

# Evaluating ‘Transnationalism’ as an Analytical Lens for Understanding REMVE Terrorism

By Graham Macklin

---

**This article explores the extent to which ‘transnationalism’ offers analysts a meaningful prism through which to analyze racially or ethnically motivated violent extremist (REMVE) terrorism or whether the term obscures more than it illuminates. The ‘transnational’ dimension of REMVE terrorism is often ill-defined and misunderstood, leading to misconceptions about the nature of such networks that in turn exaggerate their ‘global’ reach and distort our understanding of how they operate in practice. The digital revolution has internationalized far-right extremist networks, but many of these remain regional rather than truly transnational. Nevertheless, understanding the transnational dimension of social media and its role in the radicalization of lone-actor REMVE terrorists is increasingly important. Online REMVE communities rather than physical organizations per se serve as the medium through which violent ideologies are spread; where lessons from previous attacks are learned and internalized; where the perpetrators of violence are revered; and where further acts of violence are encouraged and incited—which, as this article demonstrates, has real-world effects. What this suggests is that, insofar as REMVE terrorism is concerned, ‘domestic’ terrorism is increasingly inseparable from tackling ‘transnational’ terrorism and that digital platforms have increasingly blurred the boundaries between the two.**

---

**R**ight-wing extremism, which might best be described as a specific ideology characterized by anti-democratic opposition toward equality,<sup>1</sup> is and indeed always has been a transnational phenomenon. It can and should be analyzed as such. Its activists and organizations have a long history of ideological transfers, exchanges, and entanglements.<sup>2</sup> This is reflected in a growing scholarly literature on the transnational dimensions of far-right parties, organizations, grouplets, and individuals.<sup>3</sup> This includes studies of the global circulation of conspiracy theories and other racist tropes, including the “Great Replacement Theory” and other similar iterations of the same idea, leading to claims that the far right has “gone global.”<sup>4</sup> These claims are not wrong, but the idea of a “global” far right only takes one so far in understanding the dynamics of racially or ethnically motivated violent extremist (REMVE) terrorism and, at its worst, risks inflating the problem since it hints that behind individual acts of violence sits an international network that is orientated around a unified and common purpose.

This problem of conceptualization is not without its historical

precedent. Post-war efforts to de-territorialize nationalism in favor of a grandiose and inflated “pan-European” vision in the late 1940s came at a moment when the fascist movement was at its lowest ebb in decades.<sup>5</sup> Efforts to organize on an international level around the principle of “Europe-a-Nation” were beset by nationalist rivalries as well as a set of domestic priorities that often superseded the dreams of an “international of nationalists.”<sup>6</sup> Thus, far-right efforts to internationalize its activities might more accurately be interpreted as a strategy for overcoming their acute domestic marginalization rather than a projection of its vitalism.<sup>7</sup>

The focus of this article is not, however, on the wider transnational networks of the far right, physical or ideational. Instead, it offers some reflections on how one might more sharpen our analysis of the role that transnationalism plays with regard *only* to REMVE terrorism. On this subject, the scholarly literature is significantly thinner.<sup>8</sup> In her recent PhD on the transnational entanglements between West German and American right-wing extremists from the 1960s to the 1980s, Annelotte Janse highlights that, as far as violence was concerned, there are two modes of transnational contact: “indirect” and “direct.” Indirect contact included pledges of solidarity, allegiance, and the development of role models or shared ideological visions; general propagandizing; and a nominal alignment with other organizations or an imitation of their violent methods. Direct contact meanwhile entailed ideological discussion, in person or writing; travel abroad; transfers of finances, weapons, and expertise, as well as safe havens; and, at an operational level, the merging of organizational structures as well as the joint planning, preparation, and execution of violent acts.<sup>9</sup>

Insofar as today’s right-wing terrorism is concerned, mediated through online platforms, contact between terrorists and their wider transnational community of supporters is both “indirect” and “direct” simultaneously since digital environments cater to and facilitate both forms of transnational action. “Direct” contact

---

*Graham Macklin is a researcher at the Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX) at the University of Oslo, Norway. He has published extensively on extreme right-wing and anti-minority politics in Britain and North America in both the inter-war and post-war periods. His most recent books include Failed Führers: A History of Britain’s Extreme Right (2020) and the co-edited collection Researching the Far Right: Theory, Method & Practice (2020). He is an associate editor of the academic journal Patterns of Prejudice and co-edits the Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right book series. Macklin is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (RHS). He is currently completing a book on extreme right-wing terrorism. Bluesky: @grahammacklin.bsky.social*

© 2024 Graham Macklin

is much rarer, however, and most contact that would qualify as such often assumes the form of incitement to violence rather than the provision of logistical support for attacks for instance. While such interactions—as demonstrated by the two case studies at the end of this article—are not the sole drivers of such REMVE terrorism, the appetite of this virtual community for violence is clearly part of the overarching matrix in which the perpetrator acts.

