Terrorism and Political Violence

Analysis of volumes 19-23

(2007-2011)

Erika van Leeuwen

This review is part of the Journal Review project of the research-master Modern History and International Relations (MHIR) at the University of Groningen. For more information, visit **www.rug.nl/research/MHIR-journalreview**

Contents

Introduction

In 1989, the journal *Terrorism and Political Violence* was founded to fill an observed gap in the scholarly literature on terrorism. The editorial manifesto in the very first issue acknowledges that amidst the fast and ever-increasing number of books and journals, there must be a very essential justification for initiating yet another one. According to the then chief editors Paul Wilkinson and David C. Rapoport: 'despite the burgeoning of modern terrorism since the 1960s [and the subsequent] steady growth of serious scholarly research into terrorism in all its aspects, […] we lack a substantial international scholarly forum'.[1] Rapoport (University of California) is still chief editor, but he is now accompanied by Max Taylor (University of St. Andrews). The journal's self-proclaimed objective is to reflect the full range of scholarly work from a multi-disciplinary perspective: 'the journal will seek to publish articles dealing with historical, philosophical, political, legal, psychological and cultural aspects of terrorism [...] We will give special encouragement to inter-disciplinary approaches.'[2] The editors hereby aim to provide academic rigour to the field and to encourage comparative studies. The corresponding focus is on the political meaning of terrorist activity, various forms of violence by rebels and states, the links between political violence and organized crime, protest, rebellion, revolution, and human rights. The subject classification of *Terrorism and Political Violence* includes they key words government, politics & international relations, security studies - political & international relations, and terrorism. Officially, the journal is not linked to a specific institute, but they do frequently publish the book reviews – earlier published in the journal itself – at the website of the Institute for the Study of Religion, Violence, and Memory.[3]

The journal is published by Routledge, which is an imprint of the Taylor and Francis group. The latter is part of the Informa Group which is one of the sponsors of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at St. Andrews University (Scotland). The publication is also supported by the Ronald W. Burkle Center for International Relations.[4] Critics have suggested that there is a so-called RAND-St. Andrews influence exerted at the centre of the study of terrorism because of the pivotal role that experts play in institutions and

---

[1] Paul Wilkinson and David C. Rapoport, 'Editorial Manifesto,' The Journal of Terrorism Research 1, no. 1 (1989): 5.
[2] Idem.
[3] The Institute for the Study of Religion, Violence, and Memory, 'Terrorism and Political Violence Book Reviews,' http://www.uwosh.edu/isrvm/bookreviews/index.php (accessed April 28, 2012).
[4] UCLA Burkle Center for International Relations, 'Terrorism and Political Violence,' http://www.international.ucla.edu/burkle/article.asp?parentid=23350, (accessed April 28, 2012).

academic publishing.[5] Members of the RAND and St. Andrews networks hold key position in the two leading journals on terrorism: *Terrorism and Political Violence*, and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (a 1992 merger of the journal *Conflict* with *Terrorism: An International Journal*).[6] Furthermore, the earlier cited Editorial Manifesto states that the editorial control of the journal is alternating between the American and European chief editors.[7] Given these European and American roots, one should not be surprised to find this reflected in the board and content of the journal.

The composition of the editorial board is international in a sense, but the American dominance is clear cut: two-third of the editorial board resides in the USA, against one-fifth of Europeans, and only two editors are 'non-Western' (one from Asia and the other from the Middle-East). Out of the 31 editors only three are female, which accounts for 9,7 per cent. Given the relative smaller percentage of female scholars in the field of International Relations (IR), it is arguably not surprising to find that the percentage of female editors of the journal is significantly lower than the male editors, but 9,7 per cent is even far less than the average of women in the academia of IR (around 25 per cent).[8] The publisher's website contains an extensive guideline for potential authors, and the editorial procedure of *Terrorism and Political Violence* consists of a double-blind peer review process.

With regard to the journal's reputation, the Thomson-Reuters Journal Citation Reports ranked *Terrorism and Political Violence* at the 27th place out of 78 in the field of IR and 59th out of 141 in the field of Political Science.[9] In Red Jaspers, it ranks 14th out of 81 in IR and 36th out of 145 in Political Science.[10] In the Australian ERA-project from the Australian Research Council (Deakin University), the journal is categorized – on a scale of A* to C – as a B-journal in both the field of Political Research, as well as in the field of Criminology.[11]

---

[5] RAND is a non-profit making research foundation that is an important think tank for the US military.
Jonny Burnett and Dave Whyte, 'Embedded Expertise and the New Terrorism,' Journal for Crime, Conflict and the Media 1, no. 4 (2005): 1-18.

[6] Alex P. Schmid, 'The Literature on Terrorism,' in The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research, ed. Alex P. Schmid (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 460.

[7] Paul Wilkinson and David C. Rapoport, 'Editorial Manifesto,' The Journal of Terrorism Research 1, no. 1 (1989): 5.

[8] Daniel Maliniak and others, 'Women in International Relations,' Politics & Gender 4, no. 1 (2008): 122.

[9] ISI Web of Knowledge, 'Journal Citation Reports,' 2010, http://admin-apps.webofknowledge.com.proxy-ub.rug.nl/JCR/JCR (accessed May 16, 2012).

[10] Red Jasper Journal Ranking, http://www.journal-ranking.com/ranking/listCommonRanking.html?selfCitationWeight=1&externalCitationWeight=1&citingStartYear=1901&journalListId=350 (accessed May 16, 2012).

