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DICOURSE ON TERRORISM

Diploma Thesis

UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS IN BRATISLAVA
FACULTY OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

DISCOURSE ON TERRORISM
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Tutor: PaedDr. Eva Stradiotová, PhD.

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Bc. Adam Chrenko

Affirmation

I hereby affirm that this thesis represents my own original research and writing and that I have referenced all appropriate source materials.

Date:

.....

(Student's Signature)

Abstrakt

CHRENKO, Adam: Diskurz o terorizme. – Ekonomická univerzita v Bratislave. Fakulta aplikovaných jazykov. – Vedúci záverečnej práce: PaedDr. Eva Stradiotová, PhD. – Bratislava: FAJ, 2021. 109 s.

Cieľom záverečnej práce je komplexne prehodnotiť, objasniť vývoj a momentálnu situáciu v oblastiach terorizmu a boja proti terorizmu na svete a objektívne zhodnotiť doposiaľ známe a zavedené mechanizmy na boj proti terorizmu. Práca má 3 hlavné časti. Prvá časť rozoberá počiatky a dôvody vzniku terorizmu, teroristickej mentality a teroristických hnutí. Druhá časť sa zaoberá momentálnym stavom a vývojom v oblasti boja proti terorizmu a rozoberá hlavné mechanizmy a možnosti do budúcnosti, kde autor prezentuje svoje odporúčania. Tretie časť je zameraná na zhodnotenie Vojny proti Terorizmu USA a Bidenovho kroku ukončiť ju a opustiť Afganistan na základe nadobudnutých poznatkov.

Kľúčové slová: terorizmus, boj proti terorizmu, radikalizácia, vojna proti terorizmu

Abstract

CHRENKO, Adam: Discourse on Terrorism. – University of Economics in Bratislava. Faculty of Applied Languages. Department of Intercultural Communication. – Tutor: PaedDr. Eva Stradiotová, PhD. – Bratislava: FAJ, 2021. 109 p.

The aim of this thesis is to provide a complex overview of the development and current situation in the areas of terrorism and counterterrorism and objectively evaluate known and implemented mechanisms for countering terrorism. The thesis has 3 main parts. The first part describes the roots and underlying causes of emergence of terrorism, terrorist mentality, and terrorist groups. The second part analyzes the current state and developments in the area of counterterrorism, the main mechanisms, possible improvements with author's recommendations. The third part evaluates the US War on Terrorism and Biden's recent decision to exit Afghanistan based on the acquired theoretical knowledge.

Key words: terrorism, counterterrorism, radicalization, War on Terrorism

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Introduction

Over the centuries and throughout the years, people have managed to improve their situation and lives significantly. According to Steven Pinker, one of the most influential thinkers of our time, humankind has improved incredibly in almost every single aspect. However, since the 11th century humanity has been plagued by the phenomenon of modern terrorism. No amount of scientific, humanitarian, or social progress has been able to eradicate this form of political violence yet.

Terrorism remains one of the major global problems and nowadays, with the World going through an unprecedentedly difficult situation, with the differences among countries and social classes deepening more than ever, with a major long-term immigration crisis on our hands, it might be easy to turn a blind eye on this issue. Dubbed by various institutions and reports (United Nations, Europol), terrorism has been considered as one of the major and most acute threats facing humankind, with some sources even referring to the present age as the “Age of Terrorism”.

This thesis goes to explain why terrorism is a global problem even nowadays, why is it solvable, and why we should dedicate more time to solving it not only on the level of governments and international organizations, but also at universities. Over the 5 years at the University of Economics in Bratislava studying Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication, there hasn't been a single class, not even a single module of a class, dedicated to the issue of terrorism in the World. That is why we need to shed a light on the reasons why this threat should be taken more seriously even in our geographic location and why it is important to dedicate more time to the phenomena of terrorism and radicalization in the process of education on all levels.

The author explores possible ways of mitigating the threat of terrorism. Firstly, by assessing the level of terrorist activity around the World through valid metric. Subsequently, by looking at the operation of various terrorist groups around the World, thus trying to understand their motivations, mentality, and goals. Working with an assumption that it is almost impossible to counter a threat we do not understand, exploring the fundamental

motivations of terrorist groups is the first step towards more efficient counter-terrorist policies. Thirdly, the author looks at what has been done in the area of counterterrorism through case studies and aims to point out the shortcomings and possible room for improvement.

Due to the topic of terrorism having been explored and perceived in rather parochial way, this thesis aims to thoroughly analyze the concept and phenomenon of terrorism from various points of view, in order to establish a more profound understanding thereof with the ambition to subsequently devise more comprehensive, and most of all, more efficient approach to countering terrorist ideology. In this endeavor, the author makes use of various types of sources including seminal materials elaborated by the leading experts in the field. However, in order to provide a holistic picture, it is not sufficient to rely solely on highly specialized experts. As further outlined in the thesis, it is necessary to apply an interdisciplinary approach with the attempt to find the most efficient connections across various highly specialized fields to devise efficient countermeasures to terrorism and arrive at substantiated and holistic conclusions. Therefore, the author draws on various philosophical and ideological approaches, as well as on policies of international institutions and experts.

Although the subject of terrorism is much more complex than what is laid out in the following diploma thesis, this paper is an attempt to capture the most important aspects of the phenomenon efficiently, i.e. the ones crucial for understanding the phenomenon itself and for countering it efficiently. With this in mind, the thesis goes on to explain the history, definitions, mentality, possibility of measuring terrorism, the most important terrorist groups of our time, the nature of their activities, and the most recent developments on the global scene of terrorism and counterterrorism.

The analytical aspect of the thesis lies in various case studies outlined in respect to their theoretical concepts, incorporated logically within the subject matter. In the analytical part itself, the author analyzes the most recent developments in the US War on Terrorism and the possible global implications and ramifications of President Biden's decision to retreat from Afghanistan by September 2021. This part will serve to synthesize all the outlined theoretical concepts and apply them in the process of evaluation of Biden's most recent decision and the American activity in the region.

1. Current state of knowledge at home and abroad

1.1 A brief history of terrorism

In order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of terrorism, its origins and evaluate the measures devised to combat it, we first need to explore the history of this phenomenon. This section is dedicated to a brief overview of historical development of terrorism in the spirit of Stephen Hawking's "A Brief History of Time".

Terror and terrorism as instruments to express political power have been around for centuries (Aldis, 2007). Matusitz (2013) identifies 4 waves of terrorism from a diachronic point of view. The First Wave (19th century), The Second Wave (colonial wave), The Third Wave (contemporary). The Fourth Wave of terrorism becomes "the war of all against all" with the aim to destroy everything, implying the emergence of a "Culture of Terror"— which is distinct mainly due to presence of religious justifications for terrorism (Matusitz, 2013, p. 12).

Burgess (2003) provides a brief and succinct overview of the history of terrorism. First and foremost, Burgess points to the fact that terrorism is not a new phenomenon. In fact, activities of terrorist nature far predate our modern use of the term "terrorism". The use and meaning of the term terrorism have been adapting and changing according to the developing nature of the attacks. The origin of the term and its use could be dated back about 2000 years. Nowadays terrorism suggests political connotation and majority of terrorism-related discourse has been focused around it.

Diachronically, the first acts resembling terrorism were religiously motivated killings in a broad daylight aimed to send a message to Romans and Jews. Other religious groups employed methods that resembled terrorism, e.g. Assassins (a group of Shia Muslims) in the 11th century. The group was founded by Hassan Sabbah and was active in regions of Middle East, Europe, Africa, and Central Asia up until the 13th century (Aldis, 2007). Assassins attacked and stabbed to death politicians and clerics opposed to the version of Islamist ideology they were spreading. Burgess (2003) points to the origin of the term assassin as related to consumption of hashish, an interesting relationship to narcotics that would prevail

over centuries. Their actions were carried out in broad daylight, at religious sites on holy days in order to draw as much public attention as possible. They would often sacrifice their own lives.

The tactics of sacrifice was further employed by the groups of Jewish Zealots in Palestine and Thugees – a Hindu religious cult, motivated by the Hindu goddess of terror and destruction, Kali. However, this tactic was aimed at immediate targets rather than influencing a wider audience. The Thugees were a group active from the seventh until mid-19th century and responsible for more than 1 million deaths. For a long time, they had been the last instance of religiously motivated terrorism until its reemergence in the modern era (Burgess, 2003).

According to Rapoport, a professor of political science focused on the study of terrorism at UCLA, prior to the 19th century, religion provided the only justification for terror. The first emergence of the word “terror” in its modern meaning was recorded in the era of the French Revolution (Burgess, 2003). Varieties of the word had been previously used and the etymology could be traced to Latin “terrere” (frighten). Its modern meaning was achieved by adding “-ism” at the end, from the French “isme” referring to a “practice” (Matusitz, 2013).

The term in its sense originated during the French Revolution, when the people who voiced their opposition to the Revolution were punished, usually by death – this period was known as the “Reign of Terror” – from French “Le Gouvernement de la Terreur” (Matusitz, 2013), lasting from 1793-1794 - in French *regime de la terreur* (The History of the Word [online]). Reign of Terror was a large-scale violent campaign by the French State (Matusitz, 2013). Within the context of French Revolution, the term did not have the negative connotation it is associated with nowadays and was seen as a vital instrument for the survival of French Republic. Robespierre associated the term with justice and virtue and saw its emergence as a consequence of democracy (Burgess, 2003).

In the late 18th century, the term acquired its negative connotation due to revolutionaries being executed by the French government and this meaning was transferred to English officially for the first time by Edmund Burke – by referring to the conduct of French government as “terrorism” (Burgess, 2003).

New form of the word “terrorism” had a political connotation and was associated with nationalism, citizenship, and secularism. The meaning of the word seemed to have shifted to denote a set of tools for achieving Marxist goals. In connection to Marxist ideals, the term was for the first time connected to propaganda and conveying a message to an audience larger than the immediate victims (Burgess, 2003). This was achieved by killing for political goals (Matusitz, 2013).

This was first put to practice in Russia by the populist group Narodnaya Volya (NV - People’s Will) in 1800s to oppose the Tsarist regime due to its oppressive nature. NV targeted high-ranking officials representing the regime and was headed by Andrei Zhelyabov – mastermind behind the assassination of Czar Alexander II. (Matusitz, 2013). Russian NV inspired the rise of nationalism around the World, notably adopted in Ireland by the Fenians. Terrorist measures were then adopted by various groups and anarchists around the World. America registered the first signs of terrorism in the transatlantic fusion of IRB (Irish Republican Brotherhood) and the Fenians (Burgess, 2003).

The term in its form “terrorism” was then used on several occasions during the American revolutionary period by Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, and James Madison (all of them referring to the situation in Europe) – however, still retaining the meaning of “violence perpetrated by a government”. Only later on can we see the shift of its meaning – again, in the communication between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, when Adams insinuates “terrorism” being perpetrated *against* the government, and not *by* the government. In their ensuing correspondence, Adams mentions the term in connection with Machiavellianism (The History of the Word [online]), i.e. “the view that politics is amoral and that any means necessary can justifiably be used in achieving political power” (Machiavellianism [online]). This concept is reminiscent of the Fenian attitude towards achieving the free, independent Republic of Ireland in the late 19th century, communicated especially by Jeremiah O’Donovan Rossa, a great advocate of the Machiavellian principle of using any means necessary. This way, elaborating on Adams’s connection he made between “terrorism” and “Machiavellianism”, we could see terrorism as a “subset” of the larger concept of Machiavellianism which, albeit indirectly, justifies the use of political violence and terrorism as such. Nevertheless, up until the early 20th century, the term had been almost exclusively associated with violence perpetrated by the state.

During the First and Second World War, the term “terror” was often used to describe atrocities carried out by the totalitarian regimes (Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Stalinist Russia). Later on, the term was used to describe the activities of authoritarian governments in Africa and Latin America. At this point, it is important to make the distinction that emerged between “terrorism” and “terror”. In contemporary political discourse, terrorism is ascribed to non-state entities, while terror relates to state oppression and violence (Burgess, 2003). The latter is not the main focal point of this thesis, even though some sections may refer to it superficially.

According to Post (2007) the modern era of terrorism could be dated to 1960s and 1970s. The emergence of modern terrorism is the result of European colonialist and expansionist tendencies after the Second World War. Colonialism led to formation of guerrilla and paramilitary groups, closely related to terrorist groups. Although guerrilla groups are not the focus of this thesis, groups of Latin America should be mentioned in diachronic context, such as FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) or Peruvian Shining Path (SL – from Spanish, Sendero Luminoso) (Burgess, 2003).

Terrorist groups quickly learned to leverage the influence of today’s media to their advantage and promoted their successful activities internationally. This supported the emergence of nationalist groups motivated by ethnic ideologies. Among these for example the Basque ETA or Irish PIRA (Burgess, 2003). Both groups are further explored in the thesis in the subchapter “Types of terrorism”. Historically, many terrorist groups often lost focus of their cause or became less radical and more politically active.

In the 1980s the countries of Middle East were increasingly becoming the epicenter of the revival of religiously motivated terrorism. These developments leading to the events of September 11, 2001 and their respective consequences were in many ways a rude awakening and a reminder that religiously motivated terrorism had been around for centuries. The contemporary global discourse on terrorism has been largely influenced by the events of 9/11 and the resulting US-led “Global War on Terrorism” (Burgess, 2003).

Burgess (2003) concludes that if terrorism is to be countered effectively, we need to develop much deeper and broader understanding of the current threat. Without such an

approach, the threat will become unsolvable and unmanageable. In the spirit of Burgess’s stipulation, the further outlined thesis aims to provide a profound and complex understanding of terrorism.

1.2 Defining terrorism

In order to establish efficient countermeasures to combat terrorism, first we need to understand the basic definition of the concept and its implications. In the following section the author outlines major approaches to defining terrorism, provides their overview, and evaluates which definition is the most suitable for the phenomenon as we know it today as well as for the purposes of this thesis.

Over the years, there have been many attempts at defining what terrorism means or stands for. As also stated in the Global Terrorism Index report for 2020: “Defining terrorism is not a straightforward matter. There is no single internationally-accepted definition of what constitutes terrorism, and the terrorism literature abounds with competing definitions and typologies.” (IEP, 2020, p. 7). Matusitz (2013) provides a statistical overview of studies aimed at defining terrorism. There are over 200 known definitions of terrorism. The following table summarizes the emergence of various concepts within these definitions, as the result of content analysis conducted by Schmid and Jongman:

CONCEPT	PERCENTAGE OF EMERGENCE
Violence	83.5%
Political goals	65%
Causing fear and terror	51%
Random targeting	21%
Victimization of civilians and noncombatants	17.5%

Based on Schmid’s and Jongman’s analysis of the most commonly associated terms, the author suggests the following definition for uses at the academic level: Terrorism is a type of violence aimed to create a climate of fear and terror by random targeting of civilians and noncombatant targets in order to achieve political goals.

Alex P. Schmid, researcher at the International Centre for Counter Terrorism (ICCT) and a member of Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) offers the following definition:

“Terrorism refers to a political communication strategy for psychological mass manipulation whereby unarmed civilians (and non-combatants such as prisoners) are deliberately victimised in order to impress third parties (e.g. intimidate, coerce or otherwise influence a government or a section of society or international public opinion), with the help of portrayals of demonstrative violence in front of audiences and/or for coverage in mass or social media. Terrorism from non-state actors is often a strategy of provocation aiming at societal polarisation and conflict escalation while state- or regime terrorism serves the purpose of repression and social control. Terrorism as psychological warfare is also an irregular and illegal tactic in armed conflict where it can be used by one or both sides.” (ICCT, 2016, p. 14)

While the former definition compiled by the author of this thesis is more useful in the area of academia, due to its brevity and succinct character, Schmid’s definition seems more well-rounded, all-encompassing, and overall more complete – more suitable in the area of international relations and law enforcement.

The quest for the “right” or sole definition is, in the case of terrorism, futile. Nevertheless, scrutiny of these definitions will provide us with an overall better understanding of the phenomenon, which is crucial in developing efficient, long-lasting counter measures. Even the fact that the concept is so difficult to define unequivocally, should hint at the type of strategies that should be used to combat terrorism in the future. We cannot fight an amorphous, ever-changing, hybrid threat with stiff, and rigorous measures. Terrorism “is a concept that no one can clearly define and even involves actors that no one can specifically identify. While some definitions are precise, others lack important aspects of terrorism (e.g., global connections, ideological roots, etc.)” (Matusitz, 2013, p. 4).

1.3 Terrorism – causes and objectives

The phenomenon of terrorism currently cannot be pinpointed to a certain area or region of the World. Acts of terrorism are perpetrated by a wide range of subjects regardless of political system, although some regimes have proven to be more susceptible to terrorism than other. There are many factors that might be argued to cause or incite terrorism, among some that Richardson (2006), an Irish political scientist specialized in the study of terrorism, mentions are: nationalist, individual, political, economic, and cultural factors. More often than not, the root cause of terrorism in a certain area seems to be a combination of two or more of these factors.

Schmid (2016) summarizes the typology of causes and objectives as follows:

Causes:

- injustice (objective or perceived)
- repressive authoritarian regimes/suppression
- foreign policy
- alienation, marginalization, humiliation

Objectives:

- awaken revolutionary spirit in masses
- influence the world news system reporting or other target groups
- gain recruits, network growth
- revenge (for perceived injustice)
- protest against foreign policy, authoritarian regimes

Matusitz (2013) summarizes causes of terrorism based on research and summaries by various experts in the field: religious fanaticism (mostly radical religious Islamism), oppression (on the side of government), historical injustice (perceived), violation of international law, relative deprivation (present with globalization and migration), hatred of global order, financial gain (ransoms), racism, perceived lack of security, narcissism (in case of the terrorist leaders and neo-Nazi movements), communication and publicity, thrill-seeking, failure of communication. Chomsky sees terrorism as result of “the definitive failure of conventional channels of political expression and legitimate systems of authority” or failure of diplomacy (Matusitz, 2013, p. 18).

As to the causes of terrorism, Schmid refers to the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) which stipulates that terrorism occurs predominantly in countries experiencing internal conflict or that are involved in international armed conflicts. As Schmid (2016) argues, the ultimate goal of any terrorist movement is to escalate the conflict into war and take state power. In this way, as also further argued in this thesis, majority of terrorist movements would be considered a failure (with exception, to certain extent, of the IRA).

Aldis (2007), on the other hand, does not mention escalation to a full-out war among the main objectives of terrorism. The main objective is, as the term hints, to “terrorize” – create a climate of fear and disrupt normal functioning of the society and influence behavior of larger cohorts to comply with the terrorists’ interests and objectives. This influence has the form of ideology. Ideology is then driven and crafted based on grievances, consistent with

what Schmid outlined as the main causes. Therefore, the whole concept is based on ideology (many experts also denominate it as “story”) which, if discredited or without sufficient support, collapses.

As to the goals of terrorism, we can apply further, dichotomic division. Oppositional or conspiratorial objectives are aimed to overthrow a certain regime. Strategic goals aim to delegitimize the fundamental values of certain cultures or societies. The former is also more oriented towards seizing state power, while the latter aims to develop a self-regulated, independent group (Aldis, 2007).

1.3.1 Root causes of radicalization and terrorism

It is necessary to acknowledge the complex nature of radicalization and distinguish between internal and external dimensions of the process. The internal dimensions driving radicalization are for example: lack of debate about justification of violence (mainly in Muslim cultures), polarization and stigmatization, identity crisis, and alienation. Among external factors such as policy and perceived injustices. Often the perceived injustices are translated into activity on global stage, and vice versa, i.e. global developments are translated into local conflicts (Aldis, 2007).

One of the factors causing the nationalist and terroristic tendencies is, according to Richardson (2006) the process of globalization. While it would seem that globalization is a process of bringing the World and different cultural values together, the result we are seeing might be quite the opposite. Friedman stipulates that the result of globalization is a growing power of groups to collaborate which can be, in the context of terrorism, a precipice (Aldis, 2007). The fact that globalization is not in the same stage everywhere in the World creates a growing level of inequality. This, in turn, “provides both incentives and opportunities to organize, finance, and carry out terrorist attacks.” (Richardson, 2006, p. 6). While it might not be a direct cause of terrorism, it definitely permits for an environment where such tendencies and ideologies have reasons to thrive. Some experts advocate this stipulation, as Gotchev or Crenshaw, arguing that while globalization is not the direct cause of terrorism, it facilitates the emergence of this phenomenon (Richardson, 2006). Globalization is a phenomenon quite often related to the influence of the United States, breeding further and

deep-set resentment of this World super-power in regions such as the Middle East and Northern Africa.

Aldis (2007) also argues that internationalization (in the process of globalization) may cause the suppression of identity which has to be subordinated to a larger cohort. This may lead to seeing extreme measures as the only viable outlet to express one's grievances which can be done through ideological tool of terrorism.

Gotchev further argues that in increasingly globalized World, it is easier to organize and finance international terrorist activities and campaigns. The process of globalization itself imparts a certain amount of liberalization – of movement of goods, capital, and people (Richardson, 2006). Globalization, per Pinker (2018), has also allowed many countries to escape extreme poverty, while it has been demonstrated that it does not necessarily close the gap between the wealthier and poorer countries. Many experts are sceptic when it comes to globalization as they see it as a new form of “imperialism” when the economically stronger countries dominate the weaker (Richardson, 2006). A “domestic” form of imperialism was also the underlying reason for Irish rebellion and Fenian Dynamite Campaign in the 19th century, therefore, certain parallels could be drawn.

The alleged consequences of globalization are, among others, “unemployment, political tension, and the growth of religious fundamentalism” (Richardson, p. 105). Gotchev further evidences his stipulations by pointing to the African Muslim countries, a group of “weak globalizers” with the evidence of high rate of terrorist activity (Richardson, 2006). Looking at indices such as the GTI, further explored in this thesis, we would find that terrorism has been prevalently a problem of countries with lower levels of globalization. The argument can be made that globalization does not directly impact these countries; it impacts them indirectly. By other countries becoming more and more developed in the process of globalization, poorer countries are left behind and the gap between them becomes more profound, leading to more social grievances and radicalization. Pinker (2018) argues that the process of globalization has actually left the whole planet better off, the fact remains that the poorer countries have not been able to match the rate of development of wealthier countries. This is evidenced also in further sections of this thesis by evaluating the GTI.

Whether we are looking at direct or indirect negative impact of globalization, either way there is evidence that it has caused growing inequalities and tensions in certain regions of the World. The growing inequalities are evidenced by the rates of extreme poverty, which are used to justify radical measures and political violence (i.e. terrorism). Furthermore, globalization tends to infringe on traditional ways of life in the target regions which amplifies the motivation for political violence and terrorism. The infringement on cultural and societal values brings about the emergence of minorities, marginalized groups or so-called diasporas (Richardson, 2006).

Certain governments have become increasingly dependent on other governments (e.g. on the United States) and therefore have been disproportionately influenced by the global economic developments. Global trade has also facilitated easier access to more sophisticated weapons, therefore, contributing to deadlier terrorist attacks. Transnational corporations provide both targets and blueprints for terrorists. They are attractive targets due to the large scope of their influence; and a blueprint for terrorist international operations, as they can copy their structures and manner of expansion (Richardson, 2006).

