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Introduction by Jon B. Alterman, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C.

A little more than a decade ago, the world's leading academic experts on terrorism could be gathered in a not very large conference room to discuss the state of the field. As a relatively junior researcher at the United States Institute of Peace at the time, I was in such a room several times. The gathered experts rued the lack of attention most academics paid to the phenomenon of terrorism. Mainstream political science of the time was wedded to understanding the actions of states. With the exception of a few pioneers such as Martha Crenshaw[1] and David Rapoport[2], the view of many was that terrorism was properly seen as the province of diplomats, intelligence operatives and abnormal psychologists.

A decade on, political scientists have been grappling to understand terrorism for years, with mixed results. They have generally been more successful examining individual case studies, such as the Irish Republican Army and the Palestine Liberation Organization. They have been less successful relating the case studies to each other and deriving basic principles that hold between them.

The greatest strength of Audrey Kurth Cronin's book is that it cuts through the endlessly complex narrative of each individual case to highlight its essence, and then derives principles from those narratives. She assembled a massive database of terrorist groups to help guide her work and check her assumptions. Some may quibble with her interpretation of the cases—and several of the reviewers do—but there is no disputing that her analysis is a catalyst for very focused and useful discussions among generalists and specialists alike.

John Schindler's review is basically positive, but he highlights areas of ongoing scholarly debate that he believes Cronin treats as settled. If the 1999 apartment bombings in Russia were actually carried out by then-President Vladimir Putin's forces rather than the Chechen rebels who took the blame, how would that affect Cronin's analysis of subsequent violence in Chechnya? If the authorities in Algeria carried out much of the most horrific violence in 1990's in order to discredit the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), how should that affect the way we see terrorists' decision-making? To my mind, these are muddying factors but not disqualifying ones, as Cronin's analysis rests on enough other cases to remain robust.

Richard English is even more positive, but he too has concerns about losing vital specificity on the route to comprehensiveness. In particular, he has some concerns about Cronin's coverage of terrorism in Northern Ireland, and he wonders how—or if—one should differentiate between groups that are focused on purely civilian targets versus those that seek to strike a combination of officials and civilians. English appeals convincingly for

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[1] Editor, *Terrorism in Context* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 1995).

[2] Editor, *Inside Terrorist Organizations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

scholars to more fully integrate the studies of nationalism and terrorism, especially if we seek to understand the durability of the former and to split it from the latter.

Max Abrahms views Cronin's book as wading into a divide in terrorism studies between those who see terrorists as principally motivated by the desire to obtain things from other groups versus those who see them as motivated by dynamics within their own group. It is a battle that Abrahms himself is very much in the center of, and he sees Cronin as a sympathetic voice. Central to Cronin's analysis is the fact that terrorist groups only rarely accomplish their political goals, although government responses often boost the cohesion of terrorist groups and help them endure longer than they otherwise might.

What is clear reading all three reviews is how a broad variety of approaches benefit from Cronin's work. It is hard to imagine a thoughtful reader who won't be provoked by something in this book. It is still harder to imagine one who won't find his or her work enriched by it.

Participants:

Audrey Kurth Cronin (M.Phil., D.Phil., Oxon) is Professor of Strategy, and Director of the War and Statecraft curriculum at the U.S. National War College, as well as Senior Research Associate with the Changing Character of War (CCW) programme at Oxford University. She was Director of Studies for CCW prior to her current post. In addition to *How Terrorism Ends*, notable recent publications include "The Evolution of Counterterrorism: Will Tactics Trump Strategy?" *International Affairs* (July 2010), *When Should We Talk to Terrorists?* , Institute of Peace Special Report (June 2010) *Ending Terrorism: Lessons for Defeating al-Qaeda*, (IISS Adelphi Series, London, 2008), "Cybermobilization: The New *Levee en Masse*," *Parameters* (Summer 2006) and *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy* (Georgetown University Press, 2004). Her research interests include all aspects of international relations, war, strategy and statecraft, with a particular focus on how conflicts end. She is currently writing a book on strategic responses to cataclysmic attacks by non-state actors.

Jon B. Alterman is director and senior fellow in the Middle East Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. He is the author or co-author of four books on the Middle East, and editor or co-editor of two others. A former member of the Policy Planning Staff at the Department of State, he wrote a 1999 report entitled "How Terrorism Ends" while a Middle East specialist in the Research and Studies Program at the United States Institute of Peace.

Max Abrahms is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University, as well as a Postdoctoral Fellow on the Empirical Studies of Conflict project sponsored by Princeton University. He also teaches a terrorism course at Johns Hopkins University. Abrahms has published several studies on terrorist motives, behavior, and counterterrorism strategy, including: "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Spring 2008), 78-105; "Correspondence: What Makes Terrorists Tick," *International*

Security, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Spring 2009), 180-202; "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Fall 2006), 42-78; "Dying for Nothing? The Political Ineffectiveness of Suicide Terrorism" in Stuart Gottlieb, ed., *Debating Terrorism and Counterterrorism* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 2009); "Are Terrorists Really Rational? The Palestinian Example," *Orbis*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (Summer 2004), 533-549.

