

Antisemitism as Accelerator: Contagion and Validation Effects Driving the Post-October 7 Surge in Global Extremist Violence

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Abstract

This paper investigates the significant surge in global terrorism following the October 7, 2023, attacks, analyzing its implications for modern deradicalization. Leveraging incident-level data from the Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center's Record of Incident Database (GRID), the study employs negative binomial models to quantify changes in terrorism frequency over a 1,097-day period. Statistical analysis reveals a marked escalation: global daily terrorism rates increased by 44 percent, while Western Europe experienced a fivefold increase in monthly incidents. The paper argues that these patterns expose two compounding radicalization mechanisms: the contagion effect and the validation effect. Crucially, the initial shock of the attack, combined with the overwhelming asymmetric Israeli response in Gaza, acted as a dual catalyst, simultaneously shattering established security paradigms and providing a continuous stream of grievance-based content that validated extremist worldviews. Central to these dynamics is antisemitism, which functions as a potent ideological accelerator. Understanding this nexus is vital for developing agile, theme-specific deradicalization strategies that address the accelerated mobilization patterns and the structural role of antisemitism within contemporary extremist ecosystems.

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Introduction

The terrorist attacks of October 7, 2023, in Israel constituted a geopolitical shock event of particular significance, immediately shattering established security paradigms and fundamentally reshaping the landscape of global extremist mobilization in a manner not witnessed since the declaration of the ISIS caliphate in 2014 (Hashim, 2014). The scale, coordination, and explicit ideological underpinning of the initial violence shocked the global public, fueled a supercharged emotional social media deluge, and reverberated across international networks, transforming a regional conflict into a potent, transnational rallying cry for violent actors across a spectrum of ideological alignments. However, the shock event

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was not limited to the initial incursion. The subsequent and highly destructive military campaign in the Gaza Strip, characterized by a staggering loss of life and catastrophic humanitarian conditions, provided a continuous stream of grievance-based content for extremist actors worldwide. This prolonged cycle of violence necessitates a rigorous, quantitative assessment of its impact on the frequency of global terrorist violence. The question driving this research is whether a high-profile historical event of this magnitude creates a measurable, immediate, and geographically diverse surge in terrorism, and, crucially, what theoretical mechanisms drive this acceleration.

The study of political violence recognizes that significant Terrorism Triggering Events can fundamentally shift the trajectory and intensity of extremist activity, ranging from the personal to the profoundly political (Spaaij & Hamm, 2014). These events often serve as potent catalysts because they engage deeply held human emotion. The modern intensification of emotion within political behavior means that affective responses such as fear, anger, and anxiety are highly responsive to major social, cultural, historical, and political events (Wright-Neville & Smith, 2009). Crucially, the process of radicalization is heavily influenced when extremist actors successfully frame disputes or conflicts as existential threats, a technique known to accelerate the mobilization of susceptible groups (Perliger & Pedahzur, 2016). This paper investigates the October 7, 2023, attacks and their ensuing aftermath as a shock event that simultaneously acted as a triggering event and was immediately leveraged by extremist groups to frame the resulting conflict as an existential struggle. We hypothesize that this successful framing, powered by underlying antisemitic narratives, drove a measurable and statistically significant surge in global terrorism, a phenomenon analyzed here through the lenses of Contagion and Validation Effects.

Prior major acts of political violence, such as the September 11 attacks or the declaration of the ISIS Caliphate, demonstrate an organic capacity to spur waves of mobilization, operational imitation, and sustained recruitment. These shock events provide two essential catalysts for extremist movements: first, symbolic proof that the war is winnable (Kruglanski et al., 2014), and second, a moral or religious justification for the necessity of immediate violence (Juergensmeyer, 2017). A statistically robust analysis of the immediate, quantified changes in terrorism incident rates, disaggregated by region and ideological

motivation, in the direct aftermath of such an event remains a critical scholarly gap. Filling this void is the primary empirical objective of this study.

To interpret observed shifts in the global terrorism rate, this paper relies upon two established, yet compounded, radicalization mechanisms: the contagion effect and the validation effect. The contagion effect posits that successful, high-profile attacks serve as behavioral and symbolic templates that diffuse tactical knowledge and motivational cues through mass and digital media, generating waves of opportunistic or imitative violence across disparate geographic contexts (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Midlarsky et al., 1980; Weimann, 2006). This mechanism is particularly salient in low-frequency environments such as Western Europe, where decentralized or lone-actor perpetrators may be mobilized less by direct organizational ties than by the symbolic power and perceived replicability of shock events amplified through media exposure (Nacos, 2002; Spaaij, 2010).

Conversely, the validation effect describes a process by which perceived operational success reinforces the legitimacy of extremist worldviews, demonstrating the power, effectiveness, and moral righteousness of the cause to both internal and external audiences (Horgan, 2014; Kruglanski et al., 2014). Such validation strengthens internal group cohesion, facilitates recruitment, and motivates existing adherents toward increased operational activity (Bloom, 2005; della Porta, 1995). The validation effect is therefore hypothesized to be a primary driver of intensified violence in conflict zones or regions where extremist organizations are already embedded, such as the MENA region, where demonstrated success can be rapidly converted into territorial control, mobilization, and sustained escalation (Kalyvas, 2006; Byman, 2015; Gerges, 2016).

The core theoretical contribution is the argument that these two mechanisms operate synergistically, with a critical ideological component acting as the accelerator. This paper argues that antisemitism functions as a critical accelerator in the post-October 7 extremist surge. Antisemitism is not simply an ancillary prejudice; it is a profound, unifying conspiratorial worldview that provides a seemingly comprehensive explanation for global grievances, political failures, and social malaise across diverse ideological spectrums, from religious jihadism to certain manifestations of far-right extremism. By providing a universally recognizable and deeply entrenched target and narrative, the antisemitic component of the shock event and ensuing conflict allows for both immediate and sustained ideological

resonance, translating an event centered in one region into a mobilizing force across others. Understanding the nature of antisemitism as a structural bridge and radicalizing catalyst is paramount for developing resilient counter-narratives.

To test this hypothesis concerning the acceleration of terrorism post-October 7 and the dual operation of the contagion and validation effects, a rigorous quantitative methodology is employed. This study uses incident-level data derived from the Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center's (GTTAC) Record of Incident Database (GRID), examining a 1,097-day period that allows for a comparative analysis of the two years preceding the attacks against the full year that followed. Our analysis focuses on daily terrorism incident counts globally, and specifically within the MENA region, and monthly counts for Western Europe (EU and UK), disaggregating all incidents from those classified as specifically religious jihadi terrorism. This paper's negative binomial regression models statistically quantify the change in the rate of terrorism incidents between the pre- and post-October 7 periods. This approach is designed to test the statistical significance of estimates of the relative increase in incident frequency, thereby establishing a firm empirical basis for our theoretical discussion.

This paper makes a two-fold contribution to the literature. Empirically, it provides the first statistically rigorous, disaggregated analysis quantifying the immediate global and regional effects of the October 7 shock event on terrorism frequency. Theoretically, it advances the understanding of radicalization by demonstrating how the Contagion and Validation Effects converge and are amplified when driven by a unifying, transnational narrative like antisemitism. The resulting policy implications for deradicalization and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) frameworks are centered on the need to adapt in addressing the accelerated mobilization patterns and the structural role of antisemitism within contemporary extremist ecosystems.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Section II reviews the relevant literature on radicalization mechanisms, shock events, and the function of antisemitism. Section III details the data and methodology, the GRID, and the application of the negative binomial regression models. Section IV presents empirical results quantifying the change in incident rates across the different geographies and ideological categories. Section V discusses these findings in light of the Contagion and Validation Effects, emphasizing the role of

antisemitism. Finally, Section VI concludes with a summary of the implications for theory and policy.

