Radicalism of the Hopeless: Refugee Flows and Transnational Terrorism

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We examine whether refugee flows increase transnational terrorism in states to which refugees flee. Recent studies find that refugee flows contribute to the spread of interstate and civil war, but to a far lesser extent have studies examined how refugee flows could lead to other forms of political violence. We discuss two ways in which refugee flows can lead to transnational terrorism: how conditions in camps contribute to the radicalization of refugees; and how poorly host states treat refugees. We then conduct empirical tests using data on worldwide international

refugee flows and transnational terrorism. Specifically, we model the effect of refugee flows on transnational terror attacks within a directed dyad framework to account for characteristics of origin and host states. Using a rare-events logit model, along with count models to check robustness, we find that refugee flows significantly increase the likelihood and counts of transnational terrorist attacks that occur in the host country, even when controlling for other variables. Given the prominence of refugee flows and populations worldwide, the results suggest that states with significant refugee populations and the international community at large should take measures to address the conditions in refugee camps, as well as the treatment of refugees by host states in order to prevent transnational terrorism.

KEYWORDS   conflict, security, terrorism

"Unless the rest of the world grasps the need of refugees for more than a fenced camp, the radicalism of the hopeless will continue to nurture terror and cause instability"

–The late Arthur C. Helton, Council on Foreign Relations, 2002

After September 11, 2001, the United States directed the world's attention to disrupting terrorist networks that had given rise to the attacks. As part of this effort, the US Congress passed the REAL ID Act of 2005, which among other things substantially tightened up laws on asylum seeking by refugees. In announcing the passage of the legislation, the primary sponsor of the bill, Representative F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., noted that "these provisions will hamper the ability of terrorist and criminal aliens to move freely throughout our society."

The United States is not alone in its concern about a connection between refugees and terrorism. The issue is prevalent today in many other areas of the world. In November 2010, for example, news reports highlighted the Yemeni government's decision to increase the difficulty with which Somali refugees could enter and seek asylum. Officials claimed that terrorist militants associated with al-Shabaab were arrested in refugee camps after using refugee routes to enter the country (Spencer 2010). Despite widespread fears that some asylum seekers and displaced individuals may be the source of the spread of terrorism, with few exceptions refugees and their potential connection to transnational terrorism have scarcely been examined empirically (Khan 1987; Ekey 2008). Instead a large portion of research considers the relation between refugee flows and higher level forms of violence including civil and interstate wars (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006; Salehyan 2008). As terrorism is such an important concern to policymakers and increasingly to scholars, we ask whether refugee flows across state borders increase the likelihood of terrorist attacks in the country into which the refugees flee? Specifically, we investigate whether refugee flows increase the number of terrorist attacks committed in the host country by individuals from the refugee's country.

To understand the scope of the problem, consider that at the end of 2010, there were 15.4 million refugees displaced from their homes, four-fifths of which live in developing countries. Substantial numbers live in Pakistan (1.9 million), the Islamic Republic of Iran (1.1 million), and the Syrian Arab Republic (1 million) (see UNHCR Global Trends 2011). This large number of refugees worldwide coupled with research on refugee communities has led to an increased understanding of the refugee experience. The average refugee experience is miserable at best—displaced from their homes, refugees far too often occupy unsanitary and isolated camps, which

lack access to basic resources and healthcare. Moreover, host states are typically unsympathetic to the plight of refugees as they fear harm to their own markets, security, and well-being (Whitaker 2007). Far from being a welcome refuge from earlier problems, many refugees find themselves even more aggrieved within the host state. By and large, refugees are victims in this experience. However, we posit that two parts of the refugee experience—conditions refugees face within camps and the often obstructive actions of the host state—might lead some small subset of refugees to be more vulnerable to violent ideologies and forms of expression, including terrorism.

Using refugee data obtained from The United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the ITERATE Terrorism Data from the years 1969–2001, we estimate a set of directed-dyad statistical models to assess the relationship between refugee flows and transnational terrorism. Within a directed dyad framework, we include a number of variables that control for relationships between the host and origin states that might influence both refugee flows and transnational terrorism. We find that refugee flows do indeed contribute to a higher likelihood of terrorism in the host state, a result that is robust to different estimation techniques and model specifications. We also describe a number of anecdotes from contexts as diverse as Africa, Latin America, and Middle East, which all reinforce the quantitative findings.

Of crucial importance, we are not making a blanket statement that all refugees are terrorists or would-be terrorists. In fact, most refugees are victims of violence brought upon them by groups and states. None of the language inside this paper should be construed as applying to the refugee population at large. We have tried to use language that emphasizes the possibility of terrorism

arising from *within* refugee flows, and are not implying that the two are equal to each other in any way. That said, we have found compelling statistical and anecdotal evidence that acts of terrorism can emerge from within the refugee population. Our hope is that by understanding the potential danger, states can better protect and treat the countless numbers of innocent refugees as part of a solution to the challenge of terrorism.

In the next section, we review the existing literature of the effect of refugee flows on political violence generally. In section three we present the theoretical framework connecting refugees to an increase in terrorism against host states. Following, we outline the research design with emphasis on the importance of using a directed-dyad approach, and section five presents the results with attention to robustness using different estimation approaches and model specifications. As refugees and terrorism are both important concerns to policymakers, we devote attention in the conclusion to the practical implications of this study, which suggest that host states and international agencies can do a lot to mitigate the conditions that lead some refugees to become radicalized and turn to violence.