[11] Deakin University, 'ERA Journal Rankings Access,' 2010, http://lamp.infosys.deakin.edu.au/era/?page=forsel10 (accessed May 16, 2012).

The claim of critics that the academic debates in *Terrorism and Political Violence* experienced a possible RAND-St. Andrews influence makes the combined quantitative and qualitative analysis below all the more interesting and important. As a result, it might be possible to indicate as to what extent *Terrorism and Political Violence* really covers the full spectrum of topics, authors, debates, et cetera in the field of terrorism and political violence, or that it suffers from a somewhat one-sided perspective on the subject. With these questions in mind, the focus of this paper will now turn to the results of the in-depth analysis of five volumes of the journal.

General information

Before exploring the content, and classifying the authors of the articles, let me first consider the general outline of the journal over the course of these five years. The journal is published four times a year and every issue counts on average 162 pages. In the years 2007-2011 there were no special issues concerning a certain theme, although it must be noted that a quick look at the other volumes demonstrate that the journal does regularly publish special issues. Obviously, the articles take centre stage and are accompanied by book reviews. There are no special sections for editorial notes or debates, although there are three issues that published a number of responses to a certain article with a subsequent reaction of the author (2008, issue 4; 2011, issue 1; and 2011, issue 3). Furthermore, closer observation learns that there is no chronological or geographical order in the articles, but the editors do make sure that articles with similar subjects or other forms of relatedness are grouped together. The same goes for book reviews and book review essays.

Authors

Concerning the authors, it can be concluded that the journal is dominated by male and American-based writers. The contribution of men is on average just above 82% (with the lowest share being 71.1% in 2009 and the highest share being no less than 88.1% in 2011). The women who do contribute to either the original articles or the book reviews often tend to introduce gender-related issues, such as the strategic employment of women in terrorism or political violence. With regard to the origins of the authors, it can be observed in figure 2 below that the majority of the authors comes from North-America. Officially this also includes Canada, but when comparing the number of Canadian contributions with the number of articles from US-authors it is safe to conclude that the United States is the primary

contributor to *Terrorism and Political Violence*. Bearing in mind the overall presence of American authors in the academia of IR and Political Science, it might be considered a mere formality to mention this. The second contributing continent in row is Europe. As can be seen from figure 2 there is no clearly visible trend besides the fact that in 2010 there was a small increase in contributions from the Middle-East. Looking closer at that specific volume, it can be seen that the first issue contains two articles that were co-written by no less than ten authors from 'only' four Middle-Eastern institutes.[12] These two articles draw heavily upon the total of 14 Middle-Eastern authors for that 2010-volume. Bearing in mind this fact, it is a valid conclusion to state that the journal *Terrorism and Political Violence* has a consistent majority of American authors, followed by European authors. Another important observation is that contributions from the African continent are absent altogether.
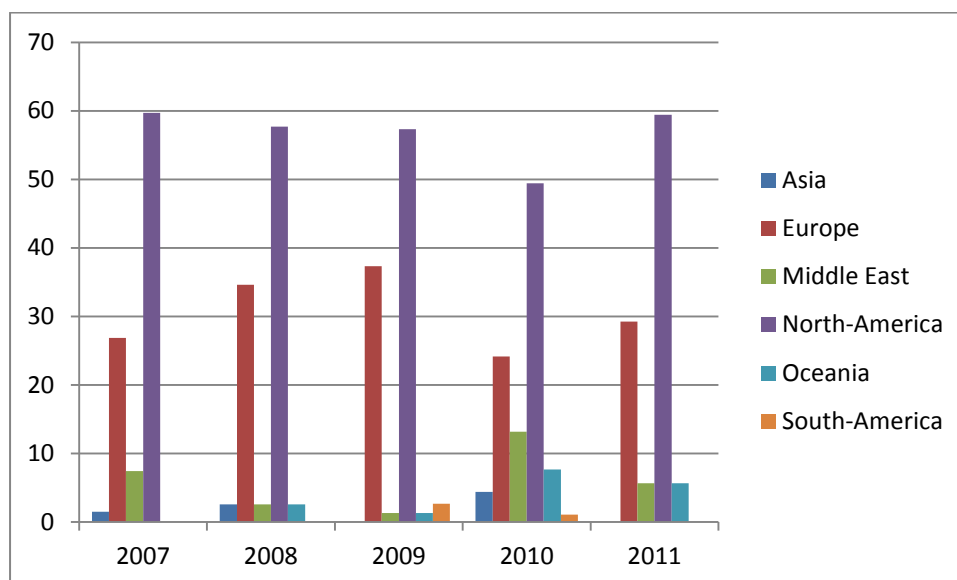

Figure 2: Origins of authors

Besides the geographical origin of the authors, it is also worth considering what the academic discipline of the authors is. As the editorial board stated at the journal's establishment, 'the journal will seek to publish articles dealing with historical, philosophical, political, legal, psychological and cultural aspects of terrorism [...] We will give special encouragement to

---

[12] Ariel Merari and others, 'Personality Characteristics of "Self Martyrs"/"Suicide Bombers" and Organizers of Suicide Attacks,' Terrorism and Political Violence 22, no. 1 (2009): 87-101.
Ariel Merari and others, 'Making Palestinian "Martyrdom Operations"/"Suicide Attacks": Interviews With Would-Be Perpetrators and Organizers,' Terrorism and Political Violence 22, no. 1 (2009): 102-119.

