Historical Perspectives and Ideological Origins

Terrorism has been a dark feature of human behavior since history was first recorded. Great leaders have been assassinated, groups and individuals have committed acts of incredible violence, and entire cities and nations have been put to the sword—all in the name of defending a greater good.

The modern era of terrorism is primarily, though not exclusively, a conflict between adversaries waging, on one side, a self-described war on terrorism and, on the other, a self-described holy war in defense of their religion. It is an active confrontation, evidenced by the fact that the incidence of significant terrorist attacks often spikes to serious levels. Although such trends are disturbing, it is critical for one to keep these facts in perspective because the modern terrorist environment is in no manner a unique circumstance in human history.

It will become clear in the following pages that the history of terrorist behavior extends into antiquity and that themes and concepts recur. State terrorism, dissident terrorism, and other types of political violence are common to all periods of civilization. It will also become clear to readers that certain justifications—rooted in basic beliefs—have been used to rationalize terrorist violence throughout history. The following themes are introduced here:

- Historical perspectives on terrorism
- Ideological origins of terrorism
- September 11, 2001, and the new era of terrorism

Historical Perspectives on Terrorism

It is perhaps natural for each generation to view history narrowly, from within its own political context. Contemporary commentators and laypersons tend to interpret modern events as though they have no historical precedent. However, terrorism is by no means a modern phenomenon and has in fact a long history. Nor does terrorism arise from a political vacuum.
Antiquity

In the ancient world, cases and stories of state repression and political violence were common. Several ancient writers championed tyrannicide (the killing of tyrants) as necessary for the greater good of the citizenry and to delight the gods. Some assassins were honored by the public. For example, after Aristogeiton and Harmodius were executed for assassinating the tyrant Hipparchus, statues were erected to honor them. Conquerors often set harsh examples by exterminating entire populations or forcing the conquered into exile. An example of this practice is the Babylonian Exile, which followed the conquest of the kingdom of Judea. Babylon's victory resulted in the forced removal of the Judean population to Babylon in 598 and 587 BCE. Those in authority also repressed the expression of ideas from individuals they deemed dangerous, sometimes violently. In ancient Greece, Athenian authorities sentenced the great philosopher Socrates to death in 399 BCE for allegedly corrupting the city-state's youth and meddling in religious affairs. He drank hemlock and died among his students and followers.

The Roman Age

During the time of the Roman Empire, the political world was rife with many violent demonstrations of power, which were arguably examples of what we would now term state terrorism. These include the brutal suppression of Spartacus's followers after the Servile War of 73–71 BCE, after which the Romans crucified surviving rebels along the Appian Way. Crucifixion was a common form of public execution: The condemned were affixed to a cross or other wooden frame, either tied or nailed through the wrist or hand, and later died by suffocation as their bodies sagged.

Warfare was waged in an equally hard manner, such as the final conquest of the North African city-state of Carthage in 146 BCE. The city was reportedly allowed to burn for 10 days, the rubble was cursed, and salt was symbolically plowed into the soil to signify that Carthage would forever remain desolate. During another successful campaign in 106 CE, the Dacian nation (modern Romania) was eliminated, its population was enslaved, and many Dacians perished in gladiatorial games. In other conquered territories, conquest was often accompanied by similar demonstrations of terror, always with the intent to demonstrate that Roman rule would be wielded without mercy against those who did not submit to the authority of the empire.

Regicide (the killing of kings) was also fairly common during the Roman period. Perhaps the best known was the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BCE by rivals in the Senate. Other Roman emperors also met violent fates: Caligula and Galba were killed by the Praetorian Guard in 41 and 68 CE, respectively; Domitian was stabbed to death in 96 CE; a paid gladiator murdered Commodus in 193 CE; and Caracalla, Elagabalus, and other emperors either were assassinated or died suspiciously.

The Ancient and Medieval Middle East

Cases exist of movements in the ancient and medieval Middle East that used what modern analysts would consider to be terrorist tactics. For example, in the History of the Jewish War—a seven-volume account of the first Jewish rebellion against Roman occupation (66–73 CE)—the historian Flavius Josephus describes how one faction of the rebels, the sicarii (who took their name from their preferred weapon, the sica, a short curved dagger), attacked both Romans and members of the Jewish establishment. They were masters of guerrilla warfare and the destruction of symbolic property and belonged to a group known as the Zealots (from the Greek zelos, meaning ardor or strong spirit), who opposed the Roman occupation of Palestine. The modern
term zealot, used to describe uncompromising devotion to radical change, is derived from the name of this group. Assassination was a commonly used tactic. Some sicarii zealots were present at the siege of Masada, a hilltop fortress that held out against the Romans for 3 years before the defenders committed suicide in 74 CE rather than surrender.

The Dark Ages: Prelude to Modern Terrorism

During the period from the Assassins (13th Century) to the French Revolution (18th Century), behavior which would later be considered terrorism was commonly practiced in medieval warfare. In fact, a great deal of medieval conflict involved openly brutal warfare. However, the modern terrorist profile of politically-motivated dissidence attempting to change an existing order, or state repression to preserve state hegemony, was uncommon. Nation states in the modern sense did not exist in medieval Europe, and recurrent warfare was motivated by religious intolerance and political discord between feudal kings and lords. The post-Assassin Middle East also witnessed periodic invasions, discord between leaders, and religious warfare but not modern-style terrorism. It was not until the rise of the modern nation state in the mid-17th century that the range of intensity of conflict devolved from open warfare to include behavior which the modern era would define as insurgency, guerrilla warfare, and terrorism.

