CANSOFCOM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

FROM ASSASSINS TO AL-QAEDA

UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO RELIGIOUS TERRORISM

KEVIN E. KLEIN

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce the most recent monograph produced by the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) Professional Development Centre (PDC). This is the twelfth volume and, as the editor of the series, I feel confident that we are continuing to expand the growing body of literature on Special Operations Forces (SOF) in general and Canadian Special Operations Forces (CANSOF) in particular. This growth is part of our commitment to progress and serves to nurture our vision of creating a series that provides quality articles that address topics pertinent to CANSOFCOM personnel and which are also of general interest to a wider audience, including the wider military community, military and civilian decision-makers, international allies, as well as the Canadian public.

From Assassins To Al-Qaeda: Understanding and Responding to Religious Terrorism, sheds light on a topic that is of great relevance to CANSOF. In light of the recent Boston Marathon bombing and the foiled Canadian VIA Rail bomb plot, it is clear that religious extremism remains a potent threat to Canadian, and indeed Western, society. As such, a deeper understanding of religious terrorism is of value to all.

With this in mind, I can easily say that *From Assassins To Al-Qaeda* is timely and topical monograph that explores the roots of religious terrorism. Moreover, Kevin Klein is aptly positioned to discuss the subject as he is a former military chaplain, a current intelligence officer and a PhD student at the University of Calgary. Overall, this volume should be of great interest to the CANSOF community.

As always, we hope this publication is both informative and sparks discussion and reflection. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have comments or topics that you would like to see addressed as part of the CANSOFCOM PDC monograph series.

Dr. Emily Spencer
Director Research and Education / Monograph Series Editor
CANSOFCOM Professional Development Centre

FROM ASSASSINS TO AL-QAEDA: UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO RELIGIOUS TERRORISM

The enemy must not know where I intend to give battle, he must prepare in a great many places. If he prepares to the front, his rear will be weak, and if to the rear, his front will be fragile. If he prepares to the left, his right will be vulnerable and if to the right, there will be few on his left. And when he prepares everywhere, he will be weak everywhere.[1]

Sun Tzu

More than two thousand years ago, the Chinese strategist Sun Tzu wrote in *The Art of War* about the significance of surprise attack. The emergence of modern religious terrorism since the 1980s has been a formidable "surprise attack" on global society that shows no indication of abating. The exclusive nature of religious belief, the militaristic language of religious faith, the spread of globalization, the rise of religious actors in the political and military realm, and the transnational nature of radical politicized religion are a reality that has added to the surprising rise of religiously motivated violence and terror.

According to the recently released book *God`s Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics*, written by political scientists from Harvard, Georgetown, and Notre Dame universities, over one-third of civil wars today are religiously motivated and the number of

religious acts of violence, which are more deadly and savage than non-religious violent acts, are on the rise.[2] Subsequently, religious traditions and communities of faith have garnered a new, hitherto, unexpected importance over the last 30 years. The Iranian revolution, the assassination of Indira Ghandi, Al-Qaeda, *Black Hawk Down*, Mali, *9/11*, GWOT (Global War on Terror), the Arab Spring, and *Zero Dark 30* have all become part of the political and popular culture that is tied to religious radicalization.

Canada has not remained unscathed by this trend. The bombing of Air India flight 182 in 1985 saw the deaths of 329 people, 268 of whom were Canadians in a terrorist attack connected to the political and religious aspirations for a Sikh homeland.[3] Recently, questions of religious terrorism have re-emerged with the news that a Canadian citizen was involved in a Hezbollah suicide-bombing that led to the deaths of six Israelis in Bulgaria[4] and the fact that two Canadians were involved in the recent deadly hostage-taking at an Algerian oil-processing plant organized and led by Al-Qaeda operative Mokhtar Belmokhtar in January 2013.[5]

These events reflect a general pattern in global terrorism over the past few decades: radical religious terrorists have become extremely dangerous to citizens globally and pose an existential threat to some governments. It is not the only threat as nationalism, as political ideology, remains a potent catalyst for terrorist behaviour. However, terrorism committed in the name and context of religion appears to have become a common characteristic of the deadliest and most pernicious threats.

An early warning of this religious danger came from scholar and diplomat Samuel Huntington in 1993 with the publication of his seminal article in *Foreign Affairs*. In "The Clash of Civilizations," Huntington argued that the great conflicts of the 21st century would be fought between civilizations over cultural differences

such as religion. Huntington divided the world into eight civilizations (Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Slavic, Orthodox, Latin American, and African) and predicted that future wars would be fought along the fault lines between these groups.[6] Huntington's article gained widespread attention and represented a paradigm shift in the study of international relations where dominant Realist schools discounted the importance of culture and religion as causes of conflict.

Since Huntington's article, numerous scholars have posited similar theories that parallel the recent and perplexing rise of religiously motivated violence. Adding to this enigma is the fact that while most religious communities are never violent, applying their cooperative capacity to providing spiritual services and mutual aid, when they turn to violence they are exceptionally lethal, willing to use deadlier means of destruction, viewing their struggle in eschatological or "cosmic war" terms of good and evil. Consequently, governments must be concerned with religious terrorism for two strategic reasons. First, the use of increasingly destructive weapons has pushed, and will continue to push, such attacks past the "nuisance" level; and second, the growing likelihood that religious terrorism will lead to future systemic war.

This monograph will demonstrate that religious terrorism is indeed different from secular terrorism. Religion is not a root cause of terrorism because religion does not always lead to extremist violence. However, religion serves as a significant lens through which extremist groups view geopolitical, social, and economic issues. This radical theological lens makes movements and terrorist groups significantly more robust and resilient to counter-terrorism strategies. Therefore, religious terrorists must be understood differently and traditional approaches to combating terrorism must be broadened to account for the unique variables that religion brings to the discourse.

To examine this phenomena *From Assassins To Al-Qaeda* utilizes a qualitative methodology, namely an interest in the presence or absence of specific characteristics or specific configurations of characteristics analyzed by means of specific comparisons to multiple cases,[7] augmented with historical, philosophical, sociological, and policy evidence to address the question at hand. This approach has been adopted as it fits well in situations where theories are underdeveloped and concepts are vague, such as in the cases of religion and terrorism. Furthermore, a qualitative approach lies between the extremes of analyzing a single case with one explanatory variable and an attempt to cover all existing cases with as many variables as possible. As such, it is the most appropriate tool to use when considering theoretical concepts with empirical enquiry to answer questions that are historically or culturally significant but contain only a small number of examples. In the case of this monograph, historical occurrences of religious terrorism are investigated by analyzing the Crusaders, the Assassins, the Zealots, and the Thugs to glean valuable insights into their motivations and demises. A cross-section of modern terrorist groups will also be studied, notably the Christian Identity Movement, Aum Shinrikyo, the Lord's Resistance Army, and Al-Qaeda.

From Assassins To Al-Qaeda is structured in three parts. Initially, problem, methodology, and definitions are examined to create a baseline understanding. The terms "terrorism," "religion," "religious terrorism," and "extremism" are delineated. The next part builds on this foundation by providing a deeper understanding of religious terrorism by analyzing historic and contemporary examples of religious terrorism, studying the reasons for the rise in religious terrorism, examining the debate over religious terrorism, as well as how the sociology of religion is used to enhance terror. The final component will address the need for a unique response to religious terrorism by exploring philosophic theories that give insight into combating religious terrorism, looking at

counter-terrorism methods and giving recommendations based on the unique factors of religious terrorism.

Finally, it needs to be clarified that the focus of the monograph is the nexus between religion and terrorism and not the wider discussion of terrorism writ large. Clearly, terrorism that is completely unrelated to religion continues to threaten thousands of innocent people around the world. Moreover, terrorism is a very long and established phenomenon with many sources of terrorism having nothing to do with Huntington's "clash of civilizations." As such, the scope of this monograph will be limited to religious terrorism. Also, while acknowledging that the historical and contemporary era of religion-based violence and terror has included a diverse group of religions with a plethora of sub-groups, all with varied and complex motivations, for the sake of scale, this monograph will limit itself to a handful of historical and contemporary examples that run across religious groups, in the hopes of identifying general characteristics and lessons. Finally, it is acknowledged that religious and ethnic identities often overlap in both the historical and contemporary examples. The Armenian, Irish, Cypriot, Yugoslavian, Israeli, and Palestinian struggles illustrate this point.

Understanding Religious Terrorism

I will send my terror ahead of you and create panic among all the people whose lands you invade. I will make all your enemies turn and run.