REFUGEES AND CONFLICT

Refugees are defined as any person "who flees a country of origin or residence for fear of politically motivated harm" (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006, 341). The flow of refugees has the potential to be both positive and negative for the countries to which displaced individuals flee. Refugees could provide what Jacobsen calls "refugee resources" or the store of human capital, entrepreneurship, and increased labor (Jacobsen 2002, 577–578) all of which could benefit the host state. These resources could potentially benefit the host country, as well as the increasing

levels of foreign aid and the increase in jobs provided by relief agencies designed to help refugees; however, too often the spotlight is on the rampant crime in lawless camps, potential looting, and military recruitment designed to target youth and other vulnerable groups (Jacobsen 2002, 581–584). In addition to the challenge of dealing with refugees once they come in, it can also be difficult to police a sometimes porous border, and the state is the primary actor in developing policy for these situations (Jacobsen 1996).

Unfortunately, many states are at times incapable of managing the effects of refugee crises on the domestic population, which can lead to even more domestic instability. Due to competition for land, resources, employment, etc., "certain sections of local populations can suffer as much as, if not more than, refugee populations" (Martin 2005, 332). Adding to the severity of these challenges, refugees also might consider their stay temporary and exploit the land and resources for short term benefit, further increasing the permanent effects on the host country and its citizens (Black and Sesay 1997, 252).

The possibility that competition over resources will lead to conflict has received some attention in the literature (Martin 2005), as have the security consequences of migration (Teitelbaum 1984; Weiner 1992–1993). In fact, evidence suggesting that refugees have a specific impact on both intra- and inter-state conflict has emerged recently in a number of studies. Refugee flows have been linked to the increased likelihood of civil war (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006) and interstate conflict (Salehyan 2008). Although the general argument in both of these articles is similar—that refugee flows lead to the spread of conflict—the causal logics differ.

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In the case of intrastate conflict, refugees upset local balances of power and economic stability in the host country, thereby producing domestic instability and war (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006, 342-343). Although there are many cases of refugees moving across borders, only about 10% of these cases result in civil conflict (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006, 352). Given the grievances that exist among refugees and the negative externalities they can create, it seems plausible that some form of conflict should occur more often than these results suggest. Examining other forms of political violence, especially those that do not require significant amounts of coordination and resources, could be instructive in understanding all the ways in which violence can emerge as a result of refugee flows.

In the case of interstate conflict, the argument begins the same highlighting negative externalities, but ends with a different punch line. Salehyan (2008) argues that the host state initiates a dispute with the state from which the refugees have fled in an attempt to cause a change in policy that will stem the flow of refugees (Salehyan 2008, 790). In addition, some of the externalities created by refugees affect the state from which the refugees have fled. It is possible that the origin state may pursue fleeing refugees or choose to initiate a dispute with a state that offers the refugees safe haven (Salehyan 2008, 791). The results of this study demonstrate a strong connection between refugee flows and interstate conflict.

Taken together, the evidence provided in these studies demonstrates that not only does conflict create refugee flows, but conflict may actually result from these refugee flows as well. In both of these cases, however, the mechanism leading from refugees to civil and interstate disputes relies on the involvement of other actors outside of the refugee camps. If refugee flows can produce

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large-scale violence, it is perhaps even more likely that refugees themselves will resort to violence, but only in limited ways, as far less coordination and fewer resources may be available. We thus shift our attention away from the negative externalities that refugees create and instead emphasize the reasons why some subset of the refugee population may resort to radicalism, which in turn increases the likelihood of transnational terrorism in host states.

REFUGESS AND TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM

Refugee camps are likely to present fertile ground for radicalization, which is defined by Ladbury as "the social processes by which people are brought to condone, legitimize, support, or carry out violence for political or religious objectives" (Ladbury 2009, 3). Martin-Rayo (2011) notes that a number of different factors can lead to radicalization, including religious education, lack of employment, lack of movement ability, and lack of access to a well-rounded education. Many of these conditions arise from the situations found in the average refugee experience, which are a combination of two key factors: the apparently hopeless conditions in which refugees find themselves upon fleeing and the poor treatment of refugees by host countries.[1] This is not an iron law; indeed, many refugees are victims of violence, war, and other atrocities, but

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[1] Of course, refugees themselves may not be victims of the refugee experience alone. In fact, due to the fact that some subset of refugees might be fleeing difficult political circumstances at home, it is possible that some refugees bring an elevated level of political involvement to the refugee experience. This may result in an increased likelihood for terrorism. We thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

do not turn to terrorism. We nonetheless contend that some subset of refugees may be radicalized as a result of the harsh conditions in refugee camps as well as the poor treatment of the host country. We consider each of these factors in turn.

First, the refugee experience is typically extremely dismal (Crisp 2003; Ekey 2008). Most refugee camps suffer a lack of adequate sanitation, proper shelter and resources, and healthcare infrastructure. Refugees leave their homes, their belongings, their family and friends for fear of persecution, and they arrive in locations supposedly better suited for relief. More often than not, however, the conditions are inadequate to properly care for the refugees.

