Calibrated Killing: Examining the Relationship between Strategies of Terrorism and Types of Violence

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Abstract:

This thesis aims to answer two main questions. Firstly, what types of violence are associated with different strategies of terrorism? Secondly, what explains these patterns? Answering these questions is essential to understand how terrorist groups make decisions concerning which types of violence to employ. It also enables more effective counter terrorism policy to be devised and implemented. Past scholarly work has failed to address these questions because there has been insufficient research on strategy as a driver of terrorist group decision-making.

This study addresses this gap by offering theoretical development and empirical evidence to show that strategy is an important, but underappreciated, element in terrorist groups' selection of types of violence. The starting point for this analysis is Kydd and Walter's five strategies (i.e., spoiling, outbidding, attrition, provocation, intimidation). The thesis extends their model to explain and illustrate the types of violence (understood as casualty numbers, target selection, and weapon selection) associated with each of the five strategies.

To accomplish this, a sequential mixed methods case study approach is adopted. Hypotheses are developed for each type of violence in each strategy and tested through case studies. Each strategy is explored using two case studies of terrorist groups employing that particular strategy, in total examining 10 different groups that span between 1970-2014. Cases were selected to be typical cases across strategies, and within strategies, and differ as much as possible on key elements to increase generalisability. The sequential mixed methods approach used quantitative methods first and then employed qualitative research. The quantitative element leverages the Global Terrorism Database to identify the types of violence. The qualitative element involves the use of documentary evidence, primarily the groups' own output, to provide evidence of strategy being a major factor in the decision to adopt these patterns of violence.

The thesis provides answers to the two research questions. The quantitative element for each strategy is able to identify the types of violence associated with strategies. The qualitative element is able to show that strategy is influential in the decision to employ these types of violence.

Abbreviated terms:

ABC – American Broadcasting Company

AFP – Agence France Presse

AQAP – Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

CBRN – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear

CJTF – Civilian Joint Task Force

CNN – Cable News Network

DNI – Office of the Director of National Intelligence

ETA – Basque Homeland and Liberty

ETA M – Basque Homeland and Liberty military

ETA PM – Basque Homeland and Liberty political-military

FARC – Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

FLN – National Liberation Front

FMLN – Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front

FYROM – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

GIA – Armed Islamic Group

GTD – Global Terrorism Database

HRW – Human Rights Watch

ICIR – International Centre for Investigative Reporting

IED – Improvised Explosive Device

IRA – Irish Republican Army

IRLA – Irish Republican Liberation Army

IS – Islamic State

ISAF – International Security Assistance Force

ISIS – Islamic State

KLA - Kosovo Liberation Army

LTTE – Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [Tamil Tigers]

MEMRI – Middle East Media Research Institute

MRTA – Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

OSAC – Overseas Security Advisory Council

PFLP – Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

PIJ – Palestinian Islamic Jihad

PIRA – Provisional Irish Republican Army

PKK – Kurdistan Workers' Party

PLO – Palestine Liberation Organization

PRT - Provincial Reconstruction Team

PSNI – Police Service of Northern Ireland

RAF – Red Army Faction

RUC – Royal Ulster Constabulary

RIRA – Real Irish Republican Army

SL – Shining Path

UÇK – Kosovo Liberation Army

UCR – Unified Court Records

UCR IRMCT – UCR International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

UNAMA – United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

WMD – Weapon of Mass Destruction

1. Introduction

Terrorism has been a defining mode of political violence in the twenty-first century. Chechen rebels in Russia caused thousands of deaths in a brutal campaign of violence. ISIS gained notoriety for the excessive cruelty of its executions and the massacres the group perpetrated. The ongoing (at the time of writing) war in Gaza began in late 2023 when Palestinian militants killed over a thousand people in a raid into Israel. Terrorism can appear chaotic and senseless; violence being inflicted with seemingly no greater purpose than creating fear. News coverage fails to convey the nuance of terrorist activity, instead creating a sense of unfocused violence with the perpetrator's only objective appearing to be maximising lethality. Take, for instance, the September 11th attacks of 2001, which remain the deadliest terrorist attacks in modern history (Hoffman, 2006). The reaction to these attacks was one of shock and anger, with coverage focusing on the high death toll and the 'evil' of the perpetrators (e.g. Wall Street Journal, 2001). However, this act was not carried out to simply kill as many civilians as possible out of evil – it was a strategically calculated act undertaken in pursuit of political goals (Kydd and Walter, 2006). The violence, while extreme, was not senseless but rather it served as a group's means of communicating with its audience and moving the group towards its objectives. This thesis builds on an understanding of terrorist groups being strategic actors, and will identify, unpack, and explain the variation in violence used in terrorist strategies. Kydd and Walter (2006) developed an influential typology of terrorist strategies to classify how terrorist groups use violence to achieve various political goals. This research is the first to examine the types of violence associated with all five of Kydd and Walter's strategies of terrorism in the same piece. The novel contribution of this work is to develop and examine an extension to Kydd and Walter's typology, to identify the casualty counts, target selection, and weapon selection for each strategy.

Kydd and Walter focus on five main strategies of terrorism. These strategies are: spoiling, outbidding, attrition, provocation, and intimidation. As each strategy aims to accomplish a different goal, it is expected that each strategy will map on to a unique blend of violence associated with it composed of variation of the established types of violence. It is also expected that this variation in types of violence occurs for strategic reasons. Kydd and Walter's typology of strategies offers a useful starting point for this study because it contains what Kydd and Walter consider to be the most commonly used strategies. The benefit of covering the most common strategies is that it enables most campaigns to be classified as using one or more strategies. In the case that it is not evident which strategy is being employed it does not have to be forced into the model. It is also a model of terrorist strategy that revolves around the communicative aspect, that is to say that it is not primarily concerned with battlefield gains but what violence signals to the desired audience. This is useful because it offers a consistent thread through all five strategies – each strategy is attempting to communicate something to a particular audience.

This study identifies casualty levels, target selection, and weapon selection for each strategy. Essentially, the findings of this thesis serve as an extension of the framework. Kydd and Walter identify the five strategies of terrorism but do not explore further and identify the types of violence associated with their strategies to a significant degree. They state in the conclusion to their article 'we realize that our discussion is only a beginning and that further elaboration of each of the strategies and their corresponding counterstrategies awaits future research' (p.80). My work takes this next step to deepen our understanding of terrorist strategy and to further develop the understanding of how groups go about attempting to achieve their different political objectives. It elaborates further on each and all the strategies of terrorism in Kydd and Walter's framework. As well as serving as an evolution of the pre-existing typology and identifying which patterns of violence are associated with each of the five strategies of terrorism, this research also contributes by drawing attention to how strategy remains an important, but underappreciated, factor in the decision to employ these different types of violence. These constitute both empirical and theoretical contributions.

The September 11th attacks illustrate most vividly the reactions to mass casualty events. As seen above, there is a hyperbolic response to such events with groups being viewed as essentially evil for evil's sake. This is a misunderstanding of how groups operate. Terrorist groups frequently carry out mass casualty attacks, and the more lethal an event is the more likely it is to generate higher news media coverage (e.g. Miller and Albert, 2015; Jeong and Lee, 2019). Because of these high-profile attacks, many in both academia (e.g. Ganor, 2004) and the media (Powell, 2011) have assumed that all terrorist groups always want to inflict mass casualties. The reality is more complicated than this, frequently mass casualties are the opposite of what groups desired (Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007)– but nonetheless the assumption persists.

This is one key aspect of my thesis, to expand on this nuanced understanding of terrorist behaviour and unpack its relationship to strategy, to help contribute to the wider understanding of terrorist violence and behaviour. How does the tactical aspect of a terrorist campaign relate to the strategy and ultimate political objectives? This thesis will seek to demonstrate how strategy is an important but underappreciated factor in terrorist group decision making. This research also takes a similar approach to understanding terrorist target selection and weapon selection. Again, these types of violence have been subject to misunderstanding, or simply the victims of lazy assumptions from non-academic sources (see Powell, 2011, for discussion of media coverage). There has been research that does examine the variation in casualty numbers (e.g. Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007), why groups strike an array of targets (e.g. Asal et al, 2009) and why groups choose different weapons (Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019). My work looks at this in relation to different terrorist strategies to give a more complete understanding of both strategy and target/weapon selection. This is just one of several contributions of this work, outlined further in this introductory chapter.

Literature and theory

The analysis in this thesis builds on existing understandings and approaches to terrorism. To explain how I go about exploring the question, I first lay out the key notions that are the foundation of this work.

Defining Terrorism

There are numerous competing and complementary definitions of terrorism. To understand the subject that this thesis focuses on, it is key to clarify and unpack how this study defines terrorism. Some disagree over whether a state can be a perpetrator of violence, others only consider violence against civilians to be terrorism (Easson and Schmid, 2011). This thesis uses Richard English's understanding of the concept, with a few clarifications of my own. His definition is: 'terrorism involves heterogeneous violence used or threatened with a political aim; it can involve a variety of acts, of targets, and of actors; it possesses an important psychological dimension, producing terror or fear among a directly threatened group and also a wider implied audience in the hope of maximizing political communication and achievement; it embodies the exerting and implementing of power, and the attempted redressing of power-relations; it represents a subspecies of warfare, and as such it can form part of a wider campaign of violent and non-violent attempts at political leverage' (English, 2009, p.24). My caveats were that the psychological element is not only about fear, but about inspiration too as Kydd and Walter's strategies of provocation and outbidding seek to draw support for the group. I also include non-civilian targeting as part of my definition, differing slightly from the definition used by the authors of the understanding of strategy that I adopt. This is discussed further below. Additionally, the actors perpetrating the attacks are non-state actors, which is an element of numerous definitions of terrorism (e.g. Hoffman, 2006; McCartan et al, 2008) - notably Kydd and Walter's (2006). This definition is adopted because it incorporates an array of aspects found in different understandings of terrorism. This is discussed in detail in the literature review chapter.

Kydd and Walter define terrorism as 'the use of violence against civilians by nonstate actors to attain political goals' (p.52). This definition does not include military targets, however military targets are still included in Kydd and Walter's article. For example, there are numerous references to the Beirut Barracks Bombing which was deliberately targeted at military personnel. The definition I adopt incorporates this possibility. The applicability of Kydd and Walter's work is not diminished by the inclusion of military targets as long as the focus remains on communicative violence by groups rather than focusing on groups that target military entities to achieve battlefield gains. While I do not rely entirely on Kydd and Walter's definition, the focus on non-state actors is key and is incorporated into English's above.

Terrorist Strategy

This research will tie together two key parts of the terrorism studies literature – the research on terrorist strategy and on types of violence employed by terrorist groups. The literature in these fields is considerable, however scholars tend to look at these two strands separate from one another. The original contribution of this research is to bring these two elements together to create a full understanding of the association of types of terrorist violence with different strategies of terrorism. Providing an overview of terrorist strategy understanding is important in establishing the boundaries of this research. It is also important as different understandings of terrorist strategy feed into the model used in this research.

This thesis also treats terrorist groups as rational actors in the sense that rationality is understood as how groups operate, rather than their end goals (Crenshaw, 1990; Pape, 2003). Terrorist groups are seen as rational actors given how they use their limited resources to maximise their returns, and how they respond to counter measures, adapting and substituting as required (Shughart, 2011). This is bounded rationality - that decisions are made based on what is known to them at the time and with resources available. What this means practically is that rationality is not determined based on the outcomes of their actions but the conduct of their actions, that groups behave in a way they expect to have the highest chance of leading to the desired results and are able to adapt their behaviour when feedback is received.

This understanding of terrorism is communicative with a variety of audiences. The audiences for the violence undertaken in these strategies can be understood as three basic groups: the terrorist group's constituent population (e.g. Kurtulus, 2017), the terrorist's group's enemy population (e.g. Braithwaite, Foster and Sobek, 2010), and the enemy government (e.g. Lapan and Sandler, 1993). The constituent population is the population in which the terrorist group is based and/or seeks to use to gain resources and recruits. The enemy government is the government from which the terrorist groups seek change of some description. Related to this is the enemy population, this is the audience communicated with when the terrorist group attempts to use them to achieve political change.

Terrorist strategy has been understood in a variety of ways, including viewing terrorism itself as a single strategy (Fromkin, 1975), or as different strategies with varying descriptions from an array of thinkers (e.g. Harmon, 2001). This thesis uses Kydd and Walter's (2006) understanding of terrorist group strategy as the basis for answering the research questions. Kydd and Walter's work outlines five commonly used strategies. The wide use of Kydd and Walter's work in terrorism research also justifies its selection (e.g. Stanton, 2013; Fortna, 2015). The framework boils down terrorist behaviour to the strategies underpinning it all without oversimplifying. Other terrorist strategy frameworks have attempted this and have resulted in understandings that lack an appreciation for the variety of goals and audience (e.g. Frieden et al, 2010) whereas others (e.g. Harmon, 2001) offer a breakdown of terrorist strategies but these do not

cover enough cases. The strategies outlined are: spoiling, outbidding, attrition, provocation, and intimidation.

Spoiling aims to undermine negotiations or agreements between a government and moderates on the terrorist's side. Outbidding aims to persuade a given population to support the group carrying out the campaign when there is competition between two or more groups. Attrition aims to inflict costs on an enemy, and to demonstrate that the group can continue to inflict costs until the enemy gives in to the group's political demands. Provocation aims to move support away from the incumbent power, or at least remove indifference to it, and bring this support to the terrorists' side by carrying out attacks that result in an over the top government reaction which emphasise to the target audience how "evil" the government is. Intimidation is used when a terrorist group seeks to gain or maintain control over a given population or compete with a government for control over a population

Types of Violence

The other aspect of the research question that it is essential to outline is the understanding of types of violence used in this research. This research explores three different types of violence in relation to different strategies: number of casualties, target selection, and weapon selection. The types of violence are highlighted and overviewed. They are explored in greater detail in the theory chapter. There is no agreement in the literature on what the basic elements of a terrorist attack are, but my work uses these three types as they occur frequently in terrorism research (e.g. Stanton, 2013; Marone, 2021; Ganor, 2004) and the GTD has data related to them for almost all attacks. This means I am able to identify casualties, weapons used, and targets struck across all campaigns.

The first type of violence is casualties, both those killed and injured. The casualty count of a terrorist attack can be used to by a group to show its ability to impose costs and willingness to do so. But not every attack has a mass casualty intent, and one key argument of this thesis is that groups very often do *not* want to inflict mass casualties. This can be because terrorist groups that depend on support from their supporters who very often are unsupportive of unnecessarily large death tolls (Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007). Another possibility is that an attack that is too deadly can serve to delegitimise the group's "struggle" and legitimise a government response that could bring about the group's destruction (Shire, 2023).

The second type of violence examined is the target selection, understood through hardness of target. Hardness of target is essentially how well defended it is (Nilsson, 2018). For this research, the hardness of target is treated as dichotomous; it is either hard or soft. A hard target is one that is well protected and more difficult or costly for a group to strike successfully, a soft target is one that is less defended and less costly to strike. For example, an airport (despite being civilian) would be considered a hard target if it is

well defended and a train station might be a soft target as they often have much less in the way of defence.

Hardness of target allows a group to communicate different traits such as ability or commitment. One purpose of striking hard targets, while being likely more costly for a group, is an alternative to mass casualties. If the aim is to communicate with an enemy that the group is capable of inflicting real damage, and a mass casualty attack is not an option to a group, then hitting a well defended target has a similar communicative effect (Polo, 2020). Soft targets can be struck for several reasons including them being more appropriate targets for mass casualty attacks or as a means of using a population to pressure a government (Asal et al, 2019).

The third type of violence is weapon selection. There are many ways of classifying weapons such as listing their types and subtypes. As with target selection, the approach adopted in this is not to list every individual weapon type but rather to classify them in a binary system – sophisticated or unsophisticated. However, whereas targets are classified as hard or soft (on a consistent basis) across all cases, in the case of weapons selection the degree of sophistication of weapon also considers the group's operating environment. This means that the same weapon can be considered as sophisticated or unsophisticated in different campaigns when factoring in the group's wider operating environment – for example, in certain countries acquiring firearms is very difficult so any use of firearm shows a degree of access to resources, in other places where firearms are easier to acquire the type of firearm must be considered to assess sophistication.

Weapon selection offers a group an opportunity to showcase the resources it has at its disposal (Lapan and Sandler, 1993). The more sophisticated the weapons a group can showcase a group's capabilities through their access to these weapons. The selection of less sophisticated weapons, while showing a lack of physical resources, does communicate to both an enemy and a supporter that the group is committed to the cause (Arianti, 2018).

This thesis also makes a contribution by including and engaging with other factors which can influence terrorist group decision making. While the focus is on strategy as a driving force, factors such as resources, political and social constraints and circumstances, and learning are also engaged with as influential factors, linking to their interactions with strategy. These do not have to be seen as competing explanations but as interrelated.

This also serves to highlight the necessity of this work. Not only does this work expand on Kydd and Walter's model by bringing together the literature of strategy and individual types of violence into one coherent model, but it also engages with other factors. This is a much-needed step forward that brings together what are often seen as competing factors into a more cohesive understanding of how terrorist groups operate, moving beyond Kydd and Walter's model.

This thesis also contributes to one of the major debates in terrorism studies, that of mass casualty attacks against civilians. By better understanding why groups opt to conduct such attacks, and when they opt not to, through a strategic lens can enable a greater understanding of the phenomenon and contribute to shaping practitioners' approaches.

Empirical Expectations

The literature review and theory chapters provide the building blocks for understanding the factors that influence terrorist group behaviour. From the literature, a series of hypotheses are developed based on the factors likely to influence decision making in each strategy. For each strategy, a hypothesis is developed for each of the types of violence. The hypotheses are summarised below:

For the strategy of spoiling, it is expected that casualty numbers would be low but rise if disruption was not successful. This is because groups seek to expend no more resources than is necessary, only escalating to higher casualty if initial low casualty attacks are not successful. Targets are expected to be soft for the same resource reasons. In addition, weapon selection is expected to start basic to communicate that violence would continue but escalate if not initially successful.

For outbidding, the expectations for patterns of violence in an outbidding campaign are that casualties would be higher as a means to show both ability and commitment to combating the enemy. Targets are expected to be mixed between hard and soft as soft would show commitment to a cause and hard shows ability. An escalation to hard targets is expected to occur when an upping of the bid is required to show greater capabilities than their rival. Weapon selection is expected to be sophisticated as this would communicate to a group's constituent population that it has greater abilities than its rivals.

For attrition, the expected patterns of violence for an attrition strategy are a high casualty count as groups seek to demonstrate their willingness and ability to impose costs on their enemies. Target selection is expected to be a mix of hard and soft depending on constituent population requirements and resource constraints. Weapon selection is expected to be sophisticated again as a means of showing ability to the target audience

For provocation, the hypotheses for types of violence are that casualties would start low and escalate higher if not initially successful. This expectation stems from the need to conserve resources but also low casualty attacks triggering a heavy-handed response better exemplify the cruelty of the enemy state. Hard targets are expected in areas of mixed populations and/or authoritarian regimes, and soft targets when the group's constituent population is removed from the area of operations. Weapon selection is expected to be sophisticated as the group needs to show that it poses a legitimate threat worthy of a crackdown.

For intimidation, the hypothesised patterns of violence for this strategy are that casualties would be low but that groups might escalate to massacres. This is because it communicates to the group's audience that the group is capable of selectively punishing those who disobey or side with the government and that those who cooperate with the terrorists are safe. Escalation is expected to occur in instances in which the population over which the group seeks control becomes too contested. Targets are expected to be a mixture of hard and soft. Hard targets would be the government, or representatives of the government that the group seeks to usurp. Soft targets would be disobedient members of the population who are not necessarily governmental. Sophisticated weapon selection is expected as groups sought to showcase their power.

Methodology

I adopt a sequential, mixed methods research design to answer my research questions. The quantitative element uses the University of Maryland's Global Terrorism Database (GTD) (START, 2021) as its source of data to identify the patterns of violence related to each strategy of violence. The qualitative element involves the analysis of output from the group, and from contemporary media sources, to develop an explanation for the selection of these types of violence.

In this research, each of Kydd and Walter's strategies of terrorism is examined using two case studies to test hypotheses for types of violence developed from the theory section. A case, in this research, consists of one use of a terrorist strategy over a specified period in a specified location.

To determine the universe of cases, I first identified groups which had perpetrated enough attacks to analyse. To accomplish this, I removed every group from the GTD that had carried out fewer than 50 attacks throughout their entire existence. A minimum of fifty attacks carried out through the group's lifetime was required as a campaign represents only part of a group's existence so needed to be sure that there would be enough attacks from which to identify patterns. For instance, a group may carry out 50 attacks across its entire existence, but these would be part of different strategies they employed at different times, meaning only a portion of them would relate to specific strategies. For my specific strategy, this would leave me less than 50 attacks to examine. As I only use descriptive statistics, I do not need a sample size as large as if I were undertaking more complex quantitative analysis. It was expected that even after attacks from the campaigns that were not focused on, there would still be a sufficient number to identify patterns. Once groups with an insufficient number of attacks had been filtered out, the remaining groups had the strategies they employed during their existence determined. Groups appearing to have more than one strategy overlapping temporally in the same geography were excluded. This gave me a short list of groups to choose from for case studies. Across the five strategies, cases are chosen based on being typical cases

of that particular strategy being employed (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). As each strategy includes two cases to examine it, these two are chosen to represent diversity within the bounds of typical case studies. That is to say that both cases are considered typical uses of the strategy but are different in important factors such as time period, geography, and ideology of groups concerned.

The cases for each strategy are shown in the table below:

Strategy	**Group**	**Location**	**Years**
Spoiling	Real IRA (RIRA)	Northern Ireland	1997-2012
	Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)	Israel/Palestine	1993-1999
Outbidding	Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA)	Peru	1987-1997
	Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA)	Spain	1976-1982
Attrition	Chechen rebels	Russia (excluding Chechnya)	1999-2006
	Armed Islamic Group (GIA)	France	1994-1996
Provocation	Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)	Kosovo	1996-1998
	Red Army Faction (RAF)	West Germany	1970-1972
Intimidation	Taliban	Helmand and Kandahar provinces (Afghanistan)	2003-2006
	Boko Haram	Borno State (Nigeria)	2010-2014

(Figure 1.1, case studies for each strategy of terrorism)

The GTD is a widely used database (e.g. Young and Dugan, (2014); Webb and Cutter, (2009)) from the University of Maryland which provides data on terrorist attacks worldwide going back to 1970. The dataset contains all the necessary data for the quantitative element of my research in relation to types of violence. The database contains data on as many attacks as possible throughout that period, and each attack is attributed to the perpetrator, enabling me to collect all the attacks conducted by a specific group in a specific period, which is vital for the case studies. The focus of this research is on modern terrorism. While the history of modern terrorism goes back a long way before this date (Tschantret, 2023) the cut-off point for this research is 1970 because that is the cut-off point for the GTD data. The GTD is not without limitations. For instance, it requires at least one high-quality source reporting an incident for it to be included in the dataset. This may leave attacks occurring in locations lacking reliable reporting to be unintentionally excluded.

Casualties are composed of both the numbers killed and injured (minus perpetrator deaths and injuries). Both killed and injured are included together to get a better understanding of the level of damage that the group sought to inflict than by death count alone. While it is never possible to fully determine intent, the combination of both killed and injured does provide a better understanding than using just one of them would. As mentioned above during the discussion of types of violence, the GTD provides detail on the targets of each attack and the weapons used in each attack. For targets, the GTD provides a breakdown of numerous different target types and subtypes – for the research I have classified each target type as either hard or soft. Similarly, the GTD provides details on weapon types used in each attack which are examined and determined to be sophisticated or not considering the context of their strategic environment.

The documents used in this thesis aim to offer an explanation as to why the groups made the decisions in relation to strategy that they did. These documents are principally those produced by the groups themselves, primarily statements and outreach material, but also include interviews and the group being quoted in the press. These documents were gathered from several places. The easiest method was to use collections put together by other researchers, such as Skare's compilation of Palestinian Islamic Jihad output (2021). Another rich source was online archives/collections which gave me access to dozens of relevant documents. Where these were not available, or additional documents were required, they were sourced from numerous places such as specific documents cited in other research (e.g. Johnson, 2007 and the use of Taliban night letters) or through the press (e.g. Real IRA statements collected through news pieces).

Findings and contributions

In total, there were 15 hypotheses to examine. Three for each of the five strategies, examined through two cases each. Hypotheses are evaluated to account for the messiness of reality, to accommodate the understanding that these cases are not experiments carried out in perfectly controlled conditions. For a hypothesis to be considered confirmed, both cases must conform to expectation. A partial confirmation has one case which conforms and one partially conforming or not conforming. A hypothesis which contains either two non-conforming cases or one non-conforming and one partially conforming is considered unconfirmed.

Provocation had all three hypotheses confirmed. Attrition and intimidation each had two confirmed and one partially confirmed (target selection and casualties respectively). Outbidding had two out of three confirmed, with casualties being unconfirmed. Spoiling was the weakest, but still had two partial confirmations and target selection unconfirmed. Of all the hypotheses, 9 were confirmed, 4 were partial confirmations, and 2 were unconfirmed. With 87% of hypotheses either fully or partially confirmed, the model is considered valid, although in need of some amending to take into account the

unconfirmed hypotheses. The groups largely conformed to expected behaviour. The qualitative element of the research supported the strategy being an important factor in the decision to employ these types of violence. This, combined with the quantitative findings, provides evidence that strategy is indeed a significant, but underappreciated, influencing factor in terrorist group decision making.

The thesis explores the individual groups for each strategy in a way which has not previously been done, allowing for a novel understanding of the groups to be drawn. This thesis not only enriches the understanding of terrorist group strategy, but makes incremental contributions to the literature on the individual groups concerned. All the groups examined in this thesis have been studied before. This is hardly surprising as the groups selected were all high profile, or at least recognisable to scholars. However, none of the groups examined have been researched in relation to the strategy employed as I do in this thesis, allowing an original contribution to the understanding of the group to be made in every case. For example, the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), who are examined in the outbidding chapter, are rarely examined as the primary focus of the research but as secondary to their rivals Shining Path. This chapter not only contributes to the strategic literature but also enriches the research on terrorism in Peru by exploring in new depth the conduct of the MRTA and does so using previously unused documentary resources.

The findings of the thesis also have potential for real world application in relation to counter terrorism policy. It showcases how strategy is an important, but often overlooked, influence on terrorist group decision making, rather than ideology or group structure, which should factor into how counter terrorist agencies conduct their activities. This aspect should be considered when they determine the likely actions of a given group. Counter terrorist practitioners, once a strategy has been identified, can begin by pre-emptively responding to it – protecting likely targets, communicating with politicians and policy makers the political aspect of the group's strategy, and guiding the public messaging in relation to these groups to reduce the communicative impact of their activities.

Layout of the thesis

The thesis consists of nine chapters, structured as follows:

The first major chapter of the thesis is the literature review. It covers the major relevant research to this thesis and highlights the gap that the work will fill. The chapter develops the understanding of terrorism used throughout the thesis from established research as well as the foundations of the work including an overview of different understandings of strategy. The chapter also explores how the three types of violence of violence outlined are understood throughout the literature.

The following chapter is the theory chapter. This chapter explores the theory that the work is built on and how the thesis will build on it. This includes an in-depth exploration of the strategy framework used throughout the thesis and the understandings of types of violence. From this examination of the theory, hypotheses for each type of violence in association with each strategy are generated and subsequently tested in the empirical chapters. The theory chapter demonstrates how each strategy has different goals and audiences and why that leads to an expectation of variation in types of violence requirements and implementation.

The subsequent chapter is the methodology chapter which explores in greater detail methods I used to carry out the research: a comparative analysis of case studies using a sequential mixed methods approach, and the benefits and shortcomings of such a method. Research ethics are addressed, given the potentially sensitive nature of the subject and the materials involved. This chapter takes the hypotheses developed in the theory chapter and explains how they will be tested to answer the thesis research questions.

The next chapters are the empirical chapters. There are five empirical chapters in total, one for each of the strategies of terrorism. In each of these chapters, the hypotheses for the types of violence associated with that particular strategy of terrorism are tested using two case studies. Each of the empirical chapters includes a discussion of its own findings and the theoretical relevance of them to the wider understanding of terrorist strategy and decision making. The research in these chapters is conducted as planned in the methodology chapter. The majority of hypotheses developed in the theory chapter are confirmed, and where they are not the explanations for the variation are still underpinned by strategy being an influence on the decision making.

The final chapter of the thesis is the conclusion, which will summarise the thesis and draw out the major scholarly and practical implications. This chapter will bring together the major contributions from the preceding chapters, highlighting how this thesis has added to the terrorism studies literature. This chapter will tie together all findings from the five strategies examined to showcase the understanding of types of violence associated with terrorist group strategy. Finally, this chapter will point the way forward to avenues of future research.

Having laid out the overview of the thesis in this introduction, the next chapter is the literature review which will identify this works' place in the literature and begin to showcase its underpinning.

2. Literature Review

Introduction

This piece of work will tie together two important parts of the literature in the field of terrorism – strategies of terrorism and types of violence. This chapter will show scholars tend to study terrorist tactics and strategy separately, with strategy often discussed on its own without in-depth exploration of associated types of violence. A smaller cohort of analysts do tie strategy to tactics, but in a narrow way. They often focus one strategy's relationship with types of violence or focus on one type of violence. My research builds on this second approach, but on a wider scale. There has not yet been research bringing these two elements (i.e., strategy and types of violence) together to create a fuller understanding of the association of types of terrorist violence with different strategies of terrorism. This will be my original contribution. This is a significant contribution to theory in terrorist group literature in that this expanded framework offers an understanding of behaviour as well as putting forward strategy as an important but underappreciated element in influencing these decisions. Furthermore, it is expected that a stronger comprehension of how terrorist groups conduct their campaigns would feed into debates about shaping counter-terrorism policy in the future. Having a stronger grasp on how terrorist groups operate enables more thoughtful and effective measures to be taken to counter them.

This review will examine the varying understandings of terrorist strategy found throughout the literature, and how these different understandings are related to each other. Subsequently, an overview of the literature on the types of terrorist violence will be conducted, these being understood here as the levels of intended casualties, weapon selection, and target selection. Before doing so, there must be an investigation of the variety of definitions and understandings of terrorism to determine clearly the parameters of the research, further defined by the section discussing the assumptions drawn from the literature concerning the field of research. The literature review will also include a discussion on how other decision-making factors, such as resources and political environments, may influence terrorist group decision making and how they relate to this work.

Defining Terrorism

The first challenge is to define terrorism. Easson and Schmid (2011) identify over 250 definitions of terrorism, ranging from those with relatively minor differences, such as the inclusion or exclusion of infrastructure as a target of terrorism, to whether terrorism is exclusive to non-state actors or can be perpetrated by states. Highlighting the variety and complexity of these definitions, Bruce Hoffman dedicates 40 pages of *Inside Terrorism* (2006) to unpacking various understandings of terrorism before he settles on understanding it as 'the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in pursuit of political change' (p. 40). Given the complexity and numerous definitions of terrorism, this section discusses the key elements of these understandings to establish what is meant by 'terrorism' moving forward in this thesis.

Elaborating on this definition, Hoffman explains that 'terrorism is specifically designed to have far-reaching psychological effects beyond the immediate victim(s) or object of terrorist attack' (p. 40). He also explains that terrorism is 'perpetrated by a subnational or nonstate entity' (p. 40). This is a good starting point for the debate around the definition of terrorism; Hoffman is not alone in seeing a major factor of terrorism being the creation of fear. Numerous authors have included this in their definitions and understandings of the phenomenon such as Braithwaite (2013) or Neumann (2009).

However, there are numerous understandings of terrorism that do not have the creation of fear as an essential component. While there is an agreement that the violence and/or threat of violence is to communicate with more than just the immediate victims, the final audience, and the intended effect on this audience, is disputed. Kurtulus (2017) explains that there 'is little evidence to support the view that the main intention of terrorism is to spread fear and intimidation among a targeted or a general population. Consequently, it is not warranted to give it – as the conventional view of terrorism does – a central place in definitions and descriptions of terrorism' (p. 515). He argues instead that the groups' aims are 'the mobilisation of the masses, extracting retribution for their allegedly wronged constituency, avenging fallen comrades, or, in extreme cases, the physical destruction of their perceived enemies' (p. 502). Here, the audience for the violence is often the terrorist groups' own populations which they are not seeking to intimidate but to inspire and represent.

Creating fear remains an important element of terrorism but is not the only aim. Terrorism is a nuanced and complex phenomenon which includes intimidation and inspiration of audiences. In Kydd and Walter's (2006) understanding of terrorist strategy, both outbidding and provocation have the goal of generating support for the group which is not achieved through creating fear of the group among the constituent population.

Hoffman is not alone in treating terrorism as carried out by non-state actors. So do both Edwards (2011) and McCartan et al (2008), for example. Kydd and Walter's definition also specifies nonstate actors: 'the use of violence against civilians by nonstate actors to attain political goals' (p.52). However, it excludes military targets despite including military targets in the examples used in the paper (e.g. Beirut barracks bombing 1983). Nonetheless, the non-state element will be incorporated into the definition that this thesis uses.

In contrast to Hoffman and Kydd and Walter, there are definitions and understandings of terrorism that either fail to specify that the perpetrators are non-state actors or are deliberately more inclusive, such as including states as potential perpetrators of terrorism. For instance, Janeczko (2014) examines terrorism in Chechnya after the fall of the Soviet Union and understands terrorism as an activity that can be undertaken by both 'civilians and government agents alike' (p. 433). In Critical Terrorism Studies, it is not uncommon to find definitions and understandings of terrorism that include the state as a perpetrator of terrorism (Jarvis and Lister, 2014). While this is not necessarily a problem in terms of it being fundamentally incorrect, it does not serve much of a purpose. There are plenty of other terms which could more accurately describe terror

inflicted by the state and include states as a potential perpetrator of terrorism. But this does little more than dilute an already broad definition.

A common claim made when defining terrorism is that the immediate victims and targets of attacks are civilian (e.g. Stanton, 2013; Janesczko, 2014). However, this understanding of terrorism is limited, and more complete understandings of terrorism include a variety of targets. Conrad and Greene (2015), for instance, include infrastructure as a target of terrorist violence. They also include military and government targets as well as civilian targets in their model of severity of terrorist targeting. Santifort et al (2012) also include this broadness of target in their understanding of terrorism, among others. They do also acknowledge the targeting of other terrorist groups, but this is not the focus of their work. This is in line with the above definition from Hoffman, who does not specify who the victim of the attack is but does refer to either a 'victim' or 'object' (p. 40) of an attack.

Richard English's definition, while long, covers almost all of the aspects discussed in this section; 'terrorism involves heterogeneous violence used or threatened with a political aim; it can involve a variety of acts, of targets, and of actors; it possesses an important psychological dimension, producing terror or fear among a directly threatened group and also a wider implied audience in the hope of maximizing political communication and achievement; it embodies the exerting and implementing of power, and the attempted redressing of power-relations; it represents a subspecies of warfare, and as such it can form part of a wider campaign of violent and non-violent attempts at political leverage'(2009, p.24). This definition makes the most sense to employ for this work moving forward given that it addresses the definitional issues addressed in this section, with the clarification that the psychological element of terrorism does not only apply to the creation of fear but includes inspiration as well. While not mentioned in this extract, English does include both state and nonstate actors as potential perpetrators of terrorism, although the work from which this definition is pulled does specify that his focus is on nonstate actors. I will only be considering nonstate actors.

Phillips (2015) highlights the discussion around terrorist groups and territory, citing de la Calle and Sanchez-Cuenca's (2011) assertion that groups which hold territory should be considered guerilla groups and not terrorist groups. However, he uses the example of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) to demonstrate the difficulty of this distinction. His argument is that AQAP did not simply stop being a terrorist organisation when it began to occupy territory and is still widely considered a terrorist group. Using the previously established understanding of terrorism does allow non state entities in civil wars to be considered terrorist groups in as much as they are, as mentioned, non-state actors who are using communicative violence to achieve political goals. And even throughout the literature which does not consider these to be non-terrorist groups, there

is never a clear line dividing civil war actors from terrorist groups.[1] Therefore I do not differentiate between territorial and non-territorial groups in this work.

Foundations

The foundation of my work is built on several core premises found in the literature. This section will explain what these assumptions are and where in the literature they have been drawn from. It is key to highlight what these are before further exploring the literature. This section will explore the rationality of groups and the audience for violence.

A Rationalist Approach

Moving forward, this research will treat terrorist organisations as rational actors. Rationality is understood not through the terrorist group's end goals, some of which seem unfeasible, but rather it is understood through how groups operate. Terrorist groups are seen as rational actors given how they use their limited resources to maximise their returns, and how terrorist groups respond to counter measures, adapting and substituting as required (Shughart, 2011). Viewing terrorism as rational is a common approach in the literature (e.g. Pape, 2003, Hausken, 2006).

There are two main challenges to the idea of the rationality of terrorism. The first challenge remains the purported lack of success of terrorist campaigns (e.g. Abrahms, 2004) The second challenge is the behaviour of individual terrorists in their apparent failure to conform to standard incentives (see Caplan, 2006, for discussion). The issue of the lack of terrorist success rendering terrorism irrational can be diffused in two ways. Firstly, that just because many campaigns of terrorism are unsuccessful, it does not mean that all will be, and that the decision to resort to terrorism might stem from a situation in which a group aiming to achieve a political objective have exhausted all other measures so it would make terrorism the logical step (Crenshaw, 1990). Secondly, terrorist groups may not often achieve their stated objectives, but the way they conduct their campaigns does fit ideas of "rational behaviour", that can be considered outcome and process goals (discussed below).

Regarding concerns around the rationality of terrorists it should be said that individual terrorists are not the focus of this research, but rather groups are, so the motivations of individuals are not applicable to the scope of this thesis. Also, it can be argued that

[1] As well as the discussion around territory and whether that distinguishes terrorism from other forms of irregular warfare, there is also the debate around how insurgency differs from terrorism regarding targeting. It is argued by Kiras (2013) that insurgency is characterised by the targeting of state security forces through guerilla attacks. Using a US State Department (2000) definition of terrorism, as discussed by Schmid (2011), it is possible to include an understanding of terrorism that incorporates the targeting of military entities. The State Department definition specifies terrorism as the targeting of noncombatants, but in this instance the term noncombatants includes off duty military personnel, or military personnel outside of an active warzone.

individual terrorists are rational actors, but the focus on the political utility of their actions could be at the cost of examining their economic or social motivations (van Um, 2011).

Abrahms (2011) understands that there are two main types of terrorist goals: outcome goals and process goals. Outcome goals are what a group ultimately aims to achieve, for example it could be a group that seeks independence from a state. A process goal is what is necessary to keep a group in existence, for example this could be the recruitment of new members into the group. This distinction can be important in relation to understanding terrorist strategy.

Terrorist Violence Audience

As touched on when discussing the various definitions and understandings of terrorism, there is also an array of audiences for terrorist violence. It is frequently argued, and generally accepted, that the audience for a terrorist attack is beyond that of the immediate victims. Hoffman explains that terrorism is 'designed to have far-reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim or target' (p. 40). However, the group with whom the terrorist group is attempting to communicate is more disputed. From the literature, there appear to be three main audiences for terrorist violence.

Firstly, there is the government. This may be the most obvious as terrorist groups that are seeking a policy change will need the government to enact this. Secondly, there is the opposition population. In many cases the audience for the violence will be the population of the opposition – especially when the population are able to "force" their government to comply with the terrorist group's wishes. It is important to distinguish between these two audiences, government and opposition population, because they can often seem to be the same. But, as an example, in an authoritarian or not fully democratic regime there may be little need to communicate with the general population in order to gain concessions as the government is not held accountable by the population (Kydd and Walter, p. 62, see for discussion around cost tolerance) and as such the audience can be understood as the government. Alternatively, in a democratic state it may be more beneficial for a terrorist group to "communicate" directly with the opposition population when the government is non-compliant, beyond using the population to pressure the government the group could use attacks to encourage a change of government, this change being an action which only the population can enact (Braithwaite, Foster, and Sobek, 2010). These two audiences frequently overlap.

It should be made clear that an opposition can be targeted without seeking to pressure any government but to maintain the status quo. This can be seen in the example of loyalist groups in Northern Ireland attempting to control republican populations. These groups perceived this as undertaking the work that the British government was not capable of due to political and legal constraints (Monaghan and Shirlow, 2011; Kydd and Walter, 2006).

Thirdly, there is the terrorist group's constituent population. This would be the population from which the group draws recruits, funding, and support (see, for example,

Conrad and Greene, 2015). It is also worth noting that a terrorist group's constituent population, which is frequently its target audience when attempting to recruit or secure funding, does not have to be geographically bound. As an example highlighting this, see Sedgwick (2004) in which he examines the activities of Al Qaida and finds that the violent acts committed by the group do not only intend to convey a message to its enemies, but also to supporters and potential supporters – in this case the constituent population and audience for Al Qaida is Muslims worldwide. This idea is not unique to Al Qaida. The LTTE also have the Tamil diaspora as an audience and constituent population (Mayilvaganan, 2008) and the Irish republican groups also have a global constituent population and audience – for example, the groups' American connections for funding (Johnson, 2001).

Other determinants of terrorist decision making

This thesis explores terrorist group strategy as an overlooked factor which influences terrorist group decision making. This is, of course, not the only factor that shapes the choices of terrorist groups. Past research demonstrates how strategy interacts with various material, social, political and other conditions – as well as terrorist learning under these conditions - to influence how groups conduct their campaigns and, subsequently, lead to different outcomes. This study situates strategy within the complex environment in which terrorist decision making takes place to both show how it interacts with these factors and exerts a particular influence.

Firstly, there is the literature on terrorist learning. Terrorist groups are not static entities, as they conduct their activities they learn lessons which they then feedback into future operations. They are also capable of incorporating information from external sources, observing how other groups have conducted campaigns and implementing lessons learned from there (Forest, 2006). This does not necessarily contravene strategy being a driving force behind decision making, in fact these two factors can align as groups use the lessons learned to refine their approaches.

Material factors can also influence terrorist group decision making. Resource constraints are an obvious example of this. Groups need resources in order to carry out attacks, this can include funds to acquire necessary equipment, weapons with which to carry out an attack, or personnel to conduct an attack. A lack of resources may cause a group to limit the scale of attacks it would ideally intend to conduct as these would be too risky to carry out (Feinstein and Kaplan, 2010). This does not mean that strategy is disregarded in these cases, but groups must work towards their strategic objectives within these constraints. An example of this occurs in the chapter on attrition later in this thesis, in which Chechen rebels' decision to carry out a hostage taking attack in a school occurred in North Ossetia, and not Moscow or St Petersburg, as the resource requirements for conducting an operation so far from the rebels' homeland were deemed too high (Journeyman Pictures, 2007) causing the group to identify a different, but strategically appropriate target. Resource factors and communicative factors can overlap. Resources can be indicative of a group's strength which groups may want to convey to their target audience as part of their strategy. For example, discussion around the strategy of outbidding which involves communicating resource depth.

Social and political factors can also have an influence on terrorist group decision making. The backlash effect is important to understand limits on terrorist violence. Essentially, terrorist groups can employ a form of violence or a severity of violence that crosses certain thresholds (this could be killing too many people, striking the wrong targets, or using particular weapons or methods) and will result in their constituent population removing their support (Wheatley and McCauley, 2008). This links very closely to discussions of strategy in this thesis as the focus is on the communicative use of violence, so not only is this an important notion in the field of terrorism studies it is also a key element of understanding terrorist decision making in this thesis. The backlash effect interacts with strategy by setting limits on violence even if other factors, such as resources, fail to do so.

Discussed further in the "Targets" section of this chapter, Stanton's (2013) work highlights how social and political conditions can influence target selection and casualty levels. A geographically concentrated constituency may lead groups to be more willing to inflict mass casualties or strike civilian targets than a group appealing to a wider constituency. Another political factor to consider is whether the violence occurs in a democratic or autocratic state. Regime type has been identified as an influence on terrorist group decision making, for example Pape (2005) identifying suicide attacks as being more likely to occur in democracies. Democracy can also be seen a factor which encourages the targeting of civilians as governments in democratic states will be more receptive to civilian casualties (Stanton, 2013).

Whilst this section summarises past research on the determinants of terrorist decision making, the subsequent section on the types of violence section, further situates these factors in relation to strategy. The broad range of factors that influence terrorist decision making contribute to understanding the incentives and constraints on terrorist behaviour and help to place terrorist campaigns in context. This does not mean that they supersede strategy as a factor influencing decision making, but they do need to be considered as strategies do not exist in a vacuum.

One of the contributions of this thesis is to interact with and incorporate these different discussions on what influences terrorist decision making. These different factors do not exist isolated from each other but rather they overlap. This thesis shows how strategy is a major driving force behind terrorist group decision making but that does not rule out these other factors. These factors can interact with strategy to both reinforce decision making which stems from strategy or to place constraints on it. This can be seen in the empirical chapters when the influence of factors beyond strategy emerges as influencing the decisions made by groups.

The inclusion of and engagement with these additional factors shows the necessity of this thesis. Not only does this work bring together the individual types of violence work with strategy to expand Kydd and Walter's model, it also considers how the other factors identified can interact with this combination of the strategy and types of violence work. It acknowledges and incorporates the complexity of the area of study to produce a more holistic picture of terrorist group decision making, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the subject. This allows the work to move beyond the confines of

Kydd and Walter's model. This greater nuance can contribute to the potential for more effective practical use in understanding and preparing for real-world terrorist campaigns. The necessary academic contribution is to tie together these often separate and competing factors into this fuller understanding, allowing the decision making process to be approached as one system rather than several unconnected approaches.

Strategies

There are numerous understandings of terrorist strategy. Some authors understand terrorism itself to be a strategy, others understand that terrorist groups can employ a variety of strategies. Understanding different approaches to terrorist strategy serves to set the boundaries of the research, to make clear what is being researched. It also strengthens the explanation for the adoption of Kydd and Walter's approach over others. And, as elements of these different understandings interrelate, it serves to provide a stronger foundation for Kydd and Walter's approach in this thesis.

Michael Howard provides a simple but useful definition of strategy as 'the deployment and use of armed forces to attain a given political objective' (1979, p. 75). While this is meant to apply to states and conventional military forces, it nonetheless is applicable to terrorist groups and the use of force (albeit communicative) to attain a political objective.

Strategies of the "Weak" (or Asymmetric Strategies)

Terrorism is frequently described as a "weapon of the weak" (e.g. Blankenship, 2018, and Crenshaw, 1981). Moving beyond the arguments about what constitutes terrorism, which is still an important element of this saying, one still needs to understand what is meant by weak. In almost all cases, a terrorist group will be considerably weaker than a state it may find itself in contention with. The state would outmatch the terrorist group in terms of strength and size (Abrahms, 2011). Weakness can be understood as being smaller in terms of personnel, worse equipped, and organisationally less sophisticated than a state counterpart (for discussion of this in the context of asymmetric warfare, see Thornton, 2007).

However, this comes into question when we address acts of terrorism not aimed against the state, but rather whose aims are related to other terrorist groups. Groups cannot always be considered weaker than rival groups. The aftermath of a split in a terrorist group adequately highlights the complexities of relative power at play. Mahoney (2020) examines the breakup of terrorist groups and subsequent competition between them and observes that this takes two forms – splinters and schisms. A splinter occurs when a small faction breaks away from the main group, and a schism is a much more even split of the group. This leaves a situation in which terrorism can be a weapon of the weak, strong, and evenly matched. To elaborate, in the event of a splintering of a group, the smaller (and presumably weaker) splinter group can employ terrorism to grow and usurp the larger group from which it broke away. The larger remnant of the original group could also use its greater strength to defeat the small splinter group. In the event of a

schism, a situation would exist in which two groups with more evenly matched resources would be in competition.

There are many sources in the literature who view terrorism as a strategy in itself. For example, Fromkin (1975) discusses groups employing a terrorist strategy – a vague and shifting strategy that revolves around the creation and exploitation of fear to elicit desired responses. Given that this was written in 1975, understandings of terrorist strategy and the field of terrorism studies have developed since, but it worth noting the shift from the *strategy* of terrorism to the *strategies* of terrorism.

Strategic Phases of Terrorism

Treating terrorist groups as rational actors, many authors have sought to explain how they conduct themselves strategically, often based on different definitions of terrorism itself. Neumann and Smith (2005) view terrorist strategy as three steps: disorientation, targets response, and gaining legitimacy. Briefly summarised, *disorientation* is the use of violence to highlight the inadequacy of the government from the perspective of the population.

Target response is the use of violence to get the target (I.e. the state) to respond in one of a variety of possible manners; (1) *target overreaction* - responding with excessively repressive measures turning the population against them, (2) *power deflation* - underreacting to a terrorist threat due to concerns over civil liberties, (3) *failed repression of moderates* – repression of non-violent opposition which can lead to them becoming radicalised, (4) *appeasement of moderates* – the government believes that terrorist activity is based on legitimate grievances and in attempting to address those grievances the government is seen as granting concessions.

The final stage, *gaining legitimacy,* is '[exploiting] the emotional impact of the violence to insert an alternative political message and seek to broaden support, often through the media or political front organisations' (p. 590).

Harmon (2001) puts forward five widely employed strategies of terrorism: *spreading chaos* (the creation of fear)*, discrediting and destroying governments* (the use of propaganda and violence to undermine government authority)*, economic damage* (the deliberate targeting of property rather than people, imposing costs in treasure not blood)*, military damage* (a focus on military targets over civilian targets)*,* and *internationalization of the cause* (to promote and generate international support, including carrying out international attacks). These share features with other strategies of terrorism, such as d*iscrediting and destroying existing government* and Kydd and Walter's (2006) intimidation strategy (discussed below) in terms by undermining its ability to govern, or Neumann and Smith's (2005) *disorientation* phase. However, Kydd and Walter's model is selected over Harmon's due to Kydd and Walter's being focused around the communicative aspect of terrorism.

The various theories around strategies of terrorism are not isolated from each other, they frequently employ significant element from each other or adapt existing understandings

of strategies. We can see in Kydd and Walter's model (2006) that their strategy of *provocation* (p. 69) resembles Neumann and Smith's *target response/overreaction* phase in that the aim is to bring about a disproportionate response from the government to turn the population against them. This highlights how Kydd and Walter have not invented their five strategies, but have brought together five individual strategies from the pre-existing literature to create their model, and reinforces that strategic understandings do not exist in isolation.

Kydd and Walter outline five terrorist strategies: spoiling, outbidding, attrition, provocation, and intimidation. Briefly summarised, spoiling is the use of violence to disrupt negotiations; outbidding is the use of violence to compete with rival terrorist organisations for support; attrition is the use of violence to for concessions; provocation is the use of violence to bait an enemy into excessive reprisals and thus generate support for the terrorist organisation; and intimidation is the use of violence to gain or maintain control over a population. Kydd and Walter call for an expansion of their work, explaining 'we realize that our discussion is only a beginning and that further elaboration of each of the strategies and their corresponding counterstrategies awaits future research' (p.80). This research will meet this need. An indicator of the usefulness of Kydd and Walter's understanding of strategies can be shown through a flawed attempt to further simplify it, thus resulting in an understanding of terrorist strategy which is lacking in nuance, shown in Frieden et al's *World Politics* (2010). In attempting to simplify Kydd and Walter's strategies they have reduced the number from five strategies down to four, combining attrition and intimidation into one strategy, *coercion* (p. 253). This combination fails to appreciate the difference in audience between an attrition strategy and an intimidation strategy. A strategy of attrition aims to communicate with the state or enemy population, whereas an intimidation strategy aims to communicate with the terrorist group's local population. Furthermore, an attrition campaign can be seen as an attempt to change the status quo, and an intimidation campaign an attempt to maintain it.

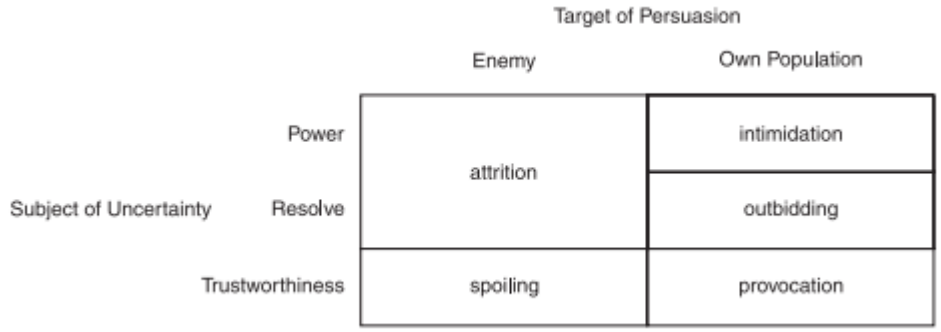
It is important to make clear that while this thesis does use Kydd and Walter's model as a foundation and draws on it heavily, the model is imperfect, and I have not stuck to it rigidly and unquestioningly throughout. The purpose of this thesis is not to defend every single point of the model so it makes sense to understand what the shortcomings are and how they have been accounted for.

Kydd and Walter's model can be seen as being an oversimplified typology in that it reduces incredibly complex and dynamic political situations into one of five categories. Every single terrorist campaign is unique and so it could be seen as failing to appreciate this. However, the nature of models is that they classify complex real life events into categories which result in oversimplification. Acknowledging this is important, and this research accounts for it by explaining how case study can be classified as the strategy it has been identified as, as well as including an examination of the context these campaigns occurred in to allow for a more nuanced analysis.

There is also a relative lack of consideration of other factors in the model, most obviously the political context in which these strategies are deployed. This relates to the

above point about oversimplification, but each campaign occurs in a unique political context with dynamics between a group and the state and a group and its constituent populations being able to vary considerably even in situations in which the same strategy is employed. This is not to claim that context is more important than other factors, but it is important to consider the political environment in which the actions of terrorist groups occur so I do include some discussion of this.

Kydd and Walter's model also employs the use of categorical binaries, reducing complex topics to two options. For example, Kydd and Walter identify three 'subjects of uncertainty' (power, resolve, and trustworthiness) (p.58) that they seek to convince their 'targets of persuasion'(p.58) of using violence. The table from their paper (p.59) is shown below. The targets of persuasion are either the enemy or their own population. The targets of persuasion only being two options feel limited, in this thesis I break it into three targets of audiences for violence – enemy population, enemy government, and constituent population discussed earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, Kydd and Walter table does not appreciate the nuance of balancing communicating with the target of persuasion with other audiences – for example, an attrition strategy may aim to persuade an enemy but a group also needs to consider the communicative effect on its constituent population. For example, the use of extreme violence may communicate power and resolve to an enemy but may cause backlash from a constituent population (Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007). This thesis adopts an understanding that accepts there may be multiple relevant audiences for different strategies.



(Figure 2.1, Strategies of terrorist violence (Source: Kydd and Walter, 2006)

Types of Violence

This part of the literature review will examine types of violence, understood here as the level of casualties, the weapons employed, and the targets of the attacks. Within these, there is a variety of choice for terrorist groups, and this section will explore the literature that explains the variation in their decision making. The factors surrounding the use of individual types of violence have been discussed in the literature which is outlined here. This section is important as it establishes what the three types of violence examined throughout this thesis are, and how they are understood. This literature is referred to again in the development of hypotheses in the theory chapter. This section also showcases how these types of violence have been researched individually or researched

in association with one strategy of terrorism. This points to a gap in the literature. There has not been research in which all three types of violence are examined in relation to the five strategies of terrorism in a theoretically consistent manner.

The casualties section will show how groups face a difficult choice in their decision on what level of human damage to inflict. Mass casualties can communicate strength but at the risk of isolating themselves from constituent populations while low casualties can communicate selectivity. The weapon selection section will explore how different authors have understood which weapons groups have opted for and the reasons for this. Factors which influence this include resource constraints, the communicative element of the weapon, and the selectivity and destructiveness of the weapon. The target selection section explores how the literature has explained the variation in what or who is attacked. Again, a communicative element emerges here as groups may seek to showcase their willingness to kill or their ability to strike well defended targets. Selectivity and constituent population response also emerge as key elements. This thesis will, in the theory chapter, use these understandings to hypothesise why different strategies of terrorism (with different communicative requirements) adopt different casualty levels, weapons, and strike different targets. This ties together the spread of types of violence literature discussed in this section which has tended to focus on one type of violence.

A particular area of contribution to significant debates is the discussion around casualties, this also highlights the value of conducting this research. The targeting of civilians with mass casualty attacks is a major area of debate in the field of terrorism studies (Asal et al, 2013; Quillen, 2002; Asal and Blum, 2005). By exploring how strategy drives mass casualty attacks and attacks against civilian targets it is possible to develop a better understand of why this occurs, or why groups choose to avoid these types of attacks. Engagement with strategy as factor which may interact with other potential drivers (such as resources, for example) strengthens this contribution. This also highlights the necessity of this work, it makes a valuable contribution to a key debate but this contribution has the potential for real world impact as it can improve practitioners' understanding of how groups operate.

Casualties

This section investigates the literature concerning the level of casualties inflicted by terrorist groups in their attack. It unpacks the research surrounding explanations for varying levels of human damage in attacks, identifying why groups would or would not want to employ mass casualty attacks.

A major issue with the understanding of terrorism has been the assumption that the sole aim of a terrorist group is to inflict the highest number of casualties. This is a view often found outside of academia, perpetuated by ill-informed or intentionally misleading media outlets, particularly in relation to the perceived threat of Islamic terrorism (see Powell, 2011). In the aftermath of the September 11th attacks in New York, which caused the deaths of thousands of civilians, it is hardly surprising to see this as a

dominant view of terrorism, even if this view is not entirely correct and is lacking in an understanding of the nuance of terrorist group strategy.

Some scholars also subscribe to the idea that terrorist groups only aim to inflict mass casualties, particularly concerning discussions around *modern* or '*new'* terrorism. Ganor explains that 'modern terrorism is essentially indiscriminate. The identities of the victims are irrelevant to the perpetrators, so long as they belong to a group singled out for attack, and the attack conveys the intended to the target population. However, in contrast to classical terrorism, modern terrorism aims to inflict the greatest possible number of casualties and damage. The goal is to undermine the government, to spread panic and anxiety among the targeted population and demoralize the public' (Ganor, 2004, p. 34).

In contrast, a quote which appears throughout the literature (e.g. Bakker and Zuijdewijn, 2023; Goswami and Bhatia, 2020) is Jenkins (1975) saying that 'terrorists want a lot of people watching and not a lot dead' (p. 4). With the development of the internet since Jenkins wrote this, there is an even larger potential audience to reach through more quickly and directly than just conventional media. It illustrates how the main aspect of a terrorist attack is not the immediate victims, but the wider audience with whom they are attempting to communicate, so, in some ways, an enormous death toll is not necessarily important.

There is nuance to terrorist violence, and there are circumstances in which they seek to limit the lethality of their violence for numerous reasons. There are times, however, when groups do seek to inflict mass casualties. The 2008 Mumbai attacks were undertaken with the goal of inflicting high casualties (Riedel, 2009). Members of Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Pakistani Islamist group, attacked several targets indiscriminately firing into crowds, leaving explosives, and executing victims. So, it is important to address why some groups feel it necessary to inflict mass casualties and others do not.

A frequently occurring argument throughout much of the literature concerns how "spectacular" an attack is, not meaning an attack being aesthetically pleasing but that an attack will create strong imagery and/or generate significant interest due to violence, death toll, uniqueness. Spectacular attacks are beneficial to terrorist groups as they generate media coverage (Sui et al, 2019). The media is essential to the survival of a terrorist organisation as a group needs a means to transmit its message to a large audience. Furthermore, this relationship can be seen as a bizarre symbiosis in which the terrorist groups are dependent on the media to spread their message and the media rely on terrorist attacks to gain views and fill air time (Wilkinson, 1997). The more spectacular an attack, the more coverage it gets, the more viewers and clicks the media get, the more the terrorist's message spreads.

Inflicting mass casualties can serve the purpose of highlighting government shortcomings and inability to protect its own people, as well as instil a sense of fear in people. Scaring a population would, in a democratic state, have the expected effect of bringing about political change in the terrorist group's favour, pressure from the population would force concessions from the government. However, as Ganor notes,

this does not always work as intended. The 9/11 attacks, for instance, while certainly having the effect of creating a sense of fear in the American people, failed in scaring the American population into pressuring the government into granting concessions to Al Qaeda but only had the effect of strengthening their resolve (Ganor, 2004, p. 38).