God
The Christian Bible, Exodus 23:20 ESV

In order to better understand religious terrorism, it is crucial to first define the terms "religion" and "terrorism". This is not an easy task, as both concepts are rather nebulous and are the subjects

of much debate within the social sciences. Regarding the term terrorism, a plethora of books have been written on the concept, with *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research* listing over 250 official definitions for the term.[8] There is little consensus on the definition both within academic and policy circles. The lack of a singular definition is largely due to the fact there is not one type of terrorism but many, and that terrorism as a tactic, is constantly changing its means, motives, and actors. For example, Robert Keohane, a Princeton University international relations theorist, refuses to use the word "terrorism", instead preferring the term "informal violence."[9] He makes the important point that everyone is certainly against terrorism, yet the term is difficult to discuss with objectivity as each party in a conflict seeks to define its enemy's acts, but not its own, as terrorism. Nevertheless, his definition of informal violence is exceptionally concise and does shed some light on terrorism: a deliberately targeted surprise attack on arbitrarily chosen civilians, designed to cause fear.[10]

Drawing primarily on Keohane's concept of informal violence and the ideas of Bruce Hoffman, a theorist at Georgetown University and the RAND corporation, this paper defines terrorism as having the following components: a) the use of violence; b) the targeting of civilians, property, or government; c) with the intent of creating fear; d) aimed at altering or "balancing" the status quo; and e) a group activity.[11] This definition stresses the corporate nature of terrorism. Though it is acknowledged that terrorists can and do act as "lone wolves," they generally take their ideas and motivation from an organization or movement. The definition also notes the tactical use of violence with the goal of changing or maintaining equilibrium with the existing political, social, military, or religious order. This definition is particularly useful for investigating religiously motivated terrorism because it considers goals that may not be strictly political, such as changing the social and religious order of a state or region. It must also be noted that terrorists may

have more than one goal. This aspect is especially true of religious terrorists who typically have an immediate and an abstract goal, differentiating them from their secular counterparts.[12]

Moving to "religion," Jeffrey Haynes, one of the foremost experts on religion and international relations, provides a descriptive definition of religion that is both concise and comprehensive. He states in his most recent book, *Religion, Politics, and International Relations*, that religion is defined within three realms of social and individual behaviour that help adherents organize their everyday lives. First, religion is defined as a process that relates to transcendence, that is, to supernatural realities. Second, it is defined as a process that relates to sacredness as a system of language and practice that organizes the world in terms of what is deemed holy. Third, religion is defined as existential – it relates people to the ultimate conditions of existence.[13] In reference to violence, religion is sometimes used in combination with other factors, and sometimes as the primary motivation for violence. Often it is intimately connected with ethnicity and geopolitical forces.

Building on the rather difficult definitions of terrorism and religion, finding a clear definition of "religious terrorism" is daunting. David Rapoport of UCLA refers to it as "sacred terror" or "holy terror," noting that, "Although everyone has noticed the phenomenon, no one has yet to distinguish the characteristics of holy terror from those of political or secular."[14] Certainly, literature on religious terrorism has had a difficult time analytically distinguishing religious terrorism from its secular counterpart. Mark Juergensmeyer simply defines religious terrorism as violent acts that are terrifying and motivated by religion.[15] This broad definition includes groups ranging from the nationalist/religious IRA to the apocalyptic Aum Shinrikyo without providing an explanation as to why religion has inspired both limited terrorist actions as well as the desire to destroy the entire world. Bruce Hoffman argues that religion serves

to uniquely legitimize and justify violence in religious terrorism through religious texts, clerical figures, and apocalyptic imagery, but neglects to explain how religious ideology differs from Marxist or Fascist ideology in inspiring terrorist acts.[16] Some believe that terrorism is really about nationalism but this view fails to explain those historic groups like the Hindu Thugs who did not assert nationalist claims. David Rapoport offers the argument that religious terrorism uses sacred texts and historic examples that are not present in secular terrorism.[17]

Nonetheless, despite these difficulties, religious terrorism is recognized as something different from secular terrorism that needs to be considered as an analytically separate category than left, right, or nationalist/separatist terrorism in order to properly understand the growing deadly trend and how to counter it. Some characteristics emerge from the outset of any analysis that must be noted as unique. First, religious terrorism is terrorism whose motivations and goals have a predominantly religious character or influence. Religious terrorists may have specific goals, but they also have larger, abstract goals that operate at the "cosmic" or spiritual level and are articulated in religious language. Specific targets such as heads of state or government buildings are not uniquely religious targets, but may be referred to in religious terms. On the other hand, abstract targets such as symbols of secularism or other religions tend to more closely reflect the religious goals of these groups. For example, one cannot understand why thousands would fight and die over the Babri Mosque from a purely geopolitical standpoint. However, when viewed through the lens of a religious dispute between Hindus and Muslims over holy ground and its bloody history, the subsequent acts of violence perpetrated in its name become more clear.

What makes specific targets distinct for religious terrorists is that they are regarded as stepping-stones to a greater religious

goal.[18] These religious goals are defined by the diety who is the primary audience for the act, and whose desires are known and legitimized, as Hoffman states by religious texts and clerics. Nevertheless, these abstract goals may be minimized for the sake of geopolitical goals, as in the case of the Khalistan movement that seeks to create a separate Sikh state, or maximized as in the case of Aum Shinrikyo's apocalyptic desires.

Another term that has become common regarding religion and terror is the term, "extremism." Canada's Public Safety website entitled *Countering Violent Extremism* defines the term as the "process of taking radical views and putting them into violent action" and indicates that such views may be based on political, economic, ethnic, or environmental beliefs.[19] However, Canada's most recent counter-terrorism strategy entitled *Building Resilience Against Terrorism*, uses the term, or a variant such as "extremist", sixty-seven times, always in reference to religious violence.[20] It is also the preferred term within Canada's intelligence and security community to refer to religious violence. In this paper, "extremism" will be used to describe activities that fall outside of the normal practices and beliefs of a religious body, especially in regards to violent activities and will be used synonymously and interchangeably with the term "religious terrorism."

Terrorism carried out in the name of faith has long been a feature of human affairs. The history of peoples, civilizations, nations, and empires is replete with examples of extremist believers who engage in violence either to promote their belief system or to add legitimacy to another goal. A study of the Christian Crusaders, Islamic Nizari Ismaili Assassins, Hindu Thugs, and Jewish Zealots offers important historical lessons in religious terrorism that also apply to contemporary religious violence. Their methodologies, motivations, effects on society, and their demise are all important

to the study of how religious terrorism may be uniquely understood and countered.

For example, during the middle ages, the Western Christian Church launched nine invasions of the Islamic east, the first one in 1095 CE. These invasions were called the Crusades because they were conducted in the name of the cross. The purpose of the crusades was to ostensibly "capture the holy lands from the disunited Muslims" who were collectively referred to as Saracens.[21] Christian knights and soldiers answered the call for many reasons: the promise of land, booty, and glory were certainly important. However, another chief reason was the spiritual promise, made by Pope Urban II, that fighting and dying in the name of the cross would ensure martyrdom and thereby guarantee a place in heaven. Liberation of the holy lands would bring eternal salvation and was reflected in the war cry of the crusades: *Deus lo volt!* (God wills it). During the first crusade, western knights captured a large part of the biblical lands, killing most inhabitants, including women and children. When Jerusalem was captured in 1099 CE, Frankish knights massacred thousands of Muslim, Jewish, and Orthodox Christian residents. Letters from Crusaders sent to Pope Urban in Rome boasted of the slaughter. The church-sanctioned invasions and atrocities were deemed to be in accordance with God's wishes and therefore acceptable.[22] The crusades lasted more than 200 years and ended without control of the holy lands. Acre fell as the last crusade stronghold in 1291 CE. After two centuries of prolonged and expensive battles, the church lost some credibility with the European kingdoms whose leaders did not wish to waste monetary and personnel resources on futile, bloody action.

The word *assassin* is derived from a religious terrorist group, the Nizari Ismailis, a radical offshoot of the Muslim Shi'a who, between 1090-1272 CE, fought the Christian crusaders as well as religious and governmental leaders who were considered to be apostates in

present day Syria and Iran.[23] The word assassin (*hashashin*, literally low-class rabble and outcasts) was a derogatory term used by their Muslim and Western opponents and has survived to this day. The Assassins used a dagger to eliminate those who they believed did not rule in accordance with divine precepts. Since the dagger was believed to be the only ritualistically and divinely allowable weapon for the assassination, this necessitated very close contact with the victim and the likelihood that the operative would not escape. The concept of martyrdom, the idea that the Assassin would immediately ascend to a glorious heaven, fostered an ethos of self-sacrifice. This concept of martyrdom was taught at a very young age to all Assassins as a divine duty and privilege that was seen as a ritualistic way to bring in the new millennium.[24] Thus, the Assassins cannot be understood without reference to religion. Their actions had the immediate goal of changing the political system, but they also had an abstract eschatological goal as well. The Assassins became powerful enough to establish city-state fortresses and developed effective armies, but gradually lost the support of the religious public, who provided needed logistical support, and prominent Muslim leaders. Eventually they were defeated and eradicated as a political and religious force in 1275 CE at Alamut by the Mongol Empire, though there is indication that some Assassins continued to exist as paid killers into the 15th Century.[25]

The etymology for the word *zealot*, can similarly be traced to a Jewish sect who fought against the Roman occupation of what is now Israel between 66 and 73 CE. The Sicarii Zealots waged a ruthless campaign of both individual assassination and wholesale slaughter against Roman soldiers, political and religious figures, and the public, both Greek and Jewish. Their *modus operandi* included killing innocent civilians, assassination (using the end of a Roman spear called the sicarii), killing unarmed Roman soldiers despite treaties and conventions allowing them to travel freely,

poisoning wells and granaries, and even sabotaging public water supplies.[26] Like the Assassins, the Zealots welcomed martyrdom. Their immediate objectives were political in that they wished for the departure of the Roman occupiers. However, their ultimate aim was the coming of the political and spiritual Messiah who they believed would hasten his arrival based on the Zealots' faithfulness, not success in their exploits. During one of their actions, they deliberately burned their own food supplies, hoping by this means to hasten divine intervention and the millennium. Their ultimate objective was decidedly otherworldly though their immediate goals were political.[27]