Literature Review

The theoretical framework of contagion in political violence suggests that terrorism functions as a communicative process that propagates through imitation and social learning. This concept is fundamentally rooted in Social Learning Theory, which argues that individuals adopt specific violent behaviors by observing the outcomes of model actions (Bandura, 1977). When a terrorist event is perceived as successful or is rewarded with significant global attention, it serves as a lethal template for potential adherents. In the aftermath of October 7, the perceived operational success of the initial attack lowered the psychological and tactical thresholds for geographically dispersed actors.

Shock Events and Contemporary Contagion Theory

Scholars have long recognized that the diffusion of terrorism is heavily mediated by what has been termed the “oxygen of publicity” (Gilbert, 2002). Early research into the contagion of aircraft hijackings and embassy takeovers established that the intensity and nature of media coverage directly correlate with a heightened probability of copycat incidents (Midlarsky et al., 1980; Hoffman, 2017). This broadcast effect suggests that the media acts as a conduit for the transmission of terrorist messages, effectively spreading the know-how and motivation for violence (Biernatzki, 2002).

In the contemporary digital era, this transmission has transitioned from centralized media outlets to decentralized, encrypted platforms. Modern extremist ecosystems utilize social media to translate regional conflict into a globalized movement, facilitating the rapid diffusion of tactical innovations (Weimann, 2015). This process is accelerated when the triggering event is framed as an existential threat to the group (Perliger & Pedahzur, 2016). Such framing provokes intense emotional responses, including fear, anger, and anxiety, which are known to be direct precursors to political mobilization (Wright-Neville & Smith, 2009). Consequently, the contagion witnessed after October 7 is not merely an imitation of tactics but a profound emotional mobilization, continuously fed by the images and videos of the

aftermath of the military intervention that followed in Gaza, which collapses the geographic distance between the primary conflict and its global observers.

Indeed, Healy and Moskalenko (2025) note a sharp rise in global antisemitic terrorism between 2019 and 2024, reporting a rise in the frequency and lethality of incidents with Jewish targets. The extent to which it is the October 7 attack itself that spurs global antisemitic incidents, or the asymmetric response by Israel, is difficult to disentangle. LaFreniere et al. (2024) found that when escalations in the Israel-Palestine conflict occur, antisemitism in the United States increases in their study of far-right violence. This implies that the October 7 may embolden antisemitic attacks, which an Israeli response viewed as disproportionate may commensurately “legitimize” violence attributed to Jewish people, in particular in regions less proximate to Israel and Palestine.

The Validation Effect and Extremist Legitimacy

The Validation Effect operates on the principle that successful political violence provides empirical proof of a group’s efficacy and the perceived righteousness of its cause. Central to this process is the Quest for Significance, a motivational framework suggesting that individuals are drawn to extremism to satisfy a fundamental need for self-worth and social standing (Kruglanski et al., 2014). When a group executes a substantial and effective attack, it creates a “success narrative” that offers potential recruits a clear path to regaining collective significance. While paradoxically, terrorist groups remain operationally conservative most of the time, sticking to well-used and validated modus operandi, important tactical successes, partially measured by media attention, publicity, and sensationalism, have their own gravitational pull and are to be emulated even by groups with distinct ideological perspectives (Hoffman, 2017). In the MENA region, the October 7 attacks may have functioned as such a narrative, validating the strategic utility of violence for those already sympathetic or engaged with the cause.

This sense of validation is further reinforced through the mechanism of Moral Disengagement. Extremist organizations utilize perceived victories to convince adherents that their actions are not only effective but also morally necessary (Bandura, 2002). By framing the violence as a successful strike against a powerful oppressor, groups can bypass the usual self-sanctions against killing, replacing them with a sense of moral superiority and divine or

historical justification. This validation of the group's moral framework is a critical precursor to sustained recruitment and the expansion of extremist ecosystems (Sageman, 2004).

Furthermore, the validation effect strengthens the in-group/out-group dichotomy. Successful violence acts as a proof of concept for the group's worldview, hardening the boundaries between a virtuous in-group and a vile out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This social identity reinforcement is particularly potent during periods where conflicts are framed as existential threats (Perliger & Pedahzur, 2016). When a group appears powerful and capable of striking its enemies, it increases its market share of support among marginalized populations who feel a vicarious sense of power through the group's actions. Consequently, the surge in terrorism frequency in the MENA region following October 7, beyond the pragmatic interpretation of coordination among Iranian-backed groups, can be viewed as a result of heightened ideological legitimacy and the mobilization of previously less active sympathizers (such as Hezbollah, for example) who saw in the attack a validation of their radical grievances.

Antisemitism as a Potent Radicalizing Force

Modern scholarship increasingly views antisemitism as a comprehensive conspiratorial worldview rather than a simple form of religious or ethnic prejudice (Langmuir 1990; Wistrich 2010). It functions as a master conspiracy theory that offers a reductive explanation for complex global grievances, positioning a perceived Jewish influence as the clandestine force behind various political and social ills (Lipstadt, 2019). This structural quality allows antisemitic narratives to serve as an ideological bridge, unifying otherwise contradictory extremist movements such as Salafi-jihadism and white supremacist accelerationism (Rich, 2018). In the context of the post-October 7 surge, this shared narrative provided a global target that transcended localized geopolitical boundaries.

The function of antisemitism as an accelerator is rooted in its ability to amplify the contagion and validation effects. When an event like October 7 and the consequences of the military operations in Gaza are framed through an antisemitic lens, it taps into a deeply entrenched historical archetype of the existential enemy (Hirsh, 2017). This framing transforms a regional conflict into a symbolic struggle of global proportions, making the "success" of the attack more transmissible to distant observers who already subscribe to

conspiratorial worldviews. Because antisemitism often portrays the adversary as both omnipotent and subhuman, or inhuman and anti-human (Pagano, 2016), any perceived blow against this enemy is seen as a monumental validation of the extremist group's power and divine or historical mandate. The omnipotence of the adversary is also fully on display as the images and reports of the asymmetric military response to the attack overwhelm social networks and challenge moral and ethical sensibilities.

Furthermore, the conspiratorial nature of antisemitism makes it an exceptionally potent tool for radicalization because it is self-sealing and resistant to counter-evidence (Sunstein & Vermeule, 2009). When disputes are framed as existential threats involving a global conspiracy, the threshold for justifying violence is significantly lowered (Perliger & Pedahzur, 2016). This creates a feedback loop where the validation of the narrative through violence, with the subject associating either with the perpetrators or the victims, encourages further contagion of antisemitic tropes across digital platforms. Consequently, deradicalization strategies that fail to address the specific conspiratorial mechanics of antisemitism struggle to disrupt the momentum of mobilization following high-profile shock events.

Methodology and Data

Data Source and Scope

The empirical foundation of this study is the Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center or GTTAC's Record of Incident Database (GRID), a publicly available dataset of worldwide terrorism incidents. In August 2018, the Department of State contracted Development Services Group, Inc. (DSG), a research and evaluation government consulting firm based in Bethesda, Maryland, and its subcontractor, the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC) at George Mason University to gather data on terrorist incidents worldwide and produce the Annex of Statistical Information on Terrorism, which serves as an additional component to complement the Department of State's congressionally mandated annual Country Reports on Terrorism. GTTAC continues the legacy of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), responsible for the Annex from 2012 to 2017, and the National Counterterrorism Center, a division of the

Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which was responsible for gathering the data between 2004 and 2011.

