

2.1 History of terrorism studies

Hi there, good to see you again. Last week we discussed among, amongst other things the definition of terrorism and the nature of the phenomenon. And in the forum I observed quite a number of different opinions about what constitutes terrorism and whatnot, and the same holds for the labeling of certain groups. Well here's the questionnaire to start with. We have these lists of terrorist organizations and I want your opinion on it. What do you think of this kind of lists, and what do you think about certain groups? What groups should be on the list and aren't on any lists yet? Is that okay, or do you disagree with that?

Take your time. Have a good look at it. It's important that, this questionnaire is part of our joint research effort that is an essential part of this course. Thank you for filling out the questionnaire, and I'm looking forward to see and analyze the results and share them with you in the forum. This week, we're going to look into the study of terrorism and counterterrorism. So what are we going to do this week?

Well, here's a list of topics that we're going to discuss. The History of Terrorism studies and the disciplines and approaches. What scholars, what, different centers have produced many reports and studies that have been published in the last couple of decades. we're going to have a look at the names and faces of some of the key authors and where they conducted their studies. And then we're going to look at an important part and that's challenges and dilemmas. Well, doing social research, the social science research in general is, is difficult but studying terrorism is particularly difficult. Think about the problem of secrecy.

And finally, we got a look at the current state of the art. What key authors, key scholars said about the quantity and quality of what has been produced in recent years. What else this week? For those who are going for the Certificate with distinction there is the peer reviewed assignment. For more information see the course syllabus. And then for everybody else there is, of course, the weekly, weekly quiz.

In this video we're going to look at the History of Terrorism and counter-terrorism studies. Well terrorism is not new, and the same holds for, the study of this phenomenon. We're going to look at modern day terrorism. Meaning the terrorism that emerged in the late 1950s, early 1960s. So what did they focus on in those days? Well, they focused on, for instance, conflict Theory. Why do people fight each other? Why do they use violence? especially with the political science background they looked at the phenomenon, the new phenomenon offences decolonization, riots, violence. But, also riots and violence in Western European cities and North American cities. So the political violence in general was studied either under the name Terrorism Studies or Political Violence Studies. And the groups they looked at were anti-imperialist and revolutionary terrorist groups. And one of them was an organization called The Weather Underground that started on a campus in North America. And it can be labeled as Marxist, Leninist, left wing kind of Terrorism. In those days, I don't think they use that term. But, it's definitely something we would, label it now. And it's the start of a [UNKNOWN], a number of red terrorist groups that would dominate also very much the news in the 1970s.

The 1970s and 1980s saw much more attention to the modus operandi of terrorist groups. the techniques, the methods they used to target selection. And the targets of those days were a lot of hijackings and hostage takings. Well, here's just a few examples of red organizations that were active in these times. So, people with a Marxist, Leninist background, extremist Left groups. here you see the logo of the Rote Armee Fraktion, which was active in Germany. If you want to know more about it, I can commend, recommend a number of books. But, I think my best recommendation would be to watch the movie Bottom Line of Complex. A very interesting movie that shows you a bit of the context in which the group was operating those days. And also the motivations of some of the individual members to, to join that struggle. And also a lot of violence that was connected to that group. Bottom Line of Complex. Actually, if you want to learn more about tips for movies, you can find it on the course dashboard.

You also see a picture here of, Alberto Moro. A key leader, politician in Italy who was hijacked. Who was taken hostage by the Red Brigade in Italy. Again, a source for a lot of filmmakers to make a movie about, I can recommend Buongiorno, Notte, a very nice movie, that looks into the dilemmas also of those who were involved in taking, this man hostage.

And there's another movie I have over here, it's called Aldo Moro. Starring Michele Placido one of the Leading movie stars in Italy. An excellent movie that also shows all the dilemmas of those who are fighting the Red Brigade and also the members of the group. In the end I think this particular hostage taking was disastrous for many people including the Red Brigade itself.

And you see a picture of the Japanese Red Army. The Japanese Red Army yes. An active group not only in Japan but actually just here 200 meters from my office there's the French Embassy. And they stormed that embassy in 1974. trying to press the release of one of their fighters. Actually, they managed to do so. And they managed to get away with it, on a plane. In the end they managed to escape to Syria.

