

Policing Matters >>>

Policing Terrorism

Christopher Blake
Barrie Sheldon
Rachael Strzelecki
Peter Williams

Series editors
P A J Waddington
Martin Wright



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1 Introduction to concepts of terrorism

Barrie Sheldon

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter you should be able to:

- understand some of the historical perspectives of terrorism;
- provide some definitions relating to extremism and terrorism;
- analyse some of the sources and causes of terrorism;
- understand terrorist ideology and motivation;
- appreciate some of the implications of the move from the old to the new terrorism.

About this book

Each chapter provides a number of tasks that help to develop your knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and also give you ideas to develop themes for academic assignments. Access to the internet will be required for completion of tasks and a number of case studies are provided to link theory with practice.

This book provides you with a basic overview of terrorism and counter-terrorism measures with a focus on the United Kingdom (UK) and is an excellent resource for any student undertaking introductory terrorism modules at academic levels 4, 5 and 6. The internet provides a wide range of quality terrorism resources for students and it is recommended that some time is spent getting to know what is available.

PRACTICAL TASK

Go to the 'Useful websites' section at the end of this chapter, where you will find a list of some of the terrorism websites that are available. Access the websites and find out what is available to you, looking particularly for links that provide access to reports and academic publications.

Many of the websites are based within the United States of America (USA) but will be very relevant to terrorism studies. The audacious attack by al-Qaeda on the twin towers of New York on 11 September 2001, which resulted in over 3,000 people losing their lives, saw the USA take the lead role in the current global war against terrorism.

We will direct every resource at our command – every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war to the destruction and to the defeat of the global terror network.

(George W Bush, 2001)

Historical perspective

The problem of terrorism is not a new phenomenon and has been witnessed on a global basis throughout history, from antiquity, through the middle ages and onwards to the twenty-first century. Historical accounts of terrorism can be found in most countries and, when these are examined, there is evidence of many different causes of terrorism; issues that motivate terrorists have existed over the entire span of human history. Many of today's terrorists are still inspired by historical events and it is the connection between past and present that makes the study of the history of terrorism important in understanding modern-day terrorism (Mahan and Griset, 2008).

Early origins of terrorism

Examples of terrorist activity can be traced back well before the first century; however, we will start by examining three early renowned terrorist organisations: the Zealots, the Assassins and the Thuggees.

Zealots

The Zealots of Judea, also known as the 'Sicarii' or 'dagger men', were opposed to the Roman occupation and took part in a revolt that lasted nearly 100 years from the time Herod became king in 37 BC. They were members of an organisation operating underground who had strong religious convictions and believed that they could not remain faithful to the true nature of Judaism while living as Roman subjects. The group carried out assassination attacks targeting Roman occupation forces and Jews who supported and collaborated with the Romans. As the Zealot revolt became more open they were finally trapped and members of the group committed mass suicide in Masada, Judea, in 74 AD.

Assassins

The Assassins of Persia (Iran) and Syria (1090–1275) were a breakaway group of Shi'ites called the 'Nizari Isma'ili' who used the tactic of assassination to target enemy leaders. They were one of the first groups to make systematic use of murder as a political weapon. Their ambition was to overthrow the existing Sunni order in Islam and to replace it with their own, to purify Islam. Because they had limited numbers, restricting the viability of open combat, they resorted to sending lone assassins to kill opposition leaders and then

waited with their victim to be killed or captured (an act of martyrdom). This action caused considerable fear within the enemy population.

Thuggees

The Thuggees were an Indian secret society believed to have been responsible for killing tens of thousands of people over a number of centuries. It is not known exactly when they first appeared, but there is evidence they existed in the seventh century and were known to be very active in the thirteenth century. The Thuggees had deeply entrenched religious convictions and carried out their killings as a sacrifice to the goddess 'Kali', the Hindu goddess of creation, preservation and destruction. In this particular case the main audience for the terrorists was the goddess rather than the general public. Their activities and methods of killing were deemed to be acts of terrorism by going beyond the accepted norms that regulate violence.

Their deceit, unusual weapon (a noose), and practice of dismembering corpses (thereby preventing cremation or proper burial) made Thug violence outrageous by Hindu standards or by those of any other culture.