inter-disciplinary approaches.'[13] The chart in figure 3 presents an overview of the academic disciplines – or the academic origins so to speak – of the articles.
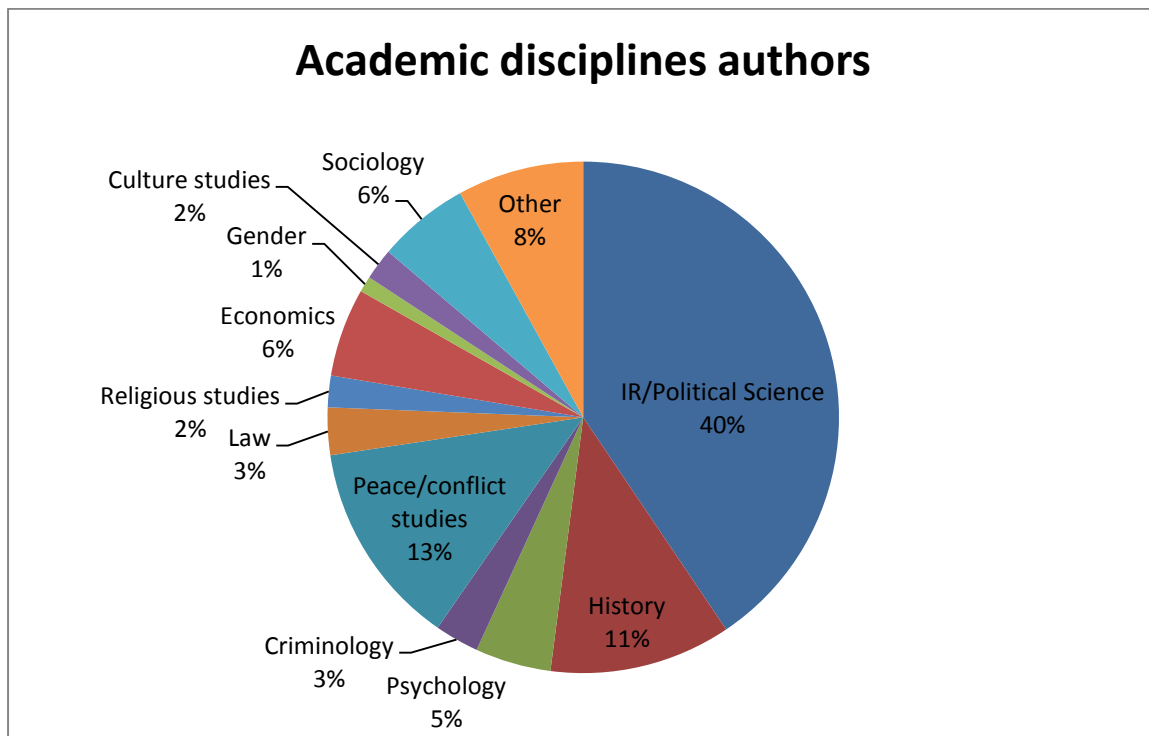

Figure 3: Academic background of the authors of *Terrorism and Political Violence* 2007-2011

As can be seen from this chart, the authors are mostly arbitrary in the field of International Relations and/or Political Science. Second comes the category of peace and conflict studies, closely followed by historians. Next in line – but all significantly smaller than the first three categories – are sociology, economics, psychology, criminology, law, religious studies, culture studies, gender, and the rest. All in all, this chart concerning the academic background of the authors appears to demonstrate that the authors represent a quite multi-disciplinary melange of expertise. On the other hand, as will be demonstrated below in figure 6, the contribution of religious studies scholars is relatively low compared to the articles about religious affairs in relation to terrorism and political violence.

---

[13] Idem.

Geography of themes

The predominance of US-authors is not equalled in the geographical scope of the articles' content. Importantly, two other categories have to be added when examining this thematic geography: 'transnational' and 'none'. The former comprises those articles that have a clear international subject (e.g., 'Strategic Framing of Racial-Nationalism in North America and Europe: An Analysis of a Burgeoning Transnational Network' by Stuart A. Wright, 2009, no. 2, pp. 189-210). The latter category contains articles that pay attention to subjects that have nothing or little to do with geographical locations (e.g., 'Measuring Political Mobilization: The Distinction Between Activism and Radicalism' by Sophia Moskalenko, 2009, no. 2, pp. 239-260, which only focuses on the theoretical aspects of psychological and individual processes of political mobilization).

Figure 4 demonstrates two important conclusions. First, although it can be observed in figure 2 that there are no articles or reviews by African authors, there is a considerable amount of writings *about* African terrorism or political violence. Notice in addition that Africa is even more often addressed than South-America and Oceania, and almost equals the number of articles on Asia. Considering the nature of the many conflicts in Africa, it can be argued that Africa indeed should have a solid share within this journal. Already in 2005, a similar argument was brought to the fore by Kurt Schillinger who is the head of the Africa security and terrorism project at the South African Institute of International Affairs: 'Terrorism is not just a western concern. It is an international issue requiring a coherent international response. Africa has a vital role to play in ensuring security within and beyond its shores.'[14]

Secondly, the 'transnational' articles are clearly in the majority. Although this is probably not surprising considering the nature of terrorism and political violence in the increasing breakdown of all kinds of barriers in the contemporary era of globalization, it is interesting to conclude that also articles on terrorism and political violence indeed transcend the traditional borders of nation-states. In addition, this very transnational nature of terrorism and political violence emphasises again the importance of an international perspective on the subject matter (i.e. more nationalities and different perspectives reflected in the journal's content).

