

3.2: A FIFTH WAVE OF TERRORISM?

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Executive Summary

The conclusion reached in the preliminary study is that the existing fourth – religious – wave will continue up to at least 2025. While other forms of terrorism will also exist – nationalist, right wing, left wing, and single issue – they are not likely to replace religious-inspired terrorism as the dominant, international wave up to 2025. Neither is it envisaged that a new wave will emerge to dominate in this period. However, it is likely that new forms of terrorism and new ideological and political drivers of terrorism will be more easily identified in the next decade. As such, a fifth wave is expected at some point as the religious wave winds down and a new dominant form emerges. Whether or not this is after 2025, in 2030, or beyond is simply speculation at this juncture.

All indicators point to the continuation of the religious wave for the next five to ten years. That, of course, may be the point, in that detecting the next wave is hidden by the dominant form of violence. However, Kaplan's own fifth wave is itself built on religion in some form, but as an atomizing factor rather than a unifying aspect of a larger identify. As Kaplan notes, 'the Religious Wave is different. Their ideologies, theologies and histories – indeed their very zeitgeist – is not taken from the world of ideas and the stuff of dreams as were the previous three waves. Rather the Bible, the Qu'ran and the Granath Sahib are shared by everyone in their societies. They are comprehensible to all levels of society...'¹ This mirrors Rapoport's own understanding that 'a striking characteristic of religious communities is how durable they are.'² There is a lot of scope for protest, violence, and political violence from a wide variety of groups and ideologies, but hewing to Rapoport's central notions of an "energy" or driver and an international aspect, there are few indicators that are readily detectable at this stage to suggest a wave that is emerging, or will emerge, to replace the fourth wave any time soon.

Across most developments, however are identity and expectations of meaningful existence. How identify shapes and alters individuals, groups, and populations in the future is likely to have an effect on the fifth wave. At heart, it may turn out that it is less about an individual's identify within a group; rather identity about being a human, unadulterated by science and technology.

¹ Jeffrey Kaplan. 2016. A Strained Criticism of Wave Theory *Terrorism and Political Violence* 28. P.232

² Rapoport. 2004. P.66.