And that international connection was also something of great interest to researchers in those days, the international dimension. The, the combination of Japanese Red Army And Palestinian groups attacking in Europe or in Singapore. It was really very international already in those days and of course researchers were very much interested in how this groups operated. In the 1990s as in previous decades, Scholars focused mainly on the, the topics of those days, the groups that were active, the way they staged attacks and the way government reacted to that.

And in the 1990s, these were the Nationalist Separatist Groups. Of course, they were active also in the decades before that, but there was a lot of study, a lot of publications offering the IRA, the Irish Republican Army, fighting in the United Kingdom, and ETA, the Basque separatist group in Spain. But, also groups in India and Sri Lanka, the Tamil Tigers for instance.

Another type of terrorism that we're studying were what we call Islamist groups. It's a difficult term, but let me label it as Islamist groups, as most scholars did in those days. And they were looking at, for instance, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the reaction of the Israeli and other authorities to those activities to new types of attacks, suicide attacks for instance. And there was also attention for the first time to a new group. Here you see a quote by the CIA. A quote that also appears in the report of the commission that looked into the terrorist attacks on 9/11. And the quote is from that report they're saying, the CIA noticed a recent stream of reports about bin Laden and something called al-Qaeda. That was in 1995 and a few years later there was a lot more attention to this group called, so-called group Al Qaeda. And it was after, you see a picture of it here, after the attacks on the US Embassies in Dar Es Salaam and Nairobi in East Africa. But in general, these 1990s saw a decline in academic interest.

We would not, we couldn't have known in those days that Al Qaeda, Islamist terrorism, and other types of terrorism would be so dominant in the last 12 years. But, in those days, there was a decline in interest. Fewer and fewer scholars were focusing on terrorism as an interesting subject to study. But something called Al Qaeda received a lot more attention after the biggest terrorist attack ever. The ones on 11 September 2001 where almost 3000 people were killed. Well that attack also is the starting point of an enormous growth in the field of terrorism and counter terrorism study. An enormous growth in terms of the number of scholars and experts that were looking into this phenomenon. many of them, most of them today are post 9/11 researchers. I'm one of them.

Now, you also saw a number of new research centers being established. The Center of Terrorism and Counter-terrorism at Landon Universities, for instance one of them. And you saw an enormous increase in training, policy advice and consultancy as governments wanted of course answers to all kinds of questions. Who was threatening us? Why? What can we do about it? How do we make sure that we don't do the wrong things and do the right things? All kinds of questions popped up. And scholars research centers try to Answer some of these questions and provide their services. And this resulted of course in enormous Growth of reports, books, articles, enormous growth in publications.

Here you see two graphs. one is a, a look at Amazon. The number of books with terrorism in the title. you see that the number of titles, book titles, is more than doubled after 9/11. And don't

forget, on the left hand side, You see, in blue, everything published, in the years before 9/11. And that means, in all the decades before 9/11. And then, after 9/11. Well, we're talking about 12, 13 years. So, an enormous growth in the number of Publications and the same holds for say more academic publications. If you look at Google scholar and look at the number of articles with terrorism in the title it's, it's more than, it doubled in 12 years' time.

So what have we learned? We looked into the development of terrorism and counter-terrorism studies starting in the early 1960s with just a handful of scholars. Then a growth in the 1970s and 1980s. And a decline in the 1990s which was Followed by an enormous increase after the attacks on 9/11. In the next video were going to look at the various disciplines and approaches of research into terrorism and counter terrorism.

2.2 Disciplines & approaches

>> In the last video, we discussed the history of terrorism studies. And in this video, we're going to look at the approaches and disciplines behind that term. I think it's safe to say that the phenomena of terrorism and counter terrorism have been studied by a wide variety of scholarly disciplines.

Well, here are just a few examples. Think of political science. scholars in that field are very much interested where terrorism fits in in political systems, how it is maybe produced by political systems and how it influences that same system. How does terrorism have an impact on political processes, on decision making, on how governments act or react to terrorist incidents?