There are also numerous considerations a group must factor in when planning an attack which may cause them to limit the number of casualties they intend to inflict. There is a danger that a terrorist group can inflict too many casualties causing a government response that the group cannot survive. This can be seen in relation to Neumann and Smith's (2005) *target overreaction* and Kydd and Walter's (2006) *provocation* strategies in which the groups aim to bring about a heavy-handed government response except that there is a danger that provoking too strong a response will destroy the group. Alternatively, this can be examined outside of those strategic understandings. A terrorist attack not aiming to provoke the government into a strong response may still unintentionally do so. Too deadly an attack may leave a government in a position in which it is pressured, or sees no alternative, but to respond in a forceful manner. This can be seen in the case of the Luxor attacks, whose lethality brought about a government response resulting in the destruction of the group that carried the attack out. (Nemeth, 2014) A group looking to avoid such an outcome would be incentivised to limit casualties in their attacks. Seeing that terrorist groups are often dependent on public support to some degree, groups must factor in how their constituent population, or any potentially sympathetic population, might respond.

Thruelsen (2010), in his examination of the Taliban insurgency in southern Afghanistan after the 2001 invasion, finds that the Taliban were incentivised to limit the casualties of their attacks. The Taliban in Helmand and Kandahar was mainly composed of local recruits and local commanders, thus giving it a certain reliance on the local populace as well as seeking to control it. The argument put forward is that the Afghan Taliban has adapted to the political atmosphere and has sought to reduce casualties in the areas it sought to control in order to maintain good relations with the local population, Including sparing the lives of policemen on the condition they fled or defected in order to keep the population onside.

Sanchez-Cuenca (2007) finds a similar theme when examining the campaigns of ETA and the (P)IRA. His work shows that both groups had low average death tolls for their attacks. He highlights instances in which both groups denied carrying out attacks which resulted in high casualties which they were likely responsible for. Having shown that these groups are actively interested in keeping death tolls low, and attempting to ensure that they are perceived as groups with self-restraint, Sanchez-Cuenca explains that terrorist groups do not want to risk alienating supporters or potential supporters, and their need to justify civilian casualties highlights their dependence on this support.

Avoiding mass casualties allows a group to showcase selectivity. This is evident in campaigns in which terrorist groups conduct assassinations against those who have disobeyed them. Johnson (2007) highlights this when discussing the Taliban's *Night Letters* which threaten particular individuals who have gone against the wishes of the group, or who are working with the government/coalition forces. The terrorist group

would have no need to inflict mass casualties here, and often even the threat itself is enough to coerce the targeted individual. While the violence does only target an individual, it communicates with the wider population that the group can selectively punish so enables them to exert a degree of control.

Having looked at the different understandings of why terrorist groups wouldand would not want to inflict mass casualties it becomes evident that some groups find themselves in a situation in which they need to balance inflicting a sufficient number of casualties in an attack in order to gain attention or differentiate themselves, but also to not inflict casualties so high that they risk alienating their support base or inciting a very strong government response which could be an existential threat to the group. This calibration of violence will vary between groups, settings, and strategies but it is essential to convey that it is a deliberate choice.

Weapon Selection

Terrorist groups can use a range of weapons from kitchen knives to nerve agents. This section of the literature review will explore the discussions around the factors that influence weapon selection. This section explains different understandings of why groups do or do not use different weapon types. First there is an exploration of CBRN weapons as, despite the infrequency of their use, the issues surrounding their use exemplify the factors at play in weapon selection. Following this, the section on guns, bombs, and suicide bombings explores the literature around the use of more conventional weapons. Finally, there is a review of the literature surrounding the use of basic weapons. The weapon selection section serves to unpack understandings covering a broad range of options open to terrorist groups.

- CBRN:

After the fall of the Soviet Union and concern over the security of their arsenals, there was a surge in the interest in CBRN weapons being acquired and used by terrorist groups, particularly nuclear weapons (e.g. Jacobs, 1998). Interest peaked once again after 9/11, with many concerned that Al Qaeda would seek to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction (Van De Velde, 2010). To date, there have been very few significant CBRN terrorist attacks, the most notable ones being the 1995 Aum Shinrikyo subway attacks in Tokyo and the 2001 Anthrax letters in the United States – neither of which resulted in particularly high death tolls (Koblentz, 2011). Despite the infrequency of extremely lethal CBRN attacks, there is a significant body of literature surrounding them. And this literature, in many cases, distils the theory behind broader weapon selection for terrorists into its core components, clearly highlighting the factors at play for all weapon selection.

CBRN weapons can range from the relatively small scale to cataclysmic. For example, the term could be as low intensity as the use of acid in attacks on abortion clinics to disable equipment and complicate clean up and rebuilding efforts, this can qualify as a chemical attack (Webb and Cutter, 2009), or as destructive and as the detonation of a

nuclear bomb in an urban area. In most cases, however, it is assumed to mean an attack more in line with CBRN WMD (weapons of mass destruction).

Maerli et al (2003) find that it would be possible for a terrorist group to create a crude nuclear device and this would be a potentially attractive weapon. An attack using a nuclear device almost guarantees attention for the terrorist group, given the destruction and shock value of such an attack. Secondly, a nuclear device would be effective in generating fear. Nuclear weapons and radiation are poorly understood by the general population and this has led to these weapons becoming almost mythical in their ability to destroy both through the immediate explosion and the after effects, even if this does not accurately reflect reality. Thirdly, a terrorist group with nuclear capabilities is a threat to be taken more seriously by governments, and nuclear capability would distinguish the group from any other.

There are also reasons why terrorist groups would not wish to launch a CBRN attack. These can help to explain why there have been so few cases of terrorist groups using them.

Palfy (2003)explores why groups, even when seeking mass casualties, do not use CBRN weapons. The reasons are: the relative ease of acquiring and/or making conventional weapons such as explosives compared to the CBRN weapons, the expertise required to use CBRN weapons, the likelihood of failure with conventional weapons is lower than that of CBRN weapons. While conventional weapons may not inflict as much damage as CBRN weapons, the use of conventional weapons is still the more prudent decision for a terrorist group seeking to inflict mass casualties. However, Palfy does note that '[other groups] predominantly focusing on inciting fear, panic, and general disruption, *regardless* of the amount of resultant casualties, may be more tempted to use nonconventional weapons' (p. 93, italics in original text). There is also the risk that CBRN weapons may be used by a group that does not fully understand the strategic interactions at play, such as cults or "amateur" terrorist groups.

Similarly, Merari (1999) agrees that the parties most likely to use WMD (weapons of mass destruction, used here almost interchangeably with CBRN weapons) are so-called "doomsday cults" due to their unconventional nature and structure, and relationship with the outside world – Aum Shinrikyo would be an example. Merari asserts that governments will respond more forcefully to a WMD attack than a conventional weapon 'not because of the unusually high number of casualties of a WMD attack but because such an attack is more frightening than the familiar bomb or fire weapons assaults, and because the use of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons is a taboo, forbidden by international accords' (p. 62).It is very unlikely that a conventional terrorist group would risk breaking this taboo and risk bringing about its own destruction.

- Guns, Bombs, and Suicide Bombing:

Moving onto conventional weapon selection, Koehler-Derrick and Milton (2019), focusing on when terrorist groups opt to employ either guns or bombs and why this decision has been made. They focus on these weapons as the most frequently used types,

explaining that in their period of study approximately 96% of terrorist attacks used guns or bombs. The two main factors they use to explain weapon selection are the size of the group and the goals of the group. They find that the larger a group is, the more likely that group is to use firearms in its attack. The explanation put forward here is that a group's size is representative of its resources, and with a member being required to be at the place of the attack to operate the firearm it is likely that the group will lose this member to death or capture. To a large group, the loss of one person is not significant but to a small group this has a far greater impact. Small groups may use bombs to carry out attacks without the risk of losing personnel. Concerning group goals, Koehler-Derrick and Milton (2019) find that a group with narrow goals will tend to employ explosives rather than firearms, and groups with wider goals will tend to use firearms. The suggestion as to why is that the use of firearms allows for much more selective violence and is ideal for social control. Ahmed's (2018a) explanation of a bombmaker being a high value resource to a group reflects the potential sophistication of bombs as weapons. The development of bombs requires expertise, with high quality bombs suggesting greater expertise.

Bloom (2004) asserts that suicide bombing is a communicative attack type selection. Suicide attacks are used to convey information to the terrorist groups target audience. The audience in these cases is often the terrorist group's constituent population. Suicide attacks can be spectacular, tending to generate significant media coverage. These attacks can be used to generate support from a terrorist group's constituent population by demonstrating their commitment and resolve to the cause, they can be used to attract recruits as the group is seen to be actively fighting and thus makes it more attractive to join. Bloom is not alone in viewing suicide attacks as communicative, Johnson (2013) sees the adoption of suicide bombing by the Taliban, in part, as a communicative weapon selection.

There is also an abundance of work that examines suicide bombing as a choice for carrying out an accurate and deadly attack. Hastings and Chan (2013), see suicide bombers as a resource which can get past layers of security and strike at vulnerable parts of a target. Suicide bombing also requires both expertise and training, suggesting groups who can employ it can be considered as using sophisticated weapons. Pedahzur and Perliger explain 'the execution of a suicide attack is not a simple process, and includes the need to prepare and train the potential suicide bomber, as well as assembling intelligence and professional knowledge on preparing reliable explosives' (2006, p.2).

This can be seen in Moore's (2012) work on Chechen suicide attacks between 2000-2004. He showcases numerous instances of suicide bombers being used to target harder to reach locations, such as airports outside of Chechnya or to detonate truck bombs against Russian military targets within Chechnya. The decision to use women to carry out many of these attacks seems to stem, again, from a tactical consideration. Men were perceived as the main actors in the Chechen bombings so were consequently the focus of security operations, using women to carry out these attacks was a sound tactical decision given the relative lack of suspicion cast upon them.

- Low-Tech:

Marone (2021) examines the logic of weapon selection in recent low tech European attacks. The use of knives in these attacks can be explained by the variety of attributes that bladed weapons possess such as their ease of acquisition, the lack of training required to use effectively, and ease of transport and concealment. Additionally, the seeming lack of interest in these actors to seek to escape or survive further adds to the suitability of a knife as a weapon for these attacks. Similar principles apply to the selection of vehicles as a weapon of choice, their availability and ease of use make them a viable weapon. Both weapon choices carry the additional benefit of being harder to predict and prevent than other weapon choices.

State support for groups can influence weapons selection. Especially in Europe, firearms and explosives are relatively difficult to acquire without the support of a nation state so resource constraints will force these groups to adopt different weapons.

Targets

Moving forward with a definition that views terrorism as a phenomenon that includes a variety of targets, this section will examine these different possible targets and the reasons for their selection. Reasons include showcasing strength and resolve, constituent constraints, and geographical concentration of populations. These findings can then be used to help determine the expected behaviour of groups in different strategies given the different requirements of those strategies in the theory chapter.

Hastings and Chan (2013) examine the relationship between hard targets and terrorist violence in terms of aviation security. Viewing terrorism as a form of costly signalling, the hardening of a target (such as the aviation industry) can increase its value as a target, rather than deterring attacks.
Attacking a hardened target is a means for a terrorist group to demonstrate its strength to an audience. Hastings and Chan explain that 'the specific target of a terrorist group may or may not have any military value, but it and the attack itself may have symbolic value to the terrorist group and, and the terrorist group may derive some value from an attack even if it does little or no damage, inasmuch as it may signal, in Walter and Kydd's phrasing, "resolve" or "strength", highlighting their continued existence in the face of state crackdowns' (p. 783).

Aviation is identified as a valuable target in three ways. It is cost effective, a small and cheap bomb can bring a plane down. An attack will generate news coverage. And, it has the potential for both symbolic (a modern and highly protected target being brought down) and economic (it will have costly knock on effects in the aviation system) impacts.

While the aviation sector can be considered a civilian target, hard targets also often include military and government targets. Abrahms (2011) when examining whether terrorism works argues that, in general, a group escalating to terrorist violence will not yield concessions from a government. However, this changes when a terrorist group strikes military targets as opposed to civilian targets. While Abrahms' uses a definition

of terrorism that only includes attacks against civilians (p. 591), a broader understanding of terrorism will include these campaigns and highlight the value of striking hardened military targets. He explains that terrorist groups are more likely to achieve concessions when striking military targets but striking civilians may provoke the government (p. 591).

Jessica Stanton (2013) examines the use of terrorism in civil wars. This paper addresses both civilian and non-civilian targeting, as well as discussion around intended civilian casualties. Stanton's findings regarding when a rebel group is more likely to target civilians rather than government entities determine that regime type is a major factor at play here. When engaged in conflict with a democratic regime, groups are far more likely to employ violence against civilians than groups which are in conflict with an autocratic regime. The argument made is that democratic regimes are far more sensitive to civilian losses and will thus give in to the rebel groups demands.

When targeting civilians, Stanton discusses the variation in the levels of intended casualties by different groups by using the examples of the FMLN (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front) in El Salvador and the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) in Turkey. The FMLN predominately targeted infrastructure resulting in relatively few civilian casualties whereas the PKK attacked crowded civilian targets resulting in expectedly high civilian casualties. Both groups claimed that these were attempts to coerce the government into granting concessions. Stanton concludes that this is down to the broadness of the terrorist group's constituency. The FMLN, seeking to develop wide support, sought to avoid civilian casualties. The PKK, a separatist group with its population relatively concentrated in one area, was able to attack civilians that were not part of its constituency.

Asal et al (2009) also examine why terrorist groups would attack undefended civilians and find, conversely, that regime type does not appear to be a factor where attacks against civilians are concerned. They three other conclusions that are of interest. Firstly, that there is a 'calculated logic in attacking soft targets' (p.274). Secondly, religious ideology does lead to a higher likelihood that a group will conduct attack against civilians but that there is less evidence to suggest that ethnonationalism as an ideology of a group will increase chances of a group attacking civilians. Thirdly, 'larger and better networked terrorist organizations are all more likely to repeatedly attack undefended civilians. However, older organizations are not more likely to attack soft targets more often' (p. 275). The ability of a terrorist group being able to spread the various risks involved in perpetrating an attack, as well as the ability to more easily attain the necessary resources for the attacks could explain this.

McCartan et al (2008) examine target selection patterns of Chechen rebel bombings between 1997 and 2003, finding that bombings conducted inside Chechnya tended to target non-civilians and bombings outside Chechnya (in the rest of Russia) tended to be perpetrated against civilian targets. The reasons put forward for the targeting of non-civilians inside Chechnya are that it is retribution against the Russian government for actions taken against Chechnya and Chechens, but, and possibly more important from a signalling perspective, is that striking Russian government and military targets inside

Chechnya ‘demonstrates the weakness of Russia to the Chechen populace and serves the purpose of demonstrating Russia’s vulnerability in the face of Chechen strategy’ (p. 72). Targeting civilians outside of Chechnya allows the rebel groups to highlight how Russia is unable to defend its own citizens and its vulnerability to terrorism.

In agreement with Stanton, McCartan et al propose that the rebels can conduct these attacks without risking losing support from a geographically confined constituent population given the relative concentration of their constituency. The targeting of military and government entities inside Chechnya is an attempt to minimise Chechen civilian casualties to maintain this essential support.

Abrahms et al (2018) investigate why some groups are more likely to target civilians than others,. understanding civilian targeting as a principal-agent problem in which a terrorist group creates an off-shoot group which is more likely to target civilians. There are costs and benefits to attacking civilians, the costs are the potential risks in support to the group perpetrating these attacks as well as a hardening of opposition in the victim population. The potential benefits are media coverage which can lead to a surge in recruitment for the terrorist group. These can be understood as outcome goals and process goals, outcome goals being the ultimate aim of a terrorist group and process goals being the objectives required to sustain a group. So civilian attacks can help with process goals but hinder outcome goals.

When a terrorist group (the parent organisation) creates an off-shoot group (the affiliate group) they have different objectives in terms of outcome goals versus process goals. The affiliate group is far more likely to undertake attacks against civilian targets because it is interested in process goals, the group needs to gain more members and grow, attacks against civilians may serve this purpose. The parent organisation, however, is interested in outcome goals and the targeting of civilians may have a harmful effect on this so the parent group is incentivised to not carry out attacks on civilians.

Boukhars (2020) explores the targeting preference of extremist insurgent groups in Africa, concluding that there are four factors at play determining whether a group will target civilian or official targets, and that these preferences are subject to change over time. These four factors are closely related and tie into the discussion above on terrorist target selection. One issue with this piece of work is that the author uses terms like violent extremist group, terrorism, and insurgency interchangeably but the conclusions he reaches still have validity, especially when examined in conjunction with other literature on targeting.

The first factor is the group’s dependence on local support, a group that is strongly dependent on local support in unlikely to target civilians as this would only be to the group's own detriment.

The second factor is the *In Group/Out Group* dynamic. In this case, groups which rely heavily on local support may still inflict significant civilian casualties on the out group.

Thirdly, there is competition and power shifts. Boukhars succinctly explains that, for insurgent groups, 'the incentive to exercise restraint in targeting civilians diminishes when their military capability are territorial control are threatened' (p. 123).

The final factor is the strategy of counterinsurgency . A heavy handed and indiscriminate counterinsurgency campaign will have the effect of escalating violence, and if the counterinsurgency follows the in-group/out-group divide then these divides will deepen and lead to an escalation in the targeting of civilians in the out-group. However, in a counterinsurgency campaign in which the in-group/out-group divide is not so prominent then it is expected that the insurgent groups will attack mostly government forces.

Related to competition and power shifts, civilian targeting seems to become more common as a group becomes more desperate. Biberman and Zahid (2019) use the cases of the Beslan and Peshawar school massacres to explore why terrorist groups resort to, even by their own standards, striking such controversial targets – not just civilians, but children. The first cause is internal rifts and/or a leadership deficit in a terrorist organisation, this provides a need for a section of the terrorist group to highlight its suitability to lead and thus resort to extraordinary violence to do so, demonstrating greater commitment to the cause. The second cause is external pressure on a terrorist group which poses a potentially existential risk. Biberman and Zahid explain concisely that 'desperate groups are also more likely to use shocking violence to attract media attention in pursuit of their short-term goals' (p. 180). The targeting of large groups of unprotected children is almost guaranteed to create shocking imagery, a "spectacular" attack, which will produce a significant amount of media coverage for the group.

Biberman and Zahid (2019) show how resources can have influence. The targets of Peshawar massacre were orignally the children of military officials. However, the terrorist group carrying out the attack found that the nearby military school was too well defended, and the group lacked the necessary resources to effectively carry out its mission, instead opting to attack the softer target of the civilian school.

Conclusion

This literature review began with an examination of different understandings and definitions of terrorism. Having discussed the variety within these understandings, a workable definition of terrorism derived from English will be used. The focus of the research area, as well as the understanding of terrorism, was further narrowed down and specified by drawing assumptions from the terrorist literature.

The examination of the literature on terrorist strategy highlighted the complexity of the subject, the similarities and differences between competing and complimentary understandings of terrorist strategy demonstrate the interconnectivity of these understandings. Kydd and Walter's five strategies of terrorism will be employed moving forward as they offer a nuanced understanding of the different ways terrorism is employed to achieve political ends, incorporating and building on previous work on terrorist strategy.

The discussion of the literature addressing casualties of terrorism established the factors which influence a terrorist group's level of intended casualties for an attack. These factors are resource constraints and management, government reprisals, public sentiment, and the possibility of public backlash.

The weapon selection section of this literature review used CBRN weapon discussion to emphasise the factors at play for terrorist groups concerning their weapon selection. The constraints and considerations for terrorist groups when selecting weapons are distilled to their most obvious components, allowing for an effective illustration of strategic decision making, whether this is the lethality, spectacle, or resource cost of the weapon considered. Literature around the use of conventional weapons such as bombs, guns, and suicide bombings was also scrutinised, highlighting the coercive and communicative elements of terrorist group weapon selection.

The section examining terrorist group target selection explores the variety of targets that terrorist groups strike, not just soft civilian targets, but hard targets, and military targets. The literature shows that there are numerous factors influencing target selection, such as the audience, geography of the audience, short- and long-term goals, and desperation, among others. The debate around the role of regime type is not resolved, and the discussion continues.

Strategy has been identified by other authors as being broadly a driving factor of terrorist decision making (e.g. Crenshaw, 1990). However, it has been the case that one strategy has been explored as a driver of decision making (e.g. Conrad and Greene, 2015), rather than taking a wider view. This research is necessary not just because of Kydd and Walter's call to develop their work, which it does by elaborating on the strategies and extending their model, but because it provides an improvement on previous related research which will enhance how we understand terrorist decision making. The role of strategy as being an influence in decision making is a major element of this research, and this is explored through all five of the strategies and in relation to the three types of violence rather than looking at individual strategies or types of violence. This strengthens the understanding not just that strategy is an influential factor, but how it is. The work also has value in real world application, by better understanding terrorist groups and strategies, policy makers will be better prepared to counter them.

3. Theory

Introduction

This chapter will explore Kydd and Walter's strategic theory of terrorism in more detail, as well as the work from which it draws. This provides the context and the framework for the research and the hypotheses that this research will test. Following on from the methodology chapter, this theory chapter will clarify the direction of this research.

The theoretical underpinning for this research is Kydd and Walter's five strategies of terrorism (2006). Not only does my work use this as the basis for understanding terrorist group strategy but also seeks to build on it, furthering the knowledge and understanding of terrorist group strategy. This chapter focusses on explaining and analysing these strategies of terrorism in detail, seeing how others have incorporated Kydd and Walter's work or the individual strategies included in their work, or used them as their basis for research, and how it will be understood and employed in the empirical sections of this thesis.

As discussed previously, these strategies were not the sole creation of Kydd and Walter, they successfully synthesise different understandings of strategies of terrorism together into one model. This model accommodates the most common strategies used in terrorist campaigns.

This chapter will first review key elements needed to move forward that have already been established in previous chapters. This is the conceptual framework which establishes the foundation for answering the core research questions that drive this thesis: what types of violence are associated with different strategies of terrorism? And what explains these patterns? This includes both the understanding of terrorism for this research and the dynamics at play in the *types of violence* (Intended casualties, target selection, weapon selection) examined. Subsequently, there will be an in-depth exploration of each of the five strategies of terrorism (spoiling, outbidding, attrition, provocation, and intimidation) and how they interact with the types of violence – this is the theoretical framework. Hypotheses for the types of violence expected in association with each strategy of terrorism are developed from the literature.

Conceptual Framework

This section forms the conceptual framework for this research. First this section will include an overview of how terrorism is understood in this thesis. Drawn from the literature review, the understanding of terrorism covers rationality, resources, audience, and strategy. An understanding of these elements must be established to have a solid foundation on which to build the subsequent research. The next section covers types of violence. This section, therefore, also covers how the types of violence are understood and what impacts them.

Understanding of Terrorism

The understanding of terrorism being used in this thesis is Richard English's definition, which differs slightly from Kydd and Walter's definition, as explained in depth in the previous chapter.

Terrorist groups are treated as rational actors. Already discussed in the literature review, it is sufficient to say that they are rational actors given how they use their limited resources to maximise their returns, and also how terrorist groups respond to counter measures, adapting and substituting as required (Shughart, 2011).

One significant component of Kydd and Walter's understanding of terrorist strategy, as well as that of others (e.g. Ahmed, 2018b), is the variation in audience or the population with whom the terrorist group seeks to communicate. This thesis works with three audiences: the group's constituent population, enemy population, and enemy government. This is a slight variation from Kydd and Walter as I have split their enemy audience into population and government.

It should also be noted that a terrorist group can employ more than one strategy simultaneously. For example, during the time that the attrition strategy employed by Basayev-led Chechen rebels was being undertaken in Russia (outside of Chechnya), there was a campaign of intimidation occurring within Chechnya at the same time. Fortunately, from the perspective of my research, there was a clear geographical dividing line in this case which made differentiation of the campaigns straightforward, but in some instances this cannot be so quickly identified.

The term "resources" covers many elements that terrorist groups need. Most obviously, these are recruits and money (Overgaard, 1994). Like any form of warfare, terrorism too requires blood and treasure. It can also include individuals with particular skillsets, such as bombmakers (Ahmed, 2018a). The loss or gain of such a skillset would be considerable to a terrorist organisation.

A terrorist group's constituent population is the most likely place for it to draw recruits and funding from. It is possible in some instances that a group could employ fighters akin to mercenaries (Hausken et al, 2015), use fighters from other/previous groups (Rich and Conduit, 2015), or force individuals to act on their behalf such as in cases in which groups have used child soldiers (e.g. Zack-Williams, 2001; Ehrenreich, 1998). A constituent population does not have to be geographically confined. Many groups, such as the PIRA and LTTE, had an international diaspora and can appeal to them for support and funding

Numerous works (e.g. Onat and Gul, 2018; Drake, 1998) have examined the role of ideology. It is worth clarifying that while my research does not primarily focus on ideology, ideology is still construed as important in two ways. Ideology can provide information in understanding the context in which the groups examined in this thesis operate. Ideology is also seen as a factor which can influence terrorist decision making and is engaged with when appropriate. In other words, I do not dispute that ideology is an influential factor, but I focus on strategy as it has been less studied to date.

Kydd and Walter's model is suited to understanding group strategy and, given that my work treats groups as rational actors, I will not be including lone actors given their potential unreliability as rational actors[2] (Spaaij, 2010). However, differentiating between lone actors and those affiliated with groups can be difficult. As I use the GTD, I adopt their attribution of attacks which removes this uncertainty.

Types of Violence

This section will further examine how types of violence (casualties, weapon selection, and target selection) are understood.

There is no consensus on what forms the basic elements of a terrorist attack. However, variation in target selection (e.g. Stanton, 2013; McCartan et al, 2008), weapon selection (e.g. Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019; Marone, 2021), and casualty count (e.g. Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007; Ganor, 2004) are three commonly researched elements of attacks throughout the literature. Furthermore, these three types of violence have data related to them which is accessible through the GTD for almost all attacks. This means that across groups, time periods, and campaigns I can identify for each attack which weapons were used, which targets were struck, and how many people were killed and injured. These types of violence are also referred to as the core types of violence for the purposes of this research.

These core types of violence do not cover every aspect of terrorist violence. For example, kidnapping is not specifically focused on in these types of violence yet it is a widely reported element of terrorist activity (e.g. O'Brien, Lippiello and Gehlen, 2024; BBC, 2004). However, kidnapping accounted for only 3% of terrorist attacks in 2019 (GTTAC, 2020). An exploration of the relationship between strategy and kidnapping (or other aspects of terrorist violence) would be valuable, but it is beyond the scope of this research. The types of violence explored are the ones I consider to be basic elements of an attack, but this is not an exhaustive list. They are three basic types of violence with considerable research around them (as individual types) and with quantitative data available as well. Aside from noting that I am not focusing on lone actors, I have also not included the number of perpetrators of an attack, despite the number of individuals involved being a potential indicator of group resources and commitment. This is due to two reasons: it can be difficult to ascertain the exact numbers of perpetrators of an attack in all cases, and those who carry out the attack are not necessarily the only people involved, unlike in the cases of lone actors.

It should also be noted that groups are recognised as being able to adapt their behaviour during the course of the campaign and learn from the outcomes of attacks. This will become evident in the strategies section when hypotheses developed include the possibility of escalation to properly calibrate their violence. The ability of terrorist

[2] Some literature does question how alone a lone actor is (e.g. Hofman, 2020), the social connections which play a role in the decisions to carry out attacks are different enough to a formal group structure that they lone actors are treated as individuals and excluded.

groups to learn and adapt is well established in the literature (e.g. Jaspersen and Montibeller, 2020; Gill et al, 2013)

Casualties

Terrorist groups do not simply seek to inflict maximum casualties at every possible opportunity (e.g. Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007). There are numerous reasons for this such as an audience's tolerance of or aversion to high casualties (e.g. Piazza and LaFree, 2019) or the potential of an overwhelming government response (Quillen, 2002). However, there are also times at which they might wish to inflict mass casualties, for example as a means of conveying strength to an enemy population. The ability to inflict high casualties can serve as a brutal demonstration of a group's strength and commitment to a cause, both to their own population and to an enemy.

An important factor is constituent populations' potential aversion to or tolerance of high casualties (e.g. Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007). Even if the group possesses the material resources to carry out mass casualty attacks, it may avoid mass casualty attacks as the group does not want to lose support from its constituent population.

There are other reasons for deliberately selecting low casualty attacks. For instance, the ability to be selective in violence has the potential to be very beneficial to a group in terms of only killing those the group wishes to kill and sparing those that it does not seek to kill, targeting those on the "wrong side" (Boyle, 2020). This can be used to punish or to scare. The death of an individual can have an enormous psychological repercussion hence communicative value (Mandala, 2017).

A mass casualty attack is also likely to have a greater resource cost than a low casualty attack, assuming the same hardness of target. So, in situations in which mass casualties are not necessary, even when higher casualties would not be disadvantageous politically to a group, it would make sense for them to inflict the minimum number of necessary casualties to keep resource expenditure to a minimum.

The potential of escalation of a campaign makes determining appropriate levels of casualties to inflict difficult. It might be required that a group escalates its level of violence after an attack if an enemy does not immediately concede. A group would need to leave itself enough potential to escalate from its previous attack so the initial attack would inflict lower levels of casualties. On the other hand, a group could inflict maximum casualties in the hope that there is an immediate concession from the enemy but it would not have the means to escalate this campaign (Neumann and Smith, 2005).

When there is a high degree of uncertainty concerning the force required to achieve a political goal, it is easier for a group to start with low casualty attacks and escalate to high casualty attacks than it is to start high and deescalate. What is meant by this is that a group can escalate attacks to calibrate the necessary levels of violence, thus keeping the constituent population on side and not provoking a destructive response from the enemy.

However, if a group starts at a high level of violence, it can be problematic in numerous ways. Firstly, an initial excessively high casualty attack can have the effect of immediately turning the group's constituent population against them. Secondly, trigger a destructive response from the government. These first two points have already been mentioned, but this discussion here is specifically in reference to escalation. Thirdly, there is the relationship with the media to bear in mind. As a campaign escalates from low level violence through to higher level violence, one would expect the coverage of that campaign to grow alongside it. However, if a campaign starts off with high level violence which is unsustained and becomes less violent over time then we could expect media coverage to reduce as the campaign continues (Braithwaite and Orringer, 2022).

Weapon Selection

Resources influence weapon selection – both actual and what they seek to communicate. Using more advanced weaponry does indicate a group's higher resources, but also has a resource cost (Lapan and Sandler, 1993). The same reasoning does also apply to hard target selection. Conversely, using more primitive weaponry would suggest resource deficiencies but attacks using less advanced weapons can still be an indicator of commitment to a cause. This can be seen in IS affiliated attacks in Indonesia, in which the perpetrators have either failed to acquire other weapons or their explosive devices have failed to work but they have still carried out attacks using bladed weapons (Arianti, 2018).

Another important element of weapon selection is found in Koehler-Derrick and Milton's work (2019). It is argued that firearms are used by groups who have a relatively large number of members and bombs requires a person to be physically present at the attack to carry it out. Whereas bombs can be detonated remotely or left with a timer. Essentially, groups using firearms are demonstrating that they have personnel to spare, bombs alone do not indicate this.

One significant element of the CBRN discussion is that the taboo nature of these weapons makes them unattractive to use as they risk creating too strong a governmental response (Merari, 1999). Tannenwald (2005) asserts that this taboo makes them attractive as the weapon's 'transgressive nature' (p.43) would have a greater political and psychological impact and subsequently gain more attention. Groups may also be deterred from using CBRN weapons as this could isolate them from their constituent population in a similar fashion to the risks of mass casualties. While CBRN use by groups is rare, the theory behind serves to crystalise the considerations groups must make in their weapon selection.

A novel weapon type may gain attention for a group even if an attack is unsuccessful. For instance, while Richard Reid was unsuccessful in detonating his explosive device on a transatlantic flight, the choice of weapon itself garnered media attention and he became known as the "shoe bomber" (BBC, 2001; Belluck, 2003).

Novel weapons can impose severe costs on an enemy. These costs can take the form of loss of life or damage to targets. For example, IS' adoption of drones as a means to

target enemy fighters was a cost effective and novel way of imposing costs on the enemy during the battle of Mosul (Rossiter, 2018). These costs can also be financial. Additional security measures can have a significant financial cost.

Weapon selection in this thesis is treated as either sophisticated or unsophisticated, this is discussed in greater detail in the methodology. The context of a group's campaign may play a role in determining whether a weapon is sophisticated, although there are some types which are expected to be consistent in sophistication across campaigns. What is meant by this is that some weapons will often be considered basic (such as a knife or a vehicle for ramming) and other weapons will often be considered sophisticated (such as nerve agents). However, those which fall in between can be more difficult to determine. Firearms, for instance, can be considered as either sophisticated or unsophisticated depending on the setting of their use. A handgun in an active war zone is a relatively basic weapon considering the other weapons in that strategic context. In a well policed and heavily regulated geography, however, a handgun can be considered more sophisticated given the difficulties in acquisition and how it compares to other weapons in that setting.

Target Selection

There is a variety of targets that terrorist groups choose to attack, and there are numerous ways of understanding these. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is specific in its listing of targets in terms of labelling them as the entity which is struck (e.g. school, police station, checkpoint) but this does not explain much in terms of hardness or softness of target, so I still have to designate these labels.

As discussed in the methodology chapter of this thesis, I will be labelling them simply as hard or soft targets. Hardness and softness of target is not simply determined by being a civilian or military target but takes into account other factors such as ease of access and overall protection. For example, an airport would be considered a hard target because of the high degree of security even though it is a civilian entity (Hastings and Chan, 2013).

A group may choose to strike softer targets for a number of reasons. One possible reason is the lack of ability to strike hard targets as their resource constraints limit their target options (e.g. Biberman and Zahid, 2019). Soft targets are expected to be easier to successfully attack than hard targets so it would make sense that a group with significant resource constraints would attack them. Or they could be struck by a well-resourced group that simply does not want to exert more resources than it has to. This is the same logic as a group not inflicting more casualties than they have if the minimum number achieves the same goal. There would be no need to expend more resources striking a hard target when the use of fewer resources to strike a soft would accomplish the same goal.

This saving of resources for both target selection and the levels of intended casualties is related to a key notion – the *minimum force principle,* that "there is no need for a terrorist group to resort to any means more complicated, dangerous or extreme than the

most basic tactic required to accomplish terrorist objectives' (Jacobs, 1998, p. 158; discussing Beckman, 1986).

A group may also choose to strike soft targets to inflict higher casualties – the reasons for this desire have been discussed in the casualties section, the same logic applies here.

Striking soft targets also demonstrates commitment to a cause and willingness to impose costs (Asal et al, 2019), or to highlight to that population that their government cannot protect them and the best way of ending the violence is to concede to the group.

Despite being more heavily defended, or even because of this, there are reasons a harder target may be more appealing to a terrorist group. Striking a hard target allows a group to convey a message of strength to its target audience, that it has the means not just to strike opportunistically against undefended targets but also to hit the enemy where it hurts (Polo, 2020). The decision to strike hard targets may also be a result of the group's circumstances, if the group's constituent population is in the same geographical area then striking hard targets becomes a means of ensuring only the enemy incurs losses and reducing the chances of members of the constituent population being unintentionally killed (McCartan et al, 2008).

Strategies of Terrorism

Having established the conceptual framework above, this section will discuss the interaction of these types of violence with each of Kydd and Walter's five strategies of terrorism which forms the theoretical framework. Linking types of violence and the strategies of terrorism has not yet been successfully addressed in the Terrorism Studies literature. There have been instances of individual strategies being linked to individual types of violence which make a very important contribution to my work, but linking Kydd and Walter's overall model to the patterns of types of violence is what this thesis will do, building on and expanding the understanding of terrorist strategy.

Spoiling

The first strategy to be examined as a theoretical basis for my research is *spoiling*. Kydd and Walter explain that 'the goal of a spoiling strategy is to ensure that peace overtures between moderate leaders on the terrorists' side and the target government do not succeed. It works by playing on the mistrust between these two groups and succeeds when one or both parties fail to sign or implement a settlement' (pp. 72-73). I would elaborate on this last point further and argue that the undermining of an implemented ceasefire or settlement also fits within this strategy (Reiter, 2015). Any peace agreement is underpinned by trust, to a large degree. A spoiling strategy aims to undermine the minimal trust that exists and to exacerbate the distrust between the two groups.

An environment during a spoiling strategy is expected to always have this degree of distrust between the parties concerned. Peace negotiations during civil conflicts are difficult to maintain due to distrust (Walter, 1997). Spoiling plays on this. Kydd and Walter explain that: 'Terrorist acts are particularly effective during peace negotiations because opposing parties are naturally distrustful of each other's motives and have

limited sources of information about each other's intentions' (p.73). Even after a peace agreement is reached, this distrust can still hold and be played upon to prevent proper implementation of an agreement and ultimate abandonment of it. As the actual levels of trust between concerned parties cannot be known with certainty, the expected actions of groups would be to begin campaigns on the basis of maximum distrust and develop from there as required. This is discussed in relation to the individual types of violence below.

Kydd and Walter expand on when spoiling occurs, stating that this strategy will be employed when 'relations between two enemies and a peace agreement threatens the terrorists' more far-reaching goals' (p. 73). Potential loss of support for a terrorist group should a peace agreement be implemented could also drive the adoption of the strategy. A population would be less likely to support further violence when there is an opportunity for peace so it is in the terrorist group's interest to ensure that this peace does not occur (Kydd and Walter, 2006).

Spoiler opportunities are periods of time surrounding particular events that a spoiling group can target to achieve its goal. An example of this is the 1996 Israeli election. It is argued that Hamas (who opposed the Oslo accords) violence prompted the Israeli electorate to vote for Benjamin Netanyahu who opposed the peace process rather than Shimon Peres who sought to continue it (Braithwaite, Foster, and Sobek, 2010; Berrebi and Klor, 2008). However, it must be noted that spoiling as a strategy can be effective even for weaker and/or smaller terrorist groups. Reiter (2015) examines this and explains how terrorist groups are able to undermine peace processes, and achieve that goal at least, while expending minimal resources. This requirement of minimal resources also opens up the possibility of successful spoiling campaigns to many terrorist groups. Of course, this is only possible when the distrust is high. The higher the distrust or uncertainty between the negotiating parties, the more likely negotiations are to fail (Kydd and Walter, 2002). But this does mean that the entry point for violence in spoiling can be relatively low level.

Spoiling is a strategy which groups may be able to conduct with minimal resource expenditure. One of the factors at play here is the number of casualties required, that in situations in which the levels of trust between the two entities negotiating is very low then it should not require a mass casualty attack to exploit this. The threshold for disruption being so low provides an opportunity for groups with more limited resources to provide this disruption, a group does not need to possess the means to inflict mass casualties in order for this strategy to play out. And a group which does possess the ability to carry out these attacks does not need to expend more resources than necessary.

As with the casualties, when the levels of trust between the entities negotiating is low the least resource intensive solution would prove to be effective. In relation to target selection, this would mean the striking of soft targets. Soft targets are easier to strike and cost less in terms of group resources, and an attack against a soft target has a higher likelihood of success (Santifort et al. 2012). An additional benefit for the terrorist group of striking soft targets, especially civilians, is that it can be more directly persuasive to the enemy population it may be trying to communicate with.

Again, in the context of a situation in which distrust between two groups is high and that spoiling is a strategy which can be employed by weaker groups, the requirements for weapon selection should be relatively basic. There is no reason for a terrorist group to expend more resources than it has to. If there is greater trust between the two groups, or reduced distrust, then the weapon selection requirements might become more demanding. A stronger show of force could be required to demonstrate that the treaty being agreed will not hold, to persuade the enemy that the agreement would not successfully bring about the end of violence.

From this, the following hypotheses are established:

1. Casualties are expected to start low but can escalate.
2. Target selection is expected to be soft.
3. Weapon selection is expected to start basic but can escalate.

Outbidding

The strategy of *outbidding* stems from two or more groups competing for the support of a given population and uncertainty on the part of the population in terms of which group to support. Groups seek to demonstrate their suitability to represent the population. . It should be noted that outbidding can also occur when a group splits or splinters (Mahoney, 2012), which essentially forms two new groups.

Kydd and Walter explain that a population has the choice between 'a strong a resolute defender of the cause (zealots) or weak and ineffective stooges of the enemy (sellouts)' (p. 76). A group aims to convince the population that it is the zealot and that the rival organisation is a sellout. This can be achieved through violence to demonstrate the will and ability for a group to continue fighting and acting on behalf of the population. The audience for the violence here is the constituent population and not the target population.

Outbidding occurs in a competitive environment, dictating how groups are expected to behave as they seek to showcase their strengths compared to their rivals. An important aspect of terrorism, and particularly outbidding, is the "propaganda of the deed". The group needs to generate a publicity from attacks to spread their message (Schmid, 1989). However, not all terrorist attacks receive the same degree of media coverage. To generate the desired media coverage, a terrorist group must undertake an attack which is sufficiently different. This differentiation could be a particularly lethal attack, an attack against a target or target type not targeted by other groups, or the use of different weapons to rivals. High casualties also convey a group's zealotry, their serious commitment to cause and to what is necessary.

Escalating to harder targets could be expected as simply striking soft targets might not be sufficient for a group to differentiate itself. Striking harder targets has the potential to "up the bid" in an outbidding strategy and differentiate itself, to demonstrate that the group can strike against targets that are more difficult to hit (Kearns, 2021).

However, it is still likely that soft targets will be struck. Firstly, as an initial bid as it is less costly to in terms of resources to strike soft targets so it forms a cheaper opening bid. Secondly, because the soft targets can be seen as part of an enemy population and thus legitimate targets then will and capability are effectively conveyed through their targeting (Stanton, 2013). Soft targets communicate will to fight and to do whatever is necessary to achieve an objective.

Conrad and Greene (2015) examine how competition between terrorist groups affects their tactical choices, explaining 'in particularly competitive environments, violent groups are incentivized to engage in more shocking or innovative tactics because it distinguishes their "brand" from competitors, ultimately making the organization less sensitive to competition' (p.546). This thinking demonstrates the potential value to a terrorist group of striking soft targets as Conrad and Greene assert that they are more effective when it comes to enabling a group to differentiate themselves.

One issue of contention concerning the work of Conrad and Greene is that they treat attacks against civilians are higher "quality" attacks than those against military targets, that targeting potentially softer targets is a better argument for a group's claim to represent a population than attacks on hard targets. In agreement with Conrad and Greene, it can be argued that attacking a civilian target does show a group's commitment to a cause and willingness to inflict costs. But it can also be argued that striking hard targets rather than soft targets is a more of effective means of showing a group's resolve and resources. A better resourced group would have the ability to strike hard targets and more poorly resourced groups would not. This ability to strike hard targets would distinguish it from rival groups. The literature leads me to expect a mix of hard and soft targets in an outbidding campaign. There is evidence to suggest hard targets would be preferred and there is evidence to suggest soft targets would be preferred, these are not incompatible. They are reflective of different elements which inform the strategy. If a group is seeking to demonstrate its viability via zealotry then it needs to show that it is willing to do what others will not. This would include striking soft targets. This is one side of showcasing the group's 'brand'. The other side is to show ability – this emerges through the striking of hard targets. In tandem, striking hard and soft targets communicates how far a group is willing to go and how capable a group is.

Desperation also must be considered. When a group is being outbid by another group, or because of an internal schism, it may have to resort to desperate measures to survive. Biberman and Zahid (2019) discuss how school massacres can be a consequence of outbidding. They assert that outbidding is likely to result in more brutal attacks, and when the outbidding factor is combined with an existential threat for a terrorist group, they are likely to grow increasingly desperate. This combination of weakness and desperation will lead to groups attacking soft targets and shocking targets to generate much needed media attention because they lack the means to strike hard targets. This can also risk turning away supporters if it is perceived as too extreme.

The literature would indicate that more advanced weapons, such as guns and bombs (rather than , for example, knives), would effectively communicate to the target

audience for the capabilities of the group in question. This is because more sophisticated weaponry would enable a group to separate itself from competitor terrorist organisations. The use of more advanced weaponry indicates that a group is better resourced (Lapan and Sandler, 1993). To a potential recruit, a better resourced group is more attractive to join. And to a potential supporter, a better resourced group is more likely to achieve their objective. There is also the possibility of the use of "novel" weapons or attack types to differentiate a group from its rivals, for instance it has been shown that the use of suicide bombing is a means of communicating with an audience and differentiating a group from its rivals in terms of commitment (Bloom, 2004).

From this, the following hypotheses are established:

1. Higher casualties are expected.
2. A mix of hard and soft targets are expected.
3. More sophisticated weapons are expected.

Attrition

Kydd and Walter succinctly describe the strategy of attrition as 'a battle of wills' (p. 59), explaining that 'the most important task for any terrorist group is to persuade the enemy that the group is strong and resolute enough to inflict serious costs, so that the enemy yields to the terrorists' demands' (p.59). In a strategy of attrition, a terrorist group needs to persuade an enemy government and/or population that the group has the means to inflict a high cost at that time and in the future, and that the group also has the commitment to inflicting the costs unless its demands are met. The group needs to communicate that it can inflict costs higher than its adversary is willing to endure. High casualties communicate ability to inflict costs. A group can carry out a limited number of mass casualty attacks in an effort to convince an opponent that it can conduct a sustained high casualty campaign. This does allow terrorist groups with more limited resources to bluff. A terrorist group with limited resources could launch one or a small number of attacks aiming to generate mass casualties, although these would deplete the group's resources. But the gamble would be that, with the government not having complete information on the group, this would convince their opponent that the group has the means and conviction to carry out a mass casualty campaign (Overgaard, 1994).

However, high casualties may come into conflict with the levels of violence a constituent population is willing to permit (Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007). It is possible that this could be substituted for economic damage as seen in the case of the PIRA, in which there were instances of the group warning authorities of attacks in order to reduce the lethality of the blast while still inflicting costs and demonstrating power through the physical damage to the environment caused by the explosions. However, its effectiveness is questionable.

In terms of target selection, an attrition strategy could have terrorist groups targeting both hard and soft targets. They might strike hard targets when constituent constraints prevent them from carrying out attacks against soft targets, capable of delivering significant casualties, so instead the target hardness rather than the level of casualties

becomes the means of communicating strength (Polo, 2020). They might also strike hard targets in situations in which the target government is unlikely to respond to civilian casualties so needs to be struck in a more direct manner.

Attacks against soft targets, such as civilians, would be easier to undertake with limited strength and/or limited resources but still have the potential to be devastating and attention grabbing while showcasing commitment. It might also be beneficial for a terrorist group to strike soft targets, especially civilians, when engaging in a campaign against a democratic state or a state in which the populace has the ability to pressure the government into granting concessions even if the government was initially unwilling to do so (McCartan et al, 2005).
Striking both target types enables a group to communicate strength and commitment to audiences. The mixture of targets enables a group to showcase that not only can it carry out attacks against its enemy population, but that it has the ability to do so even against targets which have protective measures in place.

Concerning weapon selection, as costs are imposed through destruction, the weapon selection needs to be capable of inflicting a high degree of damage. The group also need to communicate that this destruction can be sustained until their demands are met, which requires a weapon type which will not expend the group's resources excessively. Palfy (2003) explains that terrorist groups opt to use conventional rather than CBRN weapons because 'high-potency conventional weapons can provide the high casualties and operational flexibility required' (p.91). This drives a need for a sophisticated weapon capable of inflicting significant damage but not an exotic weapon selection. As with casualties, it is possible that a group may try to bluff by carrying out one or a few attacks with a very destructive (conventional) weapon type.

From this, the following hypotheses are established:

1. High casualties are expected.
2. Targets are expected to be a mix of hard and soft.
3. Sophisticated weapons are expected.

Provocation

A provocation strategy aims to bait a government into a heavy-handed response. A terrorist group seeks to turn support away from the ruling regime and towards the group itself, so if the group can successfully create an excessive government reaction that harms the population in question then support for the regime would weaken. Or it can occur in a situation which the terrorist group's constituent population has grievances with the government but the population does not believe that these grievances are sufficient to justify violence. A provocation strategy would demonstrate to the constituent population that these means are justified (Kydd and Walter, 2006, pp. 69-70).

Provocation works when the group is not directly targeted by the government reprisals but when the constituent population is instead. The group needs government reprisals

against the population to turn them to the group's cause. Reprisals against the group itself could pose an existential threat (Kydd and Walter, 2006).

Provocation is most likely to work in a situation in which the government does not have the means to respond selectively. A state with less sophisticated internal intelligence systems will have fewer means to respond so selectively and so is more likely to respond in the desired heavy-handed manner (Blankenship, 2018). However, too heavy handed a response can also be detrimental to a group as it could destroy the group's constituent population.

Low casualty attacks are expected. This is because it would be less costly in terms of resources to the group conducting the attacks, and low casualty attacks triggering a heavy-handed state response better serve to exemplify the disproportionate state response. Kydd and Walter explain that the aim of a provocation campaign is to 'persuade the domestic audience that the target of attacks is evil and untrustworthy and must be vigorously resisted'. This 'evil' would be best illustrated by a response far more severe than the triggering incident. Should low casualty attacks not be sufficient then it is expected that there will be escalation as mass casualty attacks would be harder for a state to ignore (Blankenship, 2018).

Targets are difficult to predict. Abrahms (2011) explains that governments can be less likely to compromise and more likely to strike out against a group when civilians are targeted which would play into a provocation strategy. However, in an authoritarian regime it is possible that a government would be less likely to respond to attacks against the civilian population as they are not held directly accountable (unlike in democracies, in theory at least) so there is less incentive for them to respond. Instead, in an authoritarian regime it is possible that attacks would be focused against governmental targets to force a response (Nilsson, 2018). Groups also need to be wary of not inflicting damage against their constituent population which is an additional complication. It is expected that a group will strike *either* hard or soft targets depending on circumstance. Soft targets are expected to be struck in democratic states or states with the terrorist group's constituent population separated from the area of operations. Hard targets are expected in areas of mixed populations and/or authoritarian regimes.

It is expected that unsophisticated weapons would not be sufficient to provoke a government response. A government would be able to endure low complexity attacks (e.g. knife attacks) far more easily than it might when terrorist groups use more advanced weaponry. A group that uses the more advanced weapons would make itself a clearer threat to the government in question and be more likely to provoke them into a heavy-handed response. Additionally, sophisticated weapons provide opportunity to demonstrate threat without having to inflict mass casualties.

From this, the following hypotheses are established:

1. Casualties are expected to start low but can escalate.
2. Groups will primarily attack *either* hard or soft targets.
3. Weapon selection is expected to be sophisticated.

Intimidation

Intimidation is explained by Kydd and Walter as working by 'demonstrating that the terrorists have the power to punish whoever disobeys them, and that the government is powerless to stop them' (p.66). Intimidation is employed when groups seek to 'overthrow a government in power or gain social control over a given population' (p.66). I also add the slight clarification that it is not just gaining social control over a population, but it can also be employed to maintain a degree of control over said population. For example, as a group's territory comes under threat, they might be willing to use violence to ensure that the population does not disobey or defect.

Service provision can be an important element of this strategy. Intimidation does often involve a carrot and stick approach. Not only is the population kept in line through violence and fear but it can also be persuaded to stay onside by providing services that the government fails to deliver. IS became notorious for the treatment of people in the territory that it controlled in the 2010s and the methods it used to maintain control over that population (Cheterian, 2015). However, it also became evident that the group was governing, with some degree of effectiveness, this population and providing necessary services to the population such as security, food, and utilities (Revkin, 2021).

In an effective intimidation strategy, it is expected that violence would be selective but violence in intimidation campaigns has the possibility of escalating to massacres (Kalyvas, 1999; Feldmann, 2018). As discussed by Kydd and Walter, a good intimidation strategy should demonstrate a terrorist group's ability to punish those who disobey them and support the government. More effective social control would be indicated by only targeting those who disobey the terrorist group, and not targeting those who are compliant – this would indicate, in its most developed form, effective governance over a population by a terrorist group. Selective and indiscriminate attacks can have been assessed in previous research based on being low or high casualty evets (e.g. Kurtulus, 2011). Consequently, it is expected that an intimidation campaign would be mostly composed of low-level casualty attacks but that larger scale attacks might occur.

In an intimidation strategy which has not escalated, one would expect to see low levels of intended casualties in attacks. Again, in an effective campaign, a terrorist group will be able to punish only those who disobey the group and not harm those who are compliant – disincentivising misbehaviour and encouraging compliant behaviour. Beyond it being a means to coerce compliance, it can also serve as a means of showing the group is more suited to govern than the ineffective state (Johnson, 2013).

Determining whether the targets of an intimidation campaign are likely to be hard or soft is difficult. While it might be expected that an effective intimidation campaign would focus on targeting individuals who disobey the group, the hardness of these targets can vary. This would include government representatives or those who side the government. One would expect to see government representatives being targeted who could be hard targets, have additional security and protection. However, it is also possible that other individuals to be targeted might not be hardened – so a mix of hard and soft targets is

possible. Kydd and Walter explain how an intimidation campaign functions: 'By targeting the government's more visible agents and supporters, such as mayors, police, prosecutors, and pro-regime citizens, terrorist organizations demonstrate that they have the ability to hurt their opponents and that the government is too weak to punish the terrorists or protect future victims' (p.66).

Firearms are the most effective weapon for social control as these weapons require people to be physically present to commit acts of violence which allows them to be selective as well as demonstrating a group's ability to deploy people and police them in person (Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019). Explosives can also be used for social control. A group is expected to still be able to showcase its ability to selectively punish individuals through targeted attacks with explosives. For example, the PIRA's use of car bombs to assassinate individuals, such as prominent loyalist John McMichael (Dillon, 1999), demonstrate the ability of explosives to be used in a targeted way. A degree of sophistication is required in the group's weapon selection to showcase the ability to punish selectively and impose their will. Similarly, the Tamil Tigers used suicide bombings as a means of killing specific individuals (Kumar, 2005).

From this, the following hypotheses are established:

1. Casualties are expected to be low but can escalate.
2. Target selection is expected to be a mix of hard and soft.
3. Weapons selection is expected to be sophisticated.

Conclusion

This chapter has tied together the weapon selection literature with Kydd and Walter's understanding of terrorist strategy to demonstrate the different factors at play in terms of strategic decision making for terrorist groups. Each strategy of terrorism has different goals and audiences and consequently will have different requirements in terms of the types of violence required to conduct such a campaign. How terrorist strategy impacts types of violence remains an under explored topic, but this relationship is important to advance our understanding of how terrorist groups conduct their campaigns. Establishing how strategy may shape terrorist group decisions on types of violence selection can lead to the development of more effective policies to counter these groups.

Moving forward, the following chapters will demonstrate how the theory developed in this chapter applies to a diverse range of terrorist groups. Each empirical chapter will focus on one strategy of terrorism, exploring both the patterns of types of violence and the reasoning behind these patterns. The empirical chapters will look at this theoretical model in the context of modern terrorism, examining terrorist campaigns from 1970 onwards using both documents and data from the GTD. In depth cases studies will explore how this theory set out here is observed in the "real world".

4. Methodology

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology of my research. I will begin by reiterating my research questions. Then I will clearly explain my approach to my research being positivist in outlook and its relevance to my research. Subsequently, I will discuss my case selection before leading into a detailed look at how I use sequential mixed methods to examine the case studies. I will explore the reasons for selecting these methods, as well as the limitations imposed by this selection.

In total, I examined ten case studies in the empirical chapters, two for each of Kydd and Walter's strategies of terrorism. The case selection process took two key factors into account to increase confidence in the generalisability of my findings. First, I selected typical, or representative, cases from the larger population for each strategy. Second, I ensured that the two selected cases for each strategy differed significantly along a host of factors that might also explain the link between terrorist strategy and types of violence (e.g. geography, time, ideology) (Seawright and Gerring, 2008).

Case selection is decided across strategies and within them. Across strategies I employ a most typical case selection, and within strategies I endeavour to select cases which are significantly different from each other while still being typical of their strategy.

I leveraged a sequential mixed methods approach to analyse each case study. This involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). For each case study, the quantitative aspect is the first employed, and it is used to identify the patterns of violence employed. The qualitative element is the second stage and its purpose is to explore how strategy influenced the decision to adopt certain types of violence.

Finally, I will examine the ethical questions posed by this research, and how they were addressed before moving on to look at the wider difficulties associated with conducting this research,

Research Framework

The aim of this thesis is to determine which types of violence are associated with different strategies of terrorism, and to explore why this is the case. This research draws on the tradition of treating terrorist groups as rational actors (Shughart, 2011; Hepworth, 2013), it is assumed that it is a conscious decision by a group to employ a specific type of violence in pursuit of its goals, as part of a particular strategy.

To reiterate, the framework for examining terrorist strategy is the model put forward by Kydd and Walter (2006) which outlines the five strategies of terrorism. Types of violence are understood as level of intended casualties, weapon selection, and the targets of the attack.

There is no consensus that these three types of violence form the basic elements of a terrorist attack. However, as mentioned in the introduction, variation in target selection

(e.g. Stanton, 2013; McCartan et al, 2008), weapon selection (e.g. Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019; Marone, 2021), and casualty count (e.g. Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007; Ganor, 2004) are three commonly researched elements of attacks throughout the literature. In selecting the types of violence, it was key that I ensured I chose ones with access to sufficient data for my cases (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). These three types of violence can be found in the GTD which includes data for almost every attack for weapons used, targets struck, numbers killed and injured. Types of violence have been selected based on their recurrence in the relevant literature and the pragmatic reasons of data availability. These types of violence are considered the core types of violence in this research. Other types of violence (e.g. concerning kidnapping) may be considered peripheral as they are not the focus of this work.

My research questions can be broken down as follows: in each strategy, what trends are present in terms of level of intended casualties of attacks, what type of weapons were employed to carry out these attacks, and what were the target of the attacks? And why would a terrorist group deliberately select these? Having two research questions allowed me to keep my workload at a manageable level (White, 2017), especially when factoring in how these will be answered through my methods.

Paradigm

I adopt a positivist approach given my aim to identify empirical truth in an objective reality. Positivism is a prevalent approach to the field of terrorism studies, although it is difficult to find authors who explicitly state that their approach is indeed positivist. Heavily quantitative papers in the field can be seen as positivist based on their choice of methods (Nicholson, 1996). Treating actors as rational actors relates to a positivist approach, with Crenshaw (1990) explaining 'terrorism may follow logical processes that can be discovered and explained' (p. 7) and that terrorist group violence is 'a wilful choice made by an organization for political and strategic reasons' (pp.7-8). Critical terrorism scholars highlight the dominance of positivism in orthodox terrorism studies (e.g., Jackson, 2012; Milders, 2017), often scholars positioning themselves differently (e.g. Gunning and Jackson, 2011; Lee, 2009).

International relations and the social sciences have largely used positivism as their approach (Smith, 1996; Blaikie, 2007). The fields have sought same rigorous standards of "conventional" sciences. While some question it as an approach (e.g. Neufeld, 1995; Diez and Steans, 2005), and some who have adopted a variety of approaches (Linklater, 1996), it is still at the core of much of the research being conducted in the field and maintains its validity as an approach. A positivist approach is required for my research as the questions I seek to answer in this research involve the use of objective and measurable data for the quantitative aspect, and also to provide an objective answer to explaining the adoption of types of violence.

Case Selection

For the basis of my research, I selected two case studies for each of Kydd and Walter's 5 strategies of terrorism (2006), giving me a total of ten case studies. Each case is the use

of a particular strategy, in a particular area, during a particular period of time, as mentioned previously. A case could be considered to be a particular campaign.

It should be noted here that all of the campaigns examined do not claim to examine the entire history of the group during the time period presented. The analysis focuses on the terrorist acts carried out by groups during that period and focuses less on other aspects of the groups' behaviour such as non-politically motivated crime, peaceful efforts for political change, relationships with other actors, or activities beyond the geographical scope. This is not to say it entirely excludes these either, they are included when relevant to the groups' activities as important context. In summary, these case studies are not group histories but are focused analyses of particular campaigns of terrorist violence.

Cases are selected across chapters and also within chapters to increase generalisability. I selected cases for each of the strategies, and then within each strategy (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). Across strategies, I opted to select typical case studies – these are cases effectively representative of the strategy in question, cases that would uncontroversially be labelled as their respective strategies in use (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). For each strategy, I strive to present two different case studies within the confines of the exclusion/inclusion criteria and the requirement that they be typical cases for their strategy. The two cases within each case were attempted to be different based on a number of key factors which could influence observed outcomes – geography, ideology, date.