The process of globalization, while improving certain parts of the World significantly, causes other regions to fall behind. Inequality and lack of equilibrium caused by globalization leads to occurrence of the infamous phenomenon of poverty. Poverty and growing inequalities, in turn, might be indirect or secondary factors inciting terrorism and radical ideologies in certain areas of the World. Poverty can be considered as a secondary factor to radicalization, while the primary is the influence of ideology (Aldis, 2007)

All types of grievances – political, social, racial, national, economic – are often coupled with religious extremism. While assuming that religion and terrorism are directly linked would be presumptuous and for many offensive, it's irrefutable that religious ideologies have been used as means of spreading extremism and justifying numerous acts of terrorism. Professor of Middle Eastern and Religious studies, John Esposito, clarifies the connection using probably the most predominant example in the form of "political Islam" (also Islamism, Islamic fundamentalism): "...terrorists like Osama bin Laden are driven not by religion but by political and economic grievances; however, they draw on a tradition of religious extremism to legitimize their actions." (Richardson, p. 7). Figures like Bin Laden completely disregarded the principles of Islam, the criteria for a just war and valid jihad –

“a holy war waged on behalf of Islam as a religious duty”, or “a crusade for a principle or belief”, e.g. protection of innocents and civilians, proportionate use of violence (jihad [online]). While “jihad” in its sense of holy war should be subject to moral conditions, the second definition is much vaguer and allows for numerous subjective interpretations – a common recurring issue in the concept of religious fundamentalism and religious justifications for terrorist actions. Understandably, we are still operating within a reality which can justify the expression “valid jihad” – historically, we should be able to argue that there is no such thing as “valid” war of any kind, regardless of the motivation or religious imperatives.

Another view of the process of radicalization is presented by Olivier Roy, a French political scientist. Coining the term “deculturation” as the main reason behind radicalization, he argues that while operating in Europe and other countries around the World, terrorists become disconnected from their cultural and religious backgrounds (Richardson, 2006). Furthermore, they feel their culture is being threatened and terrorism is their way of conveying their grievances. He ascribes radicalization to be a “consequence of the Westernization of Muslims being born and living in Europe” (Richardson, 2006, p. 163). This aspect of radicalization is further explored in the chapter about the complex relationship between migration and terrorism.

Roy points to emerging trend suggesting that radicalized individuals no longer come exclusively from Muslim countries or the region of Middle East. They are more likely to be either Europeans or migrants possessing European citizenship and have never been a part of any particularly Muslim or religious community or participated only peripherally. This peripheral participation meant that they were part of neither culture, living on the margins in both societies. A big problem Roy points to are also so-called “converts”, i.e. Europeans that converted to Islam and adopted the ideology of jihadism. Roy ascribes this issue of converting to the lack of leftist radical movements in Europe, which otherwise could provide an alternative (Richardson, 2006). The leftist ideologies are on the opposite side of the spectrum, radically opposed to any singular form of governing belief or leader. Generally, the radicalized individuals with leftist tendencies are prone to fight against any kind of suppressive or strictly regulated regime, which religious fundamentalism and jihadism definitely is. They are most likely to pursue “lone-wolf” terrorism or seek more “liberal”, antisystem organizations with lower degree of structure and control (or higher level of

independence), such as Anonymous. It is a viable alternative ideologically; however, this would only “move” the problem to a different part of the sociopolitical spectrum. Roy is right in the need of more balanced spectrum; however, this new spectrum should be connected by the ideas of humanism and reason, rather than any of the polarizing ideologies.

The role of religion in the process of radicalization is a polarizing and extremely sensitive topic, that is also why it has been under such careful scrutiny. Roy, however, points to possibly more important factor as a precursor to becoming radicalized in general. Radicalization often coincides with individuals or groups becoming increasingly disconnected from groups or cultural cohorts they used to be a part of (these may or may not be of religious nature). The feeling of being disconnected may result in desperation – a situation when people often resort to singular, radical measures. Religious ideologies such as Islam, in some cases, could represent the last resort for the individuals desperately looking for a cause or a deeper meaning. As Roy puts it, “radicalization has nothing whatever to do with Islam as a culture and everything to do with ‘deculturation and individualization’” (Richardson, 2006, p. 8). In the process of deculturation, a group is forced to abandon manifestations of its culture (language, customs). This may lead to a feeling of wrong-doing, weakness or helplessness and resorting to radical measures. It is only logical then, as many authors argue, that terrorism as the result of radicalization comes from the position of weakness, rather than strength.

The logical prevention of radicalization would then seem to be inclusion. However, the deculturation and subsequent individualization seems to occur when the individual becomes disconnected from their culture of origin; therefore, we need to ask ourselves, what is the reason behind them becoming disconnected in the first place? Indirectly, Roy drew the first lines connecting handling of migration with radicalization of individuals instead of attributing it solely to religion. To conclude Roy’s point of view, the solution which presents itself seems to be the one of inclusion and tolerance, possibly leading to lower propensity of the individual to become radicalized.

Further elaborating on the reasons behind radicalization is Richardson, who argues that “political and economic inequalities and social alienation are risk factors for the emergence of terrorism” (Richardson, 2006, p. 12) while she also outlines that religion can

make the problem of terrorism and political violence even more difficult to cope with, sharing this point of view with Juergensmeyer's following stipulations.

Juergensmeyer – American scholar and writer, best known for his contributions to the field of religious violence and global religion, looks at the links between religion and terrorism from a broader perspective. Leaning towards Esposito's point of view, Juergensmeyer contends that the problems of economic, social, and political nature “are being expressed through rebellious religious ideologies” (Richardson, 2006, p. 8) – embracing the stipulation of considering religion as the means for justification and spread of terrorist ideologies, rather than the root cause. According to Juergensmeyer, religion provides the means for “social mobilization, organizational networks, and, more importantly, a justification for violence.” (Richardson, 2006, p. 8). Naturally, Juergensmeyer does not argue that religion is a direct cause of terrorism, however, religious ideologies make it difficult to deal with this phenomenon – as religion and religious ideologies are considered to be “taboo” in many societies, it becomes increasingly difficult to get to the root cause of radicalization. Richardson also confirms both Juergensmeyer's and Roy's stipulations arguing that “terrorism is not caused by religion, globalization, political structures, or psychopaths” but that “political and economic inequalities and social alienation are risk factors for the emergence of terrorism” while also confirming that religion can be a tool for legitimizing the use of political violence (Richardson, 2006, p. 12).

Important aspect of radicalization is also the place where it happens. Among the most pronounced types of places are radical mosques, communities, and university groups. In the modern day, cyberspace has become instrumental in spreading radical ideology (Aldis, 2007).

1.3.2 Psychology of terrorism

Generally, the experts' consensus is that terrorism is “an extremely complex and diverse phenomenon” (Richardson, 2006, p.17). There are multiple motivations or causes tied to this behavior according to Jerrold M. Post, American psychiatrist and former analyst for the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency). He argues that instead of defining unified psychological pattern for terrorist mentality, we should be looking at multiple psychological motivations – using “interdisciplinary approach, incorporating knowledge from political,

historical, cultural, economic, ideological, and religious scholarship.” (ibid, p. 17). The argument for such wide, interdisciplinary approach only goes to show how complex the issue of terrorism really is – and maybe also why we have not been able to successfully eliminate it yet. It might become a truly daunting task to create a team or a task force of experts from all the fields mentioned above and get them to cooperate efficiently with the same goal; however, to effectively counter and prevent radicalization and terrorism it is of paramount importance. Seemingly, the approach on the side of counterterrorism lacks the unifying factor, which the terrorists find in the form of religious or radical ideologies.

Nevertheless, Post introduces an intriguing strategy – in understanding heterogeneity of the phenomenon and trying to “consider each terrorism in its own political, historical, and cultural context” (ibid, p. 17). This seems rather self-evident as terrorist mentality and motivations differ depending on the region, nationality, faith, culture etc. Being able to identify the crucial differences and target them efficiently seems to be logical and sophisticated way of thinking about counterterrorism in general. In order to implement such tailored strategy for each region and each type of terrorism, we would need highly specialized task forces and experts with years of experience in a given region, with given culture, political background, social and economic problems, and a high level of intercultural competence. Employing such professionals and tailoring the strategies to such extent, while maintaining a coordinated, multilateral effort requires a significant shift in the area of counterterrorism – further explored in the thesis.

An integral part of any terrorist movement is ideology. Ideology enables the groups to operate in a decentralized manner, influencing people around the World without any specific need of active recruitment or presence. It is the common objective that brings multiple possibly alienated individuals or marginalized groups together to fight for a cause. Ideologies appeal to the individuals’ motivations or grievances, gives them a sense of belonging (Richardson, 2006). The fact that terrorist organizations and groups are tied together by ideology allows them to operate in a de-centralized manner (Aldis, 2007).

Another important aspect in understanding the psychology of terrorism is the role of a leader. Leader plays an important role in unifying the “alienated, frustrated individuals into a coherent organization” (Richardson, 2006, p. 21). The right leader, with the ability to reach out to a large audience using religion (or any other common political, social, economic

grievance), at the right time, may result in very strong political campaign in general – and terrorism is not an exception. The leader conveys a unifying message that provides religious, political or ideological justification for the acts of terrorism (Post, 2007). An example of such a leader would be Osama bin Laden – idealized by many young people because of his anti-American orientation.

Post (2007) explains that terrorism is used to convey a message to audience other than the immediate victims. The fact that many terrorist attacks are random in nature and seemingly could happen anywhere and anytime incites great psychological fear. Furthermore, he emphasizes presence of the erroneous stereotype that terrorists must be psychopaths. The psychological studies have concluded that terrorists are mostly “normal” and do not demonstrate any distinct signs of psychopathology. The only trait that stands out is their strong sense of tribalism and collective identity.

Understanding the psychology of terrorism is an integral part of forming efficient counterterrorist policies. Post (2007) states that it is impossible to defeat someone whose motivations we don't understand.

The psychological (or cognitive) process of one becoming a terrorist could be divided into 3 stages:

- cognitive opening – usually caused by identity crisis
- religious seeking – to resolve the crisis (fundamentalism, radicalism)
- constructing sacred authority – e.g. charismatic leader (Aldis, 2007)

The author would suggest that the second stage be rather “ideological seeking” due to variety of motivations present in terrorist groups nowadays, ideology is a term that would encompass broader scale of motivations.

Availability bias

An important role in our perception of terrorism plays the “availability bias”, also known as the availability heuristic. This phenomenon is a “mental shortcut”, i.e. the notion that whatever information can be recalled quicker and easier must be more important. Also, the easier we seem to recall the information, we suppose much greater consequences. This

is heavily influenced by the media coverage and the news. The availability heuristic can also be applied to terrorism, as terrorist attacks get intensive coverage in the media nowadays. Some authors, e.g. Aldis (2006), even pose a question whether terrorism would be present in our society in the form we know it, had it not been for the publicity.

People become increasingly worried about their safety and them being targets of such an attack, quite irrationally, while statistically there is a much higher chance of their lives being threatened by, for example, a car accident. Pinker provides an example of such a bias related to the fear of being the target of terrorist attacks: "...a 2016 poll found that a large majority of Americans follow news about ISIS closely, and 77 percent agreed that 'Islamic militants operating in Syria and Iraq pose a serious threat to the existence or survival of the United States,' a belief that is nothing short of delusional." (Pinker, 2018, p. 42). While statistically, Pinker is right and the chance of mass terrorist attack on the US soil is fairly low (compared to other forms of violence as murders or road accidents), the history and emotion tied to the 9/11 attacks may justify such fears especially in case of American population. Naturally, the coverage of the attacks at the time caused a profound availability bias which has been present in American society and culture since 2001 and it is reflected in policies and handling of homeland security until today.

Štefančík (2012) also points to the importance of media and the role it plays in forming our perception of Muslims. He argues that the "apocalyptic" image of Muslim community being a threat to the European culture and values was common also in the past. The depiction of violent Muslim community along with growing influence of Arabian caliphate in the Middle Ages formed the sentiments held until today. The media often present migrants one-sidedly and stereotypically and put them in position of criminals, terrorists, and fanatics. This has been largely the result of the events of 9/11.

Terrorism and identity

Collective identity is a crucial concept in understanding terrorism as such and terrorist organizations in general. It is a leading motivating factor in developing terrorist mentality – the individual identity is subordinated to collective identity, i.e. the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few. Also, terrorists demonstrate many strong features of tribalism in their behavior as a group, as well as in individual cases. Often the cases of

terrorism presented as justified by religion have more to do with “virulent tribalism” than religion itself. The struggle is then transformed from focusing on religious fundamentalism to tribalism of transnational groups (Aldis, 2007). As Richardson (2006) also suggests, our identity is closely tied to the identity of our parents – therefore, the terrorist mentality can be passed on through generations. Example of such “hereditary” terrorist tendencies represent the terrorist groups in Northern Ireland and Palestine – terrorist mentality is tied to the history of land ownership and injustice in these regions.

Militant Islamist are quite different. Their reasons for political violence do not stem from a mentality passed on over generations, rather it is the result of hatred bred in their communities, in places of worship – the mosques. Nevertheless, also in this case, the generational social dynamics play an important role in forming their terrorist mentality.

The longing for prestige within one’s community is directly tied to the cause of one becoming a terrorist in the first place. Collective identity plays an absolutely crucial role in developing the terrorist mentality. The collective identity is cemented in individuals through “externalizing, justifying, and requiring violence against the enemy” (The Roots, 2006, p. 23). Also, in this case, the sooner these sentiments are fostered, the higher probability of the individual becoming a terrorist. Although the strength of group identity is immense, there have been individuals who decided to leave the group. It is crucial to understand why they chose to do so and what lead them to this decision, so we can devise tactics to disassemble such groups from the outside, appealing to the members’ mentality.

Case study: Suicide terrorism

Interestingly, suicide terrorism – an action almost exclusively carried out by an individual, is actually the result of group, tribalism or collective identity and the psychological dynamics behind it. The main driving force behind these acts for the perpetrator, according to the experts in the field, seems to be the acquisition of prestige within their community or group (Richardson, 2006). Although the actions are almost exclusively carried out by an individual, the concept behind it is closely tied to the group identity and the terrorist group’s goals to increase the psychological impact of their attacks on a wider audience while also raising their profile (Richardson, 2006). For these reasons, instrumental use of a charismatic figure in inspiring martyrdom is crucial. Nowadays,

inspiring martyrdom is in many ways easier, with the ability to reach out to a much wider audience using social networks and media.

Suicide attacks are usually concerted by groups (while individuals are instrumental in the implementation itself) with the goal to emotionally affect the culture of Islam and Muslims. This could be considered as quite an interesting argument, as usually these attacks resonate and impact the whole World regardless of religion or culture affiliation. There seems to be a long-established concept of carrying out such attacks near the places of religious significance and places with high concentrations of people. This obviously serves to multiply the effect of the attack as well as its subsequent coverage.

There may lie various reasons behind the act of suicide terrorism or the acts of martyrdom. The religious and psychological aspect of these acts is tied to *ummah* – membership in a community which the *shahids* (martyrs) are willing to exchange their lives for gaining posthumous immortality. Arguing with Islamist fundamentalist terrorists, with their motivations tied to something “beyond our reality” (belief in a better “afterlife”), seems to be an impossible task. Pinker elaborates on the concept of afterlife as a part of religious ideologies and sheds a little more light on the possible reasons behind the motivations for martyrdom: “Belief in an afterlife implies that health and happiness are not such a big deal, because life on earth is an infinitesimal portion of one’s existence; that coercing people into accepting salvation is doing them a favor; and that martyrdom may be the best thing that can ever happen to you” (Pinker, 2018, p. 30).

The first suicide attacks in modern history took place in Lebanon carried out by Hezbollah (The Party of God). This means of terrorism was then frequently used during the Israel-Palestine conflict as a weapon of last resort by Hamas. The act was strongly tied to the idea of self-sacrifice for the fight against oppression (Richardson, 2006). This also came with pride and prestige within the community. Hezbollah and Hamas resorted to suicide bombings mainly due to poor economic situation and overall sentiment of desperation and hopelessness (Post, 2007).

Matusitz (2013) also identifies various factors why groups resort to suicide attacks: historical grievances, resentment, humiliation, sorrow, and revenge. Aldis (2006) adds economic decline and lack of freedom.

The acts of suicide terrorism by religiously fundamentalist groups and their justification are the result of misinterpretation of scripture (religious verses in Koran). They consider martyrdom to be the highest level of jihad which should represent the depth of their faith (Post, 2007).

Lack of our ability to understand such a specific phenomenon within the concept of terrorism is making it significantly more difficult to counter or mitigate the dangers that arise in relation or as a result of suicide terrorism. The targeting has been random, the recruitment is unpredictable, and the forms are “mutating” and varying from attack to attack. Post (2007) conceded that suicide terrorism as a tactic is the most difficult to deal with and counter, although it is by no means new.

Regardless of the psychological motivations and identity patterns of terrorists, we can observe that terrorists and their activities have been gradually gravitating towards targeting democratic regimes. Democracy, however, is not characterized as an oppressive regime or a regime that would foster political and terrorist violence. The following section aims to examine certain weaknesses or indicators in global democracies which may serve as a motivation for terrorist activities.

1.3.3. Democracy and terrorism

Leonard Weinberg, who has served as a consultant to the United Nations Office for the Prevention of Terrorism, argues that in the recent decades, terrorism has seemed to be mostly a problem arising in democracies (Richardson, 2006). So why are democracies prone to terrorist outbreaks, or why are democracies the targets of terrorist organizations and attacks?

The word as such, “democracy”, with its etymology based in Greek language, constitutes of two parts. The first part of the word (“demo”-) meaning “people”, and the second part (-“cracy”) could be interpreted as “reign”. Therefore, reign of the people. So why does this “reign of the people” create, allegedly, such an environment for fostering political violence and terrorism?

Democracy is built upon freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembling and forming politically active groups. The Fenians in the 19th-century Ireland drew on the republican concept of democracy in their pursuit of Irish free state. These ideals were then, however, tainted by Machiavellian tendencies of their leaders, such as Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa. Nowadays, democracies support diversity of opinions and the process of embracing worldwide cultural and religious differences. These differences and embracing thereof has been a controversial topic. Samuel Huntington in his "Clash of Civilizations" (1996) argues that the cultural and religious differences among civilizations "become the primary source of terrorism today" (Matusitz, 2013, p. 12).

It is becoming increasingly more difficult to devise control mechanisms that would reliably warn us about the signs of growing radical or terrorist tendencies in democracies. According to Tore Bjørgo, Norwegian social anthropologist, professor and expert on the extreme right-wing politics, political extremism and terrorism, the so-called "transitional democracies" (i.e. the countries transitioning from a different regime) "are substantially more susceptible than long-standing democracies to outbreaks of terrorist violence" (Richardson, 2006, p. 46). An example would be a transition to democratic regime in Spain, following the death of Francisco Franco. Although Spain finally "escaped" the oppressive regime of Franco and transitioned to democratic form of government, it caused a spike in terrorist tendencies from organizations such as ETA.

On the other hand, if we look at "long-standing democracies", such as United Kingdom or USA, we can't confidently say that them being long-standing democracies reduced their susceptibility to political violence and terrorism. Weinberg argues that United Kingdom was the "most frequent site of internal terrorist violence from 1950 to 1995" (Richardson, 2006, p. 47) – for almost half a century.

Considering our modern understanding of democracy and its definitions, it seems counterintuitive to argue that democratic regimes either cause, foster or in any way incite terrorism. If anything, democracy should be the most perfect political structure yet, repelling any kind of political violence, extremist ideologies or terrorism – though in this context it doesn't seem to be so.

Probably the most outspoken and signature example of a democracy is the United States of America. Weinberg (Richardson, 2006) uses this example to show that democracies can also be the target of international terrorism. He ascribes the fact that the United States have been target of such massive and highly publicized terrorist attacks to their self-proclaimed positioning on the global political stage. Their claims for being the “no. 1 country in the World” often stirs more hatred, contempt, and envy around the World. Osama bin Laden in his “Letter to America” from 2002 (after the 9/11 attacks) implied that American citizens should be collectively accountable for the actions of the USA on international stage, because of their democratic regime – the rule of the people (Richardson, 2006).

Another aspect making democracies particularly vulnerable to terrorism are their open-border policies facilitating easy entry and exit. Individuals with terrorist tendencies or backgrounds may also aim to misuse the inherently humane approach to treatment of human beings. This, however, cannot be considered as a flaw in democratic regime, rather as a flaw in the process of identity and personality formation leading to radicalization. Democracies are often faced with more inhibitions when handling migration and this often drives the number of immigrants who, then, form diasporic communities within the target country higher. These groups consciously exploit the freedoms guaranteed by democratic regimes (freedom of movement and expression, looser security measures) and are able to inflict more harm at will (Aldis, 2007). The author elaborates on the topic in more detail in the chapter on correlation between terrorism and migration focused on European countries.

One of the main pillars of democracy is diversity. Diversity of opinions, political views and parties, diversity of races, religions, ethnicities etc. The concept of diversity is nowadays presented as incredibly crucial. Jan Oskar Engene, heading the Department of Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen in Norway, compiled a set of data spanning 45 years, focused on democratic regimes. He came to a conclusion that there exist “modest but meaningful statistical associations between ethnic diversity and the incidence of terrorist violence. The more ethnically diverse the country, the more terrorism it experiences, especially when the violence is motivated by ethnic grievances” (Richardson, 2006, p. 47). The following table summarizes some of the major indicators Engene’s study took into account with author’s commentary briefly explaining Engene’s findings.

INDICATOR	COMMENTARY
Diversity	The more diverse the population, the more terrorism it experiences.
Presence of ethnic minorities	Ethnically homogeneous nations experience far less political violence than democracies with permanent ethnic minorities.
Uneven income distribution	This affects the frequency of terrorist attacks.
Protection of civil rights and liberties, political system	Democracies that managed to ensure better protection of civil rights and liberties experienced less terrorism.
Extremist political parties	The more support for extremist political parties, the more terrorist violence.
History marked by serious discontinuities	Countries that have undergone revolutions, authoritarian regimes etc. have higher incidence of terrorism.

Engene’s findings conclude and indicate that terrorism is the most prevalent in “noisy and highly contentious democracies” and “the underlying conditions seemed to be extreme social and political fragmentation” (Richardson, 2006, p. 48).

While Engene’s findings are mostly pertaining to domestic, or home-grown, terrorism within democracies, democratic countries are also faced with the threat of international terrorism. In fact, democratic countries are often the targets of international terrorism, the prime example being the United States of America; however, all the major superpowers emerging after the First and Second World Wars have been subject to terrorist attacks (either domestic or international). International terrorism and political violence are nowadays the natural response of the countries where globalization has had a bad impact. Also, in case of the United States we could argue that their expansionist tendencies, especially in the Middle East, lead to them being a target of international terrorism (Richardson, 2006). Fenians in the 19th century Britain and Ireland also cited the colonial

and expansionist nature of the British Empire among the factors that had incited their terrorist activities.

Building on Engene’s studies, Martha Crenshaw – a founder of the “Mapping Militants Project” under the Stanford Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC), identified the direct conditions that trigger terrorist campaigns. Among the precursors to terrorism, Crenshaw includes radicalization, opportunity, and resources. Radicalization is a well-known term in this context. The “opportunity” Crenshaw mentions can be basically anything. Even an attempt at reconciliation or compromise may be perceived by the terrorists as a form of betrayal and further intensify their campaign (this has proven to be the case especially in dealing with terrorist groups in the Middle East, though not exclusively, as attempts at reconciliation with the IRA have also had a history of prompting more violence) (Richardson, 2006). With this in mind, resolving any type of situation involving terrorism or political violence seems to be extremely complex and difficult – especially due to multifaceted nature of the threat (various groups, from various backgrounds and various objectives). There is a host of issues arising from the outlined stipulations, above them also many the author will attempt to answer or clearly explore in the following sections.

1.3.4 GTI – Global Terrorism Index

This part will be dedicated to exploration of the current metrics devised to “measure” terrorism and its global impact, including the author’s insights about the effectiveness, possible uses, and alternatives to the existing indicators.