Eventually the Zealots lost popular support for their radical actions. In the Talmud, the Zealots are described as "wild, boorish, ruffians" and are condemned for their aggression, unwillingness to compromise, and their blind militarism against the religious leaders. They are blamed for the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jewish temple by the Romans in 70 CE. After the siege of Jerusalem, 960 Zealots took the Roman fortress of Masada and held it for three years before the Romans built a giant earth ramp to take back the fortress. However, before the Romans could do so, all the Zealots in Masada, including their families, committed suicide.[28]

The term *thug* comes from the Hindu religious association of professional murderers who, from the 7th Century until their suppression in the mid 19th Century, systematically strangled travellers as sacrificial offerings to Kali, the Hindu goddess of terror and destruction. Estimates have put the number of persons murdered by the Thugs, who engaged in the strangulation practice known as *Thuggee*,[29] at between 500,000 and 1 million, which is an astonishing death toll considering that each victim was to be individually and ritualistically strangled as slowly as possible.[30] The Thugs believed that their ritualistic offerings were transmitting

the energies that allowed Kali to keep the universe in balance. Their victims' terror was deliberately prolonged for the benefit of the goddess. Emphasis was placed on complete secrecy, with the audience being the goddess and not the public in any way. Nevertheless, the existence of the Thugs created an environment of fear initially among the local populations and later among the British colonial occupiers. The Thugs viewed their entire activity as ritual and did not even consider it murder, but simply the work of the goddess.[31]

Lasting several centuries, the resilience of the Thugs is astonishing. The kingdoms of the Indian sub-continent were unable to eradicate the Thugs who blended seamlessly into their communities, displaying flawless citizenship, patience, and discipline. In many cases, British officials found that they had unwittingly employed Thugs as servants, administrators, and even teachers for their children. The clandestine organization was deeply ritualized in all aspects of life and children were educated very early in the practice of Thuggee.[32] Their immediate and abstract goals were purely religious with the ritualized killing for their deity's satisfaction alone.

The demise of the Thugs only came about because of a concerted effort on the part of the British. Originally, they held to a position of non-interference regarding the population on the Indian sub-continent. However, the economic impact caused by the fear of the Thugs, as well as abhorrence from the British public, led to pressures to combat the problem. The British created a number of laws to combat and outlaw the practice of Thuggee. They then developed an extensive intelligence network in order to keep track of known Thugs and learned the identities through "contact chaining." This information was passed on to administrators and staffs of different regions. Extensive interrogations were undertaken and known Thugs were encouraged to give up other Thugs in

exchange for their freedom. Eventually, British officials were able to convince older Thugs that the younger Thugs were contravening the religious rules of Thuggee by stealing money and goods from their victims, a practice that was expressly forbidden. These acts led to internal conflicts between Thugs causing Thugs to inform on others to the authorities, and even the killing of Thugs by those of the same sect. Eventually these consequences led to the religious cult's demise.[33]

The Crusaders, Assassins, Zealots, and Thugs demonstrate notable characteristics that are crucial to understanding religious terrorism. Historical religious terrorists proved to be quite resilient, generally lasting more than one generation. Furthermore, their actions appeared at times to be self-defeating or irrational. However, when understood from an abstract, religious perspective, they appear to make far more sense. It must be noted that historical religious terrorists often had geopolitical goals as in the case of the Assassins, Crusaders, and Zealots, though the ultimate audience was divine and they themselves considered their actions as part of a divine plan. Indeed, their behaviours were considered to be ritualistic, almost akin to worshiping and sacred texts, and clerics were used to legitimize their acts of violence.

The demise of historic religious terrorist groups is also of interest as several points hold the key to understanding and combating religious terrorism. Notably, legal methods and intelligence practices were used effectively against the Thugs. Moreover, powerful forces directly combated religious terrorists in force-on-force action, except in the case of the Thugs who remained hidden within the population. Largely, religious terrorists met their demise from direct action when they banded together and attempted force-on-force action; as long as they stayed hidden amongst the population, they were difficult to identify and stop. Nonetheless, the two most interesting aspects about the demise of historic religious

terrorists are that they began losing the battle when they lost support of the religious population and they were seen as contravening religious precepts.

Without a doubt, religious terrorism is becoming the dominant form of terrorism in the world today. A series of studies has shown that beginning in the 1980s, religious terror has become the most prominent form of contemporary terror, far surpassing the number and effects of any other terror group.[34] Though the number of terror attacks is decreasing globally, the percentage of religious terror attacks is increasing. The United States National Counterterrorism Center's 2011 *Report on Terrorism* found that out of the 12,533 deaths in 2011 caused by acts of terror, 8886 or 71 per cent of them were caused by religious extremist groups, as opposed to political, anarchist, or fascist groups.[35] Terrorism motivated in whole or in part by religious imperatives is also found to be more intense, producing considerably more fatalities than the acts of violence perpetrated by secular terrorist groups. As well, the attacks are generally more gruesome and random regarding women, children, and the elderly. Recent high-profile extremist events have all had a decidedly religious component, making religion a primary characteristic of concern.

David Rapoport describes modern terrorism as existing in four distinct waves. According to Rapoport, since 1879 the world has suffered from modern terrorism divided into these distinct periods, each lasting approximately one generation, and characterized by a different energy creating distinctive purposes and tactics: the anarchist wave directed against the power of the monarchies; the anti-colonial wave directed against colonial empires; and the new left wave directed against liberal-democratic ideology as exemplified by the backlash against American involvement in Vietnam. He asserts that the current *fourth wave* of terrorism is driven by a sweeping international force of radical religion, which notably

underscores Huntington's hypothesis. However, Rapoport admits that the current wave does seem to be much more robust and resilient than its predecessors.[36] Therefore, he is reluctant to predict its end. While 90 per cent of terrorist organizations have a lifespan of less than one year, and of those that make it to a year, more than half disperse within a decade,[37] the remarkable staying power of early historic and contemporary extremist groups indicate the inherent staying power of religiously-based motivations for these groups. This monograph will now turn its attention to a discussion of a cross-section of these contemporary groups: the Christian Identity Movement, Aum Shinrikyo, the Lord's Resistance Army, and Al-Qaeda.

The Christian Identity Movement is an American extremist group which claims to be based on "racial supremacy and biblical law." As a group, they believe that they are waiting for "God's time to start the war... a holding action... until the time that God sends Michael, the archangel." Adherents to this extremist theology are a loose collection of American Nazis, militia groups, and quasi-Protestant churches on the fringe of standard traditional denominations. Their ideas foresee an apocalyptic future followed by a Christianity-based theocracy that saves mankind.[38] In the interim, the Christian Identity Movement uses violence to promote their ideas and defend their faith. Besides using abstract metaphorical biblical texts, the chief literary work associated with the group is *The Turner Diaries*.[39] This novel tells the story of a religiously-based guerilla movement fighting against an evil federal government whose power has grown too great and has become oppressive to its citizens. The attack on the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City by Timothy McVeigh that killed 168 people and injured 680 in 1995 parallels the text of the book. McVeigh is known to have been deeply influenced by the writings of the Christian Identity Movement and frequently sold *The Turner Diaries* at gun shows. Though it is a loose affiliation of several groups with little

hierarchy or formal communication networks, their extreme religious ideas, transmitted through texts and radicalized individuals, are believed to continue to influence numerous groups and "lone wolves" within the United States. Though McVeigh appeared to be a lone extremist, he was not, giving a clue to the secrecy with which some extremist groups operate.[40]

Aum Shinrikyo, currently known as Aleph, is a Japan-based cult founded by Shako Asahara in 1987. Its name translates to "religion of supreme truth" and its goal under Asahara's leadership was to seize control of Japan and then the rest of the world. The core belief is that Armageddon, the ultimate cosmic battle between good and evil, is imminent. As one top member of the cult explained, "The evil of the modern age will be shed in a catastrophic discharge and only those who repent of their evil deeds will survive."[41] At its peak membership, Aum Shinrikyo had approximately 9,000 members in Japan and 40,000 members around the world, many thousands in Russia. Asahara claimed to be the reincarnation of Jesus Christ and Buddha and urged his followers to arm themselves if they were to survive Armageddon. This apocalyptic creed led to the stock-piling of conventional weapons as well as chemical and biological weapons such as nerve gas and anthrax. In March 1995, members positioned several packages containing Sarin gas on five trains in the Tokyo subway system scheduled to travel through Tokyo's Kasumigaski terminal. The containers were simultaneously punctured, killing 12 people and injuring 5000.[42] Asahara was arrested and sentenced to death. However, his execution has been stalled as the Japanese attempt to arrest others involved in the gas attack. The extremist group continues to be on the watch list of many governments as a terrorist organization as it continues recruiting under a new name.