The physical and mental health of the refugee also suffers dramatically in war conditions and, assuming that refugees leave because of war, an environment incapable of fostering health and rehabilitation further exacerbates the plight of the refugee. War has been shown to more strongly affect women (Plumper and Neumayer 2006), which, in addition to the devastating effects on women themselves, may leave the husbands and fathers of sick and disabled women angry, frustrated, and hopeless. The possibility of radicalization among men and women alike in these circumstances is not trivial. Whether by post-movement conflict, natural disaster, or post-settlement conditions, accounts of refugee health, including fertility and child mortality, demonstrate that refugees suffer considerably in camps (Verwimp and Bavel 2005). Many suffer for long periods with post-traumatic stress (Ekey 2008).

It is important to note that the dismal experiences may cause some subset of the refugee population to turn to terrorism, however these dismal experiences might also signal the vulnerability of a refugee population to outside groups interested in recruitment. As Sageman

notes in his work, an individual is much more likely to radicalize when his personal experience resonates with the propaganda of the terrorist organization (Sageman 2008, 83). In other words, if outside groups that are antagonistic to the host state, or a politically extreme subset of the refugee camps, consider the dismal conditions of refugees, they may recruit individuals who, having experienced these conditions, might be more sympathetic to the extreme messages.

Repatriation to origin countries can prove difficult; depending on the circumstances, refugees may be displaced for long periods of time. It is also possible that some refugees who have fled to a developed country can integrate well and might not seek repatriation. Fleeing to a developing country is likely fraught with uncertainties, however. Some developing countries may fail to take in and fully support the large and unexpected influxes of people to their country, thus reinforcing longer-term dissatisfaction among refugees. When repatriation does occur, in some cases it may not be back to the country of origin. In this sense, some refugees are malleable; they may change their occupation, ideology, and other forms of identity and therefore desire to return to a place conducive to their new identity (Kibreab 2003, 32–34). Others might not so easily accommodate or return, however, and instead strike back against the harsh conditions they face in the refugee conditions.

In addition to the effect of the generally miserable experience refugees have in camps and the inability to return home, there are strategic reasons that transnational terrorism may be more likely among refugees. Due to the geographic location of many camps, which is often just inside the borders of another country (Crisp 2003, 6), individuals are ideally located to conduct violence. The border is a critical location for the onset of conflict because rebel groups, other

exiles, and terrorists can easily infiltrate, hide, and recruit supporters in the refugee camp, which is easily accessible from the border and isolated from the government (Salehyan 2007). Those in support of conflict can find refuge in the camp and protection from detection as they recruit and train individuals to engage in terrorism.

Whether near or far from the border, it is also likely that the refugee camp is isolated and segregated from society at large, thus making the actions inside the camp hidden from the authorities. This privacy creates an opportunity for terrorist cell development, terrorist recruitment, and weapons laundering and distribution to go undetected. This last point is important. Not only do terrorists recruit out of refugee camps, but they might also provide resources that are otherwise difficult to obtain to sympathetic refugees within the camps. Moreover, this isolation from the rest of society can foster discontent against refugees on the part of host country citizens as well as on the part of refugees against the rest of the citizens in the host country.

Second, recent research on the connection between repression and political violence demonstrates some of the difficulties states impose on their populations (Krueger and Laitin 2008; Moore 2000; Piazza and Walsh 2012; Young 2013), especially vulnerable populations such as refugees. Thus, although the dismal refugee experience itself might have an effect on the refugees, the choice to engage in conflict is almost assuredly not independent of the treatment they receive from the host country. Although states may promise to take in and protect refugees from the circumstances they left behind, there is no incentive for, or punishment against, a state that fails to uphold this promise (Jacobsen 2002, 592). Indeed, the host country itself may fail to

provide the resources and freedom necessary to refugees to avoid radicalization, and instead may encourage refugees to leave. The government in Beirut, for example, imposed harsh measures on the Palestinian community with the aim of hastening their emigration from the country (Khashan 2003).

The failure to integrate refugees also occurs due to the negative perception of refugees and the negative impact they can have on the host country (Black and Sesay 1997, 252; Jacobsen 2002, 586; Martin 2005, 332). Because refugees can become competitors for land, resources, and employment, which may already be scarce in the host country (Martin 2005), the exacerbated scarcity due to the influx of refugees may frustrate locals and, in turn, the host government which may fear both developments. The subsequent host country response is potentially manifest in the denial of healthcare, education, or employment (Khashan 2003). If scarcity results and the refugees are the first to be cut from the partitioning, the resulting discontent could spawn an increase in violence and terrorism against both the citizens and the government of the host state. Thus, instead of integrating the refugees into society and potentially avoiding the possibility of terrorism, the host state may keep them on the outside of it in a bid to avoid the negative externalities that may come from attempting to integrate the refugees.

A host country could create further grievances by restricting the refugees from continuing to hold or expand their existing external social networks. This could lead the refugees to make new network connections in their new setting, thus providing an opportunity to extremist groups to fill critical voids in the social networks. By connecting refugees to new network structures, a refugee may add capability to a newly developed willingness to carry out terrorist actions

(Sageman 2008, 84–85). Salehyan (2007) proposes that conflict spreads due to the spread of these networks, arms, and combatants across national borders. If the host country is perturbed by the potential conflict between states or if host country individuals have conflict with the out-group networks, the host country may engage in pervasive border patrol and policing (Jacobsen 1996). Although the host might be seeking to avoid involving their nation in broader conflict (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006, 343), the restriction of social networks between the refugee and camp infiltrators, refugees and origin country, or refugees and host country individuals may further increase refugee grievance and isolation, which may encourage their willingness to engage in terrorism.

