrorism legislation). Although the book’s coverage is dated, as it was published in 2009, it provides an invaluable resource for the study of current terrorism-related developments in the region. At the time the book was published, the author was an Associate Professor in the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

Robert W. White, *Out of the Ashes: An Oral History of the Provisional Republican Movement* (Dublin, Ireland: Merrion Press/ Distributed by ISBS, Portland, OR, 2017), 500 pp., US \$ 45.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-7853-7093-9.

This oral history is the product of the author’s more than thirty years’ series of interviews and discussions with Irish Republican Movement activists. It is also a substantial revision and update of his earlier *Provisional Irish Republicans: An Oral and Interpretive History*, which was published by Praeger in 1993. The new volume is divided into five parts. Part 1, “Introduction,” presents a brief historical overview of the Northern Ireland conflict from 1969 to 2005, and a conceptual framework that discusses the relationship between terrorism and social movements in order to demonstrate how Irish Republicanism fits the category of a social movement because it engaged in political violence against British state repression. Also discussed are the benefits of using oral history to examine “the political choices that led people into two organizations of the Irish Republican Movement, namely the Provisional IRA and ‘Provisional’ Sinn Fein,” as well as its unique feature in being “informed by accounts from activists that were collected over a thirty-year period” (p. 12). The author’s methodological procedures in collecting these oral histories are discussed in the book’s first Appendix. The first part’s second chapter presents an historical overview of resistance in the Northern Ireland province to British rule from 1170 to 1923. Part 2, the volume’s longest section, presents oral histories from 1923 to 2005, which are accompanied by the author’s running narrative. Part 3, “Revolution Over the Life Course and Life Over the Course of the Revolution,” presents personal accounts of recruitment into the movement and why some people stayed while others withdrew. Part 4, “The War is Over: The Irish Republican Movement Continues (Activism since 2005),” presents the activists’ thinking on

the movement's post-violence political struggle. Part 5, "Conclusion," is the author's sociological assessment of the Provisionals' 'life span,' which are explained by the theories of academics such as Sidney Tarrow, "that there are phases or cycles of protest that extend across social systems" (p. 389), which are amplified by Francis Fox Piven and Richard Cloward insight that there are social processes that cause moderation in radical organizations (p. 390). Two Appendices provide the author's methodology for conducting oral history research and a listing of the "Provisional Republican Roll of Honour" who were killed in action. This is followed by an extensive bibliography. This book is an invaluable primary resource for understanding the outlooks of the activists who joined the Provisional Irish Republican movement, which the author has masterfully compiled and narrated. The author is Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI).

Wang Yizhou, *On Terrorism: Chinese Perspectives* (Paths International Ltd./Social Sciences Academic Press (China)/Distributed by ISBS, Portland, OR, 2014), Translated by Zhang Yidan, 86 pp., US \$ 98.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 9781844643035.

With a title promising to present "Chinese Perspectives" on terrorism, this short book, instead, is a general and competent overview of terrorism, without any mention of anything distinctly Chinese in its contents, including any discussion of terrorism in China. This book is divided into three sections: "Definitions of Terrorism" (including the historical origins and dynamics of terrorism, the characteristics of terrorist behavior, the causes of terrorism, the ideology of terrorism, and terrorism and international relations); "Types of Contemporary Terrorism" (e.g., extremist nationalistic and religious terrorism, extremist right-wing and left-wing terrorism, and terrorism and criminality); and "The North-South Income Gap and Terrorism" (e.g., the impact of negative income distribution on the rise in international terrorism). The author is Professor and Deputy Dean, Institute of International Relations, SIS, PKU, in China [this affiliation is not listed in the book – JS].

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

Announcements

TRI Thesis Award 2016: Top Finalists Identified

Since 2014, the Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI) has annually awarded a prize for the best doctoral dissertation in the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism studies. The jury currently consists of Prof. James Forest, Prof. Clark McCauley, and the chairman, Prof. em. Alex P. Schmid, with Prof. Edwin Bakker as an alternate member. The criteria set by the jury includes that deserving theses must demonstrate originality in terms of introducing new data, theory or methodology and that award-worthy theses manifest novelty/uniqueness in their findings. Of the theses submitted to TRI in 2016, two clearly achieved these criteria and were selected as co-finalists:

Dr. Emily Corner (Research Associate, University College London), author of *The Psychogenesis of Terrorism*

Dr. Steven T. Zech (Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Relations at Monash University), author of *Between Two Fires: Civilian Resistance during Internal Armed Conflict in Peru*

Dr. Emily Corner examined mental disorder and psychological distress among lone-actor terrorists and regular members of terrorist groups. Her methodologically sophisticated, solid empirical research was based on six unique datasets (including 97 terrorist autobiographies) and guided by an excellent conceptualisation. Her findings bring nuance to the debate about the issue of normality vs. mental health problems among terrorists.