One of the possible alternatives of measuring the impact of terrorism is the “Global Terrorism Index” (IEP, 2020) compiled by the Institute of Economics and Peace, with the most recent results published in 2020 (data spanning years 1970-2019). The index covers 163 countries, 99.7 per cent of the World’s population and the data for 170,000 terrorist incidents. Each country is evaluated on a scale of 0 to 10; 0 meaning no impact of terrorism, 10 represents the highest impact of terrorism in a given country. For the intents and purposes of this index, the definition of terrorism that was agreed upon is as follows: “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation.”(IEP, 2020). This definition

implies not only the use of physical force but also its lasting psychological impact on the society. Another aspect of the GTI terrorism classification is that it accounts only for intentional, violent acts perpetrated by sub-national actors. Therefore, the database does not include terrorist crimes perpetrated by the states. Furthermore, two of the following three criteria must be met in order for an incident to be included in this metric:

- The violent act is carried out with the intention to achieve political, economic, religious or social goal.
- The violent act is carried out to convey a message to a larger audience than the immediate victims.
- Nature of the violent act is in contradiction to humanitarian law.

GTI report warns about the surge in far-right terrorism carried out by unaffiliated, rogue individuals. Majority of far-right terrorism was carried out in the United States and in a survey conducted in 2020 almost 40% of respondents (regardless of political affiliation – Democrats and Republicans) “felt that violence for political ends was at least partially justifiable” (IEP, 2020, p. 3). The report also outlines the most critical areas that need to be tackled in order to reduce influence of the terrorist groups. Among the major drivers of influence are “media coverage, recruitment of sympathizers, and finances” (IEP, 2020, p. 3). Furthermore, the report’s findings list some of the most crucial socio-economic factors associated with terrorism: weak rule of law and dissatisfaction of multiple groups within a society, more developed countries have issues with wealth gap, inequality and marginalization, in less developed countries – religious or ethnic conflicts and corruption are more closely associated with terrorism. These precursors also lead to more intense emergence of far-right terrorism in Western Europe and North America.

In order for the West to tackle the problem and its root cause, the countries need to address both the recruitment process and the motivations behind joining a terrorist organization. One of the possible solutions outlined in the IEP (2020) report is the way of social and economic inclusion of the marginalized groups.

On the other hand, the report stresses the spread of ISIL and affiliated groups in regions of Africa, with their attacks having impact on the whole World. According to the report, a major shift has been recorded in the attacks by ISIL as their focus went from the

Middle East to sub-Saharan Africa. Still, between the years 2014 and 2019, “France recorded the most ISIL-related terrorism deaths, followed by the United States and Belgium” (IEP, 2020, p. 5).

The study includes only such incidents that comply with the aforementioned criteria. The spectrum of terrorism impact ranges, as previously stated, from 0 to 10. The most recent available data for 2019 were published in the 2020 report. The countries most impacted by terrorism, with indicator of “very high impact”, were Afghanistan, Iraq, and Nigeria. Following was a larger group of countries, with the indicator “high impact”, including Syria, Somalia, Philippines, Burkina Faso (rank change of +15), and also Sri Lanka (rank change of +35 – the second highest, i.e. from “low” to “high” impact). The countries with “medium impact” are yet again a larger group. Mostly, the ranking in this group hasn’t changed, maybe except for two interesting cases. Ukraine improved by 11 places, meaning the impact of terrorism was reduced in the country. However, this group also includes New Zealand with the highest rank change of +79, therefore moving from the group of countries declaring “very low impact” to the group with “medium impact” of terrorism. Costa Rica recorded the second highest negative change of +74 moving from countries with “no impact” to the group with “very low impact”. Benin was a similar case with change of +65.

The ranking offers, however, also a brighter side – in the form of most improved countries, i.e. countries where the impact of terrorism was reduced the most. Interestingly, though, the most positive changes are in average much lower than the negative ones. Curiously, the best results were achieved by countries that managed to be reclassified from the group of “very low impact” to “no impact” – i.e. the countries which had been doing pretty well anyways. These include Bhutan, Dominican Republic, Iceland, and the United Arab Emirates – all with the score of 0 and the best positive rank changes in the range of -27 to -44. Slovakia with the score of 0.029 falls into category of countries with “very low” impact of terrorism. Among the countries least impacted by terrorism are for example Croatia, Cuba, Kosovo, Oman, North Korea, Slovenia, Portugal, Singapore, Turkmenistan etc.

GTI report also includes a list of the most fatal terrorist attacks in 2019 – ranked by the number of casualties. The most severe and the most numerous attacks were recorded in two regions of the World – the Middle East and Central Africa, with New Zealand being an

exception, or regional anomaly that given year. The report concludes by reviewing the results of the statistical research provided. Overall, the total number of deaths from terrorism in the World “declined for the fifth consecutive year in 2019, falling by 15 per cent to 13,826 deaths. This represents a 59 per cent reduction since the peak in 2014 when 33,438 people were killed in terrorist attacks.” (IEP, 2020, p.12)

GTI report also stresses the fact that many more countries improved than deteriorated (103 improved, only 35 deteriorated). One of the key attributes of this index is that “it measures the full impact of terrorism, which takes into account a weighted average of all terrorist activity over a five-year period.” (IEP, 2020, p.12). Nevertheless, terrorism still remains one of the major global threats, despite many indicators showing improvement. Interestingly, the report evidences that only 10 countries (Afghanistan with 41%, other countries from 10-4% mostly from the region of Africa and Middle East) accounted for 80% of the total deaths from terrorism, while the rest of the World for the remaining 20%. (7 of 10 countries with the largest increases in deaths from terrorism are in sub-Saharan Africa). This goes to show that terrorism is a problem particular to certain regions with the same traits and characteristics – the question then remains, what is it that ties these highly targeted regions together? What do they have in common? Analyzing the similarities and differences among these countries might lead us to better understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism as such and improve our ability to counter it all over the World.

1.3.5 Terrorist groups

The report also provides us with an overview of the largest and most active terrorist groups in recent history. The groups, or organizations, were selected based on the amount of deaths they had been responsible for in 2019. According to this statistic indicator, the first places are taken by Taliban, Boko Haram, ISIL, and Al-Shabaab. “These four groups were responsible for a total of 7,578 deaths from terrorism, representing 55 per cent of total deaths in 2019.” (IEP, 2020, p. 14). According to the reported data, “the past decade has seen the largest surge in terrorist activity in the past fifty years.” (ibid, p. 14).

Taliban

Taliban is a terrorist group of Afghani origin and one of the deadliest organizations in 2019 considering deaths from terrorism. Taliban took over Afghanistan in 1996 and

declared it an Islamic emirate. In 2001, as a result of the invasion of NATO, their regime was overthrown. Fractioned Taliban has been regrouping for years now and has led several coordinated insurgencies against the state of Afghanistan and the US-led forces in the region. The US swore it would withdraw all their forces by May of this year, decision which is also the subject of analytical part of the thesis. The main issues arising during the negotiations are different stances on Islam and women's rights.

According to the statistics laid out in the report, the number of Taliban attacks surged, while the attacks have become less fatal. Taliban's activities are predominantly focused on the region of Afghanistan (IEP, 2020).

Tactics: According to 2019 statistics, Taliban targets mostly police and military personnel, followed by government personnel. This is their way of trying to undermine the overall political stability and security of the region. Their tactics have been based in bombing attacks (roadside bombs, improvised explosives), armed assaults, and assassinations. All of these instances have been reported to increase by more than 30% compared to the previously examined period.

Boko Haram

Boko Haram is an Islamist terrorist group which according to the GTI recorded increase in its activity, rendering it the second deadliest terrorist group, active mainly in the region of sub-Saharan Africa. The group originated in Nigeria and in 2019 its activity surged by 46 per cent (compared to 2018), which is demonstrated mostly by their operations outside Nigeria (e.g. Cameroon).

Tactics: The tactics favored by Boko Haram have shifted, from previously common suicide bombings towards armed assaults and hostage taking. Boko Haram had previously implemented a strategy for recruiting women and children as suicide bombers – this trend has, however, declined. Nevertheless, they still employ children as the means of collecting intelligence. The main counter-terrorism response to Boko Haram is the Multinational Joint Task Forces (MNJTF) in cooperation with the Nigerian military (IEP, 2020).

ISIL – Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

This terrorist group is also known and referred to as ISIS or Daesh, ranking among the deadliest terrorist organizations in 2019. Emerging from local Iraqi militias and surviving members of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, it was formerly known as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). The formation of ISIL ensued after an Islamic Caliphate had been declared in parts of Iraq and Syria.

In the recent years, ISIL and its operations have suffered due to a number of successful counter-terrorist operations in the region of Iraq and Syria. One of the successful US military operations resulted in death of the former ISIL leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Organization's decline is evidenced in the decrease in number of attacks as well as resulting deaths and the group's reduced focus on Iraq.

Nevertheless, ISIL claimed responsibility for the attacks in Sri Lanka, a series of coordinated bombing attacks targeting hotels and churches. Internationally, the number of affiliate groups that have pledged allegiance or support to ISIL is on the rise. (IEP, 2020)

Tactics: In spite of the group's fragmentation and lack of leadership after al-Baghdadi's death, it continues in its operations and is conducting attacks through "sleeper cells" in Iraq and Syria and globally through a network of affiliated groups" (IEP, 2020, p. 16). Sleeper cell structure is not a new concept and ensures anonymity and secrecy even among the members of the organization itself. This system had been previously used by the Irish American Fenians in the 19th century and their secret society Clan na Gael.

More than half of the group's attacks were bombings or explosions, followed by armed assaults. In 2019, their attacks targeted predominantly civilians; however, in this aspect the group was significantly less deadly, less by over 80 per cent. Another common tactic used by ISIL have been suicide bombings. Contrary to the group's bombing attacks, "the number of deaths from suicide bombing increased for the first time since 2016, owing to deadly attacks in Tunisia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Iraq and Syria. In 2019, suicide bombings accounted for 13 per cent of all attacks by ISIL and 53 per cent of deaths attributed to the group" (IEP, 2020, p. 17).

Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab is a Salafist militant group, affiliated with Al Qaeda, active in Africa, whose origins can be traced back to 2006. It is based in Somalia and Kenya and its goal is to establish an Islamic state in Somalia. Al-Shabaab has been globally active more recently, with their attacks targeting the city of Mogadishu and other neighboring states (Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda).

African peacekeeping forces, African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), together with the United Nations have been fighting Al-Shabaab since 2007. “In 2017, the first wave of US troops and air strikes were deployed in Somalia to fight against Al-Shabaab” (IEP, 2020, p. 17). Overall, the terrorist activity of Al-Shabaab is on decline.

Tactics: Among the tactics favored by Al-Shabaab are bombings against civilians and businesses, armed assaults, and assassinations of key government figures. More than half of their attacks carried the traits of civilian bombings and in 2019 proved to increase in lethality – 3.2 deaths per attacks (2019) as compared to 1.9 deaths per attack (2018) (IEP, 2020).

Among the most common tactics of all the aforementioned terrorist groups are bombings and assassinations, following the pattern of “low-tech attacks on target-rich gatherings” (Pinker, p. 303). Indeed, the tactics of the most active terrorist groups haven’t undergone much of a change since the late 19th century, thus leaving no discussion for “progress” or shift in this area (maybe except for suicide bombing which emerged with religiously motivated terrorism). Nevertheless, many individuals and groups have now plenty other means of targeting innocents, governments, and other institutions – in seemingly non-violent ways: by hacking, stealing data, and exposing confidential information. “Sophisticated” terrorism nowadays has the form of information warfare.

1.3.6 The countries most impacted by terrorism

In this subchapter we will have a closer look at the aforementioned countries which ranked as the most impacted by terrorism in the GTI Report, with emphasis on the targets of their attacks. This way, the author attempts to find common traits of terrorist activities and thereby hint at the need of tailoring the counter-terrorist strategies for each region, with the possibility to devise preemptive measures. The author decided to include the 5 most impacted countries due to steep decrease in GTI thereafter.

Afghanistan

According to the GTI Report, Afghanistan is ranked number 1 with the score of 9.592 out of 10. The most active group in the region is Taliban, responsible for 87% of the total fatalities from terrorism. Taliban did not seem to change the strategy and focused the attacks mainly on police and military targets (over 500 attacks resulting in close to 3000 fatalities). ISIL was the second most active group in the region. The targets of terrorist attacks in Afghanistan were mostly the police and military, followed by private citizens and property, and the government (IEP, 2020).

The activities of Taliban have reflected negatively especially in the lowest female literacy, as the terrorist organization prevented girls and women from getting sufficient education in the region of Afghanistan (Pinker, 2018). This course of action of Taliban might hint at possible counter-terrorist strategies, particularly increasing literacy and inclusion of women in regions with high incidence of terrorism through joint programs and initiatives of international counterterrorist and humanitarian organizations.

Iraq

Iraq recorded reduction in deaths from terrorism in the third consecutive year, in 2019 by 46%. The most active group in the region is ISIL, with their activity in significant decline since its peak in 2016. Iraq also recorded substantial decreases in civilian deaths and lethality of the attacks. Contrary to the situation in Afghanistan with the Taliban, the nature of ISIL's activities in the region changed: "There has been a notable decline in the number of complex, multi-stage attacks, such as car bombings and suicide attacks which require developed logistical networks." (IEP, 2020, p. 20). This situation may hint at a number of underlying causes – it may be a result of decrease in available funding or growing inability to coordinate complex operations coupled with difficulties in intergroup communication, among others. Also, the number of suicide bombing attacks decreased, which is attributed to efficient counter-terrorism measures. Despite the death of ISIL leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIL remains a threat and continues to operate in rural areas (IEP, 2020).

The targets of terrorist groups in Iraq are partially consistent with those in Afghanistan. The most targeted group are private citizens and property, followed by the police and military, and curiously, in the third place are small businesses.

Nigeria

The most active terrorist group in Nigeria is Boko Haram, the second deadliest terrorist group in the World. The group is engaged in an insurgency campaign against the Nigerian government. According to GTI, the activities of Boko Haram caused more than 240 000 Nigerians to flee the country. Overall, the terrorist activities of the group are on decline (IEP, 2020).

Syria

The fourth country most impacted by terrorism is Syria, mostly due to activities of ISIL. However, there are 2 other active groups: the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). In 2019, PKK and HTS increased their targeting of civilians, while "ISIL conducted more attacks against police, military and militias" (IEP, 2020, p. 22). ISIL was responsible for the most lethal attack in 2019 targeting the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). The GTI report also indicates geographic spread of terrorism in Syria – terrorist attacks occurred in 11 out of 14 Syrian provinces.

These countries are followed by Somalia, Yemen, Pakistan, India, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Philippines.

One cannot but notice that the highest scores of GTI are mostly signature for the region of Middle East and East Africa. What makes this region of the World so volatile and prone to numerous outbreaks of terrorism and civil wars? Harari hints at some answers to these questions. Most present-day nations and cultures enforce their "inherent" right to the land they live on and are rather strict when it comes to drawing borders. According to Harari: "Most nations argue that they are a natural and eternal entity, created in some primordial epoch by mixing the soil of the motherland with the blood of the people. Yet such claims are usually exaggerated. Nations existed in the distant past, but their importance was much smaller than today because the importance of the state was much smaller." And he elaborates: "Moreover, whatever importance ancient nation states may have had, few of

them survived. Many of today's nations coalesced only in the last few centuries." (Harari, 2015, p. 407).

He follows with an example of enforcing this inherent right by nations or states and provides an example particular to the region of Middle East. Thereby, possibly answering the question of why this region is plagued by so many instances of terrorism, political violence, unrest, civil wars, and insurgencies:

"The Syrian, Lebanese, Jordanian and Iraqi nations are the product of haphazard borders drawn in the sand by French and British diplomats who ignored local history, geography and economy. These diplomats determined in 1918 that the people of Kurdistan, Baghdad and Basra would henceforth be 'Iraqis'. It was primarily the French who decided who would be Syrian and who Lebanese. Saddam Hussein and Hafez al-Assad tried their best to promote and reinforce their Anglo-French-manufactured national consciousness, but their bombastic speeches about the allegedly eternal Iraqi and Syrian nations had a hollow ring.

It goes without saying that nations cannot be created from thin air. Those who worked hard to construct Iraq or Syria made use of real historical, geographical and cultural raw materials – some of which are centuries and millennia old. Saddam Hussein co-opted the heritage of the Abbasid caliphate and the Babylonian Empire, even calling one of his crack armoured units the Hammurabi Division. Yet that does not turn the Iraqi nation into an ancient entity." (Harari, 2015, p. 407).

Harari also hints at the approach we should take in the future. Ignoring the regional cultural and historical differences and variety resulted in instability of the regions. In order to restore it or mitigate the ramifications thereof, we need to be able to critically consider the regional cultural realities and build our approach to resolving problems in this region upon them.

1.3.7 Types of terrorism

While there have been many classifications and categorizations published throughout history, the author chose to adhere to the most recent report published by Europol. Europol is the European Union's designated law enforcement agency. Its main agenda is to support the member states in their fight against various forms of crime, including terrorism. Europol lists terrorism among the 5 biggest security threats to European Union (together with international drug trafficking, organized fraud, counterfeiting of euros, and trafficking in human beings). Europol states that the main reason these are the 5 most pertinent threats is that they have proven to be "immune" to the traditional law enforcement measures.

The most recent available report published by Europol evaluates the data regarding terrorism for 2019. The report evidences that the number of attacks has been in steady decline since 2017. Considering the relevant types of terrorism in European Union, Europol's report offers categorization as follows in the next section. The categorization is not strict and ideologies, objectives, and grievances of various groups of the spectrum might overlap.

Jihadist terrorism

For the purpose of this section it is necessary to distinguish two terms: "Islamic" and "Islamist". "Islamic" denotes a relation to Muslims. "Islamist" is an extreme version, used to suggest relation to terrorism and violence (Matusitz, 2013). Islamists are the "Muslims who articulate a political agenda for restructuring the society according to a normative vision extracted from the Quran" (Aldis, 2007, p. 133) and are driven by desire for subjective purity. Furthermore, they argue that faith can be practiced authentically only under the Shariah Law which requires the existence of Islamic state. This then fuels dichotomic, rigid world perspective of "us vs. them".

The Europol report defines Jihadist terrorism and its motivations as follows:

"Jihadism is defined as a violent sub-current of salafism, a revivalist Sunni Muslim movement that rejects democracy and elected parliaments, arguing that human legislation is at variance with God's status as the sole lawgiver. Jihadists aim to create an Islamic state governed exclusively by Islamic law (*shar'ia*), as interpreted by them. Major representatives of jihadist groups are the al-Qaeda network and the so-called Islamic State." (Europol, p. 35).

Pew Research Center found that "overwhelming percentages of Muslims" across many countries want *shar'ia* to become the supreme law of the land (Pinker, 2018). "Resentment and revenge are a major principle in the writings of the Shi'ite thinkers of jihad. Jihadists exploit collective narratives of humiliation and revenge to rationalize the need to kill themselves, civilians, and even fellow Muslims..." (Matusitz, 2013, p. 16)

Jihadism represents a movement rejecting the ideals of democracy and elected authorities arguing that God is the only authority. Jihadists use Islamic doctrines to justify their violence by interpreting "jihad" as "religiously sanctioned warfare" (Europol, p. 35). The actual meaning of the word is "struggle". Matusitz (2013) distinguishes between "greater jihad" based in spirituality, and "lesser jihad" – external, physical obligation to

defend Islam, including terrorism. Jihadists use historical context, parallel to the Christian crusades of the Middle Ages, to assert their view of being under attack from a global non-Muslim alliance of Christians, Jews, and other religious groups. Any nation declared as non-Muslim is considered a legitimate target and enemy. Jihad in the modern world represents a branch of Nietzsche's ideas of Will to Power and the ultimate ambition to rebuild the Caliphate – an Islamic state wherever Muslims live based on a pan-Islamic idea of culture (Aldis, 2007).

Jihadist ideology is based in literal interpretations of the Islamic doctrine, particularly of the Quran – the hatred of non-Muslims, justification for martyrdom, and the sacredness of jihad. The literal interpretation is becoming an ever more increasing problem, as survey of Pew Research Center shows, in 32 of 39 surveyed countries more than half of the Muslim population is convinced that Quran should be taken literally and that there is only one way of understanding it “correctly” (Pinker, 2018). Quran asserts that “Muslims have the duty of fighting enemies and invading non-Muslim territories to spread Islam” (Matusitz, 2013, p. 13). Štefančík (2012) also points to apparent deviation from the original ideology of Islam and argues that this problem has been growing ever since the era of Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

This ideology was diffused by the writings of the Egyptian author Sayyid Qutb, who was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and laid the foundation of Islamist movements such as Al Qaeda. The ideology focuses on the past glory of Arab civilization and blames non-Muslim forces for its decadence. Restoration can only come through sharia law and purging the World of non-Muslim influences (Pinker, 2018). Qutb devised his ideology after his visit to America, which turned him into a great critic of the Western civilization. His teachings contributed heavily to polarization of Muslim society, their beliefs, and perception of good and evil. In his effort to “purge” the World of evil influence of the Western ideologies he concluded that jihad is the only way to do so.

We could argue that jihadist terrorism falls under the umbrella term “religiously motivated terrorism”; however, such further classification seems obsolete as jihadism is obviously the only prevalent “modern” religiously motivated terrorist ideology. The first step towards eliminating jihadism, in countries where it is prevalent, needs to be the

separation of state, law, and religion. In the Christian world, this process took place during the era of Enlightenment and the world of Islam has yet to undergo such transformation.

The most important issue arising from jihadist and religiously motivated terrorism is the question previously outlined in this thesis: Whether religion can be classified as a direct cause of terrorism. Juergensmeyer explores both sides of this argument. On one hand, violence is present in all types of religion (i.e. as an ideology) and is justified by bringing benefit to a larger number of people (i.e. is not focused on the individual – as opposed to the ideals of Enlightenment). On the other hand, the essential meaning of religion is to convey peace and this opinion is held by the majority of believers around the World. The current situation and the omnipresence of availability bias incites the public to make direct connection between religion and terrorism (Richardson, 2006). This connection is, however, a subjective distortion of reality as there has never been a direct or any empirical, verified connection between the religious ideologies and the acts of terrorism. The connection is caused by a fabrication of individuals who interpret (or rather misinterpret) religious teachings and ideologies in the way that suits them, i.e. that justifies their acts of terrorism. It is necessary to also take into account that terrorism emerged as a nationalist/separatist grievance and its origins have little to do with religious ideologies that had already been present for centuries. This does not change the fact that religion has been used as a “vehicle” and argument for justification of terrorist acts – often used to convey political, social, and economic grievances (e.g. in the Middle East) rather than religious. In general, experts have been divided on this topic. The most accurate approach to this relationship might be that religion is not a direct cause of terrorism but under certain circumstances it might contribute to it (Richardson, 2006). Even such an approach seems to be quite incomplete, as looking at other religious ideologies – Buddhism, Hinduism, there has been no evidence that it would be in any way engaged in religiously motivated political or terrorist violence.

Case study: Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda is the emblematic representation of radical Islam employing jihadist ideology. It is comprised of *mujahideen* fighters, i.e. Muslims involved in the jihad. Erick Stakelbeck in “The Terrorist Next Door” (2011) interviewed the apprehended members of Al Qaeda about their motives to engage in terrorism. Their response was that it was the Islamist ideology (Matusitz, 2013).

Osama bin Laden was the central figure of Al Qaeda during its most active years. He was a well-educated man from a well-off family. Bin Laden's radicalization was the result of Soviet invasion in Afghanistan when most young Muslims were called on to wage jihad on behalf of their homeland. Bin Laden was known for his inspiring rhetoric largely based on Islam. He was determined to wage jihad on global scale, resulting in the establishment of a terrorist group Al Qaeda (al-Qaeda), i.e. The Base (Post, 2007). The name was inspired by Qutb's writing "*al-qaedah al-sulbah*" (the solid base) (Aldis, 2007).