---

[14] Kurt Schillinger, 'Global Terror: Africa not Immune to Terror,' Business Day, October 7, 2005, http://www.saiia.org.za/security-and-terrorism-in-africa-opinion/global-terror-africa-not-immune-to-terror.html (accessed April 28, 2012).
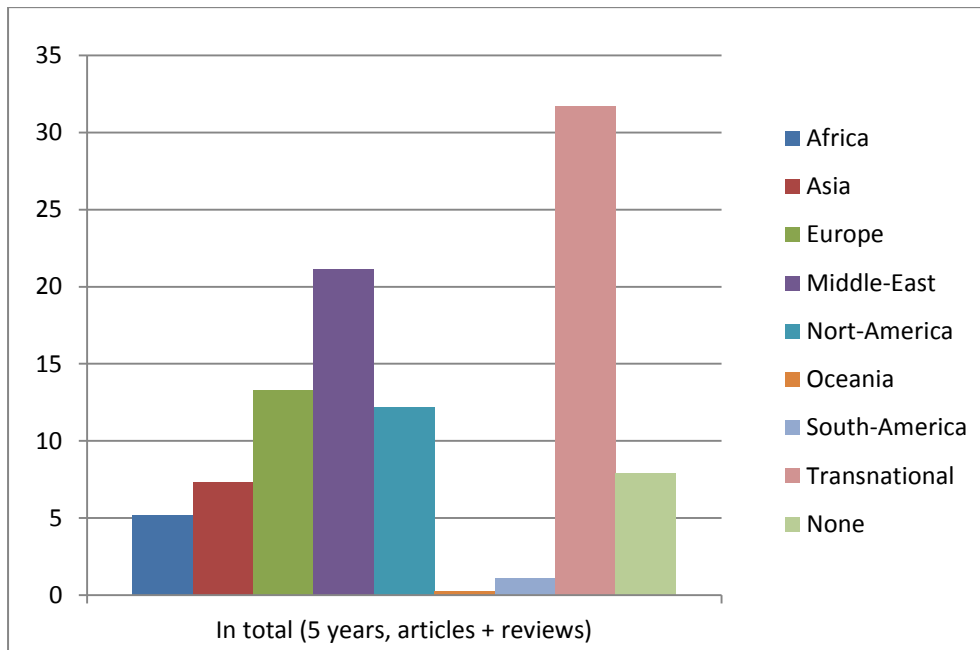
Figure 4: Geography of themes

By disaggregating the data of figure 4 into the separate volumes, it can be seen to what extent it is possible to discern some trends or exceptional instances in the geography of themes in *Terrorism and Political Violence* during the years 2007-2011. The results are presented in figure 5, which indicates that the last three years have demonstrated an upward trend for articles on Europe, seemingly at the expense of transnational articles. (Note that the data on the geographical scopes of the book reviews are quite comparable to the data on the geographical scopes of the original articles, therefore a separate graph on the book reviews will be left out.) The peak of articles with their main focus on the Middle-Eastern region is not surprising given the earlier demonstrated sudden increase in Middle-Eastern authors. Besides these two trends, there are no striking tendencies or outliers with regard to the geographical scope of the articles and book reviews over the past five years.
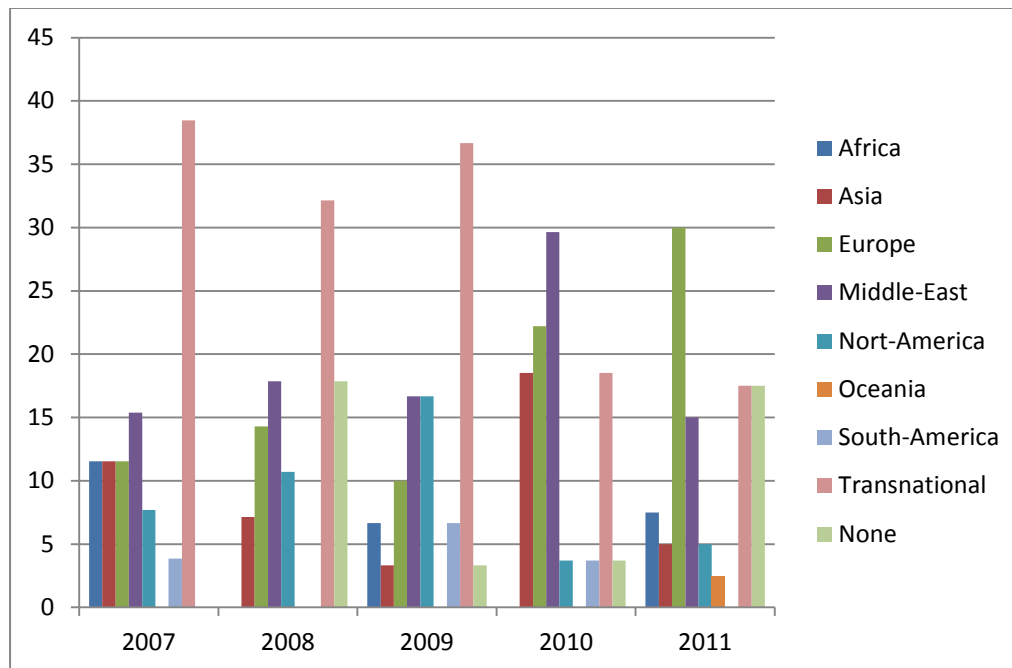
Figure 5: Thematic geography of the articles

Themes

Having considered the backgrounds and gender of the authors, and the geographical scope of the articles and book reviews, the analysis will now turn to probably one of the most interesting and important quantitative variables: the themes that have been addressed in *Terrorism and Political Violence* in the time span of 2007-2011.