Finally, host states may create further problems by restricting refugees from engaging in politics in the host state. In the short run, refugees' lack of representation and participation in the host country may not affect grievances all that much, because refugees hold a greater tie and allegiance to their origin country. As refugees are increasingly stuck in protracted states where repatriation is difficult, however, grievances are likely to increase over time. As such grievances continue to escalate, individual willingness to find other forms of expression, such as terrorism, may increase.

In sum, the dismal conditions within refugee camps and the treatment of the refugees by host states can contribute to the radicalization of refugees. We argue that the refugees in a host country may engage in transnational terrorism in response to such conditions and thus hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: As refugee flows increase from Country A to Country B, we expect an increase in the likelihood of transnational terrorist attacks in Country B by individuals from Country A.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Hypothesis 1 implies that transnational information about both an origin and host state is important in evaluating the refugee-terrorism connection. We therefore follow recent practice and use directed dyads as the unit of analysis (Plumper and Neumayer 2010; Findley, Piazza, and Young 2012; Young and Findley 2011). Refugee flows occur almost exclusively between contiguous states, thus indicating that using all directed dyads would be inappropriate. Where refugees are able to flee further than a contiguous state, it is likely they are able to seek asylum in a more developed, stronger country. Accordingly, we restrict the set of directed dyads to be politically relevant (Lemke and Reed 2001; Salehyan 2008), which captures the conditions of contiguity and major power connection.[2] The data set ranges from 1969–2001 for all politically relevant directed dyads worldwide.[3]

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[2] While we have substantive reasons to restrict the data to politically relevant dyads, we also conducted the analysis on the set of contiguous dyads plus all OECD dyads and found similar results (See Appendix Table A1). We also note that current research on the topic finds no qualitative changes in results when using all dyads rather than politically relevant dyads (Findley, Piazza, and Young 2012).

[3] We did follow Salehyan (2008) in splitting the sample of politically relevant dyads into contiguous and non-contiguous dyads (See Appendix Table A2). In these results, the refugee

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The dependent variable is a measure of terrorism, from the International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE) dataset. ITERATE defines transnational terrorism as

"the use, or threat of use, of anxiety-inducing, extra-normal violence for political purposes by any individual or group, whether acting for or in opposition to established governmental authority, when such action is intended to influence the attitudes and behavior of a target group wider than the immediate victims and when, through the nationality or foreign ties of its perpetrators, its location, the nature of its institutional or human victims, or the mechanics of its resolution, its ramifications transcend national boundaries" (Mickolus et al. 2011).

As the theoretical argument emphasizes transnational terrorist attacks committed by citizens from Country A inside the geographic borders of Country B, we first obtain a count of all terrorist attacks satisfying that specific transnational requirement. In other words, we only count transnational terrorist attacks in which (1) the individual committing the attack comes from the refugee's country and (2) the attack itself is committed in the country hosting the refugees.[4]

variable remained strongly significant for the sample of contiguous countries. In the case of the non-contiguous countries, the results were mixed. In both the ZINB and NBREG models, the results were statistically insignificant. In the RELOGIT analysis of the non-contiguous dyads, however, the results were statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

[4] In the appendix (Table A3) we consider an additional possibility. Namely, we examine whether attacks against the origin state by individuals of the host state also increase as refugees leave flee. The results suggest that this is not the case. As noted in the conclusion and appendix, a fuller treatment of this reverse relationship is necessary before making final conclusions.

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Using the ITERATE database in this way is consistent with advice to think carefully about the measurement of the dependent variable (Milton 2012; Young and Findley 2011).[5]

Because of the directed dyad setup, only about 1% of the dyads have a high count of terrorist attacks. As such, we collapse the data into a dichotomous measure of the occurrence or non-occurrence of terrorism and use standard dichotomous dependent variable techniques. Due to the small number of transnational terror counts in comparison to the places where terrorism does not occur, we estimate a rare events logit model (King and Zeng 2001), which more accurately

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[5] Notice that the use of directed dyads together with ITERATE data allows us to eliminate instances of terrorism against the refugees by individuals of the host state from the dataset because such incidents do not meet condition (1). However, it does not eliminate the possibility that some of the data is due to refugee-on-refugee terrorism or that some of the data is due to cross border attacks. For example, in 1987, a bomb went off in a market in Pakistan. Responsibility was attributed to agents of the Afghan government, who were reportedly seeking to "[generate] hatred against Afghan refugees" (Mickolus, Sandler, and Murdock 1989). Our dependent variable would also account for ETA attacks on France as a result of France's treatment of Basque refugees (Mickolus 1980, 837). It would also include instances of terrorism by refugees against other refugees or workers in the refugee camp, provided the action happened in the host country. We did not see any evidence of this type of attack in our investigation of the data. It is important to reemphasize that not all incidents of violence qualify as terrorism under ITERATE's definition. Thus, while refugee violence against other refugees or aid workers may occur, it falls outside the scope of the ITERATE dataset.

predicts the likelihood of terror attacks given this distribution of the dependent variable. Although a rare-events logit model is the most appropriate model based on these grounds, we estimate a series of additional models, including a negative binomial model and a zero-inflated negative binomial to test the robustness of the results. Finally, we cluster the standard errors by dyad to properly account for serial correlation.

The main independent variable across our models is the logged number of refugee flows measured as the number of refugees that fled from Country A to Country B. The data are based on those reported in (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006), who originally obtained refugee data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 2011). This variable is lagged one year behind the dependent variable to address possible concerns over endogeneity.

