The Seeds of Terror

The Political, Economic, Demographic, and Geographic

Causes of Terror Group Formation

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Introduction

The phenomenon of terrorism is one of the most complex and hotly debated topics in political science. Particularly following the World Trade Center attacks of September 11th, 2001, the study of terrorism grew both in scale and scope. Topics broadly covered are the groups themselves, how they operate, how and why an individual may turn to terrorism, and of course how to combat terrorism and terror groups. Comparatively little study has been undertaken on the broader societal causes of terrorism, especially as a quantitative analysis. This monograph will attempt to at least begin that study; its object is to use quantitative analysis to identify what characteristics of a country lead to the formation of terror groups; and thus test any theories on the cause of terror group formation and determine if there are any general trends in the data. The scope of this study is quite large scale, with a 192 separate groups included, spanning much of the 20th and early 21st Centuries, with 16 different social, political, economic, and geographic variables.

The study will begin by discussing the history and definition of terrorism as a phenomena, before turning to the exact methodology used in the study. A review of major theories on the causes of terrorism will follow, followed by the results of the study and how they impact those theories.

Definition

Studies and discussions of terrorism traditionally begin with a discussion of the definition of the word, in order to adequately identify what we are discussing.[1] So common is this trope of the literature that it has become a 'convention' or 'custom' of the study,[2] yet despite (or because of) the widespread discussion, there is no agreed upon definition of the word;[3] Walter Laqeur notes that there are over 100 different definitions of the term.[4] Despite this disagreement, most studies of the

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[1] N Fotion, B Kashnikov, and J Lekea, *Terrorism: The New World Disorder*, Continuum, 2007, p 1
[2] S Vertigans, *The Sociology of Terrorism*, Routledge, 2011, p 1
[3] Ibid
[4] W Laqeur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p 5, cited in N Fotion et al, *Terrorism: The New World Disorder*, p 1

phenomenon will require the author to generate or choose a definition, and then to justify their use of that definition. This study is especially sensitive to the definition that is used, as while the question of 'what is terrorism?' is not especially relevant, including phenomena which are of the same type, and thus potentially the same cause, while excluding distinct phenomena which may have a different cause, is vital to the study's validity. This author was prudent in the selection of groups for analysis, and at times had some difficulty in considering whether a group should be included or not. Thus an extensive review of the definition of terrorism, and that used in this study as well as justifications, is needed to ensure the reader understands the reasoning a particular group was included or excluded.

History

A large part of the disagreement about the definition of 'terrorism' comes from the history of the word itself. Terrorism, at least the type used in this study, is a predominantly modern phenomena, but there are some early, even ancient, examples. 1 Maccabees 2:24 gives us perhaps the first example of terrorism from Seleucid occupied-Judea, when the Jewish priest Mattathias and his sons killed a Syrian officer who was forcing them to worship a pagan Greek. Crucial for the purposes of definitional discussion, they also killed a Jew complying with the Syrian, and Mattathias cried out for others to follow him in resisting; thus triggering the Maccabean revolt.[5] A few centuries later, following the occupation by the Romans in 64 BC, various sources of discontent began to grow, particularly in relation to the privileged positon priests and their followers had secured themselves by collaborating with the Romans. This led to the rise of the 'Sicarii'; named for the daggers they carried, who began targeting Roman collaborators around 50 AD; stabbing their victims in broad daylight and often in crowds.[6] The attacks eventually triggered open revolt against Roman rule in 66 AD. The rebellion was brutally crushed and the Second Temple destroyed four years later, but the Sicarii themselves had fortified themselves in the mountain fortress of Masada, where the Romans laid siege

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[5] R Law, *Terrorism: A History*, Polity Press, 2009, pp 26-27
[6] Ibid, p 27

to them in 73 AD. Rather than surrender, the Sicarii allegedly committed mass suicide.[7] Despite their antiquity, Matthias and the Sicarii display several key tenets of modern terrorism; publicising their acts, their indiscriminate targeting, and in the case of the Sicarii, a huge amount of public fear was created by their acts. This fear was even exploited in Cyrene (modern day Libya) by the local Governor as an excuse to arrest notable Jews and seize their property,[8] arguably similar to some modern day terror-scares or crackdowns on political dissidence.

Other pre-modern examples, depending on the definition of terrorism used, also exist; the classic example being the *Assassins*, a Shia sect specialising in targeted assassination which operated in Persia between 1090 and 1296.[9] They provoked widespread fear among Sunni and government leaders, provoking a variety of crackdowns, including caravan inspections and security checks in Cairo in 1122.[10] In 1296, they were finally crushed by the Mongols, who dismantled their fortresses and killed over 100,000 of the sect in order to prevent their reformation.[11] Another example is the Indian *Thug* cult, who worshipped the Hindu God of Death, Kali. In order to appease her, as well as rob their victims, they ambushed travellers in remote areas, operating from the 7th Century through to the 19th.[12] Notably, the Thugs were highly organised, with a clear set of rules and operating procedures for their operations.[13] It should be noted, however, that neither of these cases can strictly be regarded as terrorism in the modern sense, as they fail to meet several criteria frequently present in definitions of terrorism (including this author's). The Assassins, while sowing fear and publicising their actions, did not target indiscriminately, and specifically selected targets for assassination, while the Thugs, while being highly organised and killing indiscriminately, did so for religious or criminal motivations, not political.

The first appearance of the word 'terror', and the start of its evolution into the modern form, is in reference to the French Revolution. Following the overthrow of the Monarchy in 1789, the

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[7] Ibid, pp 28-29
[8] R Law, *Terrorism: A History*, p 29
[9] Ibid, pp 39-45
[10] Ibid, pp 41-42
[11] Ibid, p 44
[12] R O'Kane, *Terrorism*, Pearson Longman, 2007, p 8
[13] Ibid

Republican government instituted the *regime de la terreur.*[14] The 'Terror' was designed to consolidate the powers of the new regime through the intimidation and suppression of counterrevolutionaries and other threats. Under the auspices Maximilien Robespierre, a 'People's Court' was established and given broad powers to arrest, try, convict, and execute. Ironically, 'Terror' was seen as an important component of democracy and freedom. Robespierre argued that the Terror would defend the 'virtue' of the new republic, and its efficiency and uncompromising nature was itself a virtue.[15] Robespierre himself would fall victim to the Terror in 1794, and it ended with his death and the eventual collapse of the revolutionary regime. A year later the conservative English writer Edmund Burke, in his criticism of the French Revolution, would coin the term 'terrorists' to refer to those in the regime.[16] The fervent belief by the French revolutionaries in the nobility of their goals, and thus the justified use of terror, is what links this first form to the modern. The French Revolution would also trigger the rise of other anti-Monarchist groups around Europe. One important example is the republican extremist Carlo Pisacane, who developed the theory of 'Propaganda by Deed'; that the propagation of ideas alone would not gain a movement the mass support of the people, rather that the people needed to be 'educated' through the use of violence, and the use of violence by such groups was a vital part of their propaganda efforts.[17] This idea would prominently feature in later, including modern, terror group campaigns and thinking.

The first such group to adopt Pisacane's ideas, and embrace political violence, was the *Narodnaya Volya*, or 'People's Will', in Russia during the late 19th Century. People's Will sought to overthrow the Tsar and his Government, and institute a republic. Unlike modern terrorists, they fastidiously avoided civilian casualties, targeting only the Tsar and government officials, and were ultimately successful in 1881, when they assassinated Tsar Alexander II.[18] Within a few years the group had been hunted to extinction, but their embrace of 'Propaganda by Deed', and revolutionary use of the new technology of dynamite, inspired others around Europe. In the months following the

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[14] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Columbia University Press, 2006, p 3
[15] Ibid, pp 3-4
[16] Ibid, p 4
[17] Ibid, p 5
[18] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, pp 5-6

Tsar's death, the first anarchist conference was held in London, where the 'Black International' was established to ostensibly coordinate anarchist activities throughout Europe, including violence.[19] The International had questionable actual impact on anarchism, but anarchist violence nevertheless spiked in the following decades. The 1890s were known as the decade of the bomb,[20] of note was the 1894 bombing of the Café Terminus in Paris by anarchist Emile Henry. Henry's attack is notable in that, in addressing the jury at his trial, he justified attacking civilians because, in his view, as patrons of the café they were all members of the bourgeois, and thus at least tacit supporters of the political and social system he sought to attack.[21] This logic is strikingly similar to that used by Sayyid Qutb and Al Qaeda, who expanded the Islamic idea of 'takfir', or apostasy, to include all Muslims who were not actively fighting jihad; their failure to do so meant they were tacitly supporting secular regimes and infidels, and thus not true Muslims. Anarchist violence, however, still remained distinct from modern terrorism. People's Will avoided civilian casualties, while bombers like Henry were 'lone wolves', and there was never a sustained campaign of violence from anarchists.

Such a campaign, and the world's first true incarnation of a modern terror group, came from Irish nationalists. The first Irish nationalist group, the Fenian Brotherhood, formed in 1858, was largely a failure. It operated from the United States among the Irish diaspora, and attempted a series of plots, including invading Canada, all of which ended in failure, and the group was defunct by 1868.[22] The group, however, paved the way for more effective Irish groups, specifically *Clan na Gael*, formed in 1873 by Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa. Also operating from the US, *Clan na Gael* called upon the diaspora to donate funds to carry out attacks in Ireland. The group did not advocate a general uprising in Ireland, rather it advocated the creation of a "little band of heroes"[23] which would wage guerrilla warfare. Through its mouthpiece, the *Irish World* newspaper, they published propaganda and solicited funds, receiving $23,350 by March 1877. In 1881 they carried out their first attack, targeting a barracks in Manchester, and two years later, alongside the Ireland-based Irish Republican

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[19] Ibid
[20] R O'Kane, *Terrorism*, p 18
[21] Ibid, pp 18-19
[22] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 8
[23] Ibid

Brotherhood, they began the world's first terror campaign, planting a series of bombs in the Underground and train stations around London and other major cities.[24] The indiscriminate attacks, despite the relatively low body count, shocked the British, and led to the first counter-terrorism efforts, including increased surveillance, border control, and increased national and international police coordination, as well as the establishment of the first counter-terror police unit, Scotland Yard's Special Branch.[25] *Clan na Gael* and the IRB demonstrated the first form of modern terrorism. The groups used propaganda to appeal for support, maintained a foreign base in a safe country from which to organise, and then launched a sustained campaign of violence.[26] Terrorism had moved from being single events carried out by individuals, to being an organised, cohesive effort planned, supported, and carried out by a group.