Richard English is Professor of Politics at St. Andrews University and his books include *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA* (2003), *Irish Freedom: The History of Nationalism in Ireland* (2006), and *Terrorism: How to Respond* (2009). He is a Fellow of the British Academy, a Member of the Royal Irish Academy, and has lectured widely in Europe and the United States on the subject of terrorism.

John R. Schindler is professor of national security affairs at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, RI, and a senior fellow of the International History Institute at Boston University. He previously served for nearly a decade with the National Security Agency as an expert in counterespionage and counterterrorism. A historian (Ph.D., McMaster University), he serves as a consultant on terrorism to several agencies of the U.S. and Allied governments. He has published widely, including *Unholy Terror: Bosnia, Al-Qa'ida, and the Ride of Global Jihad* (Zenith, 2007), and *The Terrorist Perspectives Project: Strategic and Operational Views of Al-Qa'ida* (U.S. Naval Institute, 2008; co-author), and is currently completing *Agents Provocateurs: Terrorism, Espionage, and the Secret Struggle for Yugoslavia, 1945-1990*.

Review by Max Abrahms, Dartmouth College

A battle is raging in the field of terrorism studies. Proponents of the Strategic Model say that rational people participate in terrorist groups mainly for the political return, whereas proponents of the Natural Systems Model say that rational people participate in terrorist groups mainly for the social return. The former posits that terrorism appeals to its practitioners for the collective benefit of inducing government concessions, while the latter posits that terrorism appeals to its practitioners for the selective benefit of operating in an exciting, tight-knit, social unit. Based on these presumed incentive structures, the Strategic Model predicts that terrorist groups will act to maximize their stated political goals, while the Natural Systems Model predicts that terrorist groups will act to maximize their cohesion and survival.[1] This debate is spearheaded by academics, but is hardly academic; the question of what motivates people to partake in terrorism is fundamental to combating it because we cannot expect to cure a malady until we understand its underlying cause.

Audrey Cronin does not explicitly align herself with either school of thought, but *How Terrorism Ends* underscores that social calculations are more often determinative than political ones. Cronin peppers her book with admonitions against the Strategic Model, warning that terrorist groups do not behave like conventional political actors in the international system. Taking a page from the Natural Systems Model, she cautions: "The common assumption (especially among political scientists) that strategic theories developed on the basis of state behavior are directly comparable to terrorist group activities glosses over vital differences in their decision-making processes…terrorist groups do not behave as if they were the equivalent of weak, little states, and efforts to analyze them as if they were are misguided" (78). Cronin elaborates: "Organizations that primarily use terrorist tactics are not the same as small or weak states, or even factions in a civil war or insurgency. Relying on the[se political] assumptions and paradigms…is a mistake" (40).

Indeed, her analysis of how terrorism ends suggests that it is seldom due to rational political considerations. Like other recent studies on negotiating with terrorists, Cronin finds that this approach "very rarely" works, as "Most terrorist groups choose not to negotiate at all" (71, 40).[2] Echoing the Natural Systems Model, she explains that this

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[1] For a recent study on the Strategic Model and the Natural Systems Model, see Max Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," *International Security*, 32:4 (Spring 2008): 78-105. For a response to that study, see Erica Chenoweth, Nicholas Miller, Elizabeth McClellan, Hillel Frisch, Paul Staniland, and Max Abrahms, "Correspondence: What Makes Terrorists Tick," *International Security*, 33:4 (Spring 2009): 180-202. For an earlier study on this topic, see Martha Crenshaw, "Theories of Terrorism: Instrumental and Organizational Approaches," in David C. Rapoport, ed., *Inside Terrorist Organizations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 13-31.

[2] For nearly identical findings, see Abrahms, "What Makes Terrorists Tick"; and Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering Al Qa'ida* (Santa Monica, Calif: RAND, 2008).

reflexive aversion to compromise is due to the fact that "organizational survival overshadows the [stated] cause" (80). Cronin explains: "Received wisdom about conflict resolution does not apply to campaigns primarily characterized by terrorism" because unlike traditional political actors, terrorist groups recognize that they "cannot exist in the absence of violent activities" (40). The logic is straightforward and familiar: "If violence is part of the identity or livelihood of participants themselves, then the likelihood of negotiations resolving a conflict is miniscule" (40).[3] In fact, she suggests that what usually bring terrorists to the negotiating table are threats to their organization itself rather than to its political platform per se (63-4). Conversely, Cronin finds additional empirical support for the observation that refusing to engage in negotiations with terrorists does not shorten their campaigns either, reinforcing the claim that they are not operating according to standard political considerations (10, 35).