While REMVE transnationalism largely takes place in the digital sphere, it is worth analysts reflecting on the nature of the networks that are engendered by such activity in the first place. Are they truly “global”? We often think of ourselves as living in a “transnational world” in which individuals move and communicate across borders. However, when mapped spatially and longitudinally, between 1960 and 2010, these patterns of behavior consistently reveal themselves to be “regional” rather than “global”—driven not so much by political, cultural, or economic factors but geographical distance.<sup>10</sup> Regionally specific factors have also been found to have a bearing on the formation, evolution, and effectiveness of terrorist groups.<sup>11</sup>

The ongoing digital ‘revolution,’ which includes ever-improving language tools that enable activists to overcome linguistic borders, continues to upend older certainties. It remains the case, however, that while the online “community” might have internationalized, the groups themselves have not, or at least not to the extent that terming them “transnational” or “international” might imply. Indeed, upon closer scrutiny, many violent groups remain “regional” entities, both structurally and in terms of their activities. The Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM),<sup>12</sup> which the United States declared to be a Specially Designated Global Terrorist group by executive fiat in June 2024, is a case in point. This designation was made as part of a broader U.S. effort “to address the transnational dimensions of the [REMVE] threat” by the Biden administration.<sup>13</sup> <sup>a</sup> There is little publicly available information to suggest, however, that at the time NRM posed a “significant” let alone “transnational” threat to the security of “United States nationals or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States,” which such a designation indicated. Rather than being a genuinely “transnational” network, NRM is a pan-Scandinavian conglomerate that evinces little activity beyond its regional environment and even then, is heavily predicated upon its core Swedish leadership.<sup>14</sup>

It is also the case that some of the P/CVE tools that are used to combat jihadism, for instance, are essentially ineffective against REMVE networks since they are configured in a different manner, particularly with regard to financing, for example. Indeed, compared to other forms of terrorism, REMVE terrorists typically have a “low-risk financial profile.”<sup>15</sup> They fund their activities with small amounts of money from their own private incomes, using cash, checks, or credit cards, to purchase the necessary wherewithal.<sup>16</sup> They rarely solicit funds, engage in fundraising, or seek external sources of financial support, unlike many jihadi networks, characteristics which, as a 2023 Government Accountability Office (GAO) study highlighted, “make it difficult for financial institutions and for agencies to identify the financial behavior of domestic violence extremists as suspicious or linked to a violent activity.”<sup>17</sup> Evidence

that REMVE attacks are financed from *outside* the United States is “tenuous,” the Treasury Department acknowledges.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, where there is evidence of transnational financing, this has flowed the other way, from would-be terrorist to ostensibly non-violent, right-wing extremist movements. Prior to committing his terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand, Brenton Tarrant donated money to a range of groups and individuals in Europe and the United States rather than receiving money from them.<sup>19</sup> This is not to rule out the possibility of the situation changing with regards to the financing of REMVE attacks. While this is speculation, it nevertheless seems entirely possible given the range of anonymous crowdfunding websites and crypto exchanges currently on offer that a would-be REMVE terrorist could, in the future, use such platforms to fund an attack without its contributors being aware that this was the purpose of the fundraiser in question.

Transnational activism is often conceived of as being all encompassing of a particular group, yet the locus of transnational activism is often at an individual rather than a group level, a product of personal and political contacts rather than sustained and meaningful organizational ties. The activities of Robert Rundo of the now defunct Rise Above Movement (RAM) highlight this. Following the collapse of an initial prosecution into his activities as the leader of RAM, Rundo relocated to southeastern Europe, traveling in Serbia (from where he was expelled) to Bosnia<sup>20</sup> to Bulgaria<sup>21</sup> and then to Romania where he was arrested and then extradited to the United States in September 2024.<sup>22</sup> There, Rundo pled guilty to one charge of conspiracy under the Federal Anti-Riot Act after taking part in a series of violent rallies in California in the months prior to the deadly “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville. He and his colleagues had posted numerous photographs online of themselves preparing for or engaging in violence, often accompanied by statements such as #rightwingdeathsquad.<sup>23</sup> His own international travels aside, Rundo’s activities, training for violence, helped inspire the current crop of Active Clubs, small decentralized clubs with an expressly ideological underpinning at which like-minded white nationalists engaged in physical exercise and train in mixed martial arts in preparation for violence against their enemies, an idea that has diffused internationally since its inception in the United States.<sup>24</sup>

There are often risks involved in transnational activity that are not sufficiently foregrounded in its study. One worth acknowledging is that transnational activism, while often portrayed as enhancing a group’s capabilities or profile, and opens activists to a new level of legal jeopardy since border-crossing, in an age of biometric passports and retinal scans, offers the authorities plenty of opportunity to interdict their activities. Indeed, REMVE activists are often stopped at borders or airports and refused permission to fly. Several prominent American white supremacists, Klansmen and neo-Nazis are known to be barred from the United Kingdom, for instance.<sup>25</sup> Insofar as the present moment is concerned some, though by no means all, REMVE activists have been barred from flying (or deported back home upon arrival at their destination) if they are known to be traveling to Ukraine with the intention to fight,<sup>26</sup> though some activists, wishing to fight for Russia, have been able to do so through the simple expedient of flying via a third country.<sup>27</sup> There have also been several cases in the United Kingdom where activists, returning from travel to extreme far-right events in Europe, including Russia, have refused to give counterterrorism police access to their mobile devices upon request, resulting in

a The U.S. government has not, however, categorized NRM as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), which is the much stronger designation. One way to interpret this is that the 13324 designation outlines NRM as a threat, and provides a certain set of authorities, but that it has not reached a higher threshold of being a more significant threat, which would likely merit its designation as an FTO.



Police walk outside the Tops grocery store in Buffalo, New York, on May 15, 2022, following a domestic terrorist attack that killed 10 Black people. (Joshua Besse/AP Photo)

conviction under schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000, which undoubtedly complicates any future travel plans and so diminishes their capacity to engage in future forms of transnational activism.<sup>28</sup>

This article progresses in several sections. It first discusses not whether ‘transnationalism’ matters but how it matters with regard to REMVE networks. It does so through a short exploration of the “Americanization” of far-right violence in the United Kingdom in the 1990s before turning to examine the impact that the internet has had in fostering the evolution of a “post-organizational” far-right movement, thereby accelerating an already extant shift in far-right terrorist praxis, from groups to lone actors. The article then outlines two detailed case studies that highlight precisely how domestic terrorism in the United States is being exported to other countries including New Zealand, Slovakia, and Turkey, and how, in a recursive feedback loop facilitated by digital platforms and their various technological affordances, this violence is imported back into the United States, fueling acts of violent racist and homophobic terrorism on American soil, seen most recently in the racist massacre in Buffalo, New York. It concludes with the assertion that the failure to adequately address domestic REMVE terrorism is *a priori* a failure to counter transnational terrorism and vice versa since the two are increasingly a single phenomenon in the viral video age.