We include a set of additional independent variables that are similar to past studies in order to control for other relationships that might account for transnational terrorism between two countries. These include whether there is a rivalry between the two dyads (Klein, Goertz, and Diehl 2006), whether both states are a democracy (Marshall and Jaggers 2009), the military capability ratio between the two dyads (Singer 1987), whether there is was a militarized interstate dispute (MID) between the two states (Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer 2004), contiguous borders (Stinnett et al. 2002), dyadic trade (Barbieri, Keshk, and Pollins 2009), and whether the temporal period occurred after the end of the Cold War. We also include a lagged dependent variable to account for the effects of past terrorism.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical Analysis

According to Hypothesis 1, we expect a positive relationship between refugee flows and transnational terrorism committed by individuals from the origin country against the host country. The results displayed in Table 1 demonstrate that there is consistent support for Hypothesis 1 across each of the three estimation techniques. In other words, as refugee flows from one country to another increase, the likelihood of terrorism committed by individuals with the nationality of the refugee against the host state also increases.

In column 1, the RELOGIT results are positive and highly significant when the dependent variable is a dichotomous measure of terrorism in the host country.[6] In column 2, we change the dependent variable from a dichotomous measure to a measure of the actual number of terror events. When we do this, the effect of refugee flows on transnational terrorism remains positive and strongly statistically significant.

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Although the negative binomial results are strong, the same rationale that led us to use RELOGIT (the fact that terrorism does not occur in the large portion of directed dyads) also suggests we use a count model that captures the large number of zero-counts. Accordingly, in

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[6] We also estimated an ordinary logit model. The results from the model for the refugee variable are similar to those presented in Table 1 ($b = .33$; p value $< .01$; z value $= 4.27$).

column 3 we report the results of a zero-inflated negative binomial (ZINB) model. The use of the ZINB model requires that the researcher specify two equations, one that accounts for the difference in the likelihood of experiencing any terrorism at all and the other to account for the magnitude of terrorism as defined by the number of events that occur. As Li (2005, 293) notes, the decision to include variables in the model that accounts for the probability of terrorism should be theoretically informed. The literature on terrorism, however, offers very little guidance on this point. Consequently, we follow the principle outlined by (Drakos and Gofas 2006) and include a measure that accounts only for the joint level of democracy in both the host and origin states in this portion of the model.[7] When we estimate the ZINB model, the results are similar to those reported in columns 1 and 2.

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[7] Drakos and Gofas (2006) only use monadic data, whereas the data we use here is dyadic. We feel that the best application of Drakos and Gofas' advice would be to include a measure that accounts for democracy in *both* countries as done in Findley, Piazza, and Young (2012). However, we also ran our ZINB models including only a measure of democracy in the host country. In these models, the effect of the refugee variable does not change from what is reported when we use the joint democracy variable. We also accounted for the possible existence of underreporting bias by incorporating a variable that accounts for the press freedom present in the host state following Li (2005). In each of the models, the substantive magnitude decreased slightly, but the refugee flows variable in each of the models remained statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

To get a better idea of the substantive effects, we calculated how the predicted probability of transnational terrorism would change in response to changes in the size of refugee flows for the RELOGIT model shown in Table 1. The results appear in Table 2 and demonstrate how the likelihood of transnational terrorism changes as refugee flows change from the 25th to 75th percentile. The change in the predicted probability of transnational terrorism as refugee flows change is around 15%. Especially given that transnational terrorism is a fairly rare event, a change of this magnitude is of substantive import.

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

The presentation of substantive effects in Table 2 relied on the results from the RELOGIT estimation method. Turning to the NBREG and ZINB models, we calculated the percentage change in the incident rate ratio (IRR) as a way to understand the substantive effects from these models. The percentage change in IRR tells us the expected percentage change in the count of events as the independent variable of interest changes. For the NBREG model, when the refugee flows change from the 25th to the 75th percentile, the expected count of transnational terrorist attacks increases by 91.38%. The percentage increase in expected counts is nearly identical using the results from the ZINB model.

The results for the control variables are generally consistent across each of the models we estimate. The discussion here focuses on the results from the RELOGIT model. Some of the control variables conform to expectations, while others differ from expectation. The coefficient on rivalry is positive, indicating that states that are rivals are more likely to experience

transnational terrorism. This result is similar to that which other scholars have found in studies of rivalry and terrorism (Conrad 2011; Findley, Piazza, and Young 2012).

Although democratic peace arguments might suggest a negative relationship (Maoz and Russett 1993), in fact, the result is the opposite. The coefficient for joint democracy is positive and statistically significant. As noted by Li (2005), democracy can have both a positive and negative relationship with terrorism. In one circumstance, it can offer non-violent routes for individuals who have a grievance (negative relationship). It can also constrain the ability of the executive to deal with terrorism (positive effect). Of course, the benefits of domestic political participation do not mean much to transnational actors. Thus, it is possible that between two democratic states, only the executive constraints matter, leaving us with the expectation of a positive impact of joint democracy on terror. Another possibility is that, while Maoz and Russett (1993) show that two democratic countries are less likely to get in an interstate conflict (that is, between their respective militaries), this does not constrain them from being passive sponsors of terrorism (Byman 2005). More research is needed to address these possibilities.