GTTAC's definition of a terrorism incident is laid out in US Code, 22 U.S.C. § 2656f (2024), in that 1) the violent act aims to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal; 2) the violent act includes evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to an audience (or audiences) larger than the immediate victims; and 3) the violent act occurred outside the precepts of international humanitarian law, as far as it targeted non-combatants. In some cases, when designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations attack military targets, those incidents are also included (U.S. Department of State, 2024). One limitation of this study is that while incident counts provide a clear metric for extremist activity, they do not capture the full spectrum of extremist behavior, such as non-violent mobilization, radicalization of intent without action, or foiled terror plots that never reach the execution phase.

GRID has been used previously to highlight a sharp rise in global antisemitic terrorism between 2019 and 2024, in a report noting that incidents have become more frequent and increasingly lethal (Healy & Moskalenko, 2025). Examining only incidents of terrorism where the victims were targeted because of their Jewish faith, the United States recorded the highest total number of attacks, while smaller nations like Armenia and Greece experienced the highest per capita rates, primarily driven by far-right and religious extremist ideologies. The current study does not limit itself to the narrow subset of incidents with Jewish targets, rather our theoretical framework posits that antisemitism functions as a "master narrative" that accelerates broader extremist mobilization. To code and isolate only explicitly antisemitic attacks would artificially narrow the scope and miss the very Contagion Effect we are trying to measure, which is how this specific narrative triggered a generalized surge in global extremist violence.

The October 7th, 2023, attack is the most complex incident recorded as of yet in GRID (Healy, 2025). It consists of 33 related incidents that are discontinuous over space and or time, but form part of one terrorist event. In the database, it is described as follows:

On October 7, 2023, in Israel, HAMAS launched a massive multi-pronged assault that involved drone attacks, rocket attacks, naval incursions, land assaults on

kibbutzim and Israeli military posts, and the planting of IEDs. In total, the attacks killed 1,033 civilians, including 46 American citizens, 300 Israeli soldiers, resulted in 222 kidnappings, and wounded 3,400 others.

In the Gaza borderlands, Beersheba, Netivot, two locations in Ashkelon, Tel Aviv, Rehovot, Gedera, and Mazkeret Batya, there were no casualties. At Zikim beach, 13 killed. In Erez, 75 killed, 121 wounded. At Zikim base, 75 killed, 121 others wounded. In Reim, 75 killed and 121 wounded. In four incidents in Sderot, 100 killed, 800 wounded, 40 kidnapped. In Ofakim, 53 killed, 400 wounded, 40 kidnapped. In Be'eri, 110 killed, 121 wounded, 8 kidnapped. In Kfar Aza, 62 killed, 121 wounded, 17 kidnapped. In Kissufim, 8 killed, 121 wounded, 8 kidnapped. In Yad Mordechai, 78 wounded, 121 wounded, 7 kidnapped. In Yated, 78 killed, 121 wounded, 8 kidnapped. At Sofa base, 75 killed, 121 wounded. In two locations at Sofa kibbutz, 77 killed, 122 wounded, 7 kidnapped. In Holit, 10 killed, 122 wounded, 7 kidnapped. Near Re'im, 260 killed, 500 wounded, 50 kidnapped. In Alumim, 17 killed, 122 wounded, 8 kidnapped. In Nir Am, 2 killed, 1 wounded, 7 kidnapped. In Ein Habsor, 78 killed, 123 wounded, 7 kidnapped. In Nir Oz, 100 killed, 123 wounded, 7 wounded. (Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center [GTTAC], 2025; Healy, 2025)

The dataset itself consists of detailed, incident-level data, which allows for a granular analysis of specific terror events, disaggregated by over 60 different items. GRID is described as a dynamic, living dataset (U.S. Department of State, 2024) and is updated weekly. For the purpose of this paper, GRID data from December 18, 2025, was used, containing more than 63,000 incidents from 2018 to roughly the middle of 2025. The temporal scope of this study covers a total of 1,097 days, comprising a 730-day baseline period prior to the October 7 attacks and a 367-day observation period afterward. This timeframe ensures a robust comparison by utilizing two full years of historical data to establish a stable pre-attack mean. All 33 incidents related to October 7, 2023, were excluded from the regression to ensure the results reflect the secondary effects of the attack rather than the casualty counts of the event itself.

The primary dependent variables are the daily and monthly counts of terrorism incidents. Daily counts are utilized for global analyses and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, while monthly counts are employed for Western Europe (EU and UK) to manage the higher frequency of zero-incident days in that region. To understand the specific drivers of the post-October 7 surge, the data is disaggregated into ideological categories, including “All Terrorism” and “Religious Jihadi Terrorism”, as GRID uses a categorization of types of incidents that allows to isolate jihadist incidents, even if committed by unknown or individual perpetrators instead of groups, whose ideologies are well documented (GTTAC, 2023).

The key independent variable is a binary temporal indicator representing the period after October 7, 2023. Additionally, a time-trend variable is included to control for any pre-existing upward or downward trajectories in terrorism frequency that may have been present during the baseline period. This allows the model to distinguish between a genuine shock increase and a gradual trend already in motion.

By examining the number of incidents globally, and in various regions, broken down by various ideological measures, the goal is to demonstrate the effects of the event broadly on terrorism trends, while also isolating events that we would consider more traditional warfare, largely perpetrated by paramilitary Iranian-backed terrorist groups (Hezbollah and Houthis, among others). In particular, our MENA analysis accounts for incidents specifically targeting Israel in order to better understand the effects of the dynamic on terrorist activity. But by further analysing the effects of October 7 on the trends in the EU/UK, we can estimate the effects of the event on violent extremists that are geographically removed from the conflict, representing a greater transnational diffusion of violence.

In summary, the unit of analysis is the daily count of terrorism incidents, and monthly counts for the EU/UK. For example, looking at all incidents globally, each row represents a day with columns representing the sum of incidents in that day in terms of “all incidents”, “all jihadist incidents”, and “all incidents minus jihadist incidents”. The independent variable of interest is a binary measure indicating if the incidents took place before October 7th, 2023 (coded as 0) or after (coded as 1). Finally, the time trend variable included in the analyses increases by 1 for each day (or month) of data.

Statistical Model

While Poisson regression is often the starting point for modeling count data, this study utilizes negative binomial regression models run using Stata 17 (Statacorp, 2021). Standard linear regressions are inappropriate for these data because terrorism incidents are discrete, non-negative integers that do not follow a normal distribution (Hilbe, 2011). Furthermore, terrorism data frequently exhibits overdispersion, a condition where the variance of the incident counts exceeds the mean (Hardin & Hilbe, 2014). This assumption failure was empirically confirmed in our initial estimations. Across all model specifications, the overdispersion parameter (α) was strictly positive, with 95% confidence intervals well above zero, ranging from $\alpha = 0.05$ in the global models to $\alpha = 5.16$ in the highly variable Western European jihadist models. Consequently, negative binomial regression models were employed, as they include this overdispersion parameter to prevent the underestimation of standard errors and the inflation of statistical significance (Long & Freese, 2014).

Furthermore, to account for any remaining heteroskedasticity or minor distributional misspecifications, each model is specified using what is known as Huber, White, or sandwich estimators, commonly referred to as robust standard errors (StataCorp, 2025). The use of robust standard errors is essential in terrorism research because it relaxes the assumption that the model errors are independent and identically distributed (Cameron & Trivedi, 2009). By accounting for potential heteroskedasticity and minor concerns regarding the specification of the distribution, the robust variance estimator ensures that the resulting p-values and confidence intervals remain valid even if the underlying model assumptions are not perfectly met.