And then you have military science war studies. The term says it all. they're mainly interested in the use of force, the use of the military to literally fight terrorism.

And then we have International Relations. Terrorism, at least for a long time, and in many countries, is pretty high on national political agendas, but also on the international one. And scholars in the field of international relations want to know, who puts terrorism on the agenda and why. And what impacts the fight against Terrorism has, for instance, on relationships between countries. Does it lead to cooperation, or more conflict? These are just a few questions they are interested in. And then you have communication studies. Last week, we mentioned the fact that terrorism, to some extent, is a tool for terrorists to spread the word, to spread a message, to create fear, to have an impact on society.

Our scholars in the field of communication studies, want to know, how does that work? What is the role of the media? how and what circumstances influence whether or not a country is turned upside down by a terrorist attack. Or how do you, how can you limit, for instance, the impact of terrorism on societies.

And then there's social psychology. You see a picture of a person that looks into the head of somebody. Well, I'm not sure if psychologists like that idea, and they will definitely frame their domain differently. but it is of interest to people who study terrorism. There are quite a number of books that have in their title, the mind of the terrorist. We want to know what's going on up there. How do they think? How do they behave? Are they different from you and me? Or not? Are they crazy or not? We will discuss that also later. What are their characteristics, and what about group processes. Who radicalizes, and who not. How to deradicalize persons.

All these are issues that are of importance in the fight against terrorism, in the struggle against terrorism, and that are studied by people in the field of psychology and social psychology. But there are many more disciplines that study the phenomena of terrorism and counterterrorism. But here's a blurb with a number of them, arranging from conflict studies to international law, public administration, police science, actually there are too many disciplines to mention them all. And there's no dominant one, but I should say that many scholars have a background in political science.

How to study and understand terrorism and Counterterrorism? Where to start approaching this question? Are we going to look at the behavior of individuals? Or look at the larger picture, the world political system and how terrorism fits in. So we start very small or look at something very big. Are we going to talk to people? Approach them? Try to interview of terrorist and people that fight terrorism? Or are we going to look at the facts? Are we going to get our data? Look at, for instance, archives? And are we going to look at causes or the effects of terrorism? Just basic questions with different approaches, and each with different challenges and dilemmas, which we're going to focus on a little bit later.

So there are many different practical approaches to study terrorism and counter-terrorism, but what about the theoretical ones? Well currently there are three main approaches. The first one is the rational or instrumental approach. This approach tries to understand terrorism and terrorists as rational actions, rational actors of people that want to achieve certain political goals. And their terrorist activities, their attacks, are an instrument to that. And are often the result of a cost-benefit analysis.

Here you see a picture of Martha Crenshaw, who was one of the early scholars that looked at terrorism as a rational act and looked at terrorists as rational actors. The second main theoretical

approach is that of social psychologists. And you see here a picture of Jerrold Post, who is one of the leading authors in this field, and we already mentioned some of the questions he and his colleagues like to address that are basically focused on the thinking and acting of individuals and that of smaller groups. And that's the main distinction with the rational or instrumental approach which focuses more on the wider political systems, political behavior and political processes.

The third main academic or theoretical approach is the multicausal approach. I'm not sure if it's, a well-defined approach as most academics would fit in that category as there is wide spread understanding that terrorism is highly complex, and that there is not one single explanation for terrorism. And if you want to understand terrorism, you'll have to look at many different causes. Well I think I would fit in in that category. And I think we have to look in a wide variety of phenomenon and causes if we want to understand terrorism and counter terrorism.

To sum up, there are many different ways to study terrorism and counter terrorism. There are many different disciplines Ranging from political science to police studies. And there are three main academic approaches: the rational instrumental approach, the social psychological approach, and a multicausal approach. Next time you read an article, try to find out the background of the author and the approach he or she takes in trying to understand terrorism. In the next video, we're going to look at the key authors and key centers of terrorism studies.

2.3 Key authors & centres

In the previous video, I already mentioned some of the leading authors in the field of terrorism and counterterrorism studies. And in this video, we're going to look at some other examples of key authors, very important centers and key journals in my area of expertise. Well, here is a list of some of the most well-known, most relevant, most often-quoted authors in the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism studies.