(Mahan and Griset, 2008, p49)

REFLECTIVE TASK

Find out more about the Zealots and consider why this group were considered to be a terrorist organisation. The link www.asiantribune.com/?q=node/12854 will take you to an article written by Professor Fernando of the University of Columbo titled 'The Menace of Terrorism and Its Early Origins'. Read the article and then consider how the reasoning for defining the Zealots as terrorists could be applied to both the Assassins and Thuggees (further research may be required to find out more about the two groups).

Seventeenth to nineteenth centuries

Throughout this period there were many examples of global terrorist activity and the following case studies highlight some key historical events that assist with the understanding of terrorism:

- Guy Fawkes, 1605;
- the French Revolution, 1793;
- the People's Will (Narodnaya Volya), 1879.

Guy Fawkes

During the reign of Henry VIII (King of England 1509–47), the King asked the Pope to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon after she had failed to provide him with a male child. His intention was to marry Anne Boleyn, but the Pope refused his request, so Henry declared himself head of the Church of England and separated from the Catholic Church. This was followed by a period of action directed against the Catholic Church, including the dissolution of monasteries, destruction of churches and seizure of lands. Catholics who

failed to recognise the king as supreme head of the Church were repressed and persecuted. The persecution continued when Elizabeth I took the throne in 1558, and when she was succeeded by James 1 in 1603 it was hoped that he would be more tolerant as his mother was a Catholic; however, he continued to persecute the Catholics.

A small group of Catholic men led by Robert Catesby decided that the use of violence was the only answer and they planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament when the King and other officials would be present during its opening on 5 November 1605. They managed to smuggle explosives into the building but, following a tip-off, Guy Fawkes was captured while guarding the explosives. The rest of the group were soon captured and put to death for treason. Today these conspirators would be considered as extremists or terrorists.

The French Revolution

This period of revolution within France was considered as a prelude to modern terrorism and was referred to by the British statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke (1729–97) as the *régime de la terreur*, translated as the 'Reign of Terror' (Martin, 2009).

The revolution came about following a period of recession, a deteriorating economy and imposition of taxation. France was a feudal state with an absolutist monarch (King Louis XVI) and there was much disquiet about the inequalities of social life. Most people lived in poor conditions, had to work hard and suffered deprivation, while a minority enjoyed excessive riches and a life of luxury. On 14 July 1789 the Bastille prison in Paris was stormed by rioters supported by a group of radical revolutionaries who murdered the guards and later took control of government. The King was later tried and executed in January 1793, following which a revolutionary tribunal led by Maximilien de Robespierre began the reign of terror. Thousands of people opposed to the new dictatorship were arrested, sometimes on the flimsiest of evidence, tried by the tribunal and beheaded by guillotine.

This is a good example of state terrorism, which is explored further in the next chapter. The revolutionaries who had taken control of a mainly Jacobin-dominated government adopted tactics of terror to achieve the goals of their revolutionary ideology. The ideology was related to justice, freedom and equality; however, there was a smaller group of Jacobin socialites who supported complete state control and believed that equality should be enforced by the state (O'Carroll, 1994).

The People's Will: Narodnaya Volya

This group was founded in 1879 as a protest against the tsarist regime in Russia. In 1861 Tsar Alexander II abolished serfdom. The serfs expected to acquire new land and also be given land that they had previously tended, but instead wealthy landowners would only provide the land at excessive prices. This resulted in the Tsar being publically criticised for his enslavement of the lower classes.

In 1876 a revolutionary society, 'Land and Liberty' (Zemlya Volya), was founded. Its membership consisted of many university students who had developed Marxist views and who championed the rights of the people, particularly the peasant classes. In 1879 the group was split into two following a series of arrests and trials. One of these groups was Narodnaya Volya, whose members saw terrorism as an important tactic to achieve their

political objectives. The group carefully selected their targets and used tactics of shooting, knifing and bombing directed against government officials. In 1881 Tsar Alexander II was assassinated by a Narodnaya Volya bomb, following which members of the group were quickly arrested and hanged, resulting in the group's demise. The impact of the group was not forgotten and it provided some stimulus for the later Bolshevik Revolution of 1907, which brought about the communist era in Russia (Mahan and Griset, 2008).