The French Revolution: Prelude to Modern Terrorism

During the French Revolution, the word terrorism was coined in its modern context by British statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke. He used the word to describe the régime de la terreur, commonly known in English as the Reign of Terror (June 1793 to July 1794). The Reign of Terror, led by the radical Jacobin-dominated government, is a good example of state terrorism carried out to further the goals of a revolutionary ideology. During the Terror, thousands of opponents to the Jacobin dictatorship—and others merely perceived as enemies of the new revolutionary Republic—were arrested and put on trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Those found to be enemies of the Republic were beheaded by a new instrument of execution—the guillotine. With the capability to execute victims one after the other in assembly-line fashion, it was regarded by Jacobins and other revolutionaries of the time as an enlightened and civilized tool of revolutionary justice.

The ferocity of the Reign of Terror is reflected in the number of victims. Between 17,000 and 40,000 persons were executed, and perhaps 200,000 political prisoners died in prisons from disease and starvation. Two incidents illustrate the communal nature of this violence. In Lyon, 700 people were massacred by cannon fire in the town square. In Nantes, thousands were drowned in the Loire River when the boats they were detained in were sunk.

The Revolutionary Tribunal, a symbol of revolutionary justice and state terrorism, has its modern counterparts in 20th-century social upheavals. Recent examples include the struggle meetings of revolutionary China (public criticism sessions, involving public humiliation and confession) and revolutionary Iran’s komitehs (ad hoc people’s committees).

Nineteenth-Century Europe: Two Examples From the Left

Modern left-wing terrorism is not a product of the 20th century. Its ideological ancestry dates to the 19th century, when anarchist and communist philosophers began to advocate the destruction of capitalist and imperial society—what Karl Marx referred to as the “spectre . . . haunting Europe.” Some revolutionaries readily encouraged the use of terrorism in the new cause. One theorist, Karl Heinzen in Germany, anticipated
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the late-20th-century fear that terrorists might obtain weapons of mass destruction when he supported the acquisition of new weapons technologies to destroy the enemies of the people. According to Heinzen, these weapons should include poison gas and new high-yield explosives. 11

During the 19th century, several terrorist movements championed the rights of the lower classes. These movements were prototypes for 20th-century groups and grew out of social and political environments unique to their countries. To illustrate this point, two examples are drawn from early industrial England and semifeudal Russia of the late 19th century.

The Luddites were English workers in the early 1800s who objected to the social and economic transformations of the Industrial Revolution. Their principal objection was that industrialization threatened their jobs, and thus they targeted the machinery of the new textile factories. They attacked, for example, stocking looms that mass-produced stockings at the expense of skilled stocking weavers who made them by hand.

A mythical figure, Ned Ludd, was the supposed founder of the Luddite movement. The movement was active from 1811 to 1816 and was responsible for sabotaging and destroying wool and cotton mills and weaving machinery. The British government eventually suppressed the movement by passing anti-Luddite laws, including establishing the crime of “machine breaking,” which was punishable by death. After 17 Luddites were executed in 1813, the movement gradually died out. Although historians debate whether Luddites clearly fit the profile of terrorists, modern antitechnology activists and terrorists, such as the Unabomber, Theodore “Ted” Kaczynski, in the United States, are sometimes referred to as neo-Luddites.

People’s Will (Narodnaya Volya) in Russia was a direct outgrowth of student dissatisfaction with the czarist regime in the late 19th century. Many young Russian university students, some of whom had studied...
abroad, became imbued with the ideals of anarchism and Marxism. Many became radical reformists who championed the rights of the people, particularly the peasant class. A populist revolutionary society, Land and Liberty (Zemlya Volya), was founded in 1876 with the goal of fomenting a mass peasant uprising by settling radical students among them to raise their class consciousness. After a series of arrests and mass public trials, Land and Liberty split into two factions in 1879. One faction, Black Repartition, kept to the goal of a peasant revolution. The other, People’s Will, fashioned itself into a conspiratorial terrorist organization.

People’s Will members believed that they understood the underlying problems of Russia better than the uneducated masses of people did and concluded that they were therefore better able to force government change. This was, in fact, one of the first examples of a revolutionary vanguard strategy. They believed that they could both demoralize the czarist government and expose its weaknesses to the peasantry. People’s Will quickly embarked on a terrorist campaign against carefully selected targets. Incidents of terror committed by People’s Will members—and other revolutionaries who emulated them—included shootings, knifings, and bombings against government officials. In one successful attack, Czar Alexander II was assassinated by a terrorist bomb on March 1, 1881. The immediate outcome of the terrorist campaign was the installation of a repressive police state in Russia that, although not as efficient as later police states would be in the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany, succeeded in harassing and imprisoning most members of People’s Will.