Cronin also finds that terrorist groups "very rarely" abandon the armed struggle due to achieving their official political goals (93). This conclusion is unsurprising given our knowledge that terrorist groups virtually never attain them in the first place. Her quantitative analysis leaves unanswered the crucial questions of whether terrorism is less effective than other forms of protest and whether terrorism's low success rate is inherent to the tactic of terrorism itself. These ambiguities stem from the fact that unlike my 2006 study in *International Security* entitled "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," she neither compares the success rate of terrorist campaigns to other forms of coercive leverage nor controls for common correlates of terrorism that are associated with substate political failure, such as the oft-extreme nature of terrorist demands.[4] Her case studies do, however, bolster my thesis that terrorist groups fail because their attacks on civilians are politically counterproductive, hardening governments from making concessions. She sensibly focuses on the handful of terrorist groups in modern history that have achieved their policy demands, highlighting that these were realized "despite the use of violence against innocent civilians [rather] than because of it" (82). Cronin is quick to mention that this does not mean terrorism accomplishes nothing at all. As previous studies have found, terrorist acts often undercut the organization's professed political agenda, while simultaneously boosting terrorist membership, morale, and cohesion (77). In other words, terrorism may be ineffective for accomplishing the organization's "outcome goals," but is effective for accomplishing its "process goals."[5]

Terrorism seldom ends by successfully coercing government compliance, but its perpetrators have often been stamped out by provoking government repression. Quite the opposite of granting concessions, the use of overwhelming force is "the most common

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[3] This is also a central argument in Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want."

[4] Max Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," *International Security*, 31:2 (Fall 2006): 42-78.

[5] On the distinction between outcome goals and process goals in the context of terrorist effectiveness, see Max Abrahms, "Are Terrorists Really Rational? The Palestinian Example," *Orbis*, 48:3 (Summer 2004): 533-549.

response to terrorism" (11). According to Cronin, "it is difficult to find cases" where the state did not use repressive measures and thereby dig in their political heels (11-12). She does not endorse a policy of repression, however, since this approach can backfire by turning the local population against the government, ultimately growing the terrorist group. A more frequent way for terrorism to subside is by alienating potential supporters (94-5). She provides copious examples of terrorist groups that "imploded" due to their lack of appeal to fresh recruits, infighting between organization members, and especially a backlash against the gory violence itself, which she finds is arguably "the most common" way for these organizations to go out of the terrorism business (108). Finally, Cronin finds that they regularly remain intact for patently apolitical reasons. A typical reorienting pathway away from terrorism is the transition to purely criminal behavior, exemplified in FARC, which now emphasizes cocaine over communism.

Cronin has written an important book on how terrorism ends. Her analysis is perhaps equally illuminating for its insights on why people partake in terrorism in the first place. The evidence is accumulating that these two research inquiries may actually be one in the same. For both, the empirics are converging on the surprising tendency among terrorists for social factors to trump political ones, with major implications for counterterrorism policy.

Review by Richard English, University of St Andrews

Audrey Kurth Cronin's powerful book addresses a vital subject with impressive scholarly rigour. The central case of *How Terrorism Ends* seems to me to be this. Terrorist campaigns always end, and if we properly understand why they do – on the basis of historical research - then our practical response to current terrorist challenges will be far more sure-footed and effective. Analysis of the latter phases of terrorist campaigns suggests six main patterns at work: decapitation, where the leader of a group is captured or killed; terrorists' entry into legitimate political processes, with negotiation; success, with the achievement of a group's aims; failure, through terrorist implosion or loss of support; crushing defeat by force and repression; and transition or reorientation from terrorist activity into other forms of violence. Of these, the majority (including most negotiations) involve terrorists *not* achieving their main objectives.

In setting out this argument, Professor Cronin devotes chapters sequentially to these six terrorist endings, before a seventh relates the research findings to the author's perhaps overriding aim: how the United States (U.S.) and its allies can deal, not just with terrorism in general, but with al-Qaida in particular. Cronin suggests here that, of her six categories, several are of little or no relevance to al-Qaida (decapitation, terrorist success, brute-force repression). There is a greater prospect of al-Qaida failure through implosion, division, inconsistency, and loss of support: "the al-Qaida movement can undermine itself, if it is enabled to" (189); negotiations are of no use with the central core of al-Qaida, but may yield results with some outlying groups which at times use the AQ brand label; and the group might transition to other means - not necessarily prettier ones, if they turn out to involve insurgency or conventional warfare.