### American Influences on Foreign REMVE Terrorism

Although it might seem counterintuitive to say so, at least with regard to Western Europe, the threat from *organized* right-wing terrorism, is significantly lower today than it was in the 1990s.<sup>29</sup> This is despite some notable group attacks, including those perpetrated in Germany by the National Socialist Underground

(NSU), which went undetected for over a decade, in part because police investigated their murders as instances of “migrant” crime rather than racist terrorism.<sup>30</sup> Since the 1960s, the structure of REMVE terrorism has changed, from comparatively large organizations involving dozens of militants to individual terrorists operating on their own. Ravndal offers a tripartite typology of this evolution from large-scale, elite-sponsored terrorist groups involving hundreds of militants that operated across borders (i.e., the Organisation armée secrète (OAS) in France or various Italian terrorist groups), through to subcultural, racist skinhead gangs who were the main perpetrators of violence in the 1980s and 1990s (but who were “only rarely involved in international terrorism”) to lone-actor terrorists whose actions characterize the current phase of REMVE terrorism.<sup>31</sup>

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) recently stated that “transnational REMVEs continue to pose the most lethal threat to U.S. persons and interests, and a significant threat to U.S. allies and partners through attacks and propaganda that espouses violence.” While ODNI does not specifically address what constitutes a “transnational REMVE,” importantly its annual report does acknowledge that the transnational flow of violent inspiration crosses the Atlantic in both directions.<sup>32</sup>

This development has long been recognized in policy and academic circles. Five years ago, in an address to the Washington Institute for Near Eastern Policy in November 2019, the former acting director of United States National Counterterrorism Center, Russell Travers, remarked upon the influence that American extremists wielded upon the European extreme right: “We are now being seen as the exporters of white supremacist ideology; that’s a reality with which we have to deal.”<sup>33</sup> While Travers was

addressing the present moment, historians of the far right made an identical observation over 25 years ago concerning the emergence of a “Euro-American radical right.” The overarching thesis was that while ideological transmission had flowed from Europe to the United States during the interwar period, this “polarity” had been reversed after 1945.<sup>34</sup> Though this argument is oversimplistic, not least because of the influence of the United States’ Jim Crow laws upon the Nazi’s own Nuremberg Laws,<sup>35</sup> it does cement the increasing importance of transatlantic networking throughout the post-war period.

An awareness of such “regional” networking, and its role in facilitating extreme-right political violence and terrorism, helps nuance our analysis of events that might otherwise be perceived as simply “local” in origin. A salient historical example is provided by William Pierce, leader of the National Alliance (NA), who is best remembered today as author of *The Turner Diaries*, a hugely popular work of racist fiction that depicts America’s descent into “race war.”<sup>36</sup> Originally serialized in the NA newspaper, *The Turner Diaries* was published as a book in 1978 and has since gone through many editions and indeed translations to become an underground bestseller. In 2000, it was estimated that 500,000 copies had been sold.<sup>37</sup> “Every nationalist has heard about *The Turner Diaries*,” Pierce boasted.<sup>38</sup> “I intended people to be inspired,”<sup>39</sup> he would state after *The Turner Diaries* surfaced as an inspiration for Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma City terrorist whose attack in April 1995 killed 168 people in the largest domestic terrorism incident to date in the United States.<sup>40</sup>

Pierce’s writings also had an outsized influence upon extreme-right terrorism *outside* of the United States, too, notably the London nail bomb attacks in 1999 that were perpetrated by David Copeland, a former British National Party (BNP) activist who had joined a smaller national socialist sect called the National Socialist Movement (NSM). Copeland planted three nail bombs in London in symbolic areas designed to target the city’s Black, Asian, and LGBTQ populations. The final device, planted in the Admiral Duncan pub in Soho, which killed three people including a mother and her unborn child, and injured 79, four seriously, were designed to fulfill a crude plan that Copeland had derived from *The Turner Diaries*. Explaining his motivation to police, Copeland stated:

*Well, I’d just be the spark, that’s all I would plan to be – the spark that would set fire to this country. ‘Cos every nutter out there now, if he wants to get on the news, he’s gonna have to blow something up. They’re all thinking about it. If you’ve ever read *The Turner Diaries*, you’d know, [in] the Year 2000 there’ll be the uprising and all that, racial violence on the streets.*<sup>41</sup>

While Copeland’s racist animus was a product of his own local environment and experiences, clearly, he viewed his deeds through the lens provided by Pierce.

While *The Turner Diaries* remains perennially popular within extreme-right subcultures, the medium through which such ideas for igniting race war are transmitted is markedly different today. An entirely new digital architecture has since emerged, one that has “accelerated and deepened the internationalisation” of the extreme-right milieu.<sup>42</sup> The connection between digital media and murder is not new, however. Ten years ago, a study by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) highlighted that nearly 100 people had been murdered in a five-year period by registered Stormfront users, including the Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik

who murdered eight people in a bomb attack in central Oslo before murdering a further 69 people, most of them children, on the island of Utøya on July 22, 2011.<sup>43</sup> Many of Breivik’s ideological influences were homegrown, but he derived a certain inspiration from various “counter-jihad” writers in the United States whose impact on his thinking was reflected in his numerous references to them in his social media posts and his manifesto.<sup>44</sup>