Findley and Young (2012) highlight the issue of generalisability when conducting research on terrorist groups in their examination of outbidding and its tendency to focus primarily on groups in Israel/Palestine. Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007) discuss the issues around the generalisation of case studies, examining observations that case studies can be specific to themselves but can also have broader applicability (e.g. Wolcott, 1995; Kluckhon and Murray, 1948) and highlighting Yin's (1994) assertion that the use of multiple case studies can address issues of generalisability.

The cutoff date for my cases is 1970 as that is the cutoff point for the GTD data. This means that I do not include any campaigns that started before 1970 even if they then carried on through to the 1970s. A campaign beginning in 1970 is acceptable and included as all the attacks of the campaign are recorded. A group that was formed prior to 1970 and carried out attacks prior to 1970 is eligible for selection if the campaign being examined occurs after 1970.

In relation to the inclusion and exclusion of potential cases, there were criteria to filter these. For a case study to be considered for selection there also must be enough data available on the potential groups. The minimum data requirement I chose as the first basis for selection is 50 incidents in the GTD. Having a dataset of this size for each group allows me to have a credible sample size for the basic quantitative element of my research (Babbie, 2005). A minimum amount of 50 incidents also allowed me to cast a relatively wide net when it came to selecting groups, if the minimum number of incidents required were to be higher then I would have risked having an overly

exclusionary selection policy. The sample size of 50 was selected because there is an understanding that only a portion of those will be part of the specific campaign to be examined for each group, and after excluding other incidents I would have a sufficient amount of data. That is to say a group may have carried out 50 attacks across its lifetime and all strategies it adopted, so only a portion of those fifty will constitute the particular strategy being examined. While the quantitative element of this research is descriptive, this does not negate the need for a number of events from which to draw patterns. This segment of a minimum of 50 incidents was still sufficient to work with and generated a possible list of 91 groups to examine across the five strategies. Using 50 attacks as the cutoff point also had the practical benefit of creating a shortlist of a manageable size for me to work through. A lower threshold may have left me with too many groups to sort through. A higher threshold would have been unnecessary and risked excluding too many groups.

These 91 possible groups were whittled down further based on their use of strategy. The different strategies used by each group were determined. This also enabled any groups who did not conform to the definition of terrorism used in this research to be excluded. In order for a use of a strategy to qualify for inclusion, the strategy being employed by the group must be the only strategy that it is conducting in that time period and geography. Any campaigns with strategies overlapping geographically and temporally are not considered. Kydd and Walter's article (2006) does allow for groups to employ more than one strategy simultaneously. I selected cases for which the observed group was only employing one strategy in the time period and location studied. This helped to reduce the influence of confounding factors, including a mixed strategy. From the remaining cases, those selected for inclusion were done on the basis of being typical cases across the five strategies. The two within each strategy were selected to differ on key factors to increase the generalisability of the work, as explained above (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). To determine which strategy, and if only one strategy, was being employed I researched the groups to a degree which gave me an overview of their campaigns. Once selected as possible case studies, they were examined in greater detail. If, on the second examination with more in-depth research, they were found to not be typical cases or be using multiple strategies they were excluded.

The table below provides an overview of the cases in this thesis:

Strategy	**Group**	**Location**	**Years**	**Ideology**	**Outcome goal**
Spoiling	Real IRA (RIRA)	Northern Ireland	1997-2012	Irish Republicanism	Northern Irish unification with Republic of Ireland
	Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)	Israel/Palestine	1993-1999	Islamism	Destruction of Israeli state

Outbidding	Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA)	Peru	1987-1997	Communism	Communist state in Peru
	Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA)	Spain	1976-1982	Nationalism	Basque Independence
Attrition	Chechen rebels	Russia (excluding Chechnya)	1999-2006	Nationalism/Islamism	Chechen Independence
	Armed Islamic Group (GIA)	France	1994-1996	Islamism	Political power in Algeria
Provocation	Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)	Kosovo	1996-1998	Nationalism	Independence from Serbia
	Red Army Faction (RAF)	West Germany	1970-1972	Communism	Communist revolution in Germany
Intimidation	Taliban	Helmand and Kandahar provinces (Afghanistan)	2003-2006	Islamism/Nationalism	Return to power in Afghanistan
	Boko Haram	Borno State (Nigeria)	2010-2014	Islamism	Establish Nigerian Islamic State

(Figure 4.1, Cases for terrorist group strategies)

Methods

The methods I employed are comparative analysis of case studies using a sequential mixed methods approach (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). I adopted a combination of basic quantitative methods to develop an overview of the patterns of violence in each case being examined, and analysed documents from and about the terrorist group in question in order to explain these patterns. Quantitative analysis/data identified patterns. Qualitative data shed light on the reasons for those trends. The methods selected are also appropriate to use with a positivist approach.

For each one of Kydd and Walter's strategies of terrorism, a comparative analysis of two case studies was conducted, requiring the use of 10 case studies overall. A case, in this research, consisted of one use of a terrorist strategy over a given period of time in a specified location. For example, the Taliban would not constitute a case but the intimidation strategy employed by the Taliban in Southern Afghanistan (Helmand and Kandahar) between the years of 2003 and 2006 would be. This would be composed of

all the attacks they conducted during that period as part of that strategy. Case selection is discussed in its own section of this chapter where this will be discussed in greater depth.

The quantitative element of my research sought to discover and highlight the patterns of terrorist violence. Burnham et al explain succinctly that the value of 'descriptive statistics is that they offer a powerful and economical way of measuring, analysing and presenting political phenomena' (2008, p. 138). This aspect of descriptive statistics is sufficient for the first research question. The statistics used throughout the thesis, drawn from the GTD, are not used on their own to explain terrorist behaviour. They are used to discover and present the activities of the groups concerned. The explanatory element of the work involves qualitative research.

One significant aspect of the methods I have chosen is that they do not require me to travel. I began this PhD research during the Covid-19 pandemic which has caused research to be disrupted as travel has been inadvisable or simply not possible. Consequently, fieldwork overseas and in person interviews have not been able to be conducted, as well as restrictions on even more basic elements of research such as visiting libraries. As such, it was important for me to devise a means of conducting research with an awareness of limiting potential disruption from Covid, a goal which my selected methods achieve.

Quantitative Data

The source of data for the quantitative element of my research is the University of Maryland's Global Terrorism Database (GTD) (START, 2021). The GTD is one of the largest freely available databases for the study of terrorism, recording a wide range of data on terrorist incidents since 1970. Included in the data for each attack is the perpetrator (when known), the location details, the weapons used, the victim/target information, number of fatalities, and number of injuries. These are the elements which are important in determining the patterns of violence in relation to my research question. There is plenty of other data available too, for example concerning ransoms for kidnapping, which is not relevant to my research. Using all of the attacks in each terrorist strategy allowed me to create an adequate sample size with which to work. This was enough data from which descriptive inferences could be drawn.

The GTD contains over 200,000 terrorist incidents but can be used with relative ease. The GTD is used frequently in research on terrorism (e.g. Young and Dugan, (2014); Webb and Cutter, (2009); Abrahms, Ward, and Kennedy, (2018)). The purpose of highlighting its prevalence in the field is to demonstrate its established recognition as a reliable source for data on terrorist incidents. Given the highlighted qualities of the GTD, it was a suitable source of data. By using pre-gathered data I can eliminate my bias as a possible element in data collection and operationalisation of concepts. The wide use of the GTD enables my research to be comparable across a wide range of studies.

The understanding of terrorism used by the GTD is: 'In the absence of a universally accepted definition of terrorism, the GTD uses several coded criteria to cover key

characteristics of terrorism through a combination of inclusiveness and filtering. The goal is to have a dataset that is useful to as many interested users as possible' (START, 2021). This is important to highlight because a consistent understanding of terrorism is required throughout my research. And this approach from the GTD allows the narrower definition of terrorism I have adopted to still be employed as it sits within the confines of the broader understanding used by the GTD.

I used the GTD to gather the relevant data to understand types of violence on all the attacks carried out as part of the particular campaign being examined as part of that case study. For casualty numbers, I required both the number of fatalities and injuries. Combining these two elements gives me a more accurate number of the intended destruction of an attack, even if it was not carried out perfectly. For example, an attack which involved firing an automatic weapon indiscriminately into a crowd might only result in a few deaths but numerous injuries. It is fair to assume here that the intention was to inflict a large number of deaths. Furthermore, perpetrator injuries or deaths are excluded from the casualty count as they are not *victims* of an attack.

This research includes discussion of mass casualty attacks. Mass casualty attacks are understood as any attack resulting in 10 or more casualties (as used by Kim et al., 2020). Determining whether an entire campaign was a mass casualty campaign or not has a slightly different threshold. This is because, even in a mass casualty campaign, not every attack will be a mass casualty event, it just matters that the overall pattern is one of mass casualties.

This means that I look at an average casualty account across the entire campaign. An average casualty count of five or more is the requirement for a campaign to be considered as being a high casualty campaign. This figure is lower than the threshold for a single mass casualty attack because it is expected that, even in a mass casualty campaign, there will be a number of attacks that don't inflict mass casualties either by design or a lack of total success. Most of the groups have an average casualty count across their campaigns comfortably distant from this threshold, either significantly under or above it. Only the Taliban's average of 5.3 casualties per attack is close to the threshold. Second closest is the Red Army Faction with an average of 6.125. Given the expectation in a provocation campaign for low casualties, or escalation from low to high casualties, the impact of a different threshold is reduced.

There are two points to be specified on mass casualties. Firstly, as discussed in the theory chapter, a campaign can move from high to low casualties or vice versa. Secondly, one major attack can massively increase the average casualty count of a campaign giving a different impression of its conduct – where this occurs it is highlighted and discussed.

The data for understanding and determining *weapon selection* taken from the GTD is quite straightforward. The GTD provides data on *Weapon Type* and *Weapon Subtype* – so, for instance, the weapon type might be a *firearm* and the subtype would be *handgun,* which provides more detailed information. It also allows numerous weapon types and subtypes to be recorded in the event that numerous weapons were employed in an

attack. Weapon selection in this thesis aims to determine whether groups employed sophisticated weapons or unsophisticated weapons. The understanding of what is or is not sophisticated can vary between each campaign as different geographies, at different times, have factors which influence the ease of acquisition of weapons. The weapon's ease of use also factors into this determination. While this makes individual weapon types incomparable across different campaigns, the focus of comparison is on the sophistication of the weapons used in a particular context. Using sophistication enables me to distil weapon types from different contexts into a metric which can be more adequately compared to other contexts.

Ease of acquisition explores how difficult it is for a group to acquire or build the weapon used. In certain geographies, weapons may be easier to acquire than in others due to legal constraints, policing, or availability. For example, a semi-automatic weapon may be straightforward to acquire in the United States but more difficult to acquire in the UK. Ease of use reflects the level of expertise required to operate a weapon, such as the training needed to use it successfully or knowledge to build it.

To illustrate, it is expected that a knife in most campaigns would be considered a basic weapon. A knife is generally easy to acquire and can be used to kill or injure with little training. On the other end of the spectrum, a nuclear bomb would almost always be a sophisticated weapon as it would be very difficult for a terrorist group to acquire and requires significant technical expertise to use.

Target selection, similar to weapon selection, is coded by the GTD as *Target/Victim type* and *subtype.* Again, this identifies broadly what the target of an attack is, and then provides more specific information in the subtype. For example, the target/victim type could be *military*, and the subtype would be *military recruiting station/academy.* Information is provided in each attack on up to three target types and subtypes. The GTD, however, does not specify whether these are hard or soft targets. My work would be improved by a simple designation of each attack as to whether the target was hard or soft. To resolve this, it made most sense for me to code each target subtype as either hard or soft. The coding is outlined in the paragraph below.

Hardness and softness of target is not simply determined by being a civilian or military target, but takes into account other factors such as ease of access and overall protection. For example, an airport would be considered a hard target because of the high degree of security even though it is a civilian entity (Hastings and Chan, 2013). In order to determine whether a campaign as a whole was primarily soft or hard, or composed of mixed targets the threshold of two thirds was used. That is to say that in a campaign where 66.7% of attacks or more were against either hard or soft targets then the campaign would be determined to be focusing on that target. Below that threshold and the campaign is considered to have mixed targeting. From the GTD's target categories, those considered soft were: business, abortion related, educational institution, food or water supply, journalists & media, maritime, NGO, other, private citizens & property, religious figures/institutions, telecommunications, tourists, transportation (other than aviation), utilities. Hard targets were: government (general), police, military, airports & aircraft, government (diplomatic), terrorists/non-state militias, violent political parties.

'Unknown' in the GTD was marked as unknown in this research as well. Not all of these target types occur in the research, for example there are no abortion targets in the case studies. This is a complete list of all the target types used in the GTD.

The GTD employs a rigorous process for collecting data, drawing on hundreds of thousands of media articles each day. Very briefly summarised; non relevant articles are filtered out automatically by software, the remaining articles are further refined, duplicates removed, and then the remaining articles relating to potential terrorist incidents are manually reviewed by humans in the GTD team to be further researched for the required information and are added to the database. The GTD requires at least one 'high-quality source' to report an incident for it to be added to the database to ensure reliability. This can result in a potential under recording of incidents in certain geographical areas but the incidents that are reported are known to be reliably recorded (START, 2021, GTD Codebook, page 10). There are numerous issues associated with the GTD, and other event-based databases, which stem from this requirement. These include government control of or censorship of media and reporting in a language the researchers do not have expertise in (LaFree and Dugan, 2012). However, all datasets have limitations and the GTD's wide use in high quality research establishes it as trustworthy (e.g. Young and Dugan, 2014; Webb and Cutter, 2009).

Qualitative Data

The documents analysed are primary sources from the organisations in question, the groups own output – preferably internal documents but also documents that they have distributed. The *Green Book* is an example of a potentially useful type of document. It was used by the IRA and served as a training manual but also explained in a relatively straightforward manner what the group's strategy and aims were (Drake, 2012). Although it should be noted that this does not perfectly explain the violence as regional variation did occur. Nonetheless, it is sufficient for illustrative purposes. At times, distinguishing between the two can be difficult, especially in the age of the internet, as terrorist group recruitment material, training and instructional material, and ingroup communication have become more available online (Conway, 2005).

As discussed further down, I will be using secondary replications of primary sources for my research rather than directly accessing the primary sources. Documents for the research were found through a number of sources – online archives, journalistic/media material, collections compiled by others, and documents which had been previously used in other research. An example of an online archive used would be CeDeMA (2024), a repository for documents from Latin American groups which I used when examining MRTA. Articles reporting on terrorist activity and conveying statements from groups fall under the category of journalistic material. An example of this is the use of French newspapers when examining the GIA. Skare's book *History of Palestinian Islamic Jihad* (2021) is a collection of the group's output I used when researching their activities. And Johnson's (2007) research on night letters in Afghanistan is an example of collecting data from sources that were used in other research. These sources enabled me to gather the groups' own words to attempt to explain strategic decision making.

The decision to analyse documentary evidence stems from the need to explain the patterns found using the GTD data. The quantitative research on its own is not capable of exploring this aspect of the research to a satisfactory degree (Morgan, 2014). The use of documents allowed me to gather richer data, more clearly explaining the deliberate decisions made or the reasoning behind decisions than one could infer through quantitative methods (May, 2001). The use of documentary analysis in case studies is well established, including its use alongside other sources of data (Hancock et al, 2021). Of course, one cannot rely on a terrorist group, or any political entity for that matter, to provide entirely factually reliable information in its communiqués. Depending on the target audience of a particular document, one can expect varying degrees of reliability. For example, it is likely that documents for purely internal use among leaders of the group would be more reliable than documents produced simply for their propaganda value. This is not an issue of positionality, but of groups conveying what they perceive to be appropriate information. Internal documents are not necessarily perfectly reliable in terms of representing the truth of the situation, but are likely to be more so than propaganda. These are the type of issues I had to bear in mind when analysing these documents (Mason, 1996). The situation in reality is unlikely to be quite so binary, and documents could exist on a spectrum of reliability but this illustrates the variation possible. Factually unreliable documents are not without value. Terrorist propaganda or output does not have to be accurate to be reliable if one's research had a different focus to my own (e.g. Altier et al., 2012).

For older and now inactive terrorist groups, sourcing these documents can be somewhat easier and less risky than for modern and currently active groups. This is because their output could potentially be seen as historical documents rather than an ongoing security issue, and because there has simply been more time for the groups to be studied so there will be more of their documents available to study. For instance, Re (2020) was able to gather 181 of the Red Brigade's communiqués between 1970-1988 from easy-to-access sources.

For contemporary groups, or groups that have been active more recently, sourcing these documents is not always so straightforward. As mentioned above, there are security concerns around the gathering of these documents. But it is possible to find primary documents in "safe" places. For example, one potential source of primary documents from jihadi groups is Aaron Zelin's *Jihadology* (Zelin, 2021). This website is an excellent collection of various primary documents from Jihadi groups, and is very useful because Zelin has collected these documents and put them in one place making it easy for a researcher to find and use without the risks associated with searching these documents out in "the wild". The benefits of this are discussed further in the ethics section of this chapter.

Limitations

My approach is not without limitations. While employing the use of case studies does allow me to have a great richness of data, it could be argued that this is at the expense of generalisability. A related issue is the problem of generalisability of case study-based research is the representativeness of the case studies selected. In large-N quantitative

studies, representativeness can be achieved through a large enough random sampling of a given population (Babb, 2012), however with in depth case studies this is simply not possible. But the use of comparative case studies, even small-N, does allow the issue to be confronted (Kacowicz, 2004). The use of typical cases across strategies enables cases representative of the strategy to be selected. Within strategies, the selection of different groups (or groups that differ on as many elements other than terrorist strategy as possible) enables the findings to be generalisable (Seawright and Gerring, 2008).

To avoid another potential criticism directed towards the use of case studies, the possibility of a lack of rigour on the researcher's part, I adopt advice put forward by Schoch (2019). Schoch explains that it is vital to be 'constantly aware of your own feelings, opinions, and prejudices, and make sure you are open to data and evidence that might not fit your idea of what you might find' (p.256). Yin explains the issue of a lack of rigour: 'too many times, a case study researcher has been sloppy, has not followed systematic procedures, or has allowed equivocal evidence to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions' (2014, pp.19-20). One possible explanation put forward as to why this is the case is the relative lack of strict procedures when carrying out case study research when compared to other methods. Whatever the cause may be, it is essential for the researcher to have a strong sense of discipline to avoid falling into the traps described above. This is an element of research covered by George and Bennet's (2005) structured, focused comparison method. This method is adopted as it enables the same "structure" of research to be used across cases – i.e. in all cases I will be seeking answers to the same key questions. It is focused 'in that it deals only with certain aspects of the historical cases examined' (p. 71). I will not be looking beyond the scope of focus for my case studies. This approach guides consistency, discipline, and rigour across the cases in this thesis.

Related to the potential lack of rigour is the potential lack of reflexivity. An unreflexive researcher may allow bias to influence their work, or not take actions to mitigate this, they may exclude certain data which could potentially lead to different findings than those which are expected.

A limitation of quantitative research, on its own at least, is the difficulty in analysing complex realities and social dynamics of a particular situation (Jerrim and de Vries, 2017). I would have found it difficult, had I adopted a solely quantitative approach in my research, to adequately explain the reasoning and strategic decision making behind the patterns identified. There are quantitative methods that can be used to infer causation (Franzese, 2020). However, when using statistical methods like these there is a demand for a large sample size which I cannot guarantee (George and Bennett, 2005). This sample size would be larger than required for descriptive statistics.

A potential issue was the reliability of documents in terms of their ability to dependably convey strategic decision making given variation in audience and reasons for production. Documents released to the press could perhaps be considered less ideal for my research than internal documents that have surfaced. However, as terrorism is treated as fundamentally communicative, it can be expected that the groups' statements align

with their violence – at least when they perceive their violence to be successful. The strategies of spoiling, outbidding, attrition, and intimidation all aim to communicate directly with an audience. The statements made relating to violence during these campaigns recommunicate the groups' messages which should enable them to be more easily analysed. Provocation is more complicated. As provocation aims to bring about reprisals on a group's constituent population they cannot explicitly state this is their goal. However, there are still indicators of this intent in the output, such as highlighting the disproportionate response of the government to the group's own "legitimate" violence.

Given that my research includes terrorist groups from around the world, and I examined documents from these groups, they were not all originally in English. And, given my limited proficiency in foreign languages, I was unable to translate them from their original language to English myself. This meant that I will was relying on translations conducted by someone else for those documents, which did raise some methodological concerns. I took several steps to mitigate these concerns.

Firstly, I ensured that the translations were accurate linguistically. There are discrepancies between different translations of the same document, or nuances which are lost in translation (both are issues which will be discussed shortly). But before looking at these concerns, I needed to be confident that the translations I used were of a high enough quality. I could not use translations that were deliberately misleading, i.e. those which have been translated in a manner to suit a particular political or narrative goal. As an example, Baker (2010) argues that some of the translations undertaken by Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) are conducted in such a way as to reflect a particular political stance. None of the sources I use give me reason to suspect that they have been deliberately mistranslated or translated in such a way as to distort their content.

In some cases, the documents that I found were not available in English, either as pre-translated or English being the original language of the document. When this occurred, I relied on computer translations. To ensure the accuracy of the translations, I verified a sample of the computer translations with an individual fluent in the language of interest.

Another possible issue when working with translated documents is finding conflicting translations of the same document. Schäffner (2007) discusses issues around the translations of political texts and uses the example of Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin from 1971, whose text was originally in English, French, and Russian. However, there existed two German versions of the text – one for East Germany and one for the West which contained similar but slightly different wording which conveyed slightly (but importantly) different meanings. Fortunately, this was not an issue which presented itself in the documents collected as part of my research. Being aware of it as a potential problem for political documents enabled me to be prepared for it, look out for it in my documents being analysed, and ultimately to be confident in it not being a significant factor in my research.

The meaning of a document may not always be clear if it uses culturally specific language, requires an understanding of particular historical context, or particular terms have numerous possible meanings in English. Blight (2005) addresses this in relation to translating the New Testament of the Bible and the need for clarification and explanation of background information. This is not directly linked to my research's subject matter but illustrates the importance of this issue in translation. Throughout my research I use the translator's footnotes, or translator's explanations when it is available and required.

In the end, translations proved to be much less of an issue than I had initially anticipated. I avoided selecting any sources that would give me concern over the reliability of their translations. For example, when using Johnson's collected Taliban letters I can rely on them being accurately translated as they have already been used in his published research. The research carried out by Johnson is widely cited and used (e.g. Terpstra, 2020; Thruelsen, 2010). He also has a significant body of research on the Taliban in Afghanistan (Naval Postgraduate School, 2021) to suggest expertise.

Ethics

To carry out this research, I needed to receive the clearance from the School Research Ethics Committee. This was granted but required me to address in detail two points: safely accessing documents and researcher safety. These are discussed below.

Sourcing documents is a potential concern. If one directly sources the documents from the organisation being examined then this could pose some significant ethical difficulties concerning accessing sensitive websites. Additionally, the secrecy of many terrorist groups could also make finding the right documents a difficult task. Documents were sourced from parties which had already collected them.

Another area of concern is the potential distribution of terrorist material or propaganda through academia, which Zelin (2021) addresses in relation to his website *Jihadology,* but the concerns are applicable across academia. One way to avoid this is to only use documents from non-active terrorist groups but this was not possible with my research. And, even if it were, this would be no guarantee that the spread of the messages within would not still have a receptive audience. See, for example, how material from inactive groups or individuals involved in American far right terrorism continue to influence the movement today (Graham, 2021).

However, ensuring the safety of the researcher is also vital when researching terrorism, even online. (Conway, 2021) In this regard, there are a few issues to consider; physical danger, virtual danger, reputational danger, psychological danger. Physical danger is the threat of injury or death, which is a possibility to be aware of in this field. Just because the research is being conducted online does not necessarily mean that the risks involved will stay online (Conway, 2021). In my research, physical risk from groups was not a strong threat for myself as I did not interact with members of the group, and this was avoided further by not sourcing documents directly from the groups in question.

Another issue raised concerning the wellbeing of the researcher is the psychological impact of constant exposure to extremist material. More commonly seen in those who are continually exposed to violent propaganda this can eventually have a severe psychological impact on the researcher (Morrison, Silke, and Bont, 2021). While my research is not so focused on terrorist group propaganda or imagery, it did still involve exposure to ideas and statements which have the potential to be uncomfortable or distressing to some degree over time. There are a few ways this can be combatted, or the impact reduced, such as emotionally distancing myself from the content of my work, deliberately taking a more removed position. Additionally, one can dilute the workload in the sense that one ought not to devote all their time to these materials but also conduct other parts of the research or other work alongside it. And finally, one can simply take a break from this work if it does start to feel overwhelming.

This chapter has explained how the research was carried out and the potential issues associated with this research. The literature review established the literature gap into which this thesis fits and the importance of filling that gap. The theory chapter develops the hypotheses to be tested in my work. With these foundations now in place, the next chapter will be the start of the five empirical chapters of this thesis.

5. Spoiling: Disturbing the Peace (Process)

Introduction

On 9th April 1995, a public bus carrying civilians and soldiers to the Israeli settlement of Kfar Darom was rammed by a vehicle which subsequently exploded. This was not an accident, but a suicide attack carried out as part of Palestinian Islamic Jihad's escalating spoiling campaign, a campaign to undermine the peace agreement between Israel and Palestine (UN, 1996). First, I will provide a brief overview of its function and intent. Following this, I will explore the two case studies chosen to identify and explain the types of violence present within this strategy. The case studies are the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA) in Northern Ireland between 1997 and 2012, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in Israel/Palestine from 1993 to 1999. Using data from the GTD and open-source documents available concerning these groups, I will first identify the patterns of violence within each case study and then examine why these types of violence have been selected. The cases selected for this strategy are both typical cases of spoiling. However, to increase generalisability, the two cases between themselves differ on certain key factors such as geography, time period, and ideology.

The aim of a spoiling strategy is to undermine negotiations or agreements between a government and moderates on the terrorist's side when the outcome of these would be unfavourable for the group (Kydd and Walter, 2006). This unfavourable outcome can take the form of falling short of the group's intended goals or leading to a situation in which support for the group would diminish. A spoiling strategy works by playing off the mistrust between the groups negotiating and aiming to communicate that those on the terrorist group's side cannot be trusted to implement or uphold a peace agreement.

Spoiling is employed to achieve a group's process goals so that it can subsequently pursue outcome goals. A group employs a spoiling strategy because a successfully implemented peace agreement could end the possibility of the final objective. A group that is seeking independence for its region, for instance, is not going to achieve this political goal through a spoiling strategy. However, undermining any peace agreements would create a situation in which a new campaign to achieve independence would be possible (Kydd and Walter, 2002).

A clarification of language used in this chapter is required here. When the term 'spoiler' is used, it does not mean to classify every action the group has ever taken as spoiling or that the sole purpose of the group is to spoil. Rather, it means that in the particular temporarily and geographically confined campaign being examined the groups are engaging in spoiling activity. As spoiling relates to process goals rather than outcome goals, a group is unlikely to solely exist as a spoiler – it engages in spoiling behaviour in order to secure its process goals so that it can then pursue its outcome goals, the group's overall political objective – for instance, independence.

When examining the RIRA, the research will be confining its focus geographically to Northern Ireland and not the rest of the United Kingdom nor the rest of the island of Ireland. When examining PIJ, the research will look at the Israel/Palestine region more

broadly. This difference is necessary for two reasons. Firstly, the RIRA's cause was separatist and the PIJ sought to claim the whole of Israel/Palestine so this context is important. Secondly, the physical barrier of the sea between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK makes separation of activities clearer while the geographical connectedness of Israel/Palestine makes them more difficult to view separately. The RIRA did carry out attacks in England during the period of study, but this is treated as a separate campaign due to the geography.

The hypotheses established in the theory chapter for the patterns of violence in a spoiling campaign can be summarised as the following:

1) For weapon selection, weapons are expected to start basic but can escalate. This is because in a situation with high levels of distrust, the only message to be communicated is that violence will continue. A basic weapon conveys this as effectively as a more complex weapon but for a cheaper resource cost.

2) For casualty numbers, the entry point is expected to be low level but can rise if disruption is not successful in early stages. Lower casualties are less resource costly than higher casualties so it becomes the cheaper option. However, when levels of trust between negotiating parties are higher, a higher casualty count may be required to destabilise negotiations and agreements.

3) For target selection, targets are expected to be soft. Again, it is expected that striking soft targets is less costly in terms of resources than striking hard targets but conveys the same message. It also has the potential effect of more directly communicating with the target audience.

Real IRA

Background

The Real IRA was a republican terrorist group active in Northern Ireland. The group came into existence in 1997 because of a split in the Provisional IRA over the decision to end their violence and engage with the Peace Process. Like its predecessor, the Real IRA aimed to unite Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland. Since 1997, the group was engaged in a spoiling campaign to undermine the peace process and the Good Friday Agreement (Tonge, 2014) that brought about an end to the Troubles, albeit with a pause in violent action between 1998 to 2000 (Dingley, 2001). This chapter will be examining the group from its formation in 1997 until 2012 at which point it is reported to have merged with other republican organisations (Morrison, 2016). The Real IRA sought to spoil the Northern Irish peace process because the agreements implemented fell short of the group's aim - full unification of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland. This is despite the relatively high level of support for the peace agreement (Reynolds, 1999; Hayes and McAllister, 2001). The group did not accept the existing

compromises made and sought to undo them. Concerning the peace process, in 2003 a representative of the group explained: ‘’we believe that the so called “peace process” is a misnomer and is grounded on a false premise that it is the road to a final settlement... The war was not fought for seats in Stormont, on Councils nor indeed policing boards’ (Okado-Gough and Melaugh, 2003). This indicates that the group may not have been willing to settle for the peace agreement and would continue to try and undermine it. Ultimately, the group was unsuccessful in its attempt to spoil (Trumbore, 2018).

The formation of the RIRA as a “new" group following the split from the PIRA led to them emerging into a political environment which immediately put them at odds with the British state. From the very inception of the group, it intended to undo the progress towards peace which had been made in Northern Ireland. But the group’s activities in Northern Ireland meant that it was conducting activities in a geography where its constituency population and its enemies were in close proximity. This context is important to understand factors interacting with strategy which can shape the conduct of campaigns.

While this campaign does cover the entire lifespan of the group in terms of time, it does not cover the entire group’s history. The case study focuses only on the terrorist activity of the group, which employed spoiling behaviour throughout this period, within the geographical confines of Northern Ireland. It does not look at the group’s wider history concerning its activities in the rest of the United Kingdom or in the Republic of Ireland. Also, given the definition of terrorism used in this thesis and in the GTD, does not examine the group’s other activities such as alleged involvement in organised crime with an economic rather than political motive. This also means that its relationship with rival and collaborative groups is not examined either as it is outside the confines of the campaign in question.

Activity

The constantly changing nature of republican terrorist groups in Northern Ireland can make them difficult to track (Whiting, 2015). The Real IRA’s transformation into the New IRA is not necessarily the demise of the group, it can also be seen as a new phase, but regardless of this the period of the group’s activity between 1998 and 2012 can be seen as one campaign and strategy of spoiling. The group did experience a change of leadership as the initial leader Michael McKevitt was arrested and a disagreement with the group while he was detained led to him leaving his position as the head of the organisation. The group continued with its same strategy to disrupt the peace process after the split, although there was a pause in significant activity (Dingley, 2001).

The RIRA’s rhetoric sought to discredit Republican groups complying with the peace process. Given that the stated aim for those on the republican side of the Troubles had been to separate Northern Ireland from the United Kingdom and unite it with the Republic of Ireland, the RIRA viewed Republican entities acting in accordance with the peace agreements to be falling short of the desired goals of the republican movement, referring to them as ’the quislings in Stormont’ (Melaugh, 2009). They went so far as to

threaten the lives of republicans who took up positions in the political establishment – notably Martin McGuinness (Melaugh, 2009).

The Omagh bombing is a key moment in the group's history, a car bombing that killed 29 civilians. The attack was such a disaster for the RIRA that it led to them to temporarily suspend their campaign. Two statements were put forward by the group in the days following the attack. The first statement initially sought to shift the blame to the authorities, justify carrying out the attack, and to explain that civilians were not the intended target of the attack (McKenna, 1998a). Shortly afterwards, the group issued a second statement: 'As a direct result of the Omagh tragedy and also in response to the appeals of Bertie Ahern [the Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister)] and others we are currently embarking on a process of consultation on our future direction' (McKenna, 1998b). The group also announced the suspension of their campaign. The political fallout of the event was so significant that not only did it fail to spoil the peace agreement, it even led to the Provisional IRA ruling out returning to violence (Frampton, 2009).

Dingley, writing in 2001 on the Omagh attack and its aftermath, raises the concern that the attack is being quickly forgotten. He observes that: 'beyond the victims of the bombing there is an awful sense of Who remembers Omagh? starting to emerge' (p. 463). As will become evident in the exploration and discussion of the RIRA's campaign following Omagh, the attempts to limit collateral damage and to strike particular targets, the RIRA remembers Omagh.

In statements and interviews, representatives of the RIRA have been reluctant to disclose their strategy, stating 'quite simply it would be self-defeating for any guerilla organization to discuss its future military strategy and we are not prepared to that' (Okado-gough and Melaugh, 2003). While a typical response of the group, it is possible to figure out their strategy. In the same interview, the group describes itself as 'Republicans who oppose the sell-out enshrined in the 1998 Agreement'. A strategy of spoiling can be indicated by examining what has been discussed about the Northern Ireland peace process. Numerous groups, including the RIRA, have sought to undermine the peace process. Dowling explains that since the Good Friday Agreement 'dissident republican (DR), and loyalist factions, as well as both their linkages to organised criminal groups, have continued to threaten Northern Ireland's delicate stability, and to undermine peace in the region' (p.774). Dowling also indicated these are deliberate actions threatening the peace process, writing: 'despite continued attempts to rock the boat, the relative peace established by the GFA [Good Friday Agreement] has now held for twenty-five years (p.774)'.

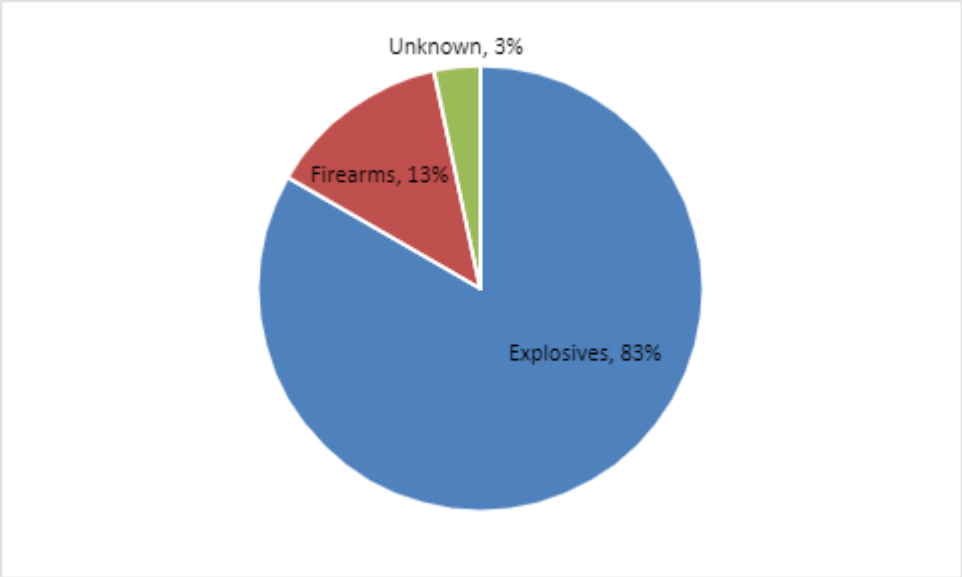
It is possible to rule out this campaign as being one of outbidding, although there are elements that at first glance do seem to be indicative of this. One example is an attempt to discredit the potential rival organisation, the Irish Republican Liberation Army (IRLA), describing them as 'not republicans and nothing but a bunch of criminals using a republican title' (Irish Republican News, 2007a). However, the group's willingness to cooperate at times with other violent republican groups (U.S. Department of State, 2018) shows that their priority is not consolidating support for themselves. Furthermore,

the group's statement that it is willing to cooperate on certain matters with the Continuity IRA and the Irish National Liberation Army (Irish Republican News, 2008) shows that this is the case. It would be unlikely for a group seeking to outbid another group for support to acknowledge willingness to cooperate. Having established the strategy being employed, its parameters, and its context – I now move on to the types of violence of the campaign.

Weapon Selection

Explosives were the most used weapon type. 83% of attacks used some form of explosive, ranging from pipe bombs to car bombs. Firearms accounted for 13% of the attacks provided in the GTD data. The benefit to a group carrying out a spoiling campaign and using explosives has been discussed, that the use of explosives allows a group to not risk losing personnel unnecessarily.

In the initial phase of the campaign, up to and including the Omagh attack, the group appeared to project a powerful arsenal with its ability to deploy high yield bombs. However, after these attacks and the organisation's regrouping they would not be able to readopt that level of firepower with the subsequent attacks involving more basic weapons.



(Figure 5.1, Real IRA weapon selection, data sourced from GTD)

It is helpful here to look at the RIRA's predecessor group, the Provisional IRA. There is commonly an association between the Troubles and bombings, in particular car bombings (Davis, 2007). However, using the data from the GTD it emerges that 45% of attacks carried out by the PIRA involved explosives as the weapon type. The increase in the use of explosives as the weapon choice in attacks is of note. Although this is an imperfect comparison given the data limitations for the PIRA in terms of the cutoff point for GTD collection.

A reason for the increase in the use of explosives could stem from the smaller number of personnel in the organisation – an explanation well-grounded in the terrorism studies literature. As a splinter group of the PIRA, the RIRA by its nature will be a smaller group (Perkoski, 2019). With fewer personnel, the loss of each member becomes much more significant to a group. To prevent the loss of valuable personnel a group is more likely to use explosive weapons as they can be operated on a timer or remotely. Firearms require someone to be present at the scene of an attack to operate which increases the likelihood of losing those carrying out the attack (Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019). A larger group can afford this, a smaller group cannot.

It is estimated that the Real IRA was never able to exceed more than a few hundred members at any one time (Stanford, 2019), while the PIRA, it has been claimed, had over 10,000 recruits throughout its history (Moloney, 2002). The result of this disparity in membership figures is that each individual member of the RIRA becomes significantly more valuable than each member of the PIRA as the loss of one member in a smaller organisation represents a greater loss to the organisation as a whole. It makes sense given this difference in group size for the RIRA to undertake attacks that minimise the likelihood of losing recruits.

While in terms of number of recruits the RIRA was significantly more resource poor than the PIRA, it was able to maintain some resource strength in terms of expertise. The leader of the RIRA, Michael McKevitt, when it broke away from the PIRA was the quartermaster of the original organisation (Horgan and Morrison, 2013). This gave him access to significant weaponry and the knowledge and ability to use said weaponry, as well as other expertise stemming from his long involvement in the conflict and those under his command. This access to PIRA weapons would have made explosives relatively easy to acquire. The expertise to use them would have made them simple for the group to use so the decision to employ them was made straightforward by these factors.

In an interview in 2008, a representative of the RIRA listed the weapons available to the group: ‘hand-guns, rifles, sub-machine guns, assault rifles, plastic explosives, and our own improvised weapons’ (Irish Republican News, 2008). However, the representative went on to add: ‘the acquisition of weapons is a problem but it’s one which the IRA has overcome and will continue to overcome’. This suggests that the group faced difficulties in reliably acquiring weapons, even if it did claim to have some arsenal, adding a resource constraint to its ability to carry out attacks.

This difficulty acquiring adequate weaponry also relates to the UK government’s determination to prevent the group from getting its hands on weapons. In the 2000s there were several notable instances of the government conducting operations which sought to disrupt the organisation’s attempts to acquire weapons, such as a 2001 sting operation in Slovakia (Hunter, 2001) and a 2008 sting in Lithuania (BBC News, 2011).

The lack of ability to properly discriminate between who is harmed and who is not harmed by explosives made them much more difficult to use selectively. One solution had been to use relatively low yield explosives; while this does not guarantee that only

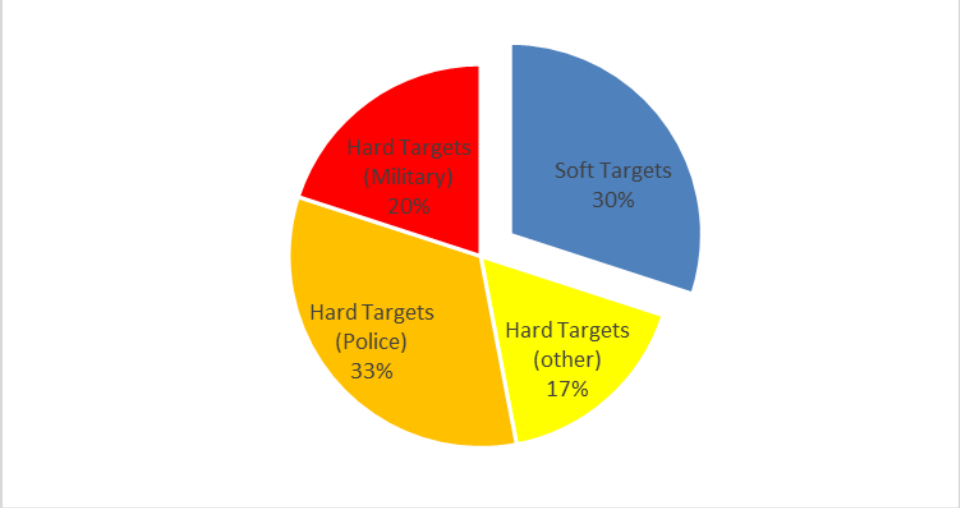
the intended targets are harmed it does, at least, reduce the likelihood of mass casualties. The RIRA stated in relation to an explosive device being detonated in Newry in 2007 that they had deliberately set the attack up in such a way as to not harm civilians (Irish Republican News, 2007b). The complexity and sophistication of the bomb are disputed, with the RIRA claiming in their statement 'the device was neither crude nor contained fireworks but detonated in the manner we intended'. Incidents like this enable the group to carry out attacks that do not harm civilians while also reducing the risk to their own members. It is not quite the selectivity of a firearm, but it is also not the indiscriminate violence of a large yield bomb. The group's statement indicates that it has a desire to communicate restraint and selectivity though its weapon selection. The claim is that the absence of casualties is not the result of a low-quality weapon but because of deliberate planning by the group.

As the communicative element of a spoiling strategy does not focus strongly on resources, but fostering distrust (Kydd and Walter, 2006), it is not necessary for a group to demonstrate a depth of resources. The group does not have to move beyond the use of unsophisticated weapons as all it needs to do is communicate that violence will continue.

The sophistication of the group's weaponry, after the initial phase, can be considered basic. When compared to what the group was capable of in the initial phase and what its predecessor organisation was capable of, the weapons used by the group come across as very basic. This is the context, in this case, for determining sophistication of weapon selection.

Target Selection

The majority of the attacks carried out by the RIRA were against hard targets, constituting 70% of attacks in the period studied. Fifty three percent of the total attacks were against either police targets (33%) or military targets (20%). These have taken a variety of forms, including individuals in uniform, police stations, and military installations. They have also attacked hard government targets.



(Figure 5.2, Real IRA Targeting Patterns, data sourced from GTD)

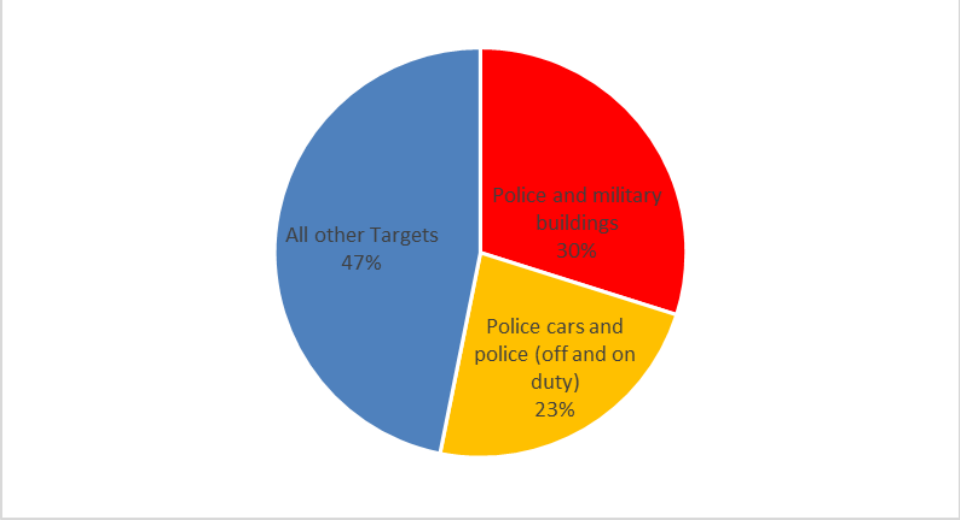
The targeting of police and military appears to be deliberate, the data shows the frequency of the targeting but the rhetoric of the group suggests intent. The group claimed that it intended to continue the targeting of 'Crown forces' (Irish Republican News, 2007a) in 2007 following a set of two attacks against members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Given that these attacks being referenced were also carried out with firearms this indicates that the PSNI may have been deliberately targeted as firearms do allow for more selective violence.

The Real IRA, in an interview with a representative in 2008 (Irish Republican News, 2008), explain that their targets are 'those who promote and protect the illegal occupation of the six counties – British soldiers, RUC/PSNI members, and British government ministers'. And they went on to explain that they consider Republicans engaging in peaceful politics such as Martin McGuinness and other members of Sinn Fein to be "British government ministers". Here the words of the organisation line up clearly with their actions. This overlap between rhetoric and behaviour can be seen as providing a justification for their targeting, especially important to the group after the damage that civilian targeting had done to their reputation. It also shows that the targeting of PSNI and soldiers is a deliberate choice by the group.

In their Easter Statement from 2009, the group would reiterate its intent to strike at certain hard targets; 'as was witnessed in Antrim, British soldiers and the colonial police will continue to lose their lives as long as the issue of national sovereignty remains unsolved' (Melaugh, 2009). The explain that the police and military, both hard targets, are legitimate targets. The Antrim attack being referenced occurred in March of that year at a British military barracks. As soldiers left the barracks to collect a takeaway order they were fired upon by RIRA members using an assault rifle. This resulted in the deaths of two soldiers (McDonald, 2009).

When carrying out attacks against policy and military targets, it appears the group took steps to limit the risk to civilians. To reduce the chances of civilian casualties and to make sure it was a visibly police or military attack. Police stations, military barracks, and checkpoints were often targeted. Thirty percent of the attacks of the campaign being examined were conducted against either military or police buildings, with 89% involving the use of explosives.

Beyond attacks against the buildings, 23% of attacks were carried out against police both on and off duty, including police vehicles, including attacks of all weapon types. The attacks have been conducted against police from both Catholic and Republican backgrounds, with the police being seen as a 'colonial force' in Northern Ireland by the RIRA, and Catholics and republicans who work for the PSNI being seen as traitors to the cause. The RIRA has stated that it would target officers regardless of background (Melaugh, 2013).



(Figure 5.3, Real IRA Hard Targeting Patterns, data sourced from GTD)

The RIRA would have likely learned lessons from the Omagh bombing in relation to appropriate targeting. The disastrous attack which took the lives of 29 people, both Protestant and Catholic, and both unionist and republican in outlook, taught the group how considerable the backlash can be for a group striking civilians. Even in relation to a spoiling strategy, a result of the Omagh bombing was to harden resolve across both communities to implement peace agreements and not to undermine the trust between the negotiating parties. Because of the Omagh bombing, the RIRA was incentivised to be seen to be clearly targeting non civilians (Morrison, 2020) – uniformed representatives of the British establishment would be seen as acceptable to the group (Cowan, 2002).

Their statement following the Omagh bombing is very clear in saying that they did not intend to kill civilians and also offered apologies to civilians (McKenna, 1998a), a statement which can be viewed as a realisation after the fact rather than expression of genuine intent in their planning. But regardless of what went into the planning of the Omagh attack, this event so early in the campaign and their apology in the immediate aftermath would lead to a strategic decision to minimise civilian casualties.

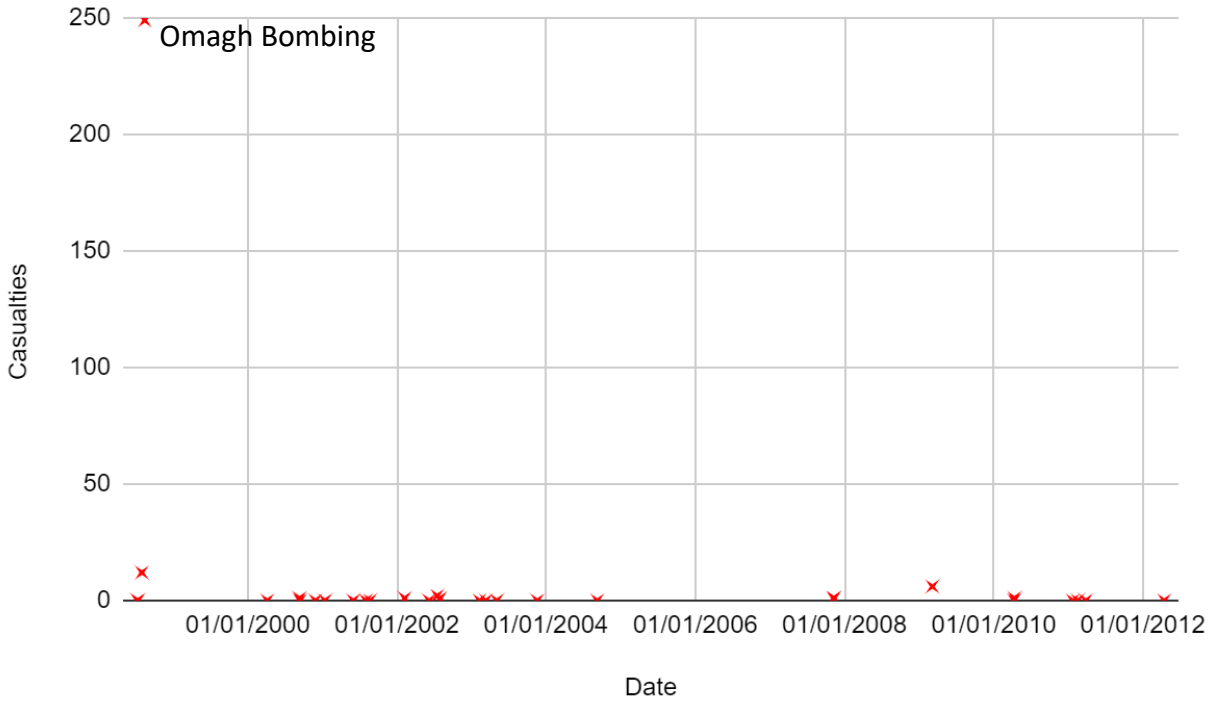
The decision to predominantly attack hard rather than soft targets stemmed from an interplay of the strategy of spoiling and the environment in which the group existed. Kydd and Walter's expectation that terrorism simply occurring can be enough to spoil suggests that a low resource attack against soft targets would be all that is required, however, the group's environment was not permissive to soft target attacks so this led to an escalation to striking harder targets. This finding does not conform to the hypothesis for a spoiling campaign. This expectation was a preference for striking soft targets with little expectation for harder targets, suggesting that the environment of a group played a much stronger role than initially anticipated. There is also the political context of the campaign to factor in, the group was directly opposed to the British state from its very inception so any representative of the state will remain as valid target when other targets may be restricted.

Casualties

The RIRA's lessons learned from Omagh, mainly about the avoidance of civilian casualties, are illustrative of a phenomenon highlighted by Stanton's (2013) examination of the PKK's bombing campaign in Antalya. The separation of the group's constituent population and the targets of the attack 'made it possible for the PKK to attack high-casualty civilian targets outside of the region without risking significant backlash from its civilian base' (p.1018). As the RIRA's constituent population lived in the same area that they were conducting their campaign in, they would have been forced to limit their attacks on civilians for fear of backlash, an eventuality which became obvious to the group after Omagh.

Furthermore, the group shows an understanding of the importance of constituent population support and the risks that different targets can pose to this, with a representative explaining: 'targets aren't chosen on legitimacy but on whether hitting them would be politically expedient or counter-productive and on the likely effect on public support' (Irish Republican News, 2008). This indicates that the group understands that what it considers to be legitimate targets versus what its constituent population may consider to be do not always align.

The average casualty count for each attack of the campaign at first appears to be high, just over 9 per attack (9.17). However, as has been the case throughout this case study, the Omagh attack is playing a significant role here. The Omagh attack skews the data; when the casualties from that attack are removed, the mean casualty count per attack falls to under 1 (0.899) - showing that low casualty attacks, or even targeted attacks at individuals, are the types of attacks in terms of casualties that are common in this campaign. As figure 5.4 below shows, the casualty count of the Omagh bombing is significantly higher than any other attack of the campaign and occurs close to the beginning of the campaign.



(Figure 5.4, RIRA casualty count of attacks, each cross represents one attack. Data sourced from GTD)

The group's use of the term "execution" in its output is illustrative of attacks carried out against specific individuals rather than non-specific targets of greater numbers, with care taken not to harm anyone beyond the target. For example, the group assassinated Denis Donaldson in 2006. He was a former member of the PIRA killed for having been an informant for British intelligence. The group described his murder as an execution and made sure to be clear that they carried out the attack when they knew he was alone (Breen, 2016). His case is exemplary of the history of the group, and republican groups in general, of targeting defectors and those who were perceived as betraying the cause. An example of previous republican violence of this kind is the notorious case of Jean McConville who was murdered by the Provisional IRA for being, the group alleged, an informant for British forces (Frampton, 2022). The trend continues in modern times with groups' vigilante activities, for instance the targeting of drug dealers (UTV, 2007), as a demonstration of the group's selective and precise violence in what they assert is the common interest.

The history of kneecapping in the republican movement (and used by loyalist groups too) to punish but not kill purported wrongdoers and used by the RIRA again allows the group to demonstrate selective and proportional violence, that the group is capable of scaling its violence in line with what is necessary and what might be acceptable to a constituent population, or even desired (Rickard and Bakke, 2021; Belfast Telegraph, 2009). The GTD does not record instances of kneecappings or punishment beatings

performed by the RIRA, but it can be assumed they are unlikely to be mass casualty events.

In an interview, when asked if the scale of the September 11th attacks made the IRA attacks on railway lines and shops look 'low level and amateurish' (Irish Republican News, 2008), the representative of the group responded by explaining that the use of incendiaries maximised financial damage to their opponent while minimising potential civilian casualties, while also being a relatively cheap way for the group to inflict these costs. This pertains to both weapon selection, using the most cost-effective means as a group with limited resources to maximise outcome, but also speaks to their level of intended casualties – that the group wanted to keep them as low as possible. As a RIRA member explained: 'A few incendiaries can have the same impact as a 500lb bomb without the risks' (Irish Republican News, 2008). The specificity of 500lbs for an explosive is of note as it was the same size as the explosive used at Omagh (Silke, 2005), this can be seen to be seeking to mirror the impact of Omagh but without the negative outcome.

The low levels of casualties are in line with the theoretical underpinning of spoiling as outlined by Kydd and Walter. They explain that given the high level of potential distrust between parties involved in a settlement that 'isolated violence might still convince the target to reject the deal' (p.74). Keeping casualties to a minimum in terms of maintaining constituent support, but also is potentially still effective in achieving its strategic objective. However, the case here was that low level casualties were not enough to successfully spoil but the group, as a result of constituent demands, was unable to escalate its violence in terms of casualties. However, while the low casualties are expected, the initial phase of the campaign with a higher casualty count means that overall the group's behaviour in terms of inflicting casualties only partially conforms to the hypothesis set out for casualties in a spoiling campaign.

Summary

The initial phases of the RIRA spoiling campaign were aggressive and extremely violent, but this only resulted in damage to the group's ambitions. The group began with mass casualty events but found a poor reception to it, subsequently focusing on lower casualty attacks. The response to the striking of soft targets also drove the group to focus primarily on hard targets.

Weapon selection in this case was interesting, the initial stages of the attack showed the use of sophisticated weapons but subsequently the group used weapons that were, in comparison to the start of the campaign and its predecessor organisation, relatively basic.

The qualitative element for the group suggest that their use of a spoiling strategy was an influential factor in their types of violence decision making. The types of violence were selected to a degree to undermine the Good Friday Agreement, however the response of the group's constituent population appears as a considerable factor in influencing this decision making. The group's desire to not isolate itself from its constituent population

drove it to make decisions on the types of violence it employed which may not have met the needs of their strategy.

The context of the campaigns touched on earlier in the chapter contributes to understanding why the patterns of violence played out as they did. The RIRA's opposition to the British state from the origins of the group meant that it remained an acceptable target for the duration of the campaign. When this is combined with their constituent and enemy population inhabiting the same space and the mistakes of Omagh they learned from, this can contribute to understanding why the patterns of violence were not entirely as expected – particularly in explaining the striking of hard targets and low casualties.

Palestinian Islamic Jihad

Background

Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) is an Islamic terrorist group active in the Israel/Palestine region. The group formed in 1981 in the aftermath of its precursor organisation being expelled from Egypt (Alexander, 2002). The group was active during the 1980s but the spoiling campaign began in 1993 in opposition to the Oslo Accords (Pearlman, 2008). The group considered the accords an unacceptable compromise that fell short of what was desired - full Palestinian control over the entirety of Israel/Palestine.

The accords were agreements made during the 1990s which aimed to bring about a peace settlement in Israel/Palestine. However, they were not universally embraced. Especially among the Palestinian population and Palestinian groups, there was significant opposition to the accords as they failed to recognise Palestine as an independent and sovereign state (Naqib, 2003). There was also disapproval from some on the Israeli side, arguing that the agreements compromised Israeli security (Mahle. 2005).

The spoiling campaign would play to this concern by highlighting that Palestinian representatives could not or would not control violent actors so these security concerns would not be disregarded by the Israeli populace, using the distrust to the spoiler's advantage. The dissatisfaction with elements of the Palestinian population would also enable PIJ (and other groups) to be able to carry out their campaign. In contrast to the RIRA, the actions of PIJ would eventually cause the peace process to fail in 2000 (Pressman, 2003).

While the group is active in the Israel/Palestine region, for ease of communication I will use *Israel* to refer to incidents which occurred in regions outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip as the GTD distinguishes between Israel and the West Bank & Gaza Strip.

Incidents in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be referred to by that designation or as Palestine.[3]

In a document concerning a potential restructuring of the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization), written by a member of the group's political bureau for a book on that subject more widely, the PIJ make evident their concern over the Oslo Accords. The document is critical of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and asserts that only with PIJ involvement can the PLO return to its purpose of "liberating" all of Palestine (including what is now Israel). It is argued here that this is only possible through rejecting Oslo in its entirety and the peace process (Skare, 2021b).

Beyond that, there is evidence from historians and area study experts to infer PIJ's role as a spoiler in the Oslo Accords (e.g. Seliktar and Rezaei, 2020; Bartal, 2023). For example, Golan (2019), in her work on coping with spoiling, explains 'terror attacks by Hamas and Islamic Jihad that began almost immediately after the signing of the Oslo Accords in September 1993. These events nearly derailed the process on a number of occasions and clearly complicated the efforts of the "custodians" to placate or neutralize spoilers on the Israeli side' (p. 200).

While there are many groups active in Israel/Palestine which tends to promote outbidding, it is possible to reduce the role that this strategy plays during the period of spoiling. Under non spoiling conditions, the numerous groups in the area are in competition with each other to some significant degree for the support and resources of the population that they seek to represent (Kydd and Walter, 2006). However, while the spoiling campaign was under way numerous groups were working to undermine the negotiations and agreements which is in their common interest. The *Alliance of Palestinian Forces* was established in 1993 in opposition to the Oslo Accord. This brought together groups from Palestine who sought to undermine the accords and seek more hardline goals (Strindberg, 2000). Additionally, PIJ adopted a cooperative tone in its rhetoric towards Hamas (the major anti-Oslo group). For example, in an interview PIJ's leader Ramadan Shallah states: 'despite negative elements in our relationship in the past, we both understand that our differences pale in comparison with the challenges and dangers facing our nation and our central cause, Palestine. These require unity, which for us is the larger aim. If unity in framework cannot be achieved, we are keen to maintain unity in Islamic action and struggle' (Shallah and al-Ayid, 1999, p.65). These elements, cooperation and corresponding rhetoric, indicate that an outbidding strategy was unlikely to be occurring during the attempts to undermine the Oslo accords.