Have a look at the list. What do you notice? Look at the first names. You see very few ladies among them. Ann Speckhard Jessica Stern, Martha Crenshel. We have already mentioned her and my colleague there [FOREIGN]. We'll come back to that later.

An interesting list of interesting people, and if you want to know more about them, I've added a list of these people with their main publications on the course dashboard. The key research centers include, think tanks, NGOs and of course, many academic institutes that focus on terrorism, counter-terrorism, radicalization, etcetera.

Well, here are just a few places where I think the most prestigious centers are based. That's in Washington D.C. and the surrounding area. Think of the University of Maryland, just outside the beltway. And downtown Washington, Rand Corporation. Well, it's in Arlington. Georgetown University, also not really downtown Washington. but Washington based centers are among the key centers in the field of terrorism studies. Same holds for London. Where you find quite a number of Universities and think tanks that focus on terrorism and counter-terrorism. And one that has done so for quite a while is based in Saint Andrews, all the way up in Scotland. where I think if I had to maybe pick one institute, it's maybe Saint Andrews, that is among the most prestigious ones. While outside Europe, outside America, you have an institute in Israel, Herzliya, and one in Singapore, which I would count among the leading ones in the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism studies.

Earlier I mentioned the enormous increase in terrorism studies and the establishment of many new centers after the attacks on 9/11. Well, the Center of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism of Lieden University is one of them. And together with the neighbors, the International Center for Counter-Terrorism, I believe that The Hague is one of the, the new institutes that also play a role in my field of study. And the same holds for a number of institutes in Scandinavia, Oslo, Stockholm.

Of course in Spain there is quite a lot of expertise centers in Madrid, and also more recent phenomenon is the Center of Excellence of NATO on Terrorism in Ankara. And in Australia you have important centers of knowledge in Melbourne.

And I would also like to mention, one center in the United States that, has produced very interesting results and much training, to people working in the field of terrorism. And that's the Oklahoma, center for Terrorism studies, which was established after the, the attack by Timothy McVeigh 1995 who blew up a building there, killing 150 people. And one of the, initiatives that came out of that attack was a center of excellence where people realized they needed to know more about terrorism.

Where do you find the main academic output of these research centers and individual scholars? Well, of course increasingly on the internet, web logs, et cetera, but good old journals are still very important today, especially in the academic world. Well, here are the five leading ones in the field of terrorism and counterterrorism studies. From left to right and from oldest to Newest publication, you find Studies in Conflict and Terrorism. Then, next to it you find Intelligence and National Security. And in the middle, in blue, Terrorism and Political Violence. And then you to other one, you could say They are the most rebellious and the newest kid on the block.

So, Critical Studies on Terrorism. Offers a forum for a lot of writers, authors that have a different view on the study of terrorism and maybe in particular on the way terrorism is dealt with by states. So it's a more critical journal, as the title already suggests. And then you find, the latest one, Perspectives on Terrorism, which is an open online journal, of which I'm very much a favor. Offering a platform for both many authors who can write and publish, but also a lot of readers who can freely access all these studies, interesting studies that are published in that journal. On the course dashboard, you'll find a link to these journals as well as to the centers that I mentioned earlier. When

I presented the lists of authors in the field of terrorism, and counter-terrorism studies, I asked you if you noticed anything particular about that list.

Well let's now project that list on a map, as well as that of the centers and the journals. What do you see? Do you see something remarkable? What about this statement? The study of terrorism and counter-terrorism is not only a real dominated discipline, but also a heavily western dominated discipline. My next question would be, is this a problem? And if so, why is this a problem? I would love to hear your opinion about this, by way of this next questionnaire. Thank you for filling out the questionnaire. I'm very curious about the results, which we're going to discuss online.

How would I have answered that question? Well I do think that the study of terrorism and counter-terrorism is a male dominated, Western dominated discipline. I mean look at the facts, look at them map, there's no way I'm denying it. Do I think it's a problem? Well, to some extent. About male dominance, I would like to give my dear friend and colleague, Professor Beatrice De Graaf, the opportunity to say something. She's the author of a very interesting book published in Dutch called, *Dangerous Militant Women*, and she Definitely has an interesting opinion on this.