In broader terms, not merely relating to al-Qaida, Cronin makes many valuable points. Arresting terrorist leaders tends to have worked better than killing them (14, 32, 201); once terrorist groups have become established, negotiating with them does not seem to have sustained their campaigns, any more than refusing to talk has shortened them (35); "Popular impressions of the efficacy of terrorism are overblown" (75); and terrorist violence is frequently counter-productive, turning people away from sympathy with a cause in whose name such repulsive atrocities have been carried out.

The book's main strengths are its sustained and systematic focus on an undoubtedly important and under-researched problem, the breadth of reading on which the book rests together with its emphasis on historical understanding, and the author's honest combination of scholarly inquiry with practical intention. I think Professor Cronin is right to suggest that, "While studying the history of terrorism is not sufficient to explain the threat we now face, it is certainly necessary if we are to extricate ourselves from the counterproductive policies and narrow doctrinal disputes that are absorbing all of our energies" (3).

How Terrorism Ends builds on Cronin's earlier, valuable work; it very helpfully complements recent scholarship by people like John Horgan on the process of people

disengaging from terrorism; and it furthers the process to which Audrey Cronin has herself already contributed, of inter-disciplinary debate about what we know that we know (and do not know) about this enduring terrorist problem.[1]

There is so much that is of high value in this book that it deserves to become a key text in the study of terrorism. I myself agree with many of Professor Cronin's conclusions and approaches, her arguments often harmonizing with my own about, for example, the need for dispassionate, disaggregative analyses of terrorism, or the recognition of the importance of avoiding an over-militarization of response.[2]

But, in a spirit of (I hope) fruitful disagreement and reflection, there do seem to me three points which might helpfully also be made.

One of the main division lines within the scholarly study of terrorism (and arguably an even greater line of division than that involving disciplinary background, or political orientation) is that between single case-study focus, and comparative analysis. For all of her detailed, single-case knowledge, Professor Cronin's book clearly falls into the latter category, but it seemed to me that some readers will retain doubts about aspects of this approach. It is remarkably difficult to be expert on such a wide variety of very different settings as this ambitious book addresses, and there are on occasion some slips. The case I know best is the Irish one, and I am very impressed by Cronin's sharp-sightedness about the shape of how terrorism has (largely) ended in Northern Ireland. She is quite right to stress, fundamentally, that the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) ended their campaign without even coming close to securing their central objective, that of a united Ireland. But she does make errors. Referring to the mid-1980s, for instance, she talks of loyalist terrorists opposing British state policy and suggests that then "the British government stood them down" (44); but loyalist groups like the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Defence Association (UDA) had never been government-run in the first place, and had indeed lastingly existed in sharp conflict with a British state which had arrested and imprisoned very many of their members.

As I say, this is not to undermine Cronin's broad argument about Ireland. But such slips do highlight the gap between closely-focused, monographic single studies and this synoptic viewing of many cases in one book. Cronin does not refer to some of the most widely-known case-studies of key terrorist groups in Northern Ireland,[3] and I think one of the key

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[1] Audrey Kurth Cronin, *Ending Terrorism: Lessons for Defeating al-Qaida*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2008; John Horgan, *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements.* Abingdon: Routledge, 2009; Richard English and Richard Jackson, eds., 'Symposium: The Belfast International Terrorism Workshop.' *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 2:2 (August 2009): 313-63.

[2] Richard English, *Terrorism: How to Respond.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

[3] For example, Ian S. Wood, *Crimes of Loyalty: A History of the UDA.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006; Jim Cusack and Henry McDonald, *UVF.* Dublin: Poolbeg Press, 2000; Henry Patterson, *The Politics of Illusion: A Political History of the IRA*. London: Serif, 1997; Jack Holland and Henry McDonald, *INLA: Deadly Divisions.* Dublin: Torc, 1994.

challenges for us all in understanding terrorism is to harmonize the insights of the hedgehogs and the foxes: for case-study specialists to do more than they have tended to do to reflect on wider patterns, and for wide-angled students of the subject to be sure to learn fully from case-study hedgehogs as they proceed.

For the bigger question lurks here for those who are instinctively inclined towards single-case expertise: to what extent *are* there actually broad patterns of experience in such a long and varied historical phenomenon as terrorism? Cronin acknowledges the range of terrorisms which have existed (referring, for example, to four main twentieth-century types of group - left-wing, right-wing, ethno-nationalist/separatist, spiritualist (80)). But the distance from, for example, Narodnaya Volya to Abu Sayyaf, or from Sendero Luminoso to Aum Shinrikyo, is *so* very broad, that some historians (and perhaps others) will wonder whether we can legitimately speak of historical patterns meaningfully at all across such expansive historical, geographical, practical, and ideological distances.

My own preference, perhaps naive, is to try to combine the insights of the fox with those of the hedgehog, and I have tried to do so in different books.[4] I suspect that Audrey Cronin would sympathize with this instinct, and the test even of an excellent book such as her own will remain, to some extent, the degree to which case-study specialists find her treatment of their particular settings to be both convincing on their own, and persuasive that there are meaningful shapes to human history beyond the unique, the local, and the contingent.