Colonialism

REFLECTIVE TASK

The following provides a definition of colonialism:

The colonial system of political government or extension of territory, by which one nation exerts political control over another nation, territory, or people, maintaining the colony in a state of dependence, its inhabitants not having the same full rights as those of the colonial power. The controlling power is typically extended thus by military force or the threat of force.

(Webster's Dictionary, 1913)

Consider the ramifications of colonialism and how it may contribute to terrorist activity.

Colonialism has influenced the development of terrorism in many corners of the globe and is a political process that, according to Smith (2005), can:

- usurp political control;
- ignore ethnic boundaries;
- strip away economic resources;
- alienate the population;
- undermine cultural hegemony.

These factors invariably produce an emotionally charged environment that can lead to the development of terrorism in the name of nationalism or ethnic causes (Smith, 2005).

There are many historical examples of terrorist uprisings linked directly to colonialism, and the two terrorist groups considered below demonstrate such links.

Hindustan Socialist Republican Association

During the nineteenth century Britain took political control of India and it wasn't until 1947 that India achieved independence from British rule. During this time many Indians were opposed to British rule and a group led by Mahatma Gandhi campaigned to end it. Gandhi did not believe in violence and rejected terrorism; however, another group known as the Hindustan Republican Army (HRA), inspired by the Bolsheviks' role in the Russian Revolution during 1917, supported the idea of terrorism. Initially their aim was to organise an armed revolution to end colonial rule and replace it with a Federal Republic of the

United States of India. In 1928, following a speech given by Bhagat Singh, leader of one the groups, the aims of the group were stated as creating an India based on the socialist ideals of Lenin and Marx, and the group's name changed to the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).

The group was responsible for a number of terrorist attacks, including the looting of a train in Kakori carrying Government money (1925), the shooting of two police officers in Lahore (1928) and the bombing of the Government's Central Assembly in Delhi (1929). It is believed that the HSRA ceased as an organisation following the death of certain leaders and activists, but it provided the inspiration for future revolutionary groups:

Bhagat Singh thus symbolised all that was best in our struggle for national liberation and that is why he is still a mighty source of inspiration for the present generations – as he was for the earlier ones.

(Surjeet, 2006)

REFLECTIVE TASK

Go to the following website link and read through the 1929 manifesto of the HSRA: www.shahidbhagatsingh.org/index.asp?link=hindustan_socialist.

- What does the manifesto say about the use of violence and its legitimacy in the struggle against the British rulers?
- Why do you think that the HSRA advocates the use of terrorism as being the most effective means of retaliation against British rule?

Make a list of the arguments put forward to support the use of terrorism and then consider them further when the causes of terrorism are explored.

Basque Fatherland and Liberty

Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) is a left-wing terrorist group whose primary objective is to create an independent Basque state in northern Spain and south-west France based on Marxist principles. The group emerged in 1959 to oppose the dictator General Franco (Spain's head of state 1936–69), who was suppressing the Basque language and culture. Other political groups such as the Basque Nationalist Party were renounced by ETA as being collaborators with the Spanish Government and, by the 1960s, ETA had developed into a revolutionary group adopting terrorist tactics to achieve their goals. They targeted and killed Government officials using both firearms and bombs, and more recently have targeted and bombed tourist areas within Spain.

ETA has attempted to enter the political process through the 'Batasuna' political party, but in 2003 the Spanish Supreme Court banned the party, which was considered as the political arm of ETA. More recent attempts by the Government to negotiate with ETA have failed.

These examples demonstrate the power of a large state exerting political control over a territory and its people, where certain members of the population have become dis-

affected and see the only means of changing the political process as being through violence. In contrast with ETA, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and its political wing 'Sinn Fein' have now become an integral part of government in Ireland.

REFLECTIVE TASK

Does terrorism work? The IRA has been able to enter the political process and successfully change the face of politics in Northern Ireland, yet ETA has failed legitimately to become part of government and influence policy. Why do you think this is?