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is a Ugandan extremist group currently operating in the border region of the Democratic Republic

of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), and South Sudan. Joseph Kony established the LRA in 1988 with the claim of restoring the honour of his ethnic Acholi people and installing a government based on his personal version of the Christian Ten Commandments. Kony claims to channel various spirits who, he says, direct him to oust Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. Notably, however, under Kony's leadership, LRA soldiers conduct violence "in the name of spiritual purity," primarily against civilians, rather than fighting to advance a political agenda. Since 2005, the LRA is believed to have committed hundreds of attacks resulting in well over 5,000 deaths with considerably more wounded and kidnapped. LRA soldiers have gained a reputation for murder, torture, rape, and mutilations in the name of God, as well as abducting tens of thousands of children over the years to use as sex slaves and child soldiers.[43]

In 2008, following Kony's refusal to sign a negotiated peace agreement, Ugandan, DRC, and southern Sudanese armies launched a joint military offensive, "Operation Lightning Thunder," against the LRA in northeastern Congo. The operation succeeded in cutting off supplies and destroying some of the main camps but ultimately failed to capture or kill LRA leaders. As a result, the LRA broke up into smaller, more mobile groups and spread out into the border regions, making them even more difficult to locate.[44] The LRA continues its brutal violence to this day without any apparent political aim.

Established by Osama bin Laden in 1988 with Arabs who fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union, Al-Qaeda's declared goal is the establishment of a pan-Islamic caliphate throughout the Muslim world. Toward this end, Al-Qaeda seeks to unite Muslims to fight the West as a means of overthrowing Muslim regimes Al-Qaeda deems "apostate," expelling Western influence from Muslim countries, and defeating Israel. Al-Qaeda issued a

statement in February 1998 under the banner of "the World Islamic Front for *Jihad* Against the Jews and Crusaders" saying it was the duty of all Muslims to kill US citizens – civilian and military – and their allies everywhere. The group merged with the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (al-Jihad) in June 2001.[45]

On 11 September 2001, 19 Al-Qaeda suicide attackers hijacked and crashed four US commercial jets – two into the World Trade Center in New York City, one into the Pentagon near Washington, D.C., and a fourth into a field in Shanksville, PA – leaving nearly 3,000 people dead. Of those who died, 373 were foreign nationals from 90 countries, including 24 Canadians. Since 2002, Al-Qaeda and affiliated groups have conducted attacks worldwide, including in Europe, North Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East.

In 2005, Ayman al-Zawahiri, then bin Laden's deputy and now the leader of Al-Qaeda, publicly claimed Al-Qaeda's involvement in the 7 July 2005 bus bombings in the United Kingdom. In 2006, British security services foiled an al-Qaeda plot to detonate explosives on up to 10 transatlantic flights originating from London's Heathrow airport. Also in 2006, Al-Zawahiri announced that the Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat had joined Al-Qaeda, adopting the name Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). In 2009, extremist leaders in Yemen and Saudi Arabia announced they had merged to fight under the banner of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).[46]

On 2 May 2011, US forces raided a compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, resulting in the death of bin Laden. His death, in addition to significant losses to Al-Qaeda's command structure based in the tribal areas of Pakistan since early 2008, was believed to have left the group at its weakest since the fall of the Afghan Taliban in late 2001. However, in the aftermath of bin Laden's death,

Al-Qaeda leaders moved quickly to name al-Zawahiri as his successor. Since this announcement, regional affiliates such as al-Shabab of Somalia, and the AQIM (al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb) have publicly sworn allegiance and pledged support to him. Al-Qaeda remains a cohesive organization and its core's leadership continues to be important to the global movement. Recently, the AQIM took control of a significant portion of Mali, leading to military action by an international coalition led by the French. Furthermore, the al-Nusra Front, a Syrian-based extremist group fighting the Syrian government of Bashar al-Assad pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda and al-Zawahiri on 10 April of this year.[47] This highlights Al-Qaeda's ability to attract affiliates under its extremist banner and shows that the organization is actually growing and becoming more dangerous since bin Laden's death.

Modern religious groups display a lethality and resilience that baffles counter-terrorism experts and remains the topic of much debate and speculation. These four extremist groups all remain on terrorist watch lists throughout the world and continue to pose a significant danger to governments and populations. They are a very small cross-section of the hundreds of terrorist groups worldwide that are influenced by religion.

The idea that religion is a motivator for terrorist actions has been the subject of much intense discussion. Consequently, there are those scholars who see religion as a root cause of violence while others regard it as an insignificant peripheral issue that is only co-opted by wily leaders for their political goals. These scholars believe that religion must be discounted as merely a transparent tactic designed to conceal political goals, generate popular support, and silence opposition. In other cases it is believed to be an amplifier of social, economic, or political discord. Notably, extremism cannot be easily categorized and there are instances where religion undoubtedly acts in all of these aspects. Importantly, while

the rationale for violence cannot be easily understood, somehow religion is involved.

As part of this debate, it is important to ask whether religion shares commonalities with other ideologies that have produced violence and terror. If so, these commonalities suggest that there is a uniform extremist mentality that causes ideologies to become violent. Because religious ideologies and worldviews have much in common with secular ones, it could be that their violent strains are a reflection of human nature and a universal response to certain political, social, and economic decisions. The ideologies that are used to justify violence demonstrate that religion is not the only dogma that can be taken to the extreme. For example, the French Revolution had an extreme spiritual zeal for democracy and it took on the trappings of a church in the power given to its demagogue leaders and its slavish devotion to what it called the temple of reason.[48]

The strength of religion as a cause of terror and violence is also called into question by its variability over time. Religion, along with many non-religious factors, was an important cause of war and terrorism up until the 18th Century. At that point, religion's role began to decline as the revolutions in America and France were rooted in secular concepts such as liberty, freedom, and equality. Colonization was based primarily on the pursuit of political influence, raw materials, and markets rather than converting people to Christianity.

The first instances of modern terrorism were committed in the second half of the 19th Century in Russia by anarchists. Waves of terror that followed offered secular ideologies including nationalism and socialism, with religion staying out the picture until the 1980s with the civil war in Lebanon and the Iranian Revolution.[49]

As such, there is the argument that if religion as a cause of violence and terror varies, then it must be non religious factors that are causing this variance. Additionally, although there is no reliable way to count the exact number of religious terrorists, it is safe to assume that the number of extremists is far smaller than 1 per cent of the world's religious people. Therefore, it seems logical that religion cannot be a basis for terrorism because the overwhelming majority of religious people are non-violent. If religion is a cause of violence and terrorism, then there should be many more religious terrorists because this small number of cases does not confirm a strong relationship between religion and terrorism.[50]

Though these arguments are persuasive, they do not account for the overwhelming majority of extremist groups that hold to a religious identity. In fact, the majority of terrorist groups in the world describe themselves as religious and, once again, the numbers of victims of religious terrorist attacks is on the rise. These realities must be accounted for. To ignore them is to ignore a crucial aspect of counter-terrorism, let alone world affairs. Politicians, diplomats, scholars, and religious leaders themselves have noticed the unexpected resurgence of political, violent religion over the last 30 years. Moreover, by the 1980s it became evident that religion was not diminishing worldwide. Social scientists discovered that people around the world not only continued practicing their faith, but also mobilized politically on the basis of ethnicity, nationalism, culture and religion.[51] In fact, religious dynamics entailing actor, worldviews, and cultures, permeated a number of disputes in the late 1990s including Bosnia, Rwanda, Afghanistan and Sudan. Furthermore, religious violence through holy wars, messianic cults, extremism, suicide bombers, and terrorism became a disturbingly frequent factor in world affairs, significantly impacting relations within and between countries. Prominent sociologists today, such as Peter Berger of Boston University, speak of a religious resurgence while others speak of it as a fact that cannot be ignored.[52]

Social theorists talk about religion's "return from exile" while others refer to the renaissance of religious traditions taking place virtually around the globe.[53]

One must thus ask which is the best way to explain this unexpected development. To begin with, it is important to note is that there is no simple, clear-cut reason or theoretical explanation to cover all cases. However, most scholars accept that religious actors' widespread social and political activities are linked, ironically, to the very factors that were thought to spell the demise of religion. First, in many parts of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, efforts at modernization have failed, causing a backlash against Western secular ideologies that were the basis for the governments that pushed these unsuccessful efforts. Western secular ideas are considered foreign and, thus, illegitimate, leaving only religion as a basis for legitimacy.[54]

Second, modernization has had an adverse affect on traditional lifestyles, community values and morals, contributing further to the backlash against modernity. Modernization has undermined societies at both a communal and personal level, and religion has arisen in an attempt to redefine, restore, and reinforce the foundation for both the community and the individual who has been dislocated.[55] In many ways, religion has emerged as a rejection of the rational and scientific foundation of modernity and the modern society, if not technologically, then in terms of morals, values, and community.

Third, advances in communications technology and its availability, an important component of globalization which is itself a multifaceted process of change significantly affecting governments, communities, and individuals, is a further reason for the global re-emergence of religion. Religious actors are not immune to globalization's influence and some have become skilled at using

the media to spread their message. Some religious leaders react positively to the communication of diverse messages within their communities, accepting and even endorsing pluralism. However, others are deeply affected by what they see as apostasy among "the faithful" as they encounter diverse views. In these cases, religious leaders feel threatened and emphasize inter-religious differences, sometimes confronting other beliefs in attempts to preserve their particular beliefs, morals, values, and community ideals from further erosion.[56] This examination leads to fundamentalism and a forceful emphasis on religious beliefs, practices, and lifestyles. At times it can also lead to radicalization and even violence.