The result on capability ratio is potentially puzzling. It suggests that if the host state is more powerful than the state from which the refugees have fled, transnational terrorism will decrease. Some research has suggested that terrorism is a tool of the weak and that it is used when the balance of power resides in the enemy (Pape 2003, 346). A strong enemy can have weaknesses that the extremists can exploit (Lake 2002, 19–20). This suggests that as a country becomes more powerful relative to any other country, it might be more likely to use terrorism. Here, we find the

opposite. Perhaps this is because the relative strength of a country increases the costs for terrorists to operate, reducing the likelihood of terrorism.

Militarized intestate disputes (MIDs) are shown here to increase the likelihood of transnational terrorism, as might be expected. Contiguity, long a factor associated with conflict, is also positive as expected (Lemke and Reed 2001; Reed and Chiba 2010; Senese 2005). The result for trade is positive, suggesting that connections between countries are an important predictor of transnational terrorism. The results on the Cold War confirm that the end of the Cold War reduced transnational terrorism (Enders and Sandler 1999). In addition, past transnational terrorist events remain a very good indicator of the likelihood of future terrorist events.

Given that there is a fair amount of discussion in the literature regarding the use of lagged variables (Achen 2000; Beck and Katz 2004; Keele and Kelly 2006), we re-estimated the RELOGIT model with changes to how we account for past terrorism within a directed dyad. Scholars have used a number of different approaches (Li 2005; Li and Schaub 2004; Plumper and Neumayer 2010). When we re-estimated the RELOGIT model with no lag structure of any kind, the results were stronger in terms of magnitude and statistical significance ($b = .40$; p value $< .01$; z value $= 5.00$). When we used a logged average of each directed dyad's history with terrorism, the results were nonetheless statistically significant ($b = .40$; p value $= .01$; z value $= .53$). This gives us more confidence that regardless of the lag structure, our results hold.

Another possibility, which would explain these results, is that terrorism may occur, not because of the refugees, but simply because of a large increase in the population living within their borders. In other words, controlling for population size may show that refugees matter little when

the population of the host state is taken into account (Ross 1993, 320–321). To address this concern, we added population size of the host state to each of the models shown in Table 1. In the results for each of the models (not shown, but available with replication data), the refugee variable remained statistically significant at the 95% confidence level or greater.

According to the UNHRC (2011a, 11), 80% of refugees live in developing countries. It might be entirely possible that the process we have spoken of here is limited to developing countries alone. To test for this possibility, we separated our sample into OECD hosts and non-OECD hosts, thinking that this could be a fair measure of developed vs. developing countries. The results show that the magnitude of the effect is bigger in OECD countries than non-OECD countries. However, the statistical significance is a bit smaller (but still over 95%) in OECD countries as opposed to non-OECD countries. Thus, although there is some difference between OECD and non-OECD countries, in both cases the effect of refugee flows is still significant, suggesting that this process plays out in both developed and developing countries.

As previously noted, the temporal domain of this study is from 1969-2001. Using refugee data for this entire period is consistent with other studies in the literature (Moore and Shellman 2007; Salehyan 2008; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). However, the refugee data likely decreases in accuracy the further back in time one goes. To address the possibility that our results would change if we only the later portion of the data, we conduct robustness checks in which we limit the time period under examination from 1990-2001. When we do this, the RELOGIT results remain consistent ($b = .35$; p value < .01; z value = 2.89). The results from the NBREG ($b = .31$; p value = .05; z value = 1.96) and ZINB ($b = .29$; p value = .07; z value = 1.81) are also

statistically significant. Each of these results is consistent with the results presented in the main models, increasing our confidence that these results are not contingent on early data on refugees. In the next section, we highlight a few examples from different parts of the world where terrorism occurred within the context of refugee flows in a manner consistent with both our theoretical story and quantitative results.

Anecdotal Support

Due to political turmoil in late-colonial Rwanda, a number of Rwandan refugees fled to neighboring countries. According to one study, 45,000 Rwandan refugees were in Burundi by 1963 (Van Der Meeren 1996, 263–264). The government in Burundi attempted to implement policies to take care of the refugees, but success was elusive. Providing food and decent living conditions placed a great strain on the government, eventually leading the government to place an emphasis more on its own population that that of the refugees (Goetz 2003, 20–26). Between local conditions in refugee camps, political turmoil within Burundi, and ethnic divisions, the conditions were ripe for violence. Unsurprisingly, violence followed shortly thereafter, but the scale of which was unexpected as a Rwandan Tutsi refugee assassinated the Hutu Burundi Prime Minister on 16 January 1965. Events such as these are not confined to Africa, moreover.

In Latin America, when the Chilean government of Salvador Allende fell in a military coup in 1973, a number of Chileans fled to neighboring countries to escape the upheaval, with many ending up in Argentina. However, once in Argentina, Chileans found themselves the target of harassment (Wright and Zúñiga 2007, 35–36). On October 8, 1975, a group of 12 people (including 11 Chileans) took a number of U.N. personnel hostage in Buenos Aires. In addition to

seeking passage out of the country, the hostage takers noted that they were "protesting the treatment of fifteen thousand Chilean refugees" (Mickolus 1980, 553).

Of course, one of the most visible refugee communities is that of the Palestinians. Palestinian refugees are found in many countries, but the largest concentrations are found in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Inside these camps, there is no shortage of distressing conditions, including overcrowding, lack of education, and poor economic opportunities (Sirhan 1975). Sympathy for the Palestinian cause led to funding of groups, which later used refugee camps as centers of operation to act against Israel (Friedman 1990, 16). These actions led to Israeli retaliation against the states hosting the refugee camps, which in turn created conflict between the host states and Palestinians, specifically on the issue of the refugee camps (16).