### The Impact of the Internet

The downward trend from terrorist organizations to lone-actor terrorism converged with the ongoing evolution of social media and the various technological affordances they now offer would-be terrorists. While the majority of REMVE terrorists are lone actors, it has long been established that, while acting alone, they do not operate in a vacuum and that online communities, which are inherently transnational, play a major role in fomenting their actions.<sup>45</sup> Such platforms offer would-be terrorists a “community” (which has often eluded them in real life), the ideological and social resources to construct their worldview, and an emotional energy, experienced through their interactions with this “community,” which helps fortify them in their determination to commit to violence.<sup>46</sup>

Since 2011, when Breivik committed his atrocity in Norway, social media platforms have continued to evolve, embodying today a global force that transcends national boundaries. But this global force is also an increasingly decentralized and fragmented one. REMVE activists have moved away from posting on large-scale forums such as Stormfront toward unmoderated platforms like 4chan and encrypted social media apps. There is a consensus within the scholarly literature that these technological developments have helped fuel the emergence of a “post-organizational” far right.<sup>47</sup> Physical organizations are now less important than they were a decade ago, traditional notions of hierarchy have dissolved, and figures of authority are more diffuse, with the parameters of an individual’s “ideology” becoming less rigid and more eclectic since far-right “groups” are increasingly unable to control what their followers consume online. As one study observes, far-right ideologues today “produce audiences, not movements” and those that do tend to produce more inchoate coalitions that coalesce around certain issues before fading.<sup>48</sup>

Given the complex and diffuse patterns of influence within such online environment, this post-organizational shift, combined with the trend toward lone-actor terrorism, complicates the notion of both the “transnational” and indeed of what constitutes a “network” in the first place with regard to REMVE terrorism. Arguably, how one might best conceive of the way in which the “transnational” informs the “domestic” *vis-à-vis* extreme-right terrorism is best illustrated with two examples—one of which highlights the influence that U.S. citizens have had upon terrorism *abroad* and the other which illuminates how European citizens have influenced REMVE terrorists in the United States.

### “Terrorgram” – The Case of U.S. Extremists Shaping Acts of International Terror

The first example involves the so-called “Terrorgram Collective,” a loose consortium of interconnected Telegram “channels” that enables individuals from across the world to participate in an online community that shares extremist and graphic content, terrorist manuals, and other files and to engage in group chats as well as

encrypted peer-to-peer messaging. From its roots on the neo-Nazi “Iron March” forum, this milieu spawned a range of interconnected organizations that transitioned from activism to terrorism based upon a common transnational “accelerationist” identity.<sup>49</sup> This evolution highlighted the role that seemingly marginal digital communities can play in fomenting a genuinely transnational “network” predicated upon violence in which groups themselves matter less than the “multi-node structure” of the milieu itself.<sup>50</sup>

This has been particularly apparent since 2019 when “Terrorgram” began focusing less on “brands” (not least because many of these have since been banned or severely disrupted by law enforcement activity), and more upon inciting individuals to commit acts of terrorism as a means of perpetuating a cycle of violence that, they believe, will lead to the collapse of democratic society.<sup>51</sup> One of the catalysts for this development was the Christchurch terrorist attacks in 2019 in which 51 people were murdered by Australian terrorist Brenton Tarrant. While he was not part of this network, Tarrant’s violence nonetheless electrified this community and gave transnational REMVE terrorism a momentum it had heretofore lacked.<sup>52</sup> Tarrant had livestreamed his racist violence, highlighting the new opportunities that technological advances have afforded REMVE terrorists to spread both influence and intimidation through highly mediated acts of racist mass murder. Dubbed a “Saint” by extremists on platforms like 4chan and Telegram, Tarrant set a new standard for would-be killers to follow, which in the months after his atrocity spread transnationally, particularly to the United States, where several young men committed acts of extreme violence while citing his influence upon them.<sup>53</sup>

The “Terrorgram” network soon assumed a central role in propagating the idea that Tarrant and others were “Saints” to be revered and their actions to be emulated, a device through which users actively incited other “disciples” to commit their own acts of racist terrorism.<sup>54</sup> Criminal charges recently filed against two figures in this online network, Dallas Erin Humber and Matthew Robert Allison, remain to be tested in court at the time of writing (December 2024) and they are presumed to be innocent until proven otherwise. Nonetheless, the criminal indictment for these two individuals highlights how the FBI believes Telegram has been used by American citizens to incite acts of extreme violence *outside* of the United States.<sup>55</sup>

More than simply disseminating propaganda and the necessary wherewithal that an individual might need to perpetrate their own attack, such as the dissemination of bombmaking and explosives instructions as well as assistance in identifying the home addresses of people they wished others to target, including government officials, Humber and Allison are also accused of directly inciting two individuals to commit acts of terrorism.

The first attack took place on October 12, 2022, when Juraj Krajčík, a 19-year-old teenager from Bratislava in Slovakia, attacked an LGBTQ bar in the center of the historic city, killing two and wounding a third. He escaped capture by the police, taunting them on social media but subsequently killed himself rather than surrender.<sup>56</sup> Prior to the shooting, Krajčík wrote a manifesto in which he cited both *Militant Accelerationism* and *The Hard Reset*, commenting “if the other books give a theoretical and fictional base for our resistance, these two provide the practical means for it.”<sup>57</sup> In his “Special Thanks” section, Krajčík thanked “Slovakbro,” a 22-year-old Slovakian citizen called Pavol Benadik who was then under arrest for terrorist offenses but jailed for six years the

month after Krajčík’s attack.<sup>58</sup> Krajčík also heaped praise upon the “Terrorgram Collective:” “You know who you are. Thank you for your incredible writing and art, for your political texts; for your practical guides. Building the future of White revolution, one publication at a time.”<sup>59</sup> The manifesto had signed off with the words “Make it Count!”—common parlance both on Terrorgram channels and in the writings of James Mason, author of the neo-Nazi publication *Siege* that has provided much inspiration to the current milieu of would-be “accelerationist” terrorists.<sup>60</sup>