The Modern Era

David C. Rapoport designed a theory holding that modern terrorism has progressed through three waves that lasted for roughly 40 years each, and that we now live in a fourth wave. His four waves are as follows:

- The anarchist wave: 1880s to the end of World War I
- The anticolonial wave: end of World War I until the late 1960s
- The New Left wave: late 1960s to the near present
- The religious wave: about 1980 until the present

It is useful in developing a critical understanding of modern extremist behavior to understand that the modern threat of the New Terrorism adds a unique dimension to the terrorist environment of the 21st century. This is because “the new terrorism is different in character, aiming not at clearly defined political demands but at the destruction of society and the elimination of large sections of the population.”

The new breed of terrorists “would feel no compunction over killing hundreds of thousands if they had the means to do so.” In addition, the emerging environment is characterized by a horizontal organizational arrangement wherein independent cells operate autonomously without reporting to a hierarchical (vertical) command structure. The attacks in September 2001 in the United States, March 2004 in Spain, and July 2005 in Great Britain and Egypt are examples of this new environment. Many of these new terrorists are motivated by religious or nationalist precepts that do not fit easily into the classical ideological continuum discussed in the next section.

Ideological Origins of Terrorism

Ideologies are systems of belief derived from theories that explain human social and political conditions. Literally scores of belief systems have led to acts of terrorist violence. Because there are so many belief systems, it is difficult to classify them with precision. Nevertheless, a classical ideological continuum rooted in the politics of the French
Revolution has endured to the present time. This is instructive for our discussion of politically motivated violence because the concepts embodied in the continuum continue and will continue to be relevant.

The Classical Ideological Continuum: The Case of the French Revolution

At the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789, a parliament-like assembly was convened to represent the interests of the French social classes. Although its name changed during the revolution—from Estates-General, to National Constituent Assembly, to Legislative Assembly—the basic ideological divisions were symbolically demonstrated by where representatives sat during assembly sessions. On the left side of the assembly sat those who favored radical change, some advocating a complete reordering of French society and culture. On the right side of the assembly sat those who favored either the old order or slow and deliberate change. In the center of the assembly sat those who favored either moderate change or simply could not make up their minds to commit to either the left or right. These symbolic designations—left, center, and right—have become part of our modern political culture. Table 2.1 summarizes the progression of these designations from their origin during the French Revolution.

It is readily apparent from the French Revolution that the quality of the classical continuum depended very much on the political environment of each society. For example, within American culture, mainstream values include free enterprise, freedom of speech, and limited government. Depending on where one falls on the continuum, the interpretation can be very different. Thus, the continuum summarizes the conventional political environment of the modern era. Many nationalist or religious terrorists, however, do not fit easily into the classical continuum. For example,

to argue that the Algerian terrorists, the Palestinian groups, or the Tamil Tigers are “left” or “right” means affixing a label that simply does not fit. . . . The Third World groups . . . have subscribed to different ideological tenets at different periods.

Nevertheless, the continuum is still useful for categorizing terrorist behaviors and extremist beliefs. Table 2.2 compares the championed groups, methodologies, and desired outcomes of typical political environments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislative Body</th>
<th>Political and Ideological Orientation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Constituent Assembly, 1789–1791</td>
<td>Patriots (republicans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Assembly, 1791–1792</td>
<td>Mountain (republicans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Convention, 1792</td>
<td>Mountain (radicals)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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An Ideological Analysis: From the Extreme Left to the Extreme Right

**Fringe left** ideology is usually an extreme interpretation of Marxist ideology, using theories of class warfare or ethno-national liberation to justify political violence. At the leftist fringe, violence is seen as a perfectly legitimate option because the group considers itself at war with an oppressive system, class, or government. The key justification is the notion of the group as a righteous champion of the poor and downtrodden.

This type of ideological movement frequently concerns itself only with destroying an existing order in the name of the championed class or national group, not with building the new society in the aftermath of the revolution. For example, Gudrun Ensslin, a leader of the terrorist Red Army Faction in West Germany, stated, “As for the state of the future, the time after victory, that is not our concern. . . . We build the revolution, not the socialist model.”

**Far left** ideology frequently applies Marxist theory to promote class or ethno-national rights. It is best characterized as a radical worldview because political declarations often direct public attention against perceived forces of exploitation or repression. Far left groups do not necessarily engage in political violence and often fully participate in democratic processes. In Western Europe, for example, Communist parties and their affiliated Communist labor unions have historically been overt in agitating for reform through democratic processes. It is important to note that this environment of relatively peaceful coexistence occurs only in societies where dissent is tolerated. In countries with weaker democratic traditions, far left dissent has erupted in violence and been met by extreme repression. Latin America has many examples of this kind of environment.

**Far right** ideology is characterized by strong adherence to social order and traditional values. A chauvinistic racial or ethnic dimension is often present, as is an undercurrent of religion or mysticism (the latter is especially prevalent in the United States). As with the far left, far right groups do not necessarily engage in political violence and have fully participated in democratic processes. Organized political expression is often overt. For example, right-wing political parties in many European countries are a common feature of national politics. Their success has been mixed, and their influence varies in different countries. In Spain, Greece, and Great Britain, they have little popular support. However, those in Austria, Belgium, France, and Italy have enjoyed significant popular support in the recent past.