The next major evolutionary step in terrorism occurred following World War II amid the decolonisation process and Cold War confrontation. Countries as diverse as Israel, Kenya, Cyprus, and Algeria all featured nationalist campaigns of terrorism.[27] Such groups often received support from the (ostensibly) anti-imperialist Communist Bloc, both materially and politically, and so such countries were unwilling to describe these groups and their campaigns as 'terrorism'. This began the modern confusion of the term, and the adoption of the "politically correct" term 'freedom fighters' to refer to their struggles.[28] Key to this distinction was the view that freedom fighters fought against political and/or colonial oppression, and for 'just' causes, and thus could not be terrorists, in simple terms; the end justified the means. By the latter part of the 20th Century, the new phase of terrorism had further expanded to include separatist and ethnic conflict not related to colonialism. By the 1980s, some American commentators began to view 'terrorism' as an exclusively anti-American or anti-Western phenomenon, supported by unfriendly states across the globe. 'State-sponsored terror' came to be seen as a tactic which weaker states could use against much more powerful ones, while largely avoiding incurring their wrath.[29] The rise of 'narco-terrorism'; violence carried out by drug cartels,

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[24] Ibid, pp 9-10
[25] Ibid, p 10
[26] Ibid, p 11
[27] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 16
[28] Ibid
[29] Ibid, p 17

further expanded the definition. Following 9/11, terrorism again shifted in meaning, with the appearance of Al Qaeda's international network of operatives, the new use of the internet to recruit and inspire, and the threat of terrorists wielding WMDs.[30] The rapid development of terrorism in the 20th Century, and its rapidly expanding definition, has created the modern definitional confusion and debate, thus an extended discussion of the definition needs to be undertaken.

Definitional Elements

The definition of terrorism contains several important factors, each of which needs to be discussed, yet there is disagreement over which factors should be included in the definition. Alex Schmid surveyed authors for their definition of terrorism, and found 22 different elements to the definition.[31] Major elements included terrorism's violent nature, its political nature, a focus on fear, a difference between the victims of the attack and its actual target, while the targeting of civilians and its organised nature have also been considered major factors. Debate also remains regarding whether or not terrorism is exclusively a tactic of non-state actors.

Terrorism is generally agreed to be, at least, a form of political violence. Definitions used by the US State Department and codified in USC § 2656f(d), the FBI, and Department of Homeland Security all cite terrorism's actual or threatened use of violence,[32] while it appeared in 83.5% of definitions surveyed by Schmid.[33] Hoffman argues that absent the use of violence, an individual is merely a political extremist, and the use of violence is fundamental to terrorism.[34] Terrorism's political nature is also stressed by Hoffman and other authors (65% of Schmid's definitions). The political nature of terrorism distinguishes it from other forms of non-state violence, such as criminal

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[30] Ibid, p 20
[31] A Schmid and A Jongman et al, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literature,* Transaction Books, 1988, pp 5-6, cited in B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 34
[32] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 31
[33] Ibid, p 34
[34] Ibid, p 38

violence, where the perpetrators use violence for personal gain, rather than to advocate political change.[35]

One crucial aspect of this political violence, however, which is sometimes overlooked by authors, is the creation and spread of fear among the target population for political ends. 51% of definitions in Schmid's survey included fear or terror as an element of terrorism, but it should be noted that terrorism goes beyond the mere creation of fear. Conventional political violence, including that used by national armies, is direct in its application; the targets of the violence are also those whose behaviour the user of violence wants to influence. For example, blowing up a bridge may prevent an army from moving to defend a critical area, or assassinating a politician may prevent him from voting a certain way on a legislative matter. Such actions may create fear, but this is ancillary to the direct impact of the violence.[36] Terrorism, on the other hand, deliberately intends to create fear in the target population through the violence inflicted on the victims, and through that fear, change their political behaviour to impact a third party, usually the government. This 'leveraging' of fear for political purposes is a fundamental part of terrorism, and distinguishes it from other forms of political violence. It is important to note that the actual victims of the attack are not the intended targets of the attack, nor may the attack itself even be related to the perpetrators' objectives. Blowing up a café, for example, will likely kill only civilian patrons, and, assuming the goal was to change the behaviour of the government, will have limited impact on government structure and stability. However, targeting cafes and other places will create a climate of fear amongst the target population, which in turn will put pressure on the government to change behaviour. It is these three steps; the attack, the creation of fear, and leveraging of that fear, which typify terrorist attacks.

The targets of terror attacks are also generally regarded as being innocent or otherwise legally immune from attack. Terrorists at the very least do not abide by the commonly agreed Rules of War, and frequently directly target civilians or other non-combatants.[37] The terrorists themselves may not see their targets as innocent, and may class particular targets, even civilian ones, as 'legitimate'

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[35] Ibid, p 36
[36] N Fotion, B Kashnikov, and J Lekea, *Terrorism: The New World Disorder*, pp 3-5
[37] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 28

because of their association with their overall enemy.[38] The targeting of civilians is key to terrorism's 'political leverage' dynamic. In order to create fear and thus leverage, terror attacks must achieve maximum publicity to ensure the greatest impact and generation of the most fear (building on Pisacane's 'Propaganda of the Deed'). Attacks on civilians and other 'innocent' targets generate shock and outrage, which maximises publicity. Further, members of the military and police forces are expected by society to bear the brunt of violence directed against the society, and so attacks on them generate less outrage and fear amongst the general public, limiting the available political leverage. Crucial to the selection of target is also indiscrimination.[39] Generally, the victims of the attack are random, although the target itself may be symbolic (again, in order to maximise publicity). The target population itself might not be completely indiscriminate, such as in cases of sectarian violence like in Northern Ireland or Pakistan, but while the target population may be specifically selected, those actually killed are not. The goal of indiscriminate attacks is to further generate fear amongst the target population; anyone can be a killed anywhere at any time, and the only way to avoid being killed is for there to be a political change, which creates pressure from the target population for that change.

Finally, there is a question over whether or not a single act, or acts by an individual, can constitute terrorism. Both Crenshaw and Hoffman argue that individuals acting alone cannot be considered terrorists. Hoffman argues that, as terrorism is inherently political, in the case of an individual's motivations it is difficult to differentiate the personal from the political.[40] Crenshaw stresses the role of the methodical or systemic nature of terrorism, and thus an individual acting alone cannot credibly create or utilise such an organised set of behaviours.[41] Rosemary O'Kane offers another criticism of the 'individual terrorist', arguing that since its inception in the French Revolution, terrorism has been organised and systemic; it is a 'system of terror', and thus the individual is incapable of operating such a system alone.[42] For the same reasons, a single act, even if carried out by a group, cannot be considered terrorism. A single act alone is not a 'campaign', and lacks the political

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[38] R O'Kane, *Terrorism*, pp 36-37, 43
[39] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, Princeton University Press, 2007, p 15
[40] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 37
[41] M Crenshaw, *Explaining Terrorism*, Routledge, 2011, p 22
[42] R O'Kane, *Terrorism*, p 35

implications of such a campaign. While a single act may create fear, it is the fear of future attacks which creates the 'terror' in the target population. Absent these future attacks or their threat, political leverage is impossible, as the perpetrator has no fear of future violence to leverage. It should be noted, however, that Hoffman argues single actors and acts may be considered terrorism if they form part of a larger, uncoordinated campaign as part of 'networked' terrorism, where an individual attacker may be inspired by the attacks and rhetoric of an existing terror group, such as Al Qaeda.[43] This author agrees with these arguments, and groups with only a single attack, as well as attacks by individuals like Timothy McVeigh and Anders Breivik have been excluded from the dataset.

One of the major areas of debate in defining terrorism is whether or not to include attacks against civilians by government forces in the definition. In some respects this is a continuation of the definition first applied to the statist French Terror and later condemnations of the Soviet 'Red Terror,'[44] but some authors such as Hoffman argue that terrorism is inherently non-state.[45] States have frequently targeted civilian populations, both their own and those of other states, in order to achieve political goals. In threatening or targeting the civilian population of another state, states are engaging in classic 'political leverage'; hoping that the deaths of civilians will cause the opposing state to acquiesce to political demands; examples include the Nazi Blitz of London, and the atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in WWII.[46] When targeting their own populations, states are using violence to create fear which ensures compliance with their political demands, again an exercise of political leverage. One issue with internal state terror, however, is that it is not usually indiscriminate; particular perceived enemies of the state are targeted. This issue was noted by fascist thinker Sergio Panunzio, who argued that violence against internal state enemies like Communists could be justified, as they had chosen to support Communism or other oppositional political movements. Panunzio specifically objected to the state targeting 'innocent' persons, who had not chosen to oppose the regime, for any reason, arguing that by targeting Communists and other dissidents, other Communists

[43] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, pp 38-39
[44] R O'Kane, *Terrorism*, pp 32-33
[45] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, pp 40-41
[46] N Fotion, B Kashnikov, and J Lekea, *Terrorism: The New World Disorder*, pp 35-36, 132-133

and dissidents would be encouraged to change their behaviour. The targeting of innocents, however, could not compel anyone to change their behaviour, because no specific behaviour was being targeted.[47] Thus, assuming state terrorism exists, it would only apply to cases of indiscriminate violence by the state, such as arguably Pol Pot's Killing Fields in Cambodia[48] and the Soviet Red Terror under Stalin.[49] However, there remains debate over whether the use of such violence constitutes terrorism. Krueger argues that while it does exist, its study requires different methods and data to non-state terror.[50] Martha Crenshaw argues that, while similar in purpose and sometimes method,[51] states cannot engage in terrorism as it is a tactic used by revolutionary forces against an existing government.[52] Hoffman argues that terrorism is designed to create political power where none previously existed, and thus a government with political power would be excluded from his definition.[53] This author tends to follow Crenshaw and Hoffman's view that terrorism is exclusively a tactic of non-state actors. In any case, it's clear that terrorism by state governments is different in cause and pathology, and thus for the purposes of this study can be excluded.