Academics generally purport that terrorism does not work. Carr (2002) suggests that the strategy of terror is a spectacularly failed one; however, Gould and Klor (2010) argue that terror attacks carried out by Palestinian terrorist factions between 1988 and 2006 have moved the Israeli electorate towards a more accommodating stance regarding their political objectives. The effectiveness of terrorism as a strategy is discussed further in Chapter 3.

The modern era

Within the modern era a new type of terrorism has emerged. The events of 9/11 refocused thinking on counter-terrorism strategy and the world was waking up to a new-found realisation that certain terrorists are intent on causing mass destruction.

The traditional type of terrorism throughout much of history has seen clearly identifiable groups with explicit grievances who carefully select their targets and use conventional weapons such as firearms and explosives. Some of the examples provided above demonstrate this, for example the HSRA and ETA. In contrast, the new terrorism is a worrying development with very loosely based networks, vague, religious or mystical motives and the use of asymmetrical methods to maximise casualties. The new terrorists seek weapons of mass destruction and are adept at using modern technology such as the internet to serve their purpose and to manipulate the media to obtain maximum publicity (Martin, 2009).

Al-Qaeda provides a good example of the new type of terrorism. It has no hierarchical structure but a very loose global network that supports the group's religious ideology based on eradicating Western influences from the Muslim world and imposing a strict and exclusive form of government based on Sunni Islam. Al-Qaeda has been linked to other terrorist organisations, groups and individuals worldwide:

the main threat no longer comes from the organisation called Al Qaeda, but from the bottom up – from radicalized individuals and groups who meet and plot in their neighbourhoods and on the Internet.

(Sciolini and Schmitt, 2008, p1)

The attack on the World Trade Center in New York resulted in mass casualties, using commercial jet airlines as unconventional and unique weapons. There have been similar attempts since and those groups aligned to the new terrorism will not shy away from

utilising weapons of mass destruction. These terrorists are ruthless in seeking maximum publicity and impact, and will target populations indiscriminately, hoping to cause mass casualties. The new terrorism brings with it new challenges for world security and counter-terrorism has become a major international issue.

PRACTICAL TASK

Draw a simple table to show the differences between the new and traditional types of terrorism. To assist with this task consider two groups, such as al-Qaeda and the Provisional IRA, and explore their structures, targets and tactics, which will highlight a number of differences.

REFLECTIVE TASK

The attack on the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001 was considered as 'The Dawn of a New Era' (Martin, 2009). Why and how has this event changed the terrorism landscape?

Defining terrorism

The word 'terrorism' became more widely used following its association with the *régime de la terreur* in 1793 (see page 4). A good starting point for defining terrorism is to examine some dictionary definitions.

PRACTICAL TASK

Using both academic texts and the internet, explore the range of definitions that are provided for terrorism.

During your research you will discover that there are many different definitions of terrorism and this makes understanding the term difficult. So why is there a need to define terrorism? A definition of terrorism is necessary to assist with the development of effective counter-terrorism strategies, and to provide a basis in law, to enable the prevention and disruption of terrorist activity and the prosecution of terrorists.

In November 2005 Lord Carlile of Berriew, QC was tasked by the UK Government to review the definition of terrorism. He started by stating that there was no universally accepted definition of terrorism and that it continues to be the subject of much debate within the international community (Carlile, 2007).

Within the UK a definition for terrorism is provided by section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2000. The definition has not been simply constructed but carefully drafted to ensure that UK law is fit for purpose to tackle the terrorist threat effectively. Table 1.1 outlines elements of the UK definition.

Table 1.1 Definitions of terrorism

Terrorism means the use of, or threats of, action . . .

What? (action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serious violence against a person • serious damage to property • endangering another person's life • creating a serious health and safety risk to public • seriously interfering with or disrupting an electronic system.
Why? (purpose)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to influence government or international government organisation, or to intimidate the public • to advance a political, religious or ideological cause.
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the UK and anywhere else in the world.