### Table 2.2 The Classical Ideological Continuum: Modern Political Environments

Activism on the left, right, and center can be distinguished by a number of characteristics. A comparison of these is instructive. The representation here compares their championed groups, methodologies, and desired outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Championed groups</th>
<th>Methodology/process</th>
<th>Desired outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left Fringe</strong></td>
<td>Liberation movement</td>
<td>Radical change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Far Left</strong></td>
<td>Political agitation</td>
<td>Radical change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liberalism</strong></td>
<td>Partisan democratic processes</td>
<td>Incremental reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate Center</strong></td>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>Status quo slow change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservatism</strong></td>
<td>Partisan democratic processes</td>
<td>Traditional values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Far Right</strong></td>
<td>Political agitation</td>
<td>Reactionary change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fringe Right</strong></td>
<td>Order movement</td>
<td>Reactionary change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Not all far right political movements are the same, and a comparison of the American and European contexts is instructive. In Europe, some rightist parties are nostalgic and neofascist, such as the German People's Union. Others are more populist, such as the National Front in France. In the United States, the far right is characterized by activism among local grassroots organizations and has no viable political party. Some American groups have a religious orientation, others are racial, others embody a politically paranoid survivalist lifestyle, and some incorporate all three tendencies.

**Fringe right** ideology is usually rooted in an uncompromising belief in ethno-national or religious superiority, and terrorist violence is justified as a protection of the purity and superiority of the group. Terrorists on the fringe right picture themselves as champions of an ideal order that has been usurped, or attacked, by inferior interests or unwanted religious values. Violence is an acceptable option against those who are not members of the group because they are considered obstacles to the group’s natural assumption of power. Like their counterparts on the fringe left, right-wing terrorists often have only a vague notion of the characteristics of the new order after the revolution. They are concerned only with asserting their value system and, if necessary, destroying the existing order. Significantly, rightist terrorists have been more likely than their leftist counterparts to engage in indiscriminate bombings and other attacks that produce higher numbers of victims.

Table 2.3 applies this discussion to the American context.

**Ideology in Practice: From Anarchism to Fascism**

**Anarchism**

Anarchism is a leftist philosophy that was an ideological by-product of the social upheavals of mid-19th-century Europe, a time when civil unrest and class conflict swept the continent and culminated in the revolutions of 1848. Anarchists were among the first antiestablishment radicals who championed what they considered the downtrodden peasant and working classes. They abhorred central government control and private property. Frenchman Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, who published a number of articles and books on the virtues of anarchism, coined an enduring slogan among anarchists—“Property is theft!”

The radical undercurrent of anarchist thought began with that proposition. Mikhail Bakunin and his philosophical associates, Sergei Nechayev and Petr Kropotkin, all Russians, were the founders of modern anarchism. They supported destruction of the state, radical decentralization of power, atheism, and individualism. They also opposed capitalism and Karl Marx’s revolutionary doctrine of building a socialist state.

Early anarchists never offered a concrete plan for replacing centralized state authority because they had no clearly defined vision of postrevolutionary society. They considered the destruction of the state their contribution to the future.

They advocated achieving propaganda victories by violently pursuing the revolution, which became known as *propaganda by the deed*. Terrorism was advocated as the principal way to destroy state authority. Interestingly, anarchists argued that terrorists should organize themselves into small groups, or cells, a tactic that modern terrorists have adopted. Anarchists actively practiced propaganda by the deed, as evidenced by the many acts of violence against prominently symbolic targets. In Russia, People’s Will conducted a terrorist campaign from 1878 to 1881, and other anarchist terrorist cells operated in Western Europe. Around the turn of the 20th century, anarchists assassinated Russian Czar Alexander II, Austro-Hungarian Empress Elizabeth, Italian King Umberto I, and French President Carnot. An alleged anarchist, Leon Czolgosz, assassinated President William McKinley in the United States.
Marxism

Radical socialism, like anarchism, is a leftist ideology that began in the turmoil of mid-19th-century Europe and the uprisings of 1848. Socialists championed the emerging industrial working class and argued that the wealth produced by these workers should be more equitably distributed rather than concentrated in the hands of the wealthy elite.

Karl Marx is regarded as the founder of modern socialism. He and his associate Friedrich Engels, both Germans, argued that their approach to socialism was grounded in the scientific discovery that human progress and social evolution is the
PART I UNDERSTANDING TERRORISM

result of a series of historical conflicts and revolutions. Each era was based on the working group’s unequal relationship to the means of production (e.g., slaves, feudal farmers, and industrial workers) vis-à-vis the ruling group’s enjoyment of the fruits of the working group’s labor. In each era, a ruling thesis group maintained the status quo and a laboring antithesis group challenged it (through agitation and revolution), resulting in a socioeconomic synthesis that created new relationships with the means of production. Thus, human society evolved into the next era. According to Marx, the most advanced era of social evolution would be the synthesis Communist era, which he argued would be built after the antithesis industrial working class overthrew the thesis capitalist system. Marx theorized that the working class would establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Communist society and build a just and egalitarian social order.

Marx and Engels collaborated on the Manifesto of the Communist Party, a short work completed in 1847 and published in 1848. It became one of the most widely read documents of the 20th century. In it, Marx and Engels explained the revolutionary environment of the industrial era and how this era was an immediate precursor to the Communist era.