The model is used to estimate the Incident Rate Ratio (IRR), which provides a clear measure of the relative rate of change. An IRR indicates the factor by which the expected count of terrorism incidents changes following the shock event. This method provides a more rigorous assessment of the surge than simple averages by accounting for the stochastic nature of terrorist events over time.

While the negative binomial models may demonstrate a significant correlation between the shock event and the subsequent surge in violence, establishing absolute causality in the social sciences remains a persistent challenge. The October 7 effect operates alongside other concurrent global stressors, including local economic instability and regional political

and interethnic grievances, which may confound relationships between the shock event and the observed incident rates.

Results

Descriptive statistics, including the pre- and post- October 7th minimum, maximum, and means, are presented for all variables used in the models in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics Before and After October 7, 2023

Region / Ideology	Pre-October 7			Post-October 7		
	Mean (Variance)	Min–Max	Total	Mean (Variance)	Min– Max	Total
Global (Daily Incidents)						
All Terrorism	19.45 (42.19)	6–47	14,201	23.97 (50.73)	7–48	8,797
Religious Jihadist	10.47 (17.35)	1–27	7,640	11.83 (21.30)	2–31	4,343
Non-Jihadist*	8.99 (20.09)	0–31	6,561	12.14 (24.58)	2–28	4,454
MENA Daily Incidents						
All Terrorism	6.15 (9.48)	0–19	4,487	11.87 (23.17)	1–28	4,357
Excluding Israel	5.93 (8.85)	0–19	4,332	6.39 (8.75)	1–21	2,346
Religious Jihadist	4.05 (6.35)	0–15	2,954	4.81 (9.40)	0–21	1,766
Excluding Israel	3.93 (5.94)	0–15	2,869	3.37 (4.12)	0–10	1,235
EU & UK (Monthly)						
All Terrorism	2.17 (4.41)	0–7	52	4.38 (6.09)	1–10	57
Religious Jihadist	0.46 (0.43)	0–2	11	1.77 (1.19)	0–4	23

* Non-Jihadist Terrorism = all terrorism incidents excluding religious jihadist incidents.

NB: Pre-October 7 observation period comprises 730 days. Post-October 7 observation period comprises 367 days.

The negative binomial regression analysis confirms a statistically significant increase in terrorism frequency following the October 7, 2023, attacks. Across almost all models, the indicator for October 7th, 2023, reveals a sharp upward shift in incident rates, even when controlling for pre-existing temporal trends.

Global Trends

At the global level (Figure 1), the expected daily count of terrorism incidents increased by approximately 44% following the attacks (IRR = 1.44, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI: 1.35, 1.54). This suggests a broad, systemic shift in the global threat environment. When disaggregating by ideology, global religious jihadist incidents saw a significant 18.6% increase (IRR = 1.18, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI: 1.09, 1.29). Notably, when jihadist incidents are removed (Figure 2) from the global total, the surge is even more pronounced, with an 81% increase in expected daily incidents (IRR = 1.81, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI: 1.64, 2.00). This indicates that the shock event mobilized a wide array of extremist actors beyond just religious jihadists, possibly driven by the broader geopolitical grievances and the existential threat framing. The regression results are reported in Table 2.

Figure 1

Number of Global Daily Terrorism Incidents

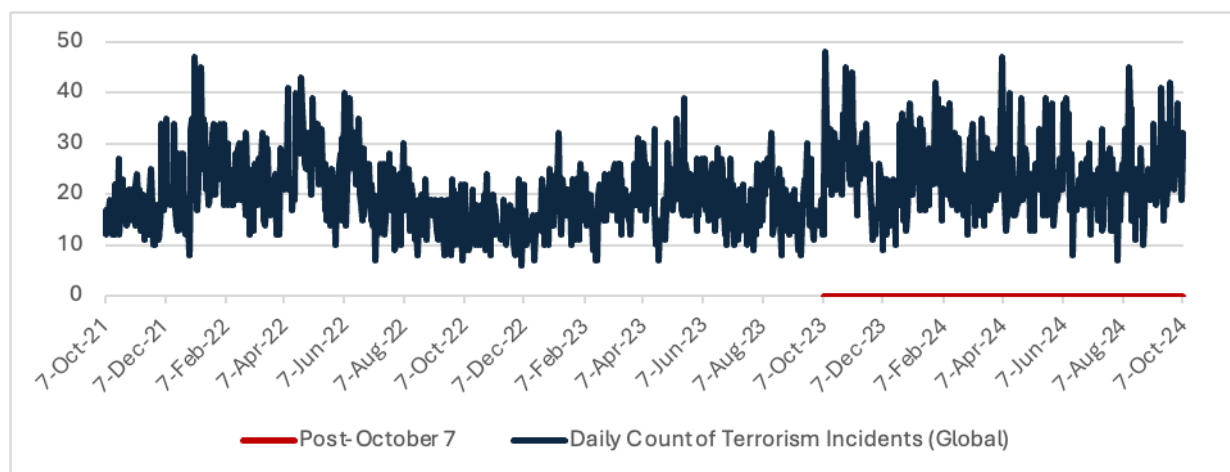


Figure 2

Number of Global Daily Terrorism Incidents with Jihadist Incidents Removed

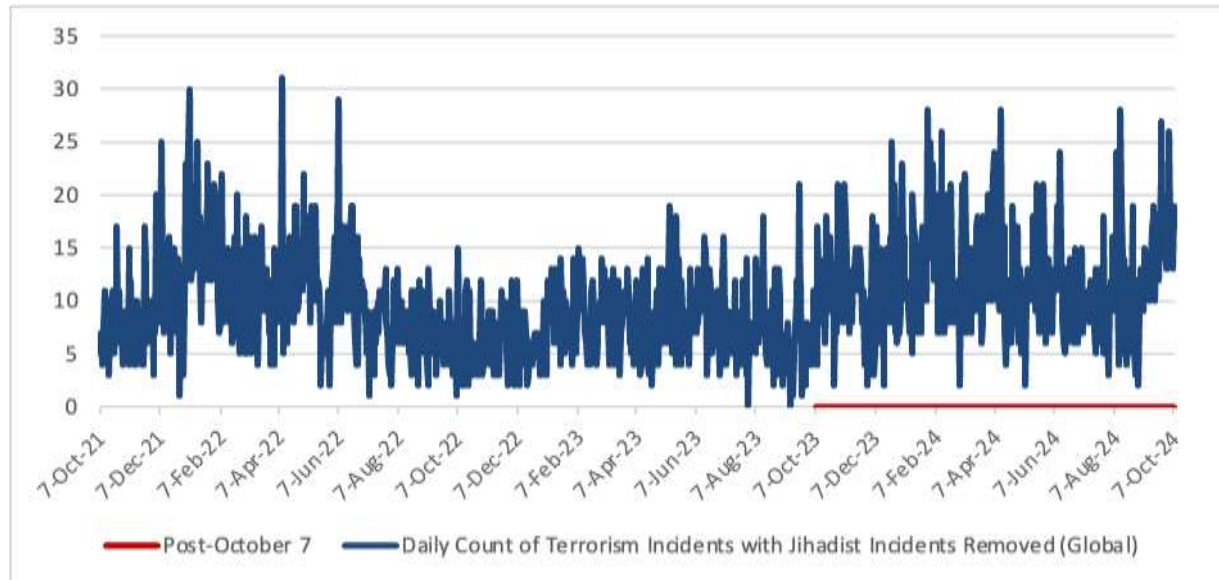


Table 2

Negative Binomial Regression Results (Global Daily Incidents)

Variable	All Terrorism	Religious Jihadist	Non-Jihadist
Post-October 7	1.443*** (0.049)	1.186*** (0.052)	1.809*** (0.092)
Time Trend	1.000*** (0.000)	1.000 (0.000)	0.999*** (0.000)
Constant	21.558*** (0.511)	10.804*** (0.305)	10.801*** (0.380)
Observations	1,097	1,097	1,097
Overdispersion (α)	0.050	0.062	0.103
Pseudo R^2	0.0181	0.0042	0.0229
Wald χ^2	151.35***	25.57***	170.81***

Note. Coefficients are reported as Incident Rate Ratios (IRR). Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Trends

The MENA region experienced a dramatic escalation, with total daily incidents (Figure 3) increasing by nearly 88% (IRR = 1.88, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI: 1.69, 2.08). Religious jihadist incidents within the region specifically rose by 21.5% (IRR = 1.21, $p = 0.008$, 95% CI: 1.05, 1.40). The regression results are reported in Table 3.