It is the thesis of this paper that religion is best understood as a lens through which the religious adherent views the world. To understand it as a root cause, a factor, an instigator, a scapegoat, a manipulation tool, misses the fact that religion is an organized system through which the world is viewed. At times the lens of religion is used to view social, political, or economic issues such as when separatist or ethnic groups act. This is the case with Al-Qaeda and the Christian Identity Movement. These extremists view the world in a certain way and specific way, using the lens of religion, even the unfocused lens of extremist religion, to create meaning, understanding and motivation for change for the reasons indicated above. At other times, identity, the future, social ills, and even a sense of belonging are viewed through the lens of religion. In these cases, religious groups may act with no apparent geopolitical motivation, as in the case of Aum Shinrikyo or the Hindu Thugs. In these cases, the extremists had no wish to attain political goals, but saw their very society through the cosmic lens of religion and in need of destruction and balance respectively. In other instances, the lens actually changes from political to what appears to be completely spiritual motivations, as in the case of the LRA and its apparent and recent disinterest in political goals.

Whatever the goals are for religious terrorists, whether temporal or abstract, these goals are always seen through the religious lens that gives these activities meaning. They may seem senseless in achieving any sort of aim, such as when the Zealots burned their food supplies. Through the lens of the these extremist, they make perfect sense.

Religion acts as a lens through which a religious group sees the world. All aspects of life including the way time is viewed, the notion of success, sacrifice, the future, and even violence are seen through the theological lens. This lens, in the case of extremism, is out of focus with the moderate, peaceful, position that the majority of religious adherents hold. Nevertheless, this lens can be exceptionally powerful and can intensify belief, feelings, and emotions either for justice and peace, or for intolerance and violence. One must then ask how exactly the religious lens accomplishes these things.

First, the lens of religion provides a comprehensive metaphysical worldview. It influences behaviour, informs beliefs that serve in the formation of norms, and gives substance for the way society and individuals conduct themselves. Emile Durkheim, considered by many to be the father of sociology, believed that religion was a unifying system of beliefs and practices that united individuals into a community with a "perspective," "frame of reference," "meaning system," and *weltanschauung* (world view). Significantly though, religion invokes a worldview with images of cosmic war that transcend temporal life. It evokes great battles of a legendary past or apocalyptic future, and it relates to metaphysical conflicts between good and evil.[57] The religious worldview is infused with militaristic language of battle, glory, victory, and struggle with evil. Through songs, stories, art, and literature the language of violence and battle is prevalent. Though metaphoric, it is not difficult for zealous religious individuals or communities to interpret these

concepts in a very literal fashion, especially when they perceive their own worldview to be threatened, whether by another religion or secularism.

Second, this religious lens blurs the distinction between temporal and eternal life. This blurring of distinctions cannot be understated. The religious adherent believes that life on earth is just a small portion of existence with death as something of a nuisance at worst, and a passage to a glorious existence at best. Every major world religion views death as something to be embraced as a path to better things (for the faithful) and not something to be feared. As well, the blurring between temporal and eternal life skews the believers' concept of time. Every major faith group has extensive theological concepts regarding time that goes beyond the "temporal." Therefore, religious adherents do not consider failure as a tragedy, for it is all part of a cosmic plan controlled in "god's time." This belief has significant implications for the extremist who, through the lens of his religious faith, does not regard death as negative or tactical failure as a setback.

Third, religion is a lens of identity. The theological lens gives meaning to what people believe in relation to others. It informs the social boundaries and often takes priority over other social divisions such as ethnicity, class, and gender. But when fears over loss of identity in the face of secular modernization emerge, it creates Huntington's clash.[58] This clash of civilizations differs from ideological conflicts where there is an "us-them-other" dynamic. In such a conflict there are three parties involved in confrontations – those who struggle, those against whom the struggle takes place, and those who are outside of the arena of struggle. However, with religion, the conflict is simply "us-them." There are only two parties involved, namely "those who believe the truth" and "those who do not believe the truth." Samuel Huntington believed

that identity, based on religion, would become the primary driver of international relations in the post-Cold War era.

Fourth, the lens of religion provides legitimacy. Religion is used to legitimize and de-legitimize actions and policies, ideas, and even people and groups. Religion declares that an action, no matter how violent or heinous, is a legitimate action, even offering temporal or eternal rewards to the individual who undertakes legitimate action (for instance, against evil). For example, Crusaders received remission of their sins through the granting of spiritual indulgence by the Pope. Similarly, for the holy warriors', or *Mujahideens'*, participation in violent *jihad* – an action declared legitimate by the cleric – demonstrates their fidelity to Islam, meaning that they believe they will receive a faster journey to heaven and spiritual benefits when the time comes.

Fifth, the lens of religion views authority in a unique way. The Iranian clergy that rules Iran feels that its actions are divinely inspired and, therefore, cannot be wrong. This logic has arguably resulted in their defiance of international pressure to stop their nuclear arms program. Claims of authority are based upon sacred texts and personal piety that cannot be questioned by those outside or even inside the group. This singular point of view causes a concentration of power that cannot be kept in check if there are tendencies toward violence or terrorism.

Sixth, the religious lens provides symbolic value which exacerbates or causes conflict through the manipulation of religious objects, buildings, and locations. Every religion sacralizes tangible things or places, thereby making them holy and resulting in a perceived obligation to protect them. The Indian subcontinent offers but one example of this act as it is infused with Islamist violence, Hindu nationalism, and various local and regional flashpoints, the most explosive being the 1992 destruction of the Babri mosque at

Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh by Hindu nationalists. The rioting that followed killed thousands of people and resulted in heightened tensions across the region. With the resurgence of religion globally, there is an increase of this symbolism worldwide with conflicts naturally occurring where religious groups live in proximity to each other. At times, claims to places or things overlap religious groups, as is the case with the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Seventh, the community of believers, as an institution, is seen through the religious lens of serving a cosmic purpose. The hand of God in Jewish belief, the body of Christ in Christianity, the duty to the community in Islam are all religious concepts that see the group as part of an extension of the deity's will if not an actual part of the deity itself. As such, all aspects of the community, from education, to financial support are meant to serve the divine purpose, usually with little thought or question. By their communal nature, religious groups provide ready-made organizational structures that often have access to media, considerable economic assets, and international communications networks. In many non-democratic regimes the protected status of religious institutions makes them the only format in which people are allowed to organize, thus promoting them as natural venues for political dissent. Furthermore, people who are active in religious organizations tend to develop organizational and leadership skills that are also useful for political activities, either violent or otherwise. They also help to develop interpersonal local, national, and transnational social networks that are useful for political mobilization. As such, religion is a "mobilizer of the masses," a controller of mass action, with some scholars referring to it as a force-multiplier ideal for those seeking to evangelize radical ideas. However, it is important to note that this institutional aspect of religion brings with it the deep emotional and social energy of being connected to a divine purpose.

In these ways, religion is used as a ideological lens through which all of life, to varying degrees for different extremist groups, is viewed and organized. While some religious groups use the lens to see the world and their own purpose in a peaceful way, others have an unfocused lens of extremism that distorts the view of the world and their very purpose towards violence. There is no question that political, social, and economic factors may, and often do, influence extremists. The frustrated and alienated provide a potentially rich recruitment pool for extremist groups. However, the way that religious terrorists contextualize these issues and mobilize religious resources to deal with them, that is, how they view the problem through a lens of belief, is what makes them religious terrorists.

Therefore, what is particularly striking about religious terror compared to secular terror is the radically different value systems, mechanisms of legitimization, concept of morality, worldview including struggle, death, and time. This worldview is conveyed through texts, sacred writings and clerics who use their position of influence to legitimize violent action, reinforced by the community of believers. As Islam scholar and Harvard law professor Noah Feldman contends, religion is the most efficient "technology" known to man for conveying ideas and motivating people.[59] The question is, can the lens of extremism be refocused to the moderate beliefs that inform so many of the world's peaceful religious adherents? Fortunately, the answer to this question is yes.

Responding to Religious Terrorism

Out of these characteristics a certain center of gravity develops, the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the point at which all our energies should be directed.[60]

Carl von Clausewitz

In the quest to respond to religiously motivated terrorism, many countries are attempting a combination of security measures, engaging in "wars on terror," strengthening the rule of law and legal institutions, and even directly negotiating with terrorists. However, these methods are having varying degrees of success while the intensity and number of terrorist acts perpetrated by religiously motivated groups is increasing.[61] Clearly, the effort to stem religious terrorism is failing. Extremists, now more than ever, threaten state governments (the AQIM in Mali), are actively seeking and willing to deploy weapons of mass destruction (Aum Shinrikyo in Japan), and are willing to participate in outright regional wars (al-Nusrah in Syria). What is missing from terrorist responses is a strategy that deals with the religious aspect of these terrorist groups. In this regard, the ideas of political philosophers shed some much needed light.

Political philosophers John Rawls, Jürgen Habermas, and Alasdair MacIntyre have struggled with the concept of diverse groups, how these groups coexist with each other, and how they change over time. Their ideas are especially pertinent in the understanding of extremist views and how their ideas transform. If governments and their counter-terrorist specialists can understand these ideas, then, perhaps, they can more effectively understand and combat religious terrorism.