Marxist socialism was pragmatic, revolutionary, and action oriented, and many revolutionary leaders and movements throughout the 20th century adopted it. Terrorism, both state and dissident, was used during the revolutions and the consolidations of power after victory. It is interesting to note that none of these Marxist revolutions was led by the industrial working class; all occurred in preindustrial developing nations, often within the context of anticolonial warfare waged by peasants and farmers.

Chapter Perspective 2.2 summarizes the Marxist-influenced political philosophies of the New Left, which arose in Western countries during the 1960s.

Chapter Perspective 2.2

Required Reading on the “New Left”

In the postwar West, many leftist terrorists were inspired not by orthodox Marxism, but by examples of revolutionaries in the developing world such as Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Castro, and Guevara. Realizing as a practical matter that building guerrilla units in the countryside was impossible—and that the working class was not sufficiently prepared for revolution—many young radicals became nihilistic dissident revolutionaries. They concluded that revolution is a goal in itself, and “revolution for the hell of it” became a slogan and a practice for many left-wing radicals in the West. For them, there was little vision of what kind of society would be built on the rubble of the old. In fact,

The central question about the rationality of some terrorist organizations, such as the West German groups of the 1970s or the Weather Underground in the United States, is whether or not they had a sufficient grasp of reality . . . to calculate the likely consequences of the courses of action they chose.
Nevertheless, from the perspective of radical activists and intellectuals, nihilist dissident behavior was rational and logical.

Several books inspired radical leftists in the West. These books provided a rational justification for revolutionary agitation against democratic institutions in relatively prosperous societies. They came to define the New Left of the 1960s and 1970s, which rejected the rigid ideological orthodoxy of the “Old Left” Marxists. They created a new interpretation of revolutionary conditions. On the short list of “required reading” among radical activists were three books:iii

- Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth*
- Herbert Marcuse’s *One-Dimensional Man*
- Carlos Marighella’s *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla.*

*The Wretched of the Earth.* In *The Wretched of the Earth,* Fanon analyzed the role of indigenous people living in countries controlled by imperial governments that exploited local resources and imposed a foreign culture and values. He concluded that revolutionary violence was perfectly justifiable under these conditions. In fact, it was required because, in addition to liberating one’s country, one had to liberate oneself as an individual; only “liberating violence” could do this. Young radicals in the West agreed with this analysis, and some concluded that liberating violence in a prosperous society was justified. They also rationalized their violent political behavior by establishing a sense of revolutionary solidarity with “the wretched of the earth.”

*One-Dimensional Man.* Marcuse was a French philosopher who, along with Jean-Paul Sartre, was prominent among existentialist writers. He argued in *One-Dimensional Man* that capitalist society—no matter how prosperous or democratic—creates “manacles” of privilege that keep the public docile and content. He explained that the people’s oppression is measured by how much they have been co-opted by the accoutrements of capitalist comfort. Using this analysis, middle-class college students who considered themselves to be Marxists could justify revolutionary activism, even though they were far removed from the working class. Thus, they were rejecting their “manacles” of privilege and fighting in common cause with other revolutionaries worldwide.

*Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla.* As discussed in Chapter 5, Carlos Marighella’s book was extremely influential on leftist revolutionary strategy in Latin America, Western Europe, and the United States. It was a blueprint for revolution in urban societies, and Marighella’s guidelines for using urban terrorism to create revolutionary conditions were practiced widely. However, as noted previously, the assumption that the exploited group would join the revolution at the right time rarely happened in practice.

These works of dissident philosophy shaped the ideological justifications for the tactics of many revolutionary movements. For example, the motivation behind West Germany’s Red Army Faction has been described as having three central elements. These elements reflect the revolutionary literature and theory of the time. They were

- the concept of the “armed struggle” and the model of Third World liberation movements . . . ,
- the Nazi “connection” and “formal democracy” in the Federal Republic . . . , [and]
- the rejection of consumer society.

Notes

Fascism was a rightist ideological counterpoint to Marxism and anarchism that peaked before World War II. Like Marxism and anarchism, fascism’s popular appeal grew out of social turmoil in Europe, this time as a reaction to the 1917 Bolshevik (Communist) Revolution in Russia, the subsequent Bolshevik-inspired political agitation elsewhere in Europe, and the widespread unrest during the Great Depression of the 1930s.
It was rooted in a brand of extreme nationalism that championed the alleged superiority of a particular national heritage or ethno-racial group. Fascism was anti-Communist, antimonarchist, antidemocratic, and anti-intellectual (though there were some fascist writers). It demanded extreme obedience to law, order, and the state. Fascism also required cultural conservatism—often looking backward in history to link the ancient past to the modern state. Fascists created their own conceptualizations of traditional values such as military duty, the Christian church, and motherhood. Strong antidemocratic leadership was centralized in the state, usually under the guidance of a single charismatic leader who symbolically embodied the virtues of the state, the people, and the underlying fascist ideology.

Italian dictator Benito Mussolini was the first to consolidate power and create a fascist state. Beginning with his March on Rome in 1922, he gradually eliminated all opposition and democratic institutions. He was a mentor to Adolf Hitler, who led the fascist National Socialist German Worker’s (Nazi) Party to power in Germany in 1933. Both the Italian and German fascist regimes sent troops to fight on the side of right-wing Spanish rebels led by Francisco Franco during the Spanish Civil War.21

Although the first fascist movement largely collapsed in 1945, right-wing groups and political parties have continued to promote neofascist ideals. Some terrorist groups in Europe and the United States have been overtly fascist and racist. Dictatorships have also arisen since World War II that adopted many features of prewar fascism. For example, Latin American regimes arose in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and El Salvador—to name a few—that fit the fascist pattern.