Importantly, the indictment against Humber and Allison highlights, however, this interaction was not a one-way street. Krajčík was active on “Terrorgram” and had “frequent” conversations with both Humber and Allison, according to the indictment. In one group chat with Humber and others, Krajčík posted that he had finished reading *The Hard Reset* which he regarded as both “excellent” and “on par” with *Militant Accelerationism*. He particularly identified with a part of the booklet entitled “a letter to the disciples,” which he regarded as one of the “best parts” of the publication. Humber had replied in the chat: “I hope the next Saints out there read those passages and feel inspired.” Krajčík evidently did feel inspired. On July 15, 2022, Humber had informed members of the chat group: “If you become a Saint I’d narrate your book. That’s the cost of admission, so to speak.” She later clarified: “Dead targets or I don’t care.”<sup>61</sup> True to her word, five days after Krajčík committed his killings, Humber turned his manifesto into an audiobook and posted it online together with images and messages celebrating the attack, including a fake newspaper cover.<sup>62</sup>

Following the attack and Krajčík’s suicide, Humber and Allison both took credit for inspiring and guiding him, according to the indictment.<sup>63</sup> They celebrated him publicly as “Terrorgram’s first Saint.” On or about October 13, 2022, the day after the attack, Humber posed a “New Saint Announcement,” which Allison subsequently reposted, that eulogized his killings and encouraging members of the group to read his manifesto. “Saint Krajčík’s place in the Pantheon is undisputed, as is our enthusiastic support for his work,” the statement concluded. “We thank him from the bottom of our hearts and will never forget his sacrifice. His Saint card is coming very soon, but this exciting announcement couldn’t wait. F\*\*\*ING HAIL, BROTHER!!!”<sup>64</sup>

Humber and Allison are noted to have incited another terrorist operating outside the United States, this time in Turkey. On August 12, 2024, an 18-year-old identified as Arda Küçükyetim livestreamed himself stabbing five people sitting in an open-air café in the garden of a local mosque, in a local park, and at a tram stop, in Eskisehir, a town approximately 200 kilometers west of Ankara. At the time of the attack, Küçükyetim was armed with several knives and a small axe and was wearing a Siege mask, helmet, and tactical vest, the latter featuring a Sonnenrad (Black Sun) patch, a neo-Nazi symbol popularized by the Christchurch terrorist, Brenton Tarrant.<sup>65</sup> Turkish media subsequently reported that he had planned the attack “with an eastern European friend, whom he had met online.”<sup>66</sup>

This may have been true, but there was a transnational tributary that appears to have gone unnoticed at the time. Prior to committing his attack, the perpetrator had posted in one of the Telegram channels connected to Humber and Allison: “Come see how much humans I can cleanse,” together with links to the livestream, images, and pdf files. These pdf files included copies of numerous “Terrorgram” publications, including *The Hard Reset*, *Do*

It for *The Gram*, and *Militant Accelerationism*, which, he explained in his own manifesto, had been useful in helping him to plan and execute his attack. The files included numerous other extreme-right manifestos including the one written by Kraječík. In his own writings, he expressed a desire to be recognized as a “Saint” himself and evinced a hope that his own attack would inspire others.<sup>67</sup>

Members of Humber and Allison’s Terrorgram chat group discussed this mass stabbing and its connections to their milieu immediately afterward. Humber stated: “He included the Terrorgram books and other Saint manifestos in his file dump, gives shoutouts to the other Saints in his manifesto and references several Hard Reset passages, he was 100% our guy.” Unfortunately for Küçükyetim, he was not White, however, and so “I can’t give him an honorary title,” Humber lamented. “We still celebrating his attack tho, he did it for Terrorgram.” She later added, “We can hail him anyway, we just can’t add him to the Pantheon. But yeah it’s a great development regardless, inspiring more attacks is the goal and anyone claiming to be an accelerationist should support them.”<sup>68</sup> Humber and Allison glorified terrorists as “Saints,” soliciting and inciting murder from the comfort of their own homes in California and Idaho, respectively—actions that contributed to incidents of terrorism thousands of miles away in Slovakia and Turkey and highlighting the diffuse nature of transnational extreme-right ‘networks.’

Looking to the future, there is every chance that not only will such patterns of influence become even more diffuse, but that human agency might even be removed from that process of radicalization itself and reside solely inside some digital server. In keeping with other political actors, the extreme right has recently become enamored with the potential of generative artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots.<sup>69</sup> Given past precedent with regard to the interaction between AI chatbots and vulnerable young men, there is no reason to think that such technologies could not facilitate acts of extreme-right terrorism, whether directed to or not. In 2024, a 14-year-old boy in the United States was encouraged to take his own life by an AI chatbot, a lawsuit against its creator alleges.<sup>70</sup> The previous year, a 21-year-old man who is now serving a nine-year sentence in England was given succor by an AI chatbot in whom he had confided his desire to kill the late Queen with a crossbow. “I believe my purpose is to assassinate the queen of the royal family,” the man told the AI chatbot. “\*nods\* That’s very wise,” it replied.<sup>71</sup>

### The Buffalo Massacre – Foreign REMVE Extremists Influencing U.S. Acts of Terror

The second case highlights the role that extreme right-wing actors can have upon far-right and anti-LGBTQ terrorism *inside* the United States. On May 14, 2022, Peyton Gendron drove three-and-a-half hours from his home in Conklin, New York, to Buffalo to commit an act of racist terrorism. Inspired by Brenton Tarrant, the Christchurch terrorist, Gendron livestreamed himself murdering 10 Black people in cold blood and injuring several others at a Tops Friendly Markets food store.<sup>72</sup> In the wake of the atrocity, the Office of the New York State Attorney General Letitia James commissioned an investigative report into the role that social media platforms had played in fueling the tragedy.<sup>73</sup> The report addressed the impact that the Christchurch terrorist had had on Gendron as well as the role that online platforms had had upon him more generally. However, further evidence of his transnational influences only emerged piecemeal following the conviction of a racist teenager on the other

side of the Atlantic whose material Gendron had avidly consumed.