Some preliminary remarks must be made however. The categorization of the topics was not at all clear-cut, since terrorism and political violence is an interdisciplinary field of study to begin with. Furthermore, it is frequently the case that many aspects and themes are addressed together in one single article. Based on the most frequently recurring keywords and after reading all abstracts, it was possible to make a categorization after all. All in all, eight categories can be defined that cover most of the themes. First, the category 'religion' covers the articles which focus on religious convictions and ideologies in conflicts and (terrorist) violence. A good example of this category is Jihadist violence or terrorism by radical Muslims. Secondly, the category 'public policy' focuses on counter-terrorism policies which are mostly conducted by governments and international organizations (e.g., 'Confronting Terrorisms: Group Motivation and Succesful State Policies' by Gregory D. Miller, 2007, no. 3, pp. 331-350). The third category is titled 'psychology' and comprises the articles that focus on the explanation of the behaviour and mental processes of individuals. Fourth, the category 'technology' refers to the articles that deal with various techniques of terrorism and violence.

For example, many articles in this category study the possibilities, causes and consequences of bio-chemical and/or nuclear weapons used by (international) terrorist networks. The fifth category consists of articles about 'gender', hence covering all gender-related topics, such as the employment of women in terrorist warfare. Six, the category 'politics' concerns all articles on terrorism and political violence in the strict sense of the political sphere (i.e. violence or warfare for political purposes or by political parties). The seventh category covers all articles on the more theoretical debates concerning conflicts, violence, and terrorism. Finally, the last category can be considered as the closing entry of the categorization by encompassing all articles with 'other' central themes.

The results over all five years (articles and reviews combined) are presented in the chart of figure 6. Religion is apparently the most often addressed topic in terrorism and political violence studies. This is both expected and unexpected at the same time. On the one hand, religion lends itself for radicalization very well, since religions almost always comprise the supernatural, allowing all-exceeding legitimization of violent acts by some divine order and/or ultimate higher goal. (Buddhism and Hinduism appear to be exceptions to that rule, so therefore there are no articles on terrorism or political violence in the context of these religions.)
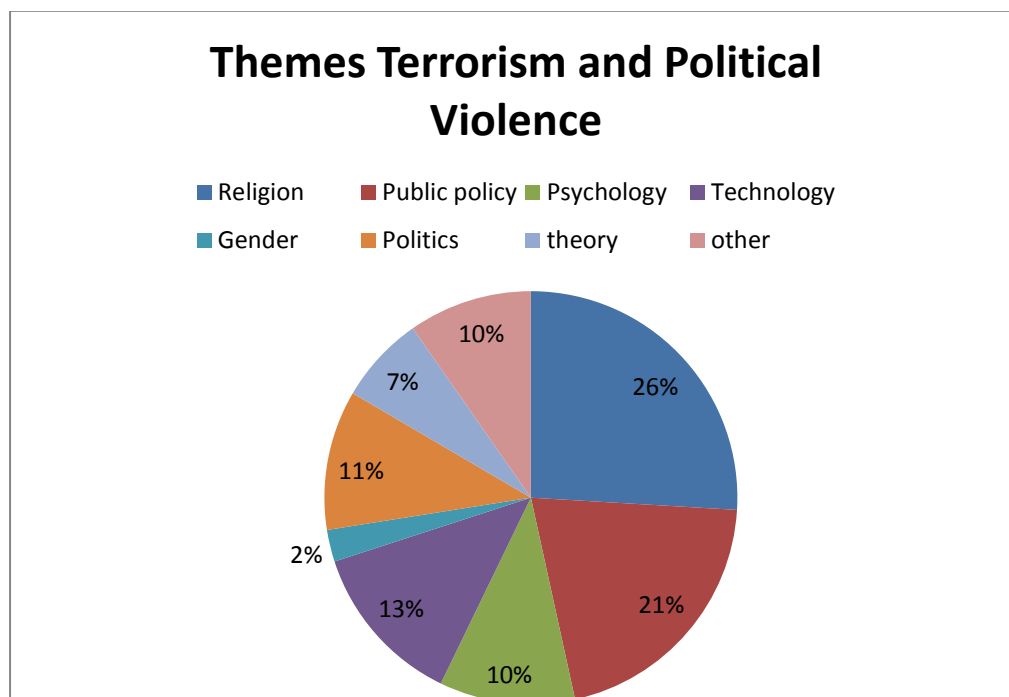