Bin Laden was first focused on Soviet Union as the enemy number one. Later on, he re-focused his activities towards the United States (after the US had penetrated into Saudi Arabia). He stood at the forefront of the most successful terrorist attacks in history, the events of 9/11. Bin Laden demonstrated traits of both religious fundamentalist and revolutionary terrorist ideology. He declared all Americans to be the enemies of Islam and called on his sympathizers to kill them wherever and whenever possible (Post, 2007). This rhetoric is closely resembling that of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa during the Fenian Dynamite Campaign in the 19th century.

Al Qaeda's strong and long-lasting presence on the international terrorist scene was the result of the group's de-centralized, non-hierarchical organizational structure which allowed it to flexibly adapt to changing circumstances and exploit the process of globalization (Aldis, 2007). It operated without any particular headquarters, internationally, making use of various technological advances. Al Qaeda was known for its "cell structure" (also present in today's ISIL organization) which ensured secrecy. Compared to Hamas or Hezbollah, Al Qaeda was much more authoritarian in decision-making, while having much looser structure. Furthermore, the organization was known for establishing vast terrorist networks among various terrorist groups around the World (e.g. Hamas). Al Qaeda's expansion could be compared to that of a business enterprise growing through mergers and acquisitions around the World. This unprecedented form of terrorist organization allowed for emergence of common ideology relying heavily on Islamic history, values and religion. All this made Al Qaeda the most elusive, longest lasting, and arguably the most successful terrorist organization in modern history (Post, 2007). At its peak, Al Qaeda would be basically "everywhere but nowhere" at the same time (Aldis, 2007, p. 4).

The main driving force behind Al Qaeda's activity was the ideology, not poverty or politics. Al Qaeda sought the support of jihadism first, group affiliation was secondary. Therefore, also the groups around the world operated independently. Al Qaeda believed that their cause had a divine legitimacy and therefore felt they were doing the right thing. Their recruitment pool was mostly comprised of vulnerable, narrow-minded individuals who found their activities appealing (ideologically or from the media coverage) (Aldis, 2007). The other prominent jihadist group, ISIS (or ISIL) is characterized further in the section on Global Terrorism Index.

Ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism

Ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism are the source of the majority of terrorist attacks carried out in the European Union, or in Europe, respectively. The Europol report defines ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism as follows: "Ethno-nationalist and separatist groups are motivated by nationalism, ethnicity and/or religion. Separatist groups seek to carve out a state for themselves from a larger country or annexe territory from one country to that of another." (Europol, p. 54). Among the groups that fall into this category are for example the Irish Republican Army (IRA) or the Basque ETA.

They are further described as:

"... those who regard social inequality as inevitable, natural or even desirable. Most perpetrators of right-wing violence adhere to a far-right mix of anti-egalitarianism, nativism, and authoritarianism. These ideological constructs and the beliefs that are strongly associated with them – such as racism and conspiratorial thinking – produce a set of political and social groups considered as enemies of and legitimate targets for the far right." (Assoudeh [online]).

Ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism, often labelled as right-wing terrorism, has recorded rising popularity in the recent years. This surge coincides with the shift of political spectrum towards far-right, with growing refugee streams, and growing ethnocentric tendencies.

The common characteristics of ethno-nationalist terrorism (or nationalist-separatist terrorism) is that the groups tend to continue in the cause of the previous generations, as is the case of both IRA and ETA (Basque Homeland and Liberty). They represent loyalty to the previous generation by their rebellion against the regime. These groups share a common enemy throughout history, which usually sought to eliminate their culture, history, and identity. Membership in such groups is usually passed on in families throughout generations

– which also serves to justify their actions. Both ETA and IRA’s grievances could be traced back more than 1,000 years in history. Their goal was to establish a separate, sovereign state. Both groups saw violence as the only possible option to call attention to their cause. Their prominent figures were often imprisoned, intensifying the commitment of other members. In case of ETA, Franco aimed to obliterate the Basque identity. In case of IRA, the British government disregarded the existence of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Both groups made use of guerrilla warfare - strategies that originated in Latin America (Post, 2007).

Case study: Irish Republican Army (IRA)

The terrorist movement of IRA was fueled by long-lasting historical grievances, spanning all the way to the 12th century when the English invaded Ireland for the first time. A significant aspect was also religion, as the Irish were Catholics and the English protestant. The British considered the Irish to be inferior and prevented them from taking part in cultural and political life.

IRA’s predecessor was the IRB (Irish Republican Brotherhood), or the Fenians, whose goal was the establishment of Home Rule. IRA, however, was not satisfied by the Home Rule alone and demanded complete independence of Ireland from Great Britain. IRA believed this was possible only through militant violence.

IRA demonstrates the importance of charismatic leader, who in this case was James Connolly. Until today, Connolly is considered as one of the most influential Irish personas. He was central to the most important rebellion in Irish history – the Easter Rising of 1916.

As most experts and authors argue, terrorist movements rarely achieve their goals. In this case, however, IRA achieved what it had set out to do – although the fight for freedom and independence lasted about 100 years. Later on, in 1969, IRA changed its strategy and decided to focus on political and diplomatic negotiations concerning Northern Ireland. This caused controversy within the organization and later on also its fragmentation and the emergence of PIRA (Provisional Irish Republican Army). PIRA made use of bombing campaigns and organized, planned assassinations. Step by step, PIRA completely deviated from the original cause of the IRA and violence for the sake of violence became its central motivation.

As a result of years of activity of both IRA and PIRA, the British government passed the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Northern Ireland Act. Thatcher's government also decided to treat the apprehended members of PIRA as "regular criminals". Complete ceasefire and the end of the IRA came only after September 11, 2001. The republicans remained active solely politically (Post, 2007).

Case study: ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna/Basque Homeland and Liberty)

Basque nationalism within Spain can be traced back to the medieval period. Basque territories were incorporated into Spain in 1492 during the re-conquest. Basque identity continued to be undermined all the way through to 1800s which resulted in emergence of the first Basque nationalist movements. Furthermore, Basque identity and culture was suppressed and persecuted during Franco's reign, which is often provided as a root cause of Basque nationalism. Basque nationalism and separatist tendencies are also strongly rooted in their language (Euskera) which is quite different from any other spoken language (Post, 2007).

Sabino Arana is considered a "father" of Basque nationalism. He used strong ethno-nationalist rhetoric (idea of ethnic cleansing) and enticed political and social actions against Spain. Common grievances against Spanish authority along with strong collectivist Basque identity laid the foundation for forming ETA. ETA was formed in 1959 by university students drawing on nationalism, separatism, and the independence of Basque nation – who were fundamentally opposed to Franco's regime. ETA's activities intensified after the transition from authoritarian to democratic regime, mainly due to its socialist and Marxist ideological roots (Post, 2007). Activities of ETA declined after the Spanish government managed to strike a deal with France and devise a joint counterterrorist policy.

In both cases (IRA and ETA) the individual causes overwhelmed and overshadowed the "original" group cause. This led to fragmentation in both cases as the counterterrorist measures became more efficient. Younger and successive generations were largely disillusioned and deviated from the root causes.

Left-wing and anarchist terrorism

The objective of left-wing and anarchist terrorist groups is to trigger revolution against political, social, and economic status quo – i.e. the state. They often idealize Marxist

ideology; however, left-wing or anarchist terrorism might as well refer to “any revolutionary, anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian agenda.” (Europol, p. 58 [online]).

Czech Republic reported that left-wing anarchists and extremists have developed their own online infrastructures to communicate utilizing encryption and modern technology (Europol [online]).

Right-wing terrorism

Right-wing terrorism aims to change the entire political, social and economic landscape of a state to a right-wing extremist model. A core idea of right-wing extremism is the belief that “a certain group of people sharing a common element (nation, race, culture, etc.) is superior to all other people” – also referred to as “supremacism” (Europol, p. 65 [online]). Supremacists believe they possess the natural right to dominate the rest of the population, thereby depriving other groups of their rights. Their ideology and terrorist activities are aimed against minorities and against diversity in society. Their behavior is often characterized as racist, authoritarian, and xenophobic. Right-wing terrorists’ attitudes are most often characterized as anti-LGBTQ, antimuslim, antisemitic, and anti-immigration (Europol [online]).

The perpetrators of right-wing extremism were also described as: “... those who regard social inequality as inevitable, natural or even desirable. Most perpetrators of right-wing violence adhere to a far-right mix of anti-egalitarianism, nativism, and authoritarianism. These ideological constructs and the beliefs that are strongly associated with them – such as racism and conspiratorial thinking – produce a set of political and social groups considered as enemies of and legitimate targets for the far right.” (Assoudeh [online]).

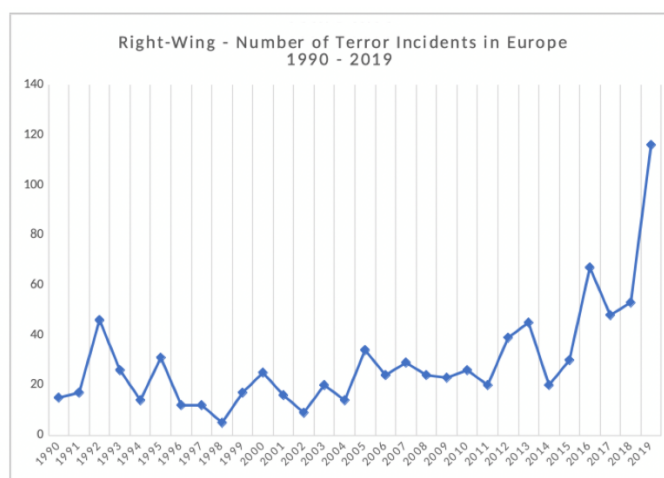
These sentiments are often rooted in “romantic heroism”, i.e. a single nation that dictates the conditions of purity and authenticity, while being led by a single “great” individual. Origins of these sentiments can be traced back to Nietzsche, who coined the term “Übermensch” (literally translated as “overman”) (Pinker, 2018). Later on, his ideas would be used as justification for Nazism, which are nowadays present in right-wing terrorism (violence, power, against liberal democracies).

Case Study: Anders Behring Breivik

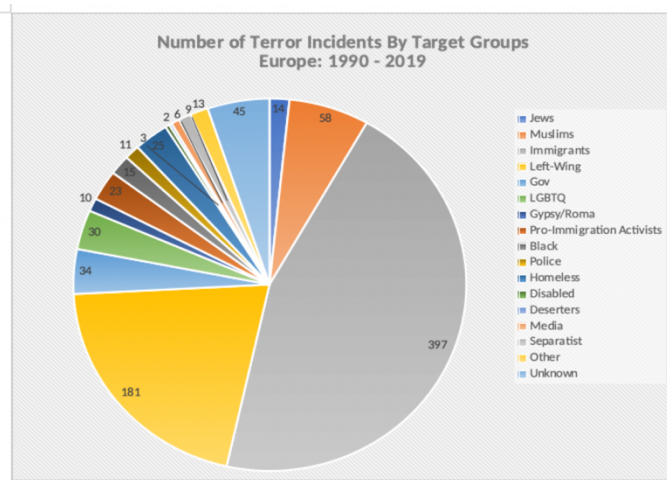
The most outstanding example of right-wing terrorism in Europe were the attacks of Anders Behring Breivik in Norway, 2011. His terrorist act also carried the traits of “lone-wolf terrorism”, meaning he had no official affiliation to any overarching terrorist group or organization. After exploding a car bomb in Oslo, he went on to kill 69 members of the Workers’ Youth League (championing the ideas of social democracy and feminism). His justification for the attacks was to save and protect Western Europe from a Muslim takeover (Schmid, 2016).

In total, 77 people were killed and 151 injured and it is considered the most devastating attack in Norway since World War II. Breivik elaborated his own manifesto which could help us shed more light on his motivations behind the attacks. Breivik asserts that multiculturalism is wrongly justified by humanism. Left-wing ideologies aim to erode European culture and values and the problem of Europe is its lack of national self-confidence. The fear of nationalistic doctrines is irrational, and we are committing cultural suicide. We need to remove doctrines of multiculturalism and left-wing ideologies in order to reverse the Islamic colonization of Europe (Matusitz, 2013).

Breivik presented this as the only viable solution to the situation which is fundamentally flawed thinking. This points to certain issues in society – not providing enough alternative narratives aiming to de-radicalize the individual at the early stages. The following chart points to the growing problem of right-wing terrorism in Europe, as the incidents have been on steady rise, recently increasing in frequency quite significantly.



Source: Assoudeh [online]



Source: Assoudeh [online]

Majority of right-wing attacks have been aimed at immigrants and Muslims. The author explores the relationship between immigration, Islam, and terrorism in Europe in a separate chapter. Among the most affected countries by right-wing terrorism between 1990-2019 were Germany, Italy, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (followed by Greece and Spain).

The loss of faith in democracy is becoming apparent around the World as well as in Europe, especially among younger generations. The era of internet and easy connectivity might transform this movement into a transnational Euro-American threat to democracy around the World.

Single-issue terrorism

As the category insinuates, single-issue terrorism is focused on changing a specific policy or practice, thus differing from other aforementioned types of terrorism which are focused on changing the whole system the society operates in. Among the usual matters of focus of single-issue terrorism are often animal rights and environmental protection. Single-issue terrorism remains fairly innocuous, using peaceful protests, demonstrations and rallies as tools for achieving goals (Europol [online]).

1.4 Europe, migration, Islamism, and terrorism

Some 50 years ago, the academics and experts in the field of migration, European studies, terrorism and Islam would argue that the terms comprising the title of this chapter cannot be possibly interconnected to such a degree that a whole chapter could be dedicated to the analysis of relations among them. Maybe even meeting in the same discussion would be inconceivable for them. However, the following chapter goes to argue that there, indeed, is a relation among these terms that has been forming and growing stronger for many years now.

Migration has always had a certain relationship or correlation to terrorism. Considering that the 19th-century Fenians and IRB formed a transatlantic alliance with emigrants from the UK and Ireland (which had emigrated due to oppression and inability to be represented or establish their own sovereign state/republic) and formed communities in the United States which were instrumental in supporting the Irish domestic insurgency movement (financially, by supplying weapons etc.). These transatlantic communities posed a great challenge to the British and Irish law enforcement as they had no way of apprehending the involved individuals or influencing their activities all the way across the Atlantic Ocean. Nowadays, the waves of migrants are coming from different regions of the World, mainly from the Middle East and North/Sub-Saharan Africa.

The chairman of the Institute of Economics and Peace, institution responsible also for drafting the GTI scores, Steve Killelea pointed to “...strong inter-connectedness between the current refugee crisis, terrorism and conflict.” (Schmid, 2016, p. 29). The report reiterates this claim in several other instances, stating that “The nexus between conflict-related terrorism and refugee migration is also plausible” (ibid, p. 32). The connection of these two phenomena is also represented in the ways that migrants can become terrorists, and vice versa, terrorists can become migrants.

Weinberg stipulates that “immigrant populations have frequently provided large pools from which so-called terrorist mosquitoes have appeared for many years” (Richardson, 2006, p. 52) – not only nowadays, but also in historical context and Aldis (2007) points to interconnectedness of refugee flows and terrorism as well.

Schmid (2016) in his research paper under the ICCT (International Centre for Counter-Terrorism in Hague) points to the lack of research in the area of relationship and intersection of terrorism and migration. He argues that there exist multiple causal relations between terrorism and migration, however, their complexity might be difficult to deal with on non-academic and non-professional levels. He stresses the need for further research in this area.

Štefančík (2012) explains that international migration has been ever present in the history of mankind and the migration waves have changed the landscape of various countries and cultures. He points to the biggest problem being integration. While Štefančík's main focus is on migration as such, he also explores phenomena that arise as a consequence of this process. He argues that one of the consequences of migration is the emergence of "parallel societies". A term that is used to describe groups of immigrants functioning separately from the autochthonous inhabitants and widely used in the media with negative connotation – pointing to terrorists of Muslim origin, suggesting high degree of stereotypes. Štefančík argues that these emerging negative stereotypes are the result of failed and inefficient integration policies and that the migrants are generally more willing to integrate. Integration is a two-way street – it requires the participation of both the immigrants and autochthonous inhabitants.

One of the main reasons behind the international migration lasting until today was, according to Štefančík (2012), the decline of European colonies in Africa and South Asia. This allowed for migration to countries of former colonists, such as France, Great Britain, Germany, and Netherlands.

He provides the example of 9/11 as evidence – the event that has brought a big wave of criticism unto the Muslim community of migrants and highlights the importance to focus on various aspects of integration policies, not solely on groups of militant Muslims. These events have negatively impacted the perception of Muslim community all around the World, not excluding Slovakia. However, the perceived hostility to Muslim community ("islamophobia") seems to be rooted in history far preceding September 11, 2001. Muslim community has actually been present in Central Europe (also in Slovakia) since the Ottoman Empire (as a result of the Empire's expansion) and the resulting oppression formed the basis for resentment of Muslims and Islam in this region. Muslims have been historically

perceived as conquerors, pagans, and enemies of Christianity. The lasting presence of these communities seems to breed islamophobia, various expressions of political extremism, radicalism, and right-wing movements (Štefančík, 2012).

After September 11, 2001, Muslim migrants and communities around the World have been intensely presented as a security threat and described as a community which is trying to impose new cultural and religious elements, endangering traditional cultural values. These sentiments are prevalently caused by the fact that the majority of Muslim countries could not be considered democratic or safe and politically stable. The people from these areas (Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan) seek the exact opposite, therefore, their usual destinations are Scandinavian countries (Štefančík, 2012).

Furthermore, Štefančík (2012) focuses on the position of Slovakia in the process of international migration and terrorism. Slovakia is a country which is instinctively opposed to new concepts. This is a direct cause of the Slovak position of minority prevalent in the past.

As of 2015, member states of the European Union received 1.9 million asylum applications, half of them from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Nigeria. This was the result of ongoing instability in the region of Middle East and North Africa (Schmid, 2016). As previously outlined in this thesis, 3 out of 4 of these countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria) placed atop of the GTI (2020) score evidencing the highest terrorist activity. In 2016 GTI report, which would be directly evaluating 2015, all four countries placed in the top 5 (GTI, 2015). In 2015, European Union was no longer able to sufficiently control the migration influx which caused that identities and motives of many migrants were not clear (Schmid, 2016). Interesting correlation might be drawn between Fragile States Index and the GTI Rankings, where all 4 countries atop the GTI (2020) are also among the top 20 most fragile states (Fragile States index [online]), as well as among the countries with the most refugees (2014). (Schmid, 2016). However, Schmid (2016) reiterates that there is no conclusive result as to the relationship between migration and terrorism.

As Post suggests, concerning the Muslim immigrants, “many suffer from an existential sense of loss, deprivation, and alienation” and “are often exposed to extreme ideologies that radicalize them and can foster entering the path of terrorism” (Richardson,

2006, p. 24). More often than not, this leads to the formation of “diaspora communities” within the target society. Also, in this case, integration and inclusion in the target countries are invaluable resources in countering the threat of terrorism early on. Schmid (2016) looks at terrorism as a “push” factor or “driver” of international migration. He then formulates the notion that migrants forming diasporic communities in the target country might become source of terrorism. He provides an example of Molenbeek in Belgium of being such a “hub”.

What is the role of globalization in this process of immigrant radicalization, especially concerning immigrants living in the big European cities? The pressure of becoming “integrated” and a part of the “globalized” society might lead to them resorting to terrorist networks or groups, in an attempt to find a place where they actually “fit in” (Richardson, 2006). Another crucial term that needs to be understood in the context of terrorism and radicalization is the concept of “other” or “otherness”. Štefančík (2012) points to the fact that this notion of “otherness” is nowadays particularly applied to migrants of Islamic origin escalating the negative perceptions of them being automatically perceived as a security threat or terrorists. This phenomenon is also produced in the process of globalization, as people are dispersed from their homeland, creating “diasporas”. Per Merriam-Webster, the term originated as a label for the Jews living outside Palestine or Israel (diaspora [online]). Richardson (2006) claims that the link between diasporas and terrorism is rather apparent, as many terrorist groups are either a part of, or supported by, such diasporas.

Roy examines discrepancies between the activity of Muslim immigrants in Europe and United States. He stipulates that there are almost no terrorists among second-generation Muslims in the United States, while in Europe this groups provides a large pool of potentially radicalized individuals with terrorist tendencies. Roy ascribes this difference to the fact, that Muslim immigrants in Europe never intended to become “settled” or citizens of Europe, while the Muslims in America had come with the intention to settle America (Richardson, 2006). This then reflects on the group’s interaction with its surroundings as well as their will to become integrated. In the case outlined by Roy, American Muslim immigrants have a higher intrinsic motivation to become integrated, while those coming to Europe have close to none.

Weinberg also points to the pressure under which young immigrants are coming to Europe which in turn makes them particularly vulnerable to radical, terrorist ideologies (Richardson, 2006). However, Weinberg's presented view explains only one side of the problem – the side of immigrants and their vulnerability to radicalization. Shiraz Maher, an analyst of radical Islamist movements, argues that the problem is not in the failing process of integration and not in the people who become radicalized this way. Maher, similarly, to Murray, points to lack of collective identity and uncertainty when it comes to shared values. Although he applies this to the “West”, it can be fairly safely applied to the situation in Europe as well (which is supported by Murray's claims): “The West is shy of its values – it doesn't speak up for classical liberalism.” (Pinker, 2018, p. 5). Pinker argues that the idea of liberalism, as a part of Enlightenment, is crucial in overall development of society, including finding solutions to problems such as terrorism. Maher, once a regional director of the jihadist group Hizb ut-Tahrir, offers an example of the terrorist organization Islamic State, which “knows exactly what it stands for” – thereby representing a “counterculture” to that of the West (Pinker, 2018). It is exactly the contrast of loosely established values of the West and the whole Europe, disguised by “diversity”, “inclusion”, and “integration” that does more harm than good in such instances. There is indeed nothing wrong with diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism, in fact, it is inevitable and leads to overall progress. However, the society and culture must be prepared to enter into such a state by making sure its own identity and core values will not be jeopardized in the process. As Murray argues, it is difficult to find a common European identity and core values, which makes this system particularly vulnerable to cultural and identity crises. In such a situation, immigration coupled with political violence can be both the cause and the effect of the gradual loss of identity and common values. In fact, Europe, allowing for such “shock waves” of immigration as it has experienced recently, may never be able to find a “solid footing” when it comes to the collective identity that needs to be presented on the global stage. However inevitable the growing levels of migration may be, there is a need for a solution of simultaneously strengthening and preserving the European identity, while embracing foreign cultural elements within society.

Post (2007) especially stresses the importance of integration of the refugees. We need to find a way to begin the process of integration without the migrants having to give up their identity and without the recipient society jeopardizing its own. It is, therefore, critical to handle the large waves of refugees properly, otherwise Europe faces the risk of growing

domestic and transnational terrorism. If the process of acceptance and integration fails, the sentiments of anger and resentment might produce generations of radicalized individuals engaged in political violence (Schmid, 2016).

Professor Sheffer of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem explores diasporic terrorism in the context of migrants and refugees seeking asylum. Diasporic communities are formed by those migrants who have not been able to integrate into the new societies and/or have been “expelled” from their country of origin (due to various reasons) (Richardson, 2006). Schmid (2016) formulates similar assertion that migrants forming diasporas is the result of insufficient integration which causes the loss of identity and subsequent resort to radical ideologies. The diasporic communities of migrants tend to be dispersed among numerous countries (e.g. the Muslim diaspora), which allows the terrorist movements to operate in decentralized, yet coordinated manner, thanks to their members being tied by common ideology, most often Islamism (Richardson, 2006). Schmid (2016) further argues that members of newly formed diasporas often engage in political activism and become radicalized in the process. He goes on to provide evidence of many jihadist being “groomed” in London. Furthermore, Peter Nesser in “Islamist Terrorism in Europe” argues that London has become “the heart of the jihadis sub-culture in Europe” (Schmid, 2016, p. 39) and the fact that the British authorities keep overlooking this issue in the face of multiculturalism, progress, and tolerance, causes the growth of jihadi network in Britain and the rest of Europe.

