

## Religion, Democracy and Terrorism

by Nilay Saiya

### Abstract

*One of the most important policy-relevant questions terrorism researchers have attempted to address is the relationship between democracy and terrorism. Some extol the virtues of democracy in combating or discouraging terrorism. Others claim that the vulnerabilities inherent in democracy make terrorist activity easier to carry out. This essay suggests that both schools of thought may be correct: democracies suffer disproportionately from certain manifestations of terrorism but not others. Specifically, I show that religious terrorists - those who prescribe for themselves religious aims and identities-are more likely to target authoritarian states, while non-religious terrorists tend to attack liberal democracies. The reason for this is two-fold: (i) religious terrorists are not as deterred by systemic repression as their secular counterparts and (ii) authoritarian countries breed religious extremism by radicalizing religious actors, weakening moderates and increasing support for extremism by making religion a point of cohesion against the state. States that provide religious security for their citizens, on the other hand - the common understanding that religious identity (including beliefs and practices) of groups and individuals in society is inviolable—undercut the narrative propounded by religious militants that their faith is under attack, thus dampening the impetus towards violence. Religiously secure countries also allow for the development of cross-cutting cleavages other than those rooted in religion. For this reason, secular terrorism is more likely to occur in liberal countries than in repressive ones.*

**Keywords:** Terrorism; religion; democracy

### The Democracy-Terrorism Debate

Scholars of terrorism have been studying the connections between democracy and terrorism for decades. Yet the literature on democracy and terrorism has not reached a conclusive verdict. On one side are those who argue that democracy mitigates terrorism. These studies reveal an inverse relationship between political freedom and the likelihood of terrorism. The logic here is straightforward: the availability of political representation found in democracies and not present in repressive states affords groups and individuals the ability to select their leaders, pursue their political ambitions, and air their grievances through political channels rather than resorting to terrorism. In this same vein, some scholars have found that the democratic commitment to civil liberties also lessens the risk of terrorism and other forms of political violence.[1] Thus democracies are believed to be “accessible systems” that naturally undercut the motivations for terrorist activity by providing legitimate, non-violent avenues for political dissent.[2] Contrariwise, authoritarian regimes that choke nonviolent avenues of dissent, ban participation in political decision-making and curb freedom of expression incentivize terrorist activity in that they leave violence as the only way by which aggrieved persons can try to change the system.[3] Such systems also serve to delegitimize the state, alienate citizens, and increase popular grievances, thus providing terrorists with a steady supply of support from among ordinary citizens.[4] Furthermore, when these kinds of regimes harshly crack down on more peaceful forms of dissent such as protests, they invite retaliatory violence against governmental brutality.[5]

Democracies also make superior counter-terrorists, according to this school of thought. Max Abrahms, James I. Walsh and James A. Piazza, for example, have all argued that a commitment to civil liberties restrains democracies from overreacting to terrorism—the precise thing that terrorists want them to do. For countries

to violate their liberal values in combating terror risks losing the support of the very constituencies—moderates, the international community, and their own publics—required for success. On the other hand, by goading states into using excessive force, terrorists can actually engender support from those who would otherwise be sympathetic towards the state.[6]

On the debate's other side are those who claim that instead of diffusing terrorism, democracy actually enables it.[7] This school of thought holds that the qualities inherent in democracies serve to facilitate attacks by militants. For instance, the democratic commitment to the rule of law, limits on the executive, and respect for individual rights (especially freedoms of movement, speech, and association) enable terrorist activity by providing militants with an open space to attract sympathizers, recruit members and plot attacks.[8] Furthermore the presence of a free media makes it easier for terrorists to spew propaganda, communicate with each other and claim responsibility for terrorist strikes, thus making violence easier for terrorists in democracies.[9]

Democracies are also believed to be inferior in terms of responding to terrorism by making the detention and prosecution of suspected terrorists more cumbersome due to restrictions on policing, a commitment to due process, and the presence of an independent judiciary.[10] By contrast, authoritarian states are less susceptible to terrorism precisely because they have greater capacities to monitor society, more restraints on movement, more media restrictions, and fewer constraints on surveillance and interrogation practices, thus raising the costs of participating in terrorist activity.[11] In short, according to this school, non-democracies experience less terrorism than democracies because they increase the costs of engaging in violence by making terrorism difficult and dangerous, whereas the openness of society in democratic states decreases those costs. [12]