"Hi there. My name is Beatrice De Graaf. I'm a researcher at the Center of Terrorism and Counter-terrorism here in The Hague. I'm a historian by training, so let's reflect a little bit on what Edwin Baucher said about male dominance in terrorism research, is that true? Well historically most often academic, scientific disciplines in the world do have a male dominance unfortunately enough. However, it might just be the case that in the terrorism research business, women are slightly on the march.

There is some over representation compared to other disciplines of female engaging in terrorism research. Take for example, Martha Krenshaw. She's one of the most famous terrorism researchers there is nowadays. She could be, considered the godmother of terror research from a historical perspective. She wrote the book *Terrorism Context*, which is still a seminal work for students to learn more about the histories, the origins of terrorism.

And there are a number of other female researchers who interviewed, who worked with, female terrorists themselves and who wrote great, terrific books on female terrorism. For example, Mia Bloom wrote a book on female, the reasons why women engage in terrorism called *Bombshell*. And there is another book by Jessica Stern on suicide terrorism. but there is also an important study of Anne Speckhard of women engaged in, for example, Chechnya, Chechen war on terrorism.

So, just to round this point up. There is indeed male dominance in Terrorist research, but women are on the march."

What about western dominance? I do think that is a problem. There are too few non-western scholars from Africa, Asia, Latin America. And if there's a resulted in much attention to terrorism in the west or against the west, a far less attention to terrorism elsewhere. And if we look at the map of terrorist incidents worldwide, we know that most terrorism takes place outside the western world.

And what about the study of counter-terrorism? If we look, for instance, at Pakistan, There is much attention to counter-terrorism in Pakistan and how that can help us to increase safety and security in the Western part of the world. But what about the impact it has on Pakistan? What about what terrorism does, to Pakistan itself? There's far much less attention to that.

And think about this statement about labeling terrorists. Here you see a picture of a man who killed a number of people in a cinema near Denver. And the statement here says, I shot, what, 71 people and killed 12 of them. And it reads, if I were a Muslim they would of called me a terrorist. What do the makers of this statement want to show? What do they want to hint at? And do you agree with that? I'm not sure. But I do think that western media, society, and scholars, might be a bit biased when it comes to labeling terrorism, especially when Muslims are involved. Summarizing this video, we've seen that most office in the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism studies, are either based in North America or in Europe.

Well, this Western bias has some negative implications for research. And it's good to be aware of that. Hopefully this will change in the years to come. In the next video, we're going to

discuss some of the practical challenges and dilemmas, when doing research on terrorism and counter-terrorism.

2.4 Challenges & dilemmas

So now we know more about the history of terrorism studies. The main disciplines and approaches. And we also mentioned a number of names of persons and institutes that research terrorism, and counter-terrorism. I can assure you that all these scholars and experts find it difficult to study these phenomena. Why is this the case? What challenges and dilemmas are they confronted with?

Well, here is an overview of the main difficulties. On the left you see a list of some of the main difficulties. Well, last week we discussed a problem of definitions, and the lack of one is an obstacle in doing research on terrorism. For instance comparative research. How can I compare your results of a study on terrorism with my results, if we don't use the same definition. And we're comparing maybe apples and oranges. A lack of a definition is a problem in doing research.

The second difficulty for research is the fact that terrorism is subjective and politicized. Think for instance about researching counter-terrorism. There you have to rely on reports by governments, by agencies that deal with terrorism, and of course they have a political agenda. Their vision on terrorism might be different than yours, and you have to be aware of the fact that there is a political agenda behind it. And that has of course an impact of, on the usability of these kind of report. And then there is the problem of small numbers. It's a bit difficult to explain. How can small numbers in terms of terrorism constitute a problem? Of course we should be happy about the fact that in many parts of the world, there isn't that much terrorism. But it for researchers it's, it's partly difficult, because it's easier and, and it's easier to come up with very general statements, to come up with theories, if the numbers are high. Then you have a lot of cases and you can say more precisely why people join terrorist group, or why they use a certain tool. This is not the case for terrorism. The numbers are low, but let's be happy about that.