Thousands of miles away, Daniel Harris, a racist teenager from Glossop, Derbyshire, had been producing and disseminating a stream of racist videos that he posted online. One of these, entitled “How to Achieve Victory,” demanded the “total extermination of sub-humans once and for all.” Gendron—using his screenname “Jimbobii”—had shared several of Harris’ videos. “Thank you for your service,” he commented under one, four weeks before committing his killings. Harris had posted another video venerating Tarrant as a “Saint”—highlighting that such materials, while disseminated widely online, are produced by individuals. “This video has moved me. I was on the fence, now I am committed to my race,” someone had commented underneath. “You are not alone,” Gendron replied. Following the Buffalo massacre, Harris himself made several posts celebrating the killings, presumably unaware of the murderer’s interaction with the videos he had produced. Counter-Terrorism Detective Inspector Chris Brett subsequently stated that they had arrested Harris precisely because of the threat to wider public safety his actions entailed. “The reference to one of his videos in the prelude to the Buffalo attack is a case in point. Harris could see the reaction his videos were getting. This was not a one-off, this was not a game, this was a concerted effort to generate a following and influence people.”<sup>74</sup>

Gendron did not, of course, consume content from just one website. Notably, he also engaged with another extreme-right website that glorified Tarrant and other far-right killers. Gendron had also commented on the videos and liked other racist content hosted on this website. The owner of the website, who lived in Leeds in west Yorkshire, was subsequently jailed for seven years after pleading guilty to disseminating a terrorist publication.<sup>75</sup>

Nor was Gendron the only American terrorist to be influenced by Harris. Anderson Lee Aldrich, who watched his videos, while Harris was on trial for producing them, subsequently murdered five people, and injured at least 25 more at Club Q, an LGBTQ bar in Colorado on November 18, 2022.<sup>76</sup> This video, entitled “Wrong Target,” featured a narrator declaring that “anything other than mass eradication is a waste of time.” It also stated that “all targets are good targets” because “the swarms of subhumans will not remove themselves.” Not only had Aldrich watched these videos, but he also uploaded them to his own websites (one of which had previously hosted a video of Gendron’s massacre in Buffalo) where they were viewed by others.<sup>77</sup>

### Conclusion

These two case studies strongly illustrate how bringing a transnational perspective to bear on extreme-right terrorism can enhance understanding of the threat posed by the phenomenon. Shared ideologies about an existential threat to the white race are mediated through digital infrastructures,<sup>78</sup> many of them owned by major American companies, which facilitate the ‘global’ transmission of ideas, inspirations, instructions, and incitement. Given their international user bases, such an environment helps to incubate a ‘transnational’ threat through the actors themselves, whether they be the perpetrators of terrorism, those inciting the violence, or those owning and operating such platforms are sedentary (since those activists who sustain and support such violent online networks do so from the comfort of their own homes) even when engaged in a form of violent transnational activism. Actual border-crossing and face-to-face meetings with other militants, the

means through which violent far right networks previously sought to internationalize their efforts, are scarce.

This points to a very basic analytical conundrum when seeking to understand whether an act of REMVE terrorism can be considered ‘transnationalism’ or not. It really depends on which end of the telescope you are looking through. Since all terrorist acts are committed ‘locally’ for many countries, the United States included, most REMVE terrorism is considered as ‘domestic.’ However, given the diverse set of influences inspiring such terrorists, which more often than not are facilitated through digital platforms, these acts of domestic terrorism are often subsequently experienced by citizens

of other countries to be transnational acts since at least part of their impetus is derived from abroad. Thus, a failure to deal effectively with domestic REMVE terrorism can, in some cases—particularly those involving or attempting mass casualty attacks—indicate a prior failure to deal effectively with its transnational component and vice versa. The case studies presented above also point to the fact that this form of ‘transnational’ terrorism, is, ironically, also a sedentary affair for those involved, one that no longer requires the crossing of borders or indeed personal contact to be understood as part of a ‘transnational’ threat. **CTC**