Looking at both terrorism and communal conflict more generally, a final set of studies finds an inverted U-shaped relationship between democracy and domestic violence. According to this logic, both highly repressive states and highly democratic ones experience low levels of civil conflict. In the former case, the costs of engaging in violence are prohibitive; in the latter, other means exist whereby groups in society can affect political change. So-called “anocracies”—countries transitioning either toward democracy or authoritarianism—experience the worst of both worlds. They do not yet have the institutions and political channels for citizens to peacefully express their dissatisfaction with the political status quo; at the same time, they do not have or choose not to use the tools of repression to undercut terrorist group formation and violence *a priori*. Anocratic countries in the transition period between democracy and autocracy, countries exhibiting enduring semi-democracy and new democracies tend to suffer higher levels of civil conflict including terrorism.[13]

### ***Religion and Variations in Terrorist Targeting***

The connection, then, between democracy and terrorism is inconclusive. Why is the literature so mixed? A large reason is that the historical record itself points in both directions. Some long-standing democracies like those in Scandinavia and Canada have been relatively free of terrorism; others like India, Greece and Israel have suffered hundreds of attacks. In examining the relationship between democracy and terrorism, scholars have attempted to disaggregate different dimensions of democratic governance and their effect on terrorism, thus accounting for the variation. Such studies have looked at the importance of multi-party competition, [14] rule of law, [15] democratic participation, [16] different representation systems, [17] and regime strength.[18] Thus, both regime type and specific regime characteristics need to be taken into account when considering the structural determinants of terrorism.

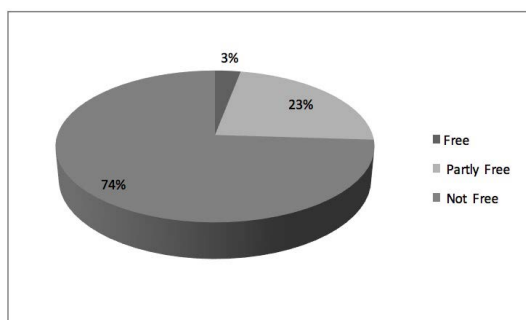
While many studies on democracy and terrorism examine different components of democracy, most do not attempt to disaggregate terrorism with respect to ideology, motivations, or tactics in the same way. The majority of these studies tend to lump terrorist groups together without taking into account the guiding ideologies of different terrorist organizations. "Terrorism," however, runs the risk of being an overly-aggregate dependent variable. Perhaps democracies/autocracies give rise to some manifestations of terrorism but not to others. Thus a disaggregated approach is more promising for understanding the structural conditions that encourage particular forms of terrorist violence, thus explaining some of the observed variation in the studies discussed above. It might, therefore, be more useful to classify terrorist incidents based on who the perpetrators are and their long-term objectives.

One possible way of distinguishing terrorist groups is on the basis of religion. Religious terrorists—those who prescribe for themselves religious identities and aims—are fundamentally different from their secular counterparts in important ways.[19] Religious terrorists look to their faith as a source of inspiration, legitimation and worldview, resulting in a totally different incentive structure than exists for their secular counterparts.[20] Accordingly, religious terrorist groups are also more lethal and long-lived than non-religious organizations.[21] Such groups have been implicated in a rising number of suicide missions in recent years, while suicide attacks by secular groups have declined.[22] To be sure, religious terrorist organizations can pursue vastly different goals, ranging from apocalyptic notions to the establishment of a religious state in the here and now. Yet because religious militants often understand their endeavors as part of a larger-than-life spiritual struggle, the constraints that normally limit secular terrorist groups seem to have little bearing on groups and individuals who commit violence in God's name.