The Just War Doctrine

The just war doctrine is an ideal and a moralistic philosophy rather than an ideology. The concept has been used by ideological and religious extremists to justify acts of extreme violence. Throughout history, nations and individuals have gone to war with the belief that their cause was just and their opponents’ cause unjust. Similarly, attempts have been made for millennia to write fair and just laws of war and rules of engagement. For example, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Hague Conventions produced at least 21 international agreements on the rules of war.22

The just war debate asks who can morally be defined as an enemy and what kinds of targets it is morally acceptable to attack. In this regard,
there are two separate components to the concept of just war (which philosophers call the just war tradition): the rationale for initiating the war (war’s ends) and the method of warfare (war’s means). Criteria for whether a war is just are divided into jus ad bellum (justice of war) and jus in bello (justice in war) criteria.23

Thus, *jus in bello* is correct behavior while waging war, and *jus ad bellum* is having the correct conditions for waging war in the first place. These concepts have been debated by philosophers and theologians for centuries. The early Christian philosopher Augustine concluded in the 5th century that war is justified to punish injuries inflicted by a nation that has refused to correct wrongs committed by its citizens. Augustine was, of course, referring to warfare between nations and cities, and church doctrine long held that an attack against state authority was an offense against God.24 Likewise, the Hague Conventions dealt only with rules of conflict between nations and afforded no legal rights to spies or antistate rebels. Neither system referred to rules of engagement for nonstate or antistate conflicts.

In the modern era, both dissidents and states have adapted the just war tradition to their political environments. Antistate conflict and reprisals by states are commonplace. Dissidents always consider their cause just and their methods proportional to the force the agents of their oppressors use. Antiterrorist reprisals launched by states are also justified as appropriate and proportional applications of force—in this case as a means to root out bands of terrorists.

Rules of war and the just war tradition are the result of many motivations. Some rules and justifications are self-serving, others are pragmatic, and others are grounded in ethno-nationalist or religious traditions. Hence, the just war concept can be easily adapted to justify ethnic, racial, national, and religious extremism in the modern era.

Table 2.4 summarizes the ideals and ideologies discussed here.

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### September 11, 2001, and the New Era of Terrorism

The death of Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in May 2011 occurred on the eve of the tenth commemoration of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the U.S. homeland. The attacks were seen by many as a turning point in the history of political violence. In the aftermath of these attacks, journalists, scholars, and national leaders repeatedly described the emergence of a new international terrorist environment. It was argued that within this new environment,
terrorists were now quite capable of using—and very willing to use—weapons of mass destruction to inflict unprecedented casualties and destruction on enemy targets. These attacks seemed to confirm warnings from experts during the 1990s that a New Terrorism, using “asymmetrical” methods, would characterize the terrorist environment in the new millennium.

**September 11, 2001**

The worst incident of modern international terrorism occurred in the United States on the morning of September 11, 2001. It was carried out by 19 Al Qaeda terrorists who were on a suicidal “martyrdom mission.” They committed the attack to strike at symbols of American (and Western) interests in response to what they perceived to be a continuing process of domination and exploitation of Muslim countries. They were religious terrorists fighting in the name of a holy cause against perceived evil emanating from the West. Their sentiments were born in the religious, political, and ethno-national ferment that has characterized the politics of the Middle East for much of the modern era.

Nearly 3,000 people were killed in the attack. The sequence of events occurred as follows:

- **7:59 a.m.** American Airlines Flight 11, carrying 92 people, leaves Boston’s Logan International Airport for Los Angeles.
- **8:20 a.m.** American Airlines Flight 77, carrying 64 people, takes off from Washington’s Dulles Airport for Los Angeles.
- **8:14 a.m.** United Airlines Flight 175, carrying 65 people, leaves Boston for Los Angeles.
- **8:42 a.m.** United Airlines Flight 93, carrying 44 people, leaves Newark, New Jersey, International Airport for San Francisco.
- **8:46 a.m.** American Flight 11 crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center.
- **9:03 a.m.** United Flight 175 crashes into the south tower of the World Trade Center.
- **9:37 a.m.** American Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon. Trading on Wall Street is called off.
- **9:59 a.m.** Two World Trade Center—the south tower—collapses.
- **10:03 a.m.** United Flight 93 crashes 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- **10:28 a.m.** One World Trade Center—the north tower—collapses.

The United States had previously been the target of international terrorism at home and abroad but had never suffered a strike on this scale on its territory. The most analogous historical event was the Japanese attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. The last time so many people had died from an act of war on American soil was during the Civil War in the mid-19th century.