Another, lesser debate on the definition of terrorism concerns its victims. Terrorism in the modern context has frequently been described as attacks on civilians, non-combatants, the 'innocent', or other descriptors excluding attacks on military and sometimes government personnel, yet the term 'civilian' or 'non-combatant' appeared in only 17.5% of the definitions surveyed by Schmid.[54] Further, there are important distinctions between words like 'civilian', 'non-combatant' and 'innocent'. For example, as noted by Ganor, the term 'innocent' is entirely subjective, and civilians of one country may not be considered innocent from the perspective of the terrorist.[55] Such subjective word should not be used in a definition, especially one of such a highly politicised and emotive subject (emphasis on innocent victims nonetheless appeared in 15.5% of surveyed definitions).[56] Even

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[47] R O'Kane, *Terrorism*, pp 28-29
[48] S Anderson and S Sloan, *Historical Dictionary of Terrorism*, The Scarecrow Press, 2002, pp 265-267
[49] R O'Kane, *Terrorism*, pp 75-79
[50] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, p 15, Footnote 1
[51] M Crenshaw, *Explaining Terrorism*, p 4
[52] Ibid, p 22
[53] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 41
[54] A Schmid, *Political Terrorism: A Research Guide*, cited by B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 34
[55] B Ganor, 'Defining Terrorism', *Policy Practice and Research*, Routledge, Vol 2, No. 4, 2002, pp 293-294
[56] A Schmid, *Political Terrorism: A Research Guide*, cited by B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 34

the distinction between 'civilian' and 'non-combatant' can be difficult. For example, are police officers to be considered non-combatants? In many countries the distinction between police and military is not clear, and police are often used is paramilitary roles or even as tools of state terror. Are peacekeepers such as the US marines killed in a suicide attack in Lebanon in 1983 considered non-combatants? Wounded soldiers have traditionally been considered non-combatants, but would we label the Jewish fighter who blows up a hospital full of SS officers in WWII a terrorist? The Geneva Conventions, from which the concept derives, are of little help, as they are overly reliant on conventional understandings of conflict between uniformed, state militaries.[57] The use of the term 'civilian' is clearer in its delineation, and resolves some of the confusion. It allows for the targeting of paramilitary and other 'unconventional' forces, and while focusing on another important part of terrorism; publicity. The primary goal of a terrorist to gain publicity and notoriety for their attacks, either to educate and inspire through "Propaganda by deed", or to create fear which can be leveraged politically. The targeting of soldiers and police is far more tactical, and unlike the targeting of civilians, is not designed to spread fear throughout the general population.

Distinguishing Types of Political Violence

As noted by Crenshaw, few violent organisations have purely used terrorism to achieve their goals,[58] and will often turn to crime as a source of funding, or will target military and government in addition to civilians. Thus the line between terrorism and other unconventional warfare become blurred. Distinguishing terrorist organisations from 'guerrillas', 'revolutionaries', 'insurgents', 'militia', and from hate crimes, as well as each different phenomenon from the others, is somewhat difficult. Various non-state actors use terrorism, such as insurgencies, in addition to targeting enemy military forces, and one group may use terrorism while in fact being better defined as an insurgency or guerrilla force.[59] Being able to distinguish between these different phenomena is important not only

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[57] *First Geneva Convention*, 1864
[58] M Crenshaw, *Explaining Terrorism*, p 4
[59] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 35

to be able to effectively study and quantify them, but also in order to combat them. David Kilcullen in fact notes that it was the use of 'counter-*terrorism*' rather than 'counter-*insurgency*' which frustrated initial efforts to fight Al Qaeda, and has continued to frustrate efforts against the Islamic State.[60]

'Guerrilla' warfare, as defined by Hoffman, is one of the larger of the non-conventional organisational types.[61] Guerrillas operate as a military unit and frequently, if not exclusively, engage enemy military forces. Guerrillas also will be able to take and hold, at least in some limited capacity, territory. Of the organisation types discussed, guerrilla forces are probably the most conventional, in fact Mao Zedong, who literally wrote the book on guerrilla warfare, noted that military forces could and should move between conventional and guerrilla operations as the need arose.[62] Guerrilla warfare was embraced by a variety of Communist groups which imitated Mao's success in China. Groups such as the North Vietnamese Viet-Minh, the FARC in Colombia, and other Latin American groups used guerrilla warfare. Russian and Polish partisans turned to guerrilla warfare against the Germans in WWII, and modern guerrilla groups arguably include the likes of the Taliban and the now-defeated Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, the latter two groups also being considered terror groups.

An 'insurgency' is more difficult to clearly define than guerrilla, as the term is often considered broader. Insurgencies, according to Hoffman, are similar to guerrilla warfare, but broader in scope, including, in addition to military tactics, political and propaganda efforts targeting the civilian population.[63] The distinction can be refined further, particularly in light of the 'insurgency' in Iraq.[64] Insurgencies differ from guerrilla warfare as their primary objective is not to control territory, rather to control populations. Thus, an insurgency may not operate from jungles and mountains like a guerrilla group, but rather infiltrate population centres, and attempt to attract or coerce the population into supporting their movements. Although they may not control territory, in that they cannot deny enemy access to it, they are generally able to control populations within a given area, and thus become

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[60] See D Kilcullen, *Blood Year*, Oxford University Press, 2016
[61] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 35
[62] M Zedong, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, 1937, Chapter 1
[63] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 35
[64] Unlike guerrilla groups, Iraqi insurgents operated clandestinely from inside cities, using the population as cover, but nonetheless came to control parts of Iraq such as Falujah and Baghdad's Sadr City.

highly influential there. Unlike guerrilla groups, insurgencies may not have clear military hierarchies, and tend to use the civilian population for camouflage, rather than physical environment. This proximity to civilian populations, and their greater focus on political action and civilian 'hearts and minds', means insurgencies are more likely to use terrorism to achieve their goals, although it should be noted it's not a necessary attribute, and insurgencies will generally focus on targeting their chosen enemy authority, usually the state or military.[65] Overlap between 'insurgency' and 'guerrilla' is extensive, and there is an argument that guerrilla warfare is, like terrorism, merely a tactic of an insurgency, rather than a separate organisational structure.[66] This argument however, fails to differentiate between purely military guerrilla operations which do not attempt to engage the population, and groups which do seek to engage the population. This is particularly important as the former can be fought purely militarily, the latter only in conjunction with 'hearts and minds' campaigns to deny the insurgency popular support.

There is also a form of 'pure' terror groups, that is, those which are not also guerrilla groups or insurgencies, are the smallest organised group of the three. While they may adopt military-inspired names and 'ranks'[67], these are mostly affectations, and they lack military-style hierarchies or structures. Like insurgencies, terror groups are focused on political acts to influence the target population, but unlike them, they are unable to exercise definable areas of influence or control over populations (if they could, they would then be described as insurgencies). Terror groups also target the civilian population in their attacks, even if the actual goal is to attack or influence a government. Guerrilla groups and insurgencies can and do use terrorism to achieve their goals, but are larger, better organised, and operate more openly, if still clandestinely. Terror groups, without the support or compliance of a wider population, must hide not only from the authorities hunting them, but also from civilians who may give them away. Classic examples of such groups are the likes of the Baader-Meinhof Gang in West Germany and the Red Brigades in Italy. These groups often seek to inspire the

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[65] S Anderson and S Sloan, *Historical Dictionary of Terrorism*, p 220
[66] See 'United States Government Counterinsurgency Guide', US Department of State, 2009, http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf, p 6
[67] For examples; 'The Symbionese Liberation *Army*', and its leader, '*General Field Marshal* Cinque'.

wider population through the concept of 'Propaganda by Deed', and thus gain popular support and evolve into an insurgency.

One final, and somewhat hypothetical grouping is the 'Terror Movement'. Hoffman notes the emergence of this relatively new form of group structure which "does not fit neatly" into existing understandings of group structures.[68] The terror movement is the classic 'leaderless resistance', and exists without formal group structures at all. Through the use of modern communications systems like the internet, radical social movements can grow and spread, attracting a wide number of followers without necessitating any formal groupings. Hoffman cites the example of existing terror groups inspiring others to act independently of them but for their cause,[69] such as 'lone-wolf' radical Islamists striking in the name of the Islamic State without ever having actually contacted the group. It is, however, possible that the terror movement requires no such group to 'anchor' its cause. Groups like the Animal Liberation Front and its derivative Earth Liberation Front have no organised group structure at all. Activists anonymously post online propaganda and advice on how to combat environmental and animal exploitation, while individuals or small cells self-organise and act around the world. Once an 'attack' has occurred, the cell or individual claims the attack online, or leaves graffiti claiming the attack for the group. Mass 'campaigns' may similarly be organised and orchestrated online, with many different individuals acting in concert. A more high-tech example of this phenomenon in the 'hacktivist' group Anonymous, which, due to more or less all members being anonymous to each other, has no group or membership structure, and instead the group acts in 'waves', with popular opinion driving the target selection. So far such movements have been relatively 'non-violent'. The ALF and ELF have been primarily focused on sabotage and vandalism, with no deliberate targeting of human lives, while Anonymous has similarly been largely limited to cyber-attacks and organising peaceful protests. Despite this absence of 'violence' the potential for a violent terror movement to form along the same leaderless, networked structure is high, and combatting such a movement will be difficult.