It stands to reason, then, that the structural conditions that enable religious terrorists might not have the same effect on non-religious terrorists and vice versa. Religious terrorist groups, for example, may be willing to carry out attacks in the same conditions of pervasive authoritarianism that might otherwise discourage non-religious terrorists who are not motivated by transcendent concerns. Indeed, analyzing terrorist attacks by group ideology and regime type reveals a striking dissimilarity between religious and non-religious terrorist groups. Non-democracies are far more likely to birth religious terrorists, while democracies are more likely to experience attacks by groups motivated by non-religious concerns.

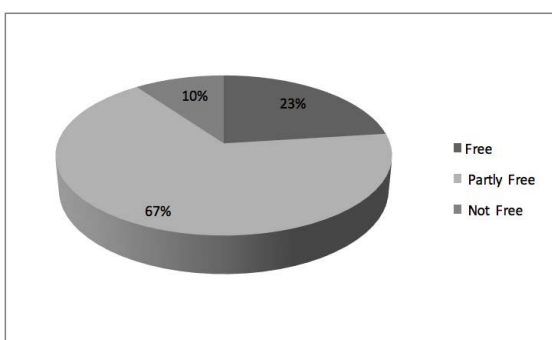
The charts below examine the average annual number of both religious and non-religious domestic terrorist attacks according to countries' level of freedom. The freedom scores are taken from Freedom House, a widely used index to assess the democratic status of countries worldwide.[23] Coding of religious and non-religious terrorist incidents was done by analyzing terrorist attacks that were included in the University of Maryland's Global Terrorism Database from 1991-2012. Only attacks by groups that are driven by an explicit and professed religious ideology rooted in supernatural assumptions are considered "religious" attacks. [24] Focusing on beliefs and practices rooted in supernatural assumptions has the benefit of allowing for the differentiation of religious from secular ideologies and avoiding debates as to whether ideologies like Marxism or nationalism constitute religion. Another benefit is that it allows for the separation of groups driven by a professed religious ideology from groups that may coalesce around a common religious identity but do not have overtly religious goals or motivations as in the cases of the Tamil Tigers, the Irish Republican Army, and the Greek Orthodox EOKA.[25]

Figure 1. *Religious Terrorist Attacks by Democracy Level, 1991-2012*



The charts reveal a marked difference in the countries most susceptible to religious or non-religious terrorist attacks. The first chart shows that 74 percent of religious attacks transpired in countries that were “not free” by Freedom House’s standards. 23 percent of attacks occurred in “partly free” countries.

Figure 2. *Non-Religious Terrorist Attacks by Democracy Level, 1991-2012*



Only 3 percent of attacks took place in liberal democracies. By contrast, only 10 percent of non-religious attacks took place in authoritarian, unfree countries. Two-thirds of these attacks occurred in partly-free countries. Yet nearly a quarter of attacks, 23 percent, transpired in liberal democracies. Simply put, religious terrorists appear not to be deterred by the same structural conditions that apparently deter their secular counterparts. Conversely, non-religious terrorists are far more likely to attack partly-free or free countries; 90 percent of these attacks occurred in moderately free or fully free countries.

These percentages show important differences in the logics of both kinds of terrorism. Even if repression generally raises the costs for engaging in terrorism, this rule does not seem to apply to terrorists motivated by religion. Put differently, the same structural context that makes terrorism a suboptimal tactic for political dissidents trying to secure concessions from their adversaries actually enables terrorism by those motivated by an ideology that downplays the strategic calculus of purely political rebel groups. Religious terrorists see value in engaging in violence in authoritarian settings, despite the risks of doing so. This does not mean that religious terrorists are irrational, but rather that they operate according to a different type of cost-benefit analysis than non-religious terrorists.

**Religious Security and Terrorism**

How can we account for these differences in the targeting preferences of religious and non-religious groups? One possibility is that religious terrorist attacks are concentrated in countries that have high levels of religiosity to begin with. While this might be true in certain cases, this rationale does not account for the fact that in a fair number of authoritarian countries plagued by religious terrorism, levels of religiosity

are actually quite low as in China and Burma. Conversely, some highly religious countries like Ghana and Romania witness very few terrorist incidents. Another possibility is that religious terrorism occurs with higher frequency in authoritarian states because the majority of Islamic countries are authoritarian and most religious terrorist groups claim an Islamic mantle. This rationale falls short for three reasons. First, certain Islamic countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan are equally or more likely to experience *non-religious* forms of terrorism as they are to suffer from Islamist terrorism. Second, slightly more than one-third of Islamic countries actually experienced no terrorism during the timeframe being analyzed, and more than two-thirds witnessed fewer than 10 attacks. The evidence indicates that Islamic countries are *not* more likely to suffer from religious terrorism when compared to non-Muslim countries. Third, about the same number of Islamic countries are “free” as those that are “not free.” Like the rest of the world, most fall in the “partially free” category.