John Rawls, an American philosopher who taught at both Harvard and Oxford, developed the "theory of justice," later to become the idea of "political liberalism" based on the immeasurable relevance of the fact of pluralism. Rawls asked, "How is it possible for there to exist over time a just and stable society of free and equal citizens who remain profoundly divided by reasonable religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines that remain entrenched and irreconcilable?"[62] From this question, he formed the idea of "distributive justice," a system that values the differences among

people but develops a methodology that allows them to live and work together. This view is directly contrary to the concept of liberal convergence which states that people will eventually come together with shared liberal norms. The concept of liberal convergence has most strikingly been observed in the idea that western style democracy will be desired as a norm throughout the world, clearly a notion that has failed to take root and, conversely, has arguably enhanced terrorism. The idea of liberal convergence can also be seen in the separation of church and state within western society and the purging of religious ideas from public life. This causes crises of identity among normative groups that leads to more forceful assertions of religious identity, again a precursor for religious violence.

Habermas, drawing on Rawls' ideas and using his theory of communicative action, argues for the inclusion of religious discourse in the public sphere, a concept that he believes has been neglected as religious language and concepts are purged from public discourse.[63] To Habermas, taking up the very notion of religion in public life asserts that the liberal state must not transform the requisite institutional separation of religion and politics into an undue mental and psychological burden for those of its citizens who follow a faith. Of course, the state does expect them to exercise a principle of neutrality towards competing worldviews, but it should not require them to purge their own views. Rather, what is required is the epistemic ability to consider one's own faith from the outside and to relate it to secular views. Secular views and language are not the absence of religious views, but the institutional translation of those moral and normative ideas into a common language.[64] In the spirit of emancipation, Habermas argues that this will allow religious citizens to participate in public discourse without having to split their identity into a public and private part. Habermas states that the liberal state has an interest in unleashing religious voices in the public sphere and in the political participation

of religious organizations as well. It must not discourage religious persons and communities from expressing themselves as such, for it cannot know whether secular society would not otherwise cut itself off from key resources for the creation of meaning and identity.[65] In other words, religious identity, community, language, and beliefs need to be valued by society if that society hopes to grow and transform itself for the betterment of all.

Habermas offers a sobering judgement to those societies that do not value religious beliefs. As long as secular citizens are convinced that religious traditions and religious communities are to a certain extent archaic relics of pre-modern societies that continue to exist in the present, they will "understand freedom of religion as the cultural version of the conservation of a species in danger of becoming extinct"[66] He states that this "enlightened" attitude considers religion to no longer have any intrinsic justification to exist and religious communities to then be in conflict with scientific criticism and the pressures of cultural and social modernization.[67]

Alasdair MacIntyre, professor at London Metropolitan University goes even further in his theory of intellectual groups in epistemological crisis. His theory tackles the idea of how, through the sort of inquiry promoted by Habermas, traditional groups such as religious groups actually change their beliefs. Like Rawls, MacIntyre rejects the central presupposition of the classical liberalism of the Enlightenment, namely, the claim that there is one substantive rationality on which all sufficiently enlightened persons must agree which therefore can provide a universally persuasive set of standards by which to judge the beliefs of particular traditions, including faith traditions. On the contrary, he believes that at least some of the diverse social and intellectual traditions that exist are to some significant degree incommensurable with one another. Yet, this does not mean that groups do not change. They do so through enquiry and through what MacIntyre calls

"epistemological crisis."[68] This crisis or enquiry progresses through three stages as certain beliefs, institutions, and practices (even religious ones) are in a constant state of flux. Stage one is characterized by unquestioning acceptance of authoritative texts, beliefs, and persons. The second stage is characterized by awareness of internal incoherencies among traditional authorities and/or inadequacies in responding to new situations. In the third stage, a tradition reformulates beliefs and revaluates authorities in a variety of ways to resolve incoherencies and respond to inadequacies, though some core beliefs survive that hold together the identity of the tradition. Once in stage three, members of the community can contrast current with former beliefs and judge the former beliefs to have been false. The concept of truth is formed derivatively, in contrast with that of falsity, where the latter is understood as a lack of correspondence between beliefs and reality.[69] Sometimes epistemological crises arise within traditions that require imaginative new theories and concepts, not just the reflection on old ideas. However, most arise out of confrontation as they are faced with rival traditions or beliefs. Traditions will vary in their particular authorities, canonical texts, and practices, as well as the particular incoherencies or novelties. But they all have in common their movement through these states, their possession of beliefs and authorities, and their understanding of the contrast between falsehood and truth.[70] This system can be understood as their theological lens.

Importantly, the ideas of Rawls, Habermas, and MacIntyre add to the understanding and combating of religious terrorism by putting forth the idea that any long-term strategy against extremism must first deeply respect the ideas of religion and value them in political discourse (with the requisite institutional translation). Religious societies can change their ideas, their worldviews and, therefore, their actions through conflicts of meaning that exist by a process of dialogue, discussion, and enquiry with other traditions.

A society's view and respect of religion will reflect its respect to the degree that it involves religion in public life. Religious communities must be included in any discussions and solutions of extremist actions because extremist ideas can change as they are confronted with information that will force them into an epistemological crisis. The lens through which extremists view the world can be refocused and behaviour changed. This alteration may take time, but it is possible and, frankly, it is likely to work much better than present counter-terrorism methodologies if it comes from an authoritative religious source.

Terrorism is committed when opportunity, motivation and capability meet. Prevention of terrorism requires the elimination of at least one of these three elements. Furthermore, counter-terrorism can be divided into two approaches, namely operational and strategic. Operational counter-terrorism aims at reducing the immediate threat by targeting terrorist cells and disrupting attack plans. On the other hand, strategic counter-terrorism aims at changing the mindset and creating theological environment that is not conducive for terrorists. Also, strategic counter-terrorism in the context of extremism must concern itself with the terrorists, their families, communities, and the larger religious population from where support is gained. Strategic counter-terrorism is much more difficult than operational counter-terrorism because it requires sensitivity and sophistication. The motivation to commit terrorist acts generally needs to be combated at the theological and group levels. This topic will be the focus of the remainder of this monograph.

Before making recommendations that can effectively lessen religious terrorism, it is important to revisit how the four examples of historic religious terrorism reached their demise. Granted, more research is necessary in this regard as there is very little research into how terrorist groups end, let alone how historic ones reached

their demise. Nonetheless, one can make some reasonable generalizations. In the case of the Crusades, the attitudes of the religious population are very hard to judge as communications, history, and information about the crusades was controlled almost exclusively by the church and by European kingdoms. Historical perspectives are very sparse, but it is apparent that the distances that needed to be covered, the cost involved, and the continual defeat in battle made the crusades impractical.[71] However, there was also another reality that played an important role: the general loss of the "ideal" for the crusades. Despite its virtual monopoly on all spiritual inquiry, the church failed to maintain the fervour for the crusades by explaining how they actually related to the spiritual life of the population.[72] Though it is difficult to call this an epistemological crisis brought on by discourse, it can be called a change in attitude that was impacted by the religious population's gradual lack of enthusiasm for a holy war. The church was not able to convince the population and leadership with a theological rationale. Without the support of the population and the European kingdoms, the crusades could not continue.

In the case of the Assassins and Zealots, both were targeted by a large empire with direct retaliatory action and both met their ultimate demise in final battles (a fact not lost on today's terrorist groups). The Assassins made the crucial mistake of actually containing themselves within mountain fortresses and city states, making them convenient targets for direct action. However, there is a deeper reason for their demise. The Assassins were clearly devoted servants to a religious cause. As an organization, they were not mere cut-throats for hire. However, their theological cohesion gradually eroded as more and more sects and theological interpretations emerged among the group, in line with MacIntyre's idea of epistemological crisis. Furthermore, their theology eroded as certain Assassins actually did serve other political purposes as hired killers. This led to diluted support among the group itself

and also diluted support from the local population on which the Assassins relied for logistical support and the continual recruitment of adherents.[73]

Similarly, the Zealots lost the support of religious leaders who directly confronted their theological rationale in the Talmud. Their actions and theology were debated in the rabbinical style that eroded their public support. This diminishment of public support was hastened by the tactics of the Zealots that targeted populations, like the poisoning of water supplies, and contravening accepted rules of conduct, like the killing of unarmed Roman soldiers. It is not surprising the Zealots lasted only 30 years as an organization and that Menachem Begin, leader of the extremist Irgun during the 1930s and 1940s sought specifically to avoid these same pitfalls of the Zealots while carrying out his campaign against the British in Palestine.[74]

Finally, the downfall of the Thugs provides further points of interest. For the secretive Thugs, the support of the population was of little consequence. They perpetuated themselves from one generation to another in total secrecy. The British authorities could not directly attack the Thugs as they were dispersed among the population with hidden identities. Of course, the use of intelligence procedures greatly helped in the eradication of the Thugs as information collection, surveillance techniques, and interrogation methods were employed. These tactics all had an effect on the Thugs. However, the greatest impact to the Thugs came when internal rifts, certainly exacerbated by wily British intelligence and police authorities knowledgeable about the theology of the Thugs, arose within the group. This theological conflict was what caused the ultimate demise of the Thugs.