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[68] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 38
[69] Ibid

The remaining two phenomenon, militia groups and hate crimes, also need to be discussed and distinguished from terrorism, and, despite their violence, should not be considered 'terror groups'. The term 'militia' is broad, and applies to two very different phenomenon. Firstly, there is the 'roving band' type most commonly found in African conflicts. This first form operates in some respects like a guerrilla group, and is generally the largest of all phenomenon. Unlike guerrilla groups, however, it is extremely disorganised, with limited organisational hierarchy or general issue equipment and uniforms. There are many examples, some including the Lord's Resistance Army, formerly of Uganda now operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, and Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia. Such groups are typified by their close links with particular ethnic groups, use of child soldiers, and extreme violence. Ethnic cleansing, mass rape, and other war crimes are common tactics of such groups. Such groups, despite the targeting of civilians, are, however, distinct from terror groups. They lack the organisation of terror groups, and their targeting of civilians is usually either incidental to their political objectives, or the civilians themselves are the intended targets of the violence because they are (or believed to be) political opponents or those of a different ethnic group, thus there is an absence of 'political leverage' in the attacks. Further, such groups are generally made up of fighters who have limited understanding or appreciation of the political reasoning behind their violence. Many, such as children, are pressed into service and indoctrinated, while others may be merely opportunistic, using the violence as a means to gain wealth or satisfy lust for power. Such militia are similar to mobs, and organise around a central leader who wields considerable power over them, and is the primary political driver.

The second kind of militia is a more organised, modern form, present in the West. This kind of militia is prevalent in the United States, although there are examples elsewhere such as in Weimar Germany, where groups like the early Nazi Party and Freikorps raised armed groups to fight street battles against Communists and their own militia. Unlike the first type, this 'static' type of militia is generally highly organised, and can feature general issue uniform and weapons, and in some cases have been used to complement the national armed forces of a country. The key distinguishing factor, however, of these militia is that they may not necessarily be involved in conflict. They can operate as

mere reserves in case of conflict, or to protect a particular political group or faction from aggression

by another group. In the US, militia groups are usually associated with Christian Identity, white

supremacist, or 'patriot'/sovereign citizen movements, or a combination thereof. Importantly, these

groups generally do not carry out violent campaigns unless provoked. The FBI classifies them as

'reactive', and regards them a generally not a threat to law and order.[70] Such groups fortify themselves

and stockpile arms and ammunition, awaiting a particular event such as the Rapture, or prior to 2000,

Y2K.[71] The primary distinguishing factor between the 'static' militia and a terror group is that, while

fully equipped and prepared to do so, the former does not carry out political violence, while the latter,

by definition, does. Militia groups may turn to violence, and become 'offensive' rather than 'reactive',

but these offensive militia are a very small minority of the overall phenomenon.[72] When acting as an

arm of or on behalf of the government, militia become tools of the state, and thus a form of State

Terror, but not terrorism. When acting 'offensively'; that is attacking a civilian population outside of

governmental auspices, such 'static' militia may use terrorism, and thus be described as terror groups,

although, as noted such offensive groups tend to be in the minority.

Hate crimes, sometimes committed by the 'static' militia type, have a complex relationship

with terrorism. The two are frequently conflated and highly politicised; some argue that the failure to

characterise attacks like the South Carolina shootings in 2015 as terrorism is a form of racism,

because they allege similar attacks by Muslims would be treated as terrorism.[73] Alan Krueger

describes the two as 'close cousins',[74] but there are, however, important distinctions. Terrorism, such

as that in Pakistan or Iraq, is often sectarian in nature; one ethnic or religious group targeting another.

Hate crimes are similarly sectarian, but both the choice of targets and the objectives differ an

important way. Firstly, the choice of victims is partially indiscriminate; they are often random

individuals, but they belong to a specific ethnic or religious group,[75] which is the same with sectarian

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[70] Federal Bureau of Investigation, 'Project Megiddo', 1999, p 22
[71] Ibid
[72] Ibid
[73] J Dahl, 'Was the South Carolina shooting a hate crime or a terrorist attack?', *CBS News*, 19/06/2015, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/was-the-south-carolina-shooting-a-hate-crime-or-a-terrorist-attack/
[74] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, p 15
[75] Ibid

terrorism. However, the victims of the attack itself, unlike terrorism, are also the targets of the attack. While the intention may also be to generate fear among the wider target community, or provoke a 'race war', the victims of the attack are not merely a means for the perpetrator to impact a third target indirectly, but also targets themselves. Secondly, the attacks themselves usually lack 'political leverage'; the attacker is not using the attack to create fear to force political change. Even where the motivation is to scare a group into leaving an area (a form of ethnic cleansing), the objectives stop at the creation of communal fear, and do not go further into political leverage; the creation of fear is the only objective. Neither the victims nor the governing authority can change their behaviour to accommodate the attacker's demands, because the motivating factor, skin colour, religion, etc, is inherent to the victims.

There are also usually, although not necessarily, broader differences between hate crime pathology and terrorism. The majority of hate crime does not involve physical violence against a person,[76] and only a tiny percentage involves fatalities.[77] Further, hate crimes are generally spontaneous acts, usually carried out by individuals,[78] unlike highly organised and planned terror attacks. The motivations behind why the perpetrator chose to attack someone also differ substantially from terrorism. In one study of 169 cases, the vast majority of offenders, 111 (66%), committed a hate crime for the 'thrill' of doing so, while 43 (25%) did so because they felt they were defending their community from perceived outsiders, only in one case did the offender believe they were on a 'mission' to fight what they perceived as evil.[79] Terrorists, on the other hand, usually deeply believe in their mission, and often create the paradigm of Good vs. Evil to justify their attacks. Finally, even where an individual is motivated by a particular movement, attacks are generally one-off, rather than sustained campaigns.

Conclusion

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[76] 64.6%, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 'Hate Crime Statistics', 2013, https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/hate-crime/2013/topic-pages/incidents-and-offenses/incidentsandoffenses_final
[77] Federal Bureau of Investigation, 'Hate Crime Statistics', <0.6%
[78] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, p 15
[79] J McDevitt, J Levin and S Bennett, 'Hate Crime Offenders: An Expanded Typology', *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 58, No. 2, 2002, pp 307-308

In this study, this author has adopted a more restricted definition of terrorism. State terrorism is excluded, as are attacks by individuals. There must be more than one successful attack by a group for it to be included. Some authors, such as Rosemary O'Kane, exclude groups which attack only property, such as many 'eco-terrorist' groups. This author tends to agree with O'Kane, but has included groups like the Weathermen and the Animal Liberation Front, as they were/are highly active, and their activities have led to deaths and injuries. Hoffman's inclusion of unconnected 'movements' terrorism is supported by this author, and thus some highly disconnected 'groups' have been included. However, some groups, such as 'militia' like groups active in Africa, have been excluded even though they often carry out violence against civilians. In order to ensure the data is as accurate as possible, a clear definition must be used in this study. Including disparate phenomena will muddy the data, and may lead to incorrect conclusions.

In summary, the definition of terrorism used in this study is as follows;

Terrorism is a campaign of violence by a non-state organisation or movement against a civilian population in order to incite fear in and intimidate an audience in order to advance a political objective.

Methodology

The focus of this study will be on the factors of a society which lead to the formation of terror groups. The primary method in identifying such factors, and testing hypothesis on the causes of terrorism, will be a quantitative analysis of a variety of factors, and whether and to what extent they are present in societies which have formed terror groups in the past. These factors include the political situation in a country, its demographics, economic circumstances, and geographic characteristics. Also taken into account will be the types of groups that have formed, and whether one particular type (such as Left-Wing or Islamist) forms in one society over another.

Political factors considered will be whether the country is a democracy, whether it's a federal or unitary state, whether the country is occupied, whether it was/is a colonial subject, and whether the country has suffered some kind of significant political upheaval in the preceding decade to formation. While a more detailed analysis of the level of freedom in a country would be ideal, the primary source this author would have preferred to use in analysing the level of freedom; the categories used by Freedom House, does not extend back prior to 1998, long after many of the considered groups have formed and in some cases ceased to operate. The binary Dictatorship/Democracy assessment is perhaps overly simple, but should at the very least give a general indication of where terror groups form. States were determined by this author to be democratic where they had free, competitive elections. Countries which were in significant political upheaval at the time, such as civil war, were not regarded as democracies as the upheaval would have prevented an effective execution of the democratic process. The consideration of a state's federal or unitary nature may reveal whether a centralisation or decentralisation of political power leads to the formation of terror groups, in particular separatist groups, who may be appeased by having greater decentralisation, rather than total independence. Occupied countries were assessed by this author as those controlled by another country which did not initially govern them, and thus also includes cases of anti-colonial resistance. Separatists seeking to break away from a country they were originally part of were not included, even though from their perspective they may consider their homelands occupied. The assessment of a colonial history was relatively straightforward, although it should be noted that both Canada and the USA (excluding Puerto Rico) have been excluded from the colonial designation, as in this author's opinion it was not a substantial factor in those countries' social makeup. Finally, significant political upheaval may lead to destabilisation or create opportunities which terror groups may form in order to exploit. Alternatively, changes to the political status quo may provoke violent reactions from some elements of a society. Such upheavals included internal and external military conflict, coups or other violent changes in government, the violent deaths of leaders, or transitions to or from democracy. In the instance of Lebanon, the arrival of large amounts of Palestinians after 1967 was determined to be an example of political upheaval, as was the assassination of President Kennedy and the Tiananmen

Square uprising for the USA and China respectively. For the countries involved, World War II was considered a political upheaval.

The assessment of economic factors has also been hindered by a lack of statistical data dating back to the early-to-mid 20th Century, particularly for undeveloped or still colonised countries. Where such statistics are unavailable a note will be made. One of the more reliable data points will be GDP per capita, as statistics on this point do go back over 50 years in some cases. The choice of GDP per capita as the factor to assess, compared to other economic assessments, was made firstly because of the reliability of data, compared to deeper assessments of the economy, such as poverty rate or labour participation, but is still a closer assessment of the actual wealth of the average person than a raw assessment of total GDP, which does not take into account population. A second reason is that GDP per capita has been identified as being a good indicator for political change. Fareed Zakaria noted in 2003 that Singapore was the only country which was not a democracy with a GDP per capita over US$10,000 ($12,881 in 2015), and countries become progressively more democratic as they approach this threshold, after which point they do not revert to dictatorships.[80] Rapid GDP change has been associated by some authors with the formation of terror groups, as the changing GDP both indicates and can lead to rapid social and political change. Rapid GDP is also associated with a modernising and/or globalising economy, which can lead to increased social pressures, especially on traditional social and power structures. This increased 'stress' on society as it changes is argued to lead to terrorism. It has been measured by taking measuring GDP change as a percentage each over the prior 5 years to group formation, and producing an average. It should be noted that the study only accounts for the level of change in GDP, not whether or not it is negative or positive.