Insights derived from the sociological theory of post-materialism first developed in the 1970s can be useful in developing a theory for understanding why religious terrorism tends to occur in authoritarian settings, while non-religious terrorism occurs in largely democratic countries. University of Michigan Political Scientist Ronald Inglehart has long argued that rising levels of wealth free people from a fixation on materialistic values like economic or physical security, and allow them to emphasize a different set of values—“post-material” ones—that stress autonomy and self-expression.[26] Thus rising prosperity creates a perceived widespread sense of *existential security*, which gradually liberates those living in rich countries from occupation with basic materialistic needs, allowing them to pursue other goals such as belonging, esteem and intellectual satisfaction.[27] In contrast, in countries marked by abject poverty and the uncertainty of survival, individuals vulnerable to physical, societal and personal risks tend to be preoccupied with materialistic values (i.e., basic healthcare, access to clean water, etc.) because survival cannot be taken for granted as it can in prosperous countries.

The theory of post-materialism can be adapted to help understand variations in religious and secular terrorism across time and space. Just as Inglehart argued that survival values predominate when material sustenance and physical security are scarce, the tendency for religion to turn violent exists when *religious security* is in short supply. While the most obvious way in which religious security can become compromised involves government restrictions on religious practice in the forms of unfavorable laws, violent state suppression, or cooptation of religious institutions, religious insecurity can result from several other factors including domestic or international conflict, religiously-based social hostilities and persecution, bellicose religious doctrines, and so forth. For this reason, religious security is a much more expansive concept than conventional notions about religious freedom. When religion becomes embattled for any of these reasons, it serves to radicalize political theologies and give more credence to the narrative espoused by religious extremists that their faith is under attack, either by the state or society at large. Because legitimate institutional vehicles are not available to voice grievances, certain religious groups feel compelled to take matters into their own hands.

The key problem with respect to religiously insecure states is that they isolate and radicalize religious identity in society and increase the possibility that religious groups and individuals feel aggrieved enough to take up arms against a state or group that is perceived to be attacking that religious identity. For example, when governmental institutions act in a discriminatory manner and block channels for political and cultural engagement, they create conditions ripe for the development of bellicose political theologies where people of faith perceive their religious beliefs are being attacked and are in need of defense. [28] This dynamic can be seen in places like Algeria, Egypt, and China. Religious security can also become compromised at the society level. Inter-group hostilities rooted in religion often result in tit-for-tat retaliations by targeted groups,

leading to violent conflict spirals. [29] In the western Rakhine state of Burma, communal violence, including widespread rioting and clashes, between Rohingya Muslims and Buddhists has resulted in thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands of people being internally displaced. Finally, as seen most vividly in Iraq and Syria, civil wars and the collapse of the state often creates a power vacuum which is exploited by extremist groups which threaten the religious security of all who do not unswervingly abide by their radical ideology. These are just three examples of the myriad ways in which religious insecurity and violence are connected, and these conditions are far less likely to be present in liberal democracies.

Unlike in Inglehart's argument, religious security does not come about through the generation of wealth, but rather by through respect for the rights of religious groups and individuals—a quality inherent in liberal democracies. When people of faith are free to believe whatever they want and practice their religion however they see fit, a transformation of individual values ensues. As countries transition toward greater religious tolerance and inclusivity, the subsequent strengthening of religious security reduces the necessity of violence on the part of religious adherents. No longer do individuals have to fight to earn basic religious rights; instead these rights are guaranteed and indeed taken for granted in highly secure countries. The full recognition of religious rights allows individuals to gradually shift their attention to non-religious goals.