The strategic motivator for religious terrorists, that is, their centre of gravity, is twofold: their theological perspective; and the larger

religious population from which they gather support and theological legitimacy. Every terrorist group underpins their entire existence on these two factors. Religiously-motivated terrorist groups who have much tighter control over the beliefs of their adherents and control their dialogue, discussion, and debate, will necessarily keep the radical theological viewpoint intact for a longer period of time. Epistemological crisis is the enemy of extremist groups and anything that counter-terrorism strategists can do to enhance theological debate and discussion within a religious group will be effective. Similarly, extremist groups cannot exist without the support of the religious population. The attitudes of support must always be taken into consideration by the counter-terrorist strategist. Again, this is not an easy task. Religious groups are closed organizations with, as stated above, their own language, symbols, worldview, and sociological system. To gain respect and trust within such a culture, let alone the experience to dialogue with a group, is exceedingly difficult. This challenge becomes even more difficult if a society does not truly value religious groups and their ideas but, as Habermas indicates, politely separates them and their views from public life. Indeed, a society that does not understand the theological underpinnings of a religion cannot fully understand the worldview through which the extremist understands the world. Furthermore, if one does not understand the lens through which a religious population understands the world, one cannot hope to speak the language that will create dialogue, debate, and abatement of support to such groups.

This line of argument is not to say that other methods do not have a place within a counter-terrorism strategy. The use of military force offers states the most direct and readily available means that are under its control. It is imperative for governments to protect their citizens and this can often only be done in the short term through such capabilities, sometimes with concentrated Special Operations Forces operations or direct military action. However, using

direct retaliatory action such as military force, drones, declaring a war on terror or other such tactics are often dangerous when dealing with extremists because these very actions legitimize the worldview that religious terrorists use to justify their actions – one in which secular and religious forces are at constant war. A belligerent, secular enemy is after all just what extremists hope for, since it justifies their theology and increases their support. The central assumption in retaliatory action is that that elimination of specific groups or their leaders in kill/capture operations will bring the global struggle against extremism to an end. On the contrary, the extremist centre of gravity is often enhanced. This process can best be demonstrated by the targeted killing of Osama bin Laden. Arguably, the killing of bin Laden led to greater support and a more effective Al-Qaeda. First, it removed a leader who was not a religious intellectual, to be replaced by a more theologically influential Ayman al-Zawahiri. Furthermore, the use of Special Operations Forces led to the perspective by many that bin Laden was not afforded a trial but was essentially executed, an argument that also extends to targeting killing using drones. Since, the death of bin Laden, more groups have affiliated themselves with Al-Qaeda, such as al-Nusrah in Syria; they have become more diffuse and more difficult to target, increased their communications and cyber capabilities, and strengthened their resolve to attain weapons of mass destruction.[75]

Similarly, in the fight against extremism, the focus on the economic, social, and governmental root-causes are an important tool to provide alternatives to populations frustrated by current governance, discrimination, unemployment, and stagnation. There is no question that political, economic, and social reform are imperative in the areas where terrorism flourishes. The problem is the amount of time, effort, and resources needed. Focusing on root-causes may be a decades-long approach to a problem whose solution must be measured in years or months. As well, efforts

may not have enough of an effect to counter the anger, frustration, and sense of humiliation that characterize passive and active support for extremism. More particularly, indigenous religious groups themselves, including extremist organizations, can generally do a much better job of these things than can outside countries who are often seen as interlopers without the proper cultural sensitivity to alleviate these root-causes. Moreover, they offer community, identity, and meaning as religious groups. The history of terrorism, frankly, provides little comfort to those who believe that the focus on root-causes from outside countries can decrease support for terrorist attacks, especially attacks by religious terrorists.[76]

Furthermore, the focus on policing, intelligence and legal mechanisms has been an important part of a counter-terrorism strategy against extremism. The use of intelligence and policing was especially useful with the demise of the Thugs and the threat posed by Aum Shinrikyo. Surveillance, the use of sources, and the sharing of information between international governments has proven to be effective in reducing the capability of terrorist organizations, as has the tracking and disruption of financial support. Similarly, laws and legal mechanisms have helped to criminalize extremist activities, but are less effective if groups are transnational.[77]

An effective long-term strategy for combating extremism must indeed utilize a range of tools that include a commitment to security and intelligence, and some have been effective. This is not an argument for planting roses in rifle barrels or naively dispatching the Peace Corps, but a argument providing recommendations for a more effective and comprehensive plan of action. The tools used by government to combat extremism generally fall within the "capability" and "opportunity" portions of the terrorist triad. An effective strategy must also target "motivation"; this theme is what is often lacking. A counter-extremism strategy can only be effective if it addresses the theological lens, enhancing the

epistemological crisis through communication and dialogue, and if it focuses upon the religious population whose views and values play a vital role in the support, both logistical and theological, of the extremist group. The extremist's centre of gravity, the misconstrued theology and the religious population, must be engaged. The more difficult issue is how this process can be accomplished.

First, governments must value religious views and norms, while also exposing extremist theology. They must find a way of rejecting the violence along with the radical theology without rejecting the religion. This task can be done by affirming the public validity of religious values, as suggested by Habermas. Of course, this affirmation will not be achieved easily or quickly, and governments will have to exercise a great deal of patience and reason. Huntington's admonition in *The Clash of Civilizations* is apt in this regard when he states that it will require a deep and more profound understanding of the basic religious and philosophical assumptions underlying civilizations and the ways in which people in those civilizations see their interests.[78] In order to deter or otherwise defeat religious terrorism, extremist theology must be differentiated from the mainstream, moderate theology. This division requires an exact and precise understanding of the culture, the history, the practice, and the worldview of the group. To do so otherwise risks alienating more of that religion's adherents.

Second, any counter-extremist strategy must include the participation of religious communities and their leaders. Religious scholars and leaders are the only people who can steer the efforts of such work. Therefore, active contributions of moderate religious leaders must be sought and their input encouraged. These leaders can provide the informational element and the much needed credibility to expose the corrupted theology. An effective example of this strategy can be gleaned from within France, which was the first nation to engage in forensic theology, also known as

ideological surveillance. After 1986, when religious terrorists launched a wave of terror attacks in Paris, the French security services began working with Islamic leaders to learn the trademarks of extremist thought. These efforts helped them to identify and disrupt several extremist cells and prevent more than 25 planned attacks. In 2003, religious experts listening to sermons in various mosques pinpointed three clerics as probable extremists. Police investigators found that all three had links to a terrorist group led by a Turkish militant, and they were ordered expelled from France.[79]

Counter-terrorism specialists need to work with religious leaders in order to scrutinize religious intellectual activity and the traditional routes of knowledge transmission. As well, they need to accumulate sufficient knowledge and expertise in extremist theology in order to accelerate academic research, particularly the study of various religious concepts that have been misinterpreted by extremists. Religious concepts especially need to be studied, understood correctly, and practiced contextually in order to order to engage religious communities in discussion and debate about the theological basis for extremism. This understanding will have three effects. Primarily, it will provide an alternate worldview that will contradict the extremist worldview, refocusing the theological lens, even if it is based on similar religious principles. Furthermore, it will help to identify and prevent the further radicalization of religious communities. Lastly, it will help to immunize religious youth from being indoctrinated into a culture of violence, thus preventing a new generation of terrorists.

Third, efforts must be made to properly understand and employ religious symbols and language. These are vitally important to the extremist and a lack of understanding can have devastating effects. For example, the concept of *jihad* is a central tenet in Islam. Contrary to misinterpretation common in the West, the

term translates to "sacred struggle" or "spiritual effort". Although a *jihad* can certainly be manifested as a holy war, it more correctly refers to the duty of Muslims to personally strive "in the way of God."[80] Speaking of a jihadist threat or referring to extremists as *jihadis*, while arguably resonating with Western domestic contexts, only perpetuates the image and perverse romanticism of extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda, making its radical theology more attractive to potential recruits. Similarly, references to counter-terrorism strategies must be vetted to avoid apocalyptic language that fuels the extremist viewpoint. The majority of extremist groups use cosmic language about a battle between good and evil. Thus, referring to counter-terrorism as a "war" or using terms like "evil" to describe groups falls prey to this type of language and motivates the extremist.

Fourth, developing an effective communications strategy is vital for countering extremism. There are two parts to such as strategy. First, there is the public communications aspect. The actions of extremists must be portrayed for what they are: heinous criminal acts that defy the norms of society as well as the norms of the religion that they purport to represent. This discrediting will create a public consciousness of extremism that will create debate, discussion, and knowledge of extremist theology and its consequences. Furthermore, communications technologies can be used to monitor, disrupt, and influence extremist activities. It is common knowledge that extremists spread their ideas through the international communications infrastructure utilizing websites, social media, and online forums. Governments need to pre-empt and prevent the propagation of extremist messages by obstructing these channels of transmission and, where this cannot be done, monitoring them for radicalized messages. Extremists function on ideas and these ideas are communicated through modern technological channels. In this regard, modern governments have the advantage and they should exploit this advantage to stop or temper the extremist message.

Fifth, and of particular importance in a counter-extremism strategy, is the need for governments to maintain the "high ground" especially when dealing with religious terrorists. Governments that have chosen the other route – abandoning their own principles in response to terrorism – have embarked on perilous journeys. It is poignant that religious groups have so often accused the governments of modern nations of being morally corrupt. The ability to label government leaders as hypocrites has animated extremists throughout the world, strengthened their zeal and drawn supporters.[81]

Sound counter-terrorism policy should be based on the full range of historical lessons in order to hasten religious terror's decline and demise. A counter-extremist approach is needed that focuses on the theology of religiously motivated terror groups and the religious population. Such measures, of course, do not erase all sources of opposition to a government, but they markedly reduce the extremists' base of support, on which they rely to carry out their operations. This strategy will also cause the much needed epistemological crisis, through dialogue, debate, and discussion that will erode extremist views as a motivation for action. These are not perfect solutions, as religious terrorism has proven to be especially fluid. However, these are strategies that can be more effective in readjusting the extremist lens. Also, they have historical precedence.