The demographics of country will be assessed in relation to population, the literacy rate (where that data is available), the unemployment rate (where that data is available), the infant mortality rate, the predominant religion or if it is religiously mixed, and whether the country is multi-ethnic. From this data we can determine whether population size is a factor is the formation of terror

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[80] See F Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom*, W. W. Norton & Company, 2004

groups, and the impact of culture and how such cultures interact. Krueger in his analysis found a strong correlation in violence between people of different religions,[81] and so expanding this analysis may prove illustrative. It should be noted that this assessment will be simple, and no distinction will be made between different sects of a religion. In some circumstances, at the author's digression, this assessment has taken place at a regional, rather than national level, such as in the case of Russia's Chechen separatists, where Chechnya is predominantly Muslim, but Russia more broadly is predominantly Christian. Multi-ethnic societies may be more prone to violence than others, particularly in the case of separatist terror groups, and the study will assess this. Lack of education, alongside poverty, has classically been linked to the cause of terrorism, and thus an assessment of literacy levels in countries with terror violence should demonstrate this hypothesis valid or not. Infant mortality can be a good indicator of poverty, and Krueger argued that high infant mortality societies were less likely to produce foreign fighters in the 2003 Iraq conflict.[82] Unemployment data is limited prior to the 1990s, but could be indicative if high unemployment leads people (especially men) to become increasingly politically active and/or take up arms.

Population, GDP per capita, infant mortality rate, and literacy rate will also be further assessed by breaking the group rankings into quartiles. This will show the ranges of the dataset, and if the results are weighted toward a particular direction (for example, does high literacy increase the likelihood of terrorism?). GDP per capita will be assessed with the 4th Quartile representing the poorest, the 1st Quartile the wealthiest, population will be assessed with the 4th Quartile representing the smallest countries, the 1st Quartile the biggest. Infant mortality will be assessed with the 1st Quartile representing the lowest rate and fewest number of deaths per 1000 live births, while the 4th Quartile will be the highest number of deaths. Literacy will be assessed with the 4th Quartile representing the most literate countries, the 1st Quartile representing the least literate. In each case, the top of the range will be the highest score (or 100% in the case of literacy), while zero will be considered the bottom of the range.

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[81] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, pp 71-72
[82] Ibid, p 86

Finally, an analysis of the country's physical geography will be undertaken. Whether or not a country is mountainous or not, or is significantly jungled, will show whether or not such rough terrain promotes the formation of terror groups. The relationship between mountains and jungled areas and insurgencies is widely documented,[83] but also in dispute.[84] To some extent this assessment may also answer questions regarding whether or not highly urbanised countries produce terror groups. Assessing urbanisation prior to the 1990s is difficult in many countries, and would also require assessment of terror groups on a cases by case basis, but it can be assumed that significant jungles or mountainous areas would impede the widespread development of cities and their corresponding infrastructure. The physical geography will affect the political geography, and large numbers of mountains or jungles will limit a state's ability to effect authority in that region, even absent an insurgent group, and this handicap on authority may promote the formation of such groups. It should be noted in some cases, such as Russia and India, the survey of geography is limited to the area in which the terror group forms, as those countries are quite large. Whether or not a country is mountainous or jungled will be a simple assessment undertaken by this author.

Additionally, the different countries assessed have been divided into eight different 'regions', in addition to an 'other' category. These regions are the 'West', encompassing Western Europe, Greece, Cyprus, Canada, and the United States, but excluding their colonial possessions; 'Eastern-Europe/Russia', including Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia, and Russia; the 'Middle East/North Africa', encompassing all countries across North Africa and Middle East between Morocco and Iran inclusive, notably also including Turkey and Israel; 'Sub-Saharan Africa', including all of Sub-Saharan Africa except South Africa; 'Latin America', which includes both Central and South America and the Caribbean, with Puerto Rico excepted; 'Central/South Asia' including Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh; 'South-East Asia' includes all of South East Asia; 'East Asia', referring only to Japan in this case; and finally an 'Other' category to include those outside these regions or which do not fit in for various regions. The author decided to exclude South Africa from

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[83] D Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, Oxford University Press, 2009
[84] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, p 75

the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, as it has a significantly different history and demographic makeup, while including the two groups from China in the 'Central/South Asia' category, as both come from China's far western and predominantly Turkic region of Xinjiang in Central Asia. Given only two groups come from the region and both are significantly different in character, Oceania was not used as a separate region.

The choice of groups to include in the assessment, as demonstrated by the exhaustive discussion on definition, was somewhat challenging. A cursory glance over the list by someone familiar with political violence will reveal some glaring omissions. Highly active groups like the Abu Nidal Organisation, the Tamil Tigers, and Al Qaeda in Iraq have been deliberately excluded, while less active, even largely unknown groups, have been included. The reasoning behind this is that this study is intended to focus on the factors that cause terror groups to form. Many groups like Abu Nidal and AQI are offshoots or successor organisations to prior terror groups. Their members, at least the founders, are already terrorists, thus the societal factors at the time of the formation of the offshoot are not relevant, given the primary actors have already been influenced to turn to terrorism. This distinction, however, is not clear cut. Some groups, such as the Taliban, formed out of existing militant groups, which, however, may not necessarily be classed as terrorist groups. Other groups are successors to smaller groups which were largely inactive, and thus excluded. Others may have evolved from a guerrilla or militia group to become definitively a terror group. Further, in some cases such as the Communist insurgents in India, the point where one group ends and another forms may not be clear, and in some cases organisations belonging to the same movement have been grouped together, particularly where they formed alongside each other. The date of formation has also been included, although for some groups this may not be accurate, and can indicate the date they began terror activities. Some groups were formed and organised for some years prior to commencing terror operations, and in such cases the date used is when they began such operations. It should also be noted that some groups included did not form in the country listed, such as the slightly confusing case of the Japanese Red Army forming in Lebanon. Some groups formed in 'safe haven' countries, but assessing these countries and their societal features as the cause of that group's formation would be

inaccurate. This author has attempted to balance where groups formed and what countries were their primary targets, as well as what their political objectives were in order to harmonise this data and promote accuracy.

Consideration of the various group ideologies, and whether they have any impact on group formation, has also been made. The four ideologies identified in this assessment are 'Islamist', 'Left-Wing', 'Right-Wing', and 'Nationalist/Separatist', as well as the category 'Other' including some groups which do not fit easily into the other categories. Islamist groups are groups which are motivated by (usually) fundamentalist Islam, and who generally seek to impose Sharia law and an Islamic way of life in their region or state, and/or expel or kill people of other religions. No distinction has been made between the different Islamic sects. Left-Wing groups are those motivated by Socialism, Communism, or other Marxist derivative ideologies. Right-Wing groups are a slightly broader category, and include both neo-Fascist and neo-Nazi groups, as well as anti-Left-Wing groups. Also included in this category are two French groups, the Charles Martel Group and the Organisation of the Secret Army, which opposed Algerian separatism. The reason these two groups are classed as right wing rather than nationalist, is that, particularly in the case of the OSA, they represented conservatism within the French Republic, rather than any particular exhortation of French ethnic or national identity. Nationalist/Separatist groups are generally those which seek to either expel colonial or occupationary regimes, or which seek to leave their constituent country. Also included in this category are some anti-separatist forces, such as Loyalist groups in Northern Ireland, as they were also expressing nationalist sentiment. The 'Other' category includes groups such as fundamentalist Christian groups in the USA, an eco-terrorist group from the UK, radical Jewish or Zionist groups, as well as other non-descript groups. Where a group has multiple ideologies, such as being both nationalist and Islamist, this author makes a determination as to which is the predominant motivator. Finally, this author focused on groups which formed after 1945, and only two groups surveyed, the Jewish Irgun and the Arab Black Hand, were formed prior to 1945, both in Mandatory Palestine. The Irgun were included as they continued operations post-1945, and the Black Hand were included as they effectively precipitated later Palestinian violence. Focusing on post-1945 terror groups limits the

analysis to terrorism's 'modern' form, as few groups fit this form prior to 1945, and also aids in data collection, as pre-WWII data on many factors, even in Europe, is patchy.

Literature Theories

While very little significant study has been made into the societal causes of terrorism, there are some major theories, however these have tended to focus on the psychology of the individual, and why any given individual may turn to terrorism. This study has only focused on the broader social conditions present in the country where a terror group will form, and thus it is less focused on conditions directly affecting the individual. Nevertheless, these theories are useful and will serve as a basis for discussion and conjecture. They will be outlined below, before being tested against the data, including this author's own theory devised prior to the research being done.

One of the major refrains in regards to terrorism's cause is that it is caused by poverty and a lack of education. It has be cited by Presidents,[85] Prime Ministers,[86] World Bank Presidents,[87] and some academics.[88] Some examples include the relatively poor and uneducated background of IRA members in Northern Ireland, as well as the increasing working class membership of the Basque group ETA.[89] Supporting data more widely, however, is less forthcoming. Ted Gur argues that poverty alone is not the cause of terrorism, rather economic inequality as well as rapid economic change contribute to its cause.[90] Despite these issues, the theory remains widely held by politicians. In many respects poverty is a politically convenient scapegoat; it does not require soldiers to combat, is not inherent to any particular group or religion, and solving it through development and aid is a

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[85] G Bush, 'Remarks by the President at United Nations Financing For Development Conference', *PR NewsWire*, 22/03/2002, http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/remarks-by-the-president-at-united-nations-financing-for-development-conference-76591477.html
[86] T Blair, 'Full Text of Blair's Speech', *The Guardian*, 13/11/2001, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/nov/13/september11.usa1
[87] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, p 12
[88] Ibid, p 13
[89] D Sterman, 'Don't Dismiss Poverty's Role in Terrorism Yet', *Time*, 04/02/2015, http://time.com/3694305/poverty-terrorism/
[90] T Gur, 'Economic Factors', *The Roots of Terrorism*, L Richardson (ed), Routledge, 2006, pp 86-88

relatively well understood tactic that is acceptable to most domestic politics. Its effectiveness, however, remains to be seen.