In states that are religiously secure, religion does not cease to be an important value—just as Inglehart's concept of existential security never stops being fundamental—but rather, concerns over religion are not overwhelmingly predominant, often leading to attention being given to other or new issues and the formation of cross-cutting cleavages in which religious and other forms of identity are given more equal weight. Prolonged periods of religious security encourage the spread of these non-religious concerns, while the declination of religious security has the opposite effect. People raised in times of religious security will turn their attention to “post-religious” concerns. These concerns permit an entirely different set of grievances to emerge that has little to do with religion—secular nationalism, environmentalism, animal rights activism, racial supremacism, etc.—for which terrorists may take up the gun.

Terrorism of this variety often occurs when groups believe they are too small or marginalized to work through the system or the state refuses to negotiate on issues of importance. Religious terrorism may well occur in religiously secure countries, but it tends to be intermittent and carried out by “lone wolf” militants. This logic might help us understand how a country like the United States can remain highly religious and multicultural, yet at the same time face few problems when it comes to religious violence.[30] This also means, though, that secular violence becomes more common in religiously secure states. In short, in religiously-secure countries, the religious and political rights of religious groups and individuals are basic, allowing for other kinds of cleavages to rise to importance. Because people of faith in these states can practice their faith as they see fit and work through democratic channels in order to achieve their political goals, the likelihood for religious violence is diminished because the right to religion is essentially unquestioned.

As the literature shows, religious terrorism has been on the rise over the past 30 years and especially after the attacks of September 11, 2001.[31] This can be attributed to two key factors. The first involves the global resurgence of religion in response to the perceived destruction of religious values by corrupt and self-serving secular political orders.[32] The religious resurgence has been exacerbated by forces like modernization and globalization. Yet this increase in religion's prominence comes at the precise time that religion has come under unprecedented assault from governmental religious restrictions, communal hostilities involving religion, and religiously-based civil wars—the withering of religious security.[33] The confluence of these trends helps to both explain the rise of religiously-motivated terrorism and predict its continuation and intensification well into the future.

## Conclusion

This article has made the case that religious terrorism tends to occur in authoritarian settings because faith-based terrorists are not as likely to be deterred by repression and such settings make religion a point of cohesion and contention. By contrast, in religiously secure places, people are less likely to take the claims of militants that their faith is under attack seriously and will be less willing to support or join religious terrorist organizations. People in these countries may, however, subscribe to a different militant narrative—a secular one—that supports the use of violence.

This study reinforces the notion that there is heterogeneity in terrorism, arguing that different structural contexts have the potential to breed different kinds of terrorist groups. The disaggregated approach used here cautions against making blanket judgments about the causes of “terrorism” in general, as much of the existing literature does. Contemporary terrorism has diverse roots, and this reality becomes even clearer when comparing the contexts that give rise to religious and non-religious forms of terrorism. This further means that making universal policy recommendations is difficult as the findings suggest that there is no single “silver bullet” for defeating terrorism. Approaches designed to combat secular terrorism need not necessarily apply to religious terrorism and vice versa.

Instead of adopting blanket approaches to terrorism, states would be best advised to take into account the specific nature of the threats they face. For example, this article suggests that if states struggling with religious terrorism take steps towards introducing a modicum of religious security, then this will have a mitigating effect on that particular form of terrorism, even though the threat of religious terrorism can never be completely eradicated. But the case has also been made that liberal democracies are far more likely to experience nonreligious forms of terrorism. Fortunately, though, it has been shown that dealing with non-religious terrorism is a more manageable task and can be handled through methods like policing and intelligence. These counterterrorism tactics, which tend to be ineffective against religious terrorism, often succeed when used against non-religious terrorist groups.

While this article has revealed marked divergences in terrorist targeting against certain kinds of regimes based on group ideology and while it offered a possible explanation for this finding, it has not attempted to robustly test this relationship or rule out alternative explanations. Future research, therefore, can expand upon the arguments put forward in this article in two ways. First, statistical analysis should be used to examine the robustness of the relationship between religious insecurity and violence, while accounting for other variables that may have an effect on variations on terrorist targeting. Second, case studies at both the country and group level would provide increased leverage in determining how and why violence arises.