Figure 3

Number of Daily Terrorism Incidents in the MENA Region

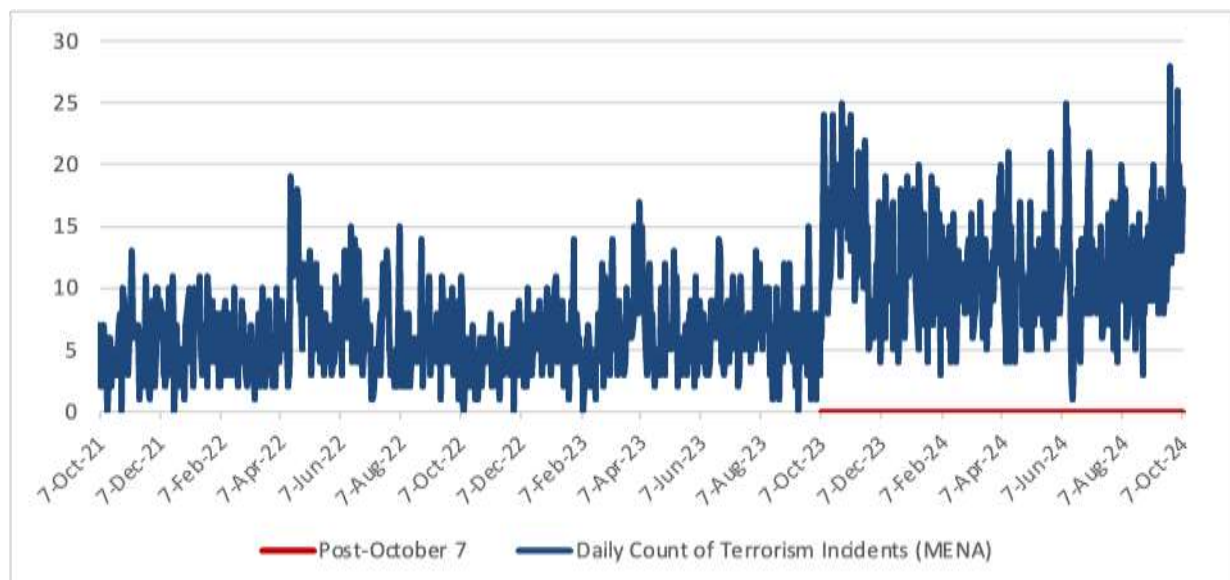


Table 3

Negative Binomial Regression Results (MENA Region Daily Incidents)

Variable	MENA All Terrorism	MENA Religious Jihadist
Post-October 7	1.879*** (0.097)	1.215** (0.089)
Time Trend	1.000 (0.000)	1.000 (0.000)
Constant	5.863*** (0.215)	4.081*** (0.177)
Observations	1,097	1,097

Variable	MENA All Terrorism	MENA Religious Jihadist
Overdispersion (α)	0.085	0.146
Pseudo R^2	0.0720	0.0044
Wald χ^2	565.07***	21.89***

Note. Coefficients are reported as Incident Rate Ratios (IRR). Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

To isolate the effect from the primary kinetic conflict in Israel, the model was run excluding Israeli data. While the total non-Israel MENA count showed a non-significant 9% increase, the religious jihadist count excluding Israel showed a statistically significant decrease of 23% (IRR = 0.77, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI: 0.68, 0.88). This divergence suggests that while the validation effect was strong within the primary conflict theater, the regional response outside of Israel was more complex, potentially due to state-level containment, a strong magnetism of Israel as a focal target for jihadist groups, or shifts in localized group strategies. The results of this regression are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Negative Binomial Regression Results (MENA Region Excluding Israel)

Variable	MENA Region Excluding Israel	
	All Terrorism	Religious Jihadist
Post-October 7	1.090 (0.057)	0.770*** (0.051)
Time Trend	1.000 (0.000)	1.000* (0.000)
Constant	5.805*** (0.215)	3.615*** (0.161)
Observations	1,097	1,097
Overdispersion (α)	0.075	0.108
Pseudo R^2	0.0016	0.0036

Variable	MENA Region Excluding Israel	
	All Terrorism	Religious Jihadist
Wald χ^2	8.98*	18.18***

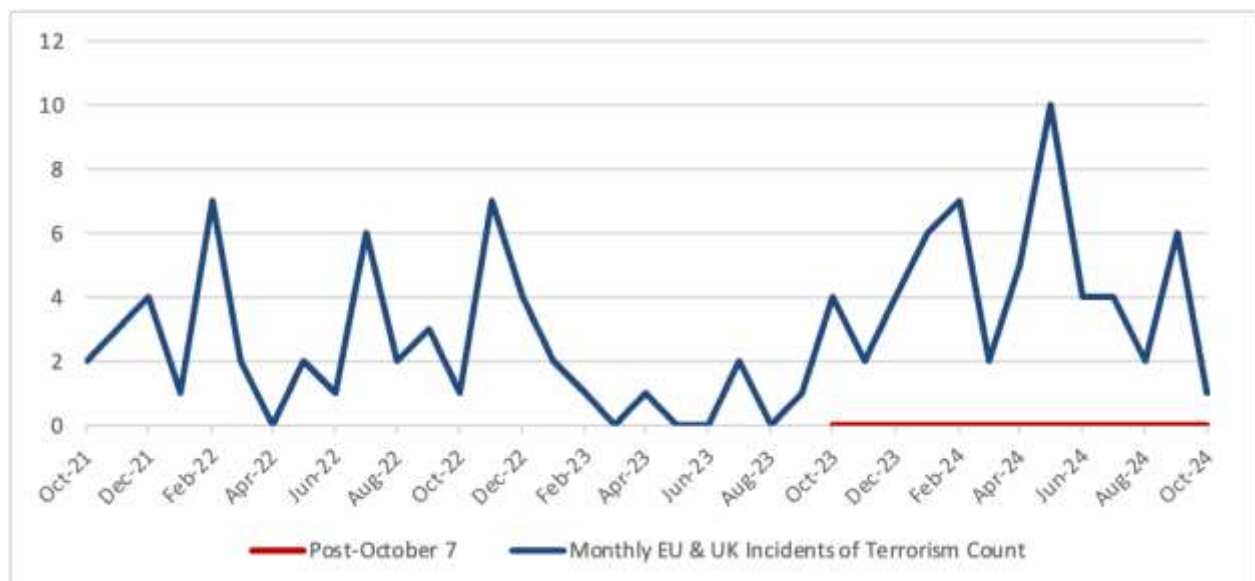
Note. Coefficients are reported as Incident Rate Ratios (IRR). Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Western Europe Trends (EU and UK)

The most striking evidence for the contagion effect is found in Western Europe (the EU and UK). The monthly incident rate for all terrorism (Figure 4) increased more than fivefold (IRR = 5.17, $p = 0.001$, 95% CI: 2.04, 13.07).