The undermining of the Oslo Accords was a requirement for the group's wider ultimate objective, neatly summarised as: 'the establishment of a sovereign Islamic state within the geographic borders of the pre-1948 British mandated Palestine. It promotes the military destruction of Israel as the only viable means to attain this goal. Accordingly,

[3] While recognising the complicated history of Israel and Palestine, and the disputes of the territory, this naming decision is made for ease of understanding the geography of the campaign and is not a reflection of any political stance.

PIJ refuses to participate in the political process and rejects the possibility of a negotiated settlement to the Israel/Palestine problem' (Parliament of Australia, 2012).

Palestinian support for the accords was divided (Roy, 1999; Hassan, 2011). International support was also divided with the USA being a strong supporter but countries such as Syria being opposed (Shlaim, 2005; Hemmer, 2003).

Despite the group being responsible for nearly 300 attacks in the GTD and having a reputation as a violent group (Skare, 2021a), during the period studied they only carried out 14 attacks. A likely reason for this is simply the lack of resources available to the group. In a 1998 interview with the then head of the organisation Ramadan Shallah, he explains: 'we are historically a poor movement with limited resources and financial means, and our activities have remained subject to these limitations' (Shallah and al-Ayid, 1999, page 68). While this statement is partly intended to deflect questions about the group's financial assistance from Iran and Syria, it does suggest that the group is lacking resources. The group was significantly weakened because of Israeli counter terrorism operations, discussed below, which lends credence to this notion.

Spoiling as a campaign has often been noted to occur around spoiler opportunities, that is to say that there are certain instances, moments and developments, that are particularly susceptible to spoiling (Bueno de Mesquita, 2005). Frequently cited are elections, in which a group can persuade the populace to undermine a peace agreement if the government in power is unwilling (Braithwaite, Foster, and Sobek, 2010). The 1996 Israeli General Election is among the most notable instances of a spoiler opportunity occurring. It is argued by Braithwaite et al (2010) that the activities of Palestinian terrorist groups, notably Hamas, were able to create just enough distrust that it persuaded a sufficient number of Israeli voters to elect Benjamin Netanyahu, the candidate more opposed to the Oslo Accords. Berrebi and Klor (2008) also conclude that terrorism played an influential role in the 1996 election.

However, while the period coincided with a wave of terrorist attacks broadly, PIJ only carried out one attack. The attack was particularly destructive with a total off 118 casualties. This attack makes more sense as part of a series of attacks coordinated with other groups – notably PIJ did cooperate with Hamas during this period. There is also the possibility that the group went for quality over quantity – carry out one major attack rather than several smaller ones.

There was a reduction in frequency of attacks following the election. 79% of the total number of attacks occurred prior to the election. Despite the Oslo accords still being an ongoing situation, the group did not carry out any attacks in 1998 or 1999. Only three attacks occurred after the election. Compared with the second Intifada which lasted from late 2000 to early 2005, this is a very small number of attacks. During the second Intifada, the group carried out 65 attacks. This is a period shorter than the spoiling campaign, yet the group was able to carry out over four times as many attacks.

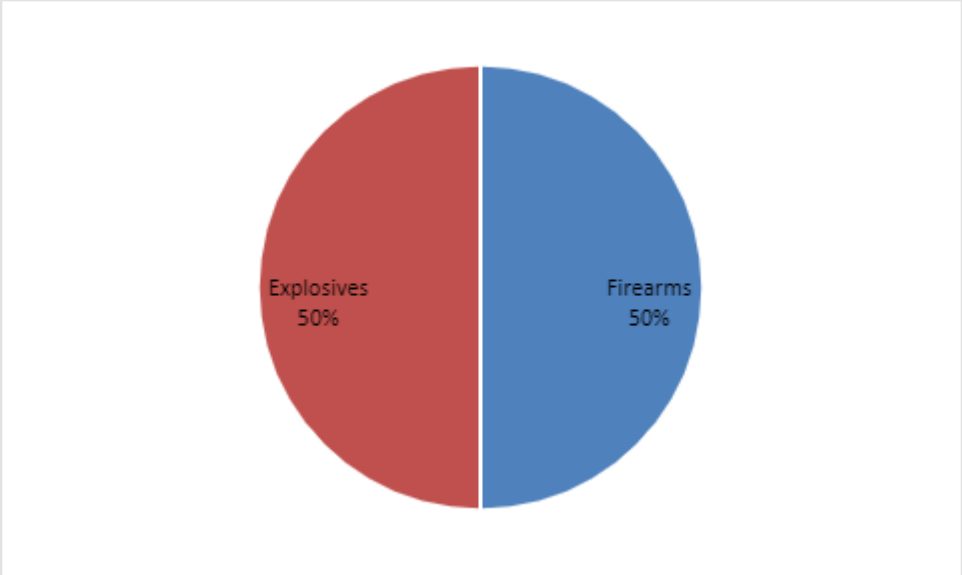
The context of the relationship between PIJ and the Israeli state should be stated clearly. The group existed before the Oslo accords and had an openly antagonistic relationship

with Israel and had foreign backing. The group had clearly defined the enemy prior to the start of this spoiling campaign. The nature of the divisions within Israel/Palestine also meant that the group's constituent population was relatively separate from that of its enemy.

One major element to consider here is the effectiveness of Israeli counter terrorism operations. PIJ was heavily targeted by Israel security during the 1990s which led to a significant weakening of the group, as did internal divisions within the group (Skare, 2021a). Israeli forces succeeded in eliminating the founder and head of the group, Fathi Shaqaqi, in 1995. This loss would have had a significant impact on the group. The group had lost its figurehead, and without a clear and capable successor, would struggle for several years as a truly effective force. Prior to the assassination of Shaqaqi, the group had been perceived as one of the most significant groups opposing Israel, but afterwards they had difficulty maintaining this prowess.

Weapon Selection

In the campaign being examined, the group used both explosives and firearms. During the first seven attacks, all of them were carried out using firearms. The attack on November 11th 1994 marked a turning point in the groups weapon selection. It was the first time that they used explosives as the means of inflicting damage and from then on the remainder of the attacks in the campaign would be carried out using explosives. These mostly took the form of suicide bombings.



(Figure 5.5, Weapon selection across campaign, data sourced from GTD)

On November 11 1994, the group carried out its first suicide bombing. An Israeli military checkpoint was the target and it resulted in 13 casualties. This shows sophistication in the group's weapon selection. The approach to the use of suicide bombing is made clear by the group. Their religious justification of it does not solely focus on how it is "correctly" and "incorrectly" perceived through different Islamic lenses. It also serves to provide a tactical and strategic outlook on the employment of

suicide bombing. The *Philosophy of Martyrdom* (Skare, 2021c) document created by PIJ seeks to explain that "martyrdom" operations do not constitute suicide, as is prohibited by Islam, but are different religiously justified actions. Although this document was published in 2000, the year marking the end of the spoiling campaign and start of the second intifada, this document relates to the group's past activities and experiences during the spoiling campaign.

The group's *Philosophy of Martyrdom* document uses extracts from the Quran throughout to provide justifications and explanations for the group's actions. An extract the group uses to highlight how their enemy fights from a protected position and so suicide bombings are necessary is: They will not fight you all except within fortified cities or from behind walls. *Their violence among themselves is severe. You think they are together, but their hearts are diverse*. That is because they are a people who do not reason' (Page 236, emphasis added). The text I have emphasised also suggests that the group understands that their adversary is internally divided. This division reflects the Israeli population's lack of unity over the Accords. In relation to a spoiling strategy, this is important as this disunity is a weakness PIJ would seek to seize upon to drive their campaign forward.

Prior to 1994, PIJ and Hamas had been rivals (Alexander, 2002) competing for the same support pool in Palestine. This situation could have led to strategies of outbidding being employed but after the opposition to the Oslo Accord was cemented by alliances among terrorist groups in the region this was not a problem. The groups have been able to cooperate somewhat during the spoiling campaign and beyond (Gupta and Mundra, 2005). It has also been argued that the assassination of Shaqaqi had an impact on the groups' ability to cooperate as after his death Hamas saw the PIJ as a less of a political threat to them (Alexander, 2002). Although cooperation on attacks was limited despite the alliance existing between numerous parties opposing the Oslo Accords, on the rare occasions that the groups did work together there would have presumably been a pooling of resources and consequently the ability to act more effectively. This is reflected in the higher death tolls and injuries from these attacks.

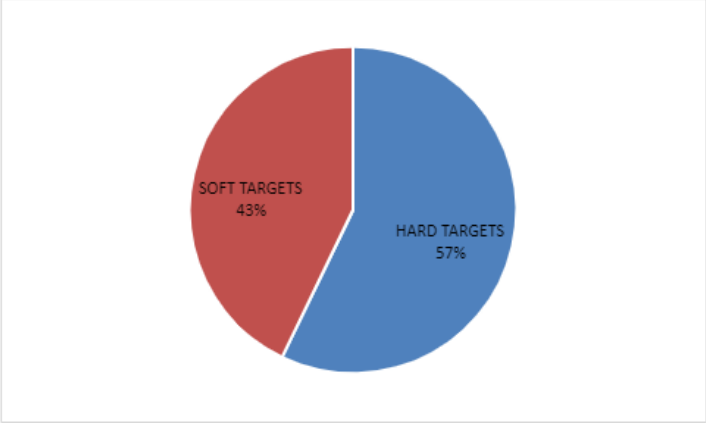
Over the course of the campaign, an increase in sophistication of the weapons coincides with increased casualties of attacks. Figure 5.9 in the section on casualties, shows the increase in casualties of attacks after the adoption of explosives as a weapon type. The weapons are considered to escalate from less sophisticated to more sophisticated as the campaign progressed. Firearms, for a group in that strategic environment are not sufficient to be considered sophisticated given their availability. However, the adoption of suicide bombing of various kinds shows innovation and technical expertise, showcasing a sophisticated weapon selection. Suicide bombing requires expertise to build the weapons and significant training and preparation to carry out the attack (Pedahzur and Perliger, 2006).

Target Selection

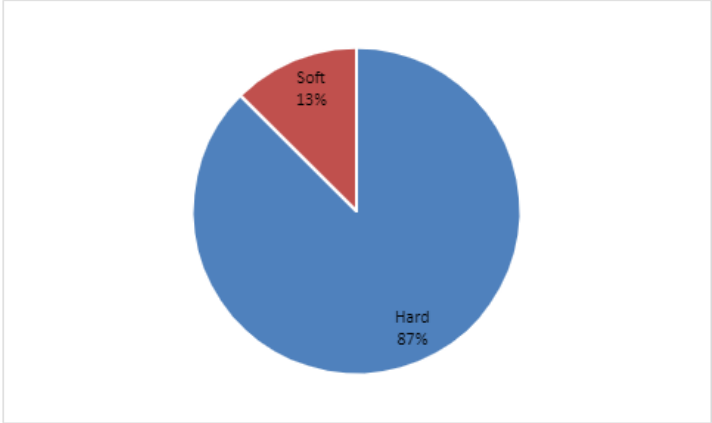
The location of the most lethal attacks both occurred in Israel, outside of Palestinian territory and the group's constituent population. In the firearms phase of the campaign,

the attacks carried out in Israel did not correspond to such a high increase in casualties. One factor to consider must be the separation of constituent population and target population. Carrying out the attack in Israel, rather than in Palestine, would have reduced the likelihood that there would be a high number of Palestinians among the victims and that these victims were much more likely to be Israeli. The group explains that 'these operations managed to achieve the desired success after selecting the targets with great precision, and they were executed with great volition and control – making the Zionist death toll significant' (page 237). This also suggests that target selection here not only avoided Palestinian casualties but also maximised Israeli casualties given the apparent boasting about the death toll. This shows a desire to inflict high casualties, and which was enabled by target selection.

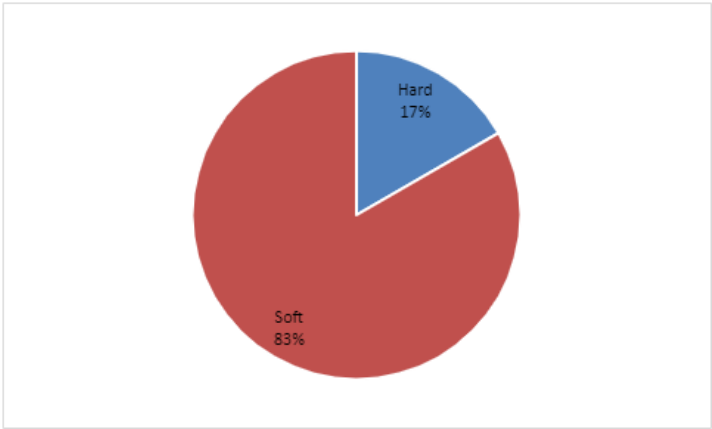
Across the entire campaign there was a fairly even split between hard and soft targets, slightly favouring hard targets. 57% of the total attacks were carried out against hard targets, 43% against soft targets. However, as with casualties and weapon selection, there was a turning point in target selection. On the 9th April 1995, a bus carrying civilians and Israeli soldiers was rammed by a vehicle on the highway which simultaneously detonated, killing 7 people (not including the perpetrator, who died in the attack) and injuring 40 more. The attack followed the bicycle suicide attack against the Israeli security checkpoint but was this time directed against a soft target. After this attack, only one more attack would be carried out against a hard target during this campaign. The rest of the attacks were carried out against soft targets. Before this attack, 88% of the attacks in the campaign had been against hard targets, all of them military.



(Figure 5.6. Targeting across entire campaign, data sourced from GTD)



(Figure 5.7, targeting before April 9 attack, data sourced from GTD)



(Figure 5.8, targeting including and after April 9 attack, data sourced from GTD)

The switch to soft targets, alongside the adoption of less discriminate weapons in the form of explosives, which could be effectively used in the form of suicide attacks, contributed to the above-mentioned significant increase in the casualty counts of the attacks (see figure 5.9 in following section). As discussed in the following section, the group was aware of the benefits of using suicide attacks to inflict a greater number of casualties. And it is shown that soft targets to inflict these casualties were also chosen deliberately. PIJ viewed all Israelis as acceptable targets: 'every individual of the entity [Israel] is a soldier on temporary leave' (Skare, 2021d, p.33). Considering Israel to be a "fortress" (page 33) allows them to undertake indiscriminate attacks in Israeli territory on what are, in reality, soft targets in what they advertise as a legitimate manner. The justification reduced the constraints on the group's activities. In relation to a spoiling strategy, this can be seen as enabling the escalation of violence to undermine the peace process. Being able to strike civilians can also act as means to pressure them into calling for a change in policy if the government has been unwilling.

However, despite viewing Israeli civilians within Israel as legitimate targets, the group did not condone the targeting of all civilians. In a document written after the September 11th attacks in 2001, the group sought to distance itself from that type of violence and to

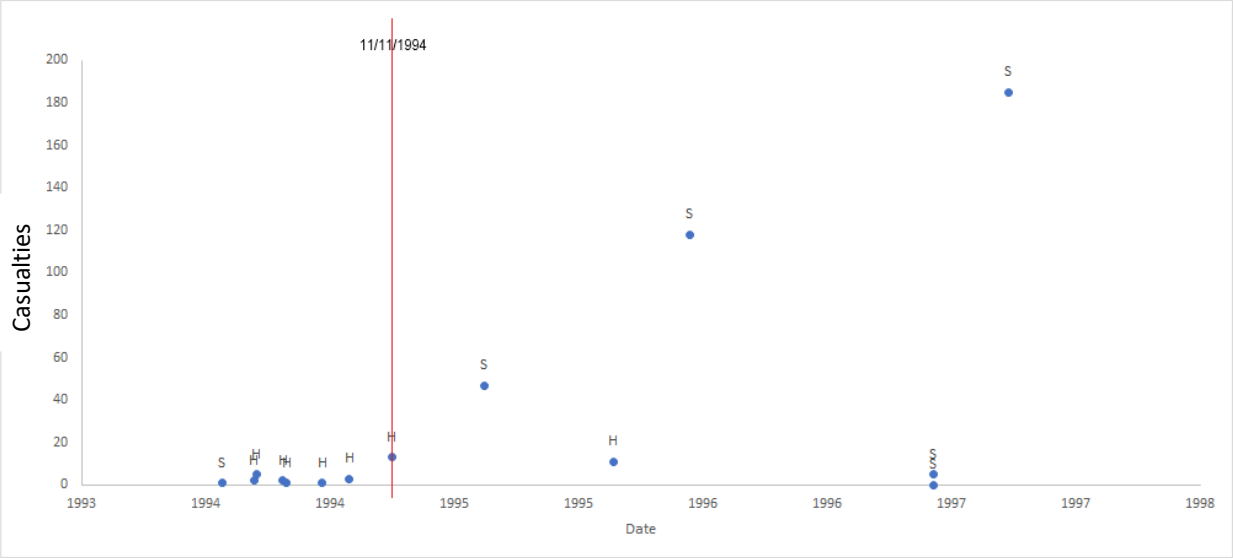
define the type of violence it had been engaged in as fundamentally different. The text explicitly condemns the 9/11 attacks and expresses concern that these attacks will cause all Muslims to be vilified. The document seeks to explain that, although it perceives the United States to be guilty of many crimes, targeting civilians inside the United States is not an appropriate form of warfare; 'it was an extreme violence and it was inflicted on a people outside the arena of confrontation' (Skare, 2021e, page 247). The document goes on to explain that many victims were Muslims and were not informed of or responsible for the situation in Israel/Palestine, and were not inflicting harm on Muslims. This differentiates from the previous document discussed concerning the targeting of Israelis in Israel, in which it is determined that these were acceptable targets because the group perceived Israeli civilians to be complicit in the actions of the Israeli state, and that their presence in Israel was an occupation of Palestinian land. The group saw Israeli civilians as legitimate targets in the combat area, but it does not endorse attacks against all civilians.

This demonstrates the group's willingness to strike soft targets in the form of civilians, but also how the group was aware of the repercussions of this so first sought to justify the striking of Israeli civilians while putting confines on these attacks. There is a strategic utility to the group in striking Israeli civilians, and a potentially worthwhile payoff. This is not the case for striking other civilians, here shown to be U.S. civilians. Attacking U.S. civilians would be unlikely to derive significant benefits for a group in PIJ's situation, but it could yield disastrous consequences – especially in the wake of 9/11, as the U.S. government had shown a willingness to punish such groups. Additionally, U.S. civilians are unrelated to the group's communication.

Given that Israeli civilians are the primary target audience for the violence, the switch from targeting security elements to striking soft targets can be seen as a more direct form of communication. A spoiling strategy aims to convince this group of people that moderates on the terrorist side are unable and/or unwilling to constrain the more extreme elements on the terrorists' side (Kydd and Walter, 2006). Attacks against civilians communicate this effectively to the intended audience. Without constraints on the targeting of civilians, it is worthwhile for a group to do so in a spoiling strategy.

Casualties

The average number of casualties across the entire campaign was 28. However, this does not tell the entire story. The November 11th 1994 attack again marks a turning point here. Not only was it the group's first use of explosives in the campaign but it was also the first time the casualty count had entered double digits. The total killed and injured in the November 11th attack was 13. Prior to that attack, when firearms had been the weapon of choice, the highest casualty count for any attack had been 5. The average casualty count for the attacks before November 11th was just over 2 (2.14). The campaign up to that point had been made up of low casualty attacks. This also marks the shift towards striking soft targets. The graph below illustrates the shift in both casualties and targeting after the November 11th attack.



H=Hard Target S=Soft Target

(Figure 5.9, PIJ Attacks Over Time, data sourced from GTD)

The *Philosophy of Martyrdom* document explains why high casualty attacks were determined to be necessary making the observation that the Israelis (it is not clear if they mean the government, the people, or both) have an aversion to high casualties. The document explains that 'the human element is scarce and dear to them, and they are not as concerned about material losses as they are about human losses' (page 236). This demonstrates the group's understanding that it is not sufficient to carry out attacks against material targets but to ensure that their attacks result in the deaths of people. Beyond that, the group is clear that the utility of suicide bombings stems from the number of possible casualties: '[suicide bombers] aim to inflict the greatest losses on Zionist society and the greatest number of deaths' (page 239). These extracts suggest that the group deliberately sought mass casualties. The first extract suggests this pattern is driven not out of hatred or revenge but to create a response because it highlights an awareness of the enemy's perception of attacks. In a spoiling campaign, the result sought would be an abandonment of the peace process.

The document also refers to previous successful employment of mass casualty suicide bombings in Lebanon against both American forces in the Beirut barracks bombings, and against Israeli forces in the South of the country which, it is argued, resulted in the withdrawal of these forces. The group also refers to their own previous successful attacks carried out using suicide bombings and resulting in mass casualties. This demonstrates the group's ability to learn strategic and tactical lessons from other groups and form their own previous experience, and then their attempt to disseminate their learnings to members to carry on with the outlined approach. Here it shows how the group had been able to observe that higher casualties have yielded the results the group sought and as such it aimed to be able to continue with these attacks given their proven viability.

The attacks following, and including November 11th 1994, saw a significant increase in casualties. The mean intended casualty count for the campaign from that point was 54.1. This number is inflated by two very lethal attacks (March 1996 and July 1997) which had casualty counts of 118 and 185 respectively. However, even with those attacks excluded, the mean number of casualties is 15.2 - still far higher the pre-November 11th numbers.

The initial phase of the campaign was in line with the expectation that casualties would be low given Kydd and Walter's explanation that low levels of violence could be sufficient given enough distrust between the parties. However, as the low-level terrorism approach failed to achieve results, the group escalated to more lethal attacks to spoil, eventually finding the level necessary to do so. It ended up being quite a high threshold to spoil.

Summary

PIJ conformed to expectation in that they began their campaign with low casualty attacks and escalated the numbers of casualties of their attacks as the campaign progressed. Weapon selection conformed similarly, starting basic and escalating as the campaign moved forward. However, targeting was a different matter. The expectation was for soft targets, but the group began initially by striking hard targets before swapping to soft targets. This campaign included a clear turning point at which the group opted to begin switching to soft targets and high intended casualty figures. This also came with the group providing justifications to its constituent population as it sought to use violence to convince its enemy of the lack of viability of the peace agreement and maintain its support from its base. The qualitative element for this section showcases PIJ's rejection of the Oslo accords and their desire to inflict mass casualties. A lot of the content focuses on justifying striking soft targets and the use of certain weapon types to inflict these high casualties. The statements do not explicitly connect the infliction of mass casualties to the strategy, but there appears to be a link drawn between the infliction of mass casualties and the desired Israeli response.

Conclusion

The results are summarised in the hypothesis matrix and discussed below.

Hypothesis	RIRA	PIJ
Weapon Selection: Basic but can escalate	Primarily basic after initial attacks	Basic but escalated in sophistication
Target Selection: Soft	Initial stages soft, shifted to primarily hard	Mixed, began hard but switched to soft
Casualties: Low to start but can rise if disruption is not successful in early stages	Began with high casualty attacks, rest of campaign attacks low	Started with low casualty attacks, escalated to high casualty attacks

(Figure 5.10, Hypothesis matrix showing findings of this chapter. Confirmed hypotheses are in green, partially confirmed are in yellow, not confirmed are in red)

The two cases being studied showed some variation away from what was expected but were not entirely different. Concerning the casualty counts of their attacks, the RIRA started very high with the Omagh attack which had a severe effect on their campaign. The public response forced them to adopt much lower levels of violence. After this, the group ensured that it was publicly perceived as only carrying out targeted attacks rather than indiscriminate attacks. PIJ, on the other hand, began their spoiling campaign with a series of low casualty attacks but escalated after a certain point to mass casualty attacks as the low-level campaign was not yielding results.

Targeting by the RIRA was initially soft, but such was the backlash against the group for targeting civilians that they adopted a policy of attacking hard targets, usually on the form of representatives of the British government in the form of the military and the police. The constraint of the constituent population forced the group to adopt the more difficult type of target. PIJ's campaign was the inverse. The campaign began mostly against hard targets of the Israeli security forces but the group switched to embrace the targeting of civilians. The group made sure to provide ample justification for this, to ensure that they did not risk losing too much support.

The RIRA's weapon selection, after the initial use of a large bomb in Omagh, was relatively basic. The group had used simpler, smaller scale explosive devices and some firearms. PIJ began their campaign with more basic weaponry but as the group escalated their campaign there was a need for more advanced weaponry – taking the form of suicide bombs.

What is evident across both cases is the group's ability to learn and adapt. The RIRA began their campaign with a large attack, but the fallout from this attack required them to pause and reassess their campaign before restarting it at a lower level of intensity in terms of casualties and targeting only "legitimate" targets. This is because the miscalculation of the Omagh bombing did the group more harm than good – the lessons from this are evident throughout the campaign. The targeting of "crown forces" served to illustrate to their population that, in their eyes, Ireland was being illegally occupied and that the peace process is incapable of resolving this. These attacks were also undertaken in the hopes of getting the security services to harden further, creating a situation reminiscent of the Troubles.

PIJ began their campaign with low casualty attacks but escalated to mass casualty attacks which the group found to be more effective in terms of moving towards their goals. They also found attacks against soft targets to be more effective in terms of communication and achieving their goals than solely striking hard targets was. These lessons were learned and then disseminated among members and supporters to reinforce that this is how the group would (and should) move forward.

The difference in constraint on group behaviour impacted the possibility of escalation across the campaigns. The expectation was that attacks would start with low casualties and escalate should the political goals not be achieved then there is the possibility of escalating to more severe attacks. The environment PIJ found itself in an environment

that was conducive to such escalation, but the Real IRA's environment was prohibitive of such an escalation, possibly impacting the overall success of the campaign.

6. Outbidding: Not so Friendly Competition

Introduction

On the 22nd April 1997, Peruvian commandos stormed the residence of the Japanese ambassador, killing all 14 hostage takers and ending a 126-day ordeal. The hostage takers' group had been experiencing a significant decline in activity and prominence in the wake of the government's counter terror campaign and had performed this hostage taking operation as a desperate means of generating attention. Its failure ended Túpac Amary Revolutionary Movement (MRTA)'s outbidding campaign. This strategy is the focus of this chapter. After reestablishing what the strategy is, and how it works, there will then be an in-depth examination of two case studies to identify patterns of violence within the strategy. The two groups that this chapter focuses on are the MRTA and Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA). The MRTA case study will focus on the group's activities between 1987 and 1997 s within Peru. The ETA case study will examine the group's activities during the years 1976-82 within Spain. The cases selected for this strategy are both typical cases of outbidding. They occur in different locations, time periods, and the groups have different ideologies in order to maximise generalisability.

The strategy of outbidding aims to persuade a given population to support the group carrying out the campaign. This occurs when there are two or more groups competing for support from the same population and the right to represent them. To maximise their share of the finite resources the population can provide, each group aims to convince the population that their group is best suited to represent the population. Kydd and Walter explain that the population is given a choice between potential "zealots" (those dedicated to the cause) and "sellouts" (those who would accept a lesser outcome) (p.76).

> The aim of this strategy is to persuade potential supporters to back the group, to provide them with resources such as funding and to attract recruits. As Kydd and Walter observe 'an interesting aspect of the outbidding strategy is that the enemy is only tangentially related to the strategic interaction' (p. 77). The enemies might be the targets of the violence, but they are not the targets of the communication. The objective of outbidding is to build support which it can then use to work towards its ultimate outcome goal, a process goal.

An outbidding strategy incentivises a group to demonstrate its militancy.. According to Kydd and Walter, this is due to three factors: a hardline group will adopt a hardline bargaining position resulting in a better deal for those represented, a hardline group is a beneficial representative in situations in which an adversary may not be trustworthy as this group has shown its willingness to fight, a hardline group has already demonstrated commitment to a cause and so is unlikely to "sell out" once in office (pp. 76-77).

Before delving into the case studies, it is important to give a brief reiteration of methods. Within each case of outbidding being examined, the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) and used as the basis for the quantitative element of the research. The source of qualitative information is documents in the form of the group's own output and can also include other relevant documents from other sources. In the case of ETA, these

documents were difficult to come by. Output from the group does exist but it is most easily available as physical copies in archives in Spain which I could not access, and the documents would also require additional translation beyond my means. To adapt to these constraints, the research is bolstered by other sources and academic output with access to sources. This also has the benefit of acting as triangulation, a variety of data sources helps to develop a more comprehensive understanding.

The hypotheses established in the theory chapter for the patterns of violence in an outbidding campaign can be summarised as the following:

1) For weapon selection, more sophisticated weapons are expected due to the group's need to differentiate itself from its rivals. More sophisticated weapons communicate potential greater abilities than rivals.

2) For target selection, a mixture of hard and soft targets are expected because soft targets can be used to demonstrate commitment to the cause, but hard targets are an effective means of showing the ability to carry out a campaign. Hard targets are also an upping of the bid which rival groups may not be able to match.

3) In terms of casualties, higher intended casualty levels are expected because it serves as a means of demonstrating both the commitment to combatting the enemy and the ability to combat the enemy.

MRTA

The MRTA formed in the early 1980s from the coalescing of left-wing forces in Peru. The ultimate aim of the organisation was to bring about revolution in Peru and establish a corresponding socialistic and anti-imperialist government (Choi, 1997). As part of this they sought to unite all of Peru's leftists under one banner to bring about their revolution. Some scholars argue that the group also held a Peruvian Nationalist agenda alongside the left-wing elements (McCormick, 1993).

Background

For a large period of the group's existence, the MRTA's activity focused on outbidding its opponents and establishing itself as the main leftist group in Peru. It, therefore, stands out as a typical case of this strategy and appropriate to bring this case study into dialogue with Kydd and Walter's typological framework. The group was open about its intention to be the representative group of the left in Peru, as is shown through their own documents, and this was the group's main focus at this point in their history. Another reason that MRTA has been chosen as the focus of the outbidding chapter is that there is little research on the group's strategy and activities when compared to their much more well-known rivals, Shining Path (La Serna, 2020). Part of this chapter's contribution, therefore, is new empirical insights about a relatively understudied terrorist group.

The campaign being examined began in November 1987 when MRTA carried out a major operation in rural Peru in direct opposition to their main rival Sendero Luminoso (SL, or Shining Path). This brought the group into conflict not just with the government,

but with Shining Path too (Bourque and Warren, 1989). SL were the most well-known left wing terrorist group in Peru, although their activity mostly took place in rural locations (Kent, 1993) whereas MRTA's activities were primarily urban, at least to begin with (De Izcue, 2004). As such, the operation on the 6th November 1987 marked a turning point in the group's activity as it was willing to challenge SL for supremacy. While the group had been attempting to build support in the years between its founding and this campaign, these actions had been more focused on establishing the group as a viable organisation. This new phase was intended to turn the group from a left-wing group to *the* main left-wing group in Peru, aiming to represent that ideology more broadly. The attack in Juanjui was carried out to be a deliberate show of force and ability, and to generate as much press coverage for the group as possible, hence the relatively high number of journalists present (McCormick, 1993). A U.S. Embassy report on the event shows how they perceived the group: 'a well armed, uniformed and disciplined MRTA contingent' (1987, p.1)'. This is likely the group would want to be perceived, a serious militant entity and not disorganised and amateurish.

A theme throughout the timeline of MRTA's activities to showcase its competition is the desire to use violence to differentiate their "brand" from that of SL. This characterises an outbidding strategy. Throughout La Serna's book *With Masses & Arms* (2020), which explores MRTA's history, he highlights how the group used violence to offer itself as a more suitable representative of the Peruvian people. The competition between the two groups is established in academia (Palmer, 1993; Woy-Hazleton and Hazleton, 1994). This can also be drawn from the group's words as is seen in throughout this chapter.

A series of documents published by the MRTA in 1988 evidence the intent of their campaign to be to generate support across their potential constituent populations. The group published a series of "messages to" documents aiming to target various groups that they sought to represent or receive support from. These include the youth, political parties and movements, the working class, women, and peasants. These documents usually describe the problems specifically facing that group, shortcomings by the government or representatives, and how the MRTA can correct these issues, and extolling the virtues of their kind of revolution (MRTA, 1988i-vi, 1989, 1990). It is valuable in understanding how an outbidding campaign works to see a group have been so overt in its audience targeting. These documents are not aimed at the government, or at enemies. They do not threaten or intimidate. Instead, they come across as more or less conventional political material but with the added element of violence to achieve the spread of the group's message.

The 'Message to the Peruvian Peasants' (1988iii) document is illustrative of this approach. It begins by highlighting the historical suffering of the group ('for centuries you have been subjugated to a regime of brutal exploitation within an unfair and inhumane system'), while also going on to praise how they have always had a spirit of brave resistance. This history of resistance, however, must change: 'the peasantry has become aware that their spontaneous and demanding struggles they are not enough and that they must be part of the organized struggle'. The document goes on to discuss how

the MRTA's experience of already working with peasants enables them to appreciate the difficulties they have faced but and to work with them to resolve these through revolution alongside other 'exploited classes'. The MRTA differentiate themselves in arguing that theirs is a genuine concern for the peasantry, explaining 'many politicians have used the peasantry as a formal decorative element, as a simple object of study, research or for electoral discourse or gossip, we claim its fundamental strength in the revolutionary struggle'.

There are also "messages to" members of the police, armed forces and members of rival terrorist organizations and members of rival terrorist organisations. These messages are also not threatening, instead aiming to convince junior members of the security forces and rival organizations to work with the MRTA (1988vii-viii). For example, in appealing to SL militants MRTA state that '...we, the MRTA, have recognized without any pettiness, declaring that members of [Shining Path] are part of our heroic fighting people. You and we share a common action: the armed struggle to seize power and build a new society' (1988vii). The document goes on to criticise how the leaders of the SL campaign have conducted it poorly, accusing them of behaviour 'totally at odds with revolutionary morality' by violently opposing various other left-wing organisations that should be working towards a common goal.

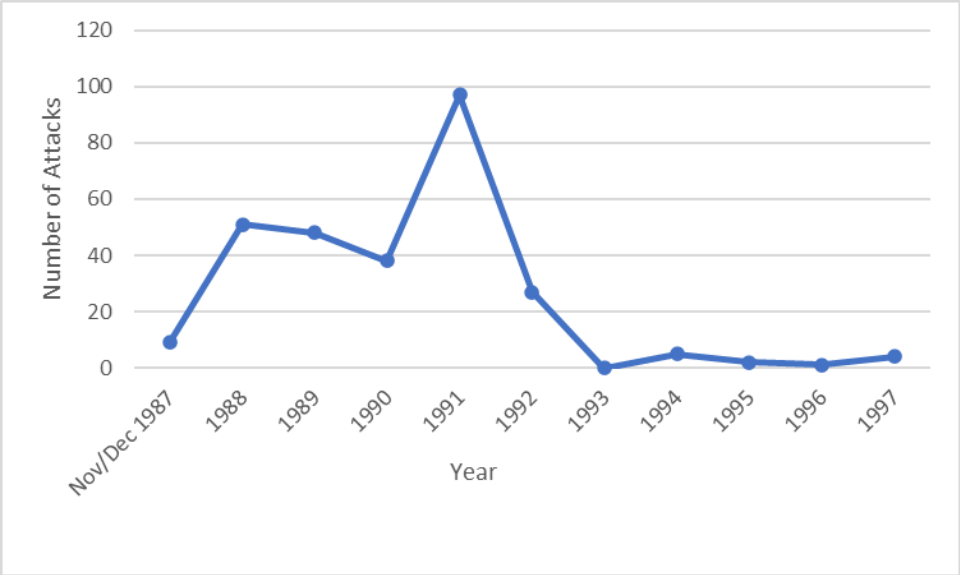
While the outbidding campaign saw the MRTA competing with Shining Path for the support of the population, the role of the Peruvian government cannot be ignored. Not only was the Peruvian government frequently the target of terrorist attacks, it also undertook activities which impacted the MRTA's campaign. Of particular note is Fujimori's rise to power and the aggressive counterterrorist campaign he launched against both groups (Weyland, 2000; Chalk, 1998). But even prior to the start of the campaign, the group's objectives had always included a change in government, through violence if necessary, so the relationship between the two was established on that basis.

Activity

The campaign shows a sharp decline in terms of number of attacks. From November 1987 to the end of 1992 there were a total of 270 attacks, and from the start of 1993 until the end of the campaign in 1997 were just 12 attacks. During the first phase, this gives an average of one attack per week, and the second phase is one attack every 140 days. This is not a perfect representation of the attacks. For example, the hostage crisis at the Japanese ambassador's residence (mentioned at the opening of this chapter) endured for a period of months. Nonetheless, these figures are useful to illustrate the significant decline in the frequency of attacks carried out as part of this campaign.

The decline in activity of all groups in Peru can be explained by the counterterrorist activities of the government (Weyland, 2000; Chalk, 1998). The Fujimori government substantially reduced the ability of rebel groups to operate. Under the Fujimori government (1990-2000), the security forces were able to much more effectively combat the terrorism situation in Peru through an escalation of the country's counter insurgency operations – both against the MRTA and Shining Path. Security forces were granted special powers to subdue rebel groups (Costa, 1993), giving them greater freedom to act

autonomously to counter the groups, allowing military tribunals to prosecute suspected guerillas, and pardoning military officials who committed crimes as part of anti-guerilla activities (Arce, 2003). This chapter is not a discussion of the ethics of methods counterterrorism, but it is important to understand that this campaign by the security forces was effective through its brutality in weakening the groups.



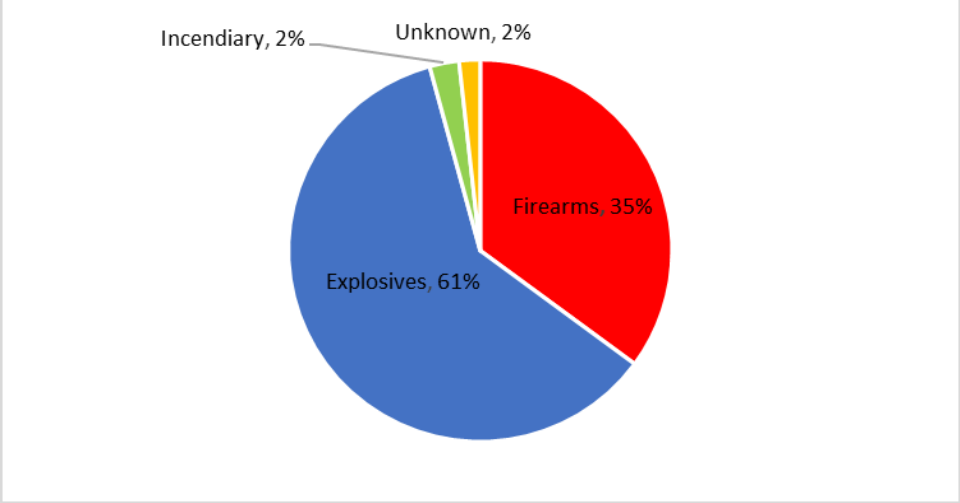
(Figure 6.1 number of attacks per year of the campaign, data sourced from GTD)

Notably, 1993 had no attacks. Decline began in 1992 but there were still a reasonable number of attacks throughout that year. The counterterrorism campaign had a big success in 1992 when they captured the MRTA's leader, Victor Polay (L.A. Times, 1992). However, in discussions around trends in the MRTA activities over time 1993 will be used as the dividing point given the clear decline in activity in that year, rather than having to split 1992 into two periods for reasons of clarity and simplicity.

Weapon Selection

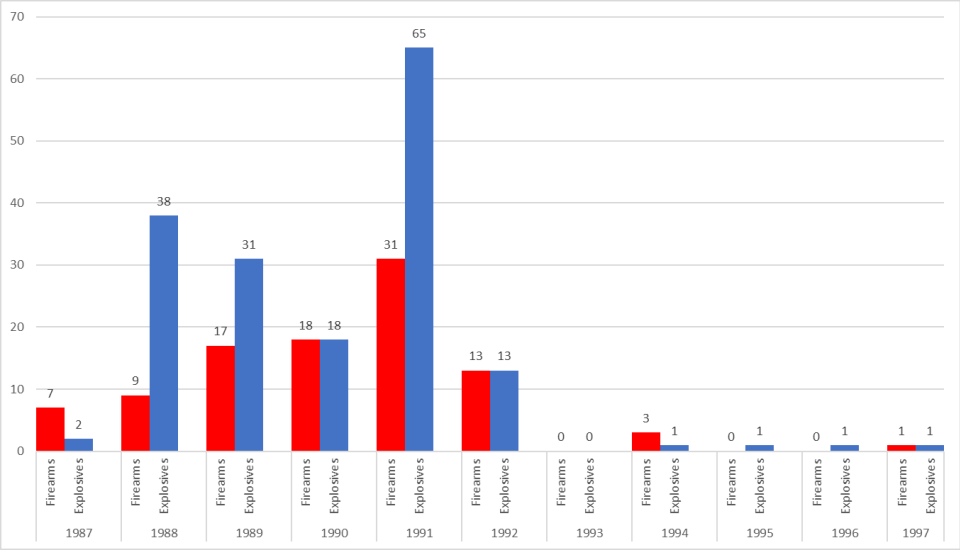
The hypothesis for weapon selection was that the group would use sophisticated weaponry to differentiate itself and demonstrate its strength and abilities to deliver on its stated goals.

The weapons used by MRTA between 1987 and 1997 were primarily explosives, although there was still a significant usage of firearms. The breakdown across the campaign using the GTD data is as follows: 61% of attacks involved the use of explosives, 35% involved firearms, 2% incendiary weapons, and 2% weapons used are unknown. The big picture here is that explosives were the favoured weapon type, but not the exclusive weapon type. Just over one third of attacks involved the use of firearms, which does show a willingness to use them, rather than the small use of incendiary devices which can allow them to be dismissed as a prominent weapon type.



(Figure 6.2, MRTA Weapon Selection Across Campaign, data sourced from GTD)

Over the course of the campaign an interesting trend emerges. During the pre-1993 phase of the campaign, when the group was at its strongest, the use of explosives is still dominant. The only point at which more firearms than explosives are used during this phase of the campaign is November to December 1987. For every year after this up to and including 1992, explosives are either employed more often or at the same number as firearms. One might have expected firearms to have been used more prominently while the group was strong and to have dropped off after the weakening of the group given the potential personal costs of firearm use and its value in communicating resource strength. This expectation stems from the work of Koehler-Derrick and Milton (2019) whose work puts forward the argument that a large and well-resourced group employs firearms as they can afford to take the risk of losing personnel more than a smaller group can.

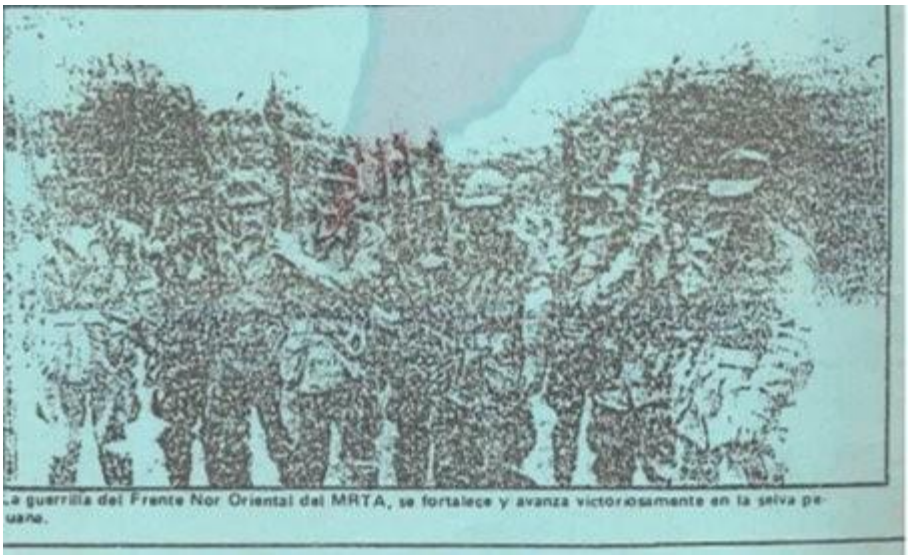


(Figure 6.3, MRTA Weapon Selection, data sourced from GTD)

One of the most frequently used explosives by the MRTA was dynamite/TNT. To be clear, these two explosive compounds are not the same thing. However, not only are they frequently confused for each other and treated as the same, the GTD also records them under explosive type as the same. Of all the explosive attacks carried out by the MRTA, when the explosive has been identified, 48% involved dynamite/TNT as the explosive of choice, although it should be noted that most of the explosive attacks do not have the specific explosive identified. One of the most valuable resources for examining the group's activities early in the campaign is a history of the group written by the group in 1990. This history includes a discussion of the acquisition and use of dynamite (1990ii). The group explains that the dynamite was stolen from mining operations or other civilian operations, an interesting finding showing that the group was facing certain constraints manufacturing its own explosives or being supplied with them.

The group, based on its own reporting, did use dynamite in many instances as one would have used any other type of explosive. The group carried out attacks using car bombs with the stolen dynamite used as the explosives. The history of the MRTA documents records two such attacks: 50kg of dynamite being used in a car bomb attack against Joint command of the Armed Forces headquarters, and 60kg of dynamite used to attack the perimeter wall of the American Ambassador's residence (1990ii). The use of dynamite as a group would use other forms of explosives suggests that dynamite has not been selected for any specific qualities over other forms of explosives but is used because it is what a group can easily acquire.

While it cannot be relied upon as evidence as to what weapons the group can access, or at least access in reasonable numbers, photographs of the group’s operatives can still demonstrate their communication through weapon selection. This is certainly the case with self-published photos or photos coming from press events. Members of the group are frequently seen uniformed and carrying automatic weapons (e.g. MRTA, 1988ix, p.8) giving them a soldierly impression, and similar legitimacy aiming to be conferred to the group. The operatives are also frequently seen carrying RPGs (e.g. Bazo, 1997) and photographs from the group also show them using heavier machine guns (e.g. MRTA, 1990ii). The purpose served by this representation of the group as an effective and well-equipped military organisation is to convince the supporters it seeks to attract that that it does not just possess the motivation to be their best representative, but also possesses the means to do so. To communicate that the group has both the resolve and the resources necessary.



(Figure 6.4, MRTA Militants, 1988ii)

The U.S. Embassy report on the Juanjui attack elaborates on the equipment used by the MRTA: 'the attackers wore olive green fatigues, were heavily armed (e.g. automatic rifles, heavier caliber automatic weapons, bazookas, grenades, etc.), and some had communications equipment pinned to the lapels of their uniforms' (1987, p.8). Again, the weapon choice here serves a communicative as well as a tactical purpose. The heavy firepower would have been useful in undertaking the attack on the town, but it also tells potential supporters and recruits that the group possesses more advanced weaponry than its rivals. The MRTA are not the only group to show off their weapons, ISIS, the PIRA, and Hamas have all done so in different ways (Guardian, 2014; Melaugh, 2022; Hassona, 2017)

The group demonstrates an awareness of the need to boast about their activities, to market themselves properly compared to their rivals, and they do so in developing this attempted air of military legitimacy. In the *Forging the Tupacamarista Army* document (MRTA, 1987), the group frequently refers to its military effectiveness – using terms such as "military tactics", "military objectives", "military action" and so on. The group also adopt terms the term 'prisoner of war' to describe captives and refer to the Geneva Convention (discussed in the targeting section) in reference to the conduct of the campaign (MRTA, 1990; MRTA, 1996). All this is done while describing how immensely successful their attack has been, in the case the notable incident in Juanjui. This serves to reinforce to the group's supporters and potential supporters their legitimacy, but more so their effectiveness as a fighting force. If a potential supporter faces the choice between multiple terrorist groups, Kydd and Walter assert that they will choose the group most likely to achieve the stated goal. Given that a potential supporter never has perfect information, groups competing for support need to present themselves as the most likely candidate to achieve the goal (p.76).

Overall, weapon selection is considered to be sophisticated. While the group's explosives were relatively basic, having been industrial purpose stolen explosives, they were still able to use them effectively. The group's firearms were sophisticated - they

were able to showcase military style fully automatic weapons which would have been difficult to acquire and they also demonstrated an ability use them effectively. This all worked towards the group attempt to cultivate an image of a serious military entity.

Target Selection

The hypothesis for an outbidding strategy is that a group will strike a mix of hard and soft targets, with both having communicative and resource dividends and penalties. Soft targets can be used to demonstrate commitment to the cause but hard targets are an effective means of showing the ability to carry out a campaign. Hard targets are also an upping of the bid which rival groups may not be able to match.

In documents from the MRTA, they frequently state their respect for the rule of law (MRTA, 1990; 1996). Law here is meant in the conflict sense rather than the law of Peru. They reference the Geneva convention and laws of combat in their statements. During one of their statements during the embassy siege they state: 'the MRTA has respected and will respect the Geneva Convention for internal conflicts; In this sense, the people who are inside the residence are treated with the respect that corresponds to their condition as human beings and prisoners of war' (1996). There are two factors here: one is the desire to differentiate themselves from rivals who do kill civilians, as discussed elsewhere in this chapter; the second relates to their desire to be seen as a legitimate military organisation, their claims to be acting in compliance with conflict law goes hand in hand with their uniforms, weapons and other language concerning their operations. It is part of the image of themselves they sought to construct. There is also the element to be considered of differentiating their type of war from that of the government's "dirty war".

Target selection is mixed favouring soft targets. The data for the overall campaign shows that 60% of the group's targets were soft, and 40% were hard. For every active year of the campaign before the 1993 reduction in frequency of attacks, soft targets were more frequently attacked than hard targets. The group's most active year in terms of number of attacks, 1991, saw almost two thirds of attacks being carried out against soft targets (65%).

Two questions emerge here. Firstly, why were soft targets continuously preferred to hard targets during this phase of the campaign? Secondly, seeing as there was a preference for soft targets, why were hard targets still attacked so frequently? The striking of hard targets was not as common as those against soft targets, but they do still make up a significant portion of the total number of attacks.

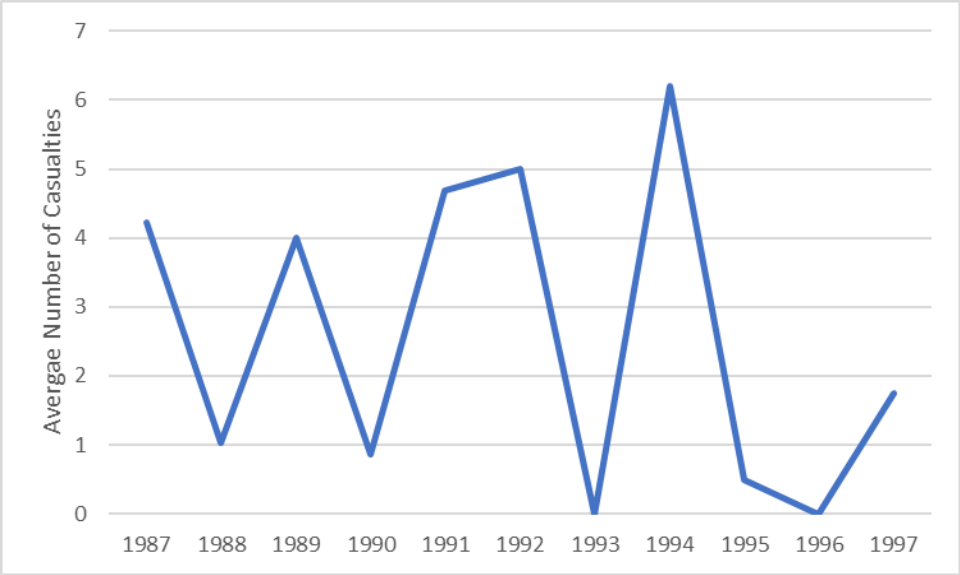
One benefit of striking soft targets is that it is less costly in terms of resources to do so compared to hard targets. Of the soft targets that the MRTA struck, 61% of these were businesses. While the MRTA did take efforts to avoid civilian casualties when possible, a soft target in the form of a business would make a legitimate target given the group's Marxist ideology. Particularly ideologically suitable targets would have been foreign businesses, especially American ones – the group considering it an attack against "Yankee" interests (MRTA, 1990ii).

Striking hard targets is potentially advantageous to a terrorist group in terms of communicating the effectiveness of their violence. Striking a hard target allows a group to differentiate itself from its rivals. Essentially, groups of varying levels of abilities should be able to strike soft targets. However, the greater demands imposed on a group aiming to strike hard targets filters out weaker groups which would enable the striking of a hard target too be used as a means of demonstrating greater ability, resources, or commitment to their intended audience (Kearns, 2021).

Striking hard targets also allows a group to demonstrate a degree of selectivity in its violence. One of the main messaging elements of the campaign that MRTA sought to convey in their output was that it fought a war against the state on behalf of the people, not against the people. This is expressed in an early document titled ‘For the cause of the poor! With the masses and weapons! We will win!’, which also became a slogan for the group. This document announced their cause and justification for the armed resistance, and it appealed for unity across the left (MRTA, 1985). This is a document from before their outbidding campaign and rivalry with Shining Path began but sets out key aspects of the group's approach. This aspect of a war for the people not against emerges again in relation to SL’s conduct. This is discussed further in the following section as it relates to casualty counts, as striking hard targets that are representative of the state enables the group to differentiate itself from its rivals in terms of who the victims of the violence are.

Casualties

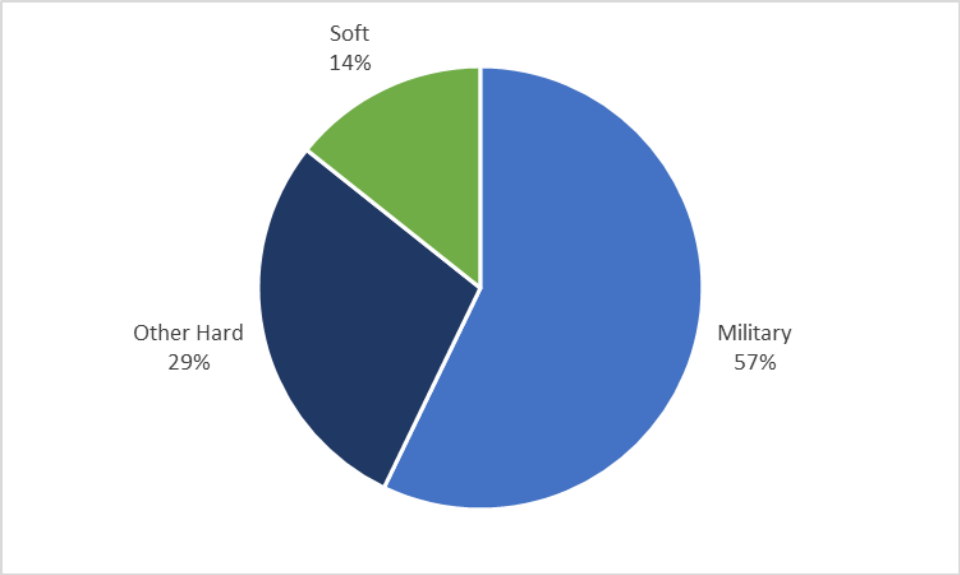
The expectation in an outbidding strategy is higher casualties, however the number of casualties inflicted by the MRTA varies significantly year by year, with no clear or consistent pattern being visible at first glance. The average casualty count varies by a considerable margin each year from less than one to over 6. This makes it difficult to assess the intent of the group.



(Figure 6.5, Average Number of Casualties Per Attack by Year, data sourced from GTD)

However, a pattern does emerge when focusing on mass casualty events (10 or more casualties). These attacks are useful to examine as they provide a clear picture of how the group carries out attacks in which it seeks to inflict high human losses, and how it does so while balancing its communicative strategic needs.

Throughout the campaign, 21 mass casualty attacks took place. Of these attacks, 86% were against hard targets. Most of these hard targets were military, constituting 57% of mass casualty hard target attacks. This demonstrates the delicate balancing act that a group must perform when seeking to represent a population but also needing to generate media attention from attacks without killing those it seeks to represent, with the additional constraint of having criticised a rival organization for doing exactly that. The group, in a 1987 statement, makes very clear that a major difference between itself and its main rival Shining Path is that MRTA do not target the members of the general population (1987ii). They describe their own militants as having 'exemplary behaviour with the people', while they claim that SL 'has maintained its practice of causing only casualties to the civilian population'.



(Figure 6.6, Mass Casualty Targeting, data sourced from GTD)

The benefit of mass casualty attacks, especially in an outbidding campaign, is their ability to generate mass media attention. There is a relationship between the lethality of a conflict incident and press coverage of the incident (Miller and Albert, 2015). However, these attacks can also lead to outrage not just among the group's enemies, but also among its own constituent population (Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007). The MRTA sought to differentiate between what they determined to be legitimate targets and the civilian population, following their self-presentation as legitimate armed forces rather than a criminal organisation. One example that supports this interpretation can be found in their accusation against SL of 'irrational violence that affects the people themselves' (1996ii). This illustrated an attempt to differentiate their brand of violence (context discussed further down). In the group's pursuit of mass casualties to generate media attention, and the need to minimise harm to civilians, mass casualty attacks against hard targets representative of the government was a means of satisfying both needs when the constituent population and enemy occupy the same geographical space (McCartan et al, 2008).

The most famous of MRTA's attacks began on 17th December 1996 when 14 members of the group broke into the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima during an official party with numerous diplomatic, political and other significant guests in attendance. The group took control of the building and took hundreds of hostages. Most hostages were released relatively soon after the initial phase of the attack, but 72 would remain in captivity until being freed by Peruvian forces. For 126 days, the crisis dragged on with negotiations between the terrorists and the government ongoing. More importantly, the ongoing and high-profile nature of the attack proved to be perfect for catching global media attention for the group, generating far more awareness of the group than any of their previous attacks. The crisis came to an end when Peruvian commandos stormed the residence, freeing all but one of the remaining hostages (who died during the raid), and killed all the terrorists (Panjabi, 1997). Although it should be noted that some terrorists

survived the commando raid but were summarily executed shortly afterwards (Corte IDH, 2015).

This attack was a complex undertaking, requiring the coordination of numerous militants, planning for timing and location/means of entry, the relative sophistication of the weapons used, and the ability to hold hostages for a four-month period. The attack was undertaken to coincide with the party being hosted and the group broke into the well-secured residence by blowing a hole in the wall surrounding the compound (Panjabi, 1997).

Outbidding campaigns have been shown to escalate when two or more groups are capable of continuously upping their bids, until there is a need for a spectacular event for one group to differentiate itself. For example, Biberman and Zahid (2019) examine the deliberate killing of children as a desperate attempt to succeed in an outbidding campaign. The lethality of the Peruvian hostage crisis was relatively low, at least for such events. One hostage was killed, and two commandos were killed in the raid. The death toll for the hostage takers was higher, with all of them being killed in the raid that ended the crisis – but they are not included in the casualty count. This is interesting in that the campaign does result in the group becoming desperate and undertaking a big and attention-grabbing mission but not in the extremely deadly style that might be expected. Nonetheless it can be seen as an escalation in the campaign.

In the group's third press release during the hostage crisis, they yet again sought to differentiate themselves from Shining Path and in doing so also reiterate their intention to reduce civilian casualties, explaining that 'we do not accept that we continue to be compared to [SL], an organization that we have repeatedly condemned, for the use of irrational violence that affects the people themselves' (1996ii). This is not to say that the group has always sought low casualties, but they aim to clarify that their intention has not been to harm civilians. The group still considers government forces and representatives to be acceptable targets. This tells us that the group is still trying to distinguish itself from its rival organisation (SL), and that even while it is undertaking drastic action in a desperate bid to survive that it is still aware enough of the need to keep potentially supportive population onside. They assert again that a key difference between themselves and Shining Path is that they do not inflict violence upon the people, that they show restraint as a selling point which can be seen as running contrary to the expectation of mass casualties outlined.

Summary

Throughout their campaign the MRTA found themselves in a difficult situation in which they needed to demonstrate their strength to their audience but do so in such a way that did not result in harm to their constituent population. This was vital to their strategy given their stated aim to differentiate themselves from their rivals by being more selective in their violence and not harming those they claimed to represent.

The main trends which emerged from looking at the group's output was their intent to distinguish their "brand" by presenting themselves as a legitimate military entity as

evidenced through language used in their reports, their uniforms, weapons, and desire to be seen as waging a "legal" war. This would have served to communicate to their target audience that they are the group most suitable to achieve the stated goals.