Number four on the list of main difficulties in doing research on terrorism and counter-terrorism, is the fact that these are very complex phenomena and that they're changing all the time. The terrorism and counter-terrorism of Today looks quite different from that of let's say a couple of decades ago. But the most challenging problem, dilemma. The most important difficulty in doing research on terrorism and counter-terrorism is secrecy. How to deal with the secrecy that surrounds both terrorism and counter-terrorism.

How about learning about the actors involved? How to understand their motivations, why they do things, how they organize things with all that secrecy that surrounds it? Think also about the names of many of these actors. We have intelligence services, but we're mainly refer to them as secret services, and we have secret agent. And the same holds for terrors, or terrorists or terrorist organizations. They also sometimes have names that indicate that secrecy. I already referred to the Weather Underground. Well, or actors with these names, and all that secrecy involved is of course a big obstacle in doing research. For instance, how to interview these people. What about the opportunities to do so, which is standard practice in social research. And you want to know more about people, you knock on their door and you ask if you can have an interview. Well, that's very difficult in terrorism and counter-terrorism studies.

And what about participant observation, meaning that you join a certain actor for a while. A counter-terrorism agency or a terrorist Organization because you want to know what's going on there. Well, I think the chances that you will be allowed to do that are very, very small. The same holds for trying to get much information from the police and secret services. I tried to get access to files and archives, especially with very sensitive oper, operational information. It's, the chance that you will get access to this data is very small. You can send a polite letter to these agencies, but it's very likely you get a polite no as an answer.

And then there are ethical problems. Even if you manage to get access to certain individuals or files, you run the risk of being blamed to be one sided, or to be too much understanding. And that mainly holds for having interviews with terrorists or alleged terrorists. Some people might not like it, might think you're unethical. And the same holds for interviewing or working closely together with all kinds of police and intelligence organizations. There are other groups of people who think that's not, you shouldn't do that. partly and that's related to the fifth challenge is partly related to the reliability

and validation problem. If you interview these people, if you get Access to, their sources, they might try to fool you. They might give you their version of the truth. they might try to influence you. And it's very difficult with all that secrecy involved to validate, to, to really try to check that the information you get is valuable or not. It's an enormous difficulty. This secrecy partly because it's related to ethical issues and reliability, and validation. But nothing is impossible.

One scholar that managed to overcome the secrecy problem is Jessica Stern, a leading scholar from Harvard that tried to answer the question, why religious militants kill? And she wrote a book, *Terror in the Name of God*. And she thought that the only way to answer the question why these people kill is to talk to them. So she talked to prisoners around the globe that in the past, at one point in time, wanted to be suicide terrorists or want to kill others in the name of God. And she got access to these prisons. In it, it's an enormous effort to, to gain the trust of these people, and also the trust of prison authorities, and in the end she interviewed quite a few of them. I think showing that it is possible to overcome the problem of secrecy, but again it caused her a lot of time. But it's a great book. I think it's, it's one of the best efforts to try to understand the motivations of, of, of people to kill others in the name of God.

And here at the Center for Terrorism and Counter-terrorism of Leiden University, we've also tried to talk to former terrorists and people who allegedly recruit for the Jihad in Syria. We think it's very important that you at least try to do so. And in some cases you can be successful. At the same time, we also have good relationships with law enforcement. The police intelligence community, again with the aim to try to better understand these actors. But the secrecy involved in the work of these actors remains an enormous obstacle.

In sum, there many difficulties and challenges, and I guess that secrecy is the most important one. In the next video, we're going to see what scholars and experts have produced despite these challenges.

2.5 Current state of the art

In the previous session, we discussed the challenges and dilemmas when doing research on terrorism and counter-terrorism. And in an earlier video, we showed enormous increase in studies, centers, researchers, in the field of terrorism studies after 9 / 11. But what insights has this boom produced. And a most important question, do we know Much more about terrorism and counter terrorism before 9/11?