**About the Author:** Dr. Nilay Saiya is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Director of International Studies at the State University of New York, Brockport. His research interests include the study of religion and global politics, American foreign policy, and terrorism. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame in 2013.

## Notes

[1] Ted Robert Gurr and Will H. Moore, “Ethnopolitical Rebellion: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of the 1980s with Risk Assessments for the 1990s,” *American Journal of Political Science*, (1997), pp. 1079-1103; Patrick Regan and Daniel Norton, “Greed, Grievance, and Mobilization in Civil Wars,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, no. 49 (2005): pp. 319-36.

[2] Joe Eyerman. “Terrorism and Democratic States: Soft Targets or Accessible Systems,” *International Interactions*, no. 24 (1998), pp. 151-70.

[3] Martha Crewshaw, “The Causes of Terrorism,” *Comparative Politics*, no. 13 (1981), pp. 379-99.

- [4] Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).
- [5] Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- [6] Max Abrahms, "Why Democracies Make Superior Counterterrorists," *Security Studies*, no. 16 (2007), pp. 223-53; James I. Walsh, and James A. Piazza, "Why Respecting Physical Integrity Rights Reduces Terrorism," *Comparative Political Studies*, no. 43 (2010), pp. 551-77.
- [7] Erica Chenoweth, "Democratic Competition and Terrorist Activity," *Journal of Politics*, (2008), pp. 16-30.
- [8] Alex P. Schmid, "Terrorism and Democracy," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, no. 4 (1992), pp. 14-25; William Lee Eubank and Leonard Weinberg, "Does Democracy Encourage Terrorism?" *Terrorism and Political Violence*, no. 6 (1994), pp. 417-43; William Lee Eubank, and Leonard Weinberg, "Terrorism and Democracy: Perpetrators and Victims." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, no. 13 (2001), pp. 155-64.; Quan Li. "Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, no. 49 (2005), pp. 278-97; Ana Bela Santos Bravo and Carlos Manuel Mendes Dias, "An Empirical Analysis Of Terrorism: Deprivation, Islamism And Geopolitical Factors." *Defence and Peace Economics*, 2006, pp. 329-41.
- [9] Brigitte L. Nacos, *Mass-mediated Terrorism: The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).
- [10] Ibid.
- [11] Sara Jackson Wade and Dan Reiter, "Does Democracy Matter?: Regime Type and Suicide Terrorism," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, no. 51 (2007), pp. 329-48.
- [12] Erica Chenoweth, *Why Democracy Encourages Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, forthcoming).
- [13] Edward N. Muller and Erich Weede, "Cross-National Variation in Political Violence: A Rational Action Approach," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol.34, no.4 (1990), pp. 624-651; Eyerman. "Terrorism and Democratic States"; Eubank and Weinberg, "Terrorism and Democracy: Perpetrators and Victims"; Alberto Abadie, *Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism* (Cambridge, Mass.: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2004); Konstantinos Drakos and Andreas Gofas, "In Search Of The Average Transnational Terrorist Attack Venue," *Defence and Peace Economics*, no. 17 (2006), pp. 73-93; Peter Kurrild-Klitgaard, Mogens K. Justesen, and Robert Klemmensen, "The Political Economy Of Freedom, Democracy And Transnational Terrorism," *Public Choice*, no. 128 (2006), pp.289-315; James A. Piazza, "Regime Age and Terrorism: Are New Democracies Prone to Terrorism?" *International Interactions*, 2013, pp. 246-63.
- [14] James A. Piazza, "Terrorism and Party Systems in the States of India," *Security Studies*, no. 19 (2010), pp. 99-123.
- [15] Alex P. Schmid, "Prevention of Terrorism: Towards a Multi-pronged Approach," in Tore Bjorjo (Ed.), *Root Causes of Terrorism* (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2003), pp. 209-231.
- [16] Quan Li., op. cit. "Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?"
- [17] Deniz Aksoy and David Carter, "Electoral Institutions and the Emergence of Terrorist Groups," *British Journal of Political Science*, no. 44, (2012), pp. 181-204.
- [18] Tore Bjorjo, "Conclusions," in Tore Bjorjo (ed.), *Root Causes of Terrorism* (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, (2003), p. 258.
- [19] Bruce Hoffman, "Holy Terror": The Implications Of Terrorism Motivated By A Religious Imperative," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, no. 18 (1995), pp. 271-84; Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Magnus Ranstorp, Terrorism in the Name of Religion, *Journal of International Affairs*, no.50 (1996), pp. 41-62; Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- [20] Ibid.
- [21] Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End Lessons for Countering Al Qa'ida* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2008); Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "The Nature Of The Beast: Organizational Structures And The Lethality Of Terrorist Attacks," *Journal of Politics*, vol. 70, no. 2 (2008), pp. 437-49; Bruce Hoffman, "The Confluence of International and Domestic Trends in Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* vol. 9, no. 2 (1997), pp. 1-15; Jessica Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorists* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Walter Enders and Todd Sanders, "Is Transnational Terrorism Becoming More Threatening?: A Time Series Investigation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* vol. 44, no. 3 (2000), pp. 307-332.
- [22] Assaf Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom: Al Qaeda, Salafi Jihad, and the Diffusion of Suicide Attacks* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008). Peter S. Henne, "The Ancient Fire: Religion and Suicide Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, no. 24 (2012), pp. 38-60.
- [23] Freedom House assesses a country's level of freedom along two different dimensions—political rights and civil liberties—on a scale of 1 (most free) to 7 (least free). Countries whose averaged scores fall between 1-3 are considered "free"; those scoring 3-5 are considered "partly free"; those scoring above 5 are considered "not free."



