

Militant Extremist Mind-Set: Provviolence, Vile World, and Divine Power

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In the present article, the authors report on the development of a scale for the measurement of the militant extremist mind-set. A previous pilot study identified 56 statements selected from writings of various terrorist groups as well as from psychological, historical, and political texts on terrorism. These statements, together with measures of personality, social attitudes, values, and social cynicism, were administered to participants from 9 countries ($N = 2,424$). A series of exploratory factor analyses of 56 statements produced 3 factors: Provviolence, Vile World, and Divine Power. Correlations of these factors with external variables indicate that Divine Power is a traditional religiosity scale, whereas Provviolence and Vile World scales cannot be accounted for by the existing psychological constructs. The distribution of scores on the Provviolence scale is skewed, indicating that the majority of participants disapprove of this attitude. The authors also present means for the countries included in the analysis. Participants from Malaysia endorse Vile World and Divine Power statements stronger than participants from other countries. The 3 Asian countries (China, Korea, and Malaysia) endorse Provviolence more strongly than countries from other parts of the world.

Keywords: terrorism, militant mind-set, social attitudes, provviolence

“The Governments . . . on behalf of their peoples declare: That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed; . . .”—Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted in London on 16 November 1945.

It is likely that signatories to UNESCO’s constitution saw war as organized violence between national military units and were referring to ideological or perhaps religious, not psychological, connotations of the “minds of men.” In the contemporary world, one form of war is between the organized state(s) and a relatively small group of people who deliberately kill (or do not avoid killing) civilians. Although the officials of the state may refer to the attackers as terrorists and prosecute them as criminals, the attackers do not use this term to describe themselves. Instead, they may call themselves freedom fighters, separatists, revolutionaries, rebels, and the like. Thus, from the organized states’ point of view,

the attackers are committing acts that are indistinguishable from criminal activity and therefore have a substantial psychological component, whereas attackers themselves subscribe to ideological or religious connotations of war.

Psychological Ingredients of the Militant Extremist Mind-Set

Assuming that the organized state is right and terrorists’ attacks are indeed criminal acts, what are the psychological components of a mind-set—a pattern of beliefs, feelings, thoughts, and motivation that tends to be mobilized under facilitating conditions—that may lead to violent behavior? In addressing this question, two options can be put aside. First, contrary to some early interpretations, terrorist acts are not committed by people who suffer from a mental disorder (Atran, 2003; McCauley, 2002). Even if the psychological makeup of those who commit suicide is a proper domain of clinical psychology, it is questionable to assume that acts of suicide bombers can be attributed to psychopathology. Second, although it is possible that those who commit terrorist acts have a peculiar constellation of standard personality traits, it is unlikely that this is the case in reality. For example, it is unlikely that all terrorists will lack the trait of Agreeableness or that Neuroticism and Extraversion will collapse into a single dimension. We say this because instances of nonclinical social groups showing aberrant constellation of traits have not been reported.

This leaves the option of conceiving of extremist mind-set as an endorsement of extreme positions on dimensions that describe normal individuals in the population. Over the past decades, much has been accomplished in charting the domains of personality (see McCrae & Allik, 2002), values (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001), social

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attitudes (Saucier, 2000), and social norms (Hofstede, 2001; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). By and large, this work is based on the assumption that the selection of items from a given domain is either exhaustive or, perhaps, representative of the domain under consideration. Thus, one interpretation of extremism is in terms of the high scores on these well-established dimensions. For example, militant extremists may score high on amoral social attitudes dimensions of toughness and maliciousness (Stankov & Knežević, 2005; Stankov & Lee, 2009) or, say, on the traditionalism facet from the domain of values.