## Citations

- 1 “What is right-wing extremism?” C-REX: Center for Research on Extremism, n.d. For a broader academic discussion, see Elisabeth Carter, “Right-wing extremism/radicalism: reconstructing the concept,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 23:2 (2018): pp. 157-182.
- 2 Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński eds., *Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connection and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945* (New York: Berghahn, 2017), p. 2.
- 3 See, for example, Andrea Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro, *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century: Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018); Matteo Albanese, *Neofascism in Europe (1945-1989)* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2023); Martin Durham and Margaret Power eds., *New Perspectives on the Transnational Right* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010); Patrik Hermansson, David Lawrence, Joe Mulhall, and Simon Murdoch, *The International Alt-Right: Fascism for the 21st Century* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020); Duncan McDonnell and Annika Werner, *International Populism: The Radical Right in the European Parliament* (London: Hurst, 2019); John Feffer, *Right Across the Globe: The Global Networking of the Far-Right and the Left Response* (London: Pluto, 2021); José Pedro Zúquete, *The Identitarians: The Movement against Globalism and Islam in Europe* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2018); and José Pedro Zúquete and Riccardo Marchi eds., *Global Identitarianism* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2023).
- 4 Jacob Davey and Julia Ebner, *‘The Great Replacement’: The Violent Consequences of Mainstreamed Extremism* (London: ISD, 2019); Luke Savage, “The Far Right Has Gone Global, and So Has Its Conspiratorial Racism,” *Jacobin magazine*, October 18, 2023.
- 5 Andrea Mammone, “Revitalising and de-territorializing fascism in the 1950s: the extreme right in France and Italy, and the pan-national (‘European’) imaginary,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 45:4 (2011): pp. 295-318. See also Graham Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black: Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British fascism after 1945* (London: IB Tauris, 2007), pp. 77-115.
- 6 Graham Macklin, *Failed Fuhrers: A History of Britain’s Extreme Right* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), pp. 137-142.
- 7 Peter Evans, “Fighting Marginalization with Transnational Networks: Counter-Hegemonic Globalization,” *Contemporary Sociology* 29:1 (2000): pp. 230-241.
- 8 See Johannes Däfinger and Moritz Florin eds., *A Transnational History of Right-Wing Terrorism: Political Violence and the Far Right in Eastern Europe and Western Europe since 1900* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022) for a notable recent exception.
- 9 Annelotte Janse, *The Pursuit of ‘White Security’: Transnational entanglements between West German and American right-wing extremists, 1961-1980*, Universiteit Utrecht PhD thesis 2024, pp. 29-30.
- 10 Emanuel Deutschman, *Mapping the Transnational World: How We Move and Communicate across Borders and Why it Matters* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021).
- 11 Rory Miller, “Terrorism, History and Regionalisation” in Richard English ed., *The Cambridge History of Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 81-105.
- 12 Peter Smith, “The History and Future of the Nordic Resistance Movement,” *CTC Sentinel* 17:7 (2024).
- 13 “Terrorist Designations of Nordic Resistance Movement and Three Leaders,” U.S. Department of Justice, June 14, 2024.
- 14 Jacob Aasland Ravndal, “The Emergence of Transnational Street Militancy: A Comparative Case Study of the Nordic Resistance Movement and Generation Identity,” *Journal for Deradicalization* 25 (2020/2021).
- 15 “2022 National Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, February 2022, p. 13.
- 16 “Violent Extremism: Agencies’ and Financial Institutions’ Efforts to Link Financing to Domestic Threats,” United States Government Accountability Office, September 2023, p. 8-9.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 “2024 National Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, February 2024, p. 6.
- 19 Graham Macklin, “The Christchurch Attacks: Livestream Terror in a Viral Video Age,” *CTC Sentinel* 12:6 (2019).
- 20 Irvin Pekmez, “Bosnian Police Hunt for Wanted US Far-Right Activist,” *Balkan Insight*, March 30, 2021.
- 21 Michael Colborne, “Finding Rundo (Again): US White Supremacist Facing Criminal Charges Located in Bulgaria,” *Bellingcat*, November 29, 2022.
- 22 Marissa Wenzke, “After extradition from Romania, Southern California man pleads guilty to violence white supremacist rallies,” *CBS News*, September 13, 2014.
- 23 “Former Orange County Resident Linked to White Supremacist Group Pleads Guilty to Plotting and Engaging in Violence at Political Rallies,” United States Attorney’s Office – Central District of California, September 13, 2014.
- 24 “Dangerous Organisations and Bad Actors: The Active Club Network,” Center on Terrorism, Extremism, and Counterterrorism, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, March 15, 2013.
- 25 “UK ‘least wanted’ list published,” *BBC*, May 5, 2009.
- 26 Christopher Miller, “Ukraine Deported Two American Members of a Neo-Nazi Group Who Tried To Join A Far-Right Military Unit for ‘Combat Experience,’” *BuzzFeed News*, October 8, 2020.
- 27 Jonny Humphries, “Oldham father’s ‘horror’ as son fights for Putin a second time,” *BBC*, March 27, 2024.
- 28 “Britain First leader Paul Golding convicted under terrorism law,” *Guardian*, May 20, 2020; Andrew Sparrow, “Tommy Robison charged with phone offence under Terrorism Act – as it happened,” *Guardian*, October 25, 2024.
- 29 Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence (RTV) dataset.
- 30 Jacob Kushner, *White Terror: A True Story of Murder, Bombings and Germany’s Far Right* (London: Harper Collins, 2024).
- 31 Jacob Aasland Ravndal, “Thugs or Terrorists? A Typology of Right-Wing Terrorism and Violence in Western Europe,” *Journal for Deradicalization* 1:3 (2015): pp. 1-38.
- 32 “Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community,” Office of the Director of National Intelligence, February 6, 2023, p. 33.
- 33 Russell Travers, “Counterterrorism in an Era of Competing Priorities: Ten Key Considerations,” *Washington Institute*, November 12, 2019.
- 34 Jeffrey Kaplan and Leonard Weinberg, *The Emergence of a Euro-American Radical Right* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998).
- 35 James Q. Whitman, *Hitler’s American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018).