Source: Adapted from section 1, Terrorism Act 2000, as amended by section 34(a) Terrorism Act 2006

By comparison, a leading expert in the field of terrorism defines it as *The deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change* (Hoffman, 2006, p40). Another expert highlights the fact that the USA has a range of different definitions across government agencies, but that there is evidence of commonality, including *premeditation, unlawfulness, groups or agents, force or violence, human or property targets, intimidation, and a political objective* (Martin, 2009, p57).

PRACTICAL TASK

Complete some further research and study a range of definitions of terrorism used by other governments and terrorism experts. Identify commonalities of definition and attempt to produce a definition of your own.

Considering terrorism from different perspectives can also present difficulties in defining it. For example, who decides that a person or a group are terrorists? Consider the phrase 'One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter.' People and groups often see their actions of violence as justified and part of a legitimate campaign to achieve freedom, fairness and justice.

CASE STUDY

Nelson Mandela

The National Party in South Africa promoted a scheme of 'apartheid' – a policy of racial segregation within society. The African National Congress (ANC) actively opposed the policy and embarked on a campaign of violence, sabotaging both Government and military targets. The ANC was led by Nelson Mandela, who was convicted of sabotage in

CASE STUDY *continued*

1961 and jailed for 27 years. The ANC was considered to be a terrorist group, but following democratic elections in 1994 the ANC took control of government. Mandela was released from prison and in May 1990 he became the President of the Republic of South Africa.

CASE STUDY

Hamas

Hamas (Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyya) is a Middle Eastern Islamic terrorist organisation operating primarily in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in Israel. Their aim is to replace the Jewish state of Israel with an Islamic Palestinian State, bridging two terrorist trends of the Palestinian fight against Israel and the wider struggle of establishing Islamic governments (James et al., 2003).

Hamas believes that it must resist Israel through armed insurrection known as 'jihad' (holy war). However, it also recognises the need to build a working relationship and avoid conflict with the Palestinian authorities. On 26 January 2006 Hamas won a landslide victory in the Palestinian elections – 76 of 132 seats on the Palestinian Legislative Council – and Ismail Haniyeh was appointed Prime Minister. He is considered to be a moderate and was willing to engage in peace talks; however, following the election victory, both the USA and the European Union (EU) threatened to cut funding to the Palestinian Authority unless it renounced violence and recognised the state of Israel. This was clearly unacceptable to Hamas and they argued that Palestinians were entitled to continue to seek independence but would willingly talk with international mediators to resolve the conflict.

Our government will spare no effort to reach a just peace in the region, putting an end to the occupation and restoring our rights.

(Haniyeh, 2006)

In this particular case study we have a group who have achieved political legitimacy but are still considered to be terrorists because of the violent tactics they adopt to achieve their aims.

REFLECTIVE TASK

Find out more about Hamas and consider whether you believe its members to be freedom fighters or terrorists. 'Al-Qassam', the military arm of Hamas, has a website: www.qassam.ps/index.html – consider whether the information provided here supports the

REFLECTIVE TASK continued

premise that Hamas members are freedom fighters rather than terrorists. In contrast, consider the position of Israel and ask whether it is a victim or an aggressor. To help with this, complete a Google search using the parameter 'Israel a victim or an aggressor'.

Extremism and terrorism

In understanding the term 'terrorism' it is also important to consider the role of extremism. Extremism can be associated with a group or a person who has radical beliefs, political views and opinions, which are not the norms of society. It is quite often a precursor to terrorism but only manifests itself as terrorism when violence is used. An extremist may be active in promoting his or her beliefs through peaceful protest, propaganda or causing disruption or damage, but these acts in themselves do not necessarily constitute acts of terrorism.

Consider the case of Islamic fundamentalist clerics who preach against the evil infidels of the West and promote a jihad (holy war) to expel crusaders (Jews, Christians and Westerners) and to purify their homelands with the aim of establishing an Islamic government. The clerics' interpretation of the Qur'an (Islamic holy book) is used to justify their political views and to encourage their more militant followers to engage in violence with promises of martyrdom and salvation. The Qur'an outlines two types of jihad – a greater jihad, which is a personal struggle to find faith and God within each person, and a lesser jihad, which relates to an external struggle against forces of evil and non-believers. It does not permit war, the killing of people or suicide, but some extremist clerics have distorted the information provided by the Qur'an to support their own motives (Mattil, no date). Islamic extremism has been recognised as a major global problem and there is evidence of widespread radicalisation of individuals encouraged to commit acts of terrorism, such as the 7 July 2005 bombings in London. The problem of radicalisation by extremists needs to be tackled and is currently a major tenet of the UK counter-terrorism strategy (see Chapter 9).