Figure 6: Themes of *Terrorism and Political Violence* 2007-2011

On the other hand, religion is primarily based on 'loving' and 'caring' premises, so its contribution in causing violence and terrorism is quite ambiguous to say the least. Some scholars have argued for the inclusion of religion in the public domain because of its ability to frame certain conflicts or tense situations in religious discourse. One could argue that the American and European dominance in the discourse, is reflected here in the depiction of 'irrational' religion as one of the main contributors and causal factors of terrorism and political violence. Food for thought is also provided by the fact that the category 'religion' seems to be broad enough to contain all kinds of convictions and beliefs, but in the majority of cases, religious violence in *Terrorism and Political Violence* can be identified with Islam and Muslims. To substantiate this statement, the chart in figure 6 presents the relative share of different religions in the broader category of 'religion' in general. As can be seen below, Islam is the most often referred to in articles on religion in the context of terrorism and political violence.
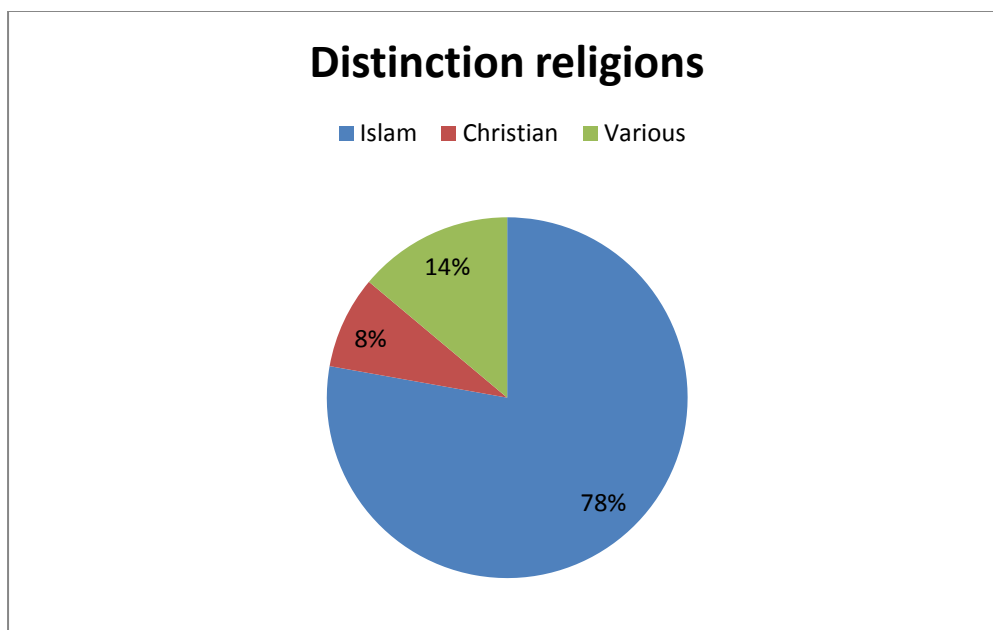

Distinction religions

■ Islam   ■ Christian   ■ Various

14%
8%
78%

Figure 7: Relative share of different religions in the category 'religion'

Secondly, the dominant position of public policy as the counter-terrorism strategies by governments and other (international) state-actors against non-state actors and international terrorist networks, is clearly present in the journal *Terrorism and Political Violence,* as can be seen in figure 6. Interestingly, when the category 'public policy' is combined with the geographical scope of 'Europe', the central question in the article is turned towards counter-

insurgency and counter-terrorism strategies by the European Union as a whole, instead of national counter-terrorism policies. This observation seems to suggest two possible trends: either the authors of those articles overestimate the ability of joint EU-forces against terrorism, or the EU is indeed the only viable forum through which member states can effectively combat terrorism and political violence.

Articles on technological matters come third in line and are often intertwined with public policy in the sense that they frequently address the question of how to combat various techniques of terrorist attacks, or how to diminish the dangers of nuclear warfare. A small side-note here is necessary with regard to the joint examination of articles and book reviews. Especially in this category of technology, one sees a notable difference between the relative share of 'technology' writings amongst articles and book reviews: there are clearly more book reviews on technology than articles. A possible explanation for this observation is that technological matters such as chemical or nuclear weapons require more in-depth, specialized, and lengthy analyses in monographs than for relative 'short' journal articles for a general public. As a consequence, one finds more books on technologies of terrorism and political violence in comparison to journal articles. Similarly, technology is more often addressed in book reviews (hence not as central topic itself, but as the main theme of a reviewed monograph) than in original articles.

A little below the relative share of technology comes the category of articles and book reviews on psychological issues. Given the fact that terrorism is often the result of radicalization of individuals, one might argue that the psychological perspective would have deserved a bigger share of the journal. On the other hand, it is also arguable that the category 'religion' is somewhat psychological in the sense that religion generally refers to individual convictions and group-think processes. The fact that political violence ('politics') only comes fifth in row, reinforces the image that this journal emphasizes mainly the non-state terrorism and state-initiated counterinsurgency.