Alan Krueger is one of the major critics of the 'poverty causes terrorism' argument, and argues firstly that poverty does not cause terrorism, and secondly that its principle cause is the absence of civil liberties.[91] Importantly, he is also one of few researchers to attempt a large scale quantitative analysis of terrorism, although his research focused more on individuals, and not groups, and does not go back prior to 1997. Analysing opinion surveys in the Middle East, Krueger found that, generally, those with higher levels of education; secondary and tertiary, were more likely to support acts of terror against Westerners. He further found no link between a low income and support of terrorism, and in some countries support was higher among the wealthier. Further, those without education were also those most likely to not have an opinion on terrorism.[92] In response to the unusual case of Northern Ireland, Krueger suggests that IRA terrorism is more akin to guerrilla warfare than small, terror group operations, and so may have different causal components.[93] Krueger's broad country analysis of terrorism is also enlightening, although limited in temporal and geographic scope. His data finds that terror perpetrators are more likely to come from poorer countries except in the case of suicide attackers, who come from the wealthiest countries as measured by GDP per capita.[94] He further argues that literacy and economic growth rates have limited impact on causing terrorism, and there is no correlation between mountainous terrain and terrorism. He also strongly contends that countries which suppress civil and political rights are more likely to create terror groups.[95]

Stephen Vertigans suggests that it is within societies with histories of violence that terror groups emerge.[96] Such violence need not be immediately present in a society, but prior histories of or the continued cultural association with violence can promote the acceptability of violence within that

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[91] A Krueger, 'Poverty Doesn't Create Terrorists', *New York Times*, 29/05/2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/29/business/29SCEN.html?pagewanted=all
[92] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, pp 25-27
[93] Ibid, pp 45-46
[94] Ibid, pp 74-75
[95] Ibid
[96] S Vertigans, *The Sociology of Terrorism*, pp 44-45

society, and 'traditional' social prohibitions against violence are undermined.[97] He cites the long history of Saudi Arabia's association with violence, even as the modern state has become more stable, and the high number of Saudi nationals turning to terrorism.[98] He further contends this violent tendency is present in America where gun ownership and white identity movements have been linked, while the US government itself, in allowing gun ownership, has tacitly tolerated such violent tendencies.[99] He further argues that violent behaviour from the state can create a social acceptance of violence and thus cause members of a society to turn to violence.[100]

Martha Crenshaw argues that several factors lead to terrorism. Firstly, modernisation and technological innovation act as 'permissive' factors for terrorism, giving individuals and groups greater capability and opportunity to carry out attacks.[101] Secondly, urbanisation was also a permissive factor, as it increased the number and proximity of possible targets, as well as providing concentrated environments from which to recruit and move clandestinely within.[102] A further permissive factor is a history or cultural veneration of violence, where, like Vertigans, she argues it decreases the strength of social prohibitions against the use of violence. She expands this argument by citing the impact of transnational movements and political discourses which also support or permit violence, which can influence actors in one country previous free of violence to turn to it.[103] The most important permissive factor she argues, is allowance of terrorism or other violence by governments, whether through incompetence in preventing attacks, or an unwillingness to fully unleash state security apparatuses on the population because of civil liberties concerns.[104] Crenshaw further suggests that certain conditions directly cause or provoke individuals to turn to terrorism. Firstly, grievances between one subgroup and the majority, such as disenfranchised ethnic minorities, can lead to terrorism, although this is not always the case. She suggests that an added variable is the view that

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[97] Ibid, p 45
[98] Ibid, pp 48-49
[99] Ibid, p 52
[100] Ibid, p 51
[101] M Crenshaw, *Explaining Terrorism*, p 36
[102] Ibid
[103] Ibid, p 37
[104] Ibid

such mistreatment is unjust or undeserved.[105] A second condition she argues is absence of meaningful

opportunities for the aggrieved group to participate in the political process, and a further promoter of

violence is where political participation is denied, but the government is otherwise unwilling or

unable to effectively repress the population in other areas.[106]

David Kilcullen has primarily focused on the pathology of terror and insurgent groups after

they have formed, and less so their causal factors, but nevertheless has produced some theory

regarding the causes of terror. In studying Islamists in Indonesia's Aceh province, he noted that

religious theology seemed to have limited impact on their thinking, but rather the idea of religion as a

rebellion, as well as a continuation of social and familial traditions of insurgency.[107] He argues that

insurgencies and terrorism can grow exponentially when certain societies, in his examples

Afghanistan and Iraq, are 'infected' with existing terror forces. These forces adapt and appropriate

existing social structures to their own ends, and eventually the terrorist or extremist outsider becomes

part of the social fabric of that community. This means that attempts by government or other forces to

combat or arrest those outsiders is met with resistance, sometimes violent, by those in the local

community, even though they may not initially have had ideological connections with or support for

the terrorist element.[108] Kilcullen's theories have generally only applied to remote or mountainous

regions, where he has focused his research, and thus it could be argued that he is a proponent of the

'mountains cause insurgencies' theory. However, Kilcullen does not address the formation of terror or

insurgent groups themselves, merely their later expansion in these remote areas. Further, in his latest

book, he explicitly acknowledges the rise in urban terror, and urban centres as sources of terrorism.[109]

Nicolas Fotion, et al, extensively cites Robert Pape[110] in their analysis of the causes of non-state

terrorism.[111] They expand upon his discussion of suicide terrorism, and extrapolate its causes to that

of all non-state terrorism. In particular, they argue that where social groups are under 'occupation' by

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[105] Ibid, pp 37-38
[106] Ibid, p 38
[107] D Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p xxvii
[108] Ibid, see Killcullen generally
[109] D Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains*, Oxford University Press, 2013
[110] R Pape, *Dying to Win*, Random House, 2005
[111] N Fotion, B Kashnikov, and J Lekea, *Terrorism: The New World Disorder*, pp 90-93

a foreign power or a dominant ethnic group, and especially where that occupation includes

exploitation, individuals are likely to turn to terrorism to achieve national liberation. This is especially

the case where there are religious differences present.[112]

In *What Terrorists Want*, Louise Richardson[113] makes an extensive argument on what factors

she considers relevant to causing terrorism at a societal level. Although terrorism is classically

considered the problem of dictatorships, Richardson notes that democratic societies are still

vulnerable to terrorism. Even in a democratic society, certain groups, such as marginalised ethnicities,

may not be effectively represented in that societies politic, while other aspects of democratic societies;

such as their protections of privacy, may allow terror groups to form and operate more freely than in a

more oppressive society.[114] In regards to state sponsorship of terror groups, Richardson argues that

smaller, weaker states may see sponsoring a terror group as a useful tool to advance their national

interests. Terror groups offer a state plausible deniability and can serve interests abroad violently

without resorting to open war. Terror groups can be used to advance offensive national interests such

as by spreading a country's revolutionary ideology, such as the case with Iran, or to undermine states

and other non-state groups which threaten the sponsor's domestic security, such as in the case of

South Africa.[115]

Social factors may also play a role in terrorism, continues Richardson. She argues that

terrorism is more likely to occur in developing countries, especially those which are modernising

rapidly.[116] The changing economic conditions of a modernising country leads to social instability and

traditional social structures are challenged by new ones. These changes may lead people to find

comfort in ideologies which explain these changes or seek to push a more traditionalist agenda.[117]

Richardson argues that young men, the classic demographic for terrorists, are especially vulnerable to

feeling isolated or who are not absorbed into the workforce, and may support a cause which seeks to

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[112] Ibid
[113] L Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, Random House, 2007
[114] Ibid, p 50
[115] Ibid, pp 50-55
[116] L Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, p 55
[117] Ibid

redress these grievances.[118] She notes that poverty alone is not a cause of terrorism, as evidenced by the relative lack of terrorism in Africa, the poorest continent. Instead, she contends, "relative deprivation"[119] is a major economic driver of terrorism. A person may be relatively well off, but if they look and see others are better off than they are, especially other social groups, this may fuel resentment. An actor must be aware of the relative deprivation, and so such grievances would be related to local and perhaps less extreme economic inequality, but thanks to globalisation people around the world are now aware of their economic position relative to the likes of the United States.[120] Richardson, however, notes that poverty and inequality are merely risk factors, not necessarily causes, and will increase support for an existing terror group, but not necessarily create them. [121] Finally, in regards to national societies, Richardson contends that education does play a role in the formation of terror groups, arguing increasing levels of education without the necessary reforms to employ the new professionals will breed resentment.[122] A terror recruit's level of education depended on the type of group they were joining, she argues. Latin American urban terror groups tended to be highly educated, European and Japanese social revolutionary groups attracted college dropouts, while ethno-nationalist groups have tended to only attract the working class.[123]

Writing in *Exploring International Human Rights*, Rhonda Callaway and Julie Harrelson-Stephens argue in their essay 'Human Rights Violations as a Catalyst for Terrorist Activity'[124] that the oppression of political rights is a major cause for terrorism. They contend that more democratic states are less likely to produce terror groups, as politically repressive states inhibit the citizenry's ability to express their opinions and effect politic change peacefully.[125] They further argue that the violence that repressive states inflict upon their population acts as a permitting factor for groups to respond with violence. Violence such as disappearances and torture act as a 'justification' for terrorist violence in