Causes of terrorism

PRACTICAL TASK

Before reading this section of the chapter, write down a list of things that you believe may contribute to individuals, groups and states committing acts of terrorism.

You may have produced a long list of potential causes of terrorism, but what does research tell us? There is no simple explanation, but it is important that we understand the driving forces (ideology and motivation) behind terrorism so that appropriate action can

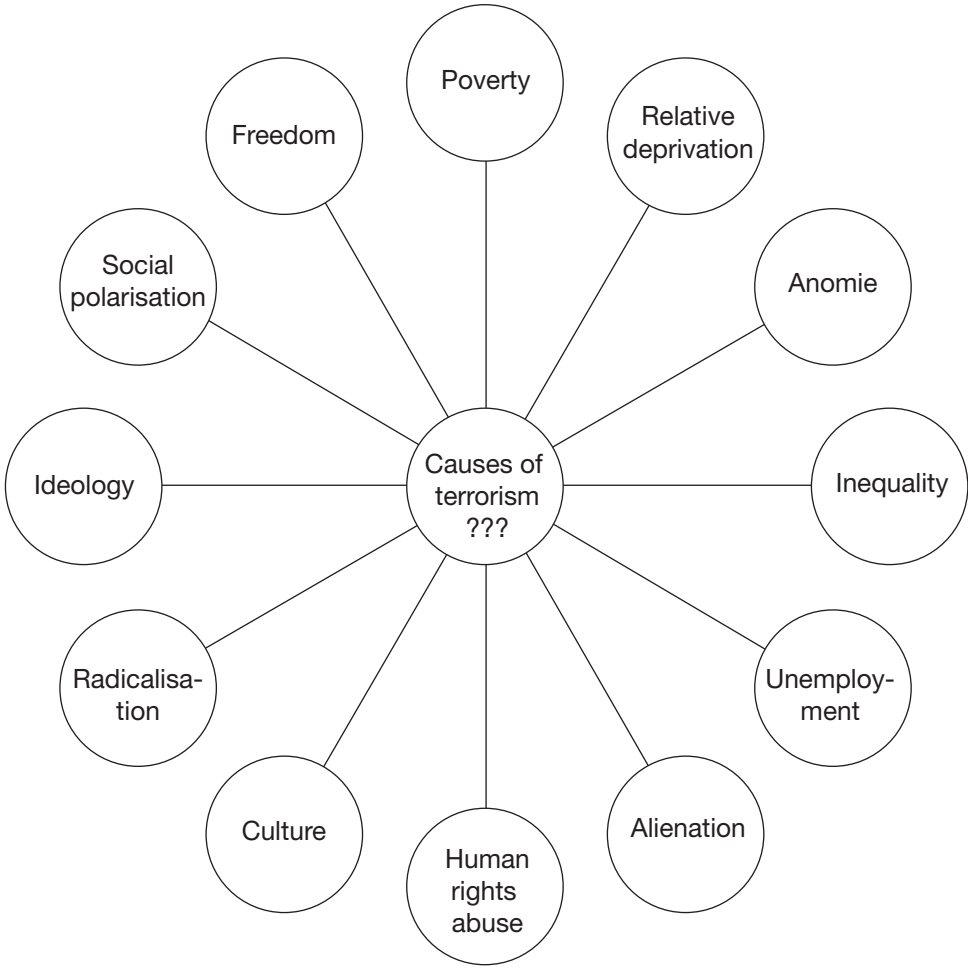


Figure 1.1 Some potential causes of terrorism

be taken to reduce and prevent it. Figure 1.1 shows some potential causes of terrorism, but it is important to highlight that defining and identifying the causes and motivations for terrorism are not simple or straightforward.