[24] A list of organizations used in the analysis is available from the author.

[25] Each attack was coded as either “religious,” “non-religious,” or “unknown.” An attack was coded as “religious” if the following conditions were met: (a) it was carried out by a group or individual that conceives of itself as a predominantly religious actor; (b) that group frames its mission in religious terms, although it may have other goals as well; and (c) the attacker, although perhaps involved in a communitarian conflict that politicizes religious symbols, holds a discernible religious ideology or motivation that serves to animate its strategies and goals apart from or in addition to the mere utilization of religious objects or rhetoric.—See Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press), pp. 81-131.

[26] Ronald F. Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977); Ronald F. Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); Ronald F. Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997); Pippa Norris and Ronald F. Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Ronald F. Inglehart, and Christian Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[27] Ronald Inglehart, “Changing Values Among Western Publics From 1970 To 2006,” *West European Politics*, Vol. 31, No. 1-2 (2008), pp. 130-146.

[28] Nilay Saiya, “Explaining Religious Violence Across Countries: An Institutional Perspective,” in Kevin R. den Dulk and Elizabeth Oldmixon (eds.), *Mediating Religion and Government: Political Institutions and the Policy Process* (New York: Palgrave, 2014), pp. 209-240; Nilay Saiya and Anthony Scime, “Explaining Religious Terrorism: A Data-Mined Analysis,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 35, No. 5 (2015), pp. 487-512; Nilay Saiya, “The Religious Freedom Peace,” *International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2015), pp. 369-382.

[29] Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the 21st Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[30] Risa Brooks, “Muslim ‘Homegrown’ Terrorism in the United States: How Serious is the Threat?,” *International Security*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (2012), pp. 7-47.

[31] Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (London: University of California Press, 1993); Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); David C. Rapoport, “The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism,” in Audrey Cronin and J. Ludes, eds., *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004), pp. 46-73.

[32] Monica Duffy Toft, and Timothy Shah, “Why God is Winning,” *Foreign Policy*, (2006), pp. 39-43; Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Shah, *God’s Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011); Gilles Kepel, *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in the Modern World* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).

[33] Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied*; Timothy Samuel Shah, *Religious Freedom: Why Now?: Defending an Embattled Human Right* (Princeton, NJ: The Witherspoon Institute, 2012); Alan Hertzke, (Ed.), *The Future of Religious Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Pew Research Center, ‘Religious Hostilities Reach Six-Year High’, *Pew Forum on Religion in Public Life*, <http://www.pewforum.org/2014/01/14/religious-hostilities-reach-six-year-high/> (accessed 1 June 2014).