One of the most critical reasons for radicalization of Europe was the fact that the warning signs of surging religious radicalization and extremism “were consistently ignored.” (Murray, 2018, p. 128). For example, one of such precursors was Ayatollah Khomeini’s (the leader of Iran at the time) document from 1989, which called on Muslims to retaliate to those who oppose Islam, the Prophet and the Qur’an: “I call on all zealous Muslims to execute them quickly, wherever they may be found, so that no one else will dare to insult the Muslim sanctities.” (ibid, p. 128)

“On 5 October 1990 a Muslim religious leader said in a radio programme on a Dutch-subsidised radio station in Amsterdam, ‘Those who resist Islam, the order of Islam or oppose Allah and his prophet, you have permission to kill, hang, slaughter or banish, as it says in the Sharia.’” (ibid, p. 135)

A Somali migrant in Holland – Hirsi Ali, who had fled the country because of forced marriage and later on became an MP for the Liberal Party in Dutch government, would go on to scrutinize: “...was the aggression, the hatred inherent in Islam itself?” (ibid, p. 140)

To answer Ali’s question, former British Prime Minister David Cameron made several comments in the aftermath of killings by British Muslims in 2013: “This was not just an attack on Britain – and on our communities who gave so much to our country. There is nothing in Islam that justifies this truly dreadful act.” (ibid, p. 153)

Cameron also responded to another atrocity, beheading of a British worker in Syria by a British-born jihadist: “They claim to do this in the name of Islam. That is nonsense. Islam is a religion of peace. They are not Muslims; they are monsters.” (ibid, p. 153)

One might argue, whether such wording or language isn’t rather counterproductive, effectively further marginalizing the perpetrators. Nevertheless, Cameron’s answer to Ali’s question would be that there indeed is not a part of Islam that would justify or embed the hatred and violence. Such a statement Cameron made is needed more frequently, with the support of moderate Muslim communities, in order to convey unity and express that such conduct is not synonymous for the community and is condemned.

On the November 13 attacks in Paris:

“... on the evening of Friday 13 November, Paris was rocked by three hours of coordinated terrorist attacks. Gunmen in a car using assault rifles drove by and shot at Parisians as they were eating and drinking in bars and restaurants. At the same time suicide bombers struck at the Stade de France stadium in Saint-Denis where President Hollande was among the crowd watching a football game. As well as further shootings and a suicide bombing at more restaurants, three gunmen entered the Bataclan theatre concert hall on the Boulevard Voltaire. ... The men continued to shoot people throughout the theatre until the police arrived, at which point the gunmen detonated suicide vests.” (Murray, 2018, p. 185)

Quite interestingly, the perpetrators upended their attack right at the point the police arrived. It would seem that only the menace of getting caught was enough for them to terminate their attack. The question is, whether there was any real objective and why did the presence of police trigger such a reaction. On the other hand, the two might not be correlated at all, which would be even more irrational, considering behavior of the terrorists. Would they have done the same, had the police arrived earlier? Obviously, the attacks had been

planned and coordinated to cause as much damage as possible, focusing on high-profile, medialized events and targets with concentrated crowds.

“By the end of the evening in Paris 129 people had been killed and many hundreds more were wounded. The Islamic State in Syria claimed responsibility for the attacks.”

In particular it was ‘Ahmad al Mohammad’.

“Officials admitted that a person of this name had entered Europe as an asylum seeker the month before the attacks. Fingerprints turned out to match a man who had been using that name to enter Greece in October. The person using the name had been picked up by Greek coastguards at the beginning of that month on a sinking boat with 70 other migrants.”

“Although the news emerged exceptionally slowly, by a year after the attack it was clear that the majority of the Paris attackers, including the ringleaders, had not only been to Syria to receive terrorist training, but had slipped in and out of Europe whilst posing as migrants.” (Murray, 2018, p. 186)

“Two of the terrorists who attacked sites in Paris on 13 November 2015 had entered Europe hidden among the refugee stream, carrying false Syrian passports.” (Schmid, 2016). As a result of these attacks in Paris, Norway and Sweden announced changes in their asylum policies, part of which was the introduction of border checks.

“For his part, President Hollande announced that France was at war ‘at home and abroad’. The country immediately stepped up its bombing campaign against Isis positions inside Syria.” (Murray, 2018, p. 187)

Paradoxically, the solution seemed to be much more complicated for home affairs. The people were becoming much more concerned about their safety and security, while struck by the question of what actually caused this situation in the first place. The French authorities “retaliated” by imposing migration quotas (Murray, 2018).

Yet another good point that Murray makes is posing a question of how to stop terrorists from carrying out attacks? It is seemingly impossible as the mind of a terrorist is able to turn anything into a lethal weapon or a weapon of mass destruction. He goes on to point out that while the countries and governments may be eventually able to stop terrorists from coming into the country, how are they going to deal with the terrorists who already are citizens and cannot be checked at the border and are willing to use anything as a weapon?

This could bring us to the morality of government surveillance of the citizens. The idea of “Big Brother” has always been taboo, especially in our modern-day democratic society. Definitely, it cannot be considered as a valid democratic solution to such a problem, however, maybe with some improvements and specific focus of the surveillance, governments might be able to achieve higher degree of security when it comes to radicalized immigrants with terrorist tendencies.

Murray poses an important question after the attack in Nice on Bastille Day when a Tunisian immigrant drove a truck into the crowds and later on Isis claimed responsibility for the attack:

“You may be able to stop people getting hold of Kalashnikovs but how do you stop them getting hold of trucks? And you may stop more extremists coming into your country, but what do you do with extremists who are already citizens?” (Murray, 2018, p. 191)

Murray gives an account of some of the attacks that were carried out by immigrants on European soil in the chapter titled, paradoxically, “Learning to live with it” – as if to insinuate that terrorist attacks and extremism is slowly becoming a part of everyday life, we only need to learn to live with it, or that we are left with no choice.

“The carnage in Nice was just the first of a set of attacks that occurred almost daily in the summer of 2016. The Monday after the Nice attack a 17-year-old asylum seeker called Mohammed Riyad pulled out an axe and a knife on a train in Bavaria, Germany, shouted ‘Allahu Akbar’ and started hacking at his fellow passengers. He seriously injured five people before he was shot dead by police. It transpired that the attacker had sworn allegiance to Isis. It also transpired that although he had claimed to be from Afghanistan when he had applied for asylum in Germany, recordings of him speaking suggested that he was in fact from Pakistan.” (Murray, 2018, p. 192)

This example, most importantly, points to the issue of porous borders when it comes to migration to European Union. As there is lack of clear and common policy in many areas, there is lack of overall security. Murray describes the reaction upon the events that transpired in the recent years.

“A bogus science grew up, while all the time policymakers missed the bigger questions beneath - questions that the general public had long been asking themselves. For the public seemed to know what the officials could not admit, which was that ‘radicalisation’ originated with a particular community and that as long as that community grew the ‘radicalisation’ would grow. there was after all a reason why the European country with the highest per capita Muslim community - France - had suffered the largest number of attacks by ‘radicals’, whereas a country like Slovakia, for example, had suffered no such problems.” (Murray, 2018, p. 199)

Although Murray makes a good point by pointing out that Slovakia hasn't been a frequent target (or no target at all for that matter) of terrorist attacks, we should keep in mind that our neighboring country – Austria, the city of Vienna in particular, has already been a target of several such attacks. The geographical proximity (only 120 kms or an hour drive) of the capital of Slovakia and Vienna is, in this case, indeed menacing. Nevertheless, evaluating the level of diversity and migration in Bratislava and Vienna, it seems understandable that the city of Vienna would be the target of much more terrorist and political violence (due to previously outlined relationships concerning democracies). Murray, however, also makes an erroneous claim, based on the public opinion as to the source of radicals. Even though he might be right in this case, overall, we cannot let these kinds of decision be driven by stereotypes and automatically pin pointing radicalization to a certain community. Higher level of vigilance is reasonable in case we have the data to support it, we have to be careful, however, when generalizing and stigmatizing the whole cultural cohort based on public opinions and perceptions.

Not to mention the fact that the “radicals” in Slovakia had already had their place in the Parliament – similar to the Marine Le Pen's movement in France. This shows us that the process of radicalization can be present in the society even though the country itself has not been affected by the growing community of migrants (to such an extent as in, for example, France). In this case, the roots of radicalization are much deeper (meaning they have more of a historical connotation), the reason being resentment of ethnic minorities.

“...three suicide bombers blew themselves up in the Belgian capital. Najim Laachroui and Ibrahim el-Barkaoui exploded their suicide vests at the departures gate of Brussels airport, while Ibrahim's brother, Khalid el-Barkaoui, exploded his at Malbeek Métro station, just by the headquarters of the European Commission. All three perpetrators were once again 'locals'. Their victims included thirty-two people of a wide range of ages and nationalities.” (Murray, 2018, p. 232)

This example clearly shows the strategy behind determining the targets of political violence and extremism. Besides the fact that the attacks were carried out in the capital of Belgium, the strategic targets included a metro station near the headquarters of the European Commission. Metro stations and premises have been targets of such attacks throughout history, due to concentration of high number of people and also due to the importance of transportation. The position near the EC HQ might be considered symbolic or a pure

coincidence, however, the history of political violence suggests that the targeting was planned and premeditated. Another interesting fact is that the perpetrators were “locals”, or at least were considered to be “locals”, although of foreign origin. This goes to show that the possible underlying reason behind these attacks and radicalization of the perpetrators might be their failure to integrate. This would result in forming a diasporic community (such as Molenbeek) which are commonly sources of political violence.

The following section describes the attitudes towards reaching an explanation for such attacks.

“Across the continent the traditional search for explanation began. Some blamed the attacks – carried out by Belgian nationals from the Molenbeek district – on town planning, others on a lack of ‘gentrification’ in the area. Still others blamed Belgian foreign policy. Belgian history including Belgian colonialism, or the ‘racism’ of Belgian society. After the first round of this public debate *The New York Times* carried an unremarkable article, pointing the finger for the attacks at various Belgian policy failures.” (Murray, 2018, pp. 232-233)

The people as well as the authorities seem to be quite at a loss of consistency when it comes to the explanations of why these attacks happen and what should be done. The gentrification is a particularly interesting and polarising reason, as it could be argued that on one hand the affluent community increases the overall standards in the area, while also deepening the difference between the affluent and the poor.

A poll conducted in Britain in 2006 brought about quite shocking results, considering the conditions, country, culture and the society which it was conducted in. The results of the poll indicated that:

“...British Muslims (19 per cent) respected Osama bin Laden, with 6 per cent saying they ‘highly respected’ him. Nine years later, when two members of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula walked into the offices of *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris and massacred the publication’s staff for printing caricatures of Mohammed, 27 per cent of British Muslims said they had ‘some sympathy’ for the motives of the attackers. Nearly a quarter (24 per cent) said they believed violence against people who publish images of Mohammed can be justified.” (Murray, 2018, p. 234)

Harari offers his take of the events that took place on 7 January 2015 referred to by Murray:

“On 7 January 2015 Muslim fanatics massacred several staff members of the French magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, because the magazine published caricatures of the prophet Muhammad. In the following days, many Muslim organisations condemned the attack, yet some could not resist adding a ‘but’ clause. For example, the Egyptian Journalists Syndicate

denounced the terrorists for their use of violence, and in the same breath denounced the magazine for ‘hurting the feelings of millions of Muslims across the world’.” (Harari, 2016 p. 418).

The absolute lack of proportionate judgment in such a situation is alarming as well as the failure to condemn the events unequivocally. This allows for perception of weakened identity or even total lack of it. The respect towards figures such as Osama bin Laden and justification of violence can be ascribed to numerous factors, mostly, however the lack of critical and contextual thinking.

In 2013 there was a poll conducted in the UK, asking the British about their attitudes towards the world’s major religions. “Of those polled 27 per cent said they did not trust Muslims and 44 per cent said they thought Muslims did not share the same views as the rest of the population.” (p. 234). These results might not be the result of the Europeans being xenophobic and judgmental, rather it might have mirrored that Islam and Muslims had been recently associated with extreme violence perpetrated in their countries, cities, and streets.

Only few weeks earlier, after a young soldier from Afghanistan had been murdered in South London, the police managed to apprehend the attacker – Michael Adebolajo who had left a letter for his children:

“‘My beloved children. Know that to fight Allah’s enemies is an obligation.’ It went on ‘Do not spend your days I endless dispute with the cowardly and foolish if it means that it will delay your meeting Allah’s enemies on the battlefield.’ The letter finished with a footnote containing almost two dozen references to passages in the Quran, which Adebolajo obviously intended as scriptural backup to the contents of his letter.” (Murray, 2018, p. 235)

This case represents two important aspects: the misinterpretation and misconception of the Quran and intention to pass these sentiments onto the next generation. The next passage further exemplifies the erroneous approach to the prevalent sentiments.

In a poll, conducted in Scotland at a local school, students were asked to list the words associated with Muslims. Among the words and expressions that came up were also “terrorists”, “scary”, “9/11”. As a response, a charity sent Muslim women to “change” the students’ views of Islam. The result – they told them “that the 9/11 hijackers had ‘nothing to do with Islam’.” (Murray, 2018, p. 236).

This provides another problem of attempting to paint the World in white and black while completely disregarding the complexity of the whole issue. The issue at hand should have been presented in its full complexity, enticing critical thinking and striking a rational balance (e.g. providing the distinction between what is “Islamic” and “Islamist”). The younger generation should be led to discover the true meanings and understand the problem in its complexity, rather than painting it in “black and white”.

A couple of years down the line, in 2013, a poll focused on Islam and its impact on the country was conducted in Netherlands. It revealed that:

“...77 per cent of respondents said that Islam does not enrich their country. Some 73 per cent said that ‘a relationship exists’ between Islam and terror attacks and 68 per cent responded that they thought there was ‘enough’ Islam in the Netherlands.” (ibid, p. 236)

In the same year a poll was conducted in France:

“...73 per cent of people polled said that they viewed Islam negatively and 74 per cent said that they regarded Islam as intolerant. It is worth remembering that around 10 per cent of the French population are Muslim.” (ibid, p. 237)

And other European countries:

“...55 per cent of Dutch voters said they didn’t want any more Muslims in their country, 56 per cent of Germans said they associated Islam with a striving for political influence and 67 per cent of French people said that they believed Islamic values to be ‘incompatible’ with the values of French society.” (ibid, p. 236)

“A poll carried out in Germany in 2012 showed that 64 per cent of respondents associated Islam with violence while 70 per cent associated it with fanaticism and radicalism. Only 7 per cent of Germany associated the religion with openness, tolerance or respect for human rights.” (ibid, p. 237)

Murray goes on to describe the circumstances of the more recent attacks in the UK in 2017:

“...a 52-year-old British-born convert to Islam, Khalid Masood, ploughed his car across Westminster Bridge, killing an American tourist, a Romanian tourist and two British nationals. Dozens more were injured as they scattered from the car’s trajectory, some falling in the River Thames below.” (ibid, p. 321)

Further investigation showed that Masood had been motivated by waging jihad.

In the aftermath of this attack, Reverend John Hall questioned and scrutinized the motives and mentality of the perpetrators:

“What could possibly motivate a man to hire a car and take it from Birmingham to Brighton to London, and drive it fast at people he had never met, couldn’t possibly know, against whom he had no personal grudge, no reason to hate them and then run at the gates of the Palace of Westminster to cause another death? It seems like we shall never know.” (ibid, p. 322)

Despite Reverend Hall not being an expert in the field of extremism or terrorism, it could be argued that he was asking all the right questions, actually looking for the root cause of such behavior. What had made the perpetrator, or the terrorist, do what he did? What were the underlying causes, ideas, his mentality and motivation for random targeting? Justifiably, these are the most important things our counter-terrorist initiatives should be focused on. Designing and implementing pre-emptive measures instead of merely reacting to the events taking place not just in Europe, but all over the World. The idea should be being at least one step ahead, not two steps behind.

Among the most publicized attacks was also the one that took place the same year (2017) following a concert of Ariana Grande in the UK. One of the attackers: “...had been born in Pakistan and was described as having arrived in the UK as a ‘child refugee’ in 1998, his family having moved to the UK to claim asylum based on ‘political oppression’”(Murray, 2018, p. 323). Another one was a second-generation migrant from Libya, fleeing the Gaddafi regime and pledging allegiance to ISIS.

A sort of reoccurring trait of the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks seems to be that they are the young, second generation of immigrants either from the Middle East or North Africa. Nevertheless, as a reaction upon the events in London, there were more precautionary measures taken: “In the days that followed even more protective barriers, walls and bollards were put up around landmarks and vulnerable infrastructure points around Britain.” (Murray, Death of Europe, p. 324).

This goes to show how grave the situation really was, as London is considered as one of the cities which has been, throughout history, already built with preventing terrorism in mind – as a result of the Fenian Dynamite Campaign in the late 19th century. To think that even more preemptive measures were needed in a city which had already been built to mitigate the threat of terrorism is nothing if not appalling. With this in mind, it’s difficult to imagine how ill-prepared the other European cities must be, as majority of European countries has never experienced such an extensive and sustained terror or bombing campaign

as London and Britain did – so there has been no need to build the cities with this eventuality in mind. Many countries would argue that there is still no need to go to such lengths to prevent the eventuality of terrorist attacks - among them also Slovakia. The recent attacks only a couple of kilometers away, in Vienna, Austria, should, however, be enough of a warning signal to us and all other European countries which have yet to experience the threat of terrorism.

Possibly, with the events of the late 19th century and the Fenian Dynamite Campaign in mind – almost as though out of the “Fenian playbook”:

“...Ahmed Hassan got on the London Underground’s District line and left a bomb on the carriage during rush hour. The 18-year-old Iraqi turned out to have arrived in the UK illegally in 2015 and lived with foster parents since then. Indeed, he had built the bomb he took onto the morning rush hour train in his foster parents’ house. Fortunately for the many schoolchildren and others on the tube the detonator exploded without managing to ignite the device itself, leading to a stampede from the carriage and several dozen people with minor burns and other injuries, rather than dozens of corpses being taken away in body bags.” (Murray, 2018, p. 324)

Quite ironically, not only was the nature and fashion of the attack reminiscent of the Fenian attacks (the place - train, railway stations), also the outcome could be considered similar - as many Fenian attempts ended with what could be considered a “failure”, if we are evaluating it as a terrorist attack with the aim to cause damage or kill innocents. One of such failed attempts took place early during the Fenian Dynamite Campaign in the Salford Barracks. It is almost mind-boggling how the blueprint of such attacks hasn’t changed in what has been almost 140 years and we are still not capable of preventing or neutralizing such threats completely - with the newest technologies and intelligence at our disposal.

The following example demonstrates the failing role of European Union in managing safe migration - therefore fostering the general stigma of fear when it comes to immigrants from the Middle East and other predominantly Muslim regions. In Sweden, there was an attack conceived by an immigrant from Uzbekistan, which had no right to be in the country at the time. He had no legitimate asylum claim and had been previously ordered to leave the country – which he had ignored.

Another example of an attack in Spain goes to show how poor are the European security measures when it comes to background checks of immigrants with possibly terrorist or radical backgrounds:

“14 people were killed and more than a hundred injured after Younes Abouyaaqoub, a 22-year-old Moroccan, drove a van into the crowds walking down the sidewalk of the popular La Rambla in Barcelona. He killed another person as he attempted to steal their car to escape. The perpetrator turned out to be a part of terror cell, members of which later ploughed a vehicle into pedestrians in nearby Cambrills, killing one woman and injuring six others. Other members of the cell had been killed the night before while they were preparing a bomb in a house in Alcanar. It was later reported that the cell had been planning far more spectacular attacks, including the blowing up of Antoni Gaudi’s masterpiece, the Sagrada Familia Cathedral. A month later, in a separate incident, anti-terrorist police stormed the cathedral, evacuated it and shut down the entire surrounding area after reports of a ‘suspicious’ van nearby.” (Murray, *Death of Europe*, p. 327)

The list of the examples evidencing a lack of background checks when it comes to immigrants seems to only grow longer:

“The day after the Barcelona attack two Finnish women were stabbed to death and eight others injured by an attacker in Turku, Finland shouting ‘Allahu Akbar’. The attacker – who had deliberately targeted women – again turned out to be from the largest contingent of recent migrants to Europe: a person who had no more right to be in Europe than anyone else in the world. Abderrahman Bouanane had arrived in Finland in 2016 under a false name, claiming to be a child refugee. He turned out to be a 22-year-old from the perfectly peaceful country of Morocco. Despite being denied asylum and adopting different, false, identities, he was not removed from the country.” (Murray, *Death of Europe*, pp. 327-328)

“Yet it appeared that little or nothing could be done to prevent such attacks. All that could be relied upon was policing, intelligence work, and the erection of ever more bollards in all European cities. About the larger issue nobody seemed to want to get out ahead of the belligerent political consensus.” (Murray, *Death of Europe*, p. 328)

Schmid’s hypotheses related to migration were supported, therefore his findings show that the higher the terrorist activity in a given country, the higher the net-migration – i.e. the higher the levels of terrorism, the more migration to Europe (Schmid, 2016). A study spanning 154 countries covering the period of 1970-2007 goes to conclude that countries with higher migration populations “are more likely to experience both domestic and international terrorism”; another study offers a parallel conclusion: “Refugee flows significantly increase the likelihood and counts of transnational terrorist attacks that occur in the host country...” (ibid, p. 37). He also stipulates that international terrorists are often migrants, or second-generation migrants, in diasporas. If they are neglected and not presented with an alternative or plan for integration and inclusion, they are likely to become radicalized.

Stricter migration control might backfire in terms of restricting freedoms for migrants as well as for native citizens. However, when it comes to policy recommendations, Schmid concludes his findings with the need to commit migrants to respect the European values and to establish communication between migrant communities and responsible bodies, so the migrants can inform authorities on security issues related to radicalization and terrorism. Furthermore, he points to lack of security in refugee camps which would suggest failure on the side of the European migration policy. These failures, often in security management of refugee camps, may lead to them becoming breeding grounds for terrorism. This is evidenced by the activities of Boko Haram, the group which in addition to causing displacement of millions of people, persecuted and attacked them in the refugee camps.