Causes can be examined from an individual, group and state perspective. Various forms of terrorism have different ideologies and motivations, and the causes will be diverse and many. It is not possible to find a single explanation for terrorism and models that are produced consider many factors, such as political history, government policy, cultural tensions, ideological and economic trends, individual idiosyncrasies and many other variables (Martin, 2009).

Extremist ideology

Ideology can be defined as a body of ideas reflecting social needs and aspirations of an individual, group, class or culture. It is a set of doctrines or beliefs that form the basis of

political, economic or other systems (Free Dictionary, 2010); for example, anarchism, Marxism and fascism are political ideologies.

Extremist ideology can motivate individuals to become terrorists and influence communities to sympathise with terrorists. Terrorism occurs when opportunity, motivation and capability are present, and ideology is one of a number of factors that can motivate a person to commit terrorism (Hassan, 2006). The nature and impact of the extremist ideology is an important consideration to make when attempting to understand the causes of terrorism.

Table 1.2 shows some examples of terrorist goals and objectives that give us clues to the groups' ideologies and motivation.

Having established the ideology and motivation of a terrorist group, what is it that drives an individual or group member to carry out acts of terrorism?

Table 1.2 Examples of terrorist goals and objectives

Hezbollah (Lebanon)	Radical Islamic group – liberation of Jerusalem, destruction of Israel and establishment of Islamic state in Lebanon.
Armed Islamic Group (Algeria)	Radical Islamic group – overthrow of secular government, replacing it with a fundamentalist state based on Islamic law.
Kahane Chai (Kach) (Israel)	Radical Jewish group – restoring biblical state of Israel, by annexing the West Bank and Gaza and parts of Jordan. Expelling all Arabs and introducing strict implementation of Jewish law.
Real Irish Republican Army (Northern Ireland)	Expelling British troops from Northern Ireland and unifying Ireland.
Aum Shinrikyo (Japan)	Control of Japan and the world to create a global utopian society.
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)	Establishing a Marxist state in Colombia.

Source: Adapted from Cronin (2004)

Individual motivations

Academics provide various models and explanations for individual terrorist motivation. For example, Miller (2006, cited in Mahan and Griset, 2008, p10) provides a three-stage process.

1. *Unacceptable conditions:* **(It's not right).**
2. *Resentment and feeling of injustice:* **(It's not fair).**
3. *Cause of the injustice is personified:* **(It's your fault).**

In contrast, Martin (2009, p65) provides a further three explanations of what motivates an individual to commit terrorism.

1. *Considers goals and options and makes a cost benefit analysis (rational).*
2. *Personal dissatisfaction with life and accomplishments (psychological).*
3. *Perception of ‘outsiders’ and their threat to ethnic group survival (cultural origins).*

Further, can an individual terrorist be identified through personal traits and where is a terrorist most likely to come from? Study the opposites in Table 1.3, which summarises research findings (not exhaustive) of terrorist profiles and where terrorism occurs.

Table 1.3 Terrorist profiles

Deprived and uneducated people	Affluent and well-educated people
High proportion of young males	Both sexes and all ages
Rich countries	Poor countries
Modern industrialised world	Low-development areas
During a process of transition and development	Prior to, or after, such a process
Former colonial state	Independent state
Established democracy	Less democratic regime

Source: Adapted from Lia and Skjolberg (2004, p8)

Terrorist profiles

In view of the atrocities that terrorists commit, is it reasonable to suggest that a terrorist has some sort of mental deficiency or has a deviant character? The psychopathy of a terrorist has been studied by many academics and there is little evidence to support the supposition made. Crenshaw (1981, p390) remarked:

Terrorists do not show any striking psychopathy; on the contrary the most outstanding characteristics of terrorists seem to be their normality.

PRACTICAL TASK

The four 7/7 bombers – Khan, Tanweer, Lindsay and Hussain – were young men who led what appeared to be unremarkable lives. Find out more about them – how did they become terrorists, and what were their personality and character traits? Consider whether you (on the evidence available) would describe them as ordinary people, or were certain traits evident that gave clues to their destiny?

Profiles of the four bombers can be found online at:

- http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/uk/05/london_blasts/investigation/html/bombers.stm
- www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/794.