ETA

Spain's embrace of democracy in the 1970s and 1980s is widely considered to be a success (Martinez, 2015). However, for ETA and its supporters this turn to democracy posed a new set of problems. The group split into two main factions, ETA-M and ETA-PM. ETA-M (referred to from here onwards as ETA) sought to continue the violent struggle to achieve their goals, whereas ETA-PM sought to begin to distance themselves from violence and achieve change through the new democracy that was forming. These two factions of the group would be competing for support from the same population, one through overtly violent means and one through less violent means (Tejerina, 2001).

To reiterate, this case study focusses on ETA's outbidding campaign. The years of this campaign are 1976-82 and will focus on attacks carried out within Spain which includes attacks carried out in the Spanish Basque country. During this time, the group did carry out a few attacks outside of Spain, in France and the Netherlands, but these have been excluded. The group's ultimate goal has always been to secure independence for the Basque Country from Spain. However, the goal of the outbidding campaign is a process goal rather an outcome goal, with the group aiming to secure its levels of support and thus its access to resources and recruits (Mahoney, 2018).

Background

Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), translated as "Basque Homeland and Liberty" in English, formed during the Franco era in Spain. Its precursor group initially starting as a student group in the 1950s before ETA mutated into a terrorist group in the late 1950s and early 1960s, with their activities turning lethal in the late 1960s (Sullivan, 1988). The outbidding campaign started in 1976, stemming from developments internal and external to the group. Mahoney (2018) explains:' As Spain began its transition to democracy after the death of General Franco in 1975, ETA underwent a schism that split the group into two separate organizations: ETA-militar (ETA) and ETA-pm. Although ETA had been divided into numerous internal factions during its early development and had previously endured splinters, the schism that occurred at the end of the Franco era was the group's most significant rupture. Following the break, ETA adopted a strategy of terrorist outbidding in an effort to become the focal actor in the Basque separatist movement' (p.924).

The split into ETA and ETA-PM was caused by uncertainty around how the group should move forward as Spain democratised (Clark, 1990). As a result of the split, three main camps developed. Firstly, there was ETA who believed they should remain militarily autonomous and advocated for hardline demands in relation to Basque autonomy and independence. Secondly, there was ETA-PM who sought to work with other groups and unions but would continue to use some violence in the hopes of achieving independence. Thirdly, there were the organisations willing to work entirely

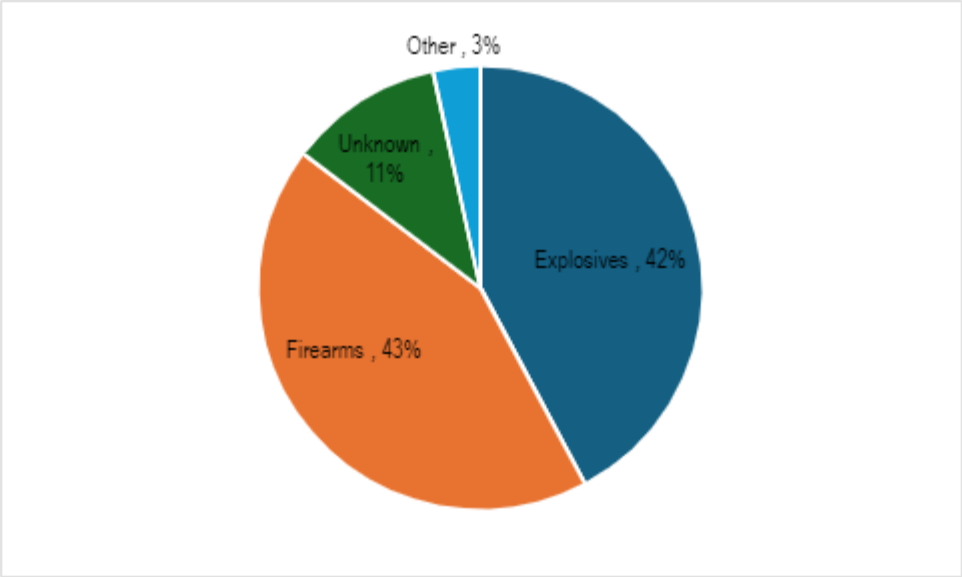
within the Spanish political system to achieve the goals that they sought (Weinberg et al, 1992). In the language of Kydd and Walter, by being the most violent group ETA was aiming to demonstrate its zealotry and paint its rivals, in particular ETA-PM, as sellouts who were willing to accept a deal that fell short of full independence. The outbidding campaign is considered successful.

There are some who claim that ETA's attrition campaign starts around the time of Spanish democratisation (e.g. Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007). This relates back to the process and outcome goals issue. ETA's ultimate goal was to secure Basque independence, and their own statements make clear that they intended to conduct an attrition strategy to achieve this (LaFree et al, 2012, p.12). However, before they could carry out this attrition campaign they had to "earn the right" to do so by proving themselves to be the representative group of the Basque population through their outbidding strategy. This outbidding campaign is the focus of this section.

As can be seen from the paragraphs above, the context of this campaign is one of pre-existing tensions between the state and the group. However, the end of Franco's regime and Spain's transition to democracy meant that ETA would have to deal with a different government, and the new political setting was unfamiliar for all groups involved at the start of the campaign.

Weapon Selection

The expectation for an outbidding campaign's weapon use is towards sophisticated weaponry due to the group's need to differentiate itself from its rivals. More sophisticated weapons also communicate potential greater abilities than rivals. Across the entirety of ETA's campaign, the main weapons used were explosives and firearms, as is almost always the case in terrorism (Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019). The GTD data reveals that of all the attacks carried out, 42% involved the use of explosives, 43% the use of firearms, 3% of attacks involved neither explosives nor firearms, and in 11% of cases the weapon type was unknown. In terms of why such a large proportion of the weapons used in attacks is unknown, this can possibly be attributed to the age of the case being examined which would make collecting all the information on attacks difficult. This means that researchers for the GTD have been able to identify from reports certain, but not all, details from the attack. The unknown weapons are not factored into the analysis as it has not been possible to gain any clarification on what they were.



(Figure 6.7, ETA weapon selection across campaign, data sourced from GTD)

While they make up a very small amount of the total attacks, the "other" weapons used include incendiaries and melee weapons (handheld weapons like knives and clubs). These are considered unsophisticated given the ease of acquisition and ease of use, but do not make up enough of the attacks to be considered relevant in the overall assessment of weapon selection in the campaign.

The group's use of firearms in their attacks, especially when carrying out assassinations (discussed in the casualties section) can be seen as an indicator of the group's resources. Groups that use firearms can do so because they have enough recruits so carrying out an "in person" attack with the high likelihood of losing members is acceptable (Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019). This communicates to their own audience in this strategy that the group is already well supported and well resourced, proving its ability to deliver on its promises. Firearms also convey selectivity given their lethality can be more discriminate than a bomb. Of course, in the real world this is not always the case, and they can (and often are) used for indiscriminate violence too.

The use of automatic weapons by the group can be seen as sophisticated. While they were not using heavy weaponry, the ability to acquire automatic weapons in a state with a strong counterterror apparatus would allow them to be considered sophisticated in the context. In states where automatic firearms are more commonplace, the threshold for sophistication of weapons would be higher. A group in a European country with effective gun control still being able to access fully automatic weapons shows a degree of competence. ETA was able to acquire guns through theft, purchase, and manufacturing them (Duquet and Goris, 2018).

Explosives offer a group the opportunity to inflict significant human and material damage. An October 1981 attack showcases the infliction of material damage. The group detonated a bomb on a Spanish Navy destroyer docked in Santander, causing significant damage and nearly sinking the ship. This attack demonstrates how to

effectively carry out a bomb attack even in situations in which mass casualties may not be desired. The target is symbolic of the Spanish state, ETA's main enemy. There were no human casualties which prevents possible backlash from the constituent population but inflicting such damage to a navy ship demonstrates the extent of the group's capabilities. From an outbidding perspective this is ideal. It is a show of strength that rivals are unlikely to be able to match. The operation and weapon show a high degree of complexity: 'officials said the 5a.m. explosion was caused by a powerful and sophisticated bomb placed by frogmen against the hull or strapped to an iron support of the jetty where the destroyer had been berthed' (Burns, 1981). These explosives are also considered to be sophisticated. As with the firearms, they may have been difficult to acquire. And explosives do require technical expertise to use effectively.

The use of both types of weapons gave the group a degree of flexibility in how it carried out attacks. Having access to explosives, as well as appropriate targets, allowed the group to act quickly when development or events impacted the group. For example, in 1981 ETA-PM agreed a ceasefire with the government, providing an opportunity for ETA to show that it was the appropriate group to back in their outbidding competition. Less than a day after ETA-PM had announced the ceasefire, ETA responded by carrying out a bomb attack against a police target (Clark, 1990). While the attack did not kill anyone, it did wound three officers but more importantly it was a quick response that communicated that the group was not going to accept this compromise.

It should be noted that this attack was not an act of spoiling. The aim of this attack was to demonstrate ETA's viability as a strong representative of the Basque population that would not settle for a lesser deal. This is made clear by Clark who quotes a statement made by ETA's political allies criticising ETA-PM as essentially being weak and self-interested:

> 'the cease-fire of [ETA –PM] is neither a surprise nor a solution. We have known for months that there was a negotiation project between EE [a Basque political organisation] and the Spanish government to get [ETA-PM] to abandon armed struggle in return for nothing more than amnesty for their prisoners. But the cease-fire solves nothing because it does not deal with the outstanding issues today in Euskadi' (p.98).

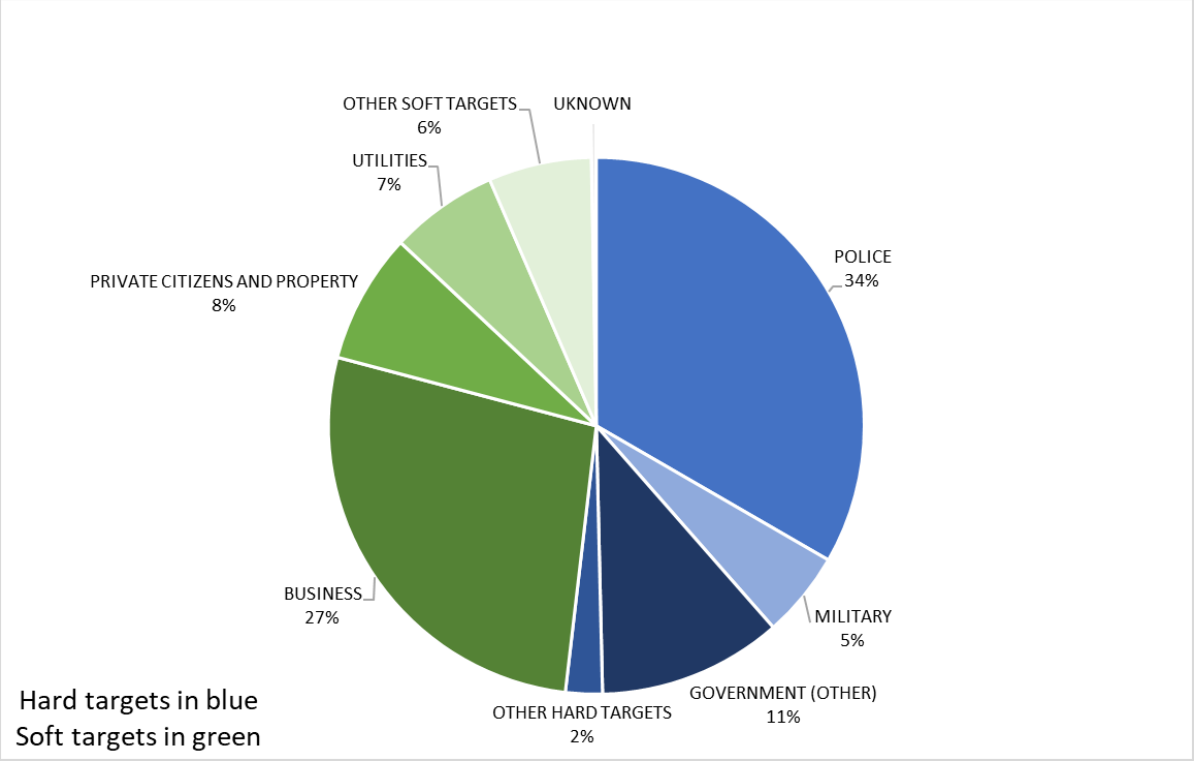
It is shown that the group were employing an outbidding strategy, and the weapon selection aligns with the expectations for this strategy. While the qualitative data is somewhat limited, it does show that outbidding was likely an influential factor in determining weapon selection.

Target Selection

The hypothesis for targeting in an outbidding campaign was that a mixture of hard and soft targets would be attacked. This is because soft targets can be used to demonstrate commitment to the cause but hard targets are an effective means of showing the ability to carry out a campaign. Hard targets are also an upping of the bid which rival groups may not be able to match.

Across the entire campaign, the pattern of target selection drawn from the GTD data shows a preference for mixed targeting, in line with expected results: 52% of targets were hard and 48% were soft. Police targets accounted for one third of the overall targets, and 64% of the hard targets. Police, in the context of this research, includes both the conventional police and the Civil Guard. The police are visual embodiments of the Spanish state, and so striking them is an enticing target for ETA as it allows them to communicate to their audience that they are maintaining the fight against the state. Conversi explains 'policemen became symbolic targets. ETA's activists could hardly increase their campaign of terror against more important targets, such as industrialists and MPs, because this would have risked their actions becoming less popular' (1997, p.249).

This also serves to reiterate the curious aspect of an outbidding campaign: that the population of the victims of the attacks are not the intended audience (Kydd and Walter, 2006). While ETA did seek to ultimately communicate with the Spanish state to try and secure independence, these attacks are not communicating to that audience. These attacks are using representatives of the Spanish state as a means of communicating to ETA's own constituent population that they will carry on fighting for their ultimate goal and will not settle for a lesser deal. It is shown that the police offer an acceptable target to both the group and its population for this communication.



(Figure 6.8, ETA Targeting across campaign, data sourced from GTD)

The targeting of the military could follow a similar logic, as they constitute representatives of the state. Military targets account for only 5% of the total targets, and 10% of the hard targets. However, these attacks were often significant. The group was

very selective in which military targets to strike, the preferred option being assassinations of senior officers both active and retired.

Being able to strike high ranking military personnel communicates to the group's audience their significant abilities. Not only does this show the group capabilities in striking hard targets, it shows selectivity and precision (Wilson et al, 2010), and can be a means of generating attention for the group without having to inflict mass casualties. As with police targets, the military are seen as legitimate targets as occupiers (Drake, 1998). Furthermore, high ranking officers of the military can be differentiated from the lower ranks of the military in that they can be seen as having a degree of responsibility for the situation in the Basque region rather than simply being those who carry out the orders.

The most frequent classification of the groups soft target were businesses, accounting for 27% of targets in total attacks and representing 57% of the soft targets struck. Business is a broad target category, and includes sub-categories such as "bank/commerce", "construction", and "restaurant/bar/cafe" among others (in the GTD codebook). In this campaign, among the most frequently targeted type of businesses were bank/commerce (21% of businesses struck), industrial/textiles/factory (18%), and restaurant/bar/cafe (14%).

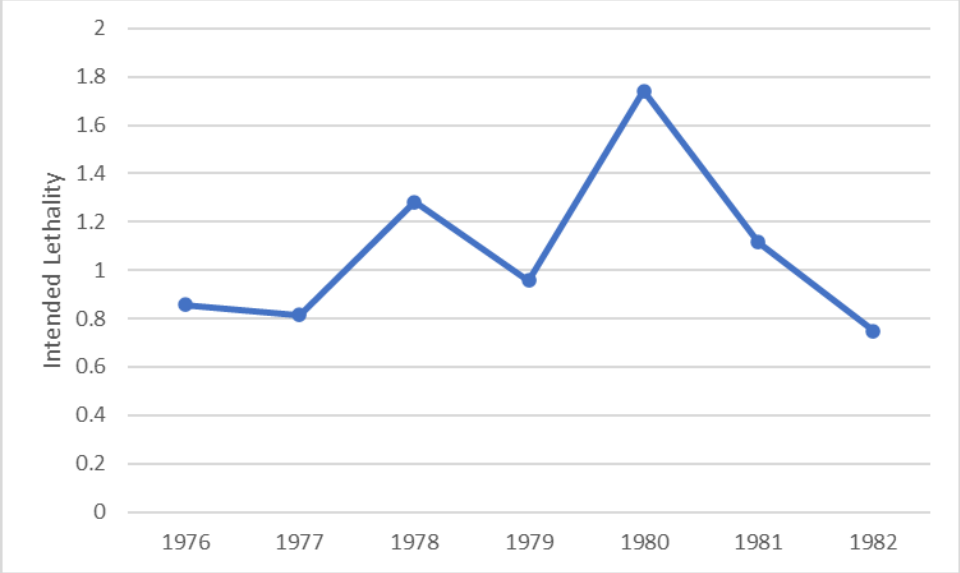
It is possible that attacks against businesses were conducted by ETA as punishment for these businesses not paying the "revolutionary tax". The revolutionary tax was similar to protection money paid to organised crime, essentially it was the group extorting money from local businesses. It served as a means of raising funds for the group and non-payment would result in violence (Alexander, 2004). The violence would appear to be a decision by the group and not the result of poor control of its members (Sullivan, 1988). ETA are not the only terrorist group to perform such activities, the PIRA (Soule, 1989) and FARC (Ortiz, 2002) behaved similarly. This violence can be seen as a necessary means of generating income for the group (Clark,1984). Both ETA and ETA-PM were attempting to impose a revolutionary tax on the same constituency, hinting at the possibility of the tax being a means to impose legitimacy as well as gain funds.

Casualties

The hypothesis for casualty levels in an outbidding campaign is that it would be high. This is because it serves as a means of demonstrating both the commitment to combatting the enemy and the ability to combat the enemy.

Using the data from the GTD, across the entire campaign the average casualty count of each attack was 1.13. Across the years of the campaign, the average casualty count moves between a low of 0.75 in 1982 and a high of 1.74 in 1980. These can be considered as low level intended casualties, the average casualty count for a mass casualty campaign outlined in the methodology is five. These low casualties run contrary to the established expectation of higher intended casualties. This is not to say there were no mass casualty attacks throughout the campaign. There were numerous instances of explosives being used to injure many people in single attacks but the trend across the campaign was toward must lower casualties. This raises the question as to

why, even with a surge in violence during the period, were attacks so limited in their inflicting of casualties?



(Figure 6.9, Average Casualty Count by Year of Campaign, data sourced from GTD)

The hesitancy to inflict mass casualties can be explained by examining the simultaneous bomb attacks in Madrid in 1979 against railway stations and an airport carried out by ETA's rival group, ETA-PM. Accounts vary between sources, but at least five people were killed and over a hundred injured in the attacks. This prompted a significant backlash against the group from supporters and affiliated political groups (Sullivan, 1988). The incident caused embarrassment for the group, suggesting that it was not capable of selective violence, and was seen to be inconsistent with its political thought.

While ETA-M is thought of as the more militant of the groups (Clark, 1990), its avoidance of attacks on such a scale in terms of casualties shows an awareness of the need to maintain constituent support – mass casualties can be a communicator of strength, but they can provoke backlash as well. The potential negative response to mass casualty attacks under the correct circumstances is well established in the terrorism literature (e.g. Thruelsen, 2010, Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007). ETA experienced backlash when they carried out a bomb attack against the construction site for a new nuclear power plant in Lemoiz which killed two workers. The response against the group for this was significant, leading to street demonstrations against the group for their violence (Zirakzadeh, 2002).

ETA carried out assassinations of prominent officials. Examples of these include the killings of politicians such as Victor Legorburu Ibarreche in 1976 and Augusto Unceta Barrenecheain 1977. The targets here were both mayors of towns in the Basque region, Galdacano and Guernica respectively. There are benefits to a group conducting an outbidding campaign when they carry out assassinations. In cases when the group does not want to inflict mass casualties because of the established constraints, an assassination can be beneficial in its restriction of casualties. This is assuming that the

means of assassination has been selected appropriately, as discussed further below. A well targeted assassination also enables a group to strike what it, and potentially its constituent population too, perceives as legitimate targets. This violence is selective both in terms of numbers of casualties and specific intended victims. An assassination also has the potential to generate large amount of media coverage. This offers a group a potential alternative to inflicting mass casualties as a means of spreading their message.

An assassination suggests a degree of sophistication from a group, in terms of intelligence gathering ability and access to appropriate targets. In environments which restrict groups' operations, environments with a strong state apparatus to counter terrorism, acquiring complex weapons can be difficult. Operations like this offer an opportunity for a group to demonstrate its ability and willingness, even if it does not have the material resources it seeks. Jenkins (1980) states that bombings are easier to carry out than assassinations, adding to the value of these attacks as a demonstration of the group's effectiveness.

The three factors can be seen coming together in ETA's assassination of Barrenechea in the Basque town of Guernica. In October 1977, as he was parking his car, ETA militants opened fire with automatic weapons and killed him and his two bodyguards. Barrenechea, as well as being the mayor of Guernica, had interests in local businesses, and had held official positions under Franco (COVITE, 2023ii). He was deemed to be a legitimate target by ETA, as were his bodyguards who were civil guards. The assassination was successful in that it only killed the intended targets and there was no collateral damage, and the targets were "legitimate" in that they were governmental.

Perhaps most importantly, the attack generated a significant amount of press coverage, making front page news in Spanish papers (COVITE, 2023ii) and being reported the world over. The effectiveness of this kind of attack is demonstrated by media outlets giving a platform for the group to spread its message, even if that is not the intention of the outlets. For example, the Washington Post's (Acoca, 1977) reporting of the aftermath of the attack quotes directly from the communique put out by ETA claiming responsibility:

> 'Responsibility for the murder was claimed today by ETA, the Marxist-Leninist Basque underground that has rejected the government's amnesty bill and offer of negotiations for self-rule. An ETA communique said it will "continue to attack all the tools used by the oligarchy for dominating the Basque country"'.

This case exemplifies why assassination in this campaign was such a useful tool for the group. It grants the group a platform to spread its message. The Washington Post here is communicating to ETA's target audience that they are the group to support, that they are both willing and able to keep fighting on behalf of the Basque people to achieve their objectives.

William Chislett reporting for *The Times* also covered this event, and like in the *Washington Post* article, gives enough space for ETA to explain their cause. An extract of his article reads: 'the military wing of ETA announced in Bilbao that it had not given

up its “armed struggle” as previously reported, because it did not consider the amnesty agreed between the Government and the Opposition sufficient’ (1977). ETA, in this statement, are very clearly communicating that they are not going to settle for a lesser deal (unlike their rivals) and this makes them a better candidate for the population to support in achieving their ultimate goals.

However, the group’s assassinations were not always as precise as intended. For instance, one of the group’s most notable assassinations was that of Juan Maria de Araluce Villar, a prominent Franco government figure. The group carried out the attack using three militants wielding firearms. This also killed his driver and three police officers. These are seen as acceptable additional casualties by ETA as it is reported they referred to them as “guard dogs” in their claim of responsibility (COVITE, 2023). However, 10 civilian bystanders were wounded in the attack which dispels the notion of selectivity.

Summary

The theme running throughout this campaign is the selectivity of their violence, or at least relatively selective violence in terms of numbers of casualties, targets, and weapon selections.

The response of the group’s constituent population encouraged ETA to adopt a low casualty campaign. Instead of inflicting mass casualties, as was expected, the group instead adopted low casualty but targeted violence for maximum impact. This relates to their targeting practices as well, in which they would strike ideologically appropriate targets which their audience would support – prominent government officials and the police. These are harder targets, but the group also struck soft targets. These were often businesses, and this is likely due to failure to pay revolutionary taxes. The group’s weapon selection was a mix of firearms and explosives, both considered sophisticated in the context of the group’s setting. Firearms also play into the notion of selectivity, the ability to only strike the intended target. Explosives are less discriminate, but when used against appropriate targets can still meet this need. While this study uncovered less evidence for why ETA undertook its attacks compared to other cases, there is still evidence of strategy influencing decision making, particularly in relation how the group carried out and leveraged assassinations. As such, the case still illustrates how strategy shaped, in part, the decision to adopt the types of violence identified.

Conclusion

Both MRTA and ETA found themselves in competition with other groups for the support of their constituent population. MRTA was competing with separate rival organisations; whereas ETA was competing primarily with splinter factions from the same core group, although not exclusively. One related difference from this is that ETA’s campaign was as much about showing that violence is the way forward to achieve political goals as it was about showing that it was the group to be backed, i.e. ETA was in competition with potentially peaceful elements. The campaign by MRTA was more focused on whose violence was more appropriate.

	MRTA	ETA
Weapon Selection: Sophisticated	Sophisticated	Sophisticated
Target Selection: Mix of hard and soft	Mixed	Mixed
Casualties: High	Varies year by year between low and high	Low

(Figure 6.10, Hypothesis matrix showing findings of this chapter. Confirmed hypotheses are in green, partially confirmed are in yellow, not confirmed are in red)

Table 6.10 summarises the hypotheses for the types of violence used in an outbidding campaign and the results. Both groups' activities included the use of relatively sophisticated weapons, as expected, although some elements of the weapon selection were more basic. In the case of the MRTA, the explosives used were relatively basic but the firearms and other weapons used by the group are classified as sophisticated. The group certainly attempted to present an image of sophisticated armament through its communications although it should be noted that explosive attacks made up the majority of attacks. ETA's use of automatic firearms, in a European context, allows them to be considered as sophisticated. Easy access to explosives can also be considered as advanced in this setting. Both groups sought to display the sophistication of their weaponry communicate to their audience that they are the best equipped group to achieve their stated goals. Weapon selection conformed to the hypothesis.

Terrorist groups adopt an outbidding strategy to convince a constituent population of suitability to represent. In these campaigns the groups went about it in different ways. MRTA sought to portray itself as a militaristic entity – uniformed, organised, heavily armed, engaging Peru's own military. ETA, constrained by the circumstances of its campaign, demonstrated its suitability through precise and selective violence. The role the constituent population plays in influencing terrorist group violence had been highlighted in the literature review. It had been shown to potentially be a factor that would cause groups to control their levels of violence. It had not been expected to have such a strong influence in this strategy. It is an element of decision making to be considered moving forward.

In the case of the MRTA, there was an expected mixture of hard and soft targets – although this did favour soft targets. However, the group's more significant attacks were mostly directed against hard targets. ETA had almost an equal share between hard and soft targets, supporting the hypothesis. Both groups took advantage of the communicative strengths of striking hard targets as a means of "upping the bid" in their respective campaigns. Target selection conformed to the hypothesis.

ETA had very low average casualty count across their campaign in a surprising contrast to the expected result. This is down to the constraints coming from the constituent population. In order to demonstrate their effectiveness, ETA instead chose a policy of more selective violence and made good use of assassinations to communicate with their audience – these were low casualty and ideologically acceptable targets on the whole.

The MRTA showed considerable variation in their average casualty count year by year, but the group did carry out mass casualty attacks, against hard government targets, to make the most of the promotion that comes from such attacks. They used these attacks to communicate their ability to effectively be the representatives of their constituent population, again seeking to be seen as an effective military entity. However, the group's most notable event, the hostage-taking at the Japanese Ambassador's compound, was a low casualty affair. A key takeaway from this chapter is how an outbidding strategy does not have to rely on mass casualty attacks and that in a constrained environment, groups will adapt and demonstrate their capabilities through other means. MRTA partially conformed to the hypothesis and ETA did not conform, as neither case provided a full confirmation.

7. Attrition: Concede or Die

The 1983 Marine barracks bombing in Beirut; the 2001 September 11th attacks in New York; the 1946 King David Hotel bombing in Jerusalem - why do terrorists carry out sensational attacks seeking to kill vast numbers of people? Terrorists who kill seemingly indiscriminately and in large numbers until their demands are met are often utilising an attrition strategy. Kydd and Walter classify the attacks mentioned at the start of this chapter as part of their group's respective attrition campaigns.

An attrition strategy aims to inflict costs on an enemy, and to demonstrate that the group can continue to inflict costs until the enemy gives in to the group's political demands. The group carrying out an attrition campaign is betting that it is capable of inflicting greater costs than the opponent is willing to endure. The anti-colonial insurgencies undertaken in Cyprus, Palestine, and Aden against the British Empire following World War II are examples highlighted by Kydd and Walter. They explain that these campaigns functioned by carrying out attacks against British interests, communicating to the British population and government that the cost in lives was too high a price to pay to hold on to these territories so the British would withdraw (p. 60). This understanding of attrition is separate to others (e.g. military) in that the aim is not the physical depletion of adversaries' personnel or equipment but rather their political will.

The cases being examined in this chapter are Chechen rebels' activities between 1999 and 2006 in Russia (excluding the territory of Chechnya itself), and the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in France between 1994 and 1996. The cases selected for this strategy are both typical cases of attrition. However, to increase generalisability, the two cases between themselves differ on certain key factors such as geography, time period, and ideology to a degree. While both groups are Islamist, the Chechens are considered as a nationalist group that adopted Islamism (Larzilliere, 2007).

The hypotheses developed in the theory chapter were:

1) Casualties are expected to be high. A group will seek to inflict maximum casualties as a demonstration of its ability and willingness to impose costs on an enemy until they meet the group's demands.

2) Weapon selection is expected to involve the use of more advanced weaponry. A group using advanced weaponry showcases the resources and ability it has to follow through on its threats and sustain a campaign.

3) Targets are expected to be a mixture of hard and soft. Hard targets are possible when constituent constraints prohibit the attacking of soft targets, they are also useful to more directly communicate with a government willing to endure civilian casualties. Soft targets are expected to be struck when groups do not possess the means to effectively strike hard targets, to enable them to inflict devastating and attention-grabbing attacks, and to use the population to pressure the government in democratic systems.

Chechen Rebels

Chechnya is a Russian republic in the Caucasus on the border with Georgia. In 1994 and ended in 1996 with de facto, but unrecognised, independence for Chechnya (Schaefer, 2010). Three years later, the second Chechen War broke out with Russia seeking to reestablish control over the region. It is this context that the campaign being examined occurred, with Chechen rebels seeking to convince the Russian population and government that it would inflict heavy costs on them until Chechnya's independence was granted. The campaign would ultimately be unsuccessful(Schaefer, 2010).

Background

Referred to as '[Russia's] Osama Bin Laden' (Gough, 2007), Shamil Basayev was responsible for some of the worst atrocities of the Second Chechen war. Named after Imam Shamil, a leader of Caucasus fighters against the Russian empire in the 19th century, he would live up to this by fighting against the Russians in the first Chechen war and on the outbreak of the second war would be the key figure of the conflict. Through the campaigns he oversaw, he would be responsible for the deaths of thousands and bring slaughter to the streets of Moscow. He was killed in an explosion in 2006,apparently as part of a Russian intelligence operation. The campaign he led inside Russia is the focus of this section. This campaign can be considered a use of the strategy of attrition. This is emphasised in an interview with the UK's Channel 4 (Journeyman Pictures, 2023), in which Basayev threatened more Beslan style attacks). He subsequently stated: 'But there is one condition [to ending the war]. That is the non-negotiable and full withdrawal of the occupying Russian troops from our territory'. Essentially, the message conveyed can be interpreted as the attacks will continue until the Russian government meets the demands of Basayev.

These attacks focused on in this section are carried out either by named groups, or by groups simply labelled as Chechen rebels in the GTD. This research treats Shamil Basayev as the main decision maker in the campaign as he was able to command a coalition of various Chechen forces and very much came to be seen as the leader and face of the Chechen rebels during the second Chechen war (Murphy, 2004). There are other major players in the conflict on the Chechen side, such as Maskhadov, and these have worked with and been linked to Basayev to justify their inclusion in the data. To make clear, the attacks sampled are those perpetrated by named Chechen groups (with exceptions discussed below) and attacks attributed to non-specific Chechen rebels. Attacks whose perpetrators are unknown are not included.

There are numerous attacks by "unknown" which are not included here due to the lack of certainty. Islambouli Brigades of Al-Qaeda are not included as they may not have been operating in coordination with Basayev and the wider mission. Hence the August 2004 bombing of two civilian aircraft which resulted in the deaths of 90 people (including the bombers) are not included as both the Islambouli Brigade and a Basayev affiliated group claimed the attack (Moore, 2012). It is unclear who was responsible,

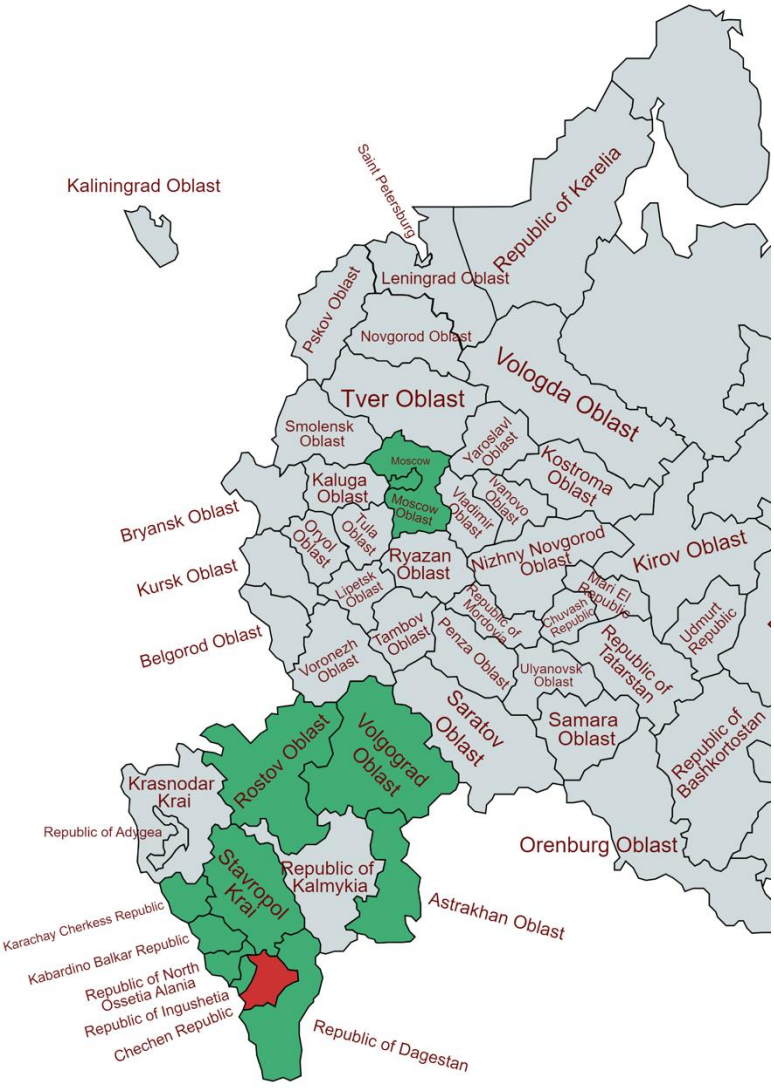
although the GTD puts the Islambouli brigade as the perpetrator, further cementing the decision to not include it in this analysis.

From a methodological point of view many of the websites hosting the statements of the groups concerned have ceased to function in recent years making them significantly more difficult to access. The research process produced a large number of dead links. It has still been possible to access some, but some are based on extracts of statements or reporting of the incidents. This did reduce the amount of qualitative data available to me. I was still able to find sufficient material to carry out the research despite this setback.

The location of the campaign being studied is Russia, excluding Chechnya. The reason for separating the rest of Russia from Chechnya is that different campaigns were being employed simultaneously within Chechnya at the same time communicating with both the wider Russian population and government as well as the Chechen population, whereas the campaign outside of Chechnya was an attrition campaign aimed at communicating with just the non-Chechen Russian population/government. This means that all attacks within Chechnya are excluded but attacks in neighbouring Caucasus republics, such as Dagestan or Ingushetia, are included as well as attacks in more distant locations such as Moscow. The timeline for this campaign runs from the start of the second Chechen war in August 1999 to the death of Shamil Basayev in July 2006.

The campaign conducted by the Chechen rebels in Russia occurred at the start of and during the Second Chechen War. The first Chechen War had only ended in 1996, three years before the start of the campaign being examined here. This context is important in understanding the dynamic between the Russian government and Chechen rebels. The recent memory of conflict between the two sides provided a foundation of mutual distrust and antagonism, much of the groundwork justifying violence towards each other had already been established. One key element of difference which could impact behaviour is the leadership of the Russian government. During the first Chechen War, Boris Yeltsin had been president but by early 2000, at the start of the second Chechen War, Vladimir Putin had taken power (McKevitt, 2024). As a new entity for the Chechen rebels to deal with, he may have responded differently to violence than Yeltsin did.

Activity



(Figure 7.1. Map of western Russia showing Chechnya in Red and locations in which Chechen Rebels carried out attacks in green. Map made by author)

Two major events from the campaign were the hostage taking incidents at Dubrovka and Beslan. These will be mentioned numerous times during this section on Chechnya so an overview of the events will be provided. The Dubrovka incident is also referred to as the Moscow theatre hostage crisis, or the Nord-Ost crisis. In October 2002, approximately 40 Chechen rebels armed with firearms and explosives took over the Dubrovka Theatre in Moscow during a performance of *Nord-Ost*. The situation lasted 4 days, gathered significant media coverage, and ended when Russian forces pumped an anaesthetic gas into the building's ventilation system to incapacitate the hostage takers and then stormed

the building. The incident resulted in the deaths of all the hostage takers, and 130 of the hostages (Dunlop, 2006).

The Beslan incident occurred in September 2004 when a group of Chechen rebels, again armed with firearms and explosives, took control of a school in Beslan (North Ossetia). The rebels gathered the children and staff in the school's gymnasium and deprived them of food and water unless the Russian government would give in to their demands. Approximately 1100 hostages were taken, with a (relatively) small number of them being executed. After three days, explosions and gunfire broke out and Russian forces stormed the gymnasium. The crisis ended with over three hundred deaths, more than half of them children (Dunlop, 2006). As with the Dubrovka incident, this situation gathered an enormous amount of press coverage.

Casualties

Given the enormity of the number of casualties at Beslan (over 1000 combined dead and injured), average casualty count across the campaign both inclusive and exclusive of this event is used. Excluding Beslan, the average casualty count across the campaign is still remarkably high at 47.2. With Beslan included in the data, this figure climbs even higher to 67.6. This is certainly a mass casualty campaign given that 10 dead and injured was considered the threshold for a mass casualty attack as established in the methodology chapter, and an average of 5 across the entire campaign for it to be considered a mass casualty campaign.

Even in the hostage taking events, Dubrovka and Beslan, casualties were always expected – the demands of the terrorists were unlikely to be accepted by the state. The demands of the hostage takers in Beslan were essentially a full withdrawal of Russian forces from Chechnya and other requests to which the government was unlikely to concede[4]:

'We demand that the war in Chechnya be stopped immediately and that the withdrawal of forces be carried out;

We insist that Putin immediately resigns from his post as President of the Russian Federation; and

We insist that all hostages, be it children or adults, go on hunger strike in support of our demands' (Dolnik, 2007, p.13).

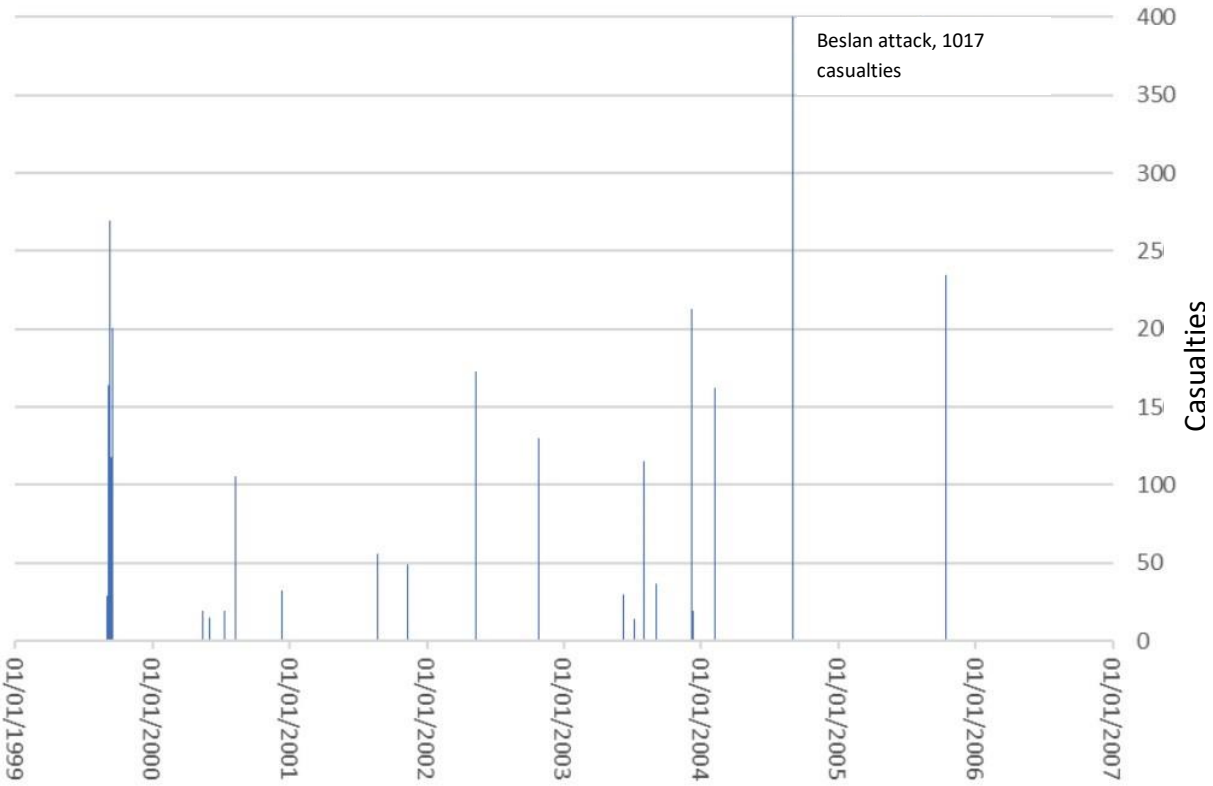
Stepanova (2004) explains 'While in the process of talks, the scale and feasibility of the demands formulated by the terrorists gave the impression that the demands were not necessarily the main purpose of the hostage operation' (p.3). The suggestion is that the group was seeking a wider impact than a straightforward hostage trade, although the ultimate aim of the group was the end of the war in Chechnya and the withdrawal of Russian forces. These two major hostage taking incidents served as spectacular events

[4] The specific demands by the group were not made public at the time and were later provided by Basayev (Dolnik, 2004).

for the groups to prolong and maximise media exposure. Wilkinson (1997), as touched on previously, has highlighted the importance of media coverage to terrorist groups. The Dubrovka incident lasted for four days, and Beslan lasted for three days. These incidents captured not only the attention of the Russian media, but media worldwide. In the wake of the Beslan attack in particular, Basayev garnered sustained worldwide press attention – conducting controversial interviews with the UK's Channel 4 and the American outlet ABC. These interviews were condemned by the Russian government (Osborn, 2005; Al Jazeera, 2005), and remain controversial as this reinforced the relationship between terrorism and the media providing a platform. In relation to this particular campaign, being able to access worldwide media attention enabled the terrorist group to work around any potential censorship from Russian media which may have prevented effective public communication.

The demands of the hostage takers are also indicative of an attrition strategy being the driving force behind the attack. The demand is the withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya and the end of the war – this was the aim of the campaign and a point that was reiterated throughout the campaign.

Throughout this thesis, an attack with a casualty count of 10 or higher is considered to be a mass casualty event. Based on this metric, 45% of all the attacks carried out during the Chechen rebel's attrition campaign were mass casualty attacks. This statistic on the sheer amount of mass casualty attacks shows a sustained mass casualty campaign rather than a campaign with occasional mass casualty incidents, as a reminder it was established in the theory chapter that a mass casualty campaign is one with an average of five casualties per attack across the campaign. This can be seen as not just bluffing to convince your opponent that you have the means and resolve to carry out mass casualty attacks but a more effective demonstration of their ability to inflict costs now and in the future. Kydd and Walter explain that 'the greater the costs a terrorist organization is able to inflict, the more credible its threat to inflict future costs, and the more likely the target is to grant concessions' (2006, p.60). In this campaign, the group demonstrated its ability to inflict and sustain destructive violence. Numerous mass casualty attacks took place, with the words of the group expressing that these would continue. The group's ability to carry out these attacks showed that these were not empty threats. In this regard they conform to Kydd and Walter's statement above, only without the success of concessions.



(Figure 7.2, Mass casualty attacks during the Chechen campaign, data sourced from GTD.)

The propensity to carry out mass casualty incidents is on full display when examining their attacks in Moscow. Eighty percent of the attacks carried out in Moscow as part of the attrition campaign were mass casualty events. As the capital of Russia, and its most populous city, it is very much the heart of the country. Carrying out spectacular attacks in Moscow serves the purpose of bringing the war to the Russian people, making it clear that the Chechen conflict is not just something happening "over there" hundreds of miles away in the Caucuses. A statement from Basayev in 2005 reinforces the determination to bring the war to the Russian people: 'we intend to continue, as far as possible, to bomb, blow up, poison, set fire to, set household gas explosions and fires throughout Rusnya' (Chechen Press, 2005ii). The effect of carrying out attacks throughout Russia, and in particular in Moscow, kept the issue at the forefront of Russian concerns. This threat is linked to the group looking to avenge the death of a notable Chechen official, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, but it also occurs in the context of the group's already active campaign in Russia. The statement goes on to say that the group's 'capabilities are growing day by day' - hinting at the prospect of more severe future violence. By this point in the group's campaign it is known that their goal is the end of the war in Chechnya and the withdrawal of Russian forces.

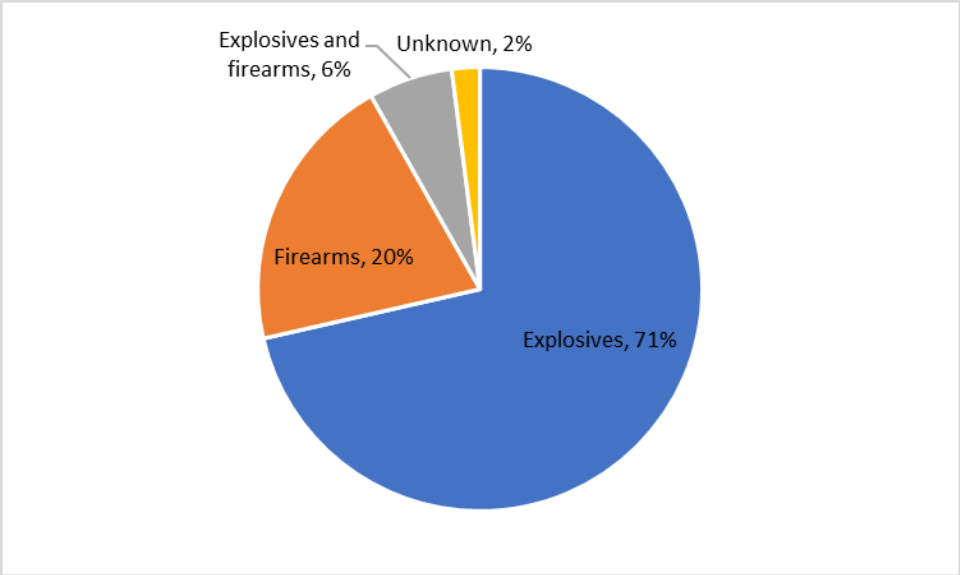
While the GTD records only one attack type as an assassination during the campaign being examined, this was indiscrete. The leader of Ingushetia's car was rammed by a vehicular suicide bomber. The assassination attempt was unsuccessful but still resulted

in several injuries from the explosion (Myers, 2004). This is somewhat surprising as assassinations can often be carried out with more selective weaponry, as discussed in previous chapters. One of the effects of the extreme violence of the Chechen campaign was to harden Russian resolve on the issue of Chechen independence (Kramer, 2005). It is argued that one potential effect of mass casualty terrorism, rather than persuading your enemy to give in to your demands, is that the enemy is much less likely to give in (Abrahms, 2011). In relation to this particular strategy, from a Russian perspective, allowing Chechen rebels to commit acts of extreme violence and then give in to their demands would be seen as rewarding this behaviour and potentially incentivising others to do the same or leading to an escalation in behaviour (Stepanova, 2004).

In relation to Kydd and Walter's understanding of an attrition strategy, the Chechen rebels act as expected. They inflicted mass casualties repeatedly to convey to their opponent their willingness and ability to impose costs that their opponent will be unwilling to endure. The group was successful in establishing the credibility of its threats however this did not result in a successful outcome in terms of the capitulation of its opponent. While strategy cannot be isolated as the only factor which drove decision making, it does emerge as a likely major factor given how the group uses casualties to showcase its willingness to impose costs. This is expressed most clearly in their overt call for the end of the Chechen war during the Beslan crisis.

Weapon Selection

Throughout the campaign, firearms and explosives were the primary weapon types used. As has been the case with other groups examined so far, this is not a surprise as that is the trend across terrorist attacks (Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019). Only one attack in the campaign is coded as "unknown" for weapon type. The data for the rest of the campaign is as follows. Attacks using only explosives accounted for 71% of the total, attacks using only firearms accounted for 20% of the total, and attacks that used both explosives and firearms accounted for 6% of the total. It is evident that explosives were the preferred weapon choice during this campaign.



(Figure 7.3, Weapon selection across campaign, data sourced from GTD)

One obvious reason for the use of explosives is the desire to inflict mass casualties. If the group carrying out an attack is not inclined to be selective over the targets of an attack, then large bombs are effective in inflicting these casualties. In the Chechen case, this can be established as the group frequently used bombs containing small metal objects such as balls bearings and bolts (GTD weapon descriptions) – a weapon designed for maximising casualties.

Guns were also used in the campaign, although less frequently than explosives. One of the most notable instances of their use was the Nalchik raid in 2005. The Nalchik raid involved numerous Chechen militants, claimed to be 217 by Basayev (Chechen Press, 2005), carrying out attacks against Russian security targets in the Kabardino-Balkar town of Nalchik. The other major use of guns was in hostage taking incidents. Here they were used as tools of crowd control as well as for executions. They were also, as was the case in Beslan, used to inflict mass casualties (Dunlop, 2006), but these attacks involved both firearms and explosives. The firearms used by the Chechen rebels were automatic weapons, considered to be reasonably sophisticated especially given that they are reported to have been stolen from a government armoury (Dunlop, 2006).

Suicide bombing was a tactic frequently used by the Chechen rebels during their campaign. I have been able to identify that at least 20% of the attacks carried out during this campaign involved the use of suicide explosives. The GTD data showed only 12% of attacks carried out during this campaign were recorded as suicide attacks, however this is because the database records suicide attacks as “carried bodily by human being”, i.e. suicide vests and similar. This means that some suicide bombings involving cars, for instance, are not recorded as suicide bombings under weapon subtype but are instead categorised as “vehicle” explosive weapon subtypes. So, attacks like the 2003 suicide truck bombing of the hospital in Mozdok are considered vehicle bombings. The additional attacks I have identified include this wider array of suicide explosives as well

as instances in which suicide explosives were present but not used successfully (such as at Dubrovka). This shows how significant suicide explosives were in the Chechen campaign.

Suicide bombing provides both a communicative and tactical utility. Hoffman and McCormick (2004) highlight how suicide bombing can be used to demonstrate an undeterrable devotion to a cause, as well as how the use of suicide bombing allows the perpetrators of an attack to have control over where and when a bomb detonates in order to inflict maximum damage or greater precision in their attack. A statement from one of the suicide bombers at the Dubrovka siege hints at this devotion:

> 'This approach is for the freedom of the Chechen people and there is no difference where we die, and therefore we have decided to die here, in Moscow. And we will take with us the lives of hundreds of sinners. If we die, others will come and follow us—our brothers and sisters who are willing to sacrifice their lives, in Allah's way, to liberate the nation' (Bloom, 2011, p.53).

This statement communicates the individual member's commitment to the cause, her willingness to kill herself to kill a large number of Russians. It also suggests that this is not an isolated event, but part of a series of similar attacks. This feeds into the notion for an attrition strategy that a group must be able to show it is able and willing to impose costs on an adversary until they concede.

In terms of the tactical utility derived from the use of female suicide bombers, this stems from them frequently being perceived as less suspicious than men (Bloom, 2011). This reduced suspicion gives the female suicide bombers potentially greater access to vulnerable targets, and they are less likely to be stopped by security forces (Soules, 2022). Essentially, female suicide bombers have the potential to carry out more precise and therefore deadly attacks than their male counterparts. The suggestion that suicide bombers are deliberately selected to inflict mass casualties is reinforced by a U.S. State Department Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC, 2004) presentation on Chechen female suicide bombers. This briefing concluded female suicide bombers 'continue to utilize the [suicide] belts because they are a low-cost and convenient way to cause high casualties by using low manpower' (slide 12).

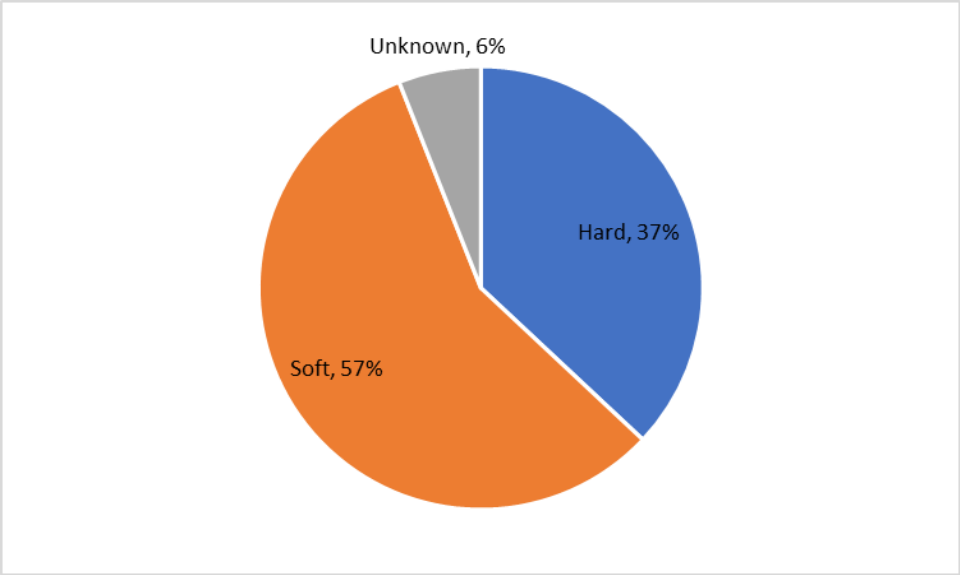
The deliberately high casualties from suicide attacks are evidenced when examining suicide attacks which consist of just suicide bombings, and not suicide bombings in conjunction with other weapons. This means that attacks like Beslan and Dubrovka, which included terrorists wearing suicide belts but also using other weapons, are not included. The average casualty count of the suicide only attacks is just over 70, which is noticeably higher than the average casualty count (excluding Beslan) of 47.2. It is also slightly, but not significantly, higher than the average casualty count when Beslan is included in the data for the overall campaign. Suicide attacks were carried out to deliberately kill and injure as many people as possible (Kurz and Bartles, 2007), and the construction of the suicide belts containing assorted pieces of metal to act as shrapnel also supports the assertion of intent to harm as many as possible, part of an attrition campaign's requirement to show the viability of the threat of inflicting sustained losses

and to show the seriousness of the group carrying these attacks out. The weapons used by the Chechen rebels in their attrition campaign are considered sophisticated. The explosives, particularly the suicide explosives, are reflection of the technical expertise of the group and their ability to acquire effective and destructive weapons. Suicide weapons require both the expertise to develop and the training of the individual suicide terrorist to use effectively (Pedahzur and Perliger, 2006).

Relating to communicating the seriousness of the group, and the willingness and ability to carry out attacks is an interesting quote from a BBC report in 1999, prior to the start of the campaign: 'his [Basayev] threats of "kamikaze" attacks inside Russia have again stirred up public opinion, *although they were probably just a bluff*' (emphasis added) (Tom de Waal, 1999). The takeaway from this is the importance of demonstrating your ability (and willingness) to carry out these attacks. Prior to the use of violence by Bayasev, his threats were not seen as serious. In order to show that he was capable of inflicting costs on Russia he had to back these threats up with action. The use of the term "kamikaze" implies a suicide attack, a type of attack he did demonstrate his ability to organise and carry out. This is in line with Kydd and Walter's view of terrorism as public signalling, that it is not enough for a group to make threats – in order for these threats to be believable they must be backed up; 'because it is hard for weak actors to make credible threats, terrorists are forced to display publicly just how far they are willing to go to obtain their desired results' (p.51). In line with the expectations for this strategy, the group uses sophisticated weaponry and attacks to communicate its abilities.

Target Selection

The campaign included a mix of both hard and soft targets – favouring soft targets. Fifty seven percent of the total number of attacks were against soft targets and 37% against hard targets (and 6% unknown).
The police and military made up the majority of the hard targets struck, and soft targets were composed significantly of private citizens and property and transport. A significant portion of the hard targets were struck in one coordinated raid. The Nalchik raid struck several different targets across different attacks, and the GTD records these as different attacks, which makes sense when it comes to understanding targets. These account for one third of the hard targets struck.



(Figure 7.4, targets across campaign, data sourced from GTD)

Striking soft targets did make the inflicting of mass casualties much easier, especially when combined with the use of suicide bombing as it would enable terrorists to detonate their explosives at a time and place which would inflict as much damage as possible. A soft target, which is by definition less protected, is simply a more vulnerable target so allows for greater control over the attack. As discussed in the theory chapter, striking a soft target is expected to be less resource costly than striking a hard target.

Another benefit for the rebels of striking soft civilian targets rather than military targets is the fresh shock value. Both Chechen wars had been brutal and had seen relatively high military losses suffered by the Russian army, to the point where the deaths of soldiers became almost routine. The mass killing of civilians served to maintain the shock value (Le Vine, 1997) and keep up the pressure on the enemy to give in to their demands. Commenting on Beslan during his interview with ABC news, despite blaming Russia for the deaths and saying he did not expect Russia to respond as they did, Basayev states: 'I figured that the more brutal I could make it, the quicker they'd get the message. I thought it would work. But it's not sinking in yet' (Siberian Light, 2005). This quote is not just descriptive of Beslan, but indicative of the campaign as a whole – to keep it as brutal as possible to coerce the Russians. It is also fitting in that it also shows the stubbornness of the Russian response.

In an interview with the UK's Channel 4, Shamil Basayev provided his justification for striking soft targets explaining that all Russians are complicit in the war 'even if they do not have weapons in their hand' (Journeyman Pictures, 2023). He asserts that '[Russians] pay their taxes for this war, send their soldiers to this war, their priests sprinkle holy water on the soldiers, and bless their "holy duty" - calling them heroic defenders of the fatherland' (Journeyman Pictures, 2023). His argument is that ordinary Russians are part of the war in Chechnya so tries to argue that the targeting of civilians is reasonable. This shows the campaign is not just about communicating with the Russian military or political decision makers but also communicating with the general

Russian population. This does not serve only as a justification for striking soft targets, but also as a threat that civilians will be killed. Basayev goes on to state in the interview: 'we are ready to stop the war, and as Maskhadov says to start negotiations without preconditions. But there is one condition. That is the non-negotiable and full withdrawal of the occupying Russian troops from our territory'. In this interview, Basayev sets outs that soft targets are legitimate targets, that they will be struck as part of the war, but the war (and consequently deaths) can be stopped if Russian troops withdraw from Chechnya.

Murphy (2004) cites an interview with Basayev from 2002 in which he goes further, and in doing so is more explicit about the purposes of targeting civilians to highlight that continued support for the government and its actions against Chechen rebels will result in continued targeting of civilians. 'We intend to pay every house of yours a visit, for all of Russia is at war... To us you are unarmed military men, because those who by a majority approve the genocide of the Chechen people cannot be peaceful civilians. According to Shariah law, mere verbal approval of war puts peaceful citizens in the ranks of the enemy' (p.170). This extract justifies the targeting of civilians inside Russia based on their support for the war in Chechnya. The threat in the message is that they will continue to target civilians because of this support. The implication is that as long as a state of war exists then the group will strike civilian targets, communicating that to end the targeting of civilians, the war must end.