Schmid also points to the accounts of recruiting activities of Islamic State (IS) inside the refugee camps. IS lures the vulnerable individuals by promise of security. While there is a strong presence of humanitarian outlooks on migration, we have to be able to look at this phenomenon objectively, and critically, based on statistics and data. The evidence that migrants cannot be only painted as victims of the unrest in their region (although many of them, indeed, are) is the wave of reimmigration recorded after the proclamation of the new Caliphate in 2014 – motivated by the strong sense of duty to defend Islam and the new Caliphate. Schmid provides the data with the evidence of almost 6000 people emigrating from Europe and joining organizations described as “terrorist” and then returning back to Europe. These types of migrants are labelled *hijrah*, as they carry the intent to infiltrate the refugee streams and engage in acts of terrorism in Europe. As in the case of *jihad*, also the notion of *hijrah* is used out of context as it means to emigrate in the way of God (Aldis, 2007). Many of these migrants become “perpetual migrants”, moving from one jihadist epicenter to another (Schmid, 2016). This is why the need for better international cooperation and coordination in the areas of migration and counterterrorism is essential. However, terrorism stemming from migration or perpetrated by migrants in the target countries is still considered a minor issue, mainly due to lack of empirical evidence and the correlation being highly circumstantial, varying from case to case. Cinoglu and Atun both argue that there is an increased focus on border policies to fight against terrorism which is “creating an artificial link between the immigrants and terrorism” (ibid, p. 48) and that targeting of specific groups of migrants for the sake of terrorism prevention is not reconcilable with the theories of democracy and human rights. This is apparent mainly in the possible extended control over citizens which the responsible authorities might acquire

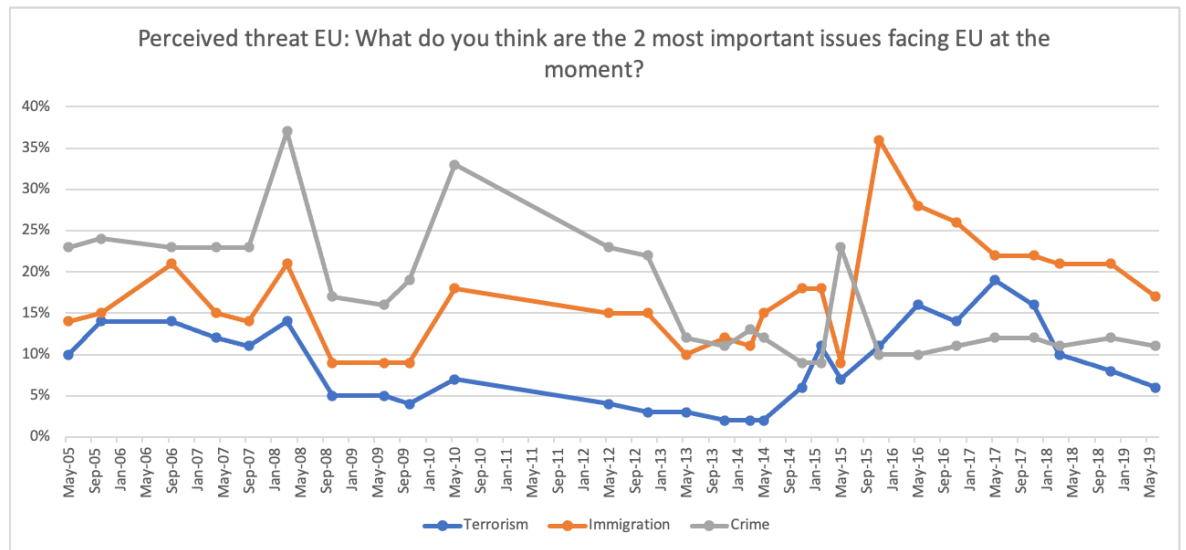
as the result of such policies. Stricter migration regulation for the sake of terrorism prevention and counterterrorism seems to be inefficient, based largely on insufficient evidence, with myriad negative side-effects infringing on basic human rights while showing no promise of improvement of the situation. Other measures need to be explored in fighting this phenomenon, especially targeting the terrorist organizational infrastructure and ideology (Schmid, 2016). Possible alternative to this seemingly invasive approach would lie in identifying the networks and streams, thereby creating a database through cooperation with indigenous Islamic institutions. Communication on international and local level remains the key in this effort (Aldis, 2007).

The author would suggest that the relationship between terrorism and migration be continuously observed to obtain empirical evidence in order to be able to make more conclusive and well-informed decisions in the future. The public needs to be more informed and provided with relevant data in order to avoid misconceptions and unsubstantiated conclusions which could result in fear, xenophobia, racism, and even the emergence of nationalist, extremist, and possibly terrorist, movements. Political discourse in this way does more harm than good, especially in Slovakia and Czech Republic, where the highest-ranking state officials (Miloš Zeman, and former Prime Minister Robert Fico) have repeatedly suggested that terrorists will use refugee streams to infiltrate the host countries. While there are instances of such activity, it is mostly exceptional and cannot be widely generalized and applied to the migrant cohort (Schmid, 2016). Overall, there seems to be more evidence of terrorism being a “push” factor, causing migration from the country of origin. The evidence is overwhelmingly inconclusive and circumstantial when it comes to migrants “importing” terrorism to the target countries.

The education system needs to improve its functioning and focus on development of critical thinking in wider contexts and concepts, so that the population is able to evaluate and verify various statements applying multidisciplinary approach based in evidence, data, and rationalism. Furthermore, Schmid (2016) proposes 2 basic measures that need to be taken in order to “de-link” terrorism and migration:

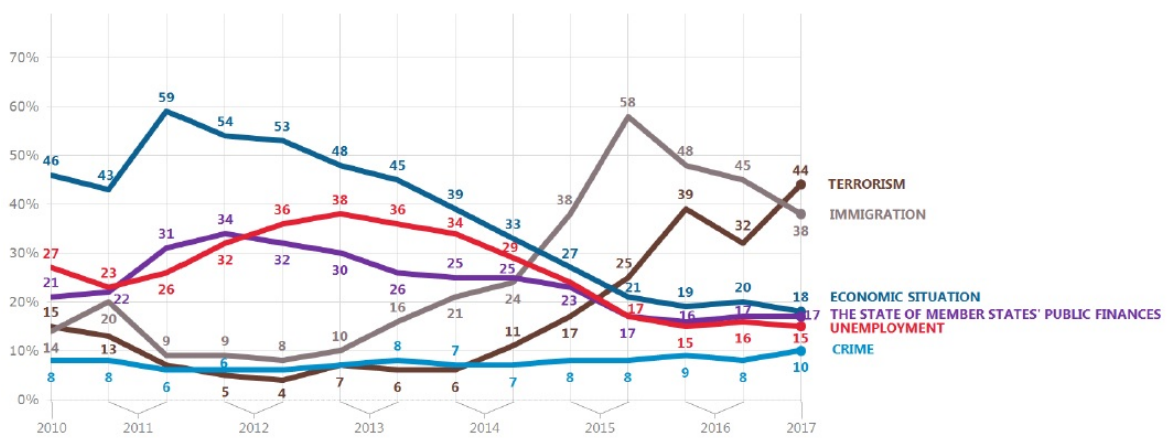
- asylum seekers shall make an official commitment to respect and uphold European (or particular countries’) laws, political culture, and core values (democracy, pluralism, freedom of speech and opinion, human and gender rights, tolerance of diversity)

- those fleeing from terrorism should assist the authorities in identifying terrorists and report on potential threats of radicalization in their surroundings (potential members of terrorist groups)



Data retrieved from: European Commission [online]

Terrorism perceived as the most important issue facing the EU:



Source: European Commission (2017 [online])

The data outlined in this part hint to a certain relation between migration and terrorism. Even though the data operate with “public perceptions”, we cannot ignore them and there is a rising need in addressing them. We need to be careful when assessing this nexus and be able to distinguish between the two phenomena simply happening simultaneously, or one causing the other – considering the post hoc fallacy. From the charts outlined in this section, the rise of perception of the threat from terrorism was in both cases preceded by the rise in perception of the threat from migration. The relation is almost self-

evident at first sight, nevertheless, there is a further need to explore the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* fallacy in this case.

The heightened perception of the threat of terrorism coinciding with heightened perception may be caused by various factors. First is the information and media sources people are consuming and their inability to apply reason and critical thinking when it comes to these sources. Both topics, terrorism and migration, are overly represented in all media streams and incite the mental shortcut previously outlined in this thesis, known as Availability Bias (i.e. whatever information can be recalled easier must therefore be more important). Aldis (2007) also ascribes these sentiments partially to lack of resilience and self-reliance of eastern Europeans, when compared to Western hemisphere. This may be the cause of previously outlined issue related to lack of collective, European identity and unity in this respect. West seems to be far better in presenting a united front.

This can be resolved by increasing the demand for critical thinking and rationalism on the level of academia.

Covid-19 and terrorism

This chapter will be dedicated to an exploration whether the recent and ongoing pandemic has had any impact on terrorist activity around the World and whether it has left governments, states, and societies more vulnerable to the threats of terrorism. According to the GTI report: “COVID-19 pandemic is expected to worsen the impact of terrorism in certain regions, and present complex challenges for national and international counter-terrorism responses.” (IEP, 2020, p. 29). At first glance, the pandemic seems to be unrelated to terrorist activity to most people. States and governments seem to neglect this connection between a long-standing phenomenon of political violence and the unprecedented global health crisis.

As countries and governments throw majority of their financial and personal resources into combatting the pandemic (in the area of vaccine research, vigilance, testing etc.), they might become increasingly more susceptible to other parallel issues and threats to national and public security, such as terrorism. This shift of focus, which has been necessary, however, is also negatively reflected in counter-terrorism budgets of each country – which might lead to an overall decrease in counterterrorist activity around the World.

With the virus outbreak, some of the major terrorist groups (i.e. al-Qaida, ISIL) announced their intentions to expand their activities, calling on their followers to “actively continue to wage global jihad, and to take advantage of strained security and government forces to launch attacks.” (IEP, 2020, p. 29). Other radical groups seized the opportunity to further escalate tensions and their rhetoric, supporting racism, anti-immigration, and Islamophobia. Jihadist groups in sub-Saharan Africa have also begun with launching attacks more frequently, for example in Nigeria, where number of attacks in the first half of 2020 exceeded the total number recorded in 2019. The Islamist extremist groups seized the opportunity to claim that the pandemic was sent by God to purge the humankind of sinners, or that it was constructed by their “enemies”, thereby trying to justify their ideology of “just” jihad (IEP, 2020).

Global lockdown has also made people more susceptible to radical ideologies spread through social media. People are increasingly irritated by the measures governments are taking to protect them and seek “vehicles” to express their grievances. The far-right extremists and supremacists have seized this opportunity to point at global failure of institutions and “the system”.

On the other hand, the pandemic also presented terrorist groups with some major challenges. Travel restrictions and more thorough checks almost at every border and airport have made it increasingly more difficult for them to carry out their operations on an international scale. The restrictions of public events have also provided fewer opportunities for impactful international terrorist attacks (IEP, 2020).

2. Effective counterterrorist policies

Terrorism is one of the many problems plaguing the World nowadays. Some people might argue that it has been around for such a long time that it seems impossible to “solve” or eliminate completely. The next step, after being able to evaluate either the impact or propensity to terrorism, is to counter and most importantly prevent any possible breakout of terrorism, violent extremism, and political violence. While the elimination of terrorism remains a “Sisyphean task” for now, the progress of our society and science in general might

prove otherwise in the future. David Deutsch, British physicist at the University of Oxford, lays out the fundamentals which should be present when approaching any kind of problem, not excluding terrorism:

“Problems are inevitable, because our knowledge will always be infinitely far from complete. Some problems are hard, but it is a mistake to confuse hard problems with problems unlikely to be solved. Problems are soluble, and each particular evil is a problem that can be solved. An optimistic civilization is not afraid to innovate, and is based on traditions of criticism. Its institutions keep improving, and the most important knowledge that they embody is knowledge of how to detect and eliminate errors.” (Pinker, 2018, p. 7)

It is exactly through innovation, knowledge acquired in the form of intelligence, and competent institutions, that we might be able to devise efficient counterterrorist measures and policies and change terrorism from an insoluble problem, to a problem to which the solution can be implemented through efficient institutions and policies, able to eliminate “errors”.

Shane Kenna dubbed the SIB’s fight against the IRB Fenians in the 19th century as “War in the Shadows”. This was mainly due to secretive nature of the counterterrorist operations, using agents provocateurs and infiltrators, to sow distrust and disrupt the structures of the Fenian movement. This concept prevails until today, as in the modern age of terrorism, there are no clear, physical enemies. We are fighting against ideologies with global reach. Terrorism is not a state, neither is it anything tangible. The amorphous nature of this threat needs to be assessed and considered in the process of forming any future counterterrorist approaches.

In order to resolve a problem, we first need to understand it. Terrorism is not an exception. The first part of this thesis served to clarify the terrorist mentality and structures. Understanding the root causes, motivations, and ideology of terrorism is crucial in countering it effectively. This aspect has been severely understudied and underestimated by policymakers.

Effective counterterrorist policy is key in defending a country against terrorism and political violence in general – whether external or internal. The essential elements of an effective counterterrorist policy, according to Richardson (2006), are addressing the

underlying cause of terrorism and violence, while combining both short and long-term strategies and responses.

According to the GTI Report, understanding the motivations and recruitment techniques of the terrorist organizations is essential in devising efficient counterterrorist measures – which should carry the characteristics of “disruption”. Furthermore, it is also necessary to address the impact of attacks. In agreement with Richardson, it is necessary to devise strategies that would disrupt the recruitment process and look at why would people seek to join a terrorist organization. Furthermore, we need to be able to facilitate a secure exit from the group and gradual integration of the individuals back into the society. This integration might be possible also by the former members sharing their experience with young adults in areas with high rates of radicalization – which would facilitate integration of the former members while dissuading new potential members from joining. GTI further calls for a stricter social media surveillance which, however, seems to be a double-edged sword (as evidenced by the 9/11 response), especially in the era of liberal democracies. Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand the significance of media and the Internet in the recruitment process and take it seriously, as the GTI Report states: “Nearly 50 per cent of current or former ISIL members indicate they had been radicalised solely by passively consuming the material on social media” (IEP, 2020, p.78). The Report, however, does not elaborate on the nature or source of this supposed material – a fact that would have to be ascertained for higher overall efficiency. Pinker (2018) also mentions an interesting aspect of limiting the media coverage of terrorist attacks and activities, aligning with the recommendations in GTI report, with the objective to minimize their influence on community and prevent further recruitment of new sympathizers.

Harari offers more of an ideological approach to dealing with terrorism, doubting the very nature of this phenomenon and almost refusing its severity, though not unwisely. He argues that “terrorism is a strategy of weakness adopted by those who lack access to real power. At least in the past, terrorism worked by spreading fear rather than by causing significant material damage. Terrorists usually don’t have the strength to defeat an army, occupy a country or destroy entire cities” (Harari, 2016, p. 39).

“For the average American or European, Coca-Cola poses far deadlier threat than al-Qaeda. How, then, do terrorists manage to dominate the headlines and change the political situation around the world? By provoking their enemies to overreact. In essence, terrorism is a show. Terrorists stage a terrifying spectacle of violence that captures our imagination and makes

us feel as if we are sliding back into medieval chaos. Consequently states often feel obliged to the theatre of terrorism with a show of security, orchestrating immense displays of force, such as the persecution of entire populations or the invasion of foreign countries. In most cases, this overreaction to terrorism poses a far greater threat to our security than the terrorists themselves.” (ibid, p. 40).

“This is what happened in the Middle East in the last decade. Islamic fundamentalists could never have toppled Saddam Hussein by themselves. Instead they enraged the USA by the 9/11 attacks, and the USA destroyed the Middle Eastern china shop for them. By themselves, terrorists are too weak to drag us back to the Middle Ages and re-establish the Jungle Law. They may provoke us, but in the end, it all depends on our reactions.” (ibid, p. 41)

Steven Pinker, a Harvard College Professor and Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, presents a view parallel to that of Harari in his publication on the importance of humanism and progress, *Enlightenment Now* (2018):

“In recent years, highly publicized terrorist attacks and rampage killings have set the world on edge and fostered an illusion that we live in newly dangerous times. In 2016, a majority of Americans named terrorism as the most important issue facing the country, said they were worried that they or a family member would be a victim, and identified ISIS as a threat to the existence or survival of the United States.” (Pinker, 2018, p. 191).

Pinker argues that terrorism has become an illusion, spreading panic and hysteria through media, rather than a real threat. He refuses to refer to the changing trends in terrorism as “progress”, because these do not result in any improvement of the human condition. Terrorism is designed solely to draw attention of the public by killing innocents, and the media covering it only help the terrorist agenda (Pinker, 2018). Such an extensive coverage as we see today triggers and builds on the so-called “availability heuristic” (a bias stating that if something can be recalled, it must be important) effectively spreading more fear and terror, unrelated to the real level of danger. The evidence would be the 9/11 – people remember the attacks on the World Trade Center but often fail to recall attacks on the Pentagon, which would be considered a strategically more important target and result in more severe ramifications to the nation. Pinker also argues that people are far more psychologically impacted by intentional malevolent actions than by accidents. He states that terrorists strike victims at random, with their goals being revenge and recognition. Pinker (2018) refutes the merit of terrorism based on recalling numerous surveys carried out by political scientists which come to the conclusion that all terrorist movements are eventually extinguished or fade away without achieving their strategic goals. Therefore the increased perceived threat of terrorism is actually the result of increased security worldwide.

Contrary to Pinker's argument that the only objective of terrorism is drawing attention, Stohl argues that acts of terror are designed "to create fear or compliant behavior in a victim or an audience for the act or threat" (Richardson, 2006, p. 57). The attacks are, indeed, designed to draw attention per Harari's stipulations; however, for reasons related to acquiring new members, sympathizers and funding. Therefore, Stohl elaborates, counterterrorist strategies should take into account also reactions of the public – their subjective feeling of safety and security. It is crucial that the authorities provide safe and secure environment from terrorism. The key to devise an effective counterterrorist policy is to understand the terrorists' primary goal – i.e. to incite fear in the audience, not in the immediate victims (Richardson, 2006).

Stohl further argues that the public, as well as the particular concerned agencies, should be more involved in the process of developing counterterrorist policies (Richardson, 2006). Better communication of counterterrorist efforts could lead to more trust from the public in government policies and agencies – trust, that especially the terrorist groups aim to undermine, and that is crucial in countering such a threat. Considering the importance of public perception in countering terrorism, Stohl also warns that: "Terrorists recognize the potential for states to overreact by ignoring their own legal requirements and norms of behavior..." (Richardson, 2006, p. 60). By overreacting, they further escalate the issue, giving the terrorists the opportunity to justify their actions by calling the regime "oppressive".

Pinker warns before overreacting to terrorism as the worst possible counterterrorist strategy – the American invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11 being the case and point. He suggests that countries should use knowledge and analysis to the best of their abilities. Securing weapons of mass destruction should be key priority to prevent mass casualties and offering alternative and better ideologies should impede the processes of recruitment and radicalization. The media should be more aware of their role in this respect and calibrate their coverage accordingly. He points to the strategy laid out by Lankford and Matfis of "Don't Name Them, Don't Show Them, but Report Everything Else" (Pinker, 2018, p. 198). Governments should be more engaged in intelligence and clandestine operations against terrorists and aim to freeze or eliminate their financial resources (ibid).

As to the future of terrorism, Pinker relies on the historical data which suggests that terrorist movements rarely achieve their strategic goals and eventually “sputter out”. However, the conceding conclusion he makes, corresponding to the ones the author made in the thesis “Victorian War on Terror”, is that it might not be possible to completely eliminate the phenomenon of terrorism (ibid).

Contrary to Pinker’s passive approach to counterterrorism, Stohl argues that democratic principles should be the foundation of any counterterrorist policy, along with strong rule of law. Bell and Wilkinson support his stance and emphasize the role of government policies (Richardson, 2006).

Post (2007) agrees that terrorism cannot be totally eliminated and, therefore, our goal should be to contain and reduce its impact as much as possible. Interestingly, he states that as long as there is democracy, terrorism cannot be completely eliminated.

Government policies

It is important to acknowledge that government policies are only a fraction of the whole aspect of counterterrorism – i.e. also the government has its limitations. Richardson (2006) mentions 4 general areas the government counterterrorist policies should be focused on: preemption, deterrence, burnout, and backlash. Preemption and deterrence refer to limiting and eventually eliminating the ability of terrorists to coerce their victims or audiences. Burnout and backlash refer to political aspects of counterterrorist policies – aiming to discourage new members from entering terrorist groups and alienating terrorist groups based on delegitimizing their actions.

Governments should find a better way to facilitate international cooperation through institutions and thereby make the cross-cultural approach to countering terrorism more efficient. Establishing common policies and response units and uniting counterterrorist policies should be among the top priorities of the European Union – especially while it is experiencing crises in form of immigration and the pandemic.

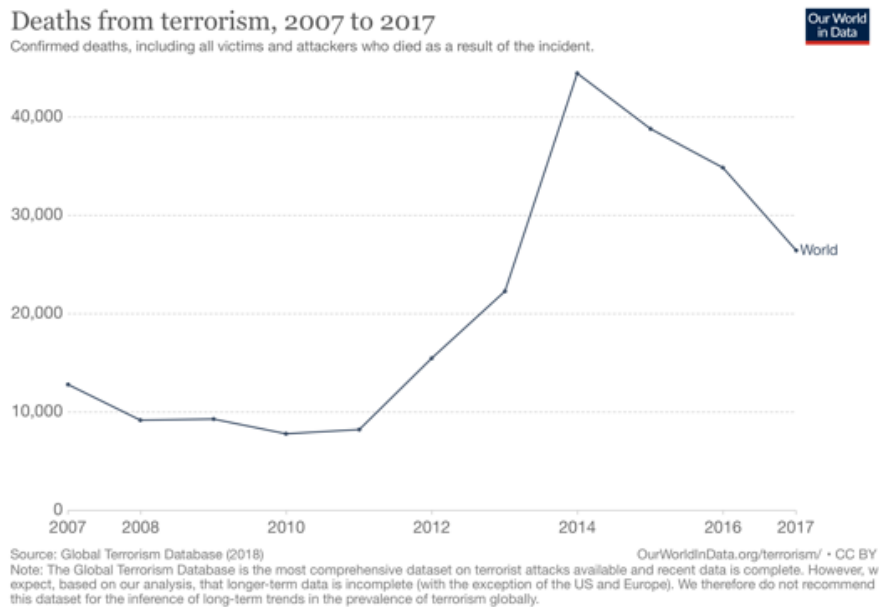
The role of private sector in countering terrorism

Private sector may be able to provide the additional incentives and investments the governments are not able to, especially during periods of political and social unrest – as is

now the case due to the pandemic. A healthy combination of private sector investments in government programs and infrastructure may lead to much faster development of counterterrorist policies as well as the underlying infrastructure. Governments should definitely play a bigger role when it comes to educating the young generation about the perils of radicalization and emergence of terrorism in European region. Incentive programs that develop intercultural competencies and further deepen our understanding of terrorism and the process of radicalization might lead to significant shift in the paradigm of our perception of this threat. Often, people are afraid of phenomena they don't particularly understand or feel like the concept is strange to them. By explaining the process of radicalization and exploring the terrorist mentality as a part of intercultural studies, universities might be able to educate a generation that is more resilient and more prepared to tackle these problems. Furthermore, it is important to lead the students to critical thinking by using various real-world case studies and enticing interdisciplinary approach in their resolution – using intercultural competences, knowledge of various cultures, ability to work with large data sets and being able to evaluate future situations based on past experiences.

In the countries which experience a high rate of radicalization, there is often a problem of inequality in accessibility to education. Inclusion of women in the process of education leads to overall development of the economy and has proven to be a way to mitigate the dangers of terrorism and high rates of radicalization and marginalization of society. Pinker's rational, data-driven approach is definitely a way to counterfeit the world of terrorism, rooted in deeply emotional, ethnological, and cultural grievances.

Looking at the latest data for the World, available for 2017, we would find out that the total number of deaths caused by terrorism was 26,445 – representing a change of +26,271 since 1970. Approximately half of those (13,621) were recorded in the last 10 years (2007-2017) of the 47-year period (Ritchie (2013) [online]). When compared to deaths caused by wars and car crashes, we could argue that terrorism does not pose such a threat. Nevertheless, it is not be the number of deaths per se that should be worrying, it should be the steep increase recorded in such a short time (10 years) compared to the total length of the examined period. The following chart represents the changing number of deaths from terrorism in the given period (2007-2017).