My second question relates to definition. Now, we are never going to resolve this matter (any more than students of nationalism, or socialism, or feminism will do in relation to their own contested central terms). But neither are we going to be able to ignore it, and with good reason. Audrey Cronin's definition is essentially four-fold, terrorism being characterized for her by "a fundamentally political nature", "the symbolic use of violence", the "purposeful targeting of non-combatants", and the fact of being "carried out by non-state actors" (7). But much of the violence she describes in her book testifies to problems with this definition. Leaving aside the issue of state terrorism, much of the violence she depicts has involved groups which very often targeted combatants rather than non-combatants (this being true of Hezbollah and of the IRA, for example) and Cronin herself notes in her discussion of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) that this group's violence often fails to fit her own definition of terrorism (57).

But clearly such groups as these have to be considered practitioners of terrorist violence (which is why she rightly discusses them in her book), and it seems peculiar to suppose that their integrated campaigns were terrorist when they deliberately killed civilians, but not terrorist when they accidentally did so or when their targets were military. Was Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA) carrying out terrorism when it attacked civilian targets, but not doing so in its attacks on the British military in the same campaign, using very similar methods? If a terrorist group bombs a building, intending to kill both its

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[4] Richard English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*. London: Macmillan, 2003; English, *Terrorism*.

military and non-combatant inhabitants at the time, does it make sense to suggest that some of the bomb's victims are victims of terrorism, while others killed by the very same bomb are not?

Moreover, the issue of defining a 'non-combatant' is complex in any case. Cronin refers to police forces as non-combatants (154) and yet in some of the cases she discusses the police forces have played at least a quasi-military role, or have been so closely allied with the military as to make distinction difficult. So I wonder whether a more relaxed and inclusive definition of terrorism would fit better with what Professor Cronin is actually dealing with in her fine book. When she says, for example, that "attacks on military targets by virtually any commonly accepted rigorous definition do not constitute terrorism" (82), is she suggesting that the famous October 1983 Beirut barracks bombing was not terrorist (except for the minority of victims who were civilian)? I don't think this would make sense, and I suspect that Cronin's admirably flexible approach to the question of which groups to scrutinize probably requires a more capacious definition of the central term in her book.

Third, there is the question of 'where next?' in our research agenda. Cronin presents her work as, in part, "a springboard for further research on pathways out of terrorism" (9) and this is a very valuable contribution made by this important book. And, again and again in these pages, what we are centrally looking at is less terrorism, I think, than terrorism arising out of what is really a more central explanatory variable: nationalism. As Cronin herself says, "National self-determination was the most important goal of terrorism in the twentieth century" (81); and even now many of the contemporary terrorist cases that we consider are really symptoms (ugly, vicious, often futile and unjustified symptoms, admittedly) of a deeper problem, namely the tension between national commitment and existing state boundaries. One of the main challenges for students of terrorism, if we are genuinely to understand our subject in the practically helpful ways that Professor Cronin seeks to do, is to recognize that our study of terrorism needs to be fully integrated, in many cases, with explanations which lie deeper in nationalism than they do in specifically terrorist dynamics as such. I think very many studies of the T word need far more material in their bibliographies on (and far more hermeneutical energy devoted towards) understanding the dynamics of nationalism and its persistent power. Cronin's impressive bibliography contains little on nationalism and nationalisms as such. But, from Spain to Israel/Palestine to Chechnya to Ireland to Kashmir to Sri Lanka and beyond, the full explanation of terrorism depends on an equally full explanation of the dynamics and contours of nationalisms. Integration of our approaches to these two great scholarly problems – terrorism and nationalism – is perhaps the greatest challenge ahead if we want properly to understand how and why terrorism ends (or why it does not).

These three points - about case-study analysis, definition, and nationalism - in no way eclipse my profound admiration for this book by Audrey Kurth Cronin. It is a work of the highest scholarly quality, and it deserves to be very widely read.

Review by John R. Schindler, U.S. Naval War College

Afrequently lost fact in the enormous amount of written works about terrorism since 9/11 is the essential reality that terrorism ends, usually badly for the terrorists. Few terrorist groups achieve their aims, and most enter a death-spiral, more often than not substantially of their own making. That al-Qa'ida is likely to end just as badly, is an outcome which can be too easily overlooked by current-day students of terrorism.

By confronting this reality in book-length form, Audrey Kurth Cronin has performed a genuine service for scholars and practitioners who wish to take a longer, and wider, view of how terrorist movements customarily wind up. She begins her impressive work with the basic question: "Terrorist campaigns may seem endless, but they always end. Why?" (1) The American war against Al-Qa'ida, on-going since 1998 and at a fever pitch for nearly a decade, surely does seem endless to many in the West, but Cronin's work demonstrates that the U.S. "war on terror" is hardly long at all compared to many such campaigns.