Figure 4

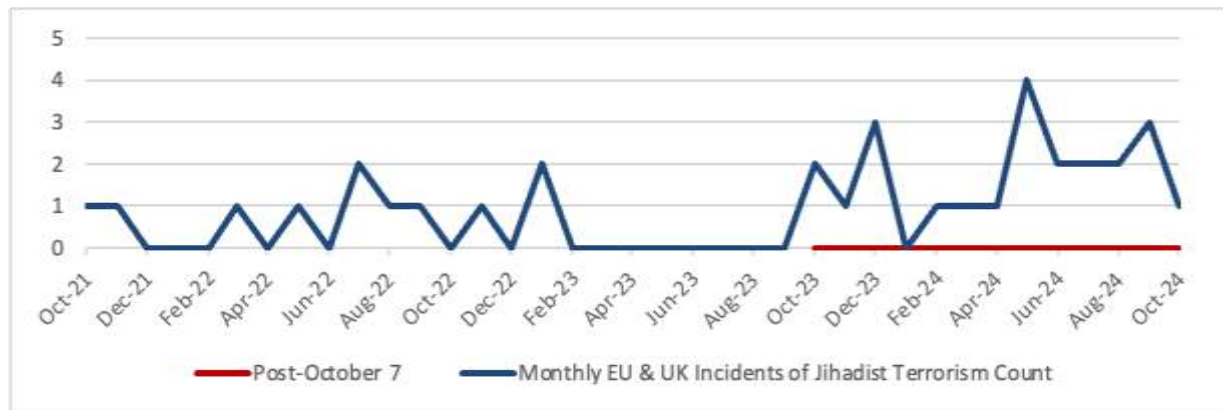
Number of Monthly Terrorism Incidents in the EU & UK



Even more significant was the increase in expected monthly jihadist incidents (Figure 5), which saw a six-fold increase (IRR = 6.11, $p = 0.002$, 95% CI: 1.89, 19.69). These results are particularly compelling because the time-trend control variable for Western Europe was significant and negative prior to the attacks, meaning this surge was not a continuation of an existing upward trajectory, but a severe, sudden deviation triggered directly by the events of October 7. The results of the regression analysis are reported in Table 5.

Figure 5

Number of Monthly Jihadist Terrorism Incidents in the EU & UK



Beyond statistical significance, this surge represents a profound substantive shift in the regional security environment. In practical terms, the baseline rate of jihadist terrorism in the EU and UK prior to October 7 was exceptionally low, averaging fewer than one incident every two months (0.46 per month). The modeled six-fold acceleration functionally erased years of localized counter-terrorism progress, escalating the operational tempo to nearly two incidents per month (1.77) during the post-shock period. For European intelligence and law enforcement agencies, this translates from managing a rare, episodic threat to confronting a sustained, high-frequency mobilization cycle. Because this sudden multiplication of incidents occurred thousands of miles outside the immediate conflict zone, it provides the clearest empirical validation of the ideological contagion effect within decentralized extremist networks.

Table 5

Negative Binomial Regression Monthly Results (Western Europe: EU & UK)

Variable	Monthly EU and UK Incidents	
	All Terrorism	Religious Jihadist
Post-October 7	5.169*** (2.446)	6.105** (3.648)
Time Trend	0.953*	0.976

Variable	Monthly EU and UK Incidents	
	All Terrorism	Religious Jihadist
	(0.019)	(0.024)
Constant	3.557*** (0.933)	0.597 (0.214)
Observations	37	37
Overdispersion (α)	0.17	<0.001
Pseudo R^2	0.0733	0.1572
Wald χ^2	13.36**	16.72***

Note. Coefficients are reported as Incident Rate Ratios (IRR). Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Discussion: Radicalization Mechanisms and Antisemitism

The initial attacks on October 7 functioned as a primary Terrorism Triggering Event that provided symbolic proof to both extremist networks as well as possible individual actors that a high-profile, coordinated strike against a technologically superior adversary was achievable (Hamm & Spaaij, 2015). This moment of operational validation shattered the perception of the status quo and acted as a moral shock, lowering the psychological threshold for violence among geographically dispersed adherents (Crenshaw, 2011). By framing this violence as a successful challenge to an existential threat, extremist actors reclaimed a sense of collective significance that is central to the radicalization process (Kruglanski et al., 2014; Perliger & Pedahzur, 2016). The perceived triumph of this operation by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad bolstered the in-group's sense of power. This has been linked to an escalation of anger directed at the out-group, thereby increasing the motivation to engage in aggressive action against them (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000).

While the initial attack provided the spark, the destructive military campaign in Gaza ensured that the radicalization process remained active rather than fading as a transient event. The intensification of emotion, specifically of anger, fear, and anxiety, within political behavior is highly responsive to ongoing historical and cultural traumas (Wright-Neville &

Smith, 2009). The intense conflict provided a continuous stream of visual and narrative content that extremist groups used to validate their conspiratorial worldviews. This sustained grievance acted as the engine for the Contagion Effect, particularly in Western Europe, where the six-fold increase in religious jihadi incidents suggests that the protracted nature of the suffering in Gaza served as a powerful recruiter for lone actors and small cells. Most mechanisms of radicalization are related to group identification, and in particular to perceived threats to one's in-group (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2008).

Antisemitism serves as the critical bridge that allows these two distinct phases of the conflict to merge into a singular, global radicalization vector. By framing both the initial attack and the subsequent response by the Israeli military through a master conspiracy lens, extremist actors provide a comprehensive explanation for the violence that resonates across ideological divides (Lipstadt, 2019). Antisemitism accelerates the synergy by ensuring that the opportunity provided by the attack and the fuel provided by the campaign are directed toward a singular, entrenched target. This explains why the surge in terrorism was not confined to the MENA region but manifested as a statistically significant global phenomenon.

The results of the statistical models suggest a 44% higher estimated rate of daily terrorism incidents attributable to the effects of events following October 7, when holding time constant. They also found a 5 times higher estimated rate of monthly terrorism incidents and a 6 times higher estimated rate of monthly jihadist terrorism incidents in the EU and UK attributable to the effects of October 2023, when holding time constant. These findings strongly support the Contagion Effect by demonstrating that the initial event (the October 7th attacks) and the ensuing conflict did not contain their effects geographically or temporally. Instead, the sharp rise in related incidents in regions distant from the conflict (Western Europe) and across the globe indicates that the conflict's emotional and ideological intensity spread through media, social networks, and communal reactions, triggering related, geographically dispersed acts. This rapid and substantial multiplication of incidents outside the immediate conflict zone is the core mechanism of the Contagion Effect.

The nature of modern extremist attacks has been fundamentally altered by the pervasive influence of social media and digital communication platforms. These networks have provided a powerful, easily accessible conduit for the rapid dissemination of propaganda, tactical instructions, and, crucially, a model for violence. Specifically, high-

profile attacks serve as a potent, impactful, easily disseminated model or inspiration for potential attackers. This digital echo chamber amplifies the perceived success and notoriety of initial attacks, turning them into replicable blueprints. At the same time, it is important to remember that evidence points to active rather than passive seekers of violent radical material being more prone to commit acts of political violence (Akram & Nasar, 2023).