The jury was impressed by the immense amount of field work that Dr. Steven Zech performed in Peru, where the Maoist Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) was active. The originality of Dr. Zech's approach lays the groundwork for a theory of civilian resistance by focusing on the neglected issue of when and how communities organise for self-defence when caught between the brutality of insurgent violence and the almost equally indiscriminate government repression.

The jury wishes to congratulate the two finalists for their achievement. They will each receive a check of US \$500 and a formal award certificate from the Terrorism Research Initiative.

Abstracts of the doctoral theses of Dr. Corner and Dr. Zech can be found below.

The Psychogenesis of Terrorism

(University College London, 2016 by Emily Corner)

Studies concerning both mental disorder and involvement in terrorism have a long and convoluted history. The literature that has focused on attempting to understand psychological drivers of terrorist behaviour has shifted through multiple stages. Moving from untested assumptions of psychopathology, personality, and deviance, towards more empirically sound interpretations of sociology. While the early studies were correctly debunked on methodological grounds, the existing consensus, spawned from the growing interest in sociology, that mental disorder never plays a role in terrorism, is likely to be a fallacy when we consider the complexity of the problem and the diverse pool of individuals who engage in it. This body of research falls into line with highly influential seminal reviews, and more recent re-examination of the role of group processes in terrorism. This thesis takes the starting position that the logic of an act of targeted violence being either borne out of mental health problems or terrorism is likely to be a false dichotomy. Instead, we are likely to see a range of mental disorders across the arc of terrorist involvement. This thesis utilises multiple existing and novel inferential statistical techniques on both qualitative and quantitative datasets, to address the current discord both in the understanding of the potential role of psychopathology, and to re-examine currently well accepted, but as yet untested theories of terrorist

behaviour. The intent of this multi-pronged methodology is to provide practitioners with a holistic understanding of the problem as well as suggestions toward preventing and disrupting future offences.

Between Two Fires: Civilian Resistance during Internal Armed Conflict in Peru

(University of Washington, Seattle, 2016) by Steven T. Zech.

Research on internal armed conflict focuses on violence perpetrated by insurgent groups and state security forces, often ignoring other armed civilian actors. However, militias, paramilitary groups, and civilian self-defense forces represent important third parties in most armed conflicts including Mexico, Nigeria, Iraq, and elsewhere. Peruvian civilian self-defense forces played a crucial role in defeating the insurgent threat challenging the state during the 1980s and 1990s. Why did some communities organize self-defense while others facing similar situations did not? I argue that how communities address the tension between their ideas about violence and their own use of violence is key to understanding violent action. Community narratives interpret events and define inter-group relations: narratives that legitimize violence makes violence more likely. The form this resistance takes—whether large-scale mobilization or disorganized individual acts—depends on a community’s institutional capacity to generate and sustain collective action. I test my argument against realist and rationalist arguments that emphasize power, threat, and opportunism. I use a mixed-methods approach that combines a quantitative analysis of regional violence with historical and contemporary community case studies in the Ayacucho region of Peru. I draw from hundreds of testimonies in the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission archives, as well as nearly two hundred personal interviews with self-defense force members, community leaders, military officials, and civilians. I also accompanied contemporary self-defense forces on patrol in remote mountain and jungle communities to evaluate hypothesized social processes from my argument. This research has important theoretical and policy implications. I demonstrate the power of community narratives and the causal role of ideas and identities. Understanding the processes driving violent action will provide policymakers with additional tools to manage or prevent it. Armed civilians play a crucial role during most armed conflicts. Peruvian civilian self-defense forces varied in their origins, behavior, levels of support they received from the military, and their post-conflict trajectory. The Peruvian case provides a unique opportunity for policymakers to learn from successes and failures when civilians organize to combat security threats.

P.S. The deadline for submissions for the TRI Thesis Award 2017 is 31 March 2018. Conditions remain the same as in previous years (see: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/494/pdf>).

About *Perspectives on Terrorism*

Perspectives on Terrorism (PoT) is a joint publication of the Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), headquartered in Vienna, Austria, and the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) of Leiden University, Campus The Hague. PoT is published six times per year as a free, independent, scholarly peer-reviewed online journal available at <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com>.

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

The editors invite researchers and readers to:

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

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The journal’s Research Notes, Special Correspondence, Op-Eds and other content are reviewed by members of the Editorial Board, while its Articles are peer-reviewed by outside academic experts and professionals. While aiming to be policy-relevant, PT does not support any partisan policies regarding (counter-) terrorism and waging conflicts. Impartiality, objectivity and accuracy are guiding principles that we require contributors to adhere to. They are responsible for the content of their contributions and retain the copyright of their publication.

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