Cronin has studied diverse terrorist movements in an effort to derive viable answers to her up-front query, and brings to bear a massive amount of data about many groups from all over the world, specifically looking at 457 terrorist movements since 1968 (for statistical analysis see 207-222): this impressive list includes pretty much every band of terrorists active in recent decades, and every group with a significant following.

After crunching a great many numbers, Cronin defines six fundamental reasons why terrorist groups cease operations: decapitation, negotiations, success, failure, repression, and reorientation. This list appears comprehensive, and is fleshed out with many examples, most of which are relevant and instructive.

Moreover, her approach is not just broad but refreshingly honest and open-minded. The writing is clear and concise, with some overdue truths stated to good effect. Her takedown of the Red Army Faction, better known as the Baader-Meinhof Group is typical, "To say that they had an ideology would be an overstatement," noting that the group's "guiding principles seemed to be a kind of cafeteria-style reference" to a host of trendy leftist icons (97), and could be said about many of the casually violent yet intellectually lazy groups she analyzes.

About al-Qa'ida, another group prone to less-than-rigorous strategic thinking, Cronin states many facts which have been frequently lost in the partisan debate that has shrouded U.S. counterterrorism policy in a polemical fog for the last decade. Pointing out how difficult it can be to understand what exactly bin Laden's myth-making legionaries want, with the admission"Most analysts are snowed by al-Qa'ida's rhetoric" (177) Cronin helpfully demolishes the widely-held notion that the al-Qa'ida franchise directly controls much of anything outside the hills of Waziristan, almost 10 years after losing its Afghan sanctuary to U.S.-led invasion. Her conclusion – that al-Qa'ida survives due to a civil war inside the Muslim world, and that their deep hatred of the West and particularly the United States is fundamentally about its policies towards the Middle East (196) – is forthright and

defensible; it puts paid to any gauzy sense that they hate the United States for its freedoms. That Usama bin Laden and Al-Zawahiri are very far from achieving their exceptionally unrealistic theological-cum-political aims is made indelibly clear in this work. For its central analysis of how al-Qa'ida is likely to end, and what the U.S. and the West can do to hasten that outcome, Cronin's book stands as a helpful and thought-provoking book, as well as an unmistakably relevant one.

However, Cronin's statistical strength leads on occasion to analytical weakness. By relying on reams of data, she oversimplifies certain terrorist cases in a way that is problematic, and at times misleading. Many controversial issues are essentially glossed over. She dismisses the robust and on-going debate about Russia's 1999 apartment bombings[1] – reputedly committed by Chechen terrorists but very possibly done by Vladimir Putin's FSB – by noting that, "whatever their genesis," they "seemed to galvanize Russian public opinion." (133) Yet if the Russian government committed this awful crime, perhaps as a false-flag operation to restart the Chechen wars, this has to effect analysis of recent terrorism in Chechnya.

Similarly, Cronin correctly observes that the Philippines' al-Qa'ida affiliate, the numerically unimpressive Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), resembles more a robber-gang than a bona fide jihadist organization ("concrete evidence of its ideological mission remains thin," she notes accurately and perhaps charitably, 153), yet avoids important controversies surrounding this shadowy outfit. She mentions Edwin Angeles, a co-founder of ASG and for years its operational chief, only in passing in a footnote, without noting that he was credibly identified years ago as an *agent provocateur* of Philippine military intelligence, a fact that raises awkward questions about what ASG really is, and which complicates conventional analysis.[2]

This tendency to oversimplify complex realities is perhaps most serious in Cronin's discussion of Algeria's Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the blood-thirstiest of all al-Qa'ida affiliates, and the one that flamed out most catastrophically. While she observes correctly that GIA's "extreme strategy of polarization" (119) during the peak years of Algeria's civil war in the mid-1990s cost tens of thousands of innocent lives, adding that GIA horrifically murdered Algerians of all ages, for no coherent reason, Cronin skirts the difficult question of what was really going on. Observing cryptically that "extremists had apparently so infiltrated each other's organizations that at times no one was certain who was responsible for the crimes," (157) she does not address the troubling topic of what hand Algeria's

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[1] The best case for the "FSB did it" hypothesis remains David Satter, *Darkness at Dawn: The Rise of the Russian Criminal State* (New Haven: Yale Univ, Press, 2003), 24-33. In September 2009, *GQ* magazine refused to run in its Russian edition an article by investigative journalist Scott Anderson entitled "Vladimir Putin's Dark Rise to Power," which added details to the FSB role in the 1999 apartment bombings, based on testimony by Mikhail Trepashin, a former KGB/FSB officer – see David Folkenflik, "Why GQ Doesn't Want Russians to Read its Story," *National Public Radio* (npr.org), 4 Sep 2009.