Nonetheless, individual actors or small cells may find themselves inspired by the readily available narratives and methods, and prompted to launch copycat plots or opportunistic attacks. The lone actor, often radicalized solely online, adopts the tactics and targets of previous, successful operations out of a caring compulsion to defend a perceived set-upon group (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2014). Similarly, small, self-organizing cells use these widely shared models of “effective” incidents that shock, that grab the digital imagination, and hurt public sensibilities, to coordinate and execute their own acts of violence, leveraging the inspiration to overcome barriers to motivation, planning, and execution. The resulting environment is characterized by decentralized, unpredictable threats that emerge rapidly following a major incident shared across global digital platforms. This study argues that the attacks of October 7th were often framed around antisemitic narratives (Baratz-Rix & Kantor, 2023; Gruber et al., 2024; Santos & Yogev, 2024; Bar-Halpern & Wolfman, 2025), making this specific motif a potent and poisonous vector for contagion.

The empirical results for the MENA region provide a nuanced perspective on the Validation Effect. The dramatic 88% higher estimate rate of daily terrorism incidents in the MENA region, attributable to the effects of events following October 7, when holding time constant, initially appears to support the thesis that a perceived operational success legitimizes extremist worldviews and motivates existing adherents toward increased activity. However, when the model is disaggregated to exclude Israeli data, a more complex picture emerges. While total non-Israel MENA incidents remained relatively stable, religious jihadist incidents outside of Israel experienced a statistically significant decrease of 23%.

This divergence suggests that the success of the October 7 attacks exerted a powerful, yet geographically concentrated, magnetism. Within the primary theater, the validation of Hamas’s tactical model likely drove the surge in incidents. The event served as a rallying cry and evidence of a potential weakness in a traditionally powerful enemy in the region, with other Iranian-aligned groups, most notably Hezbollah in Lebanon, but also the PIJ in Gaza,

and the Houthis (Ansar Allah) in Yemen, engaging in a high volume of incidents targeting Israel (Cubucku et al., 2025). While the volume of incidents is alarming, most are cross-border rocket attacks leading to relatively few casualties, rather than emulations of complex multi-tactic coordinated attacks, as seen on October 7th. Outside of this immediate theater, the 23% decline in jihadist activity indicates a shift in localized group strategies rather than a lack of ideological resonance.

This regional decrease may be attributed to several factors, however it is likely that the sheer magnitude of the conflict in Israel and Gaza will have drawn the vast majority of the attention of local groups. The geographic proximity to Israel, combined with various groups possessing Iranian rockets capable of striking their main target across that span, presents too strong an allure. This focal point has drawn the attention and resources of jihadist networks away from peripheral regional targets and toward the central struggle (Sageman, 2004). But while the target and its vulnerability are validated and spread to regional actors, the successful tactics used on October 7th never come close to being replicated in the incidents recorded in the study period. Consequently, while the October 7 shock event validated the *utility* of violence, the actual *expression* of that violence was constrained by the strategic gravitational pull of Israel. Ultimately, the level of planning and coordination required for such an incident is likely too great an effort compared to the pull of “low-cost, high-frequency stand-off warfare” (cross-border rockets), used to try to wear down tremendously effective but disproportionately expensive countermeasures (e.g., the Iron Dome) of the groups’ most entrenched nation-state antagonist (Cubucku et al., 2025).

Taken together, these findings suggest that the Validation Effect in the MENA context operates less as a mechanism for the diffusion of complex operational tactics and more as a process of ideological reinforcement and organizational legitimation within environments where powerful militant infrastructures already exist. The October 7 attacks appear to have validated core belief systems concerning the efficacy and righteousness of violent resistance, strengthening in-group cohesion, sustaining recruitment pipelines, and motivating participation within established networks, rather than generating widespread tactical emulation beyond the primary theater (Horgan, 2014; Kruglanski et al., 2014). In regions characterized by dense pre-existing militant ecosystems, such validation functions primarily to reaffirm strategic narratives and mobilize resources toward familiar, lower-cost modes of

violence that align with existing capabilities and constraints (Kalyvas, 2006; Bloom, 2005). Thus, while the symbolic success of the attack resonated broadly, its principal effect was the reinforcement of ideology and commitment within entrenched organizations, underscoring the Validation Effect as a mechanism of belief consolidation and recruitment rather than one of tactical replication in highly institutionalized conflict environments.

The pronounced global surge in expected terrorism incidents, specifically, the 81% increase in the daily IRR for non-jihadist violence compared to a more modest 18.6% increase in the daily IRR for religious jihadism, does suggest a complex interaction between the shock event, pre-existing militant ecosystems, and the profound geopolitical volatility unleashed across the globe.

First, within the MENA region, the 23% decrease in the daily IRR of jihadist activity outside Israel likely reflects a very real "magnetism effect" of the kinetic conflict rather than a decline in ideological motivation or activity. Regional actors who might otherwise conduct localized terrorism likely shifted resources toward the primary conflict theater. This manifested in low-cost, high-frequency stand-off warfare (such as cross-border rocket fire from Hezbollah in Lebanon or the Houthis in Yemen), which often borders on traditional paramilitary activity, thereby altering localized incident counts.

Second, it is crucial to emphasize that while the numerical surge in European jihadi incidents is lower compared to the explosion of broader extremist violence, a six-fold escalation remains a profound and statistically significant shift. This relative divergence in volume is likely driven by the demographic realities of the region and the strict methodological parameters of the GRID dataset. First, the baseline pool of highly mobilized, operationally capable jihadist actors in Western Europe is comparatively limited, as evidenced by the historically low pre-attack mean. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the incident data analyzed in this study strictly captures executed acts of terrorism; it does not account for the full spectrum of extremist behavior, most notably foiled terror plots that never reach the execution phase. Given the intensive monitoring of established jihadist networks by European intelligence and law enforcement agencies, it is highly probable that many plots inspired by the validation effect were intercepted "before they left the house." Conversely, the sheer potency of the geopolitical chaos activated a distinctly different demographic on the home front: marginal, less organizationally connected, and more psychologically susceptible

individuals. For these easily motivated actors, the threshold to commit opportunistic violence was drastically lowered by the surrounding crisis. Crucially, their lack of established network ties makes their spontaneous acts much harder for security services to detect and interdict, thereby driving the massive, disproportionate spike in decentralized, executed incidents.

Finally, the massive global spike in non-jihadi violence reflects the activation of decentralized, opportunistic actors leveraging this global unease to fuel localized antisemitic grievances. This volatility was heavily compounded by the asymmetric military response to the October 7 attacks. For extremist networks, the evolving conflict served a dual psychological function: the initial attack shattered the perceived invulnerability of the Israeli state, while the subsequent asymmetric response was weaponized to validate entrenched, conspiratorial narratives regarding the "otherness" of Israel and, by malicious extension, Jewish populations globally.

Conversely, highly institutionalized jihadi cells navigated this volatility differently. Rather than engaging in immediate, opportunistic violence, these networks likely adopted a posture of strategic patience. Having absorbed the profound ideological validation of the initial attack, these entrenched groups may have prioritized consolidating these narratives and awaiting centralized strategic directives before initiating new, complex operations, thereby accounting for their lower immediate contribution to the daily incident rate.