More specifically, on June 9, 1970 a group of Palestinian terrorists took a group of foreigners hostage at a hotel in Amman, Jordan. The reason for their action? The terrorists stated that they would harm the hotels (and presumably, the hostages) if the Jordanian army continued to exacerbate tensions by moving against the refugee camps (Mickolus 1980, 185). Eventually, the Jordanian government agreed to certain concessions and the standoff ended. Before releasing the hostages, George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), gave a speech to hotel guests in which he made clear that the refugee experience was a reason behind why terrorism occurred:

"If any of you would care to be our guests for another two weeks, and this time live in one of our refugee camps as we do, going out to fetch water in the morning with the women and sharing the cares and burdens of our camp existence I cannot call it a life—I guarantee that when you leave

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at the end of those two weeks, you will never look at the world in the same way again" (Cooley 1987, 14).

In each of these examples, there is a connection between refugees and transnational terrorism, thus offering additional support for our claims. It is interesting to note, however, that the reasons each of the refugees turned to terrorism are different. It appears that the refugee experience, local political conditions, and the treatment of refugees by the host state all have some bearing on turning refugees into terrorists. Each of the explanations is consistent with the theoretical framework we articulated at the beginning of this manuscript, but future work could unpack the mechanisms. In sum, both the quantitative and qualitative evidence suggests that there is good reason to expect refugee flows to lead to terrorism.

CONCLUSION

Scholars have shown the refugee flows can lead to conflict between states and within them (Salehyan 2008; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). However, the possibility that refugee flows might lead to transnational terrorism had not previously been explored. We consider our work to be an extension of the foundation laid by other scholars in the field of refugees and conflict. In this article, we consider how refugee flows can have an effect on transnational terrorism as well. Specifically, we argue that refugees find themselves in terrible living conditions in which the states hosting the refugees treat them poorly. These two factors can lead to transnational terrorism as some smaller subset of the refugee population responds against the host state. The empirical analysis in this paper offers substantial support for the argument.

As always, however, there are still other questions that are outside the scope of this study and may warrant attention in future work. Are there certain strategies that host states can utilize to deal with the potential of radicalization within camps? It may be that improving conditions is not enough to prevent radicalization if the refugee camps continue to be isolated from the rest of society in the host country. An examination of the location of refugee camps relative to major cities and resources could help answer some of these questions. We also posited that refugee flows into another country increase the number of transnational terrorist events within the host country perpetrated by individuals with the same nationality of the refugees. However, do refugees in host countries also find themselves the target of attacks by individuals from the host country? Or do refugee flows also lead to an increase in attacks against the origin state? In other words, perhaps refugee flows can increase transnational terrorism in multiple ways, which is something that needs to be considered more fully in future work.

There are some unanswered methodological dilemmas also in need of greater attention in the terrorism literature. One key question surrounds the correct specification of the units of analysis. We opted to use politically relevant directed dyads, supplemented with a set of dyads between contiguous countries and all OECD dyads, but it is possible that some other subset is more appropriate. Future research would benefit from an extensive exploration of a variety of subsets of dyads.

Despite the need for future research, there are some practical implications of this study that policymakers may consider. One of the most important points we need to stress in considering these implications is that our argument is not that refugee flows will automatically trigger

terrorism, nor that every refugee is a terrorist-in-waiting. To say that all refugees (or even that a large portion of them) are potential terrorists is a misguided interpretation of these results that might lead to attempts by states to implement blanket bans on allowing refugees into their countries. This would be an unfortunate and incorrect extension of the results presented here, to say the least.

Refugees undergo terrible experiences and often deserve assistance from both the states into which they have fled and the international community at large. Not all refugees will become terrorists, but the size of refugee flows could increase the distribution of individuals' will to engage in terrorism. The size of the flows will also affect how the host state sees the refugee threat. To reduce transnational terrorism, policymakers should focus efforts on both the refugees *and* the host state. Each of these actors bears some responsibility for the possibility of terrorism.

As long as individuals continue to flee their home country to avoid conflict and persecution, it is likely that we will continue to see transnational terrorism among these populations. In the end, it may be a more productive policy in the long run to deal with the causes of refugee flows, not only the consequences. In the short term, however, our desire is that this study provides better understanding to governments and international organizations about the possibility of radicalism among the hopeless.

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Table 1: Statistical Results for the Refugee Terrorism Relationship

Regressor	RELOGIT	NBREG	ZINB
Refugee Flows	0.33***	0.33***	0.33***
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Rivalry	1.07***	0.87***	0.87***
	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.19)
Joint Democracy	0.80***	0.44***	0.38**
	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Capability Ratio	-0.04***	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)

MID Initiation	0.73***	0.52**	0.51**
	(0.20)	(0.26)	(0.26)
Contiguity	0.69***	0.88***	0.88***
	(0.19)	(0.13)	(0.13)
Trade	1.11***	1.11***	1.10***
	(0.19)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Cold War	-0.78***	-0.85***	-0.85***
	(0.11)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Past Terrorism	3.34***	12.48***	12.46***
	(0.20)	(1.97)	(1.99)
Constant	-6.25***	-6.64***	-6.57***

	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.17)
Inflate Model			
Joint Democracy	--	--	-19.16***
	--	--	(3.57)
Constant	--	--	-2.94
	--	--	(1.85)
Observations	68,266	68,266	68,266

* p < 0.10; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01 (two-tailed)

Table 2: Substantive Effects of Refugee Flows on Transnational Terrorism in RELOGIT model

	Predicted Probability
Refugee Flows (25th percentile)	0.28
	(0.19, 0.39)
Refugee Flows (75th percentile)	0.43
	(0.29, 0.58)
Difference	0.15
	(0.07, 0.23)

Note. 95% confidence intervals in parentheses

APPENDIX

We include several additional analyses in this appendix. We note that these additional models need dedicated theoretical attention in future work. For purposes of the current paper, they demonstrate initial evidence that the model is robust to additional specifications.