The answers to these questions by some of the leading scholars in the field show a relatively critical attitude towards the products of the study of terrorism. But, in more recent statements, they seem to be rather positive about the kind of research that has been done in recent years. Well this is what they have to say Andrew Silke for instance who in 2004 wrote a very critical book about the results of terrorism studies

in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 noticed in 2009. That the field of terrorism studies is beginning to stabilize from the biases in focus in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 and a war on terror. And Magnus Ranstrorp, who is affiliated with the Swedish National Defense College, expressed the need for vigorous debates. Critical self-reflexivity and alternative analytical assumptions and approaches.

And the third quote, more recent one, is from Alex Schmid. Who, amongst all others, is a fellow at the International Center for Counter-Terrorism, here in The Hague. While he's rather positive about latest developments, in 2011, he wrote, we're very happy with that. He said that terrorism studies has never been in a better shape than now.

Looking at these statements and having studied other works that look into the state of the art in my field of study the following issues stand out. These are main characteristics, including both strong points and weaker points, and one of them is the focus on niches. a lot of terrorism researchers look into very specific types of terrorism or modus operandi. A good example of that is the interest in terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. A lot of books, articles, reports have been published about that. But it's, it's really not the type of terrorism that takes place most of the time. It's a very worrisome development. But some say too much attention has been focused on that.

Another example is lone wolf terrorism, or lone operator terrorism. Very interesting many people, remember the horrible attack in, in Norway by Anders Breivik. We want to know, you know what, what motivates these people, why they do it, what can we do against it. But if we look at all incidents on terrorism, this is such a marginal phenomenon. It represents less than a percent of all attacks, maybe it's only one tenth of a percent. So we have to be careful. Do we devote a lot of attention to these very specific types of terrorism? However interesting they are, or do we Focus on the terrorism that most countries deal with every day.

A second characteristic of the state of the art of terrorism and counter terrorism studies is the fact that it's based on the assumption that terrorism is a very big threat that terrorism constitutes of major attacks. And, if we look at the facts, we see that, in most countries, it's not a big physical threat. And at most, terrorist attacks are not of the scale of 9/11, Bombay or other major events. An issue of concern is the characteristic that the state of the art of terrorism studies is not focusing on comparative studies. And that there's few theory testing. This is a problem. I'll come back to that later.

Now, we're going to do something about it. We're going to actually compare theory and practice, something that needs to be done more according to many scholars in the field of terrorism studies. And next is the issue of the selection bias to western interests. What if I already given the example of Pakistan. Much attention to the threat posed by terrorism from Pakistan to the west and much less attention how terrorism affects Pakistan and Pakistani. And another characteristic is the policy oriented nature of research. Well, actually I think that's a positive Side of the state of the art of terrorism studies. There has been much research into questions that authorities have, governments have, how to deal with this threat. And much of the studies tried at least to give an answer to that. providing studies to questions that are relevant, especially in the field of counter terrorism.

And then the fundamental question. Do we know much more about terrorism and counter-terrorism than let's say, 12 years ago? I think the answer is yes. Yes, we do know much more. But of

course, there are under-researched issues, topics, that still need to be addressed. For a list of them, see the link to the journal *Perspectives on Terrorism*, which you find in the recommended readings. To sum up, we do know more about terrorism. And academia think tanks have produced interesting assumptions on causes, mechanisms and processes regarding terrorism and counter-terrorism. But we also notice that there has been a lack of theory testing and the testing of assumptions, and that's not a good thing. Why not? These assumptions are very often the basis of counter-terrorism policies, so if the assumptions are right, that's a good thing. But if the assumptions are wrong, maybe our counter-terrorism policies are wrong. So we need to test them. And that's what we're going to do.

We have selected five interesting assumptions. Either because they're challenged or the opposite, they're very much trusted and the basis of policy-making. And these five assumptions are the following. First is terrorism is caused by poverty. Terrorists are crazy. Terrorism is increasingly lethal. And the last two are terrorism is predominantly anti-western, and terrorism is successful. Well is it? What about these assumptions? Are they true, partly true, false, or do we have to qualify them as myth? That's what we are going to discuss next week.