After the Al-Qaeda assault and the subsequent anthrax crisis, American culture shifted away from openness to security. The symbolism of the attack, combined with its sheer scale, drove the United States to war and dramatically changed the American security environment. Counterterrorism in the United States shifted from a predominantly law enforcement mode to a security mode. Measures included unprecedented airport and seaport security, border searches, visa scrutiny, and more intensive immigration procedures. Hundreds of people were administratively detained and questioned during a sweep of persons fitting the profile of the 19 attackers. These detentions set off a debate about the constitutionality of the methods and the fear of many
that civil liberties were in jeopardy. In October 2001, the USA PATRIOT Act was passed, granting significant authority to federal law enforcement agencies to engage in surveillance and other investigative work. On November 25, 2002, 17 federal agencies (later increased to 22) were consolidated to form a new Department of Homeland Security.

The symbolism of a damaging attack on homeland targets was momentous because it showed that the American superpower was vulnerable to small groups of determined revolutionaries. The Twin Towers had dominated the New York City skyline since 1972. They were a symbol of global trade and prosperity and the pride of the largest city in the United States. The Pentagon, of course, is a unique building that symbolizes American military power, and its location across the river from the nation’s capital showed the vulnerability of the seat of government to attack.

On May 30, 2002, a 30-foot-long steel beam, the final piece of debris from the September 11 attack, was ceremoniously removed from the “Ground Zero” site in New York City.

Chapter Perspective 2.3

Waging War in the Era of the New Terrorism

A war on terrorism was declared in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks. This is a new kind of conflict against a new form of enemy. From the outset, policy makers understood that the war would be fought unconventionally, primarily against shadowy terrorist cells and elusive leaders. It is not a war against a nation, but rather against ideas and behavior.

The mobilization of resources in this war necessitated the coordination of law enforcement, intelligence, and military assets in many nations across the globe. Covert operations by special military and intelligence units became the norm rather than the exception. Suspected terrorist cells were identified and dismantled by law enforcement agencies in many countries, and covert operatives worked secretly in other countries. Although many suspects were detained at the U.S. military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, other secret detention facilities were also established. These detentions stimulated a vigorous debate among political, judicial, and human rights experts.a

However, the war has not been fought solely in the shadows. In contrast to the deployment of small law enforcement and covert military or intelligence assets, the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq involved the commitment of large conventional military forces. In Afghanistan, reasons given for the invasion included the need to eliminate state-sponsored safe havens for Al-Qaeda and other international mujahideen (holy warriors). In Iraq, reasons given for the invasion included the need to eliminate alleged stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction and alleged links between the regime of Saddam Hussein and terrorist networks.b The U.S.-led operation in Iraq was symbolically named Operation Iraqi Freedom.
One significant challenge for waging war against extremist behavior—in this case, against terrorism—is that victory is not an easily definable condition. For example, on May 1, 2003, U.S. President George W. Bush landed on the aircraft carrier _Abraham Lincoln_ to deliver a speech in which he officially declared that the military phase of the Iraq invasion had ended and that the overthrow of the Hussein government was “one victory in a war on terror that began on September 11th, 2001, and still goes on.” Unfortunately, the declaration was premature. A widespread insurgency took root in Iraq, with the resistance employing both classic hit-and-run guerrilla tactics and terrorism. Common cause was found between remnants of the Hussein regime and non-Iraqi Islamist fighters. Thousands of Iraqis and occupation troops became casualties during the insurgency. In particular, the insurgents targeted foreign soldiers, government institutions, and so-called collaborators such as soldiers, police officers, election workers, and interpreters. Sectarian violence also spread, with Sunni and Shi’a religious extremists killing many civilians.

Is the war on terrorism being won? How can victory reasonably be measured? Assuming that the New Terrorism will continue for a time, perhaps the best measure for progress in the war is to assess the degree to which terrorist behavior is being successfully managed—in much the same way that progress against crime is assessed. As the global community continues to be challenged by violent extremists during the new era of terrorism, the definition of victory is likely to continue to be refined and redefined by nations and leaders.


b. In 2006, the Senate Intelligence Committee issued a 356-page report saying that it had discovered no evidence linking Al-Qaeda to the regime of Saddam Hussein. See Greg Miller, “Senate: Hussein Wasn’t Allied With Al Qaeda.” _The Los Angeles Times_, September 9, 2006.


**The New Terrorism**

It is clear from human history that terrorism is deeply woven into the fabric of social and political conflict. This quality has not changed, and in the modern world, states and targeted populations are challenged by the New Terrorism, which is characterized by the following:

- Loose, cell-based networks with minimal lines of command and control
- Desired acquisition of high-intensity weapons and weapons of mass destruction
- Politically vague, religious, or mystical motivations
- Asymmetrical methods that maximize casualties
- Skillful use of the Internet and manipulation of the media

The New Terrorism should be contrasted with traditional terrorism, which is typically characterized by the following:

- Clearly identifiable organizations or movements
- Use of conventional weapons, usually small arms and explosives
• Explicit grievances championing specific classes or ethno-national groups
• Relatively “surgical” selection of targets

New information technologies and the Internet create unprecedented opportunities for terrorist groups, and violent extremists have become adept at bringing their wars into the homes of literally hundreds of millions of people. Those who specialize in suicide bombings, car bombs, or mass-casualty attacks correctly calculate that carefully selected targets will attract the attention of a global audience. Thus, cycles of violence not only disrupt normal routines, but they also produce long periods of global awareness. Such cycles can be devastating. For example, during the winter and spring of 2005, Iraqi suicide bombings increased markedly in intensity and frequency, from 69 in April 2005 (a record rate at that time) to 90 in May. These attacks resulted in many casualties, including hundreds of deaths, and greatly outpaced the previous cycle of car bombings by more than two to one.