On 12 October 2002, 202 people were killed and 240 were injured in bomb attacks in Bali. The attacks involved the detonation of a backpack-mounted device carried by a suicide bomber as well as a large car bomb, both of which were detonated in or near popular nightclubs. A voice message from Osama bin Laden stated that the Bali bombings were in direct retaliation to the United States' war on terror and Australia's role in the liberation of East Timor. While countries reacted with a variety of counter-terrorism methodologies, which resulted in varying degrees of success, Singapore

augmented its counter-terrorism approach with unique methodologies directed specifically at religious extremism.

In Singapore, Al-Qaeda's interest was represented by an affiliated group known as Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). Using propaganda within the religious communities in Singapore, JI successfully indoctrinated the public into terrorist sympathisers, mobilized extremist supporters and recruited members. Realizing that religion was a critical factor in extremist operations was not difficult for Singapore's authorities. They were especially concerned with the forensic psychology of the four youths who set off the bombs in London on July 7, 2005 (7/7). These youths actually had little knowledge of Islam and were nursing a deep sense of alienation from society. They had a desire, however, to find out more about their religion and terrorist groups sensed and seized upon the opportunity to use them as pawns, which resulted in the misguided youths deciding to blow themselves up, killing many innocent people in the process.[82] The radical worldview of Al-Qaeda and JI posed serious challenges, while the organizations' pervasiveness and violent approach catapulted them to being the principal security threat in the region.

In response, Singapore's authorities quickly enacted laws that criminalized JI and developed an extensive intelligence effort against JI. After the swift arrests of JI leaders and operatives, it was realized that the threat still existed throughout the Muslim community as deviant teachings and influences persisted. Singapore's government recognized the importance of a theological response as an integral part of the counter-terrorism measures. However, the government was of the view that the most effective method to do this was through the Muslim community.[83] Leaders in the government called on the moderate Singapore Muslims to speak against the false theology of hate being disseminated by JI. They also called upon local Muslim scholars and leaders to come

forward and work with government authorities to ensure that others would not be influenced by such distorted theology. Unlike government authorities, Muslim scholars and leaders had the capacity to reach the community through mosques and madrasahs and inoculate them against the dangerous extremist teachings.

The government realized that the solution to preventing the spread of distorted teachings and support for JI was through promoting a strong and confident Singapore Muslim community as a vital part of that country's multi-racial, meritocratic and harmonious society. The government believed that if a religious community did not have a place in society, this lack of standing would completely undermine what the country stood for and Singapore would thus be prone to falling prey to religious terrorist movements.

The religious community in Singapore was empowered through the development of the Religious Rehabilitation Group, or RRG, which played an important role in rehabilitating the JI detainees and their families, as well as in the public education within the religious community and in public arenas. The RRG had three specific roles: to study JI's theology, offer expert opinion in understanding JI misinterpretations of Islam, and to produce necessary counter-theological materials as well as conduct public education for the Muslim community on religious extremism.

This empowerment had impressive results. Blanket condemnations and disapproval came from Muslim leaders and the Muslim community and in 2003, the Muslim community comprised of numerous groups, both Shi'a and Sunni, published a book entitled *Muslim...Moderate...Singaporean*, that gave theological guidelines for Muslims to reject extremism. These guidelines, since used by other religious and governmental groups in the region, included: upholding peaceful means; upholding the principles of democracy; upholding the rule of law; being contextual in thinking and practice; respecting the rights and opinions of others; and

upholding Islamic teachings.[84] While these may all seem obvious, the fact that they were published and endorsed by Muslim leaders and the pan-Muslim community had a significant impact.

Furthermore, both the government and the religious communities realized the importance of a cooperative and sensitive approach to the extremist problem. The government showed respect and restraint in its communication strategy, ensuring that it briefed Muslim leaders before the media when extremist attacks occurred. Furthermore, concern was shown for the welfare of JI detainees who were given religious and social ministrations from the Muslim community even as their families were also cared for by religious groups. Through these means, by targeting both the theological distortions and the broader religious community – the extremist centre of gravity – the Singaporean government was able to decrease the incidence of religious terrorism in the country.

In 2011, Canada unveiled its counter-terrorism strategy called *Building Resilience Against Terrorism* to provide a framework for addressing domestic and international terrorist threats. The report specifically mentions "violent Islamist extremism" which it explicitly identifies as "the leading threat to Canada's national security." More than a dozen times, the document refers specifically to "Sunni Islamist extremists" and specifically mentions other extremist groups with religious affiliations such as Hezbollah, the Tamil Tigers, and Sikh extremist groups.[85] Little doubt is left within the document as to the prime concern for the Government of Canada regarding terrorist threats. The strategy to overcome these threats has four elements: prevent, detect, deny, and respond. Prevention, the document states, is a major aspect of countering violent extremism and it aims at getting to the root-causes and factors that contribute to terrorism by actively engaging with individuals, communities, and international partners.[86]

Moreover, Canada's strategy for countering extremism can be broken down into three parts: intelligence and security, research, and community engagement. Impressively, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism* lists 24 government agencies that are involved in fighting terrorism, a list that includes the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSEC), Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FinTrac) and other obvious government intelligence and security organizations along with the Integrated Terrorist Assessment Centre (ITAC). The document makes several references to national and international intelligence agencies especially regarding the passage of information and stresses the importance of the rule of law. Of course, Canada has very strict regulations on protecting Canadian's from intelligence gathering that limits the powers of these organizations. While the debate on these protections is outside of the scope of this paper, it certainly is an issue that needs revisiting, especially in light of Canada's recent issue with "homegrown terrorists".

Regarding research, the Government of Canada started the Kanishka Project – a 5 year, 10 million dollar initiative to invest in research on preventing and countering extremism. This project is named after the Air India 182 flight that was bombed in 1985 by Sikh extremists, killing 329 people, most of them Canadians, in the worst act of terrorism in Canadian history. This project aims to build a multidisciplinary community of scholarship in Canada to improve public understanding of terrorism and support dialogue between government and researchers. The important question, however, is, will it include scholars and leaders from religious communities?

In addition, the Government of Canada has indicated that community outreach and engagement is important to countering extremism. It has developed a program of "community policing" through

the RCMP to try to enhance the understanding of shared concerns and to identify solutions in cooperation with communities. In particular it strives to engage religious groups in dialogue through a cross-cultural roundtable about the collective responsibility of safeguarding Canadians.[87]

Though not an explicit part of Canada's counter-terrorism strategy, the creation of the Office of Religious Freedom as part of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada should be noted. The stated purpose of this office is to protect and advocate on behalf of religious minorities, oppose religious intolerance, and promote the values of pluralism abroad.[88] It can be argued that this is exactly the type of societal value that Habermas calls for regarding religion.

Canada's strategy does seek to address the centre of gravity of religious terrorism. It notes the importance of including religious communities in dialogue and discussion about distorted theological beliefs. It seeks to include religious leaders in the decision-making strategies regarding extremism. These are important aspects, along with intelligence and security measures, that must be included in any effective counter-terrorism strategy that seeks to address religious terrorism. Yet, the recent incidents of Canadian involvement in deadly terrorist operations sponsored by Hezbollah in Bulgaria and Al-Qaeda in Algeria cause pause for concern. In addition, during the time of writing another Canadian, Mahad Ali Dhoore, is believed to have taken part in an al-Shabab suicide attack on the main courts in Somalia killing at least 29 individuals.[89]

There can be no doubt that, as CSIS has indicated, religious extremism is the greatest threat to Canadian security. Furthermore, extremist groups are attracting Canadians with their violent theology. These realities raise many questions about the efficacy

of Canada's strategy. To what degree are religious groups playing a lead role in dealing with extremism? Are counter-extremist theological messages being conveyed to religious communities by community leaders who have a better grasp of the contextual threat of extremism? Are religious communities being empowered to communicate about radical ideas to government authorities and to the Canadian public? Is research on the unique extremist threat progressing rapidly enough? It is the opinion of this writer that the first step in countering the extremist threat has been taken by Canada's counter-terrorism strategy. However, subsequent and rapid action is needed to continue the momentum and to address the questions that focus on the motivation behind religious terrorism.

Conclusion

Peace or utter destruction. It's up to you.

Captain James T. Kirk,
Star Trek, "A Taste of Armageddon"

As Sun Tzu admonished 2000 years ago, one cannot prepare everywhere for an attack. Resources must be wisely allocated to attain the greatest effect. This dictum is especially true when fighting terrorism. Religious terrorism has risen well beyond nuisance levels and threatens a number of state governments, and, given the propensity of extremists to view the world in apocalyptic terms, threatens to kill thousands of people and pull states into all-out war. Canada especially has an interest in the question of extremism as it faces a number of its citizens going abroad to join religious terrorist groups. Therefore, it is necessary to properly understand the enigmatic threat that is religious terrorism in order to deploy the resources to counter it. Ironically, the very aspects that make

extremism a unique threat also offer the keys to counteracting it – religious ideas and religious communities. By understanding religion as a lens through which extremists see the world, leaders and policy-makers can properly recognize how to deploy effective, long-term, counter-terrorism methodologies against extremist centres of gravity.

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