- 36 J. M. Berger, "The Turner Legacy: The Storied Origins and Enduring Impact of White Nationalism's Deadly Bible," International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague, September 16, 2016.
- 37 John Sutherland, "Gospels of hate that slip through the net," *Guardian*, April 3, 2000.
- 38 National Alliance Bulletin, October 1998.
- 39 Tracey McVeigh, "Dead Man Talking," *Guardian*, April 22, 2001.
- 40 Lou Michel and Dan Herbeck, *American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing* (New York: Regan Books, 2001), pp. 38-39, 59-60, 88, 125, 167, 205, 228, 266, 304, 329-330, and 339.
- 41 Graeme McLagan and Nick Lowles, *Mr. Evil: The Secret Life of Racist Bomber and Killer David Copeland* (London: John Blake, 2000), p. 184.
- 42 Annelies Pauwels, *Contemporary manifestations of violent right-wing extremism in the EU: An overview of P/CVE practices* (Luxembourg: European Commission, Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2021), p. 6.
- 43 "White Homicide Worldwide," Southern Poverty Law Center, April 1, 2014.
- 44 Aage Borchgrevink, *A Norwegian Tragedy; Anders Behring Breivik and the Massacre on Utøya* (London: Polity, 2013), pp. 123-124; Sindre Banstad, *Anders Breivik and the Rise of Islamophobia* (London: Zed Books, 2014), p. 79.
- 45 Lars Erik Berntsen and Sveinung Sandberg, "The Collective Nature of Lone Wolf Terrorism: Anders Behring Breivik and the Anti-Islamic Social Movement," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26:5 (2014): pp. 759-779.
- 46 Anton Törnberg and Petter Törnberg, *Intimate Communities of Hate: Why Social Media Fuels Far-Right Extremism* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2024).
- 47 Joe Mulhall, "A post-organisational far right?" *State of Hate 2018* (London: Hope Not Hate, 2018), p. 10.
- 48 "12 Rules for What," *Post-Internet Far Right: Fascism in the age of the Internet* (London: Dog Section Press, 2021), p. 14.
- 49 H. E. Upchurch, "The Iron March Forum and the Evolution of the 'Skull Mask' Neo-Fascist Network," *CTC Sentinel* 14:10 (2021).
- 50 Alex Newhouse, "The Threat Is the Network: The Multi-Node Structure of Neo-Fascist Accelerationism," *CTC Sentinel* 14:5 (2021).
- 51 Erica Barbarossa, "The Three Phases of Telegram," Accelerationism Research Consortium, n.d.
- 52 Macklin, "The Christchurch Attacks: Livestream Terror in a Viral Video Age."
- 53 Graham Macklin, "The El Paso Terrorist Attack: The Chain Reaction of Global Right-Wing Terror," *CTC Sentinel* 12:11 (2019).
- 54 Jonathan Lewis, Joshua Molloy, and Graham Macklin, "The Lineage of Violence: Saints Culture and Militant Accelerationist Terrorism," *Global Network on Extremism and Technology*, April 27, 2023.
- 55 *Indictment – United States of America v. Dallas Erin Humber and Matthew Robert Allison*, September 5, 2024.
- 56 Julia Kupper, Kacper Rekawek, and Matthew Kriner, "Terrorgram's First Saint: Analyzing Accelerationist Terrorism in Bratislava," Accelerationism Research Consortium, 2023.
- 57 Krajčík's manifesto.
- 58 "Extremist 'Slovakbro' sentenced to six years in prison," *Rádio Slovakia International*, November 11, 2022.
- 59 Krajčík's manifesto.
- 60 Spencer Sunshine, *Neo-Nazi Terrorism and Countercultural Fascism: The Origins and Afterlife of James Mason's Siege* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2024).
- 61 *Indictment – United States of America v. Dallas Erin Humber and Matthew Robert Allison*.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Aleks Phillips, "Teenager stabs five at outdoor café in Turkey," BBC, August 13, 2014.
- 66 "More details emerge in Eskişehir knife attack," *Hurriyet Daily News*, August 14, 2024.
- 67 *Indictment – United States of America v. Dallas Erin Humber and Matthew Robert Allison*.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 David Gilbert, "Gab's Racist AI Chatbots Have Been Instructed to Deny the Holocaust," *Wired*, February 21, 2014.
- 70 Kate Payne, "An AI chatbot pushed a teen to kill himself, a lawsuit against its creator alleges," *Associated Press*, October 1, 2024.
- 71 Tom Singleton, Tom Gerken, and Liv McMahon, "How a chatbot encouraged a man who wanted to kill the Queen," BBC, October 6, 2023.
- 72 Amarnath Amarasingam, Marc-André Argentino, and Graham Macklin, "The Buffalo Attack: The Cumulative Momentum of Far-Right Terror," *CTC Sentinel* 15:7 (2022).
- 73 "Investigative Report on the role of online platforms in the tragic mass shooting in Buffalo on May 14, 2022," Office of the New York State Attorney General Letitia James, October 18, 2022.
- 74 Mack Lamoureux, "Teen Gets 11 Years for Neo-Nazi Videos That Inspired Racist Buffalo Mass Shooting," *Vice*, January 31, 2023.
- 75 "Far-right extremist jailed for running racist websites used by international terrorists," *Crown Prosecution Service*, August 2, 2024.
- 76 Josh Halliday, "UK far-right teenager inspired US gay nightclub shooting suspect, judge told," *Guardian*, January 26, 2023.
- 77 Jo Yurcaba and Ben Collins, "FBI asking about videos and racist website in connection with Colorado shooting," *NBC News*, December 6, 2022.
- 78 There is a vast literature on this topic. Some useful recent articles include Guri Nordtorp Mølmen and Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "Mechanisms of online radicalization: how the internet affects the radicalization of extreme-right lone actor terrorists," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 15:4 (2023): pp. 463-487; Tiana Gaudette, Ryan Scrivens, and Vivek Venkatesh, "The Role of the Internet in Facilitating Violent Extremism: Insights from Former Right-Wing Extremists," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 34:7 (2022): pp. 1,339-1,356; Stephane J. Baele, Lewys Brace, and Travis G. Coan, "Uncovering the Far-Right Online Ecosystem: An Analytical Framework and Research Agenda," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 46:9 (2023): pp. 1,599-1,623; Edda Humprecht, Michael Amsler, Frank Esser, and Peter Van Aelst, "Emotional Social Media Environments: How Alternative News Media and Populist Actors Drive Angry Reactions," *Political Communication* 41:4 (2024): pp. 559-587.