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[118] Ibid, p 55
[119] Ibid, p 56
[120] Ibid
[121] Ibid, p 57
[122] Ibid, pp 57-58
[123] L Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, p 58
[124] R Callaway and J Harrelson-Stephens, 'Human Rights Violations as a Catalyst for Terrorist Activity', in *Exploring International Human Rights*, R Callaway and J Harrelson-Stephens (eds), Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007
[125] Ibid, p275

response.[126] They note, however, that the most repressive of states generally do not have domestic terrorist insurgencies. High levels of repression prevent terror groups from organising, while the freedoms available in democracies make terrorism unnecessary. Thus the authors argue that the relationship between terrorism and political rights can be charted as a parabola, with terrorism most likely ('peaking') in states which a politically repressive, but not extremely so.[127] Finally, they make a similar argument that states which ignore their populations or are otherwise unable to effectively provide for them also engender the formation of terror groups. Economic deprivation breeds anger, the author's argue, and thus violence, however, like political repression, there is a middle-ground where terror groups are most likely to form. Extremely deprived populations are too busy trying to survive to mobilise politically and to carry out terrorism, while prosperous populations are not incentivised to; instead it is between these two extremes, where the population can be mobilised. The authors argue that those who have had a 'taste' of prosperity, but whose continued economic advancement is limited, are most likely to turn to terrorism.[128] Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens conclude that a combination of limited political rights, some, but not total, repression of the population, and failures to adequately provide economically for the population, create conditions which lead to terrorism.[129]

This author's theory on the societal causes of terrorism follows Crenshaw's reasoning. The denial of political participation, perceived or actual, seems to dominant issue among terror groups, along with a history in the country of violence. In dictatorships, groups who are unable to affect the political change they want will increasingly see violence as their only alternative, especially if the government uses violence against them as a means of political repression. Political violence may become seen as ultimately 'necessary' in order to effect change, and perhaps even defensive in nature if the group perceives it is under attack by the government. This dynamic, of the 'good' group fighting the 'evil' government can create the necessary moral imperative which can turn political violence into

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[126] Ibid, pp 275-276
[127] R Callaway and J Harrelson-Stephens, 'Human Rights Violations as a Catalyst for Terrorist Activity', p 276
[128] Ibid p 277
[129] Ibid

terrorism. Civilians may be seen as legitimate targets where they are associated with the government, such as being of the same ethnic group, and thus are also the 'enemy'. They may also become targets where the group is frustrated by the 'ignorance' of the masses who have failed to join their 'revolution'. Attacking civilian populations, especially those the government relies on, will cause fear in those populations, who in turn may advocate their government change policies to comply with terrorist demands. Such attacks may highlight the weakness of the government and its inability to protect civilians from attack, and thus leave political compromise as the only option. It should be noted that the government need not be the target of the attack. Terror groups like the Ulster Volunteers have frequently targeted other non-state actors or ethnic groups for attack, and it is their political acquiescence they seek to achieve, not the government's. Political frustration may also appear in democracies where the group believes that even with democracy it cannot achieve its political aims, such as where it believes the government is not actually a democracy, or the wider masses need to be 'educated' or 'awakened' to see the 'truth' and thus change their political behaviour, such as the case of the Red Army Faction in West Germany.

Terrorism is generally perceived as immoral or otherwise unethical, even by terror groups themselves,[130] and thus its use generally requires a leap in logic to justify targeting civilians. As mentioned, classifying civilians as enemies is frequent, but this use of terror tactics is made easier where societies have histories of violence. The presence of violence, especially against civilians, desensitises the general population to it and 'normalises' its use. The use of violence in some societies may be seen as a normal form of political expression, and thus a peaceful campaign to achieve political change would itself be unusual. Because of the political and ideological reasoning required in firstly developing political objections to the status quo, and secondly organising a group or movement around such objections, it is not normally something undertaken by the uneducated. At the very least, the initial founders of a group need to be educated, and will generally require an at least partially educated population from which to recruit. Even when the political goals of the terror group have

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[130] B Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p 21

already been created by ideological leaders, as Krueger's research shows,[131] those who are uneducated tend to be uninterested in politics, including the violent kind. For this reason, highly impoverished societies also tend to be devoid of terror groups. They are often beset by many violent groups, such as roving militia, but, in this author's opinion, such groups are distinct from terror groups, and their lack of organisation and nuanced political objectives, present in terror groups, demonstrates the impact of a lack of education. Finally, in order for political change to be advocated by a group, it must first be contemplated. In very poor societies, the lack of education and immediate need of more basic sustenance stymies this contemplation of political alternatives, but such contemplation is also absent in incredibly oppressive societies, which is why terrorism was limited in the Soviet Union and other oppressive Communist states, and remains absent in North Korea despite the widespread political oppression.

Results and Discussion

In the collation of the research and the data, several interesting trends were discovered, but further research will be needed. When reading the results, the reader should note that there was no 'control' country; all those assessed had terror groups present. Testing each instance against all other countries at the same time period would require significantly more research, as each instance would have to be tested against other countries in that particular year. This author is also concerned that this would magnify issues with the absence of data. This author also believes that testing incidences of terror groups forming against themselves is a valid assessment, and prevents the data being skewed by countries where terror groups have not formed, but it is nevertheless a factor the reader should be aware of. Finally, the reader should note that the data only shows correlation, not causation, which must be inferred from the correlation, or discovered through further research.

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[131] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, pp 25-27

Political Factors

In assessing the political factors, the higher the number of formations in democratic, federal, occupied, colonial, and/or post-political upheaval states there were, the higher the likely positive correlation between that factor and the formation of terror groups there is. Similarly, the lower the number of formations, the higher the likely negative correlation between the factor and terror group formation there is. Where the results were mixed, or around 50/50, the less likely there is any correlation between the two.

Broadly, there seemed to be no correlation between democracy and terrorist groups forming (a correlative factor of 0.53)[132], and only a limited one between colonial histories and terrorism (0.65). There also seemed to be a weak negative correlation (0.33)[133] between federal countries and the formation of terror groups. Finally, there was a positive correlation (0.71)[134] between terror groups forming and political upheavals. This was the trend for Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East/North Africa, but Central and South Asia seemed especially sensitive(0.92), although this may be because of significant representation in the sample by India and Pakistan. In contrast, groups in the West showed no correlation between political upheaval and terrorism (0.53).

Broken down ideologically, there is a low correlation between Islamist groups and democratic, federal, and/or occupied countries. Islamist groups in fact are notable in their failure to appear in democracies (0.20)[135] compared to other groups, although this may be explained by the relatively few number of Islamic democracies. There is a strong correlation between colonial histories and political upheavals in the formation of Islamist groups,[136] although the former can be explained by the history of colonialism in the Middle East and South-East Asia. Left-Wing groups have only mild positive and negative correlations with democracies and federations respectively, but do not seem to appear in occupied countries at all[137]. They seem to have no or only a very weak correlation with

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[132] See Appendix I
[133] Ibid
[134] Ibid
[135] See Appendix V
[136] Ibid
[137] See Appendix VI

political upheavals (0.58) or colonialism (0.58)[138]. The assessment of Right-Wing groups is somewhat frustrated by the relatively small sample size (16 groups), but it's clear from the data that they have a strong correlation with democracies (0.88),[139] no correlation with political upheaval (0.56), and negative correlations with federalism (0.31) and colonialism (0.25), and like Left-Wing groups, do not appear in occupied countries[140]. Nationalist/Separatist groups, unsurprisingly, have a positive correlation with colonialism (0.75), but surprisingly not with occupied countries (0.34),[141] although this is likely because of the low overall number of occupations, and they were not assessed independently. Nationalist/Separatist groups have a positive correlation with political upheaval (0.77), no correlation with democracy (0.56), and a mild negative correlation with federalism (0.38).[142]

Economic Factors

The assessment of GDP per capita, overall, found a strong correlation between low per capita GDP and terror groups, with 85% falling into the lower two quartiles, and 73% into the lowest.[143] The wealthiest quartile had only 3% of the assessed groups. This author suspected that higher GDP per capita countries were outliers, and skewing the data, and so reassessed without the top quartile,[144] and found a weaker, but nevertheless positive correlation between lower GDP per capita and terror groups (over 63% in the lowest quartile, more than 84% in the lower two). Overall there was also a very strong positive correlation between Islamist terror groups and low GDP per capita (all but one of the Islamist groups were in the lowest quartile, and none in the upper two), and average GDP per capita of $2852.[145] There was a weaker positive correlation with Left-Wing groups (2/3rds in the lowest quartile, and none in the highest), with a much higher GDP per capita of $10,151.[146] Right-Wing groups also had an even weaker association with low GDP per capita, with 1/3rd appearing in the top

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[138] Ibid
[139] See Appendix VII
[140] Ibid
[141] See Appendix VIII
[142] Ibid
[143] See Appendix II
[144] See Appendix II (B)
[145] See Appendix V
[146] See Appendix VI

two quartiles, and highest average GDP per capita of $17,250.[147] Nationalist/Separatist groups also had a very strong positive correlation with low GDP per capita, with over 80% in the lowest quartile, 95% in the bottom two quartiles, with an average of $4722 per capita.[148] When only the lowest quartile was assessed, these trends were less dramatic, but again both Islamist and Nationalist/Separatist groups had strong correlations with lower GDP per capita, Left-Wing was more mixed, but trended lower, although Right-Wing groups trended toward the upper range of this lower quartile set, and did not appear in the bottom quartile. One interesting point to note that this author was not expecting, was that in the original overall assessment, the lowest quartile, in which the majority of groups fell into, ended at US$11,527 per capita GDP while only the average GDP per capita of Right Wing groups was above this level. This is quite close to the point that Zakaria hypothesised democratic change would occur (US$12,881). This author hypothesises that the same societal processes which begin the push for democracy as a country's GDP per capita increases, also deter the formation of non-right wing terror groups. As right wing groups were also the fewest in number of the sample, it is arguable that terrorism in general declines as the GDP per capita-Democracy threshold is approached.

One of the clearest and most universal indicators of terror group formation, is that GDP change does seem to be strongly indicative of terror group formation. The average change was 13% per year, and ranged from a modest 3.3% in Uzbekistan in the 1990s to an explosive 33% in the case of Indonesia in the 1970s. GDP change of more than 10% is also common across both regions and ideologies, leading to the conclusion that high GDP change will lead to terror group formation, irrespective of region or ideology.