Considering that overall, out of 56 million deaths recorded in 2017 only 26 thousand were victims of terrorism (mere 0.0046%), one might totally agree with the views of both Pinker and Harari. However, there are two disconcerting facts about this set of data. The first is the recorded steep increase in the recent, short period of time (as shown in the chart, 300-400%) – which contradicts Pinker’s philosophy of the threat of terrorism being an “illusion”. In this spirit, also Matusitz (2013), points to the fact that Al Qaeda killed more people in a single day (9/11) than the IRA had managed to kill in 35 years. Another one is that humanity, science and progress is able, to a fair extent, mitigate the possible risks associated with, for example, car crashes (safer guidelines, roads, cars, measures, rules), or accidents in general – safer environment etc. However, in order to mitigate dangers arising from terrorism we cannot use guidelines, rules or laws – as these have proven to be ineffective throughout history. Whatever rule, act, law or guideline has been enforced; terrorism seems to always reemerge in a different part of the World. We could consider the changing nature and flexible means as the most threatening aspects of terrorism. While the number of deaths caused by terrorism could have gone down in the last decades, we should not use it to disregard the gravity of threat this phenomenon poses to our society.

Delegitimizing terrorism as a whole should be the primary long-term goal of any counterterrorist policy. This should be achieved through political actions, changes, and incentives. While this goal might take years to achieve because implementing effective counter-terrorist policy will probably be met with bureaucratic backlash, the focus should be on more immediate goals – separating the terrorists from communities that support them,

denying groups the means to recruit new members, and preventing their ideologies from spreading (Richardson, 2006). In a sense, terrorism is like a pandemic – once you contain the phenomenon and prevent it from spreading, it can be managed with relatively high level of security. However, once it gets loose, there is not much that can be done. In general, we could argue that both phenomena can be curbed but not totally eliminated – at least not in the near future.

While delegitimizing terrorism sounds good and fairly effective, one shall be cautious when pursuing this course of action. We need to have the essential goal in mind - to eliminate the source which the support for terrorism stems from. The policy has to be focused on the perpetrators. If we, for example, consider a zero-tolerance policy – as Esposito argues, there is little chance of it being effective as it contradicts the basic principles of democracy. This contradiction is prone to lead to further escalation, alienation, and increase in terrorist tendencies (Richardson, 2006).

Another way to lower the risk of a terrorist outbreak or escalating radical tendencies worldwide is to mitigate the impact of globalization and drastic socioeconomic change in developing countries (Richardson, 2006). While change, development, and progress are generally considered as processes contributing to overall higher quality of life, if a developing country is subjected to a sudden combination of these factors it might result in rejection and growing socioeconomic differences among inhabitants, concluding in a higher propensity for a terrorist or politically motivated violent outbreak. This is also the reason why the developed countries of today's World ought to be careful when providing financial or economic aid. Without sufficient understanding of the country's socio-economic background, this sort of help might have an effect contradicting its purpose and intention.

Instead of utilizing excessive financial injections and incentives for the less developed countries, the focus should be on promoting “the growth of a middle class and women's literacy and education” (Richardson, *The Roots*, p. 10). Richardson (2006) further stipulates that higher level of political, social, and economic participation of women would help to mitigate the extremist and violent tendencies around the World. Understandably, higher level of inclusion of women in the societies where terrorism is a problem would lead to reduction of general inequalities in the society, discrimination, and the propensity of inhabitants to turn to political violence as means for achieving their goals. This, however,

does not apply only to women but to any marginalized group within a society. The education, then, is directly connected to job opportunities, which is closely related to successful integration into society. Richardson further argues that the West shall provide an alternative and opportunities for the marginalized groups.

Finally, effective counterterrorist policies shall aim to neutralize the extremist ideologies behind terrorist activities. Reaching out to moderates in the countries where the radical terrorist groups are operating (through diplomats, ambassadors, media, and coordinated communication campaign) is, according to Richardson (2006), the key to successful implementation of policies and stopping terrorism in its roots. However, representatives should communicate not only with the countries where the terrorist groups originated, but also aim towards a concerted effort of all countries to limit the ability of such groups to move freely and tap into financial, material, and political resources. The only instrument which seems to fit this purpose are more thorough border and customs checks which have proven to be difficult to implement, as the World is becoming ever more globalized and interconnected.

In order to form effective counterterrorist policies, we need to acquire a more profound understanding of how the terrorist groups operate. The objective of any such policy would be to provide sufficient incentives for the individuals involved in terrorist activities to leave their intentions behind, discourage them from joining the movement in the first place, and delegitimize the leaders of such organizations. This, however, is not possible without possessing internal knowledge of how the terrorist groups operate (Richardson, 2006). Richardson's point of view would suggest that there is a need for undercover, secret policing with the intention to infiltrate the groups, learn as much as possible about the way they operate and, ideally, cause their dismemberment from within. This approach could not be considered as something particularly novel in the field of countering terrorism, as it has been employed previously – during the Fenian Dynamite Campaign in Great Britain and Ireland in the late 19th century when the British Metropolitan Police and Special Irish Branch relied on secret operatives (“agent provocateurs”) that supplied them with information. Later on, they proved to be instrumental in neutralizing the Dynamite Campaign, however, not the phenomenon of terrorism and political violence as such.

Furthermore, we need to understand each terrorist group within its own context, i.e. we cannot treat them all the same way. Various policies shall be “tailored” to each terrorist movement or group. That’s why it’s important to study variety of terrorist groups with different motives and intentions so as to understand their similarities and differences. Only if we acquire a more profound understanding of these groups and the phenomenon of terrorism itself, we will be able to devise effective and lasting counterterrorist policies (Richardson, 2006). The problem needs to be addressed at its very roots, by implementing policies focused on communities with high propensity to become radicalized and turn to terrorism as means of conveying their general discontent. By improving social and economic conditions and addressing inequalities (through integration), coupled with specific focus on each of the various groups, we may increase our ability to contain the growth of terrorism worldwide (Richardson, 2006).

Considering the formation of terrorist identity as a crucial process in the concept of radicalization as a whole, we need to be able to stop this process as early as possible. Richardson (2006), further emphasizes the point of being able to understand the terrorist mentality within its specific context (region or culture) and devising particular methods for its elimination. However, we shouldn’t focus only on the terrorist groups but also on the other side of the situation – the targets, i.e. people, societies, countries. We need to be able to “immunize” society against this phenomenon. This can be done in a myriad of ways – beginning with education in public institutions, inclusion of women in the society, gender equality, eliminating racism, xenophobia, radical nationalist and radical religious ideologies, eliminating huge socio-cultural differences and mitigating negative impact of globalization in less affluent regions of the World. Also, as we can already “expect” the threat of terrorism everywhere in the World, our cities and cultural “hubs” should be built with this threat in mind. A great example is the city of London which was, due to the Fenian Dynamite Campaign, rebuilt and modernized with the threat of terrorism in mind throughout the whole process.

Here is a summary of the key aspects of effective counter-terrorist efforts and policies (generally summarizing the experts’ consensus as well):

- Inhibit new prospective members from joining terrorist groups and movements.
- Disrupt internal organization and order of the terrorist groups.

- Facilitate exit from the group and help the members to do so (amnesty programs).
- Delegitimize the group, its ideals, reduce their support. (Richardson, 2006)

Post (2007) outlines, in essence, similar 4 points of counterterrorist strategy while adding a 5th element – protection of public and target audience. Post's suggestions for efficient counterterrorist policies include providing economic aid for development, alternatives in form of education, countering media propaganda more efficiently, and addressing the problem of radicalization at its root – by working with the youth. He further highlights the importance of infiltrating and disassembling the terrorist groups from within. Facilitation of exit from the group should be provided by amnesty programs. Delegitimizing the groups and their support shall be done by delegitimizing their ideology, e.g. as in case of religious fundamentalist groups. Scripture is often misinterpreted subjectively, especially in case of Islam. Post argues that these changes must come from within the religious communities. Delegitimizing the group ideology will eventually lead to its marginalization and individuals exiting the group. Education focused on preventing radicalization and understanding the phenomena related to terrorism is also crucial, especially in related subjects of study, i.e. intercultural communication or international relations.

Gurr offers his take on response strategies to terrorism with more focus on mitigating the danger of rapid socioeconomic changes in the process of radicalization. His suggestions include:

- mitigating the impact of rapid socioeconomic change through international financial aid and investment policies, redistribution of wealth through education,
- promotion of women's education, literacy, political inclusion, and equality,
- reducing group grievances and discrimination by promoting international equal rights with incentives for governments and private companies that do so, incorporation of marginalized groups,
- providing alternatives to radical ideologies, especially in critical regions (Western democracy)
- interrupting financial flows to terrorist organizations
- incentives for individuals for leaving terrorist groups

- international cooperation and coordination (international network of counterterrorist bodies, better cooperation especially because of much more freedom of cross-border movement and migration) (Richardson, 2006)

Gotchev proposes a set of measures drawing on various definitions of terrorism and implementing international coordination of counterterrorist efforts. Gotchev aims to lay a foundation for policies which will mitigate the downside of globalization and discredit terrorism. He emphasizes the importance of economic integration programs to reduce inequalities internationally (Richardson, 2006).

Esposito emphasizes the need to marginalize and delegitimize terrorists by using ideological counterterrorist policies addressing the underlying grievances and cause of terrorism. He argues for the zero-tolerance policy, which might not be able to eliminate terrorism but limit its reach as much as possible. His focus is on religious leaders, who wield great influence within their communities. They should mitigate the challenges related to globalization, promote inclusion and religious and ideological pluralism (Richardson, 2006).

Roy (Richardson, 2006), further elaborates on the idea of ideological and religious pluralism of Esposito, by arguing that it is necessary to make room for Islam in contemporary European or Western culture by using the tools of state policy.

Problems arising in connection with counterterrorist policies and their implementation are often related to lack of funding or lack of sustained funding over the course of several years. Governments and interested parties should be able to commit for a longer period of time in order to see results and long-lasting improvements in the area of counterterrorism. Furthermore, Gotchev argues that counterterrorism should also focus on the financial aspect of terrorism, by restricting funding and illicit trade, monitoring suspicious international money transfers (Richardson, 2006).

Tore Bjørger, a widely recognized pioneer in the study of de-radicalization and disengagement from extremist groups, emphasized the role of education in the process of countering terrorism and preventing radicalization. He highlights the importance of women's education and empowerment (Richardson, 2006).

As to terrorism arising from higher levels of migration, there are two approaches. One of them proposed by Sheffer is to create sovereign nations for emigrating groups. Sheffer uses the example of the Irish to support his case. While this solution seems quite unrealistic and structurally demanding, he proposes also other solutions that are more aligned with the previous ones explored in this section. Sheffer stresses the importance of mitigating the impact of rapid socioeconomic changes related to globalization by providing sustained aid to negatively impacted countries, focusing on reintegration of marginalized groups and empowerment of women. The next step should facilitate disengagement from terrorism as well as reintegration of individuals into society (Richardson, 2006).

Overall, the experts seem to agree that better international cooperation and joint activity on all levels would lead to better solutions for countering terrorism globally.

Case study – Systemic change after 9/11

The terrorist attacks that took place on September 11, 2001, masterminded by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, are undoubtedly among, if not the most emblematic and widely medialized terrorist attacks in our modern history. To put the events in a diachronic perspective – on that single day, “Al Qaeda killed more people than the Irish Republican Army had killed in thirty-five years.” (Matusitz, 2013, p. 9). The change these events incited has been long lasting and is felt also today. These attacks are the single most important reason behind the Americans’ heightened perception and sensibility to terrorism, as well as their waging of “War on Terror” in the Middle East. These events eventually transformed the whole World in the area of homeland security.

The events of 9/11 demonstrated the gravity of threat that Al-Qaeda, bin Laden, and globalization of jihad posed to the World. Bin Laden was opposed to the presence of Americans in the Middle East which is one of the main reasons behind his radicalization. He set up a training base for Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and declared global jihad against America as well as Muslim governments. Bin Laden became the epitome of global terrorism and led Al-Qaeda in numerous terrorist attacks. His main grievances consisted of political issues rather than religious, as he declared a war on American foreign policy (Richardson, 2006). After a poll conducted in 2006, with more than 50.000 interviews of various subject with various nationalities and backgrounds, 7% out of 1.3 billion Muslims in the World (90 million people) said the attacks had been “completely justified” (Matusitz, 2013, p. 10.).

An important aspect of the events of 9/11 is the apparent paradigm shift these attacks have caused in the arena of global terrorism. It was no longer important to strike only selected targets. By causing as many casualties as possible, the event is able to draw far more attention than if it had been specifically aimed at a particular group of people. The “new terrorism”, represented by the emergence of Al-Qaeda, is no longer interested in solely achieving its aims. It aims for total elimination of large sections of the population (Matusitz, 2013). Al-Qaeda destroyed and had aimed to destroy the essential building blocks of the American defense and security. Americans and the whole Western bloc suddenly realized their vulnerability (Aldis, 2007).

As an immediate reaction to 9/11, NATO for the first time in its history invoked Article V, i.e. that the attack on a single member of NATO is considered an attack on all NATO members. This resulted in a massive campaign against Al-Qaeda as well as Taliban. At the time, Post argued that capture or killing of Bin Laden would prove to be ineffective or even serve as a catalyst for Al-Qaeda activities (Post, 2007). As we know today, Obama’s administration managed to kill Bin Laden. Even though it marked the end of Al-Qaeda, most of its members and cells dispersed and later on morphed into ISIS, most recently ISIL and several other cell groups in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

The United States adopted, as a reaction to the events of September 11, 2001 numerous legislative acts which extended the power of the state in the area of civilian surveillance (of private citizens, through Internet and other media), airport security (tighter examination of citizens and their baggage), creation of Homeland Security Department within the government (exclusively focused on preventing terrorist acts). Many of these measures have been considered to infringe on human rights, the rights to privacy, and to be fundamentally against the principles of democracy and liberty the nation is supposedly built on (Post, 2007). Border controls have been employed as one of the essential instruments for countering terrorism since 9/11 (Schmid, 2016).

Among the most prominent measure taken by the US Government in the aftermath of 9/11 was declaring a global “War on terrorism”. This approach has been the target of critics in the field of terrorism and counterterrorism, such as Gotchev pointing to that the US reaction was inefficient due to “confronting terrorism only with military force, while failing

to deal with the issues of poverty and inequality”, an approach which is “bound to create weak client regimes that are unable to withstand the pressures of globalization” (Richardson, 2006, p. 106). Furthermore, it fed into Al Qaeda’s objective to paint the US as violent and repressive (Matusitz, 2013). The War on Terrorism has been inadequately conceptualized, with ambiguous targets, confusing tactics and goals, based on false analogies and misconception of democratic ideals. Terrorism cannot be handled as a hostile state entity because it is not tangible, it is an ideology and means of conducting warfare. Better conceptualization of the struggle would in this case be “War on Al-Qaeda” (Aldis, 2007).

Not only was the US intervention inefficient, it has proven to exacerbate the problem of terrorism in the Middle East and around the World even further. At the time of 9/11 attacks in 2001, Al-Qaeda had the size of about 300 terrorists mostly in Afghanistan. After the US “War on Terror”, Al-Qaeda has not only transformed into even more elusive organization “Islamic State” (IS), but it has also grown in size and its international reach has grown to more than 100 countries (Schmid, 2016). The number of terrorist attacks worldwide has since also risen significantly – from 2001 to 2005, immediately after implementation of this approach, the number of terrorist attacks increased from 1732 to 4995 and a year later to 6659 (Matusitz, 2013). This, however, might not have been solely the failure of the US (although, in most part, it was). The issue was exacerbated by the media attention these attacks were given which had been one of its main aims. The extensive coverage may have served as an inspiration an impetus to more marginalized groups to radicalize their approach to grievances. Overall, the strategy of counterterrorism laid out by the United States in their War on Terror proved to be counter-productive and seems to have increased the threat of terrorism in many regions around the World (Schmid, 2016).

The author decided to include a short summary of the events of 9/11 as they have had significant impact on the European attitude towards migration and overall perception of Muslim immigrants in the following two decades, up until today. Schmid underlines the importance of the measures taken after 9/11 as well, as also European policies have since been tightened (Schmid, 2016). The events have been reflected in overall attitudes manifested throughout Europe, e.g. the British capital became commonly known as “Londonistan”, becoming a hub for foreign radicals and extremist views (Aldis, 2007). These events incited growing sentiments of Muslim ethnicity being closely tied to radical ideologies and terrorism. In the recent years, with growing waves of migration from

predominantly Muslim countries, these sentiments have been amplified and voiced more openly, creating mutually hostile environment in Europe as well as in Slovakia. It is also important to build on the experience and avoid this, highly flawed, approach to counterterrorist strategies in the future. What should have been done in the first place, and what needs to be done in the future, is to prevent the terrorist organizations from getting territorial and ideological hold or influence over the region by applying efficient preventive measures.

In order to arrive at such measures, we need to clarify that by “criminalizing” terrorism we will not be any closer to achieving the goal. The overall typology of strategies needs to shift to prevention and look at ideology as the main driving force behind terrorism. We need to achieve a better understanding of terrorism as a phenomenon and concept, in order to demystify it and be able to tackle it rationally. Laws and regulations are important, but proper beliefs and attitudes are the real vehicles of terrorism. In the effort to demystify the concept, we need to establish correct and clear use of terminology and convey the right message. This can be only achieved through proper use of scientific methods and rationalistic approach to problem solving. By eliminating the emotional aspect, we become less vulnerable to the ultimate goal of manipulation and creating fear. Extreme measures and invasions ought to be the last resort. In this spirit, multilateral, international cooperation is of the essence, manifested in various areas of life (education, law enforcement, architecture, policy creation, even arts and humanities). Education is by far the most enduring form of preventing terrorist tendencies (if provided in a holistic form, rather than in compartmentalized, isolated units). Along with international cooperation and use of intelligence guided by philosophical and professional expertise, we should arrive at feasible solutions.

Case Study: Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (PVE/CVE)

2021 marks a decade since the US began seriously considering CVE policies. CVE policies aim to identify potential terrorists based on expression of radical views. The CVE policies were first devised in the USA by the Obama administration. The aim was to be impartial in identifying individuals that could cause potential threat, but the policies have become biased against Muslim communities. CVE policies have 3 main parts:

1. Identifying individuals who have adopted radical or extremist ideas, who exhibit signs of alienation, or predictive signatures of people that become terrorists (these could be the root causes of radicalization outlined in the first chapter)
2. Programs to fund or facilitate health, education, and social services (based in root causes of terrorism and radicalization)
3. Developing counter terrorist narratives (Patel, 2017)

As to the last point, counter terrorist narratives can have 3 forms:

- Government Strategic Communications – raising awareness of the government’s role, narrowing say/do gap
- Alternative narratives – positive examples of values, tolerance, freedom, and democracy (by religious leaders, former extremists, teachers)
- Counter-narratives – challenging violent extremism through logic, facts, and data

Criticism

- counter-narratives are weak compared to the terrorist propaganda (lack of strong, central, counter-narrative)
- lack of understanding of radicalization process and drivers
- no proven causal relationship between being exposed to extremist content/ideology and becoming an extremist
- lack of empirical research and data (measuring impact of the measures, surveys)
- inherently defensive strategy in nature (reacting to messages)
- incomplete strategy, needs to encompass various fields and stages
- lack of funding
- inability to identify the target group unequivocally

Benefits

- counter-messaging has obvious effects (also from other fields like marketing)
- aimed at ideology and the “roots” of terrorism
- a direct countermeasure to the terrorist propaganda (raising awareness)
- possibility of multidimensional, integrated, comprehensive, cross-platform approach (cooperation with tech companies, phase of research in cyberspace, radicalization, media, countering recruitment in the radicalization hubs, countering ideological

terrorism, community-based preventive measures, use of data analytics, including academic research)

- exit strategies, community engagement, education, comprehensive approach, “glocalization”
- RAN (Radicalisation Awareness Network) – prevention strategies stopping actors from becoming involved in the first place, facilitating exit from the group (providing alternatives, support, re-integration – through real-world case studies)
- Minimizing quantity of terrorist material on the Internet, removal of content (especially directly in the aftermath of an attack) – at least controversial (undemocratic, free speech, human rights), structurally demanding (constant adaptation), jeopardizing impartial academic research (Ingram, 2017)

Case study: CIST (Countering ideological support for terrorism)

CIST programs have been mostly focused on radical Islamists. The idea is to acknowledge the heterogeneity of Muslim world and address the problem on the level of 4 cohorts: fundamentalists, traditionalists, secularists, and modernists. Fundamentalists are opposed to any view of progress, traditionalists strictly adhere to the theological basis, secularists move forward without Islam, and modernists move forward with Islam. The latter is the most prevalent approach in Southeast Asia.

The role of CIST would then lie in exposing the contradictions between Islam and jihadist ideologies to craft counternarrative strategies. This would require understanding of the language, history, culture, customs, and philosophy. Moderate, sophisticated Muslim scholars are instrumental to conveying the narratives (Aldis, 2007). It is understandable, as terrorism cannot be countered as a physical target, rather as an ideological or philosophical one.

Recommendations stemming from this assessment are to “promote regional and local media initiatives that combat extremism; invest in education for the long term; engage opinion leaders in Middle Eastern countries; and improve the quality of public diplomacy” (Aldis, 2007, p. 13). This approach has been overlooked and understudied, mainly due to its complexity and long-term nature. There is a need to find a way to implement it in a sustainable way, considering the nuances of each culture.

CIST represents strategic counterterrorism which is necessary in the modern era. We need to develop a wide range of initiatives aimed to weaken the spread of terrorist ideologies through media and education system, while developing a long-term sustainable strategy to resolve terrorism at local levels. This process might prove to be lengthy as we need to familiarize ourselves with the key ideological aspects, organization, structure, and the target audience of a given terrorist group. Especially vulnerable to ideological radicalization are Muslim communities and diasporas in the West. The second step is creating a reliable metric which would indicate the success rate and effectiveness of the given counterterrorist policy. This would require a thorough multidimensional scrutiny of counterterrorist approaches throughout history (Aldis, 2007).

Counter-ideological initiative in Southeast Asia and resulting recommendations

The counter-ideological initiative in Southeast Asia builds on the assumption that “terrorism occurs when opportunity, motivation and capability meet. Prevention of terrorism requires the elimination of at least one of these three: motivation, which is often driven by an ideology” (Aldis, 2007, p. 17). In the region of Southeast Asia, the responsibility to carry out the prevention falls on moderate Muslim scholars and community leaders. However, this approach cannot be applied everywhere due to different cultural and contextual realities. The approach needs to be researched and then “localized” to the respective geographic, cultural, and socio-political context. This has been largely the issue in many attempts, as the result of generalized approaches in a specific cultural environment would result in failure or no tangible results. “A policy that worked for one group or one area may not be successful for other groups or areas” (ibid, p. 155)

The best counterterrorist policy is prevention. This course of action, however, requires a significant prior allocation of resources and it might seem counterintuitive. Prevention means taking precautionary measures even in countries where terrorism has not been a threat in decades or centuries. Usually, preventing terrorism is not a priority until a country or a city has been the target of such an attack. That is, naturally, flawed logic. If terrorism hits a country which is unprepared and surprised, it might result in further global escalation (as in the case of 9/11), whereas preparedness ensures swift resolution, recovery, apprehension and mitigation of damages. Marginalized cohorts need to be supported and an attempt to integrate them into communities has to be made in order to prevent radicalization. Policies need to be implemented with a clear vision and understanding of the problem, in a

calm, meticulous, systematic manner; not as an impulsive reaction to a sudden chain of events. Such an implementation should be facilitated through cooperation on various levels and deepening knowledge acquired from previous experiences. Furthermore, it is absolutely vital to be familiar with the nature of the threat and all its complexities in order to be able to counter or prevent it appropriately – this may vary on regional as well as on diachronic level. “The cure requires education, preparation, commitment, constant vigilance and plenty of time. Combating terrorism ought to constitute much more than just military or police action” (ibid, p. 65).

It is crucial that we do not confuse prevention with suppression. Prevention should be an activity leading to overall progress and flourishing of various parts of society and culture. Suppression or inadequate interference may result in further radicalization and protraction of conflicts (as was the case of the US War on Terrorism in the Middle East).