Empirical Approach to the Study of the Militant Extremist Mind-Set

An alternative approach that we adopted in the present article assumes that although militant extremism may indeed be understood in terms of the well-established constructs, it is possible that previous studies of various domains in psychology have failed to include the essential features of the militant extremist mind-set into the item sampling process. This may be particularly relevant in light of contemporary terrorists' "philosophy" and the impact it is having on the world today. Therefore, a new approach is needed to assess it properly. Given that our social life has undergone changes, it is reasonable to assume that the instruments that were originally developed in the years after World War II (e.g., measures of social attitudes like authoritarianism and dogmatism) or even in the late 1980s (e.g., Big Five personality measures) might have missed the essential aspects of the belief system that has emerged at the dawn of the present millennium.

This article consists of three parts. In the first part, the focus is on the development of new items and on the construction of scale(s) that capture what may be deemed to be the militant extremist mind-set. In the second part, the newly developed scale(s) is (are) related to the existing measures from the other domains with the purpose of establishing the extent of overlap between the new and old domains. In the third part, we compared arithmetic means of nine countries on measures of the militant extremist mind-set.

Frameworks for Item Development

The present study builds on previous pilot work, the purpose of which was to assemble a relatively large pool of statements that reflect the contemporary militant extremist mind-set and reduce that pool to a smaller set that can be used in the present study. We used three different approaches for the selection of items for the pilot study.

1. *Item selection based on a combination of primary (militant extremist texts) and secondary sources (psychological, historical, and literary).* The basic idea underlying this approach is that comprehensiveness of the description of the militant extremist mind-set should be secured through the extensive search of psychological (e.g., Freud, Adler, Jung), historical (e.g., writings about Eichman, Mengele), and literary (e.g., Dostoyevsky, Marquis de Sade) sources in addition to the primary sources, which were identical to those used in Approach 3 below. Initially, eight such themes were identified, and their existence checked against the terrorist texts. Another 12 themes found in the primary sources

were added subsequently. The final set of 122 items was based on the 20 themes.

2. *Item selection based on content analyses of texts produced by different militant extremist groups.* The basic idea underlying this approach is that the description of the militant extremist mind-set should be grounded on "themes" (recurrent patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving) based on explicit statements found in primary sources and characterizing at least three different extremist groups. We sampled militant extremist groups from seven world geographic regions, guaranteeing the diversity of ideologies, religions, and ethnicities. We found that 16 themes occurred in three or more groups. We constructed a total of 106 items to represent these 16 themes. Saucier, Akers, Shen-Miller, Knežević, and Stankov (2009) described the recurrent themes and elaborated on the selection of the items from the extremist texts.

3. *Linguistic approach to item selection.* The basic premise of this approach is that higher frequency of occurrence of particular words or content in terrorist texts can help reveal the dominant features of their mind-set. The strategy is based on the search for two types of linguistic features: (a) lemmas (basic forms of words without inflexion) and (b) content category. The methodology assumes that by comparing the frequency of words and themes in terrorist-related text with the frequency of identical words and themes in the baseline texts will reveal important features of militant extremist thinking. Baseline texts were the writings about and by the members of legally recognized political parties from the same countries that produced the terrorist-related texts. The log-likelihood statistic can be used to quantify the significance of frequency difference. After extracting the lexical features found to be strongly associated with extremist texts (15 lemmas), the next step was to select sentences containing the terms of interest and transpose these sentences into the questionnaire statements (133 items). Stankov, Higgins, Saucier, and Knežević (in press) provide further details of this approach.

Although we used militant extremist texts in all three approaches, the approaches themselves differ with respect to the sample of text examined, in emphasis, and in the additional information that was consulted during the process of item selection. The first approach is focused on experts' interpretations and understanding, the second approach lays emphasis on culture-fair sampling of extremist texts, and the third approach captures propaganda aspects of terrorist discourse.

In a pilot study, 361 items were given to 452 participants from three countries: Serbia ($n = 297$), Australia ($n = 52$), and the United States ($n = 103$). The data were analyzed using factor and regression analyses, and a reduced set of 56 items, representing roughly the same number of statements from each approach, was retained. These statements are used in the present study.