Bearing in mind the data and figures above, it can be cautiously concluded that *Terrorism and Political Violence* suffers from a lack of non-Western points of view on terrorism and political violence. Throughout reading the latest five volumes of the journal, and after interpreting the quantitative results, the impression arises that 'the world out there' is characterized as the civilized West versus the savage Rest. Hence, a certain core of the argument of Burnett and Whyte about the consequences of the RAND-St. Andrews influence – as referred to in the introduction of this analysis – seems to contain some validity if one

examines closely what is actually being said and written in the journal. Put differently, due to the emphasis on terrorism and political violence by non-state actors versus counter-terrorist public policies by (inter)national governmental bodies, the journal

Qualitative assessment: 'hot topics' and omissions

Based on this preliminary conclusion, some qualitative analyses might illustrate the preceding parts on the quantitative results. An important issue concerns the so-called 'hot topics': which topics are a recurring issue of debate among scholars in the field of terrorism and political violence studies? The first that comes to the fore is the global war on terror. As demonstrated by the facts that religion almost always refers to Islam, and the presence of a significant portion of articles on public policy against terrorist attacks by global Jihad networks, suggests that the West perceives a constant threat by Muslim extremists. Moreover, the date 9/11 and the terms post-9/11 and Homeland Security (referring to USA's internal affairs) is so evidently present in a majority of the articles on the 'new terrorism' that this reinforces the idea of the West versus the Rest and the global war on terror. Christian radicalization or sectarian movements are amply mentioned, although they are quite present in the USA (consider for example the attacks on employees of abortion clinics by radical anti-abortion Christians).[15]

Another hot topic concerns the crucial role of the media and internet in framing terrorism and political violence. This idea is often referred to in the context of reaching a world-wide audience by the terrorists in order to spread maximal fear.[16] The influential role of globalization in altering the debates surrounding terrorist and violent acts is addressed as well. The causal relationship between globalization and 'new terrorism' is often debated. For instance, does globalization cause the increasingly transnational nature of terrorist networks, or do the terrorist networks (i.e. Global Jihad Muslims) speed up the processes of internationalizing crime and counter-terrorism strategies?

In addition, the psychology 'behind' terrorism and political violence is being debated frequently in the journal. Two theses are often addressed in this context: on the one hand it is

---

[15] Gabriel A. Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan (eds), *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003).
[16] E.g.: Brigitte L. Nacos, Yaeli Bloch-Elkon and Robert Y. Shapiro, 'Prevention of Terrorism in Post-9/11 America: News Coverage, Public Perceptions, and the Politics of Homeland Security,' *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 1 (2008): 1-25.
E.g.: Truls Hallberg Tønnessen, 'Training on a Battlefield: Iraq as a Training Ground for Global Jihadis,' *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 4 (2008): 543-562.

stated that terrorist behaviour ultimately comes from economic and social relative deprivation. Put differently, if someone finds him- or herself marginalized in society, he or she is more likely to radicalize and to resort to violent acts, whether they are religiously inspired or not (see for instance 'Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism' by Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko, volume 20, no. 3 (2008), pp. 415-433). On the other hand, there are those scholars who argue that terrorists are often the well-off middle class and that they deliberately and 'rationally' choose to pursue radical goals with violent means. In between are those scholars who recognize both arguments and compromise by extending the idea of 'existential anxiety' to non-economic factors as well (see for example 'The Logic of Terrorism: Existential Anxiety, the Search for Meaning, and Terrorist Ideologies' by Megan K. McBride in volume 23, no. 3 (2011), pp. 560-581).

One final recurrent topic throughout the five volumes analysed is the technological developments of weapons and other warfare-techniques. In the articles, this topic mainly touches upon the role of internet in training terrorists and upon the details of precision-bombing and suicide attacks. The threats of and combat against nuclear warfare and bio-chemical weaponry is also frequently brought to the fore, but foremost in book reviews. As mentioned earlier, this is largely due to the somewhat technical details that need more extensive explanation than the 10,000 words-maximum of articles that is allowed by the journal.

One element that is not addressed sufficiently is the relationship between religion and violence. The question to what extent religion actually contributes to the radicalization of individuals and organizations, and causes the subsequent terrorist acts and political violence is not addressed in the journal at all, whereas many articles do take religious reasons or religious actors to be the cause of violence and terrorism quite often. As a consequence, the reader may believe after these five volumes that religion is not innocent in the sense that religious ideas and convictions have the potential to result in violence. However, there are also scholars who critically question a direct causal link. William Cavanaugh for example argues that the distinction between secular and religious terrorism and violence is 'unhelpful, misleading, and mystifying, and should be avoided altogether.' [17] As a consequence, Cavanaugh concludes that violence itself should be analysed as the problem and not religion.

---

[17] William T. Cavanaugh, 'Sins of Omission: What "Religion and Violence Arguments" Ignore,' The Hedgehog Review 6 (2004): 50.

In this journal however this fundamental question is hardly addressed, and religion often is indeed classified as the problem itself and an important source of radicalization.

A related argument has been raised by B. Lincoln who addresses exactly the scholarly tendency to oversimplify the understanding and defining of religion. He proposes a flexible account of religion, ranging from maximalist to minimalist interpretations and applications. Thereby he allows religion to play a (important) non-violent role in society.[18] The beneficiary contribution of religion to peace building processes is illustrated by Appleby and Little in 2004.[19] They shed light on the so-called 'ambivalence of the sacred' (this is the capacity of religion to stimulate intolerance and hatred on the one hand, versus the stimulation of tolerance and actions on behalf of the others on the other hand). They observe an increasing role for religious leaders and organizations in peace-building processes and in the civil society. Peace building is understood in this article as the overlapping processes between conflict management, conflict prevention, peace enforcement, and peace building. Religious actors can perform as heralds, observers, and peacekeepers in the maintenance of the peaceful status quo; they can perform as advocates, observers, and mediators in the process of conflict transformation; and they can perform as educators and institution builders in the post-conflict phase of peace building and structural reform. Appleby and Little conclude that the ambivalent role of religion in conflicts needs to be studied more extensively before being able to make strong claims about understanding religion and structural reform. It is exactly this more extensive research into the ambivalent role of religion in terrorism and political violence that misses in *Terrorism and Political Violence*. Bearing in mind figures 6 and 7, this is an important point to make since the most often addressed topic in this journal is precisely religion.