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[147] See Appendix VII
[148] See Appendix VIII

Demographic Factors

The assessment of population revealed that the majority of terror groups formed in less populous states.[149] Initially, 91% of groups formed in the lowest quartile. This author again suspected that very large countries, China and India, were skewing the data set, and in a second assessment excluded them. Even when excluding China and India, however, the majority (80%) of terror group formation still took place in the quartile of lowest population. All group ideologies followed this trend, the only notable data point being no Right-Wing groups formed in the most populous quartile prior to the exclusion of China and India.

The assessment of literacy[150] in relation to terror group formation was quite difficult, and this author has some concerns regarding the dataset. Only a little over half of the instances surveyed had literacy rate data, and even then much of it was from inference, rather than hard assessment. Furthermore the fact that less developed and less literate countries also tended to be the ones which did not assess their literacy rates (either through unwillingness or inability), meant that the dataset was skewed upwards toward countries which did assess their literacy rates. Thus the author advises caution in using this data. Nevertheless, the data which was surveyed demonstrated that countries with higher levels of literacy tended to form terror groups, or at the very least, countries which had high literacy levels were not immune from terrorism. Only two terror groups (2%) formed in countries with less than 25% literacy, while 63 (63%) formed in countries with greater than 75% literacy. Countries without data, if they could be included, this author theorises would soften this upward trend, but, especially when considering the data collected by Krueger,[151] the trend would remain slanted towards terror groups forming in countries with higher literacy rates, or at least those above the lower quartile. Due to the issues with the literacy data, this author will not engage in a breakdown of the groups by ideology, although that information is available in the datasets.

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[149] See Appendix II
[150] See Appendix III
[151] A Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*, pp 25-27

The analysis of unemployment and terror group formation was just severely hamstrung by a lack of data as the literacy assessment, as most data was from 1991 onwards, and so again a discussion of the data broken down by region or ideology would likely render sample sizes too small to be accurate. The average overall rate, however, is relatively high at 11%.

High infant mortality rates seem to have a strong correlation with terrorism. The overall average rate was 59 deaths per 1000 live births, while this was brought down by a much lower rate of 17 deaths per 1000 live births in Europe. Sub-Saharan Africa predictably had the highest rate of 101 deaths per 1000 live births, followed by Central and South Asia with 87, Latin America with 66, and the Middle East and North Africa with 54. Perhaps because of their strong representation in Europe (discussed below), Right-Wing groups had the lowest average, with 37 deaths per 1000 live births, while the other ideologies floated around the overall average; Islamist with 67, Left-Wing with 59, Nationalist/Separatist with 71.

In regards to religion,[152] the majority of the terror groups surveyed formed in either Christian (43%) or Muslim (36%) countries. Surprisingly relatively few formed in 'mixed' religious countries (17%), although again, no assessment was made of comparing mixed religious countries with terror groups and mixed religious countries without. Ideologically, Nationalist/Separatist terror groups seemed to form irrespective of the dominant religion. Predictably, Islamist groups formed the vast majority of the time in majority Muslim countries. Both Left-Wing and Right-Wing groups were significantly more likely to form in Christian countries than others.

Overall there was a high correlation between multi-ethnic countries and terror groups forming (0.84),[153] although this was not weighed against the overall number of non-multi-ethnic countries, so the data may be slanted. Predictably there was an extremely high correlation between Nationalist/Separatist groups and multi-ethnic countries (0.94), but only a mild positive correlation

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[152] See Appendix III
[153] Ibid

with Left-Wing groups (0.73), and a stronger negative correlation with Islamist groups (0.21). There seemed to be no correlation with Right-Wing groups (0.56).

Geographic Factors

The overall assessment of geography interestingly found a negative correlation between the formation of terror groups and both the presence of mountains (0.34) and jungles (0.24).[154] Nationalist/Separatist groups followed this trend, as did Left-Wing groups in the case of jungles, but in the case of mountains they seemed to have no correlation positive or negative (0.46). Islamists seemed to have an especially strong negative correlation with both mountains (0.08) and jungles (0.02). The negative correlation suggests that terror groups require societies with relatively high freedoms of movement, and rough terrain, impacted infrastructure development and isolating certain parts of the country from others, could impede their formation.

The regional breakdown of groups showed some notable, but not dramatic trends. The Middle East and North Africa had the largest amount of terror group formations; 53 or 28% of the sample. These included 62% of all Islamist groups surveyed. Central and South Asia followed with 39 or 20% of the sample, including 28% of the Islamist groups and 30% of the Nationalist/Separatist groups, and notably no Right-Wing groups. The West followed with 45 (23%) of the surveyed groups, predictably including no Islamist groups, but 69% of all Right-Wing groups and 35% of Left-Wing groups. Latin America had 28 (15%) of the groups surveyed, the vast majority of which were Left-Wing, comprising 44% of all Left-Wing groups and 25% of Right-Wing groups. Finally, Sub-Saharan Africa had 12 terror group formations, equalling only 6.3% of total, the majority (8 of the 12) being Nationalist/Separatist, and also no Right-Wing groups.

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[154] See Appendix IV

Results and the Literature Theories

The correlation between a low GDP per capita and terrorism seems to at least partially confirm the classically held view that poorer countries are more susceptible to terrorism. However, even with the weaker data, the view that a lack of education (represented by low literacy rates) causes terrorism is rebutted by the evidence, which shows that higher education can contribute to the likelihood of terrorism. This result supports Kruger's analysis of individual terrorists. Even if the countries without data on literacy trended lower, that would merely mean that there was no correlation between the two factors.

In addition to at least partially supporting Alan Krueger's views on education, the results go further than he does in rejecting a correlation between mountainous terrain and terrorism, indicating a negative correlation. However, Krueger's view that poverty is unrelated to terrorism is rebutted, at least at the societal level (although not necessarily the individual, which Krueger focused his assessment on), and his view that high infant mortality does not cause terrorism also seems to be rebutted, although it should be noted that Krueger was analysing foreign fighters, not terrorists at home. While it seems that the low correlation between democracy and terrorism refutes Krueger's view that high levels of repression as a cause for terrorism, when combined with Zakaria's 'Democracy threshold' and the GDP per capita data, this issue is partly resolved. It seems that the decline in terrorism and rise in democracy may have the same cause, rather than rising democracy necessarily being the cause of a decline in terrorism; this interpretation does however cast Callaway and Stephenson-Johnson's findings of a parabolic relationship between democracy and terrorism into doubt. The finding of strong correlation between high GDP change and terror group formation partly contradict Krueger's findings (although Krueger argued against *growth* as a causal factor, not *change*),[155] while supporting Richardson's argument that rapid economic changes can lead to terrorism.[156]

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[155] Ibid, p 75
[156] L Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, p 55

Richardson's contention that changing economic circumstances can lead to people (in particular young men) out of work is partly supported by the relatively high average unemployment rate in societies which produce terror groups, although as stated the sample size in this analysis was smaller.

Stephen Vertigans' and Martha Crenshaw's view that a history of violence in a given society may promote violence seems to be partially supported by the positive correlation between political upheaval and terrorism, although further study will be needed to confirm this. Crenshaw's additional argument that urbanisation contributes to terrorism may also be supported by the negative correlation between rough terrain (mountains and jungles) and terrorism, indicating that terror groups tend to form in areas which are reasonably accessible, and thus generally more urbanised than other areas. Her view that terrorism could also be linked to ethnic divisions is also supported by the data.

Nicolas Fotion, et al's assertion that terrorism is linked to occupation seems to be rebutted, although this author is hesitant given occupations without terrorism were not included, and further assessment will be required, but their belief that multi-ethnic societies lead to terrorism is supported, however their belief that religious differences also lead to terrorism is prima facie rebutted by the not especially strong correlation between religious mixing and terrorism, although a deeper analysis of different religious sects may change this result.

As for this author's own theories on terrorism, the link between low per capita GDP and terrorism was surprising, as this author believed there would be no correlation either way (or it would be minimal). The lack of correlation between democracy and terrorism either way was a little surprising; this author expected a mild correlation between an absence of political freedom and terrorism, and its absence may partly explain why some politically repressive societies like North Korea remain absent terrorism. Further, this author expected that there would be either no correlation between terrorism and rough terrain, or a positive correlation. The negative correlation between the two is very surprising, although this author would caution that merely because terror groups don't form in such areas, this does not mean that such areas don't promote the expansion of existing terror groups. David Kilcullen's research in this regard, in this author's opinion, remains accurate.

Conclusions

The societal causes of terrorism remain somewhat elusive, even after this study, although some important conclusions can be drawn from it. The role of GDP per capita and GDP change is enlightening, as is the apparent lack of a role for democracy, and the negative impact of geography. Broadly speaking, from this study we can conclude that a country's democratic status is not relevant, but its development level is. A deadly mix for a society would be one with a low per capita GDP that is nonetheless educated, has reasonably well developed infrastructure, is multi-ethnic, and has recently suffered or is going through a political upheaval and high levels of GDP change. In such a society there is a high chance of terror groups forming, and both India and Pakistan, countries with a comparatively high amount of terror group formation, are examples of this.

Conclusions for counter-terrorism are somewhat convoluted. Developing a country to move it out of the GDP per capita 'danger zone' will also lead to a populace which is better educated, and GDP change can lead to social and economic upheaval, while infrastructure development will likely negate the isolatory impacts of jungles and mountains. Further, if the country is not already a democracy, as it approaches Zakaria's threshold, the likelihood of agitation for change, and thus political upheaval, is increased. Counter-terror efforts will have to balance these factors, and in some cases support countries through the transitionary period.

This study was intended to be a broad overview of an area in which little no study has been done. While somewhat frustrated by the absence of data in some areas, and the need to include control examples in future research, it nonetheless produced some interesting results, confirms and rebuts some current theories, develops further nuance to the understanding of terror, and gives direction for further areas of study.

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