The aim of the present study was to examine the structure of the 56 selected items using a large number of participants in order to achieve an improved understanding of the main dimensions of the militant extremist mind-set. The aim was also to construct a new psychometrically sound scale measuring these dimensions with a smaller (i.e., fewer than 56) number of items.

Extremists' Views Within Nonextremist Populations

The empirical approach to scale construction adopted in this article draws on samples of participants who are not militant

extremists. The underlying assumption is that many people from normal walks of life (i.e., those who are not members of an extremist group) will, to some degree, endorse statements that are based on extremist ideology. Disagreement among participants may vary, with such statements leading to a shift in mean and, perhaps, a skewed distribution of scores. However, as is the case with measures of right-wing authoritarianism (see Altemeyer, 1996), it is likely that there will be considerable variability among the individuals in the population. This variability will allow for the examination of the psychometric properties of the new scale(s) and for the examination of its correlation with measures of other constructs.

Can Militant Extremism Be Understood in Terms of the Well-Known Psychological Constructs?

An important task for anyone claiming to have developed a measure of a potentially new construct is to demonstrate its discriminant properties; that is, scales purported to measure it do not measure something that is already known. The most likely areas that may be related to militant extremism are noncognitive domains of personality, social attitudes, values, and social norms.

In this study, we reported correlations between our scales of militant extremism and several well-established measures from these diverse domains. Thus, the present study contains measures of the Big Six model of personality (Saucier, in press), measures of social attitudes based on Saucier's (2000) work on -isms, measures of values derived from Schwartz and Bilsky's (1990) work, as well as subjective measures of the dimensions that are a part of the Failed States Index (FSI).¹ In addition, this study includes measures of social cynicism based on Leung and Bond's (2004) and psychoticism (based on Knežević et al., 2009) work. We describe these different measures below in the Method section.

To the extent that individual differences on new measure(s) of the militant extremist mind-set cannot be reduced to the well-established constructs, there is evidence that something new is indeed being measured. Together with the procedures used in item selection, new scales justify the claim that there is indeed a construct of the militant extremist mind-set. These new scales also provide an operational definition of the construct. Further examinations of their properties and the adequacy of their interpretation may follow.

Cross-Cultural Differences on Measures of the Militant Extremist Mind-Set

An important feature of our approach is the availability of data from nine countries, allowing for the cross-cultural comparisons in the extent of endorsement of militant extremist sentiments and beliefs. The countries belong to four world regions: North America (the United States of America), Eastern Europe (Serbia, Slovakia, and Belarus), Latin America (Chile and Guatemala), and Asia (Malaysia, South Korea and China). Countries from this last region differ with respect to religious affiliation, with Malaysia being Muslim and South Korea and China being influenced historically by Confucian teachings. The issue of interest is whether there are significant differences in the levels of endorsement of militant extremist statements between the countries included in this study.

Without knowing the nature of the constructs that will emerge from structural (i.e., factor) analyses, it is hard to formulate particular hypotheses about cross-cultural differences. Nevertheless, the available sample of countries allows us to make comparisons not only with respect to four world regions but also with respect to the effects of religious affiliation and degrees of economic development and sociopolitical status between and within the regions. We report the main findings on cross-cultural differences in the last part of the present article. To the extent that observed differences on measures of the militant extremist mind-set correspond to some well-known and related sociological or political differences between the countries, it is reasonable to claim support for the validity of the interpretation of measures of the new construct.

Acquiescence: A Source of Construct-Irrelevant Variance

In studies of personality in which self-report measures are used and that are based on Likert scales, it is generally accepted that it is necessary to control for *acquiescence response set*—a tendency to agree rather than to disagree, independent of the content of the statement. The absence of an appropriate control for acquiescence poses threats to the validity of the interpretation of scores obtained by the instrument. Personality scales and other instruments in use today control for this tendency by using both positive and reverse-coded items. Smith and Fischer (2008) argued that there are significant cross-cultural differences in acquiescence that, to some extent, parallel differences between collectivistic and individualistic societies. In the present article, we controlled for the effects of acquiescence in two ways: (a) by including reverse-coded items in the initial item pool and therefore allowing them to have (negative) loadings on the resulting factors and (b) by assessing acquiescence and using statistical techniques to partial/covary it out from the effects of interest.