Modern religious currents need to provide constructive ideological solutions to contemporary problems while respecting the heterogeneity of opinions and ideologies. This can be done by providing alternative narratives and interpretation of concepts, such as for jihad. Greater, better, and more efficient international cooperation cannot be stressed enough. Nations need to come to an agreement on the threat first and then devise efficient measures in the area of policy, strategy, and tactics that would make the most out of international cooperation. This would be then facilitated by improved information sharing and joint planning, first on the institutional level of states and then further on international level. Agencies often lack the flexibility and scope to efficiently cooperate and share intelligence with other institutional bodies. This, however, needs to be addressed earlier on – at the level of educational institutions where the lack of interdisciplinary approach focused on reasoning is still overshadowed by dogmatic learning and rigidity of the whole system (ibid, 2007). Ideological, violent extremism lies at the root of terrorism, which is why a comprehensive, consistent ideological response must be developed. It is important to eliminate the dichotomic perception and generalization of the problem and address its complexities on multiple particular levels. This responsibility falls unto a nation or the state, to build a bottom-up approach at the level of educational institutions. These efforts would then be translated into the aforementioned improved international cooperation.

Universities play a crucial role in this respect, facilitating free exchange of ideas and concepts on high academic level. It is important that programs focused on international relations and intercultural studies incorporate peace studies and strategies for preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism – while further deepening the understanding of various multicultural elements related to the field of study. Holistic approach might improve problem solving skills and provide the students with new and innovative perspectives (Echle, 2018).

Overall shift from reaction and militant solutions towards preemption and ideological solutions must be facilitated. It is crucial to focus on the “story” (ideology), or the “soft” aspect, which is in the center of radical systems (ibid, 2007). In this respect, media and education systems play a crucial role, due to their ability to influence public opinion and development, respectively.

If we fail to address the underlying causes of radicalization and only focus on the superficial dimension, the ideological terrorist groups will be able to replenish and sustain themselves by influencing new members (ibid, 2007). In this respect, we should be able to learn and draw on the Southeast Asian model which successfully harmonized the secular, traditionalist aspects with pluralistic, progressive, and modern ideas.

On the ground, we need to improve our ability to resolve intercultural conflicts peacefully. This must be facilitated by experts who understand the historical context of the issue or conflict and are skilled and prepared to handle both cultural and ideological narratives. Understanding the motivations and context on both sides would create the space for peaceful resolution. Furthermore, it is of paramount importance to resolve the conflicts on the level of diasporas and migrant cohorts in Europe in order to create a sustainable, long-term strategy (ibid, 2007). This, however, cannot be done if we remain oblivious to the issue or ascribe it to emotions. We need to be able to acknowledge and evaluate the problem impartially, operating at the intersection of data analysis and intercultural knowledge, or exact and social sciences. Thus, the role of higher learning institutions is paramount in instigating multidisciplinary approach to problem solving and modern, liberal, critical thinking on all levels.

In case of the armed forces, the counterterrorist activities should be centered around information-based, subversive approaches employing highly specialized individuals – not escalating the conflicts into full out war or protracted armed struggles. This is the area where flexibility of various private companies and their resources as well as experience might prove beneficial.

The role of government is crucial in the whole process, by supporting the initiatives and ensuring peaceful processes and reactions, especially in the aftermath of terrorist attacks. Media and the government need to provide complex, undistorted information. The role of government often also lies in upholding the democratic and liberal values which are to be followed by the citizens; e.g. speaking out against Islamist extremism, while acknowledging the heterogeneity of Muslim culture avoiding stigmatization and further alienation. This can be done by employing moderate Muslim thinkers to provide an unbiased and modern view of religion and Islam and point to discontinuities between the actual religion and radical concepts. Government should also serve as the facilitator of cooperation of multiple institutions in the public and private sectors and ensure correct conduct by overseeing the whole operation through international agreements, legislation, and verification mechanisms. The cooperation of government, experts, and private stakeholders needs to be facilitated through various workshops and conferences (Aldis, 2007). We can find myriad policies and recommendations published by the European Union and parallel bodies. These, however, fail to provide concrete solutions and are vaguely worded. It is necessary to aim for progress in this area which would be measurable or palpable, i.e. the efficiency of counterterrorist policies and programs. These results would then be shared on international forums, providing other countries with ideas, possibilities, and inspiration to also adopt and “localize” the successful approaches to the respective cultural and sociopolitical climate. Echle (2018) also advocates methodical approach to identify strengths and weaknesses with the possibility of improvement.

In the modern era defined by multiple crises, among them also migration, the host societies and cultures need to provide alternative narratives to reduce misunderstandings of Muslim culture and Islam and aim to build a harmonious environment. Neglecting this problem and degrading its importance or relevance is not going to help anyone. The aim is not to force our ideals upon other cultures, rather identify the cohorts in risk of becoming

radicalized and provide them with viable alternatives while bringing both cultures closer together in the process.

When it comes to Europe itself, there are several issues that need to be addressed. Even if we omit the lack of unity and collective identity, still more issues arise. Among them corruption, poor border protection, ignorance, lack of cooperation and synchronous action, fragmentation, lack of trust in institutions and democracy, anachronistic views, and numerous political tensions. Several attempts have been made towards rectifying this situation with emphasis on protection against terrorism by experts in the field; thus far their inputs have been mostly ignored (Aldis, 2007). Echle (2018), in agreement with Pinker, stresses that nowadays, more than ever, our modern, progressive values rooted in humanism and enlightenment need advocating – among them the principles of democracy, freedom, and human rights. These efforts could lead to progress in many areas, also in counterterrorism.

Considering the financial aspect of taking all these precautionary measures – changing curriculum, employing moderate religious teachers, focusing on cooperation, changing school curriculum – one might argue that it is too much to prevent a threat that might not even come. If the recent terrorist activity in Europe was not convincing enough then common sense should tell us that it is always better to be safe than sorry and prevention, or being a step ahead, is always better than reaction.

3. Biden’s decision to end the War on Terror and its ramifications

War on terror is a concept known ever since the 19th century, when the British and Irish secret services cooperated to successfully (to some extent) thwart the ambitions of IRB Fenians to establish independent Irish Republic. However, back in the 19th century, the War on terror was waged “in the shadows”, by covert operators of the Special Branch, and ultimately it was the sophistication of this approach that led to suppression of the Fenian Dynamite Campaign. Irish republican tendencies resurged in the 20th century and eventually the Irish succeeded in achieving independence. The United States of America, headed by

President George W. Bush, declared War on Terrorism 20 years ago as a reaction to the events of 9/11 previously described in the thesis.

The author aims to objectively evaluate Biden's decision to end the War on Terror and exit Afghanistan based on the research outlined in this thesis. Methods the author will use will be mostly analytical and comparative. The author aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the situation and evaluate the ramifications of Biden's decision – how it will impact the areas of terrorism and counterterrorism in the future. Various media outlets are used to this end. In order to avoid biased opinions, the author consulted the website of “ad fontes media” – company which rates the media employing content analysis, and its Media Bias Chart (ad fontes media [online]). The chart evaluates media outlets and sources on vertical scale based on reliability of information they provide, as well as on horizontal scale determining their respective political orientation.

September 11, 2001 was a defining moment of George W. Bush's presidency due to his reaction to these events, the terrorist attacks carried out by Al Qaeda. He declared a war on terrorism unprecedented in the modern history. This constituted invasion of Afghanistan (where Osama bin Laden was supposedly hiding) and of Iraq (where supposedly Saddam Hussein was developing or already had developed weapons of mass destruction). The first American troops entered Afghanistan on September 26th, 2001, only 2 weeks after the attacks (The Economist [a]). This was seen not only as a political conflict – it also demonstrated dimensions of the philosophical “Clash of Civilizations” first outlined by Huntington, the everlasting battle of “good against evil”, and was portrayed as a struggle between the Christian West and “the hydra of radical Islam”. Bush received support from Great Britain (Tony Blair) and other NATO members (although France and Germany gradually lost understanding) (Kovář, 2021).

Kovář (2021) expresses an absolute understanding with Bush's decision to invade Iraq and Afghanistan and asserts that validity of Bush's decision cannot be questioned, even though in Iraq there were no signs of weapons of mass destruction to be found, Osama bin Laden had first managed to escape, and wars on both fronts were protracted and extremely costly. He places great importance on Bush's swift, decisive reaction which manifested that the West is not as weak as terrorists might think. Kovář further states that we cannot vanquish the Islamist radicals through media but only in their physical bases. Kovář sees Bush's War

on Terrorism as a sacrifice for greater good of the Western civilization. Obama continued in Bush's endeavors in the Middle East and under him as the Commander in Chief, the US military managed to kill Osama bin Laden in 2011.

The War on Terrorism became the principal problem for the Western civilization, especially for Americans. All other threats seemed to diminish in importance as the nation sacrificed even their most valued freedoms for an ephemeral victory in Huntingtonian clash of civilizations. The first problem with this concept ("War on terrorism") is that terrorism can be either considered a tactic or an ideology. It is not an empire, state or a nation. Therefore, the conception becomes inherently flawed and if assessed critically, the conflict becomes unwinnable. In order to put it in terms that are more achievable and realistic, we need to identify who is the war actually against. In this case it was the Al Qaeda and then ISIS (ISIL). Therefore, the battle should be seen as a war against an organization which carries the ideology of terrorism. While the organization can be dismantled and vanquished, the ideological aspect is a whole another dimension. Former United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres summed it up succinctly: "Terrorism is fundamentally the denial and destruction of human rights, and the fight against terrorism will never succeed by perpetuating the same denial and destruction." (Echle, 2018, p. 77).

Kovář is in many ways misguided, as previously evidenced in this thesis. Terrorism as an ideology transcends time, cultures, nations, societies and borders; it is in its nature intangible and therefore, cannot be defeated by exclusively tangible means. The negative effects of terrorism as a tactic can be prevented or mitigated – through architecture, law enforcement, security measures etc. However, as any problem in the World, it first needs to be studied and understood. Jumping to conclusions on such a global level with so much at stake, and insufficient understanding of the issue, can only lead to damaging the US profile and further deepening of grievances in the region.

Biden's decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan by September 11, 2021, which would mark the end of the 20-year long War on Terrorism, has received mixed reactions. Other countries of NATO are most likely going to follow suit, among them Slovakia. This is mostly due to struggling Afghani government in the face of Taliban resurgence. At the peak of US War on Terrorism there were more than 100,000 troops in the area. Now there are only about 2,500. The overall consensus is that there is no "good way" to end the ongoing

War on Terror (Al Jazeera). Especially with the costs that have already amounted to about 2 trillion USD (about 20 times the current Slovak GDP). These “investments” were supposed to bring peace in the region by employing US diplomats and soldiers. This has proven to be a delusion, as the mission was trying to re-make Afghanistan to the liking of US politics, ignoring the Afghani realities, cultural differences, historical context, and even previous failed attempts (The Economist). United Nations confirmed that civilian deaths in Afghanistan were up almost 30% in the first quarter of 2021 (Ghosh [online]).

NATO’s Jens Stoltenberg described the US withdrawal more as a mere gesture and reiterated that any hostile activity in the region will result in abortion of this process (TASR). This, however, might be more than a mere gesture to other World’s superpowers. China has been planning to expand its activity in the region, which has been possible mainly due to growing stability and absence of violence – supposedly, the result of US presence. The exit of US forces might have a negative impact in the whole region, as these problems have often their way of “spilling over” to other neighboring countries. With the withdrawal already announced, Taliban might feel less pressured and jihadists might find their sanctuary in Afghanistan yet again (Ghosh [online]). On the other hand, if it leads to more stability in the country and surrounding regions, it may resolve multiple issues linked to the situation. American forces have proven to be a great instrument in waging war, far less so in stabilization and peacekeeping. Their presence fueled the grievances of local radical Islamists and their striving for megalomaniac grand finale stood in the way of reasonable, peaceful, and sustainable resolution (The Economist).

In spite of all the reporting and obvious evidence, American public opinion seems to be against Biden’s decision and against leaving Afghanistan in general, as are Biden’s chief military advisors. If the Taliban regained their influence over the region, 10-year work of the US might have been in vain. Biden sees announcing the exit as a way to dissuade Taliban from further attacks, even facing the group’s current resurgence. American decision, as it has been for years, serves as a blueprint for Europe which will leave the region as well. The US hopes to keep the resurgent terrorist groups at bay by employing long-distance counterterrorism methods (i.e. drones) (The Economist [a]).

While the idea of long-distance methods looks like progress at first, it really is not. There is no tendency towards trying to resolve the underlying conflicts and grievances and

understand the region in its complexity. The long-distance methods are being presented as low impact which is really far from the truth. Low impact methods would have to employ at least the basics of CIST and CVE policies – focusing on the underlying ideology, root causes, cultural grievances etc. All the US is doing is going from one rigid, hardline approach to more subtle, but still rigid and hardline approach, while making a global, grand gesture out of it – the symbolism of which might still backfire. The transition should be as “smooth”, gradual and as subtle as possible, not to cause further destabilization of the region. The US government should keep assisting Kabul financially while prompting the local government to resolve the issue internally. The transition must be facilitated, and stabilization of the region ensured, in order to prevent the scenario of escalation and repeated US intervention (The Economist [b]).

As Gorbachev once said about Afghanistan, summarizing the situation well even in the present: “The opportunity is there, but much is needed to seize it: realism, persistence and, last but not least, honesty in learning from the mistakes made in the past and the ability to act on that knowledge.” (Coll, 2021). This does not only apply to Afghanistan but to the whole concept of counterterrorism in the future. With Gorbachev’s words, we can only hope that policy makers and the World’s superpowers will heed any of the words of experts outlined also in this thesis and change their approach to this whole problem because the current situation and approaches can only result in failure. It is of paramount importance to withdraw the troops, without making a spectacle out of it, while respecting and supporting the Afghani cultural and social realities. The region should be supported, but only remotely, with soft approaches entailing intelligence and CVE/CIST methods.

Conclusion

Among the challenges the author faced when compiling this thesis was the overwhelming number of sources and materials, the need for prior in-depth assessment of their relevance and gravity. Contending ideas and concepts needed evaluation while the evidence existed for both sides. Conclusions are largely based on acquired theoretical knowledge evaluated through the lens of real-world situations and events. Striking a balanced overview of professional, contemporary, and philosophical aspects of the phenomenon was challenging but crucial for devising sound conclusions and recommendations. The topic itself is fairly generic and a separate thesis could be written on almost every single chapter – that is why this work is by no means complete and can only serve as an introduction to the topic of terrorism, counterterrorism, radicalization, and prevention of political violence. The most important aspects that need to be addressed is the improvement of process of preventing radicalization and improving reintegration in counterterrorist policies. While reviewing various counterterrorist programs, or responses, little attention was given to prevention and reintegration. Policies are predominantly focused on reactive measures which have proven to be ineffective over the centuries.

Overall, terrorism has not developed into a sustainable strategy and its nature and tactics change after achieving the political goals. The use of terrorism is usually temporary and local and situations involving terrorism usually do not escalate into full-out war conflicts.

It is necessary to formulate a single, overarching, internationally acceptable, unified definition of terrorism and counterterrorism. While in many areas diversity of opinions and concepts may yield benefits, in case of terrorism and counterterrorism it is exactly the ambiguity of conceptualization that leads to inefficiency in formulating joint, international counterterrorist policies.

This is the reason the author compiles new suggestion for defining the concept of “terrorism” based on data-driven approach pursued by previous academics and experts in the field, who have, however, failed to use it to these ends. By providing a singular, complex definition based on empirical analysis the author aims to take the first step to achieve better understanding of terrorism, crucial for devising successful countermeasures.

It is obvious that the problem of terrorism has been overshadowed by, arguably, more imminent issues, such as global warming, pandemic of COVID-19, global poverty, and wars. Herein lies the significance of the thesis and its appellative approach to this topic in modern age.

The problems of terrorism and radicalization need to be addressed at various levels, e.g. education and inclusion of women. It is apparent that programs, such as Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication, do not provide sufficient understanding of crucial issues related to radicalization, migration, and underlying reasons for emergence of terrorism. While certain scholars (Štefančík) focus on a single underlying aspect, as for example migration, there is a lack of apparent interdisciplinary approach supportive of critical thinking about various problems based on rationalism and data analysis which could lead to significant progress not only in this area but also in other related fields of study. Critical thinking seems to be a skill that needs more attention especially due to various emerging conspiracy groups which disseminate unsubstantiated claims and theories (diffused by the media and the Internet). Institutions, especially universities, should be more focused on developing critical thinking rooted in rationalism and the ideas of progress and innovation. Cooperation should be developed not only on the interdisciplinary (interdepartmental) level within a single institution but should span various institutions with differentiated foci. Terrorism needs to be tackled from economic, cultural, linguistic, social, political and academic points of view, while all of these approaches need to be supported by big data analysis feasible through state-of-the-art technologies.

In the arena of policymaking or policy-creation, there should be an increasing tendency towards preventive measures – therefore a change of direction from the current strategy heavily reliant on military response strategies. With more developed preventive strategies, there will be less need for high-impact strategies, often costly and inefficient in the long term and in wider context of the issue. With the focus on aforementioned areas of academia and education of youth, promoting inclusion and enhancing the understanding of the issue, we should be able to enhance the policy making system and steer it in the right direction.

In the area of academia and institutions of higher education in Slovakia and around the World, with programs aimed at intercultural studies and international relations, there needs to be more emphasis on issues related to radicalization, understanding, and countering terrorism. Even though terrorism might not pose the most imminent threat to Slovakia, the fact that we are living in an ever more globalizing World students have, in general, a high chance of moving, living, and working abroad (especially with the focus on foreign languages or international relations). Therefore, it seems necessary to incorporate studies of such a prevalent topic as terrorism, counterterrorism, and radicalization. Students would then be able to use this knowledge, complemented by their intercultural and linguistic competence, on European and international stages. Moreover, studies of this type would be beneficial in preventing radicalization of young individuals by helping them understand the complexities of the modern terrorist phenomenon.

Due to overwhelmingly complex nature of the topic, this thesis does not present and exhaustive overview of the issues of terrorism and counterterrorism. In order to compile more exhaustive and more complete research, there would be need for a long-term, empirical, data-based analysis of various emerging trends and patterns across history of nations, cultures, and societies. The thesis may still serve as an incentive for more resourceful institutions to enhance their activities in these areas.

One of the author's objectives was to explore possibilities to devise a comprehensive metric which would be able to assess country's or region's "propensity to terrorism/political violence". This has proven to be a Sisyphean task, as the author lacks the practical expertise and skillset to devise such a metric as well as the time to analyze large datasets efficiently. Nevertheless, this may serve as an inspiration for further research for academics and professionals of related fields with deeper theoretical and practical knowledge of exact sciences and also evidence the need for even more interdisciplinary approach to counterterrorism.

The analytical part of the thesis goes on to evidence that the acquired theoretical knowledge can indeed be used efficiently, should not be ignored by policymakers, and should become central in future endeavors in the area of counterterrorism. In case of the US, it is especially the lack of understanding of intercultural realities which caused a protracted, unwinnable, global conflict.

Diachronic analysis of terrorist leaders' discourse is a topic which possibly provides new and ample room for research, especially in similarities marginally outlined in this thesis – between Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa and Osama bin Laden.

The thesis shows that even in ever progressing World and society, the problem of terrorism is still prevalent and cannot be ignored. It will take a coordinated effort of multiple fields and experts to come to the right solutions and provide a stable and prosperous future, mostly free of terrorist and radical ideologies. Nature of the problem is highly intercultural and therefore should be addressed by colleagues of related fields more often and more clearly, in order to avoid misconceptions on the part of academic body. This thesis may and should serve as a blueprint for scholars and students who share these sentiments to further the research and knowledge in these areas and thus contributing to the overall progress of humanity, peace, and progress.

Resumé

“Diskurz o terorizme” je práca zameraná na podanie komplexného prehľadu v oblastiach terorizmu a boja proti terorizmu z historického a regionálneho hľadiska. V prvej časti autor podáva historický prehľad oblasti terorizmu a formovania teroristických skupín a ideológie a poukazuje na rôznorodosť definícií terorizmu a navrhuje možnú alternatívu, ktorá by problematiku zjednotila. Následne sa autor zaoberá radikalizáciou a procesom formovania teroristických a extrémistických myšlienok a postojov – rozoberá ich počiatky a dôvody vzniku, ktorých pochopenie je kritické na zefektívnenie boja proti terorizmu v globálnom merítku. Po vyjasnení všeobecných pojmov pre pochopenie terorizmu ako javu, autor prechádza ku jednotlivým typom terorizmu a teroristickým skupinám. Každá skupina má svoje regionálne a historické pozadie, ktoré treba brať do úvahy pri boji proti nim. Táto časť je špeciálne dôležitá pre schopnosť lokalizácie prístupov v boji proti terorizmu. Dôležitým faktorom, ktorým sa práca zaoberá je aj merateľnosť teroristickej aktivity ako aj efektivity protiteroristických opatrení. Teroristickým skupinám je pridelená hodnota globálneho teroristického indexu. Taktiež to platí aj pre krajiny. Na základe spoločných znakov určitých regiónov s vysokou intenzitou teroristickej aktivity sa autor snaží ponúknuť alternatívne prístupy a odôvodnenia, ktoré za takouto aktivitou stoja. Všetky typy skupín a terorizmu sú sprevádzané prípadovými štúdiami. Práca spomína aj viaceré faktory, ktoré ovplyvňujú teroristickú aktivitu vo svete – najmä medzinárodnú migráciu. V tejto časti sa autor snaží podať objektívny pohľad na prepojenie a vzťah týchto dvoch novodobých javov s využitím a vyhodnotením pohľadov zahraničných ako aj domácich expertov v oblastiach terorizmu a migrácie. Argumenty sú často podložené dátami z inštitúcií a rôznych prieskumov a pomáhajú autorovi vytvoriť ucelený a neustranný obraz o celej situácii v Európe a vo svete. Autor potom plynule prechádza do časti, ktorá je pre celú prácu ťažisková, a kde leží jej najväčší prínos. Na základe mnohých domácich aj zahraničných publikácií sa autor snaží nájsť konsenzus v tom, čo by malo predstavovať najefektívnejšie nástroje v boji proti terorizmu. Rôzne nástroje a prístupy sú analyzované a porovnávané so zavedenými prístupmi v praxi. Autor apeluje na authority a vedúce orgány v boji proti terorizmu – je potrebné pozrieť sa do minulosti a poučiť sa, zamerať sa na to, čo podnecuje extrémistické a teroristické tendencie, venovať sa omnoho viac ideologickým nástrojom v boji proti terorizmu, využívať interkultúrne znalosti a vedomosti, lokalizáciu prístupov a kooperáciu inštitúcií ako aj expertov pri tvorbe protiteroristických programov a vyhlásení, opierať sa o ideály racionalizmu a humanizmu za využitia dátových analýz a najmodernejších

technológií a v neposlednom rade, zaviesť tieto postupy čo najskôr do procesu vzdelávania. Posledná časť práce je zameraná na vyhodnotenie kroku prezidenta USA Bidena stiahnuť jednotky z Afganistanu a tým ukončiť dlhoročnú Vojnu proti Terorizmu. V tejto časti sa autor opiera o poznatky z teoretickej časti a snaží sa kriticky zhodnotiť Bidenove kroky, ako aj historický prístup v boji proti terorizmu zo strany USA a ostatných krajín a zooskupení sveta. Počas celej práce sa autor taktiež opiera o vlastné poznatky nadobudnuté počas štúdia interkultúrnych javov, ktoré sa ukázali byť vo viacerých prípadoch ťažiskové pre nájdenie progresívneho riešenia daného problému.

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