[2] *The Philippine Star* (Manila), 6 Jul 1999. That Angeles was an *agent provocateur* has been generally admitted, even by Islamist rebels, see *Luwaran* (MILF website), 22 Nov 2002.

powerful and competent military intelligence service, the DRS, had in this dirtiest of recent jihads.

Yet there is extensive and credible evidence demonstrating that, in fact, GIA was deeply penetrated by the DRS, and that its agents, including several top GIA emirs, were orchestrating massacres of civilians to discredit GIA, a horrifying strategy which succeeded in defeating al-Qa'ida there and undermining the appeal of political Islam in Algeria altogether.[3] That Algerian military special units were executing their own massacres while masquerading as mujahidin – an effective yet messy tactic, known as pseudo operations in the trade – is another troubling issue which is left largely unexamined.[4] But what if GIA's explosive death in the late 1990s was due largely to manipulation by the DRS, more than by poor decision-making by senior terrorists? That was the conclusion of al-Qa'ida's top expert on Algeria and GIA, but is left unexplored here.[5]

The important role played by *agents provocateurs* in defeating terrorism is hardly new. The fantastic case of the Russian arch-terrorist, and Okhrana agent, Yevno Azef, continues to exert fascination more than a century later, yet too few scholarly approaches incorporate this shadowy reality into "terrorism studies," especially when analyzing more recent cases, to the detriment of the canon.[6] In this, Cronin is hardly alone, yet her impressive and well-reasoned study would have been bolstered by fewer statistics and more detailed analysis of how terrorist groups really operate – and end.

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[3] Mohamed Samraoui, *Chronique des années de sang* (Paris: Denoel, 2003), a detailed account by a DRS colonel, on how his service manipulated GIA into the ground.

[4] Habib Souaïdia, *La sale guerre* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001), explains how Algerian special operations units perpetrated false-flag massacres that were blamed on GIA.

[5] Jim Lacey (ed.), *A Terrorist's Call to Global Jihad: Deciphering Abu Musab al-Suri's Islamic Jihad Manifesto* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2008), 136-145.

[6] Recent Azef scholarship includes Anna Geifman, *Entangled in Terror: The Azef Affair and the Russian Revolution* (Wilmington DE: Scholarly Resources, 2000), while the best overview of Tsarist intelligence operations vis-à-vis Azef and his group is Ben Fischer (ed.), *Okhrana: The Paris Operations of the Russian Imperial Police* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1997).

Author's Response by Audrey Kurth Cronin

H aving three knowledgeable and constructive reviewers read my book is an honor, and I am grateful to them all. Each sees *How Terrorism Ends* through the aspect of political violence that most interests him, offering fascinating reactions to my humble effort to illuminate a colossal subject.   As Richard English notes, the book is designed to be a "combination of scholarly inquiry with practical intention"—i.e., not only a theoretical analysis of the patterns of endings of groups, but also a policy-relevant study for those concerned with the current threat. It is problem-driven, not methodology-driven, with its purpose being to answer the question: How does terrorism end?

To address the question with balance and some comprehensiveness, the book combines different methods and levels of analysis. There are three modes of inquiry: a focused quantitative analysis of nearly 500 groups in a database created for the book; a comparative analysis of several dozen case studies of modern terrorist groups; and a broad treatment of the evolution of modern terrorism, in order to place the arguments within an historical framework. Each approach is intended to check and balance the conclusions of the other two; none is sufficient on its own. There is also an attempt at even-handed treatment of all three actors in the terrorism equation: the group, the state and the audience. The first two chapters (decapitation and negotiation), emphasize the role of audiences; the second two (success and failure) emphasize the role of groups; and the last two chapters (repression and reorientation) emphasize the role of states. The last chapter of the book (one of the longest) typically draws the most interest from policy-makers: the analysis of how al-Qaeda will end. Those who are familiar with my work will recognize the key arguments, structure and points of the whole book first sketched out in my *International Security* article, "How al-Qaida Ends," vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006). The enduring aspects of the first six chapters are designed to be applied to any individual group or movement--al-Qaeda, as well as whatever terrorist campaigns will follow it—so as to provide insights into how they will meet their demise.

How Terrorism Ends is a big topic, and in his thoughtful review, Professor English sees the book as the work of a hedgehog ("The fox knows many things; but the hedgehog knows one big thing"). That's pleasing: Isaiah Berlin argued in his famous 1953 essay on Tolstoy that great writers and philosophers see the world through a single defining idea. I am flattered by the suggestion and would like to deserve the hedgehog label some day. But truthfully, I see the dichotomy as being between "lumpers" and "splitters," which is not quite the same thing. The book does not aim to promote a single idea or viewpoint about how terrorism ends; but it does see important similarities among historical case studies that may elude those who see only complexities and differences in them.