In summary, our aims in this paper were to (a) examine factorial structure among the 56 items selected to measure aspects of the militant extremist mind-set; (b) construct a scale for the measurement of the militant extremist mind-set; (c) examine correlations between the new scale and measures of related well-established psychological constructs; and (d) compare arithmetic means on measures of the militant extremist mind-set for nine countries from different regions of the world.

Method

Participants

The total number of participants that were included in the analyses to be reported in this article was 2,424. The average age of the participants was 21 years old ($SD = 3.20$). Table 1 provides a breakdown in terms of gender and country of origin. Overall, there were almost twice as many women as there were men in our total sample, but the proportion of men varied across the national samples. The grouping of countries in the present article is based on the GLOBE (House et al., 2004) classification of five world regions that are listed in Table 1.

At the time of data collection, all participants were enrolled in colleges, mostly in the initial years, in their respective countries.

¹ Please see www.fundforpeace.org

Table 1
Participants in the Present Study Classified by Gender, World Region, and Country of Origin

Region and country of origin	Women	Men	Total
Anglo			
USA	263	122	385
Eastern Europe			
Serbia	171	61	232
Slovakia	129	118	247
Belarus	102	95	197
Latin America			
Chile	129	57	186
Guatemala	175	25	200
South East Asia			
Malaysia	160	82	242
Confucian Asia			
Korea	166	233	399
China	221	76	297
Total	1,516	869	2,385
Missing data on gender			39
Total			2,424

USA = United States of America.

The available information indicates that the samples from different countries are comparable in terms of their socioeconomic status and other demographic characteristics. Needless to say, this sampling framework limits the generalization of the present findings beyond student populations.

Measures

The total number of items in the present survey was 186—they all belong to different scales that are described below. All items were translated into the languages of the countries included in the survey, with back-translation used to check on the adequacy of the translation and to make small necessary adjustments until the back-translations all closely matched the original English items. In seven countries, the survey was administered in the paper-and-pencil format. In the United States and in Belarus, the survey was administered online.

Putative measures of the militant extremist mind-set. The three procedures that have been used for the collection of statements were described in the introductory section of this article. As mentioned earlier, a 56-item instrument used in the present study was compiled from a broad list of 361 items used in the pilot study. Stankov et al. (in press) reported the findings with 133 linguistically based items from the same pilot study. Table 2 contains a sample of 24 items from the list of 56—these are the items that were retained following statistical analyses and that are described at the beginning of the Results section. Each statement was accompanied by a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly and completely disagree*; 2 = *moderately or mostly disagree*; 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*; 4 = *moderately or mostly agree*; 5 = *strongly and completely agree*). As can be seen in Table 2, some statements were reverse keyed.

In the remainder of this section, a description is provided of measures to be used in order to assess the well-known constructs within psychology that may be related to the militant extremist mind-set.

Measures of personality. A very brief 25-item personality inventory developed by Saucier (in press) was used to assess a Big Six model, with at least four items assessing each of the following dimensions:

1. Conscientiousness. Example: “I complete my duties as soon as possible.”
2. Honesty/Propriety. Example: “I cannot imagine (that I would engage in) lying or cheating.”
3. Agreeableness. Example: “I am usually a patient person.”
4. Resiliency. Example: “I rarely worry.”
5. Extraversion. Example: “I laugh a lot.”
6. Originality/Intellect. Example: “I have a rich vocabulary.”

Each statement was accompanied by a 5-point Likert scale identical to the one used with the militant extremist statements. Two of the statements for each scale were reverse coded.

7. Personality Disintegration (or Psychoticism). A 10-item scale developed by Knežević et al. (2009). Example: “I regularly have a feeling that everything is unreal.”