Table A1: Results with all contiguous plus OECD dyads

Regressor	RELOGIT	NBREG	ZINB
Refugee Flows	0.37***	0.46***	0.46***
	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Rivalry	1.15***	0.79***	0.80***
	(0.22)	(0.20)	(0.21)
Joint Democracy	0.29***	0.25**	0.25
	(0.17)	(0.12)	(0.21)
Capability Ratio	-0.05***	0.01	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
MID Initiation	0.88***	0.58*	0.56*

	(0.21)	(0.32)	(0.33)
Contiguity	1.08***	1.11***	1.10***
	(0.16)	(0.13)	(0.13)
Trade	1.88***	1.46***	1.45***
	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Cold War	-1.00***	-1.04***	-1.04***
	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Past Terrorism	3.53***	20.96***	21.00***
	(0.17)	(2.36)	(2.33)
Constant	-6.22***	-7.51***	-7.40***
	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.12)

Inflate Model

Joint Democracy	--	--	-0.01
	--	--	(1.95)
Constant	--	--	-2.28***
	--	--	(0.56)
Observations	242,344	242,344	242.344

* p < 0.10; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01 (two-tailed)

Table A2: Results with politically relevant non-contiguous dyads only

Regressor	RELOGIT	NBREG	ZINB
Refugee Flows	0.48**	0.38	0.40
	(0.24)	(0.33)	(0.33)
Rivalry	1.47***	0.85**	0.88***
	(0.41)	(0.35)	(0.34)
Joint Democracy	0.80***	0.42**	0.32*
	(0.22)	(0.18)	(0.18)
Capability Ratio	-0.07***	-0.02	-0.02
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)
MID Initiation	1.01***	0.06	-0.01
	(0.35)	(0.47)	(0.49)

Contiguity	---	---	---
	---	---	---
Trade	1.85***	2.52***	2.46***
	(0.48)	(0.57)	(0.53)
Cold War	-1.15***	-1.30***	-1.31***
	(0.17)	(0.23)	(0.23)
Past Terrorism	3.70***	12.11***	12.10***
	(0.28)	(2.73)	(2.71)
Constant	-6.57***	-7.80***	-7.64***
	(0.40)	(0.46)	(0.41)

Inflate Model

Joint Democracy	--	--	-16.60***
	--	--	(3.13)
Constant	--	--	-2.22**
	--	--	(1.04)
Observations	52,574	52,574	52,574

* p < 0.10; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01 (two-tailed)

Table A3: Results with politically relevant contiguous dyads only

Regressor	RELOGIT	NBREG	ZINB
Refugee Flows	0.33***	0.27***	0.27***
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Rivalry	0.87***	0.79***	0.79***
	(0.22)	(0.23)	(0.23)
Joint Democracy	0.88***	0.50**	0.54**
	(0.25)	(0.22)	(0.24)
Capability Ratio	0.08	0.01	0.02
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
MID Initiation	0.56***	0.54**	0.54*
	(0.21)	(0.28)	(0.28)

Contiguity	---	---	---
	---	---	---
Trade	0.61***	0.45**	0.45**
	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.19)
Cold War	-0.31***	-0.35*	-0.35*
	(0.16)	(0.21)	(0.21)
Past Terrorism	2.80***	11.73***	11.79***
	(0.23)	(3.00)	(3.09)
Constant	-5.90***	-5.37***	-5.37***
	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.21)

Inflate Model

Joint Democracy	--	--	12.50***
	--	--	(2.62)
Constant	--	--	-15.77***
	--	--	(0.40)
Observations	15,692	15,692	15,692

* p < 0.10; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01 (two-tailed)

Table A4: Terrorist attacks against the origin state

Regressor	RELOGIT	NBREG	ZINB
Refugee Flows	0.15	0.16	0.15
	(0.16)	(0.12)	(0.11)
Rivalry	1.10***	0.89***	0.89***
	(0.20)	(0.18)	(0.18)
Joint Democracy	0.78***	0.42**	0.36**
	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Capability Ratio	-0.05***	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)
MID Initiation	0.73***	0.50*	0.49*

	(0.20)	(0.26)	(0.26)
Contiguity	0.73***	0.91***	0.90***
	(0.18)	(0.13)	(0.13)
Trade	1.07***	1.07***	1.06***
	(0.19)	(0.16)	(0.16)
Cold War	-0.76***	-0.83***	-0.83***
	(0.11)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Past Terrorism	3.39***	12.71***	12.69***
	(0.20)	(1.98)	(2.00)
Constant	-6.23***	-6.61***	-6.55***
	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.17)

Inflate Model

Joint Democracy	--	--	16.23***
	--	--	(3.65)
Constant	--	--	-2.96
	--	--	(1.89)
Observations	68,266	68,266	68,266

* p < 0.10; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01 (two-tailed)