If it is to be accomplished at all, writing a book that tackles such a broad question demands stubbornness in hewing to the core line of inquiry.   It would have been impossible to include substantial detail on individual case studies. Some of that detail is provided in my other publications but could not be included in this book.   The manuscript was 210,000 words when it was initially drafted, culled down (in 2007, between the 5th and 6th drafts)

to a press-mandated 120,000 words to keep it affordably-priced and accessible to general readers. While the amputation was painful at the time, I have no regrets: the result was a more readable book. Those who study particular groups may not be satisfied: the vast majority of the cutting occurred in the narratives of individual case studies. Still, as some particulars vanished, I made every effort to ensure that the key points of the analysis remained accurate. Thus, even as I acknowledge Professor English's correction about the relationship between the British government and the UVF and UDA, I am nonetheless pleased that so eminent an expert on Northern Ireland is "impressed by [my] sharp-sightedness about the shape of how terrorism has (largely?) ended" in Northern Ireland.

With respect to the definition of terrorism, I remain comfortable with confining the term to attacks on noncombatants. As those who have taken my war college terrorism course will attest, I do not consider Hizbollah's 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine Corps headquarters in Lebanon to be technically classified as an act of terrorism. As evocative as the term is, 'terrorism' is not the only label that condemns a violent act. Despite all its horror and injustice, that bombing targeted combatants. Still, these questions deserve further analysis and debate: my book has succeeded if it stimulates additional research. If it played some minor role in Richard English's plan to produce a study of terrorism and nationalism, for example, I will be among the first to read it. I am a huge admirer of Professor English's works on terrorism: they are not to be missed.

Likewise, I eagerly await John Schindler's forthcoming study of *agents provocateurs.* His argument that Vladimir Putin, Abu Sayyaf 's Edwin Angeles, and Algeria's Department of Intelligence and Security (DRS) all acted as *agents provocateurs* is intriguing and will no doubt be detailed there. Admittedly the question is not treated as a separate inquiry in *How Terrorism Ends*, but neither is it overlooked—further engagement was not the book's purpose and would not have changed the conclusions. It's worth noting that with respect to the Armed Islamic Group of Algeria (GIA), however, the book is selectively quoted. Professor Schindler quotes (p. 157): "extremists had apparently so infiltrated each other's organizations that at times no one was certain who was responsible for the crimes," whereas the full passage reads: "But there was a sinister side to the military's behavior as well: villages close to security force barracks and posts were massacred; the security forces neither stopped the attacks nor pursued the perpetrators, leading to suspicions that the security services were complicit in the killings. Extremists had apparently so infiltrated each other's organizations that at times no one was certain who was responsible for the crimes, with some alleging that military forces were instigating or encouraging atrocities to demonize the GIA." Also, with respect to the Chechen case study, I have written in greater detail in my chapter of Robert Art and Louise Richardson's *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past.*[1] More to the point, *How Terrorism Ends* is not meant to be about *agents provocateurs*, so there is ample room for Professor Schindler to complete that part of what he terms the "terrorism studies" canon.

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[1] Audrey Kurth Cronin, "Russia and Chechnya," chapter 12 of Robert J. Art and Louise Richardson's *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007), pp. 383-424.

Max Abrahms, who has done outstanding work on the likelihood of success or failure of terrorism, offers interesting interpretations, especially of my chapters 3 and 4. He is correct that the book's quantitative analysis leaves unanswered the question of whether terrorism is less effective than other types of violence. Again, that is not its purpose and I am delighted to leave that line of inquiry to him. He is also right that I do not align myself completely with either the "strategic model" or the "systems model" of terrorism research. Both approaches emphasize the group itself, slight the role of the audience, and are too narrow for my taste. Different models suit different types of groups within different cultural and historical contexts. On the question of models for terrorist group dynamics, in other words, I am neither a hedgehog *nor* a lumper.

Finally, Professor Abrahms draws from my book the message that "the question of what motivates people to partake in terrorism is fundamental to combating it because we cannot expect to cure a malady until we understand its underlying cause." This surprises me. Looking at the hundreds of groups in my research, I conclude that the causes of terrorism—personal, political, social, economic, whatever—almost never persist throughout the life span of a group and lead to its demise. The causes of terrorism rarely point to its end, because the launching of a terrorist campaign always changes the political landscape in ways that are irreversible. But then my book is merely about endings: I eagerly await additional, excellent research by Professor Abrahms on *beginnings* to convince me otherwise.

These three reviewers have done me a kind service in reading *How Terrorism Ends* and commenting so insightfully about its strengths and weaknesses. I am extremely grateful to them all. As I wrote in the book's preface, "I have yet to read a perfect book, and I certainly have not written one." The reactions and suggestions of these generous scholars will help me with the next book, and perhaps I'll edge a little bit closer.