An interesting geographical dynamic emerges when looking at the locations of attacks in this campaign. Chechnya is bordered by four other Russian administrative regions (Dagestan, Ingushetia, North Ossetia, and Stavropol Krai). Fifty one percent of the total number of attacks occurred within these regions. Moscow is 1500km away from Grozny, the capital of Chechnya. Twenty percent of the attacks from this campaign occurred in Moscow. No attacks occurred East of the Urals. Russia's geography is a potential factor to consider in this campaign. The sheer size of Russia provides potential logistical difficulties for a terrorist campaign that might not be found in campaigns in other countries. This is highlighted in Dunlop's work on the Dubrovka theatre crisis (2006) which details the buildup to the attack and the preparations the terrorists had to make in order to carry it out which involved significant long distance coordination and logistics such as the acquisition of property in Moscow, the coercion of Moscow based Chechens, and the transportation of weapons.

(Figure 7.5, Map of Russia showing percentage of attacks in different regions, data sourced from GTD)

This geographic dynamic is also obvious in Beslan, a factor which Basayev acknowledges in his controversial interview with the UK's Channel 4: 'I didn't originally plan for this to happen in Beslan. We planned for operation for Moscow or St Petersburg, or both simultaneously. But we ran out of money, we're not exactly delighted by what happened in Beslan, to be honest I'm even shocked by what happened there [in reference to the actions of the Russian security services, not the actions of the Chechen rebels]'(Journeyman Pictures, 2007). The logistical difficulties in carrying out a major attack in a republic bordering Chechnya are significantly reduced and the costs considerably lower than carrying out such an attack in one of Russia's major distant cities. Beslan is located in North Ossetia, a republic bordering Chechnya and Ingushetia. Here, resource constraints played a significant role in target selection, albeit in terms of location of target and not necessarily hardness of target. There was a mixed hardness of targets in attacks in Chechnya's neighbouring republics, attacks included both hard and soft targets.

Attacks against hard targets were more feasible in the Caucasus region as it was possible to coordinate and move personnel around more easily. For instance, the 2005 attacks in Nalchik involved the targeting of the police and military and was carried out with assistance of local *Caucasian Front* (a rebel group) members and a total of 217 "mujahideen" (according to Basayev) (Chechen Press, 2005). An attack of this magnitude would have been very difficult logistically to carry out outside of the Caucuses, and certainly unlikely to be possible in Moscow.

Attacks in Moscow, however, were all conducted against soft targets. This can be partially explained by the communicative aspect and the strategic value of targeting civilians, as discussed when examining Basayev's statements referenced earlier, and through the potential difficulties in striking harder defended targets far from Chechnya.

Basayev claimed (Al Jazeera, 2003) the intended target of the 2003 Red Square suicide bombing was the State Duma but speculated that "something prevented her from walking the 50 metres to her goal" and she detonated her explosives on a street nearby inflicting 19 casualties. The initial intended target was hard but the circumstances of the attack resulted in a substitution to soft. It can be put forward that attacks against soft targets in Moscow are not just a result of the intention to communicate with the Russian population, but also a result of the inability to successfully hit hard targets in the capital. This is in line with Santifort et al's (2012) argument that 'traditional homeland security actions of hardening historically favoured targets and venues – e.g. officials and embassies – have a dark side by deflecting attacks to private parties in public places' (p.89).

Overall, the targeting patterns have conformed to expectation, the group has shown a mix of hard and soft targets. When made possible through resources, they carried out attacks against hard targets. But with the restrictions, the group sought to strike soft targets – especially in distant Moscow. Furthermore, Basayev makes clear that striking soft targets is to communicate with the Russian people.

Summary

The Chechen Rebel's attrition campaign demonstrated extreme violence and reach. The main aim of an attrition campaign is to convince an audience that a group can inflict costs and continuing to inflict these costs that the audience is not willing to endure. The group's level of intended casualties, weapon selection, and target selection all played into a demonstration of extreme violence and reach. The qualitative element of the research can be seen as providing evidence for attrition being one of the influential forces in the group's decision making. Throughout the campaign it is known that Basayev sought the end of the war and withdrawal of Russian troops, and statements show the desire to impose costs on the enemy.

The campaign had a very high casualties, with the group consistently carrying out attacks inflicting significant human damage. Soft targets enabled mass casualty attacks. The use of explosives, and in particular suicide bombings, allowed for maximised indiscriminate casualties.

Weapon selection was sophisticated, alongside complex attacks being undertaken. This did not just allow for mass casualties but also enabled the group to deliver on its threats, and demonstrate willingness and ability, essential for an attrition campaign.

Targeting was a mixture of hard and soft, soft allowing for high casualties and more direct communication with civilians. The striking of soft targets was a combination of constraints and strategic decision making. Hard targets were struck when strategy,

constraints, and geography allowed which resulted in these mostly occurring in the Caucuses.

The types of violence employed by the Chechen rebels conformed to expectation, confirming hypotheses. This does suggest that strategy is a major driving factor. But this does not mean that other factors are totally irrelevant. The social and political context of the campaign did not emerge as having a major impact on the outcome. This can be seen as an enabling factor for these types of violence, in that these conditions provided no reason to limit the intentions of the terrorist group.

GIA

Background

Before ISIS rose to prominence as an extremely violent group aiming to build a 'Caliphate' there was the Groupe Islamique Armé (Armed Islamic Group, GIA). The group sought to create an Islamic state in Algeria and gained notoriety for their particularly brutal violence in the country's civil war (Bencherif, 1995). The group perpetrated numerous atrocities, most well-known of these being their many and escalating massacres. In the second half of the 1990s, the group began using massacres of civilians as a means of attempting to control populations in their territory (Kalyvas, 1999) as their power began to wane and their grip on the population began to loosen. The group also set bombs off in public areas, carried out assassinations, and conducted numerous kidnappings (Mannes, 2004).

The GIA was formed by the coalescing of numerous smaller Islamist groups in 1992. Like other Islamist groups in the country, the GIA emerged during the chaos of the Algerian civil war. The Algerian civil war broke out following the 1991 military coup undertaken to prevent an Islamist government forming after parliamentary elections (Mannes, 2004). The war would be known for its ferocity and cruelty, and end in 2002 with a government victory.

The conflict was not confined to Algeria. The group conducted attacks in France between 1994-1996. These are the focus of this part of the chapter. Beginning with the hijacking of Air France Flight 8969 on Christmas Eve 1994 and carries on through the bombing campaign in France throughout 1995, with one more attack occurring in 1996. These attacks were undertaken by the group to persuade the French government to pull its support of the Algerian government and to not influence the conflict in Algeria. As Gregory (2003) summarises: 'the GIA has also brought the war to the streets of France with a terrorist campaign of singular purpose... [they sought to] force France to end its support for the FLN and disengage from Algerian affairs' (131).

This is treated as a separate campaign to the events in Algeria. As discussed in the methodology chapter, within each strategy cases are chosen on a most different basis – this difference in geography is one major difference. This is done to increase the generalisability of the research. The group, in the early part of the civil war at least, were involved in an attrition campaign in Algeria – aiming to overthrow the government and establish an Islamist government but this campaign also occurred alongside other

strategies stemming from rival groups in the country (Hafez, 2020). The group's activities were an attrition strategy, clearly communicating with a French audience. Any outbidding benefits derived are an additional bonus of the campaign, rather than the main goal. Gregory (2003) explains that 'the GIA sought both to destabilize and remove the FLN at home and force France to end its support for the FLN and disengage from Algerian affairs' (p.131). The group itself stated in a 1995 communique 'o French people, the GIA has not ceased to prove its strength since my late brother Djaafar Seif Allah threatened you with death, at the end of 1993, if you did not leave our country' (Ayad and Johannes, 1995). These extracts show a desire by the group to force France, through violence, to concede to the group's demands.

This case is of a shorter duration than others used so far in this thesis, however it is still rich with data. The campaign included numerous high-profile attacks such as the hijacking of Air France 8969, the bomb at the Arc de Triomphe, a car bomb at a Jewish school in Lyon, and a number of attacks against public transport. While the Air France flight was initially hijacked in Algeria, it is considered part of the French campaign because it was intended to be either exploded above, or crashed into, a Parisian target (Sancton, 2001; Catusi and Tardo, 2019). Furthermore, the situation ended on the tarmac in Marseille. The hijacking of flight 8969 is frequently referred to in this chapter. Sancton (2001) and Catusi & Tardo (2019) provide excellent summaries of the developments which are the basis of the narratives provided of this event in this chapter.

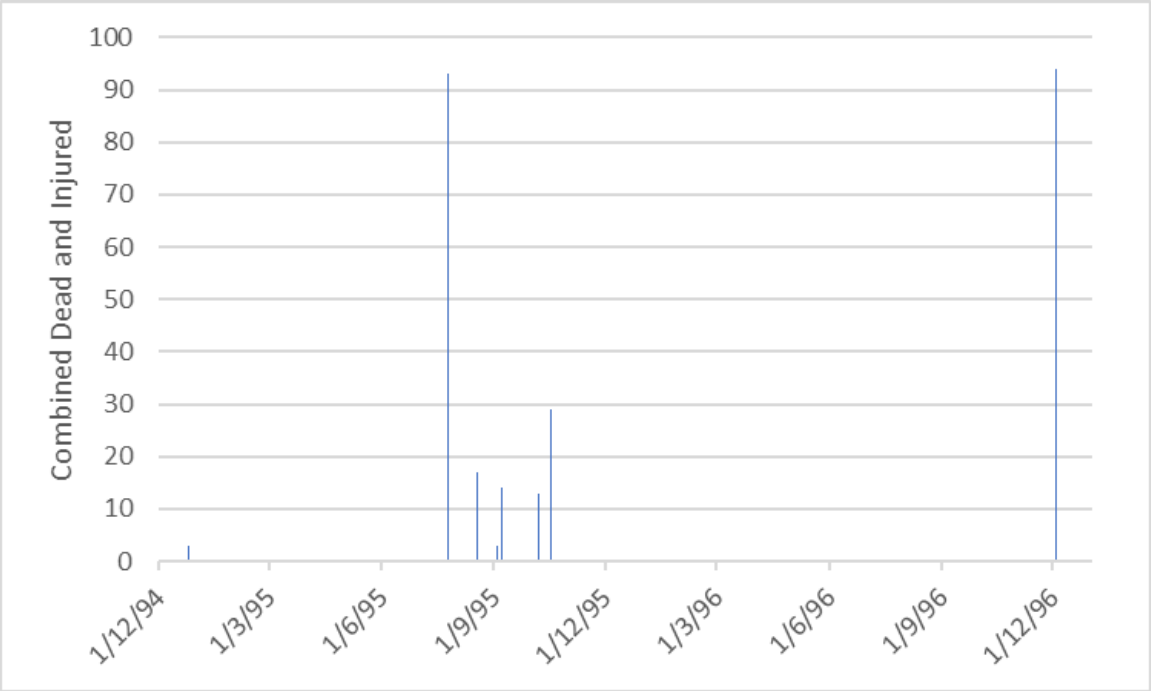
The GIA being based in Algeria provides a slightly different context to other groups examined in this thesis so far. Their primary conflict was in Algeria with Algerian government. The dispute with France stems from the French support of the Algerian regime and is also rooted in France's colonial history in Algeria (Gregory, 2003). This does lay the foundation of the French state being a major enemy. The geographic separation also enables a separation of populations, although there is a significant Algerian diaspora in France (Gregory, 2003) and the GIA demonstrated their willingness to inflict harm on Algerians during the domestic conflict.

Casualties

The group gained notoriety in the late 1990s for its massacres of Algerian civilians, but even before then the group would establish a reputation for high levels of violence in Algeria (Drozdiak, 1994). Even though the group's activities in France in the period under study are treated as a separate campaign, high levels of violence would be a feature of their French campaign as well. The data from the GTD shows us that the casualty figures were high, with a mean casualty count of 26.6 per attack. While this is much lower than the casualty counts of the Chechen rebels (67.6 casualties per attack) discussed previously, it is still more than sufficient to be considered a high casualty campaign using the casualty count of 10 as the basis for a mass casualty attack and 5 for a campaign as a whole, especially when compared against the casualty figures of groups employing other strategies. The most destructive attack was the last attack of the campaign when the group detonated a bomb targeting a Parisian commuter train.

According to the GTD, this resulted in 91 injuries and 3 deaths, reflecting a trend in the campaign of high injury numbers but low numbers killed.

Seventy percent of the attacks, according to data from the GTD, resulted in no deaths – albeit with 162 injured during these attacks. Having adopted an approach that focuses on total casualty count, as is common throughout the terrorism literature, I am able to get a better understanding of the total destructiveness of an attack than simple death tolls would communicate. These attacks are designed to inflict as much damage as possible (and the weapon selection will show an indiscriminate nature of the attacks).



(Figure 7.6, Casualties from GIA attacks throughout campaign, data sourced from GTD)

Throughout the campaign there was an intent to inflict high levels of casualties. This is backed up by the group's statements, in one of which the group accuses the French government of downplaying the lethality of their attacks, stating that the hijacking resulted in 'more than four deaths among the passengers, an assessment of which France made a state secret' (Ayad and Johannes, 1995). Two things are of importance here, firstly is the use of violence to spread their message, the second is how violence is part of their message. A U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) intelligence summary from September 1995 provides a view of how security organisations at the time perceived the GIA threat. In identifying the GIA as the perpetrator of a series of attacks in France, the document states: 'The 17 August bombing near the Arc de Triomphe and the 26 August attempted bombing of a high speed rail line near Lyon are likely related as well, given the similarities in bomb construction and apparent intent to cause indiscriminate injuries' (p.4).

The use of violence in itself is not different from how one expects a terrorist group to operate - this notion has been present in understandings of terrorism for a long time (Wilkinson, 1997). In this instance, the group carries out an attack, or series of attacks, which then brings press attention to the group and their statements, allowing them to get their message out.

The second aspect shows more variation from regular patterns of behaviour than we would expect from terrorist groups. It has been shown in other case studies so far, and in the literature (e.g. Sanchez-Cuenca, 2007), that groups will often seek to limit their casualties, seek to downplay the lethality of their attacks, or simply not take credit for attacks that they perceive to have inflicted too much damage. In this instance, the group is doing quite the opposite, seeking to exaggerate the level of violence that they have inflicted. It must be appreciated that in an attrition campaign a group is not communicating with its constituent audience, but with the enemy government and/or population. The strategy of attrition relies on a group being able to present itself as a viable threat in terms of willingness and ability to inflict costs. This demonstration of strength has similarities with outbidding, except here the audience is the enemy not the group's constituent population. Statements like this communicate that a group intends to inflict mass casualties, that it has the resolve to inflict them. In disputing the official death toll, they also seek to communicate their ability to inflict these costs too. The group when carrying out this campaign, sought to focus on the "terror" aspect of terrorism.

These figures had the potential to be higher if the hijackers of flight 8969 had fully succeeded in their plan to either crash the plane into Paris loaded with fuel (Catusi and Tardo, 2019). There were over 200 survivors of the hijacking, many of whom (all who had not been released) would have likely died in an explosion or deliberate crash, and there would have also likely been casualties on the ground too. An attack of this type is designed to bring about a high level of destruction, it is not selective or restrained. This attack is not considered a failed attack as the group were able to hijack the plane with passengers on board and so is included in the data. Although the casualty count reflects only the actual casualties of the attack and not the what if. This is used to illustrate lethal intent.

While it is not usually useful to engage in hypothetical and "what-ifs", the purpose of their discussion here is to highlight the intent of the group: how the mass casualty outcomes of their attacks were not unfortunate results of operations going wrong but rather the high casualty outcomes appear to stem from the attacks going as planned. It is likely that the low casualty outcomes are those in which the group's attacks did not develop as they had anticipated.

The GIA, much like the Chechen rebels, deliberately sought to inflict mass casualties. This is in line with the hypotheses laid out, and the reasoning is to convey to their audience their ability and willingness to inflict severe human damage until their demands are met. The group was very clear in its intent to inflict these casualties to portray itself as a genuine threat to France.

Weapon selection

Explosives were the primary weapon type used in this campaign. The data given by the GTD reports that 90% of the attacks in this campaign, reporting the weapon types used in the hijacking as "unknown". However, reading through reports on the hijacking of the flight, it is clear that both firearms and explosives were used (Sancton, 2001) – meaning that 100% of the attacks in this campaign used explosives.

The GTD does not provide further details on the types of explosives used but it is possible to determine what they were from different reports in some cases. The types of explosives used in the different attacks vary. The aircraft hijacking reportedly involved grenades and dynamite as the explosives carried (Sancton, 2001); the attack in Lyon involved a car bomb; whilst some of the other attacks and attempted attacks on the Paris Metro involved gas cylinders filled with nails and bolts (CNN, 1995).

The weapons used in the hijacking of Flight 8969 were, as mentioned above, firearms and explosives. The firearms were used for crowd control, to execute hostages, and in the hijackers' attempts to fight off the GIGN. The explosives were used, or at least their use was threatened, when the hijackers wanted to force Algerian authorities to comply with their demands while the plane was still on the Tarmac in the country (Catusi and Tardo, 2019).

The greater threat posed by the explosives, fortunately not used, was to detonate the plane over the Eiffel tower. When the plane landed in Marseille to refuel on its way to Paris, and was subsequently stormed by security forces, it requested to take on three times more fuel than was necessary for a flight of that distance. At the time there were two concerns: that the group would not fly to Paris but on to a third friendly country, or that they were filling the plane with fuel to turn it into a bomb. It would emerge that this was indeed a likely possibility (Sancton, 2001). The other possible action the group was intending to carry out, as determined by investigations afterwards, was that the hijackers intended to use the plane itself as a missile and hit a symbolic target (again, likely the Eiffel tower) (Catusi and Tardo, 2019).

The intent of this attack, in its weapon selection and execution, communicates a strong degree of sophistication from the group. The weapons used by the group were both difficult to acquire and require expertise to develop and operate. This sophistication and ability to carry out attacks such as this show the group's audience that they are well resourced and able to inflict damage, it also conveys that the group was able to follow through on its threats. In this case, it communicated the group's intent to strike French interests and targets outside of Algeria, and that they had the firepower to do so.

Other than the initial hijacking incident, none of the attacks carried out by the GIA included the use of firearms. A likely reason for this is the relative lack of GIA operatives in France compared to in Algeria. The GIA had significant support from members of the Algerian community in France (Lia and Kjok, 2001), but they did not have as many active personnel as they did in Algeria, because of this they did not have individuals to spare to carry out in person attacks. A loss of an individual to a small

group is much more significant than the loss of an individual to a large group, this is why larger groups (in terms of number of personnel) are able to carry out firearm attacks. As discussed by Koehler-Derrick and Milton (2019), there is a likely resource cost to carrying out attacks using firearms as opposed to explosives. Explosives can be left to detonate and do not require an individual to be present at the time of the attack which allows them to escape capture or death, however a firearm attack requires an operative to be present to carry out the attack which leaves them vulnerable to death or capture.

The group, or at least individual members of the group, did have access to firearms. This can be seen in the killing of GIA member Khaled Kelkal who had been involved in a shootout with French security forces (Dejevsky, 1995; CNN, 1995ii; Simons, 1995ii). His firearms were reported as shotguns or pistols, not the more advanced automatic weapons used by the Chechen rebels but this shows that the decision to use explosives was not simply a constraint issue but was a choice based on what weapon would be most appropriate for the campaign. It is likely that these more basic firearms would not have been sufficient for a mass casualty attack, or not as effective as the explosives used.

The group's use of gas cannisters, especially when filled with nails, was common in their activities in Algeria prior to the attacks in France (CNN, 1995). This replication of attack type in France serves as an indicator of the credibility of the group's threats and as communication that the war in Algeria is being brought to France. The group's statements from October 1995 convey this credibility as an extension of the war in Algeria: 'we are continuing, with dignity and all our strength, the path of jihad and our military strikes, this time in the very heart of France and in its largest cities' (Ayad and Johannes, 1995). This is from the same communique referenced above which included the extract that the GIA 'threatened you with death, at the end of 1993, if you did not leave our country'. This also relates to targeting, but this is discussed later. The threat from the group here is that the extreme violence that the group developed a reputation for in Algeria can be transposed to the streets of France, and the group can use its preestablished reputation for violence to build immediate credibility for its threats in the French campaign.

In relation to Kydd and Walter's understanding of attrition, this is an effective means of communicating (in a manner likely to be taken seriously) that they will carry out the same type of attacks as they have done in Algeria unless the government cooperates with their demands. This type of bomb, importantly, is sufficient for the group to inflict mass casualties. While there might be more sophisticated ways to inflict casualties, these come at a greater resource cost (as seen with the hijacking). For the group to achieve its objective of inflicting mass casualties, these gas cannister explosives are a way of doing so without needlessly expending resources. A journalist reporting on the attacks in Paris provides a description of the bombs used: 'The explosion of the train at Saint-Michel was caused by a gas cylinder filled with black powder, weedkiller and shrapnel (nails and nuts). Such "poor man's bombs" having been used in Algeria, the police recognized the signature of the GIA' (Tourancheau, 2007). Despite being 'poor man's bombs', they still function very effectively when judged by mass casualty outcomes.

In comparison to the Chechen rebels, an obvious difference is the lack of suicide bombings when it comes to the use of explosives. The Chechen use of suicide bombings allowed them greater control over the time and location of their detonation. The GIA's lack of suicide bombing meant that they were unable to use explosives as effectively in terms of optimising casualties. What is meant here is that by not being present for the detonations of the bombs, the groups had to use them in such a way that increased the likelihood of high casualties but this still prevented them from assuring high casualties as is possible with suicide bombing. One way of increasing the likelihood of these casualties is to use explosives against soft targets.

While the group's weapon selection is not as advanced as that of the Chechen rebels, the weapon selection is sufficient to meet the group's goal of mass casualties. Again, the DIA report (1995) referenced above supports the notion that the group sought to inflict mass casualties and that the bombs were intended for this. While this is not evidence from the group itself and so not as beneficial as if the group explained it their choice of violence in a communique, a source from an entity external to the conflict is useful to suggest that this was the group's intention. The group's use of gas cannister explosives can be considered reasonably sophisticated in the context of their operation, but it is also important that they are sufficient for the group's needs. There is no need for the group to expend any more of its limited resources than it must, especially operating so far from home. The group's use of the same weapon type as it had used in Algeria allows it to communicate to its target audience that it is willing and able to wage a sustained campaign of violence. The knowledge required to build such a bomb is also indicative of sophistication.

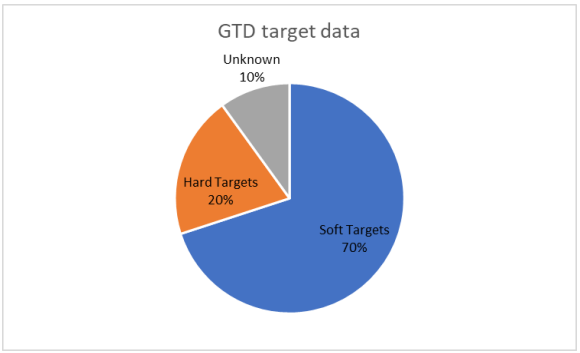
Overall, the group's weapon selection can be considered sophisticated. Beyond the hijacking of the airliner, the group was able to carry out a series of bombings in a European capital city. The group was consistently able to build explosives capable of inflicting mass casualties in an operating environment which made the acquisition of explosives difficult. They were also able to do so in a way which made it clear they were the responsible group by mirroring their weapons election from the Algerian campaign. Furthermore, while these bombs were not as sophisticated as those used in the Chechen suicide attacks, they do require expertise and resources to build.

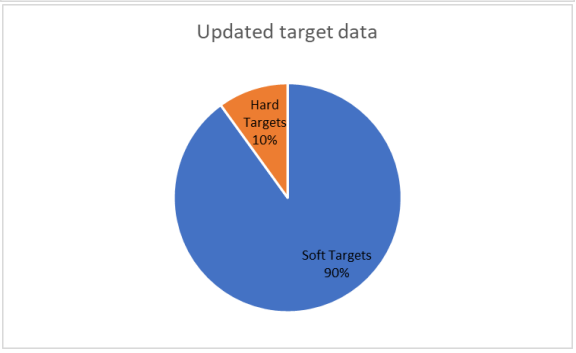
Target Selection

The group sought mass casualties, and selected weapons appropriately to inflict them. The group also made sure to select appropriate targets to enable mass casualties. The breakdown of the targeting of the group's campaign according to the hard/soft classification of targets in the GTD is 70% soft, 20% hard, and 10% unknown. However, with this being a relatively small number of attacks, it is possible to interrogate these targets further. The target classified as unknown is the 17 August 1995 Arc de Triomphe attack. The target here is likely to be soft given how it intended to cause indiscriminate civilian casualties in a heavily travelled tourist area (Simons, 1995). Of the two attacks recorded as hard, one is the aircraft hijacking which is an accurate classification. The other attack was the October 6 1995 attack which was

carried out at Maison Blanche Metro station in Paris (Whitney, 1995) but the GTD has recorded as against a government target (which the system for this thesis classifies as hard).

The issue is not with the classification system developed for this thesis but rather the GTD's recording of evidence. However, while these are some minor errors they do not disrupt the overall picture of the campaign, which was a strong preference for soft targets.





(Figures 7.7 and 7.8, GIA targeting patterns from GTD data and adjusted GTD data, data sourced from GTD)

Given that France is a democracy, one possible strategic reasoning for attacking civilians rather than government targets is to pressure the population into forcing a change in government policy or to provoke a response from the government to respond to the deaths of civilians (McCartan et al, 2005). If the group is unable to successfully convince the government directly to comply with its demands, it can use the population as a means of forcing compliance. In non-democratic states, the government may be less willing to respond to the deaths of civilians as the same systems of accountability are not as strong (Kydd and Walter, 2006). The group shows a dual communication in their communiques following their attacks. In a communique in September 1995 addresses both the President of France and the people of France with its demands (Ayad and Johannes, 1995). This can suggest that an aspect of targeting civilians is to impose costs on them to pressure policy changes.

Targeting Paris has obvious symbolic significance to the group and its audience. The group's reported aim to target the Eiffel tower by crashing the hijacked airliner into it is

a theme which continued with a widely covered 1995 illustration from the group's propaganda outlet *Al Ansar* depicting the Parisian landmark exploding (Tourancheau, 2007; Gettgno and Inciyan 1996). The building is a symbol of France, and even if the group are not threatening the literal destruction of the tower it is still effectively conveying the intent to carry out significant attacks in the country. This reiterates the previous threat made by the group that it will continue to strike at the heart of France and its cities (Tourancheau, 1995). Similarly, the selection of Air France as a target for the hijacking was not a coincidence; the airline was France's national carrier making it a tempting target for symbolic violence. Even before the attack the airline was aware of the risks of flying into and out Algeria, having only volunteers as staff on the route and petitioning the French government to allow them to stop the service. It can also be seen as an extension of the targeting of French interests in Algeria.

This is something security services at the time were aware of, the focus on symbolic targets. The then leader of the French police union commented during the autumn of 1995 that there were fears 'of a possible resurgence of attacks targeting symbolic places, such as the openly designated Eiffel Tower, but why not the Arc de Triomphe, the Concorde, or the Champs-Elysees' (Tourancheau, 1995). This shows a degree of success in the communicative aspect of the terrorist campaign, an awareness of the audience that attacks will continue until demands are met. His words go on to further show how the GIA's attrition campaign functions:

> 'We must continue to fight fundamentalism, as we are already doing in France, but adopt a neutral attitude towards Algeria, and above all not interfere in the elections... Have all the security consequences of [the decision of the French and Algerian presidents to meet] been taken into account? To admit that France's declared solidarity with the current Algerian government poses no risk would be tantamount to admitting that the GIA (or any other terrorist group active in France) has no capacity to respond on our territory, which is far from being the case'.

This again shows that the message is being received, and that if the group is unable to pressure the French government directly into policy change, then attacks against civilians can force that pressure from below. There is an admission that France is potentially vulnerable to the attacks, that by the meeting of the presidents there is a likelihood of violence, and a call to at least moderate France's stance on Algeria to appease the GIA.

Having established the group's intent to inflict mass casualties in the casualties section, the targeting of public transport has a related logic. Public transport targets, such as metro stations, provide easy opportunities to inflict mass casualties – they contain large, dense, groups of people at most times which enables a bomb on a timer (or similar) to be deployed with relative certainty that it will succeed in inflicting significant human damage. There isn't an obvious ideological reason for targeting metro stations, it is a target of convenience from many strategically acceptable targets.

A similarity between the GIA campaign and the Chechen campaign is the distance operations were carried out from the groups' homebases. As was seen in the Chechen

campaign, when the group carried out attacks against distant targets in Moscow, it tended to strike soft targets. It was also shown that resource constraints became more evident and more of an issue for the group when it carried out operations in Moscow instead of the Caucuses. Similarly, the GIA when carrying out attacks in France, far from its base in Algeria, also only struck soft targets. Geography would appear to be a factor at play, an important part of the context of this campaign. The groups face logistical problems, among other issues, in being able to bring about the necessary resources to strike hard targets.

As in the Chechen campaign, there was also an attack against a school in the GIA campaign. On 7 September 1995, a car bomb exploded outside a Jewish school in Lyon minutes before students were due to leave at the end of the school day (Riding, 1995) However, there are several key differences. Most notable is the significant difference in death toll of the attacks. Beslan resulted in the deaths of hundreds whereas the Lyon attack killed none and only injured 14, some of this can be attributed to the relatively good fortune of the bomb detonating before the students had left the school and it can also be explained by the difference in attack type. The attack at Beslan was a long and complicated operation involving numerous militants to hold hostages in person, whereas the Lyon attack was simply a car bomb. The hostage taking element enabled a drawn out and media generating event, similar to the GIA's aircraft hijacking.

Finally, the group's response to these attacks must be considered, with the two groups taking very different approaches to promoting their attack. The Chechen rebels made the most of the attention generated from their attack to spread their message, as discussed in that section. The GIA, on the other hand, did not even formally claim credit for the attack, nor did they produce much (if any) propaganda or output relating to the attack. It is unclear why this would be the case, in other instances it is understandable that a group responsible for attacks against targets their constituent population might be averse to claiming credit for these attacks to not lose support (again, see Sanchez-Cuenca). However, given that it is established that the GIA use extreme and shocking violence as part of their activities (Lia and Kjok, 2001) this explanation does not fit.

This is worth mentioning as Beslan was one the standout attacks of the Chechen campaign whereas the Lyon school attack has largely been relegated to obscurity. The striking of similar targets resulted in very different outcomes for the groups in terms of coverage generated. So, while target selection is important, it is not always sufficient on its own and needs to be understood in relation to casualties and weapon selection - and, ultimately, the degree of success of the attack.

The expectation was that a group employing an attrition campaign would strike hard and soft targets. The GIA's targets consisted almost entirely of soft targets. The striking of soft targets is in line with the theoretical underpinning which is a group lacking the means to strike hard targets will carry out mass casualty attention grabbing attacks against soft targets. The striking of civilians also enabled them to communicate more directly with their target audience. Geography also appears to have been a factor with

the GIA operating at a significant distance from its base imposing restrictions on its abilities.

Summary

The GIA campaign in France was mostly comprised of indiscriminate bomb attacks against soft civilian targets. The group's reputation for extreme violence continued in the French campaign, although perhaps more in intent than execution, given the very high casualty figures. Most of these casualties are made up of injuries, with relatively few deaths but the intent to cause death is evident. The group was very clear in its communication that these indiscriminate attacks would continue until France complied with the group's demands. The group followed what was expected of an attrition campaign, they communicated to the French government and the French population that they had the willingness and ability to inflict high costs against their enemy until demands were met. This did not occur, but the messaging and communication of that messaging through violence was clear. The group did also show the ability to carry out more complex attacks through the hijacking of the Air France flight. The qualitative evidence from the group showed that the group was carrying out a campaign in France with the goal of forcing them to change their stance on Algeria. The group's output suggests that the group's choices concerning types of violence were shaped by their strategy.

Conclusion

Both campaigns examined in this chapter are defined by their brutality. The groups involved had a clear aim to communicate to their enemy that they could and would carry out incredibly violent attacks, and continue to do so, unless their opponent conceded to their demands. This brutality is most obvious in the lethal intent of the groups. Both of them carried out mass casualty attacks. While the Chechens were more lethal, and more successful in killing, the GIA still sought to kill as many as possible. This level of casualties is in line with the established hypothesis.

	Chechen Rebels	GIA
Casualties: High	High	High
Weapon Selection: Sophisticated	Sophisticated	Sophisticated
Target Selection: Mix hard and soft	Mixed	Soft

(Figure 7.9, hypothesis matrix for attrition. Confirmed hypotheses are in green, partially confirmed are in yellow, not confirmed are in red)

The hypothesis for weapon selection was that the groups would use advanced or sophisticated weapons, this was certainly the case with the Chechen rebels as they used suicide bombs as well as carrying out more complex attacks. The GIA did carry out one complex attack with an array of weapons (the hijacking of Air France 8969), but the rest of their attacks were bombings. These bombings were sufficient to inflict mass casualties, but the weapons were not as advanced as those used by the Chechens.

However, they are still considered advanced or complex given their use in a much more restrictive environment and also their communicative use as the group's trademark.

The hypothesis for target selection was that groups conducting an attrition campaign would strike a mixture of hard and soft targets. For the Chechen rebels, their behaviour conformed to this. The GIA, however, did not. While carrying out the research, what became evident was the difficulties groups faced when operating far from their homebases, making hard targets more difficult to strike and leaving soft targets as the only viable options. Soft targets still enabled the groups to inflict mass casualties and communicate that they were able to operate at a distance but this came at the cost of being able to communicate the ability to hit protected targets. Both the groups aimed to communicate they could strike "at the heart" of their enemy which was accomplished through soft targets.

What this chapter reveals about an attrition strategy is how the main element of communication stems from the (human) damage inflicted. Both the campaigns examined are unambiguously bloodthirsty. The weapons and targets are selected in support of maximizing casualties. This is not to say casualties are the only factor, but they are the priority. Ultimately, the best way for a group to prove it has the ability to impose costs against an opponent is through high casualty attacks.

8. Provocation: Poking the Bear

In 1996, the Kosovo Liberation Army began deliberately attacking police in Kosovo in the hopes of bringing about an excessively violent response against the Kosovar population. In the previous Yugoslavian wars, Serbian forces had demonstrated how capable they were of perpetrating crimes against humanity – so why did the KLA want this to happen to their own population? More broadly, why do groups undertake actions that they know will result in the death and suffering of the population they claim to represent? In a provocation campaign, groups find themselves with a perverse incentive to undertake actions designed to result in harm to their own people. This chapter explores the types of violence that groups undertake to try and bait their enemy into an over-the-top reaction. A provocation strategy is designed to move support away from the incumbent power, or at least remove indifference to it, and bring this support to the terrorists' side. The strategy is 'designed to persuade the domestic audience that the target of attacks is evil and untrustworthy and must be vigorously resisted' (Kydd and Walter, 2006, p.54). To achieve this, a group will carry out attacks with the intention of inducing an over the top and heavy-handed response by the government against the terrorists' constituent population. This response will highlight the "evil" of the government and drive the constituent population's support to the terrorists as they are the means of combatting the government. A provocation strategy legitimises the terrorists' actions and generates support and recruits.

Where this strategy differs from the previous strategies examined is the indirect communication with the audience. The previous strategies involved, in simplified terms, a group carrying out attacks and those attacks conveyed a message. For example, in an attrition campaign the attacks convey the message that the group will carry on inflicting damage until its demands are met. In a provocation strategy, however, communication is more complicated. The ultimate audience of the campaign is the group's constituent population, but the message being conveyed (that the government is 'evil and untrustworthy') relies on the government responding as the group intends.

One aspect of a provocation campaign that can make it difficult to research in relation to terrorist group output is the claimed motivation for attacks. It is difficult for a group seeking to gain the support of a population to state publicly that it is carrying out attacks to get the state to repress this audience. As a result of this, there can be some confusion as to the motivation and strategy of the group as they will still present themselves as carrying out attacks for reasons which may be related to the group's cause but are not the goal of the strategy. Public statements from a terrorist group may not reveal explicitly that a provocation campaign is occurring. Internal documents of groups may do so, but I was unable to find them for the two groups examined in this chapter. It is useful in cases of provocation to use the research of those who are familiar with the groups (such as historians or conflict experts) but not involved with them to help determine when a provocation campaign is occurring if documentation from the group does not explicitly say so. For instance, in the case of the Red Army Faction, Moghadam explains that the group expected their actions 'would help expose the fascist nature of the regime by compelling it to employ the full force of its apparatus of repression... the

RAF hoped that state-wielded repression would in turn help mobilize additional parts of the population toward the revolutionary cause' (2012, p.160).

The cases being examined in this chapter to explore the provocation strategy are the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in Yugoslavia between 1996 to 1998 and the Red Army Faction (RAF) in West Germany between 1970 to 1972. Both of these cases showcase a provocation strategy in action, but in different contexts. While both groups succeeded in baiting their respective states into a heavy-handed response, the character of that response was very different: slaughter in Kosovo and stricter policing and restrictions in West Germany. This helps to illustrate the variation in what constitutes a heavy-handed crackdown. These two cases are typical of provocation. They do differ on geography, time period, and the ideology of the groups involved which helps generalisability.

The hypotheses developed in the theory chapter were:

1) That casualties would start low and can escalate to higher if the group is not successful with low casualties. This expectation stems from the need to conserve resources but also low casualty attacks triggering a heavy-handed response better exemplify the cruelty of the enemy state.

2) It is expected that a group will strike either hard or soft targets depending on circumstance. Soft targets are expected to be struck in democratic states or states with the terrorist group's constituent population separated from the area of operations. Hard targets are expected in areas of mixed populations and/or authoritarian regimes.

3) Weapon selection is expected to be reasonably sophisticated as a non-basic weapon can communicate to an enemy the threat posed by the group therefore triggering the necessary crackdown without the group having to run the risk of inflicting mass casualties.

Kosovo Liberation Army

Background

In early 1998, Yugoslavian forces began a campaign of violent retribution against Albanian resistance fighters, the KLA, their perceived sympathisers, and political opponents in Kosovo. This would escalate to more general violence against Kosovar Albanians and an attempted ethnic cleansing of Kosovo which would spark NATO's 1999 military intervention and ultimately result in Kosovo's de facto independence (Posen, 2000). The 1998 actions stemmed from numerous complex developments and long-standing historical tensions, but the major trigger was the campaign carried out by the KLA (Bekaj, 2010).

The Kosovo Liberation Army, also known as Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës (UÇK) in Albania, was an ethnically Albanian militant group established in the early 1990s with the intention of securing Kosovo's independence from Yugoslavia (Perritt, 2008). Throughout the 1990s, numerous ethnic conflicts occurred in the territory of Yugoslavia such as the Bosnian War, the Slovenian War of Independence, and the Croatian War of Independence. In this environment, the KLA saw the opportunity to press for Kosovo's independence.

The provocation campaign occurred in Yugoslavia from February 1996 to February 1998, when the group sought to bring about government reprisals against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo to generate support for the group. A classic provocation strategy meets the groups process goals (generating support for the KLA) rather than outcome goals (independence). The main source of group statements for this section is a compilation from the Sense Transitional Justice Center which has numerous resources relating to the Yugoslavian conflicts (Sense, 2023). This compilation contains communiques the group sent to the press that have been translated into English. It is one of the most comprehensive sources available in English, especially in relation to KLA output prior to the 1999 Kosovo War. Other sources, such as a UK Foreign Affairs Select Committee report (2000) and transcripts from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (UCR IRCMT, 2007), are used to a lesser extent.

One element of provocation is the requirement to persuade the group's constituent population that violence is the correct course of action and that peaceful attempts to achieve political goals will be fruitless (Kydd and Walter, 2006). In a communique from December 1997 the group makes this clear:

> 'Those in the failed pacifist movement [ethnic Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova and his party advocate a peaceful solution] must now realize that Kosovo and the other Albanian territories will not be liberated down the telephone or from an office, but only by a serious commitment in support of the armed struggle' (Sense, 2023ii, p.6).

Here and in similar extracts, such as a February 1998 communique urging 'the Albanian people not to give in to the terrorist attacks of the Serbian military and police forces, but to join our units' (p.9) the group shows an excellent awareness of the strategic goal of their campaign. The group appears to have understood that they were unlikely to be able to effectively fight Serb forces, rather a path to victory required a popular support base. The group needed to meet its process goals before the outcome goals became a possibility. And, as is highlighted in the targeting section for this group, the KLA sought to showcase the brutality of Serbian forces in comparison to themselves. The incident discussed refers to an attack against Serbian police and the response of the state which resulted in the death of a child. The group used the death of an innocent child to showcase the response of the Serbian forces to the KLA's attack against more 'legitimate' targets.

A heavy-handed response by Serbian forces followed KLA provocation. In March 1998, Serb forces carried out a raid on Prekaz, a village in Kosovo, to kill KLA militants

living there. The result of this operation was nearly 60 people killed by the Serb forces, including members of the militant's families and civilians. This attack generated outrage among Kosovars and is seen as a key turning point in the conflict (Kubo, 2010).

The UK government Select Committee on Defence report on the Kosovo war (2000) recognised how the KLA sought to grow its popularity and establish violence as the way forward to secure Kosovo's independence. The section exploring the background to the conflict explains that:

'During 1997, KLA attacks and assassinations provoked responses from Serbian security forces in Kosovo which became increasingly disproportionate'

and

'Faced with the growing realisation that the Kosovo Albanians were becoming radicalised by the activities of the KLA and Serbian overreactions to them, NATO and other organisations in the international community—the UN, the EU, the OSCE and the Contact Group —began from late 1997 to look for ways to head off a crisis in Kosovo'.

The words of the group concerning the need to resist violently and highlighting the violence inflicted on Kosovars by government forces alongside the Select Committee report suggest that the group was actively seeking to provoke an excessive response which they could capitalise on. This can be considered a campaign of provocation.

The group's campaign would be successful. The Serbian government would launch a heavy-handed crackdown and the group would see a huge rise in the number of recruits from 150 up to 15-20,000 (Nation, 2003; Wentz, 2002). A UK Parliament Foreign Affairs Select Committee report (2000) summarises: 'after the Serb atrocities in February and early March there was an enormous groundswell of support for the KLA in Kosovo such that it was possible for them to conduct operations over a much wider area of territory'.

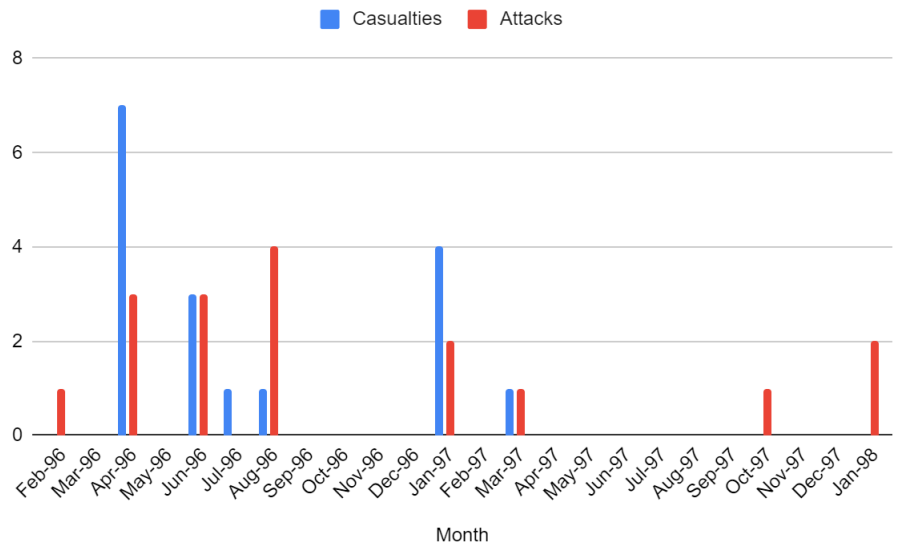
In terms of the political context of this campaign, while there had been tensions between the government in Belgrade and Kosovar population, violence relatively rare prior to the KLA's activities. The existing independence movement was primarily peaceful (Maliqi, 2012), something the KLA sought to challenge. The conflict would be along ethnic lines, the group's constituent population, within Yugoslavia, was primarily confined to Kosovo but Kosovo did have a minority but significant ethnic Serb population (Brunborg, 2002).

Casualties

The conflicts in the Balkans throughout the 1990s were notorious for the extreme levels of violence employed, up to the levels of events like Srebrenica in 1995 in which thousands were systematically murdered (BBC, 2020). The casualties inflicted by the KLA in the period being examined does not come anywhere close to events like that. Overall, and especially in comparison to previous and subsequent conflicts in the region, the casualties inflicted by the KLA were low.

Using the GTD, an average casualty count of 1 per attack was recorded. There were no attacks that exceed a casualty count of three. April 1996 was the month that involved the most casualties (7) but these were spread out across three attacks.

In terms of the frequency of these attacks, an attack occurred approximately once every 43 days. However, the campaign was made up of periods of more intense activity and periods of little activity, as reflected in Figure 8.1 below. For instance, there were three attacks reported as carried out on the same day in 1996 (22 April), again on 2 August, and two attacks are carried out on 4 January 1998. These do impact the average frequency of attacks, and also make for higher casualty periods. In terms of mass casualty events, even if we treat the attacks carried out in one day as a single incident, still no attack meets or exceeds 10 casualties, the threshold being used for mass casualties in this research. The closest is the April 1996 attacks which combined have a casualty count of 7.



(Figure 8.1, KLA number of attacks and casualties over campaign by month. Data sourced from GTD)

Interestingly, the group does claim some more lethal attacks in a December 1997 communique (Sense, 2023ii, p.6-7), which are not captured in the GTD data. These attacks occurred on 25 and 28 November 1997, and they produced more casualties than those that are recorded. The group claims to have carried out five attacks in this period which resulted in 9 deaths and several (an unspecified number in the document) injuries. Notable among these claimed attacks is the reported downing of a Cessna 310 light aircraft that resulted in the deaths of 5 passengers.

In the case of the downing of the Cessna, it can be established that the group was likely not behind this attack (UCR IRCMT, 2007, p.100). Discussed further in the weapon selection section, there is evidence to show that the group did not possess the means to

take down aircraft, even light aircraft. However, the group still clearly felt the need to claim credit for this, most likely to boast of their prowess and threat.

Following the increased availability of sophisticated weapons after Albania's economic collapse and the raiding of state armouries (discussed again in detail in the weapons section) it became clear that the group possessed at least some of the resources to inflict mass casualties. The weapons flowing into Kosovo included former Albanian government automatic weapons (and ample ammunition) which even in the hands of a single or few operatives would be capable of inflicting high casualty numbers. Weapon selection in the second half of the campaign is not the factor limiting casualty counts. A plausible explanation for this is a decision by the group to keep casualties low for strategic purposes. Another possible explanation for the use of sophisticated weaponry but low casualties is that the group members did not know how to handle the equipment. This seems a less plausible alternative as once the provocation campaign ended and the next phase of the conflict began, the Kosovo War, the group was immediately able to conduct operations against Serb forces which required their operatives to use their weapons effectively (Perritt, 2008).

An element from the group's communiques relating to casualties, or the lack of casualties, is the focus on "material" damage to the enemy (Sense, 2023ii, p.6, p.8). Material damage here is taken to mean damage to equipment or buildings, rather than human casualties. The group's focus on its ability to inflict material damage highlights two things: most obviously that it is capable of inflicting damage to the enemy directly and precisely and imposing costs on them; and secondly its ability to restrain itself when it comes to the taking of human life.

The following extract from a communique issued by the group in January 1998 (Sense, 2023ii, p.8) illustrates the language used and the use of "material" damage:

> 'On 25th November 1997, units of the UCK carried out two armed attacks against the Serbian police in Operational Zone No. 1, one in the village of Zakute near Podujeve, in which a police car was attacked, and a second in which the Serbian police station in Podujeve was attacked. Material damage was done to the enemy.
>
> On the orders of the Central Staff, armed operations also started in Operational Zone No. 2.
>
> On 16th December 1997, the building of the anti-Albanian court in FYROM [Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia] was attacked with explosives, causing material damage.
>
> On 4th January 1998, the police stations in Kumanovo and Prilep were also attacked with explosives. On this occasion, several police vehicles were destroyed, and other material damage was caused'.

This communique, unlike many of the others, does not make a direct appeal to any audience for support or funding, nor does it directly threaten an opponent. However, by adopting a military tone coldly reporting the facts (as the group would like them to be seen), the language suggests a desire by the author to communicate a seriousness of intent and ability. In the outbidding chapter, this was the case with the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement seeking to present itself as a serious military force. Similarly, here the KLA attempt to do the same, albeit to communicate their abilities to a different audience.

All these attacks share the outcome, as reported by the KLA, of inflicting material damage against the enemy. These are all communicated as low casualty but high damage attacks, which meet the groups communicative goals of capability but restraint. This is a delicate balance that the KLA sought to maintain throughout the campaign because the main audience for the violence of a provocation campaign is the enemy the group seeks to provoke, the views of other audiences must also be appreciated. Given the aim of a provocation campaign is to convince an audience that the enemy are the "bad guys" then the group is also invested as portraying itself as the "good guys".

The media has focused on KLA conducted assassinations (e.g. Beaumont, 1999 and Gadzo, 2003). The group was purportedly responsible for numerous abductions and assassinations of both ethnic Serbs and Albanians (Bellamy, 2000). However, even prior to the escalation of events in 1998 assassinations featured as part of the KLA's repertoire of violence. The GTD data reports one attack type as being an assassination but it is likely one more can be considered as an assassination given that the victim is labelled in the GTD as an 'ethnic Albanian'. Despite making up a low percentage of the group's attacks, they are notable in that the group mentions them in their output. Nearly two thirds (62.55%) of the communiques made available through the Sense collection (2023ii) that were released during the period of the campaign refer to attacks targeting specific individuals. These attacks against individuals are also in keeping with the pattern of low casualty levels.

The victim being explicitly described as an ethnic Albanian (rather than Serbian) is in line with the KLA's comments concerning the assassinations it carried out during the provocation campaign. An August 1997 communique explains that the group 'has set itself the task of fighting mercilessly against the invader *and his collaborators* until the Albanian lands are totally liberated' (Sense, 2023ii, p.3, emphasis added). In a similar vein, an earlier May 1997 communique (p.1) explains the killing of an ethnic Albanian because of his 'notorious and open collaboration with the Serbian occupying forces'.

The KLA's frequent reporting of their own targeted attacks against individuals (e.g. Sense 2023ii, p. 1, p.3, p.5) suggests a communicative element. The killings could have easily been unannounced had the aims of the group simply been the death of the individual. Two likely options emerge, which are not mutually exclusive. One is that the audience for this is the Kosovar population, and the other is that it sends a message to the Serbian government. If the Kosovar population is the audience for this, then this is surprising and more in line with an intimidation campaign than a provocation campaign (Kydd and Walter, 2006). This would be the KLA communicating to its own population

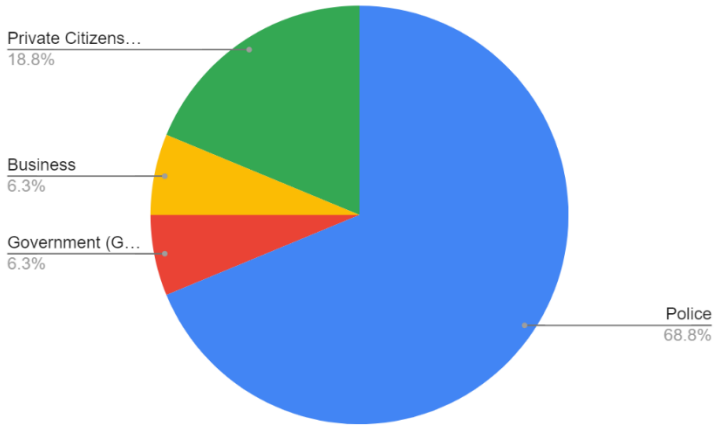
that it will be punished for aiding the enemy. In doing so, however, it would still be succeeding in communicating selectivity and restraint in its targeting. This is a potentially risky move for a small and not yet widely supported group as they risk driving their constituent population further away. However, this makes most sense when viewed as maintenance, similarly to how ETA would collect revolutionary taxes (see outbidding chapter) - the removal of collaborators is simply what allows the group to keep functioning.

In terms of communicating with the enemy government, this makes more sense in the context of a provocation campaign. The assassinations, and subsequent announcement of them, could serve the purpose of communicating to the Serbian government that the group is sophisticated enough to detect and eliminate elements of the Kosovar population that work with the government. This communicates that the group must be stopped with a heavier counter-terrorism approach. Beyond the communicative element, this would also remove the state's ability to respond with an effective and surgical counter terrorist approach and limit their options to more overt and violent ones.

The group's low average casualty conforms to expectations. The relatively low level of violence in terms of numbers killed and the intent to inflict material damage rather than human damage serves to illustrate the disproportionate response of the government. The violence is enough to bait the government into the desired heavy-handed response and shows the group's constituent population the 'evil' of the government. While various factors may have impacted the decision to inflict low casualties, the qualitative evidence does illustrate how a provocation strategy was one important influence on casualty count in this case.

Target Selection

The scale of civilian suffering in the Balkans in the 1990s was enormous. Attacks and atrocities carried out against civilians were routine across the various Yugoslav wars (Mueller, 2000). But in their provocation campaign, the KLA does not conform to this behaviour. The targeting patterns of the KLA during this campaign show a preference for hard, non-civilian targets. Using the GTD, 75% of targets struck are classified as hard.



(Figure 8.2, KLA targeting preferences, data sourced from GTD)

A statement put out by the group in August 1996 stated ‘‘On 2nd August, in Operational zone No 1 our guerilla units launched four armed attacks against the occupying Serbian police posts. Our attacks were intended to destroy the Serbian Police targets and inflict heavy material losses’ (Wilcoxson, 2007). This extract reveals information concerning their targeting policy. This statement was written after the attack referenced, prompting concern they were retroactively fitting rhetoric onto the outcome of attack. Yet, the fact that attacks continued in a similar pattern after this attack does enable us to grant it a degree of trustworthiness. Following a subsequent attack in November 1997, the group released a statement saying, ‘On 25 November 1997, units of the UCK carried out two armed attacks against the Serbian police in Operational Zone No. 1, one in the village of Zakute near Podujeve, in which a police car was attacked, and a second in which the Serbian police station in Podujeve was attacked’ (Sense, 2023ii, p.8). This statement again communicates that police entities are the targets of these attacks. As figure 8.2 shows, police made up 68.8% of targets during the campaign – an indication of the group accurately communicating its desired targets. This extract from 1997 reveals two relevant pieces of information. The first, which was discussed in the casualties section, is the intent to inflict material rather than human losses. The second, and more relevant to this targeting section, is the clear intent to distinguish between targets. This hints at a wish to be seen as effective but restrained in their violence. In an attrition campaign, one would expect similar statements boasting of the success of attacks to communicate that the group poses a threat. The same is true here as the group needs to demonstrate that it poses enough of a threat to the enemy that it must be dealt with. However, the group also needs to balance this with the need to maintain a degree of legitimacy to their violence. The group’s supporters need to be aware that the group's violence is restrained to illustrate the disproportionate response of the government.

Selectivity in targeting enables a group to contrast their actions against their enemy’s. This can be seen in an extract of a statement from December 1997: ‘On 25th November, our units opened fire and repulsed a Serbian police patrol in the village of Vojnike. On

the same day, the police wounded the 11-year-old child Babri Krasniqi' (Sense, 2023ii, p.6).

The group in this extract is attempting to present a 'good versus bad guys' narrative, essential as part of a provocation campaign, the actions of the KLA are necessary and against an appropriate foe. The Serbian forces, on the other hand, are shown as targeting innocents, in this instance the undeniably innocent and emotionally evocative targeting of a child. This output by the group is in line with Kydd and Walter's description of a provocation campaign aiming to 'persuade the domestic audience that the target of attacks is evil and untrustworthy and must be vigorously resisted' (p.54).

This message is reinforced across the group's statements, such as this extract from the report on an October 1997 communique (Sense, 2023ii, p.4):

> 'The message further notes that "being unable to apprehend units of our army, the occupier has launched campaigns of retaliation and terror against the unprotected and unarmed civil population". The communique appeals on the "decision-making centres of international community to undertake concrete measures against the Serbian terror on the civil population"'.

This extract similarly highlights how Serb forces conducted retaliatory attacks against civilians in response to the KLA's attacks. However, the group shows an understanding of the broader strategic environment in which they operate. Given the recent interventions in the Bosnian situation in the years preceding the KLA's campaign (Baker, 2015), the group was aware of the possibility of attracting international support or even intervention. The group also spoke directly to the international community in a different communique: 'You will be forced to intervene after a greater slaughter than in Bosnia-Hercegovina and after the flames of war have engulfed the entire Balkans' (Sense, 2023, p.3). In this stage of the group's existence, during the provocation campaign, there was an awareness of international intervention but it did not become a priority for the group until the conflict escalated in 1998. Nonetheless, it is of value to see the variation in audience at times, and the group's awareness of the bigger picture.

It is possible to cast doubt on the targeting of Serbian police as occurring because it was the only option available to the KLA. Ethnic Serbs, while a minority in Kosovo, still made up a sizeable portion of the region's population, approximately 10 percent of the population in 1998 (Brunborg, 2002). Attacks against these civilians would have been ideologically permissible for the KLA, but strategically it would have been unfavourable. Attacking Serbian civilians would have been likely easier than Serbian police but part of the KLA's strategy required selecting appropriate targets for their political objectives and not their ideology – not attacking this group showed restraint and highlighted the wrongdoing of Serbian authorities when they did lash out against ethnic Albanian civilians.

In the next phase of the conflict, the Kosovo war from 1998-99 and the years immediately afterwards, the KLA would develop a reputation for brutality and committing war crimes against Serb civilians in Kosovo (Human Rights Watch, n.d.).

The group's ideology had not shifted between 1996 and 1998, but once the conflict escalated after the Serb forces responded in the desired manner to the provocation attempts, the strategic environment changed. Even after the war, attacks were carried out against non-ethnic Albanian residents in Kosovo. This new environment permitted the targeting of Serb civilians (Ward, 2000). This occurred after the provocation campaign.

With 75% of all targets struck being hard, it is determined that the campaign conforms to the expectation set in the hypothesis: that the targets will be predominantly hard or predominately soft but not mixed. More so, it conforms in that the group is operating in an area with a mixed population which the hypothesis asserted as likely to encourage the striking of hard targets. This was not just to avoid hitting their constituent population, but they also appeared to have minimal interest in hitting enemy civilians. But this was not a perfect confirmation. The small number of assassinations do question this but given how small a proportion of the total attacks in the campaign they make up it is insufficient to undermine the overall findings.

Weapon Selection

The weapons used in a terrorist group campaign are not only selected to inflict damage, but they also serve a communicative purpose. A group conducting a provocation campaign is expected to use relatively sophisticated weaponry to demonstrate threat to the government it is seeking to provoke without having to carry out unnecessary mass casualty attacks. A group that is unable to communicate that it poses a severe threat is unlikely to bring about the desired governmental overreaction.

(Figure 8.3, Weapon selection by KLA according to GTD)

The data from the GTD for this campaign shows that all the attacks involved either firearms or explosives as the weapons of choice. 56% of the attacks involved firearms and 44% involved explosives. However, the data does not reveal in any greater specificity the exact type of these weapons used.

This section will make clear that in 1997 the group had relatively sophisticated weapons available to use, but prior to this development it is difficult to ascertain exactly what

weapons the group possessed. But the use of explosives and firearms suggests relatively sophisticated weaponry, but not the most sophisticated weaponry. To refer again to the claimed aircraft downing incident, Hague testimony from former KLA commander and Prime Minister of Kosovo Ramush Haradinaj explains that: 'I don't think that at the time the KLA had the weapons necessary to bring down an aeroplane... I don't think, I don't believe, that the aeroplane could be brought down by the weapons of the KLA... To bring an aeroplane down you need to have sophisticated weapons, and the KLA did not have at its disposal such weapons at the time' (UCR IRCMT, 2007, p.100).

But, by claiming that they had shot down the aircraft, this would have suggested that they possessed more advanced weaponry than they did in reality. This is useful in understanding terrorist weapon selection in a provocation campaign because it shows how the group wants to be seen, as posing a legitimate threat. In this instance it was an incident they were not responsible for, but it provides insight into their weapon selection for their actual attacks – the more sophisticated the better. This claim does not contribute to the determination of the sophistication of the group's weapon selection (as these weapons were not actually used), discussed further below. This example is used to highlight the point made about the desire to be seen as possessing a sophisticated arsenal.