---

[18] Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors. Thinking about Religion after September 11*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006).
[19] David Little and Scott R. Appleby, 'A Moment of Opportunity? The Promise of Religious Peacebuilding in an Era of Religious and Ethnic Conflict,' in Religion and Peacebuiliding, ed. Harold Coward and Gordon.S. Smith (Albany: State University of New York Press): 1-23.

Conclusion

All in all, and notwithstanding the critical points mentioned above, *Terrorism and Political Violence* is an important forum for scholars who study terrorism and political violence. It addresses multiple perspectives such as religion, public policy, psychology, technology, and others. Based on the quantitative and qualitative analysis above, this conclusion comes forward with two critical points which are open to improvement. First, the identity and background of the editorial board and of the contributing authors is too much limited to North-America and Europe. As the geographical scope of the articles themselves show, terrorism and political violence is mostly conducted elsewhere, which would argue for a more internationally oriented board. The editorial board of *Terrorism and Political Violence* could, for instance, seek cooperation with research institutes from the African continent in order to broaden its horizon. As a consequence of the 'Western bias', the so-called hot topics in the journal are mainly 'hot' for Americans and Europeans. The recurrent articles on the Global War on Terror as a response to a supposed global Jihad is the major explanation of the high rates for religion and public policy-oriented articles during the last five years. Furthermore, the term 'religion' suggests a broad range of beliefs and convictions but in fact most articles on religion refer to Islam as 'the enemy'. Again, this could be due to the Western bias in the journal.

Besides this Western bias, I believe there is enough ground to argue that *Terrorism and Political Violence* is too little concerned with the possible roles for religion in solving or diminishing terrorism and political violence. As scholars from religious studies have shown, there is much more to religion than only its radicalization potentials. Of course, religion is not innocent (just as any other radical political ideology or nationalism), but the causal relationship between religion and violence is not that clear cut. Given the fact that Western authors are in the absolute majority in this journal, a seemingly secular approach (due to the post-Enlightenment strict separation between the state and religion) to religion is reflected in the content of the articles as well, whether consciously or not.

Hence, besides offering a solid basis for the scholarly debates on terrorism and political violence (as illustrated in its steady middle-range positions in international journal rankings, and the relatively small number of journals that deal explicitly with terrorism), *Terrorism and Political Violence* has still much to win by adding a more interdisciplinary and international perspective on the subject matters. Possibly, there is some space for improvement by broadening their traditional – and somewhat conservative – horizons.

Bibliography

Journal

Rapoport, David C. and Max Taylor (eds). *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19-23 (2007-2011). Oxford: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ftpv20.

Other literature

Almond, Gabriel A., R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan (eds). *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003.

Burnett, J. and Dave Whyte. 'Embedded Expertise and the New Terrorism.' *Journal for Crime, Conflict and the Media,* 1, no. 4 (2005): 1-18.

Cavanaugh, William T. 'Sins of Omission: What "Religion and Violence Arguments" Ignore', *The Hedgehog Review* (Spring 2004): 34-50.

Hallberg Tønnessen, Trulls. 'Training on a Battlefield: Iraq as a Training Ground for Global Jihadis.' *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 4 (2008): 543-562.

Institute for the Study of Religion, Violence, and Memory. 'Terrorism and Political Violence Book Reviews.' http://www.uwosh.edu/isrvm/bookreviews/index.php.

Lincoln, Bruce. *Holy Terrors. Thinking about Religion after September 11*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006.

Little, David and Scott R. Appleby. 'A Moment of Opportunity? The Promise of Religious Peacebuilding in an Era of Religious and Ethnic Conflict.' In *Religion and Peacebuiliding*, edited by Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004, 1-26.

Maliniak, D. and others. 'Women in International Relations.' *Politics & Gender* 4, no. 1 (2008): 122-144.

Merari, Ariel and others. 'Making Palestinian "Martyrdom Operations"/"Suicide Attacks": Interviews With Would-Be Perpetrators and Organizers.' *Terrorism and Political Violence* 22, no. 1 (2009): 102-119.

Merari, Ariel and others. 'Personality Characteristics of "Self Martyrs"/"Suicide Bombers" and Organizers of Suicide Attacks.' *Terrorism and Political Violence* 22, no. 1 (2009): 87-101.

Nacos, Brigitte L., Yaeli Bloch-Elkon and Robert Y. Shapiro/ 'Prevention of Terrorism in Post-9/11 America: News Coverage, Public Perceptions, and the Politics of Homeland Security.' *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 1 (2008): 1-25.

Schillinger, Kurt. 'Global Terror: Africa not Immune to Terror.' *Business Day,* 7 October 2005, http://www.saiia.org.za/security-and-terrorism-in-africa-opinion/global-terror-africa-not-immune-to-terror.html.

Schmid, Alex P. *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2011.

UCLA Burkle Center for International Relations. 'Terrorism and Political Violence.' http://www.international.ucla.edu/burkle/article.asp?parentid=23350.

Wilkinson, Paul and David C. Rapoport. 'Editorial Manifesto.' *The Journal of Terrorism Research* 1, no. 1 (1989): 5-6.