While the contagion and validation mechanisms provide a robust explanatory framework for the observed surge, it is important to consider and acknowledge potential alternative explanations for the escalation in global violence. First, the increase in incidents could partially reflect geopolitical opportunism; as international attention and security apparatuses pivoted toward the Israel-Gaza conflict, disparate extremist organizations, such as ISIS affiliates in sub-Saharan Africa or South Asia, may have capitalized on the perceived distraction of Western powers to advance local operational tempos. Second, some regional increases may represent the continuation of pre-existing conflict trajectories that are temporally correlated with, but causally independent of, the October 7 attacks. Chronic state fragility, economic stressors, and highly localized grievances provide persistent fuel for violence that operates outside of transnational shock events. Finally, from a methodological standpoint, heightened global threat postures following major historical shocks can occasionally lead to increased surveillance and a lower threshold for classifying peripheral

political violence as terrorism. However, while these factors undoubtedly contribute to the baseline of global volatility, they struggle to fully account for the abrupt, multi-regional synchronicity of the post-October 7 surge. Most notably, these alternative theories fail to explain the immediate six-fold escalation of jihadist incidents in Western Europe, a region with high state capacity where opportunistic territorial expansion is non-existent. Consequently, while local dynamics and geopolitical distraction play undeniable roles, the activation of an antisemitic master narrative, driven by both a successful October 7 attack and an asymmetric Israeli response, that acts as a transnational contagion vector remains the most parsimonious explanation for the sudden, highly dispersed synchronization of extremist mobilization.

Sustaining and bolstering all of these effects, antisemitism serves as a potent radicalizing bridging vector across many different groups, ideologies, and geographies. It provides a lens through which shared targets and narratives can transcend usual divisions that exist among various forms and degrees of extremism, serving as a powerful amplifying force for Contagion and Validation Effects.

This has several implications for deradicalization strategies. Certain types of programming that may focus primarily on general grievances, emphasizing civic inclusion, or generic ideological redirection, while insufficiently addressing the specific content of extremist belief systems. In the context of antisemitic extremism, this approach may be limited, as antisemitism functions not merely as a political grievance but as a deeply embedded conspiratorial worldview that provides all-encompassing explanations for perceived social, economic, and geopolitical failures (Lipstadt, 2019; Mudde, 2019; Wistrich, 1991). By treating antisemitism as interchangeable with other forms of radical grievance, such programs may fail to confront the unique narrative structures that sustain it, including mythologies of hidden power, moral inversion, and dehumanization. As a result, participants may disengage tactically while retaining the underlying belief system, leaving the conditions for re-radicalization largely intact (Horgan, 2009).

Effective deradicalization strategies must therefore directly target the validation narratives that emerge in the aftermath of high-profile attacks. Emphasizing the human costs inflicted on civilian populations, including those the perpetrators claim to represent, may be able to erode the moral legitimacy such attacks are intended to generate. Importantly, counter-

narratives should avoid reinforcing grievance frames and instead focus on how perceived short-term gains often produce sustained repression, organizational fragmentation, and political marginalization over time. In this way, deradicalization efforts may be able to weaken the psychological reinforcement mechanisms that sustain belief commitment and recruitment following shock events.

Countering the contagion vector requires a shift toward more agile, event-driven interventions in digital and social media environments, where antisemitic narratives and symbolic interpretations of violence diffuse most rapidly. Research consistently demonstrates that the immediate post-event period represents a critical window during which meaning is constructed, and narratives of validation or imitation take hold (Weimann, 2006; Conway et al., 2019). Delayed or generic responses are therefore unlikely to disrupt the symbolic power of shock events. Instead, targeted counter-messaging strategies should focus on rapid narrative disruption, platform-specific engagement, and the amplification of credible voices capable of contesting extremist framings within relevant online subcultures. By intervening early in the meaning-making process, such approaches can reduce the likelihood that antisemitic narratives crystallize into enduring motivational scripts that fuel both validation-driven reinforcement and contagion-based mobilization.

Finally, a significant challenge for future deradicalization efforts is the degree to which the destructive scale of a state military response may serve to validate the very conspiratorial worldviews practitioners seek to dismantle. This phenomenon, sometimes described as reactive co-radicalization, suggests that extremist movements thrive when they can point to real-world devastation as evidence of their conspiratorial claims (Pratt, 2015). In the current conflict, the level of destruction and civilian loss in Gaza has been leveraged by extremist actors to provide a contemporary, visual proof for ancient antisemitic master narratives regarding malevolent global influence (Lipstadt, 2019). The powerful imagery and reality of the conflict in Gaza are also potent vectors of radicalization for lone actors who are compelled and care about the well-being of others (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2014).

When military actions result in catastrophic humanitarian outcomes, they can create a backlash effect that undermines the credibility of moderate voices and deradicalization programs. Research specifically examining the impact of foreign military intervention on radicalization suggests that such actions often provide extremist groups with the narrative

material necessary to fuel further mobilization (Pettinger, 2015). However, it is important to note that in modern Western contexts at least, a stronger link exists between antisemitic attitudes and support for violent or illegal political action and general aggression, compared to anti-Israel sentiment alone (Moskalenko et al., 2025). For practitioners, the difficulty lies in the fact that antisemitic conspiratorial beliefs thrive on the perception of a victimized in-group and a powerful, aggressive out-group. Future research must therefore examine how deradicalization frameworks can remain effective when the on-the-ground reality in a conflict zone appears to align with the hyperbolic narratives used by recruiters to foster mobilization (Koehler & Horgan, 2017).

Conclusion

The statistically significant surge in terrorism following the October 7 attacks and the ensuing conflict impresses upon researchers and practitioners to rethink how deradicalization programs are designed and implemented. The data suggest that current a-thematic approaches are ill-equipped to handle the synergistic radicalization triggered by intense cycles of violence and conflict, combined with entrenched conspiratorial worldviews. This study has demonstrated that the event was not merely a regional escalation but a global shock that triggered a systemic shift in the threat landscape. Our findings, most notably the 44 percent global increase in incidents and the six-fold surge in Western European jihadist activity, provide empirical weight to the theoretical operation of Contagion and Validation Effects.

The central contribution of this research is the identification of antisemitism as the critical ideological accelerator. By functioning as a master conspiracy theory, antisemitism allowed the shock of October 7 and the subsequent humanitarian crisis in Gaza to transcend geographic and ideological boundaries. It provides a unifying narrative that translates localized tactical success into a global template for imitative violence and a validation of ideological beliefs. When programs ignore this specific thematic anchor, they fail to address the primary driver of the mobilization seen in the post-October 7 surge. Practitioners must move toward theme-specific interventions that explicitly deconstruct the conspiratorial mechanics of antisemitic tropes rather than relying on generalized counter-messaging.

Effective strategies must include the exposure of the human cost by shifting the focus from symbolic victory to the tangible suffering caused by the conflict cycle. This serves to erode the moral justification for violence (Bandura, 2002). Furthermore, the six-fold increase in jihadist incidents in Western Europe underscores the necessity for more agile, targeted counter-messaging within digital spaces. Because the contagion effect is driven by the rapid, symbolic transmission of the shock event through media channels, intervention must be near-instantaneous (Weimann, 2015). This may require the development and deployment of promising “prebunking” strategies to prepare susceptible populations to recognize and reject conspiratorial framing immediately following a major geopolitical shock (Lewandowsky and van der Linden, 2021), although their applied effectiveness still remains to be proven.

While the findings presented here should be viewed as an analysis of an ongoing radicalization wave rather than a final accounting of the conflict’s impact, they propose several avenues for future work. There is a pressing need for a comprehensive qualitative analysis of how different extremist groups utilize identical antisemitic tropes to mobilize their respective bases. Understanding the threshold of violence and the specific link between general antisemitic incidents and the escalation toward formal terrorism plots remains essential for developing early-warning systems within modern deradicalization frameworks.

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