It seems that the group's weaponry was less advanced than that capable of taking out aircraft, but still not insignificant. The 1997 Albanian descent into civil unrest an economic collapse proved to be an unexpected gift for the KLA. There had long been support from within Albania for Kosovo's independence given their ethnic ties (Rogel, 2003) but the chaos that unfolded in Albania led to material gains for the Kosovar rebels. During the civil unrest, numerous barracks and weapons stockpiles belonging to the Albanian government were looted. A significant number of these weapons made their way across the border into Kosovo and into the hands of the KLA, so much so that the Albanian version of the AK-47 became the de facto standard rifle of KLA fighters.

It is estimated that over 500,000 weapons were looted during this period (Khakee and Florquin, 2003) and many of these would go on to be used by KLA fighters when the situation escalated in Kosovo (1998, after the provocation campaign). The weapons looted in Albania were small arms, machine guns, grenade launchers, and mortars.

A UK Parliament Foreign Affairs Select Committee report (2000) explains succinctly that: 'The collapse of the Albanian state in March 1997 gave the KLA access to thousands of weapons looted from the Albanian military arsenals, permitting the KLA to intensify their assaults on Serb security forces in Kosovo'. This shows that the group had a desire to use advanced weaponry but had been limited by resources when it was not able to do so. Furthermore, the Serbian government knowing that the KLA was in possession of these weapons and was using them allowed the group to convey threat without having to inflict mass casualties which is ideal for a provocation campaign.

The expectation weapon selection was that a group would want to communicate to their opponent that they pose a significant threat by demonstrating possession of weapons capable of inflicting significant damage. After the economic collapse in Albania, the

group did possess sophisticated weapons and was able to use these. But, even before this, the group at least sought to demonstrate its purported weaponry through claiming to take down an aircraft. Even if it did not possess the weapons necessary, it was desirable for the group to be seen as possessing them.

Summary

The activities of the KLA during their provocation campaign to bait the Yugoslavian government was different from the presentation of the horrors of the rest of the Yugoslavian conflicts, and how the Kosovo war would go after the government had taken the bait. The KLA kept civilian casualties low, and their targets were mostly government targets – especially police. This allowed the actions of the KLA to have a degree of legitimacy among their constituent population, but also served to highlight the brutality of the government response when they carry out massacres of civilians.

The group did want to be seen as a genuine threat to government interests, which is what their attacks attempted to communicate. This was also evident in their weapons selection or their approach to weapons, which sought to highlight the capabilities of the group.

The qualitative data does not definitively show that the KLA was selecting types of violence based on a provocation strategy, but it is enough to suggest it is a strong contributing factor. The group is unlikely to explicitly state that it hopes to bring about reprisals against its own population as this may risk losing support which makes finding this certainty unlikely. However, the qualitative data illustrates how a provocation strategy shaped various forms of violence in the conflict. **Red Army Faction**

Background

Such was the significance of the Red Army Faction that the campaign to counter the group has been described as 'West Germany's only war' (Varon, 2004). The group's attacks throughout the 1970s brought global attention to their cause, leading to an enduring awareness and romanticisation of the group. Describing the group's campaigns as a war illustrates the political significance of the group, but it is less reflective of the somewhat more limited reality of their violence and that of the state. While the group hoped to be the leaders of a war against what they saw as an evil West German government, the situation never reached that level of severity, despite the group's best efforts to force the government into this.

The Red Army Faction (RAF) was a far-left terrorist group from West Germany active from 1970 until 1998. The group's ambition was to be part of a worldwide revolution. More concretely, the group sought to bring about popular armed rebellion in West Germany. Its origins lie in the late 1960s student protest movement against the perceived increasing authoritarianism of the West German government. The key members of what would become the Red Army Faction were radicalised during this period, turning to violence. The group came into being as the Red Army Faction in May 1970 when Ulrike Meinhof helped Andreas Baader escape from prison (Moghadam, 2012).

Throughout its history, the group has been known by numerous names such as the Red Army Faction, the Baader-Meinhof Gang, and the Baader-Meinhof Group. In the GTD the group is referred to as the Baader-Meinhof Group until 1977 when they switch to using Red Army Faction (GTD, 2022). The Baader-Meinhof name was that used by the press in the early 1970s. This use of multiple names is not exclusive to the GTD. Researching the group has been difficult at times as different authors and resources use different names for the group. In this research, Baader-Meinhof group (or gang) and Red Army Faction are considered to be the same entity after 1970, when the GTD data begins.

This section on provocation focusses on the early days of the RAF, after their official formation in 1970 up until the arrests of the major players in the group, Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof, in June 1972. Between 1970 and 1972, the group's aim was to highlight the oppressive and "fascist" nature of the West German regime. The geographical focus of study is solely within West Germany, while the group did undertake activities outside West Germany such as training in Jordan with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) (Hoffman, 2017). However, they did not conduct any attacks there, nor was their audience there. The group's location for its violence was, for this phase of their existence, West Germany only. One particularly useful source for the group's output was Smith and Moncourt's collection of RAF material (2009) which provides communiques, statements, and output from the group translated into English, as well as providing some useful commentary and history to contextualise it.

The group's provocation campaign continued after the arrest of the founding members during the so-called Second Generation of the group, however at this point there were at least two strategies at play as the group was also using terrorism to try and secure the release of its imprisoned members, reflecting an attrition strategy (Rothenberger, 2017). This is why the cutoff point for the campaign is 1972 as up to that point it had been solely a provocation strategy, meaning evidence is most likely to be found during this period. In the subsequent period when the attrition strategy comes into play there is the introduction of attacks likely to disrupt the data.

Perhaps the most important influence on the group's ideology and strategy was that of Brazilian leftist Carlos Marighella (Moghadam, 2012). Marighella published the *Minimanual of the Urban Guerilla* in 1969, shortly before the beginning of the RAF's campaign, which provides guidance on how to carry out a guerilla campaign and bring about revolution. A key extract from that work explains how violent activities can force the state to act:

> 'The government has no alternative except to intensify its repression. The police networks, house searches, the arrest of suspects and innocent persons, and the closing off of streets make life in the city unbearable. The military dictatorship embarks on massive political persecution. Political assassinations and police terror become routine.

> In spite of all this, the police systematically fail. The armed forces, the navy and the air force are mobilized to undertake routine police functions, but even so they can find no way to halt guerrilla operations or to wipe out the revolutionary organization, with its fragmented groups that move around and operate throughout the country.
>
> The people refuse to collaborate with the government, and the general sentiment is that this government is unjust, incapable of solving problems, and that it resorts simply to the physical liquidation of its opponents. The political situation in the country is transformed into a military situation in which the [state operatives] appear more and more to be the ones responsible for violence, while the lives of the people grow worse' (Marighella, 1969, p.90).

This is essentially a description of a provocation strategy, outlining how a group's actions will result in a heavy-handed response by the government that results in the alienation of the population and drives them to support the terrorists. In the early phase of the RAF's existence, this was the strategy that they employed to demonstrate to the population of West Germany that the government was oppressive, and the RAF was the solution (Wright, 1991).

The Red Army Faction's campaign did lead to state repression, to a degree. The government of West Germany, a liberal democratic state, responded to the actions of the group with what were seen to be severe restrictions on freedoms or violations of personal liberties (Miller, 2010).

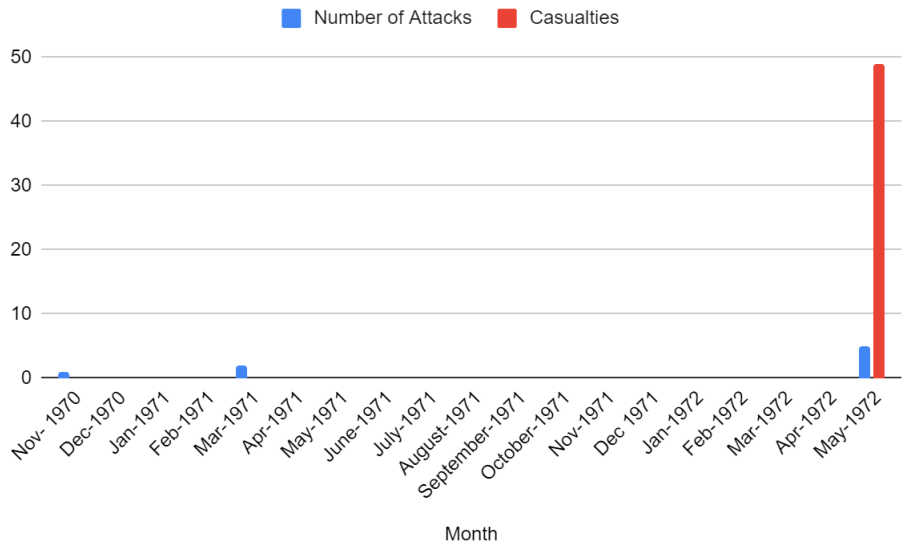
In terms of context, the RAF's relationship, unlike some of the groups examined in this thesis, does not stem from a pre-existing violent antagonism. The group was a new formation at the time of the campaign occurring and the setting for its emergence was the 1960s student protests in West Germany (Moghadam, 2012). The group's constituent population as very much mixed with the West German targets it struck which is important to consider when examining target selection.

Casualties

Actual and intended casualties can vary. Sometimes a group is not successful in killing as many people as intended and sometimes a group kills more than it intended to. In the case of the RAF, this section explores how the group appears to have fallen into the latter category. The expectation was that a group would start low and escalate to higher casualties if the initial low-level attacks were not successful in bringing about the desired government response. This was roughly the pattern for the RAF. The initial attacks were low level and in May 1972 they carried out the May Offensive which drew enormous amounts of attention, but in examining the case it is a little more complex.

The group's average casualty count across the campaign was 6.125. This is a surprisingly high figure compared to that of the KLA (1). Within the campaign, two attacks cross the mass casaulty thresholdhold (10 casualties). The interesting dynamic here is the intent to cause casualties, which is explored in this section. The group claimed to want to keep casualties to a minimum – at least in the case of attacks against

German targets. Attacks against US targets leave a little more room for destruction. The campaign escalates in casualty count towards the end. The initial attacks of the campaign have no casualties recorded, but figure 8.4 shows a spike in casualties during the 1972 May Offensive. There is also an escalation in frequency, there are very few attacks recorded by the GTD until the May offensive when five occur in the space of a month. The group does not have a recorded attack for a period of a year prior to the May Offensive.



(Figure 8.4, Attacks and casualties of RAF campaign. Data sourced from GTD)

In *The Urban Guerilla Concept*, a document put out by the group in 1971, the raid to break Andreas Baader out of prison is discussed. The group attempt to make clear that they did not want to inflict casualties, and they do not inflict casualties unnecessarily (at least at this point in their campaign). They attempt to defend their actions in a way which portrays themselves as restrained in their violence:

> 'On May 14, the cops fired the first shots. This was the case in Frankfurt as well, where two of us ran for it, because we are not going to just let ourselves be arrested. The cops shot to kill. Sometimes we didn't shoot at all, and when we did, we didn't shoot to kill. In Berlin, in Nuremburg, in Frankfurt. It can be proven, because it is true. We do not "use firearms recklessly." The cop who finds himself in the contradiction of being a "little man" and a capitalist pawn, a low paid employee and monopoly capitalism's agent, is not obliged to follow orders. We shoot back if someone shoots at us. The cop who lets us go, we let him go as well.' (Smith and Moncourt, 2009, p.86)

The group's most destructive attacks in terms of casualties inflicted was the 19 May 1972 bombing of the Springer building. The group claims 17 were injured in the attack, but the GTD has it recorded even higher at 24 – likely an attempt by the group to downplay the unintended destruction. The Springer building was the site of the offices

of the Springer publishing company that had reported on left wing protests and actions in the 1960s and 1970s in a way that displeased the RAF, and the far left in Germany more broadly. The RAF branded his publication business as an enemy of the people (Smith and Moncourt, 2009).

However, the group issued a communique that stated the infliction of mass casualties was not deliberate. The communique states that 'despite prompt and early warnings, the building wasn't evacuated and 17 people were injured' (Smith and Moncourt, 2009, p.177). The group shifts blame for the casualties to the Springer Corporation, stating that 'because the Springer Corporation can't cover up the fact that they were warned, they distort it, stating, "There was only one call and it came too late." Two telephone operators and the police can confirm that the Springer Press is lying once again... For capitalists, profit is everything, and the people who make it for them are dirt. We regret that workers and staff were injured' (Smith and Moncourt, 2009, p.177).

This is another example of a group that has inflicted mass casualties wanting to distance themselves from the attack (see previously the Real IRA in the spoiling chapter). This communique is strong evidence to show that the group sought to keep civilian casualties low, especially when their actions result in the deaths of the people (especially of a certain class, i.e. workers) that they claim to represent. Especially in a provocation campaign, the group would not want to harm the population directly as the aim of the strategy is to get the government to respond violently and to be perceived as being the enemy.

The exception was when the group targeted the US military. These attacks had relatively high casualty counts which the group did not try as hard to walk back as they did the Springer building casualties. During the May Offensive, the group carried out two attacks against US military targets resulting in 23 casualties. This is discussed more in the targeting section, but the group wanted to communicate that it would not hurt the German people. However, US military remained a valid target which would also generate attention for the group and bring about pressure the government to respond.

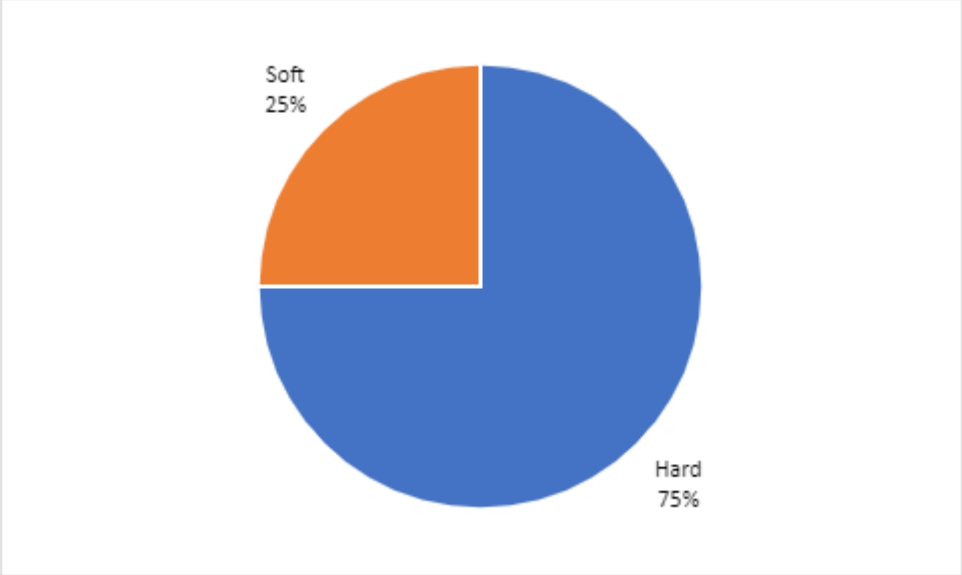
The group maximised the value of any response taken by the police. In 1971, two members of the group (Petra Schelm and Werner Hoppe) became involved in a shootout with the police. Hoppe surrendered to the authorities but Schelm was killed. Shortly afterwards in 1971, a notable poll was carried out by the Allenbach Institute revealing the extent of the sympathy or support for the group among the general population. It found that: '40 percent of respondents described the RAF's violence as political, not criminal, in motive; 20 percent indicated that they could understand efforts to protect fugitives from capture; and 6 percent confessed that they were themselves willing to conceal a fugitive' (Varon, 2004, p.1999; also discussed in Smith and Moncourt, 2009). While these results do not show a majority of the population supported the RAF, it does show some acceptance of the group's methods. They also succeeded, based on the evidence of this poll, in being perceived as a political entity rather than a criminal entity which shows the potential perception of legitimacy of the group among the West German population.

The group utilised the violence inflicted by the state. The group used the killing of Schelm in their propaganda. A flier distributed by an affiliated organisation of the RAF showed a picture of Schelm before her death and a photo of her corpse immediately after being shot in the head side by side with the caption reading in German "Shot: Criminal Proceedings Suspended" (Smith and Moncourt, 2009, p.106). The aim of propaganda is to capitalise on the heavy-handed response the government has been provoked into, to present these incidents as extra judicial killings and turn popular support towards the group and away from the state.

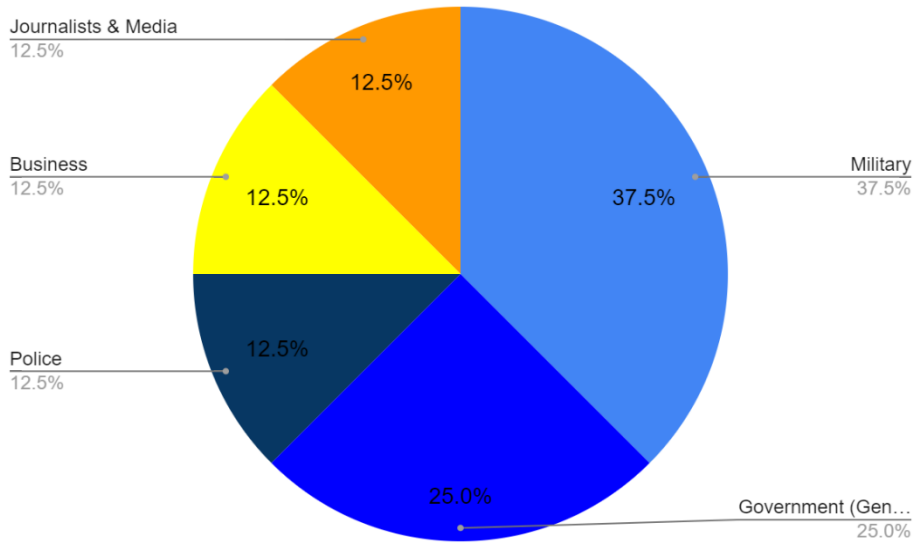
The group conforms to the escalation to higher casualties after an initial low-level start. The targeting of US personnel enables them to inflict higher casualties than they would be able to (intentionally) against West German entities while trying to maintain their legitimacy as representatives of the people. The group, throughout, is eager to try and not "terrorise" the German population but rather carry out attacks in such a way to reduce damage to the population while still succeeding in forcing a government response. This conforms to Kydd and Walter's notion of '[persuading] the domestic audience that the target of attacks is evil and untrustworthy and must be vigorously resisted' (p. 54). The group itself cannot be allowed to be seen as evil while trying to convince the people that the government is evil.

Target Selection

Of the attacks recorded by the GTD in the period being examined for the RAF, the majority are carried out against hard targets. As figure 8.5 shows, 75% of the attacks perpetrated by the group were against hard targets, these being a mixture of government, military, and police targets. Only 25% of the attacks during the campaign were carried out against soft targets. Figure 8.6 shows the detailed breakdown of these targets, with military targets making up the biggest share of targets (37.5%).



(Figure 8.5, RAF hard/soft targeting. Data Source GTD)



(Figure 8.6, RAF detailed target selection. Data sourced from GTD)

The targeting of the government, military, and police is both strategically and ideologically in keeping with the groups' aims. The willingness and ability to strike hard, governmental, targets shows that the group could be selective in its targeting. As was seen in the group's casualties section, the group wants to present to its constituent audience that it is not unnecessarily violent as that is how the state needs to be perceived. But, at the same time, the group needs to communicate to the state that it is a serious threat that requires strong action to effectively deal with. If the group is unable to present itself as a serious threat to the state, then the state is less likely to react in the heavy handed and clumsy manner that the group requires. Striking hard targets achieves both goals, it is acceptable (to a degree) to the constituent population as they are not the victims of the violence, nor is it killing civilians, but also presents enough of a threat to the state to be taken seriously.

In a communique from 28 May 1972 during the May Offensive, the group seeks to justify its targets: 'there can be no doubt that the bomb attacks were directed solely against the enemies of the people, the enemies of the working class, the enemies of the Vietnamese people, the imperialists' (p.179). The group, while carrying out violent attacks which it hoped would provoke a strong government backlash, still needed to keep the West German population onside, or at least not opposed to the group. This required them to specify that they were not trying to terrorise the population. The group explained that this communique was a response to a speech by the German Chancellor and fake RAF communiques in the press. The Chancellor is reported by the group as having said that they have 'no logical political basis, and that they have endangered innocent lives' (Smith and Moncourt, 2009, p.179). And on the fake letters purporting to be from the RAF circulated in the press, he said they 'create the impression that the bombers are brainless twits who act chaotically in an effort to create fear amongst the

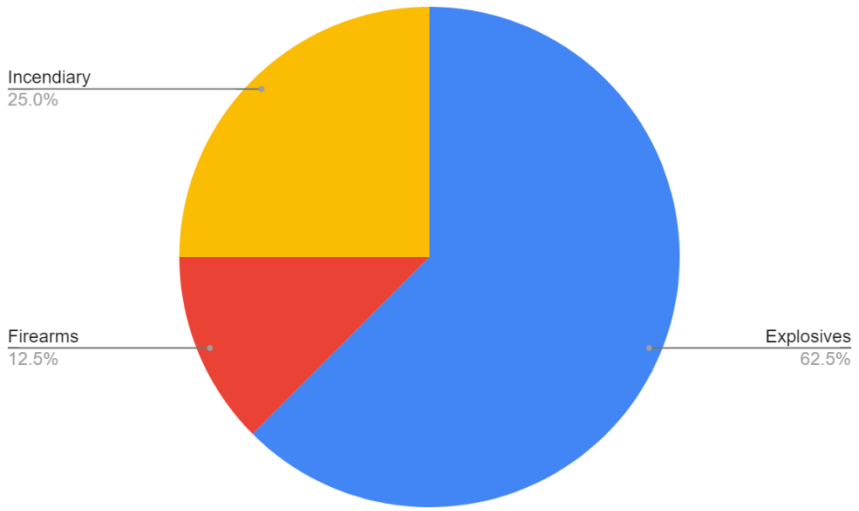
people' (p.179). The group wanted to be seen as capable, not "brainless twits", and also as being on the people's side and not trying to scare them.

The attacks against US military targets, in particular the Heidelberg base attack (May 24), were undertaken, it was claimed, in response to US bombing in Vietnam. The group demands that the US military stops the bombing and criticises it as a policy (p.178). It is unlikely that the group genuinely expected to persuade the United States to end its bombing campaign of Vietnam but these attacks do still serve a communicative purpose. The communique in which the group claims responsibility for the attack reiterates the purported fascist nature of the West German government and the imperialist nature of the US government with references to Nazi atrocities. The group goes on to elaborate on its core message, they reiterate the need for violent action against a state it believes to be evil: 'people of the Federal Republic don't support the security service in its search for the bombers, because they want nothing to do with the crimes of American imperialism and the support it receives from the ruling class here... they know from experience that demonstrations and words are of no use against the crimes of imperialism' (Smith and Moncourt, 2009, p.179).

The group's constituent population potentially being mixed with its targets presented a potential issue to the group. The group wanted support from the German population so it was not incentivised to harm them but still needed to find a way to bring about a governmental response – hard targets, German police, and U.S. military, were the most effective way to do this. This is in line with expectations.

Weapon selection

The weapon selection for the group consisted mostly of explosives, making up 62.5% of weapons used. Incendiary devices constituted 25%, and the remaining 12.5% was firearms. While the GTD does show that most of the attacks involved the use of explosives as the weapon employed, with only one instance of firearms being used in (in a terrorist attack) that time the availability of firearms to the group is known. This is because of members getting involved in firefights with the police (New York Times, 1972) and other bank robberies attributed to the group which are not included in the GTD data such in which firearms were used. However, their lack of inclusion is excusable as they do not meet the criteria for a terrorist event in that they are not overtly political or communicative, but rather fund-raising endeavours. Furthermore, the group had trained and formed connections with Palestinian groups they could acquire weapons from (Hoffman, 2017).



(Figure 8.7, RAF weapon selection. Data sourced from GTD)

The first use of explosives occurred, according to the GTD data, on 11 May 1972 and every attack until the last (24 May) involved the use of explosives. The group, in the May 1972 wave of attacks, employed only explosives as their weapon of choice during this period, foregoing the incendiary weapons and firearms used earlier. The bombs, it would seem, were used to inflict material damage and generate attention for the group. That is to say that in attacks like that against the Springer building, the group can be believed when it said it intended to avoid a high casualty count. Beyond the claims by the group that they wanted to keep casualties low, reasons to suggest this is the case include the timing of bombings and the calls ahead to warn. Reports of the calls ahead to notify relevant actors of the bombs being placed in certain attacks were verified by sources who were not affiliated with the terrorist group (Smith and Moncourt, 2009), suggesting an intent to reduce casualties or at least an attempt to absolve themselves of blame for casualties. In relation to the timing of the bombs, it is reported that in the Heidelberg US army bombing that the group carried out this attack after working for hours to reduce the likelihood of mass casualties (Smith and Moncourt, 2009).

The types of bombs used in the May Offensive vary in their severity and sophistication. For instance, in their attack against the police station on 12 May used a pipe bomb (Huffman, 2011). A pipe bomb is a relatively simple device which is not particularly resource intensive – it is among the least sophisticated of explosive types. However, the bombs used to carry out the attack against the US military targets on 24 May were considerably stronger. The attack was carried out using two high yield car bombs. The group claims it was the equivalent of 200kg of TNT placed in relative proximity to each other and the target detonated 10 to 15 seconds apart (Smith and Moncourt, 2009 p.178). This was a considerably more complex attack than the pipe bomb.

One benefit of using explosives is that they do not require an operator to be present at the scene of the attack (Koehler-Derrick and Milton, 2019). This allows a group with a small membership, such as the RAF, to carry out attacks without risking the loss of

personnel at the scene of the attack. However, this comes at the price of selectivity and control. This can, as was the case with the Springer attack, lead to unintended casualties. An operative with a firearm could restrain themselves to avoid unwanted casualties.

The GTD reports that two of the attacks during the campaign did employ the use of plastic explosives. One of these instances was the Heidelberg attack against the U.S. military target, which combined with the groups own claims of power and the damage inflicted (both material and human), does effectively highlight the sophistication of the weapons available to the group.

The May Offensive communicated to the state that the group had the means to carry out a rapid series of attacks, suggesting that the group was well-resourced and well-motivated. Essentially, this offensive demonstrated to the West German state that the group was a serious threat. The use of explosives throughout this period, especially the more powerful explosives and plastic explosives, again reinforced the severity of the threat posed by the RAF.

The expectation for provocation was that a group would use reasonably sophisticated weapons to convince opponents that it poses a legitimate threat, and that action must be taken to stop it. The RAF were successful in doing this, and their boasting of the strength and complexity of their explosives/attacks demonstrates that this is a message they wanted to convey. The weapons they used, particularly the explosives during the May Offensive, indicate an ability to acquire powerful weapons which require significant expertise.

Summary

The hypothesis was that a group employing a provocation strategy would start low and if its initial attempts at provocation were unsuccessful then it would escalate to higher casualty attacks. The RAF did conform in a way that is not as neat as the theory would expect, but on balance it can be confirmed. The attacks in 1970 and 1971 caused low casualties, it was only the May offensive that pushed the group's average casualty count above 5 (the threshold for a mass casualty campaign). The group did inflict higher casualty attacks – albeit it unintentionally when against German civilians. The group did conform to theoretical expectation in that they primarily attacked hard targets. The group wanted to avoid killing the constituency it claimed to represent, instead hoping that the government crackdown would turn them towards the group. Hard government targets, and US military targets, were both ideologically and strategically acceptable to the group. The group was also able to demonstrate sophistication in its weapons and attack types, certainly by the start of the May Offensive. The group was using relatively high yield car bombs and carrying out attacks which required a degree of expertise and coordination. Overall, the group conforms to expectation. The quantitative data illustrate a link between a strategy of provocation and tactics, while the qualitative data demonstrates how that strategy plays an important role in shaping terrorist group behaviour. The context in which the group conducted its campaign did not result in any

deviations away from the expected results, but may have contributed to the refining of selection of types of violence within the boundaries set by strategic requirements.

Conclusion

In both the campaigns examined, the groups began at low levels of intended casualties. The KLA remained at this level throughout, whilst the RAF escalated to higher casualty attacks. When the aim is to persuade an audience of a government's abhorrent behaviour, the disproportionality of their response needs to be highlighted. Low levels of violence responded to with high levels of violence is an effective way of doing so. When the state does not respond, higher levels of violence may be used to force the government's hand. This is a difficult problem for terrorist groups as they must find a way to inflict higher casualties without disrupting their message or losing support. For the RAF this was to attack US military targets. While the theoretical expectation was that resources would be a driving factor in keeping casualties low, not having to expend more resources than necessary, this did feature as significantly as expected in the findings for either group.

Both groups struck primarily hard targets. This was in line with the theoretical expectation that with targets would be primarily hard or soft but how events unfolded in the cases is different to the theoretical expectations. The KLA had the option of striking Serbian civilians in Kosovo but decided not at that point of their campaign, instead opting to hit government entities. There is not a strong suggestion that this was because of the regime type in Belgrade or the mixed population ethnically, but rather that striking hard targets enabled the group to communicate its threat without the public relations issues of killing civilians. The RAF also wanted to avoid civilian casualties, even though they did occur, as this was the population they claimed to represent.

The weapons used by both groups showed a degree of sophistication, but what was most evident was their intent to highlight this sophistication. As was seen in the case of the Heidelberg bombing for the RAF and with claimed shooting down of the aircraft by the KLA, the groups wanted to communicate to the government how capable their weaponry was. Weapon choice, regardless of casualties, can be an effective way to communicate threat. Even more importantly, it can communicate potential threat to a government, forcing them to act, without the risks associated with mass casualty attacks.

	KLA	RAF
Casualties: Start low and can escalate if not initially successful	Low	Start low then escalated
Target Selection: EITHER hard or soft	Hard	Hard
Weapon Selection: Sophisticated	Sophisticated	Sophisticated

(Figure 8.8, Hypothesis matrix showing findings of this chapter. Confirmed hypotheses are in green, partially confirmed are in yellow, not confirmed are in red)

What is made clear by the cases studied in this chapter is how intent the groups were on demonstrating that they were a serious threat that needed to be addressed. However, this still needed to be balanced out by not risking losing support from their constituent population and by making the government response appear as an overreaction rather than an appropriate response level. To achieve this, groups must demonstrate that they pose a genuine threat to the government and their interests but that this threat does not extend to parties relevant to the group's survival. The government needs to appear as the threat to justify their strategic narrative.

9. Intimidation: Killing for Control

Introduction

In September 2013, Boko Haram militants entered the town of Benisheik in the north of Nigeria and carried out a shocking attack with a death toll that ran into the hundreds. The group reportedly separated residents of Borno state and executed them. This was a major, but not isolated, attack in the group's intimidation campaign.

A strategy of intimidation is used when a terrorist group seeks to gain or maintain control over a given population or compete with a government for control over a population using violence. Kydd and Walter explain that the strategy 'works by demonstrating that the terrorists have the power to punish whoever disobeys them, and that the government is powerless to stop them' (p.66).

Kydd and Walter outline two audiences for this strategy: one being supporters of the government and the other being the broader population the group seeks control over. They explain that the group must persuade supporters of the government that it is too costly to carry on supporting the government and that they would be better off giving in to the demands of the group. In relation to the broader population that the group seeks control over, they can attempt to impose their demands directly onto the population and punish those who disobey.

Part of an intimidation campaign is for the group to essentially offer an alternative government to a degree. The group is not just seeking to remove the state government's power in the area under focus but also to impose its own rules on the population in question. A dramatic example of this was the spread of ISIS across the Levant. During this period, the group would not just seek to drive away the government's rule of law in the territory they took over; they also sought to impose their own law on the land they now occupied (Walt, 2015).

The two cases to be examined in this chapter are the Taliban in Helmand and Kandahar in Southern Afghanistan between 2003-2006, and Boko Haram in Borno State between 2010-2014. As a reminder of case selection, cases were selected to be typical cases across strategies, and within strategies were selected to differ as much as possible on key elements to increase generalisability.

Both of these campaigns' geographical areas are at the substate level. When exploring potential cases for this chapter, a trend emerged of different strategies being employed simultaneously when an intimidation campaign was being carried out. The intimidation campaign occurring on its own took place in more specific areas of a country where a group was vying for control in these cases. This is not necessarily the case for all intimidation campaigns. The campaigns were not as geographically spread out as in other strategies, such as the Chechen attrition campaign in the 2000s which involved attacks in numerous Russian regions.

The hypotheses developed in the theory chapter were:

1) In terms of casualty counts, it is expected that an intimidation campaign will mostly be composed of low casualty attacks. An effective intimidation functions by communicating to the group's audience that the group is capable of selectively punishing those who disobey or side with the government and that those who cooperate with the terrorists are safe. Escalation to mass casualty events is possible in instances in which the population over which the group seeks control becomes too contested.

2) The expectation for target selection is that it would be a mix of hard and soft targets. Hard targets would be the government, or representatives of the government that the group seeks to usurp. However, soft targets are also included as this would include disobedient members of the population who are not necessarily governmental.

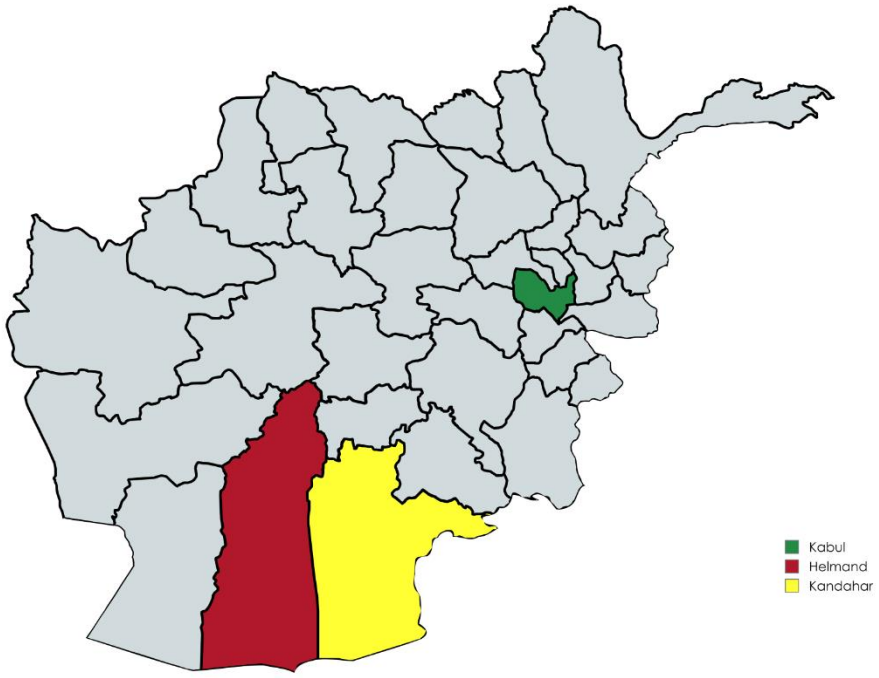
3) For weapon selection, a group seeking to control a population needs to demonstrate that they possess the means to punish dissenters and force their will on a population. The more sophisticated the weaponry, the more convincing the group's power is. It is also expected that a group would use weapons that can showcase either a physical presence in an area or the ability to be decisive on the ground in that area.

The Taliban

Background

Public executions and amputations were a key part of the Taliban's system of control when they governed Afghanistan prior to the 2001 invasion by a US-led military coalition (Goldenberg, 1998). After the Taliban government was ousted in retaliation for their acquiescence in al-Qaeda's 9/11 attack, the spectacle of punitive violence would remain a key part of the Taliban's insurgency against occupying forces, the new Afghan government, and local populations.

The focus of this section is the activity of the Taliban in the neighbouring southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar. The reason for focusing on these provinces rather than the entire country of Afghanistan is that there is variation in strategy across the country. Firstly, in the early days of the Taliban's resurgence, in 2003 the group was not particularly active across the entire country but only in certain regions (Qazi, 2010). This on its own is not an issue - other terrorist campaigns are not nationwide but only regionally focused. But, combined with the fact that even in regions in which they were active, there was the use of different strategic approaches (Dorronsoro, 2009). Why Helmand and Kandahar in particular were chosen is that the two adjacent provinces were a core area for the group during its early resurgence, and not just on the border with Pakistan. The provinces were, and still are, base territories for the group.



(Figure 9.1, Map of Afghanistan with Helmand and Kandahar highlighted. Source: created by author)

In 2001, following the September 11th attacks, the United States led a coalition to war in Afghanistan which removed the Taliban from power in Kabul. However, the force was never successful in fully destroying the remnants of the Taliban and the group began an insurgent campaign. The first few years after the invasion were a "regrouping" period for the militant organisation, during this time there was little activity (Giustozzi, 2009). Beginning in 2003, the group became more active in its operations before a shift in strategy in 2006.

As well as violence, a key element of the campaign was presenting an alternative form of government to the population. This needs to be discussed as it is an important part of the group's communication. The group does not just want to intimidate victims for the sake of intimidation but also needs to transmit that it offers a viable form of governance. In the case of the Taliban, the group would send senior figures to decide on disputes in what was essentially a shadow court (Giustozzi and Baczko, 2014). This is the stick to intimidation's carrot, that the group can provide services to those who need it but punish those who disobey. The group would also select "shadow governors" for various provinces and districts in the south of the country (Giustozzi, 2019). This highlighted both the group's ability to govern and the government in Kabul's inability to do so, relating to Kydd and Walter's explanation that an intimidation campaign requires a group to show they can 'punish whoever disobeys them, *and that the government is powerless to stop them'* (p.66, emphasis added). Having said that, the campaign is still fundamentally dependent on violence to assert control.

The Taliban campaign appears to have been successful in its goal. A UK House of Commons Defence Committee report from 2007 assessing the mission in Helmand reveals the following:

> 'We were told that the threat of violence had meant that civilian workers were reluctant to work outside secure areas. Indeed, during our visit to Lashkar Gah, the PRT [Provincial Reconstruction Team] was "locked-down" (not allowed to leave the military compound) because of the threat of attack. Although the NGO representatives appreciated that the military's first objective must be to establish security, we were given the impression that the patience of people living in Helmand was wearing thin and that progress had to be demonstrated soon, or else faith would be lost in the ISAF mission' (p. 35).

One of the main types of documentary evidence used in this section is the Taliban's "night letters" or "shabnamah". In the context of this chapter, these are letters that were left, usually during the night, by members of the Taliban threatening or encouraging members of the population in the targeted areas to resist the Kabul government or occupying forces. There is a longer history of night letters in Afghanistan, but it is sufficient here to only discuss their use by the Taliban after the 2001 invasion. They were used by the group as a means of communicating with their target audience and controlling their behaviour by making threats if the group's demands were not met (Johnson, 2007). One of the main strengths of using night letters was direct communication with the audience. The immediate demands of the group are therefore clear. They are still public documents, so do not grant the same level of insight as one would get with internal documents, but as has been the case throughout this thesis these are difficult to come by.

Johnson (2007) explains that 'by late 2005 the Taliban had regrouped and began to organize in rural Afghanistan, especially in the border areas of the east and south. Here Taliban vanguard teams and mullahs started to propagandize and intimidate villages through direct involvement and the use of shabnamah (night letters) and other propaganda tools' (p.11). The threats from the group were backed up with violence for the disobedient. The use of shabnamah and the intimidation campaign can be identified occurring in 2003, earlier than Johnson here suggests. In another work (2018), he cites a night letter from Kandahar in 2003 which threatens those cooperating with American forces.

These are not the only documents used in this section. The group issued various updated codes of conduct for its members during the war. The first one was issued in 2006 (within the period of study) and is useful in revealing how the group functioned. This section also features other assorted collected documentary evidence such as NGO reports (including interviews conducted by the NGOs) and journalistic reports from the time of the activities.

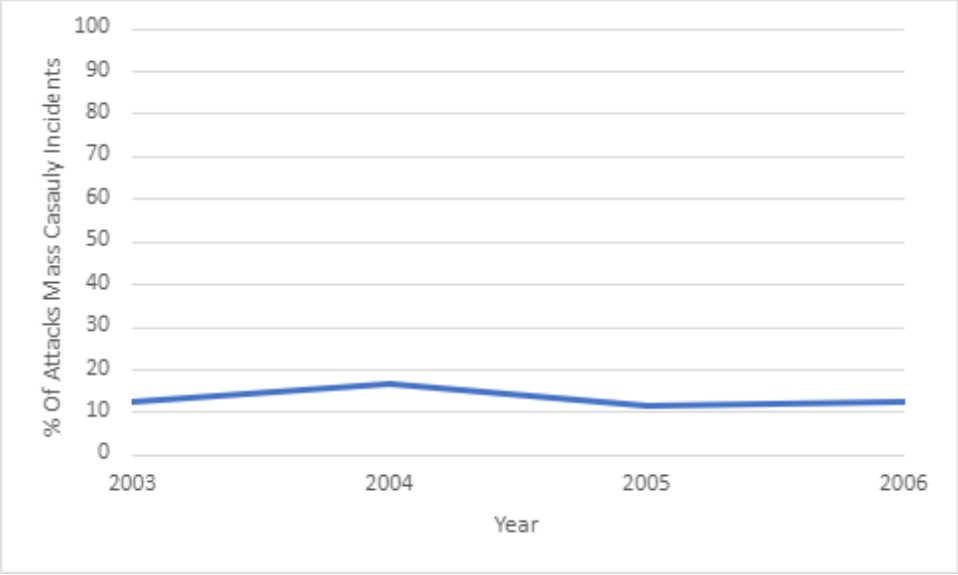
The political context of the Taliban's campaign is rather unique among the case studies examined in this thesis. The Taliban had been the ruling group in Afghanistan until the U.S. led invasion removed them from power and installed a different regime. This meant

that they had a pre-existing conflict with the established enemies in the form of the incumbent regime and NATO forces – this had already been established through war.

Casualties

The expectation for an intimidation strategy is that the attacks will be primarily low-casualty events unless competition over the population occurs in which escalation to massacres is possible. However, the data for the Taliban indicates that they did not conform to this expectation. The average casualty count across the entire campaign was 5.3, just crossing the threshold set up in this thesis (average casualty count of 5 across the campaign) into a mass casualty campaign. This is a surprisingly high figure given the expected selectivity of the violence in an intimidation campaign. When looking at the data year by year, it is possible to rule out one particularly violent year as being responsible for this figure. The lowest year (2005) still has an average casualty count of 4.4, so it can be considered a campaign with a persistently higher than expected level of violence.

Throughout the entirety of the campaign, 19 mass casualty events are recorded in the GTD. A reminder, that a mass casualty event is one with 10 or more casualties. An increase in the number of mass casualty events occurs as the campaign progresses but this coincides with an increase in overall attacks. As a share of total attacks in each year, mass casualty events remain fairly stable, never exceeding 20% of the total number of attacks in any year of the campaign. Mass casualty attacks do occur, but not as the result of escalation and competition over the population as postulated in the hypothesis. Instead, it is a recurring event throughout the campaign.



(Figure 9.2, Proportion of attacks each year reaching mass casualty threshold. Data sourced from GTD)

There is a shift in the group's mass casualty pattern as the campaign progresses. In the early stages of the campaign, the group was more willing to carry out indiscriminate mass casualty attacks that would kill and injure many civilians. One notable instance of

this was in December 2003 when a bomb was detonated in a market in Kandahar city, resulting in 18 injured civilians (GTD). Towards the end of the campaign the group tended to be more focused in its mass casualty attacks. Mass casualty attacks that killed and injured large numbers of civilians did occur, however these attacks were less indiscriminate. For example, an attack in August 2006 resulted in 16 dead and 45 wounded, but the main target of this attack (the Helmand security chief) was killed (GTD). This is more akin to an assassination with a large amount of collateral damage rather than the totally indiscriminate detonation of a bomb in a market when factoring in the group's warnings to avoid government personnel.

In the later stages of the campaign, many of the mass casualty attacks caused mostly or entirely government affiliated casualties. As is discussed in the targeting section, many attacks were carried out against Afghan police. The pattern is similar here for the mass casualty events in the second half of the campaign. During this period there were 14 mass casualty events, 50% of these are recorded by the GTD as targeting police.

The killing of the Helmand security chief discussed above can be considered an assassination, but it was unusually violent. One usually expects assassination to be more targeted, and in many of the assassinations carried out as part of the intimidation campaign this was the case. The assassination of religious leaders who did not conform to the standards set by the Taliban were the victims of such low casualty assassinations. In July 2003, Mullah Mawlawi Hamdullah was shot by the Taliban following prayers for not conforming to the Taliban's wishes. He was the sole casualty of the attack (GTD). Similarly, in July 2005 Taliban gunmen shot and killed the head of Kandahar Province's Islamic Council. He was the only casualty of the attack (GTD). An AFP report (2004) describes the attack: 'A gunman fired three bullets into the head of Hamdullah just after morning prayers. The prayer leader, who worked for the provincial government, had preached against Taliban calls for jihad (holy war) against President Hamid Karzai's government and foreigners.' This shows that the Taliban was still capable of carrying out more precise assassinations at times, the kind more in line with the expectations. This kind of attack shows electivity, the target has been identified and punished, and only he is punished, what is expected in intimidation.

The Taliban found themselves in a tricky position in relation to the casualty counts of their attacks. The group being capable of inflicting high casualty counts was positive to them as it portrayed strength, so this is what they sought out. A journalist who fled the Taliban in the south of the country explained that: '"the Taliban exaggerates, [while] the government reduces the number of casualties; so if we say the Taliban numbers, the government threatens us; if we say the government numbers, then the Taliban threatens us' (Crisis Group, p.8).

The Taliban leadership were, however, aware that the population did not respond well to mass casualty attacks particularly against civilians. This is seen both through reports of Mullah Omar's concerns over the use of suicide bombing and the risks of mass casualties (Johnson, 2013, source cites Giustozzi, 2007), and also through the general Afghan population's turn against coalition forces following numerous incidents of

significant civilian collateral damage and the United States' detainment program (Dorronsoro, 2009).

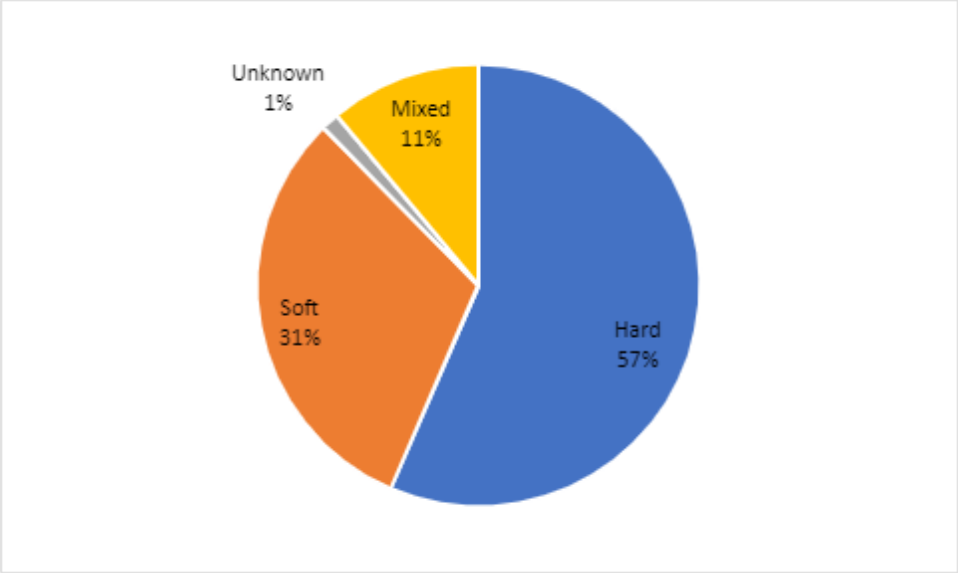
This understanding of a population's sensitivities is explained well by Clark (2011) whose examination of the Taliban's code of conduct highlights the delicate balance of an intimidation campaign:

> 'the Taleban need not only to intimidate the population enough to deter 'collaboration' with the Afghan government and foreign forces, but also not be so unforgiving as to deter 'collaborators' from switching sides' (p.5).

This was not just a lesson learned by the group in terms of casualties, but also in terms of targeting as discussed in the next section.

Target Selection

The hypothesis established for an intimidation strategy is that a group would strike a mixture of hard and soft targets to get rid of representatives of the state such as police and military but also soft targets such as those who disobey the group's commands. The results conform to this expectation, as demonstrated on figure 9.3 below which shows the group's targeting patterns during the campaign. These can be considered mixed as no type crosses the threshold (67% of targets struck) to be considered the dominant target type.



(Figure 9.3, Targeting preferences across all years of campaign. Data sourced from GTD)

Police make up over half (52%) the hard targets struck, and nearly a third (29%) of the total target count. The targeting of the police makes sense in the context of an intimidation campaign. In Helmand and Kandahar they served as the embodiment of the Karzai government. The targeting of police is clearly outlined by Kydd and Walter in their description of an intimidation campaign: 'By targeting the government's more visible agents and supporters, such as mayors, police, prosecutors, and pro-regime

citizens, terrorist organizations demonstrate that they have the ability to hurt their opponents and that the government is too weak to punish the terrorists or protect future victims' (p.66).

Discussed further in the weapon selection section, the Taliban issued warnings to members of the population in their areas to avoid using government vehicles and the roads they drive on (Johnson, 2018, p.82). This allowed the group to attempt to separate government targets from ordinary civilians, making clear that the striking of these hard targets was deliberate.

The targeting of schools and the education system was an important part of the Taliban's campaign. Targets recorded by the GTD as "Educational Institutions" make up 7% of all targets struck during the campaign, and make up 23% of the soft targets struck. A Human Rights Watch report (2006) tells of the closure of at least 49 schools in Kandahar in 2005, and the closure for security reasons of 165 in Helmand (time period unclear). They cite a USAID estimate that is even higher, claiming two hundred schools in Kandahar were shut for security reasons by early 2006.

The report goes on to quote a provincial representative for Kandahar, whose experience demonstrates how the intimidation campaign worked in relation to education (particularly of women) and how it was successful in deterring the unwanted behaviour:

> 'The security situation was fine, but during the last two years it is growing worse day by day. In the first three years there were a lot of girl students-everyone wanted to send their daughters to school. For example, in Argandob district [a conservative area], girls were ready, women teachers were ready. But when two or three schools were burned, then nobody wanted to send their girls to school after that' (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

The majority of the targets struck, in terms of nationality, were Afghan. Given that this is a campaign in Afghanistan, this not too surprising. However, given that the Taliban claim to be fighting foreign invaders the low percentage of non-Afghan targets is surprising. The GTD provides nationality data for 189 targets struck during this campaign. Of these, 82% are recorded as Afghan. This shows that the main target of the violence of the was Afghan, and not the occupying forces. This is consistent with expectations of an intimidation campaign - the group wants to be seen as punishing those who work with the government (Kydd and Walter, 2006) so it makes sense that Afghans working with the foreign forces would be seen as collaborators as shown in the extract below.

The group, in their own output, make clear who they are targeting. The use of shabnamah is to communicate with local populations, to threaten individuals in those populations and to "correct" their behaviour. If these threats are not listened to then the group carries through on them to which also communicatees to a population the sincerity of the group's words and their ability to punish. Another shabnamah examined in Johnson's work (2007) illustrates this approach clearly:

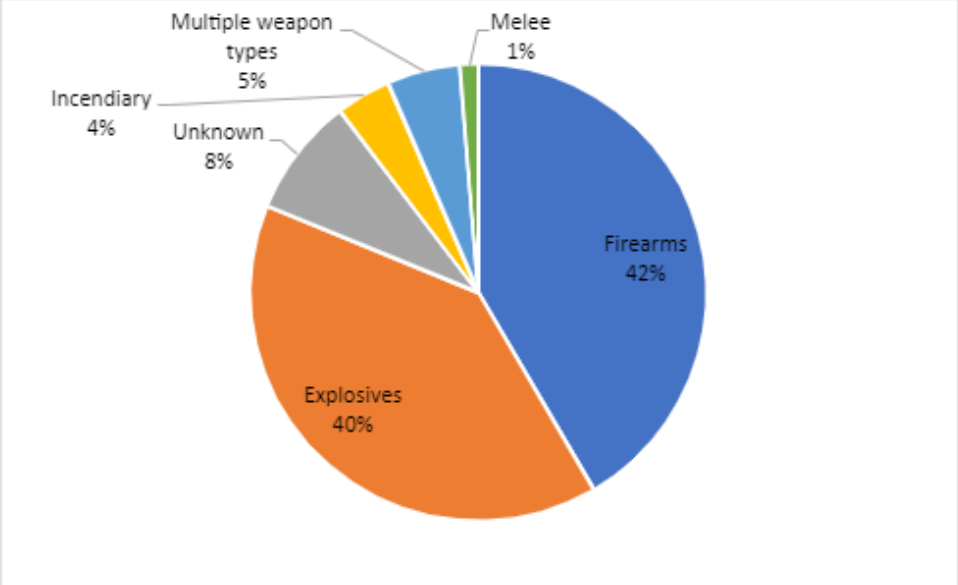
> ‘We inform those people of Maroof district that serve Americans day and night and show the places of the Mujahedeen to them or those who dishonour sincere Muslims of the country that American guards will not always be there and we can catch you any time. We know the name and place of every person; learn a lesson from those who were loyal to Russians; (if God wills) soon you will come under the knife or bullet of Mujahedeen’.

This is an example of how an intimidation strategy shapes the behaviour of a group. A threat is made about the behaviour that should be changed. In this case, cooperation with American forces must stop. The group emphasises that failure to change will provoke punishment. Underlying the threat is the reminder that collaborators during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan were punished, an occurrence from the past the recipients would likely be familiar with.

Weapon Selection

The expectations for weapon use were that a group would seek to use sophisticated weaponry to showcase its power, and also weaponry that demonstrates its ability to operate on the ground in the area in which it is carrying out its campaign.

The GTD data shows that firearms and explosives were the preferred weapon types, between them making up 82% of attacks. Within explosives especially, there is significant variation of weapon sub type which is explored in this section.



(Figure 9.4, Weapon selection across all years of campaign. Data sourced from GTD)

While not being a major component of weapon selection in terms of the frequency of their use according to the GTD, the pattern associated with incendiary weapons is clear. Every use of an incendiary weapon on its own was used to strike an educational target. The weapon choice is appropriate as it effectively destroys a building symbolising what the group is opposed to and sends the message that these projects run counter to the group’s ideals and will be destroyed. Also, it conveys a threat to the wider audience that

education not approved by the Taliban is to be avoided. This was an element of their campaign, which included the burning of schools, which received a significant amount of international attention (e.g. Baldauf, 2006).

The burning of schools is made an explicit requirement in the Taliban's Code of Conduct (Clark, 2011, p.26):

> 'The organizations [NGOs] that come to the country are tools of the infidels. In the guise of serving, they are destroying Islam, so all their activities are banned, whether it is [building] roads or anything else, or clinics or schools or a madrassa or anything else. *If a school fails to heed a warning to close, it must be burned*. But all religious books, for the sake of respecting them, must be secured beforehand' [emphasis added].

The use of arson itself is not sophisticated, requiring no complex technology or knowledge. However, the attacks required more than simply setting buildings alight. There was the delivery of threats first, the removal of Qurans from the buildings and then the destruction of the property. Carrying out attacks like this, rather than simply sneak attacks in the dark, conveys a greater degree of sophistication in the group's attack than the weapon choice suggests. It is an attack type that gets across the group's physical presence in an area. While interesting, however, the extent to which it can be treated as sophisticated in terms of weapons selection is doubtable.

A weapon trend which emerges later in the campaign is suicide bombing. The first suicide attack occurs September 2005. But following this there are 14 more suicide attacks up to the end of 2006. Suicide bombing went from being completely unused at the start of the campaign to being frequently used towards the end. Johnson (2013) observed this trend on a nationwide scale and it holding true on a subnational scale reinforces the notion that this was deliberately avoided by the group at all levels Others too, such as Williams (2008), have also observed this trend on the national level.

Unlike other contexts in which suicide bombing is seen as a legitimate act (e.g. Palestine and Sri Lanka (Pape, 2003)), in the initial stages of the war in Afghanistan, the tactic was avoided because it was a cultural taboo. However, the group overcame this and embraced the tactic. The question of how they embraced it can be answered through learning lessons and techniques from militants in Iraq (Williams, 2008). The group learned the technical aspect of the attack type through cooperation with insurgents in Iraq, similarly their refinement of IED technology. The Taliban during this campaign primarily used suicide bombings to strike hard targets and assassinate particular hard targets. For example, the GTD records a suicide attack on 12 December 2006 at the house of the Governor of Helmand. Suicide bombing offered the group the means to strike the targets it desired more effectively – the assassination of prominent government officials is in line with an intimidation strategy. Suicide bombings are considered sophisticated given the expertise required to develop them and the training and preparation needed for the end user (Pedahzur and Perliger, 2006).

The importance of balancing the group's strategic needs with the tolerances of its constituent population, the adoption of suicide bombings is worth exploring. The group leant heavily on pre-existing Islamist ideology which provided justification for suicide bombing. This, given the Taliban's ideological roots, was an essential step to take to justify the attack type. The group also preferred to use non-Afghan militants, often from Pakistan, to carry out the attacks, to avoid a backlash for any 'collateral damage' caused by these attacks and to avoid offending the families of the militants (UNAMA, 2007).

Legitimising suicide bombing was a worthwhile endeavour for the Taliban as it enabled them to increase the choices of attack types available to them, and allowed them to strike harder targets or carry out more precise assassinations than previously. As discussed in attrition chapter when examining the Chechen rebel suicide bombings, having a human control precisely when and where a bomb goes off enables more precise detonations.

Remote explosives were a weapon used frequently by the Taliban, making up 9.7% of all attacks. They were often used to target vehicles, being deployed as roadside bombs which could be detonated when the operator decided. This enabled the group to be more selective with its targeting of vehicles. The Taliban provided numerous warnings to Afghan civilians not to ride in government cars (see below) and not to use the same roads as the government vehicles. This enabled the Taliban to treat anyone using these roads as a legitimate target, or at least that they had been warned and had ignored the Taliban. Remotely detonated bombs allow the group to be even more selective than just saying which roads to avoid. Remotely detonating an explosive device enables a group to more precisely strike its intended target. For example, the group can trigger the explosion when a government vehicle is nearby rather than having a non-remote IED destroy whichever vehicle happens to encounter it. In relation to intimidation, this would enable the group to show that it only strikes those who do not align with them. It also relates back to the group having a presence on the ground in the area it sought to control. While other explosive devices can be put in place and left to wait for a target to encounter them, remote controlled explosives require the presence of an actor.

A night letter from Kandahar in 2003 is illustrative of the warnings in laying out guidance for how people should behave:

> '1. This letter aims to address those who are Muslim but work with the current American puppet government, either for money or, assuming they serve Islam, to abandon their jobs immediately,
>
> 2. Muslims do not use government vehicles
>
> 3. Whenever a governmental vehicle is exploded or damaged by any means, Muslims do not go there to have a look at the site.
>
> 4. Where there is a feast, Muslims should not go there with government officials, because danger may threaten them.

> ... 8. Muslim cars should not use the roads used by government officials' cars' (Johnson, 2018, p.82).

This extract reinforces the group's attempts to control its population, and also to reinforce the idea of obeying the group will keep you safe and disobeying has consequences. It also enables the group to absolve itself of any blame for unnecessary casualties when they have been warned.

Summary

The Taliban's levels of violence were not as low as expectations would predict, but nor did they escalate towards the end of the campaign. They remained steady throughout the course of the campaign. Mass casualty attacks did occur, initially involving the killing of civilians but gradually moving towards a focus on hard targets. In terms of targets more broadly, the campaign was composed of a mix of hard and soft targets, but this favoured hard targets, especially for the high casualty events as mentioned.

The group's weapon selection was mostly split between firearms and explosives. The explosives the group used can be considered sophisticated, especially in 2005/2006 when they began to implement explosive types mirroring those used by insurgents in Iraq as well as their use of remote explosives. These weapons also allowed greater selectivity and control.

The qualitative element of the research shows that the Taliban sought to employ an intimidation campaign. The evidence further illustrates a number of ways this strategy shaped the group's tactics, even if it may not be the only reason for some of these decisions.