All of these threats offer new challenges for policy makers about how to respond to the behavior of terrorist states, groups, and individuals. The war on terrorism, launched in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, seemed to herald a new resolve to end terrorism. This has proved to be a difficult task. The war has been fought on many levels, as exemplified by the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and the disruption of terrorist cells on several continents. There have been serious terrorist strikes such as those in Madrid, Spain; Bali, Indonesia; London, England; and Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt. In addition, differences arose within the post-September 11 alliance, creating significant strains. It is clear that the war will be a long-term prospect, likely with many unanticipated events.

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced readers to some of the historical and modern attributes of terrorism, with a central theme that terrorism is deeply rooted in the human experience. The impact of extremist ideas on human behavior should not be underestimated because certain historical examples of political violence in some ways parallel modern terrorism.

The relationship between extremist ideas and terrorist events was discussed as a nexus, whereby terrorism is the violent manifestation of extremist beliefs. Ideologies are the belief systems at the root of political violence.

Whether terrorist acts are *mala in se* or *mala prohibita* is often relative. Depending on one's perspective, gray areas may challenge us to be objective about the true nature of political violence. Most, if not all, nations promote an ideological doctrine to legitimize the power of the state and to convince the people that their systems of belief are worthy of loyalty, sacrifice, and (when necessary) violent defense. Conversely, when a group of people perceives that an alternative ideology or condition should be promoted, revolutionary violence may occur against the defenders of the established rival order. In neither case would those who commit acts of political violence consider themselves unjustified in their actions or label themselves as terrorists.
Discussion Box: Total War

This chapter’s Discussion Box is intended to stimulate critical debate about the legitimacy of using extreme force against civilian populations.

**Total war** is “warfare that uses all possible means of attack, military, scientific, and psychological, against both enemy troops and civilians.” It was the prevailing military doctrine applied by combatant nations during the Second World War.

Allied and Axis military planners specifically targeted civilian populations. In the cases of German and Japanese strategists, the war was fought as much against indigenous populations as against opposing armies. The massacres and genocide directed against civilian populations at Auschwitz, Dachau, Warsaw, Lidice, and Nanking and countless other atrocities are a dark legacy of the 20th century.

*The estimated number of civilians killed during the war is staggering:*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>20,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>319,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>391,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>391,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>953,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>7,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important doctrine of the air war on all sides was to bomb civilian populations, so the cities of Rotterdam, Coventry, London, Berlin, Dresden, and Tokyo were deliberately attacked. It is estimated that the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed, respectively, 70,000 and 35,000 people.

**Discussion Questions:**

- Are deliberate attacks against civilians legitimate acts of war?
- Were deliberate attacks on civilians during the Second World War acts of terrorism?
- If these attacks were acts of terrorism, were some attacks justifiable acts of terrorism?
- Is there such a thing as justifiable terrorism? Is terrorism *malum in se* or *malum prohibitum*?
- Is the practice of total war by individuals or small and poorly armed groups different from its practice by nations and standing armies? How so or how not?

*(Continued)*
Key Terms and Concepts

The following topics were discussed in this chapter and can be found in the Glossary:

- Anarchism
- Augustin
- Bakunin, Mikhail
- Burke, Edmund
- Classical ideological continuum
- Conservatism
- Crucifixion
- Dictatorship of the proletariat
- Engels, Friedrich
- Ensslin, Gudrun
- Far left
- Far right
- Fascism
- Franco, Francisco
- Fringe left
- Fringe right
- Hague Conventions
- Heinzen, Karl
- Hitler, Adolph
- Ho Chi Minh
- Ideologies
- Jus ad bellum
- Jus in bello
- Just war doctrine
- Kaczynski, Theodore “Ted” (the Unabomber)
- Komiteh
- Kropotkin, Petr
- Left, center, right
- Luddites
- Mala in se
- Mala prohibita
- Manifesto of the Communist Party
- Manipulation of the media
- Marx, Karl
- Means of production
- Mussolini, Benito
- Nechayev, Sergei
- New Terrorism
- Operation Iraqi Freedom
- People’s Will (Narodnaya Volya)
- Propaganda by the deed
- “Property is theft!”
- Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph
- Regicide
- Reign of Terror (régime de la terreur)
- Revolutionary Tribunal
- Sicarii
- Struggle meetings
- Total war
- Tyrannicide
- Vanguard strategy
- Zealots

Terrorism on the Web

Log on to the Web-based student study site at www.sagepub.com/martiness3e for additional Web sources and study resources.
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Recommended Readings

The following publications provide introductions to terrorism and ideological perspectives.


Web Exercise

Using this chapter’s recommended Web sites, conduct an online investigation of organizations that monitor extremist sentiment and terrorist behavior. Compare and contrast these organizations.

1. What are the primary agendas of these organizations?
2. How would you describe the differences between research, government, and social activist organizations?
3. In your opinion, are any of these organizations more comprehensive than other organizations? Less comprehensive?

For an online search of research and monitoring organizations, readers should activate the search engine on their Web browser and enter the following keywords:

“Terrorism research”

“Human rights organizations”