Boko Haram

Background

On April 14 2014, Boko Haram militants disguised as Nigerian government troops broke into the Government Girls Secondary School in the Christian village of Chibok in Borno State. The group kidnapped more than 250 female students from the school. This attack launched the group into the global public consciousness, with many campaigning for the girls' release (Onah, 2022). The group had been active long before this attack and had carried out numerous shocking attacks prior to this one (Elusoji, 2021).

This section explores Boko Haram's intimidation campaign in Borno state between 2010 and 2014. Borno state is located in the very northeast of Nigeria, bordering Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Islam is the main religion of the state, practiced by a large majority of the state's inhabitants (Nwankwo, 2019). The state acts as the homebase of Boko Haram, a Nigerian terrorist group, primarily active in the north of the country, but which has also carried out attacks throughout the country as well as conducting campaigns in Chad, Niger, Mali, and Cameroon. The group was formed in 2002 by Mohammad Yusuf as an extreme Sunni Islamist entity and engaged in violence with the government in northern Nigeria (Ladbury et al, 2016). According to Walker (2012) the

group, prior to 2009, was less politically motivated and more motivated by separating itself from non-Islamic society. After 2009, the group's focus changed to establishing and gaining power.

While researching Boko Haram, I did not encounter any sources which explicitly stated that an intimidation campaign (as understood by Kydd and Walter) was used. However, the descriptions of the group's activities point towards an intimidation strategy being employed. A Center of Naval Analyses report, for instance, summarises aspects of Boko Haram's behaviour in the following way:

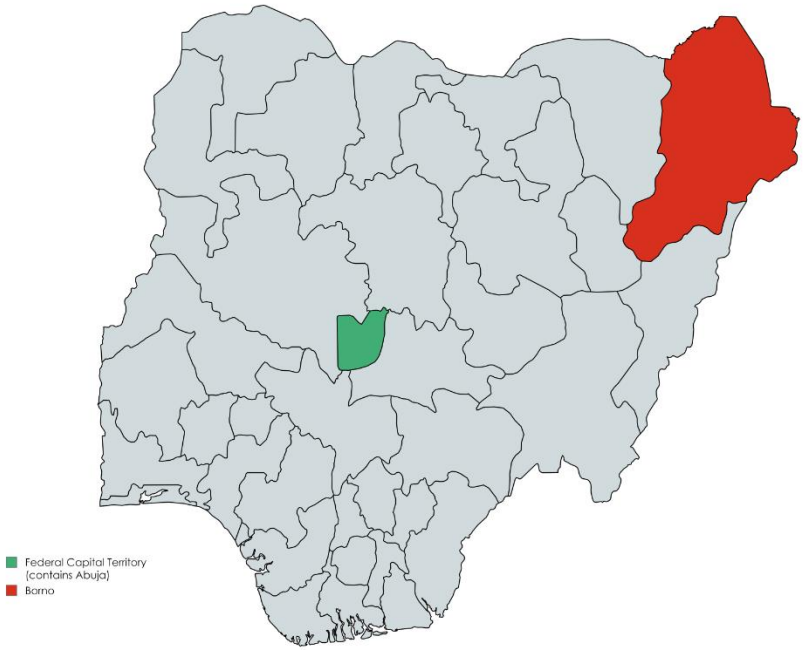
> 'Boko Haram has systematically targeted the northern political establishment and traditional leaders who could serve as government allies in combating the group. Local leaders who have spoken out against Boko Haram have been subject to a ruthless murder and intimidation campaign' (Asfura-Heim and McQuaid, 2015, p.v)[5].

This description is a key element of an intimidation campaign. The group is punishing those who are disobedient thereby attempting to prevent others from doing so in the future. De Montclos (2014) further describes Boko Haram's response to government support of local militant groups opposed to the organisation: 'in response Boko Haram simply escalated its strategy of terror and increased attacks on entire villages to deter them from cooperating with the security forces' (p.15). This violence to deter cooperation with the government is a major component of intimidation.

The insurgency began in 2009 with intense clashes between Boko Haram and government forces (Zenn and Pieri, 2019) but was unsuccessful. The insurgency was reignited following the killing of Yusuf in 2010 by government forces. The intimidation phase of the campaign began after the death of their leader and the group's second in command Abubakar Shekau's eventual transition to power. Although it should be noted that the GTD does not have any attacks carried out by Boko Haram in Borno state until September of the following year, so that is when the data begins.

This case is focused on the group's activities in one particular state rather than nationwide. Nigeria is a diverse country with the relevant split here being the division between Islam in the north and Christianity in the south (Poerri and Barkindo, 2016). This is relevant to the strategy of intimidation as the group's activity is related to its audience it seeks to control, in this case the Muslim population in its host state. The group's activity in other states may fall under different strategies, such as its attacks in the capital Abuja which have a different communicative element.

[5] Asfura-Heim and McQuaid's use of the term "intimidation" in itself is not evidence of the strategy being used as they adopt a significantly different understanding of terrorism to the one used in this thesis. It is the description of the group's activities that indicate an intimidation strategy is being used.



(Figure 9.5, Map of Nigeria with Borno highlighted. Map made by author)

A recurring theme when examining Boko Haram is their eagerness to demonstrate their effective control over Borno and the absence of government control. This can be seen clearly through the Nigerian government's failure to kill the leader of the group, Abubakar Shekau. His death was falsely reported at least once during the period of the intimidation campaign (France24, 2013). Consequently, he released a video making it clear he was alive, stating:

> 'Here I am, alive. I will only die the day Allah takes my breath... We are running our caliphate, our Islamic caliphate. We follow the Koran... We now practise the injunctions of the Koran in the land of Allah' (BBC News, 2014).

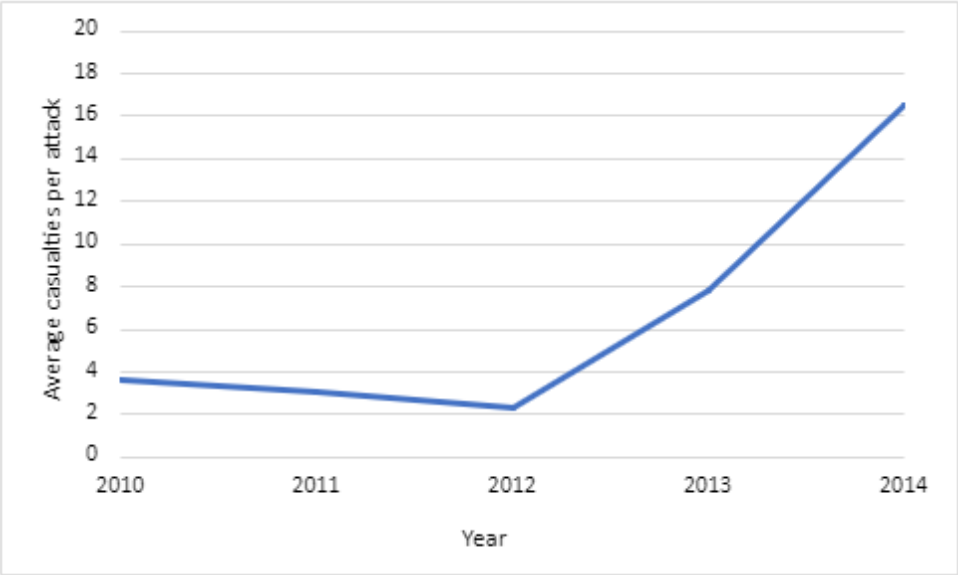
His survival and his statements were effective propaganda in highlighting the group's durability and ability to operate in the north of the country. It also shows the Nigerian government's lack of control over that part of the country.

As can be seen in the paragraphs above, an important part of the context of this conflict is the pre-existing violence between the Nigerian state and the group. Tensions between the two had escalated to the point where violence was already a feature of their conduct. Both geography and ideology are also important factors to be aware of here, as the Christian/Muslim in both population and distribution split in Nigeria was a key foundation of the dynamic of the group's relationship with the government.

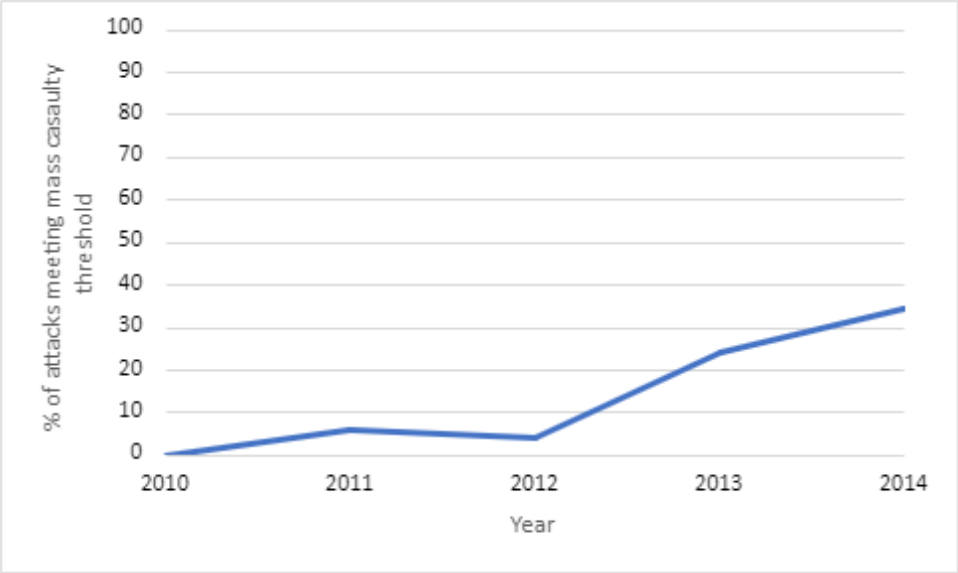
Casualties:

The expectations are that in an intimidation campaign the violence will be primarily low level in terms of casualty counts but can escalate to massacres, especially when a group is being challenged for control over territory.

The statistics for the casualties of the Boko Haram campaign are striking. Across the entire campaign, there are over 4000 killed and injured through the group's actions according to the GTD data. This gives each attack an average casualty count of 7.7. This is a high number but on its own does not reveal the conduct of the campaign. The average casualty count per year shows an interesting pattern. The first three years of the campaign show a gradual decline in casualty count per attack from 3.64 to 2.33, however in 2013 this number climbs drastically to 7.87 and in 2014 this shoots up even higher to an average of 16.37 casualties per attack. These last two years of the campaign are exceptionally violent and pull the average death toll of the campaign up significantly. On the year-by-year basis, the pattern is what was theorised – that an intimidation campaign will start with a low casualty count and escalate to massacres.



(Figure 9.6, Average casualty account per attack. Data sourced from GTD)



(Figure 9.7 Proportion of attacks each year meeting mass casualty threshold. Data sourced from GTD)

This escalation in activity is not just evidenced in the average casualty account per attack by year, but also by looking at the number of mass casualty attacks (10 or more casualties) per year. As shown in figure 9.7, the first year of the campaign (2010) saw no mass casualty events, the second year included 5, the third had 7, but in 2013 (as with casualties) there is a significant uptick in mass casualty events to 34, followed by an even bigger jump to 54 in the final year of the campaign. By the last year of the campaign mass casualty attacks had become so frequent that they made up over one third of all attacks carried out in that year. However, it should still be considered that not every attack was a mass casualty attack as low casualty attacks were still the most frequent. To illustrate this, 58% of all attacks in the campaign resulted in only two or fewer casualties, and 27% of attacks resulted in no recorded casualties.

The data shows that the group carried out numerous mass casualty attacks and would boast of them. One of the most notable of these is the Benisheik massacre. The massacre occurred in September 2013 when Boko Haram militants entered the town of Benisheik disguised as Nigerian Army personnel and began killing the inhabitants. The attack was undertaken during a period in which Boko Haram was punishing towns for using self-defence militias (BBC News, 2013). In this light, the massacre can be seen as punishment against the inhabitants for failing to recognize the authority of Boko Haram and to prevent the town from falling out of the group's influence. This assertion is supported by Agbiboa's (2021) work on civilian defence groups in Nigeria discussed further below. Essentially there was contestation over control of the population.

Furthermore, the group set up roadblocks and stopped vehicles to determine where the drivers resided. It is reported that the group only killed drivers who were residents of Borno and spared those who were not (Human Rights Watch, 2013). This shows a

degree of selectivity even in massacres, but also that this attack was meant to communicate with the population of Borno state – that it is primarily motivated by maintaining the group's control over its own territory and not mainly aimed at communicating to an enemy audience. In their claim of the attack, the group's leader states: 'we carried out the Benisheik attack killing more than 200 people too, we slaughtered them' (Reuters, 2013). Agbiboa (2021) explains that Benisheik and similar attacks are used to pacify the local population and prevent them opposing the group: 'in light of Boko Haram's rage against local communities that have formed a CJTF [civilian joint task force], many civilians have become increasingly fearful of (openly) identifying with the CJTF' (p.207). CJTF are local volunteers who work with state security forces to counter Boko Haram. The group uses extreme violence to punish villages engaged in CJTF and also to communicate to others the consequences of such behaviour. The high casualty counts suggests that the group would not hesitate to inflict mass casualties and that CJTF cannot prevent it.

The GTD has the Benisheik massacre recorded as 142 deaths, a high casualty count but considerably less than the numbers provided by the group. The group trying to play up the casualty count rather than play it down is a clear indicator that here they want to be seen as being as dangerous and lethal as possible.

In previous chapters, terrorist groups often sought to downplay their mass casualty attacks, or to attempt to disown them entirely, such as was the case with the Omagh bombing conducted by the Real IRA. This is in large part due to the potential backlash of the group's constituent population. However, Boko Haram wanted to convey that they were behind such attacks.

However, the group demonstrated its willingness to carry out low casualty or single casualty attacks as well, especially earlier in the campaign. The group's ability, or presentation of its purported ability, to kill only those who go against it are demonstrated in the assassinations they carried out. In October 2011, the group murdered journalist Zakariya Isa outside his home in the capital of Borno. The attack was carried out with a firearm and he was the only casualty of the attack. An email communique from the group stated that they:

> 'killed [Isa] not because he was a journalist but for his personal misconduct... We killed him because he was spying on us for Nigerian security authorities... [we have evidence] that he was giving vital information to security agencies on our mode of operation that led to the arrest of many of our members' (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2011).

This attack, and the subsequent communique, demonstrate that the group wants to communicate again that it is selective in its targeting and only punishing wrongdoers, that if an individual goes against the group they will be punished, if they cooperate then they are safe. While the group claims they did not kill him because he was a journalist, other threats against journalists were employed successfully.

The Committee to Protect Journalists article explains that other journalists had received threats from the group via text, and that they subsequently fled. The group's previous demonstrations of following through on its threats to punish those who go against it have backed up their later threats. This is similar to the Taliban's conduct discussed in the previous section in which shabnamah issued orders were often followed by the targets because the group had proven its ability to follow through on its threats.

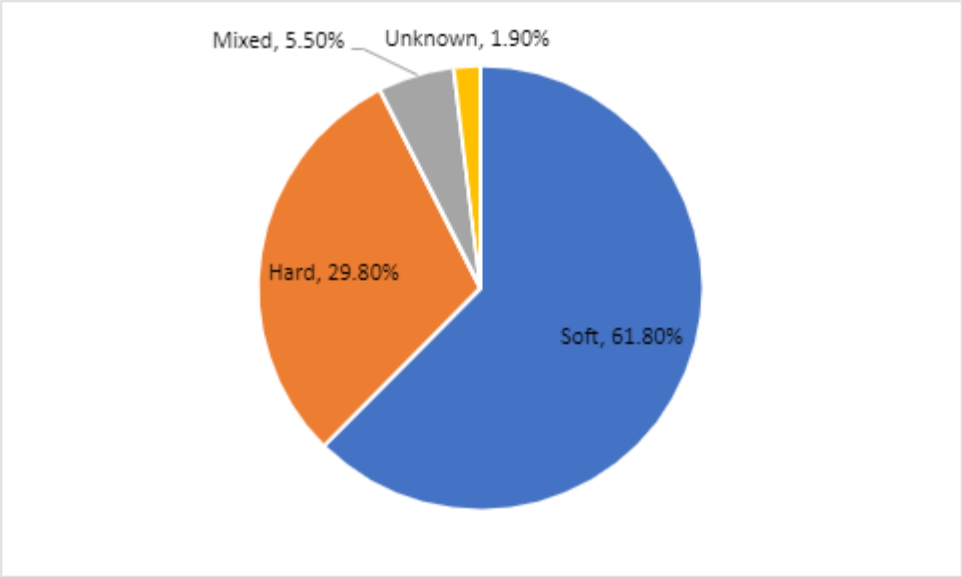
This is more broadly representative of how terrorism works as a form of costly signalling. Threats on their own are rarely sufficient to coerce the desired behaviour from a target but when a group has demonstrated it has the ability to do so then these threats/demands must be taken more seriously. Kydd and Walter explain that: 'terrorist violence is a form of costly signalling. Terrorists are too weak to impose their will directly by force of arms. They are sometimes strong enough, however, to persuade audiences to do as they wish by altering the audience's beliefs about such matters as the terrorist's ability to impose costs and their degree of commitment to their cause... Because it is hard for weak actors to make credible threats, terrorists are forced to display publicly just how far they are willing to go to obtain their desired results' (pp. 50-51). Boko Haram's campaign was not just composed of threats, but also on the proven ability to inflict the violence threatened.

Target Selection

Boko Haram developed a reputation for 'extreme violence and indiscriminate attacks' (BBC News, 2014ii). This image is accurate, but it is not the entire picture of the group's activities. They also gained a reputation for their insurgency campaign against the Nigerian government's police and soldiers. This section explores the group's targeting patterns and how the popular view of the group did not fully appreciate the nuances and intricacies of the campaign.

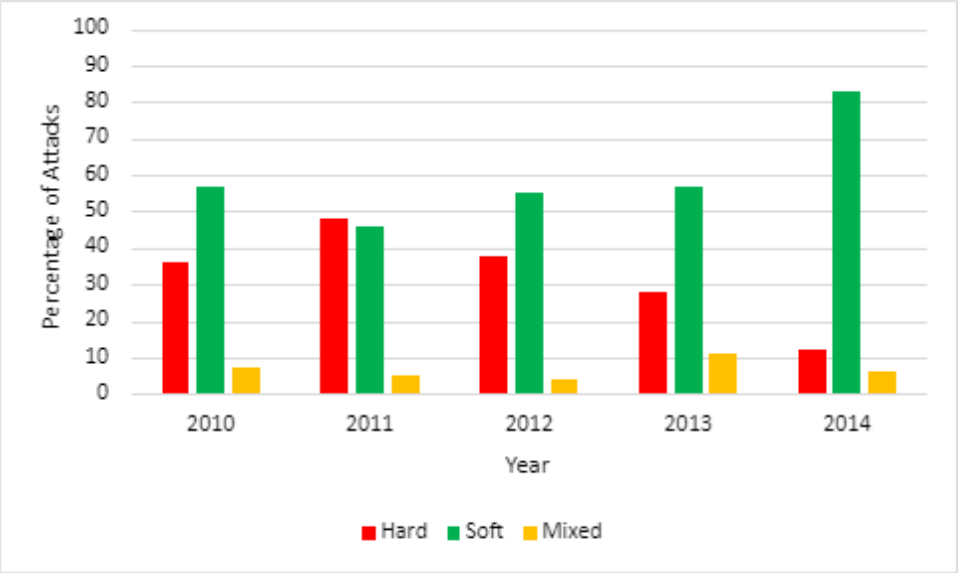
The expectation established through the theory for an intimidation campaign is that there would be a mix of hard and soft targets. It is expected that a group would kill representatives of the government that it seeks to usurp which would be hard targets such as police and military, and also carry out attacks against soft targets who are members of the population the group seeks control over who are disobedient.

The data from the GTD, as summarised in figure 9.8, shows an overall mix in targeting preferences, but generally with a preference for striking soft targets. Across the entire campaign the findings were 61.8% of targets were soft, 29.8% were hard, 5.5% were both hard and soft targets struck in a single attack, and 1.9% of targets were unknown. However, as with the casualties, this needs to be looked at over the course of the campaign as there are changes in the pattern during the course of the group employing an intimidation strategy.



(Figure 9.8, Boko Haram targeting preference across campaign. Data source GTD)

Figure 9.9 shows the targeting preferences across each year of the campaign (with unknown excluded). In the first year of the campaign, 57% of targets were soft, 36% hard, and 7% mixed. The following year sees a balancing out of targeting, with 46% of targets struck being soft and 48% hard and 5% mixed. In 2012, the mix with a preference for soft targets returned with them making up 55% of the total and hard targets dropping down to 38%, mixed targets made up 4% of all targets struck that year. The start of a significant shift away from hard targets begins in 2013, with hard targets then only making up 28%, soft and mixed targets both climbing to 57% and 11% respectively. Finally, in the campaign's last year this shift occurs significantly with soft targets accounting for 83% of all targets struck, hard dropping even further to just 12% and mixed targets dropping back to 6%. There was a small amount of unknown targets across the campaign which have not been included in these figures, additionally these figures have been rounded to the nearest percent for ease of understanding.



(Figure 9.9, Target selection by year. Data sourced from GTD)

An extract of a statement made by Shikau (Human Rights Watch, 2012) from 2012 highlights how the group wanted its targeting perceived: 'We hardly touch anybody except security personnel and Christians and those who have betrayed us'. This statement was made during the time when there was a greater balance between hard and soft targeting, prior to the shift away from hard targets and the focus on soft targets. This statement is what is expected, theoretically, from an intimidation campaign. The group wants to be seen as selective in its targeting. The statement communicates to its audience that the group does not harm people on its side, that it only punishes those who wrong them, those who do not align with them, and the representatives of the government they are in competition with for control of the population.

The statement released by the group's leader after a series of attacks across towns in the North, mostly in Borno state, (previously discussed in the casualties section), says:

> 'You soldiers have claimed that you are powerful, that we have been defeated, that we are mad people; but how can a mad man successfully coordinate recent attacks in Gamboru, in Malumfatori, slaughter people in Biu, kill in Gwoza and in Bama where soldiers fled under our heavy fire power. We have killed countless soldiers and we are going to kill more' (ICIR, 2013)

This communicates two main things, not necessarily to the enemy it claims to address, but for the purpose of this chapter what it communicates to the population it seeks to control. Firstly, it communicates that it can act with impunity in Borno. The ability to carry out high profile attacks freely within their territory is a sign of control. Secondly, it communicates that the government does not have control over the territory. Anyone living in Borno is told by these attacks and the subsequent statement that they are living under the rule of Boko Haram and that the government cannot protect them. The killing

of and driving away of government soldiers is important here as a show of strength. It communicates that the group are the main power in the region, and that the government is ineffective in even its most basic tasks of having a monopoly on violence and providing security to its citizens.

Weapon Selection

Such is the significance of weapons to Boko Haram that they were one the three major components on the group's logo. The design features a black flag above a book with two AK-47-like weapons (DNI, 2022). This logo makes clear the group's violent intent, and also reflects the pattern of the group's use of firearms frequently.

(Figure 9.10, Boko Haram Logo, DNI, 2022)

To reiterate the expectations for weapon use: a group seeking to control a population needs to demonstrate that they possess the means to punish dissenters and force their will on a population. The more sophisticated the weaponry, the more convincing the group's power is. It is also expected that a group would use weapons that can showcase either a physical presence in an area or the ability to be decisive on the ground in that area.

Across the entire campaign, firearms were the most frequently used weapon type with 74% of attacks involving firearms. This accounts for both firearms only attacks and firearms alongside other weapons. Attacks involving only firearms accounted for 41% of attacks. Explosives were the second most frequently employed type of weapon, being used in 30% of attacks and 12% when the only weapon type in an attack. Beyond firearms and explosives, incendiary weapons made up a considerable proportion of attacks. They were used in 21% of attacks, and attacks which involved only incendiary weapons made up 9% of attacks. Figure 9.11 below shows weapon selection across the campaign. This is expressed as a table unlike in other chapters to convey more complex weapon data. Boko Haram's campaign involved many attacks involving different combinations of weapons which did not feature in other campaigns examined.

	Weapon Type			
	Firearms	Explosives	Incendiary	Melee
Percentage of total attacks that involve this weapon type	74%	30%	21%	5%
Percentage of total attacks that involve only this weapon type	41%	12%	9%	1%

(Figure 9.11, weapon selection across campaign)

The most obvious trend is that the main weapon types used are explosives and firearms. Firearms are especially prevalent used on their own but also alongside the other weapon types during multi-weapon attacks. Sources indicate that the group had no trouble accessing automatic firearms, as discussed below.

The frequency of the use of incendiary weapons is interesting. While it has been established that firearms and explosives account for most terrorist attacks, not just in relation to this thesis but in the field more broadly, incendiary weapons were a major component in this campaign. Similarly to how the Taliban used fire as a weapon of intimidation in the destruction of schools, Boko Haram are reported to have done the same (Human Rights Watch, 2016). This should perhaps not come as a surprise given that the group's name translates roughly as "western education is forbidden". If this is such a key aspect of the group's ideology that they include it in their name then the destruction of schools achieves a self-fulfilling strategic logic. Furthermore, the group opposes all things which are not strictly in line with Sharia law and have proclaimed this publicly (Thurston, 2016). The founder of the group stated:

> 'What will make you a soldier of Allah first and foremost, you make a complete disavowal of every form of unbelief: the Constitution, the legislature…worshipping tombs, idols, whatever. You come to reject it in your speech and your body and your heart. Moreover, Allah and His Messenger and the believers, you love them in your speech and your body and your heart' (p.12, Thurston, 2016).

It has been reported (Windrem, 2014) and demonstrated (through the GTD data) that Boko Haram had access to a wide array of weaponry, most of which was advanced by the standards of terrorist groups. These included automatic weapons, mortars, grenades, and mines. There are primarily two sources for these weapons. The first is the black market. West Africa has a large stock of weapons available on the black market from previous conflicts. Instability in other parts of the continent such Libya also makes access to sophisticated arms possible for groups like Boko Haram (UNODC, 2013). Secondly, there are the weapons from the Nigerian military. These are weapons which been stolen/looted from Nigerian government security forces (Open Briefing, 2015). The group having access to automatic firearms aligns with accounts of their use in conducting mass casualty attacks. The GTD descriptions of the attacks carried out by the

group illustrate how automatic weapons were used to devastating effect. These are just two extracts of many:

> "05/25/2014: Assailants opened fire on residents and traders in Kanuyya village, Borno state, Nigeria. At least 24 people were killed in the attack", the weapon recorded for this attack is automatic or semi-automatic firearm".

And their use in conjunction with incendiary weapons:

> "05/31/2014: Assailants opened fire on residents and threw petrol bombs at buildings in Gula village, Borno state, Nigeria. This was one of three coordinated attacks on villages in this area on May 31, 2014. At least 42 people were killed, 16 others were wounded and an unknown number of buildings were damaged across attacks", weapons recorded as automatic firearms and incendiaries (Molotov cocktail/petrol bomb).

The group was also able to acquire Nigerian military uniforms and vehicles which they used as deceptions in their attacks. This equipment was used in attacks such as the Benisheik massacre in which the Boko Haram militants arrived in the area in numerous government-disguised vehicles and were disguised as government soldiers. This shows that not only was the group in possession of sophisticated weaponry but that it was also capable of carrying out large scale sophisticated attacks.

One aspect of the group's weapon selection which stands out is the frequency with which they carried out attacks that employed multiple weapon types. Sixty five percent of all the group's attacks were multiweapon attacks, showing that the group was consistently able to carry out more complex attacks. Multiweapon attacks, such as the use of both explosives and firearms in an attack, are assumed to require a greater degree of organisation and coordination than a single weapon attack.

The group was also in possession of anti-aircraft weaponry, which can certainly be considered a sophisticated weaponry. The possession of the anti-aircraft weaponry can be confirmed through the group's visual output (e.g. as described in Omonobi, 2014). The group claims to have shot down a military jet in 2014, and it executed its pilot. This is something confirmed at the time by security analysts but denied by the government (Omonobi, 2014). The attack aimed to convince both their opponents of their strength, but also show their prowess to those in the population that they controlled. In the video, the man they claim is the pilot states: 'we were shot down and our aircraft crashed. To this day I don't know the whereabouts of my second pilot' (Ogbondah and Agbese, 2018, p.335). Getting the pilot to admit he was shot down serves as evidence that the group's claims represented their genuine intentions and that the weapons they possessed were not just for show.

It is also observed that this served as a means for the group to portray itself as the honest party and Nigerian government as the dishonest party to both the group's constituent population and to the Nigerian forces (Ogbondah and Agbese, 2018). Furthermore, Ogbondah and Agbese contrast the Nigerian government's response to the capture and

killing of the pilot to the Jordanian response when one of their pilot's was captured and executed by ISIS:

> '[The Nigerian government] did not take any known action to seek how the pilot could be rescued or brought back alive. This was utterly in contrast to the Jordanian government's reaction when IS downed and captured a Jordanian pilot... When IS burned the Jordanian pilot alive, the government decided to fly military missions into Syria to punish Jihadists.' (p.335)

This lack of response is ideally suited to an intimidation strategy, the group has been able to demonstrate that it controls the territory in which it operates and that the government is powerless to stop it doing so. The AA gun, and statements about shooting down government aircraft, also serve to communicate not just the group's control of the territory, but of the airspace above it as well – reinforcing the image they want of total power. Automatic weapons are relatively common in the context of Boko Haram's campaign which can lead to a questioning of the sophistication of the weapon type. However, the ability to use them effectively in conjunction with other weapon types showcases sophistication given the training and preparation needed to conduct multiweapon attacks. The acquisition and use of anti-aircraft weaponry is also an example of sophisticated weaponry use.

Summary

The Boko Haram intimidation campaign in Borno state demonstrated an escalation to extreme violence over the course of its four-year duration. This is evident in the steep rise in average casualty count per attack between 2010 and 2014, rising from just over 3 per attack to over 16 by the end of the campaign. Similarly, the move away from hard targets is indicative of this shift towards greater violence. The group's choice of weapons, with the exception of incendiary weapons, were sophisticated allowing them to portray themselves as a competent fighting force. The use of fire mirrors that of the Taliban, to destroy representations of what the group opposed. The group's words do communicate a desire to control the local area and population through violence. The qualitative element further supports the idea that an intimidation strategy influenced the group's tactical choices in important, if not determinative, ways. **Conclusion**

The cases examined in this chapter demonstrate the two paths an intimidation campaign can follow. The Taliban maintained a steady campaign throughout the duration, whereas in the case of Boko Haram an escalation to extreme violence is evident. Despite the variation in progression of campaigns, both conformed, on the whole, to the expectations for their strategy. The exception was the Taliban's casualty count during the campaign. They never maintained minimal casualties nor escalate to massacres – they occupied a zone throughout at levels high enough to conform to this thesis' threshold for a mass casualty campaign. Boko Haram, however, did conform to this as towards the end of their campaign they escalated their casualties significantly.

The Boko Haram escalation is particularly interesting as it aligns with an expectation to escalate to massacres when attempting to control a population as set by Kalyvas (1999)

in an intimidation campaign. His explanation for massacres in the Algerian civil war is that when groups have effective control over a population then killings are likely to be more targeted, and as they lose control or there is a risk of defection then massacres will occur. He also notes that these massacres were not pure chaos, but that actors are selective in who they kill. Again, this holds true for Boko Haram as seen in instances like the Benisheik massacre and the sparing of certain lives.

In terms of targeting, both groups attacked a mixture of hard and soft targets. In the case of the Taliban this was a mix that favoured hard targets and was maintained throughout the duration of the campaign. For Boko Haram, the campaign started out with mixed casualties between hard and soft but over the course of the campaign the preference for soft targets grew until the final year of the campaign when they were the dominant target type. As the gap between hard and soft target share grew in this campaign, so did the average casualty count of attacks.

Both groups used sophisticated weaponry and/or carried out sophisticated multi weapon type attacks. As has been the case across all chapters, firearms and explosives were the most frequently used weapon types. The explosives (especially those used by the Taliban) show a high degree of sophistication. Boko Haram's array of weaponry is also to be considered advanced beyond the automatic weapons given their acquisition of anti-aircraft weaponry. The use of arson attacks by both groups is, as a weapon type itself, not sophisticated. But their use alongside other weapons offsets this and the groups both make clear symbolic use of fire, showing an awareness of audience communication.

These results are summarized in the hypothesis matrix below. The hypotheses for weapon selection and target selection are both confirmed. For casualties, the findings are mixed, showing that there is some evidence for the hypothesis, but that it is not wholly confirmed. What emerged through this chapter is that the strategy of intimidation, or the groups' desire to control their population, plays an important role in shaping the selection of these types of violence. The Taliban's decision to strike a mixture of hard and soft targets stemmed from their need to showcase that they could punish whoever disobeyed them. Boko Haram's escalation to massacres occurred to the prevent communities slipping out of their control. Across the types of violence, strategy is a viable explanation for the patterns of behaviour.

	Taliban	Boko Haram
Casualties: Primarily low casualty attacks which may escalate to high	Sustained level of casualties between high and low attacks – overall average high casualties.	Escalation from lower to higher levels of casualties over campaign
Target Selection: Mixture of both hard and soft targets	Mixed targets (favouring hard)	Mixed (moving towards primarily soft over course of campaign)
Weapon Selection: Sophisticated weaponry	Sophisticated weapons favoured	Sophisticated weapons favoured

(Figure 9.12, Hypothesis Matrix showing findings of this chapter. Green confirms hypothesis and red does not)

10. Conclusion

This thesis has explored how strategy influences terrorist group behaviour. With different strategies being employed, we have seen a range of options used in relation the types of violence. This variety has been identified as forming patterns in association with different strategies, and strategy has been linked as an influencing factor.

This chapter will begin by restating and reestablishing the research questions and the theoretical underpinnings of the work, as well as the methods used to carry out the research. After this, each chapter will be summarised in terms of its associated hypotheses, and results before looking at the overall findings of the thesis. These key takeaways feed into assessing the significance of the work, the future research stemming from this thesis, and its applicability.

Overview of research process

I addressed two major questions in this thesis. Firstly, what are the patterns of violence associated with different strategies of terrorism? Secondly, why did these patterns occur? The first question was answered successfully, identifying the types of violence that occur in relation to different strategies of terrorism. The second question was answered to the extent that strategy was identified as an influential factor on group decision making.

The research was carried out using a sequential mixed methods approach. The source for quantitative data was the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). The quantitative data enabled me to identify the patterns of violence used by the groups and the qualitative element was used to establish strategy as being an important factor in the decision to employ these patterns of violence.

The GTD was used for this research as its reliability has been established through its use across different publications (e.g. Young and Dugan, 2014; Webb and Cutter, 2009). The broad understanding of terrorism used in the collection of data meant that it would include the definition that I chose to use and thus my intended cases. The data available goes back to 1970 which offers a broad range of potential cases and incorporates all of 'modern' terrorism, and includes the data needed for the three types of violence this thesis focusses on.

The qualitative element of the research relied on analysing the group's own output. I was able to find statements from the groups (in full or in part) printed in media sources, or from interviews conducted with figures associated with the groups. Numerous books examining this groups (in a different context to my own research) were employed as a source of terrorist documents. When examining Palestinian Islamic Jihad, I used Skare's (2021) work which is a collection of output from the group including the time period I was examining which made it very valuable. Similarly, Johnson's work (2007, 2018) on the Taliban in Afghanistan involved gathering a significant amount of output produced

by the Taliban which I was able to use for my research. In an ideal scenario, I would have had access to all of a group's output, both internal documents and those intended for wider distribution.

Hypotheses and results

For each of the strategies of terrorism, a hypothesis was developed for their casualty levels, target selection, and weapon selection. The hypotheses are drawn from the literature on strategy and types of violence. The hypotheses can be singular, change throughout the campaign, or be mixed. Remaining singular across the campaign means that one level of the type of violence is expected – for example, in an attrition strategy high casualties are expected throughout. In other strategies, types of violence levels may change over the course of the campaign. For example, the hypothesis for casualties in an intimidation strategy allows for escalation of violence. Types of violence may also have mixed expectations. Mixed expectations reflect how groups may need to meet different requirements. For example, in an attrition campaign expected targets are mixed as striking both enables a group to showcase ability and commitment.

Spoiling

In the chapter on spoiling, the groups examined were the Real IRA in Northern Ireland between 1997-2012 and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in Israel/Palestine between 1993-1999. Three hypotheses for patterns were drawn from the literature. Casualties were expected to be low but rise if disruption was not successful as groups sought to not expend more resources than was necessary, escalating their campaign if they were not initially successful. It was expected that the targets would be soft for the same resource reasons. And weapon selection was expected to start basic to communicate that violence would continue but escalate if not initially successful.

The findings for the strategy of spoiling were mixed in terms of conforming to expectations. The Real IRA started with one high casualty attack in Omagh and then switched to low casualty attacks. PIJ began with low casualties and escalated to higher casualty attacks. In terms of weapon selection, the Real IRA conformed to expectation that more basic weapons would be used, however the campaign did begin with more sophisticated weapons. PIJ's weapon selection began as basic but did escalate to include much more sophisticated weaponry. The RIRA did not conform to the expectation for targeting as they began by striking soft targets but after the initial attacks switched to primarily hard targets. PIJ partially conforms as they began by striking hard targets but switched to soft during the course of the campaign.

In this chapter exploring the first of the strategies, it became immediately obvious that terrorist groups adapt to their environment during the conduct of the campaign (terrorist adaptation discussed by others, e.g. Jaspersen and Montibeller, 2020). That is to say that the groups were able to respond to the reception of their campaign from key audiences

as it developed rather than simply carry on with a pre-planned campaign regardless of public response. Most obviously, this is illustrated by the Omagh bombing which created an excess of casualties (in the context of the Real IRA's campaign) which rather than spoiling peace agreements hardened resolve and turned support away from the group. For the rest of the campaign, the group endeavoured to keep casualties low to avoid further popular backlash. This observation and aspect of adaptation, alongside the patterns of violence findings, was a contribution of this chapter in its demonstration of and confirmation of this previously asserted understanding of terrorism. A group's ability to learn and adapt had been highlighted as a possibility in previous chapters and this strategy provided a demonstration of it in action.

Outbidding

For the strategy of outbidding, the groups being examined were Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) in Peru between 1987-1997 and Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA) in Spain between 1976-82. The expectations for patterns of violence in an outbidding campaign were that casualties would be higher as a means to show both ability and commitment to combating the enemy. Targets were expected to be mixed between hard and soft as soft would show commitment to a cause and hard shows ability. An escalation to hard targets was expected to occur when an upping of the bid was required to show greater capabilities than their rival. Weapon selection was expected to be sophisticated as this would communicate to a group's constituent population that it has greater abilities than its rivals.

The findings for outbidding were that MRTA's year on year average casualty count for attacks varied considerably although the group did carry out mass casualty attacks. The group attacked both hard and soft targets, favouring soft targets although their mass casualty attacks were carried out against hard targets. The group's weapon selection was considered sophisticated, and the group's intent was clearly to showcase its sophisticated weapons. Additionally, they did successfully carry out more complex attacks. ETA's average casualty count was very low, running contrary to expectation. Their targeting, however, had an even split between hard and soft targets which is line with expectation. Finally, ETA's weapon selection is to be considered sophisticated.

This was the first chapter in which the strategy involved gaining support for the group. This is important in seeing how terrorism is not only about scaring your enemies but also persuading your (potential) supporters. As highlighted by Kydd and Walter, the victims of the attacks here are only tangentially related to the goals of the campaign. In this campaign, terrorist groups' actions are shaped not only by what they think constituent population will dislike, but also must conduct their campaign in such a way that appeals to their constituent population or make their violence appeal to their constituent population. The perceptions of, and response of, the victim population and government is not the major factor in the group's decision making.

Attrition

For the strategy of attrition, the groups examined were Chechen rebels in Chechnya between 1999-2006 and the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in France between 1994-1996. The expected patterns of violence for an attrition strategy were high casualties as groups sought to demonstrate their willingness and ability to impose costs on their enemies. Target selection was expected to be a mix of hard and soft depending on constituent population requirements and resource constraints. Weapon selection was expected to be sophisticated again as a means of showing ability to the target audience. The Chechen rebels did indeed conduct a campaign with high casualties. They also used sophisticated weapons and carried out complex attacks. The group's targeting patterns also conformed to expectation, striking a mixture of hard and soft targets. The GIA did not align quite as well. Their campaign did have a high casualty count, and their weapons can be considered sophisticated in their strategic operating environment, but they struck primarily soft targets.

An attrition campaign is closest to what one considers to be "war" in that its aim is to convince an enemy that that the group is capable of inflicting more damage than the state is willing to endure for the given political objective. Seen through this lens it makes sense that the groups adhered to the expectation that the campaigns would focus on inflicting high casualty counts. This was one of the instances in which the widely held assumption that terrorists want to kill as many people as possible (e.g. Powell, 2011) actually holds true, and this campaign accounted for some of the most shocking attacks that live long in the memory such as the Beslan school attack.

This chapter was a clearer demonstration of the strategic reasons that groups would decide to opt for the most violent strategy possible in terms of numbers killed and injured. The primary target being the enemy government and population, and the objective being to communicate ability and willingness to carry out a prolonged campaign of violence created the circumstances encouraging groups to carry out the most brutal attacks.

Provocation

The groups examined in the provocation chapter were the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in Kosovo between 1996-1998 and the Red Army Faction (RAF) in West Germany between 1970-1972. The hypotheses for types of violence were that casualties would start low and escalate higher if not initially successful. This expectation stems from the need to conserve resources but also low casualty attacks triggering a heavy-handed response better exemplify the cruelty of the enemy state. A group is expected to strike *either* hard or soft targets. Hard targets are expected in areas of mixed populations and/or authoritarian regimes, and soft targets when the group's constituent population is removed from the area of operations. Weapon selection was expected to be sophisticated as the group needs to show that it poses a legitimate threat worthy of a crackdown.

The KLA maintained low casualties throughout their campaign but did not escalate. They struck primarily hard targets throughout in line with expectations, and used weapons which demonstrated sophistication, again in line with expectation. The RAF began with a low level of casualties and then escalated to higher casualties towards the end of the campaign as hypothesised. They also struck primarily hard targets in line with expectations. Weapon selection also showed a degree of sophistication that the group was eager to emphasise.

A provocation campaign highlights the delicate balancing act that terrorist groups perform. In this strategy, the groups needed to prove that they were a serious enough threat to the government to provoke a violent response. However, they also needed to demonstrate to the population that they claimed to represent that their action was of an acceptable level of violence to highlight the desired government disproportionate response. The cases examined in this chapter help us to understand how groups go about trying to manage such a challenge, and how states need to be careful in their responses to terrorism. This strategy emphasises how terrorism is not a one-way dynamic, and that actions taken by the government are also received by audiences. When a government lashes out against a population, it may inadvertently prolong the conflict it seeks to end. The key takeaway here is the demonstration of how groups calibrate violence to show its enemy that it poses a genuine threat and must be confronted with severe measures but also to undertake this action in such a way that does not isolate it from its constituent population.

Intimidation

For the chapter on intimidation, the groups examined were the Taliban in Helmand and Kandahar between 2003-2006 and Boko Haram in Borno State between 2010-2014. The hypothesised patterns of violence for this strategy were that casualties would be low but that groups might escalate to massacres. This is because it communicates to the group's audience that the group is capable of selectively punishing those who disobey or side with the government and that those who cooperate with the terrorists are safe. Escalation is expected to occur in instances in which the population over which the group seeks control becomes too contested. Targets were expected to be a mixture of hard and soft. Hard targets would be the government, or representatives of the government that the group seeks to usurp. Soft targets would be disobedient members of the population who are not necessarily governmental. Sophisticated weapon selection was expected as groups sought to showcase their power.

The Taliban's casualty levels were a sustained level between high and low, just crossing the threshold into being considered a mass casualty campaign, which was not in line with expectations. The group carried out attacks against a mix of hard and soft targets (favouring hard) as was expected, and the group's weapon selection was sophisticated in line with the hypothesis. Boko Haram escalated from low casualties to higher casualties and massacres as was hypothesised, they carried out attacks against a mix of hard and

soft targets although as the campaign progressed soft targets became dominant, they group had a sophisticated weapon selection as well.

The lessons learned from the intimidation chapter in particular is how the group carrying out the campaign needs to be able to persuade its audience not just of its commitment to violence, but its ability to govern through violence. This means that the violence can range from the selective only punishing wrong doers and not those who cooperate, all the way up to massacres to collectively punish populations.

Overall

All the findings discussed above are succinctly summarised in this hypothesis matrix:

		Types of Violence		
Strategy	**Group**	**Casualties**	**Target Selection**	**Weapon Selection**
Spoiling	Real IRA	/	-	/
	PIJ	+	/	+
Outbidding	MRTA	/	+	+
	ETA	-	+	+
Attrition	Chechen Rebels	+	+	+
	GIA	+	-	+
Provocation	KLA	+	+	+
	Red Army Faction	+	+	+
Intimidation	Taliban	-	+	+
	Boko Haram	+	+	+

(Figure 10.1, Hypothesis matrix for findings. Key: green (+)=conformed to expectation, yellow (/)=partially conformed, red (-)=did not conform)

The five strategies and their relationship to the types of violence were assessed using three hypotheses each, giving a total of 15 hypotheses. These were tested through two case studies in each strategy. Each case study had three possible outcomes for its test – conformed to expectation, partially conformed to expectation, and did not conform to expectation.

Hypothesis confirmation is graded to account for the messiness of reality, to accommodate the understanding that these cases are not experiments carried out in perfectly controlled conditions. There are three possible classifications for a hypothesis: confirmed, partially confirmed, not confirmed. Confirmed hypotheses have both cases

conforming to expectation, partial confirmations have at least one case fully conform, and unconfirmed hypotheses have no cases fully conform.

Of the 15 hypotheses, 9 were confirmed, 4 were partially confirmed, and 2 were unconfirmed. In terms of assessing a strategy's relationship with the types of violence, this is dependent on the degree confirmation of the hypotheses rather than the individual cases. A case's failure to conform to expectation is not as consequential as the failure of the hypothesis. The failure of one type of violence to conform to the hypothesis does not result in the entire strategy being rejected, only that one element. All three types of violence failing in a strategy would lead to that strategy being rejected.

Both the strategies of attrition and intimidation have two hypotheses confirmed and one partially confirmed. In attrition, target selection is partially confirmed. In intimidation, it is the casualties hypothesis. As all the hypotheses have some degree of confirmation, it can be considered that the groups are selecting their types of violence as expected with strategy as a driver. This does include an understanding that the relationship with the partial confirmations is messier in application than theorised.

The strategy of outbidding had two hypotheses confirmed and one (casualties) unconfirmed. Target and weapon selection conformed, suggesting that the relationship between these types of violence is accurately understood. Casualties are a more complex matter. It was hypothesised that a high casualty count would occur, however this hypothesis is not confirmed. Constituent response to violence emerged as an issue here, which was surprising given that it was expected that high casualties would showcase a group's power and attract support rather than drive it away. Casualties in an outbidding campaign needs further research factoring in constituent constraints to strategic decision making.

Spoiling had two hypotheses as partial confirmations, and one (target selection) unconfirmed. This means that we can be reasonably confident in the association between spoiling and casualties and weapon selection. Target selection did not conform to the hypothesis. As with casualties in the strategy of outbidding, constituent constraints impacted the groups' decisions to strike soft targets. Similarly, target selection in a spoiling campaign needs further research factoring in constituent constraints to strategic decision making.

Provocation had every hypothesis confirmed. The results across all chapters indicate that strategy is a driving force for terrorist group decision making. In the case of provocation, this is where it is most evident.

Overall, 87% of hypotheses were fully or partially confirmed. This suggests that strategy is indeed an influential force behind group decision making. The failure of two hypotheses does not lead us to disregard the model entirely. The two rejected hypotheses occurred in strategies which had their other two hypotheses confirmed. This points to

identifiable patterns of violence being associated with the strategies but that it needs further study so that they can be amended.

The high number of hypothesis confirmations goes alongside the groups' documentary evidence which indicates that strategy has an influence on their decision making in relation to types of violence.

The hypothesis for spoiling being less substantiated than the other strategies is worth discussing further. The overall results of the research show that strategy is indeed a major factor which influences the selection of types of violence. So, why does spoiling struggle to conform to the expectations established? The key distinction to make here, as has been highlighted throughout this thesis, is that strategy is indeed a major factor in influencing decision making but it is not the only major factor and nor is this research set up to show a hierarchy of influences. In other words, there is scope for other major influences to shape decision making without disproving strategy as an influence. In the case of spoiling other factors may be more influential in this particular strategy in determining the decision making of terrorist group than in other strategies. This could also indicate that that certain strategies have a greater ability to influence outcomes than others, spoiling may remain a key influential factor but is perhaps not as dominant an influential factor as provocation when it comes to decision making.

Discussion and contribution

This thesis makes a number of contributions to the wider terrorism literature. These relate to understanding of strategy, individual groups, and terrorist decision-making.

The major contribution of this thesis is to offer new theory and evidence about the relationship between strategies of terrorism and patterns of violence. This thesis makes an original contribution to the literature by building on Kydd and Walter's outline and being the first to identify the patterns of violence for all five strategies. This answers Kydd and Walter's call for future research on each of their strategies (p.80) by looking at each and all of them in relation to types of violence for the first time in a systematic and comprehensive manner. There have previously been pieces of work which have identified particular forms of violence with particular individual strategies (e.g. Conrad and Greene, 2015 and the exploration of quality of violence when groups are in competition with each other), and particular understandings of those strategies, but nothing so far has addressed the whole package of strategies in this way. The work has successfully addressed all five strategies in one go, using a consistent methodology across the five strategies, and added an extension to the model to the point where it is possible to discuss strategy and refer to particular types of violence associated with each one. This thesis has also demonstrated how strategy can influence the decision to employ these types of violence. Up to this point strategy had been recognised, but underappreciated, as a driver of decision making in relation to types of violence.

This thesis makes a necessary contribution to the literature by adding to the debate around mass casualty violence against civilians. The thesis has shown across chapters when strategy drives the decision to employ attacks of this type and when strategy and other factors interact to confirm this decision or act to limit it. Highlighted in the literature review at the start of this thesis, there has been much debate over why mass casualty terrorist attacks occur, particularly those targeting civilians. This research has shown that it may be due to it being driven by strategy, and enabled by supporting factors – or, not prevented by additional constraints.

More widely, this thesis also makes a contribution by highlighting and exploring the interaction between strategy and other factors that influence terrorist group decision making. Across the different case studies, we can see that strategy is a major driving force, but other factors occur to interact with strategy and influence outcomes. This influence was most obvious in the spoiling chapter, as discussed above. But the influence has been present elsewhere even when it hasn't impacted the outcome in relation to the types of violence this thesis examines – the resource constraints faced by the Chechen rebels led them to carry out a major attack at a school geographically much closer to their base than they had originally intended. The target of the attack was always going to be a school, but the additional factor of resource constraints led to a change in location. This relates back to the discussion in the literature review which highlighted how these other factors are acknowledged across different strands of the literature and how they may feed into this work. In the case of the MRTA, the additional factors were able to influence the casualty numbers of attacks, with the political context and desire to appeal to a broad constituent population leading to variation away from expected mass casualties and the group was compelled to focus on more difficult to strike hard targets in pursuit of mass casualties.

Looking at the 87% of hypotheses being confirmed beyond simply what it represents in this model allows us to acknowledge the wider takeaways of this thesis. It does show a high degree of support for the claims made directly by this thesis, but it also shows the importance of looking beyond Kydd and Walter to refine explanations of decision making. This reinforces the point above concerning interactions with factors beyond strategy as influencing decision making to varying degrees. In other words, this figure reinforces that strategy is a major factor in driving terrorist group decision making but that it is clearly not the only one and exists as part of a complex ecosystem.

Another contribution of this thesis is to explore the strategy and activities of ten high-profile terrorist groups in a way which has not been previously done. The examination of the groups in the case studies are not in depth and they remain focused on strategy throughout. However, they still shed light on aspects of the individual groups and make empirical contributions to each. One of the best examples to illustrate this contribution is the outbidding chapter, specifically the section on MRTA. Work available on the group in the English language is very limited. The group is almost always discussed as a part

of work on its main rival group Shining Path. My research, however, has MRTA as the main focus and Shining Path as the point of comparison – allowing the competition and relationship between the two groups to be understood from the other side through a strategic lens. Previous work which has primarily focused on SL has not emphasised enough the actions taken by MRTA as part of this competition for support. Similarly, the activities of Boko Haram are still being researched given the recency of the group's activities. Using intimidation as a lens through which to interpret the group's violence offers new insight on the motivation of the group. This has been hinted at before in research, but not researched as such. As with the MRTA, there is relatively little research on the GIA available in the English language concerning their strategy in France. There has previously been work on counterterrorism during that period or the wider French experience of terrorism made available in English (e.g. Shapiro and Suzan, 2003; Gregory, 2003). My section on the group takes a step towards providing a more strategic understanding of the group in their French campaign available in English.

Concerning the individual types of violence, the difficulties concerning the casualty counts of attacks enabled target selection to be used as an alternative means of communicating ability. This was particularly evident in the provocation campaign, when a group needs to convince an enemy that it has the ability to impose severe costs but its support base would reject mass casualty attacks (particularly against civilians). In this instance, striking hard targets is a viable alternative. Hard targets can be an ideologically acceptable target and serve as a representation of the state, making them perhaps more acceptable to the constituent group. This is not to claim that this will be the case in every terrorist campaign, but rather it is a possible development to be aware of for groups which may face significant constituent constraints.

Weapon selection offers a group an opportunity to showcase its strength and resources without necessarily having to inflict mass casualties. Of course, these weapons can also simply be used as part of the carrying out of mass casualty events. Four of the five strategies' hypotheses had an expectation that the weapon selection associated with them would be sophisticated, and in each of these cases this was confirmed. The only strategy to not place such an emphasis on sophistication of weaponry was spoiling, but even this did include an expectation that weapons could escalate from basic to sophisticated. Despite a recent trend in the use of basic weaponry in terrorist attacks, such as the Nice truck attack in 2016 or the London Bridge attack in 2017, the use of basic weapons was not something groups often sought to draw attention to. Perhaps given this recency of such attacks, I had expected the hypotheses of sophisticated weaponry to be challenged more by the use of increasingly basic weapons (e.g. melee weapons or vehicle rammings). They still could be presented by groups in line with their campaign goals as it would demonstrate their ability to strike anywhere and at any time, regardless of security measures. The adoption of these weapons could also have showcased a group's ability to adapt or innovate in environments which limited options. However, even when

operating in environments that restricted the availability of weapons groups still overall managed to acquire and use firearms and explosives to sustain campaigns.

Future Research

This research has opened up new avenues for potential future research. In addition to this, given the constraints that I faced when carrying out this research, there are areas of potential research that I did not have the opportunity to explore.

Future research could explore the periphery types of violence not addressed in this research. By this, I mean the types of violence which do not constitute the basic types of violence as established earlier. One example of this would be kidnapping used by terrorist groups. This thesis has examined some campaigns which included hostage taking but only when there has been violence, but a more in depth and wider examination of kidnapping in relation to strategy could be valuable. Kidnapping does not occur as frequently in terrorism as one might expect, making up only 3% of attacks in 2019 (GTTAC, 2020), a reason for it not being a basic type of terrorist violence. But it is still an impactful element of terrorism, so what is the relationship between different strategies of terrorism and the decision to use kidnapping as a tactic?

Another option would be different ways of examining the complexity of attacks. Two possible ways of understanding complexity could be number of personnel involved or distance from "home". These are themes which have been touched on in individual cases in this thesis as tangential elements, and help to understand these terrorist groups in depth, but would benefit from further research in future. A different unpacking of the core types of violence used in this thesis is also a possibility. For example, an expansion of targeting to differentiate between human and non-human targets could be employed, such as the striking of infrastructure targets.

One more avenue of future research that has emerged in light of recent developments is to explore provocation events. A provocation event, rather than a provocation strategy, would be when a group tries to carry out one major attack to force a governmental response rather than carry out a prolonged campaign composed of numerous attacks. In terms of recent developments which have prompted this as an important avenue for future research, I am referring to the Hamas attack on the 7th October 2023. The attack appears to have been carried out with the knowledge that the Israeli government would respond in a heavy-handed way (Byman and Holtz, 2023). What is interesting about these attacks, in relation to the patterns of violence discussion, is that they do not conform to the patterns of violence established for a provocation *campaign.* It would be worth investigating this difference as the consequences of responding improperly can be severe.

While searching for resources for the study of the groups chosen, I did encounter documents which were only available physically in archives. The most notable case of

this was during the examination of ETA, during which I found at least one archive in Spain containing a large amount of material produced by the group which was only available to access in person. My resources, and Covid-era restrictions, meant I did not travel to these archives – especially if this was done for every group analysed. As a further complication, physical documents would have been far more difficult to translate than computer-based documents which would have taken too much time and incurred an additional cost as I cannot speak the languages of every terrorist group covered. This information about the depth of knowledge contained in the archives would be useful for any potential future research into any of the specific groups examined in this thesis. Related to a tweaking of methods to gain further insight, future research into this subject might benefit from the use of interviews, both with security officials and, most significantly, members of terrorist groups.

Finally, there is the opportunity stemming from this research to conduct research which determines the hierarchy of factors that influence terrorist group decision making. This research has shown strategy to be a viable factor in terrorist group decision making. Mentioned in the previous section, audience reception to violence was shown in this thesis to be a stronger than expected influence on decision making. Ideology has also been considered to be influence decision making among many other factors. It is possible that all of these play a role in decision making to various degrees and a more comparative research design would be better able to gauge the degree of influence.

Applicability

There is also the applicability of the work to be considered. This research was undertaken with the intention of not simply leaving a thesis to gather virtual dust in a virtual library but rather to have real world application through an improved understanding of terrorist strategy. It would be expected that this research could feed into counter-terrorism research. While this work does not directly address the counter terrorism literature it does hold the potential to move across into that sphere and have impact in shaping responses to strategies of terrorism having outlined more effectively how they function.

The contribution made to debate around mass casualty targeting of civilians is not confined only to the academic literature, but also has the potential to have real world applicability. This enhanced understanding of these casualty and targeting preferences can enable practitioners to better anticipate the likelihood of such events occurring.

One potential application of this work is to map it onto ongoing terrorist campaigns to help in the understanding of how groups will carry out these campaigns. If a group's current strategy can be identified then the understanding of types of violence developed in this thesis could contribute to anticipating the group's likely patterns of violence. While strategy may not be the only factor shaping a group's tactics, this study has demonstrated it remains an influential, and often overlooked, element. Practitioners can

prepare for attacks once the strategy has been identified because being aware of likely behaviour enables more focused preventative measures to be taken. For example, if a group is identified as using a strategy which is associated with both high casualties and the striking of soft targets then a list of likely targets could be produced with additional security measures being brought in, such as sports and cultural events. While these measures are already in place when the terror threat is raised, a better understanding of strategy allows for more effective allocation of security and counter terror resources. A specific example might be the activities of Islamic State in the North Caucasus who appear to be carrying out a provocation campaign in the south of Russia. If this is the case, given the geography and population factors, the striking of hard targets is expected. The response should prioritise providing further protection to hard targets in the area. At the time of writing, the organisation is regrouping after the loss of its leader but has begun to carry out attacks again.

Concluding remarks

This thesis has provided some answers to the questions posed at the beginning of the research process. The research has identified patterns of violence in terrorist strategies and has put forward strategy as being an influential force behind these patterns. This chapter has gone on to explain the significance of this, the avenues for future research, how it has contributed to the academic literature, and how it will contribute to the world beyond academia.

This work is significant because it makes a valuable addition to the existing literature in the field by expanding on Kydd and Walter's typology, adding an extra dimension through the examination of types of violence. It also contributes to the field by showcasing the importance of understanding strategy as a primary motivating factor behind terrorist group decision making. This contribution is not limited to the academic realm and has the potential to influence counter terrorism activities. In the process of answering the research questions, this thesis has opened up avenues of further research which can enable even richer understandings of terrorist group behaviour to be determined. This thesis has shown that the violence carried out by terrorist groups is not random, nor is it senseless or chaotic. Whether it is the decision to use guns or to use bombs, to strike schoolchildren or soldiers, to assassinate one person or slaughter hundreds – these elements of violence are deliberate and calculated. Strategy plays a significant role in these calculations.

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