Measures of social attitudes: Saucier’s “-isms”. A slightly abbreviated version of Saucier’s (2009) 28-item questionnaire measuring the four dimensions is used in this study, with a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly and completely disagree*) to 5 (*strongly and completely agree*).

8. The *Alpha* scale reflects the degree to which an individual subscribes to tradition-oriented religious beliefs that involve hierarchical sources of authority versus secularism. Example: “Religion should play the most important role in civil affairs.”
9. The *Beta* scale reflects the degree to which an individual subscribes to various justifications of the unmitigated pursuit of self-interest: materialism, hedonism, solipsism. Example: “Worldly possessions are the greatest good in life.”
10. The *Gamma* scale reflects the degree to which an individual adheres to civic ideals like those promoted in Western democracies, such as patriotism, constitutionalism, humanism, existentialism, and rationalism. Example: “I love and am devoted to my country.”
11. The *Delta* scale reflects the degree to which an individual endorses subjective spirituality, including mysticism and paranormal experiences. Example: “Some objects have magical powers.”

Measures of values: Schwartz’s Values Survey (SVS). Schwartz and colleagues (see Schwartz & Bardi, 2001) developed a theory of human values postulating 10 basic dimensions along which societies may be differentiated. Cross-cultural studies using the SVS were carried out by Stankov (2007), Stankov and Knežević (2005), and Stankov and Lee (2009). The SVS is used to assess how impor-

Table 2

Items of the Militant Extremist Scales, Their Means and Standard Deviations, and Their Loadings on Three Factors

Scale item	Descriptives		Factor		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Provviolence	Vile World	Divine Power
1. We should never use violence as a way to try to save the world.	3.85	1.23	-.403	.267	
2. Armed struggle is the only way that youths can redeem themselves and their society.	1.57	0.91	.519		
3. All problems can be solved through negotiations and compromise.	3.55	1.15	-.365		
4. Killing is justified when it is an act of revenge.	1.80	1.07	.525		
5. If violence does not solve problems, it is because there was not enough of it.	1.66	1.01	.592		
6. The only way to teach a lesson to our enemies is to threaten their lives and make them suffer.	1.81	1.02	.530		
7. Our enemy's children are like scorpions; they need to be squashed before they grow up.	1.65	0.98	.546		
8. War is the beginning of salvation.	1.69	0.92	.580		
9. Those who claim to be against the use of any form of force are on their way to becoming slaves.	2.09	1.08	.510		
10. A good person has a duty to avoid killing any living human being.	3.85	1.16	-.401		
11. Today the human race is on the edge of an enormous calamity.	3.31	1.08		.596	
12. Modern governments have overstepped moral bounds and no longer have a right to rule.	2.89	1.00		.497	
13. Evil has been re-incarnated in the cult of markets and the rule of multinational companies.	2.77	1.10		.479	
14. The world is headed for destruction.	3.22	1.19		.680	
15. Our people are in danger, everybody is trying to divide us and hurt us.	2.67	1.13		.538	
16. The present-day world is vile and miserable.	2.88	1.14		.719	
17. Only an idiot would go into a challenging situation expecting help from a divine power.	2.60	1.25			-.533
18. Those who obey heaven will receive beautiful rewards.	2.83	1.28			.748
19. I do not believe in life after death.	2.42	1.33			-.588
20. Martyrdom is an act of a true believer in the cause, not an act of terrorism.	2.62	1.33	.240		.376
21. All suffering in this life is small in comparison to the eternal pleasures one will receive after death.	2.91	1.33			.733
22. Our leaders are decent people.	2.55	1.04			.310
23. If you believe you have received commands from God, you are certainly crazy.	2.65	1.26			-.618
24. At a critical moment, a divine power will step in to help our people.	2.76	1.28			.722
Factor correlations	1	2	3		
1. Provviolence	—				
2. Vile World	.108	—			
3. Divine Power	-.051	.346	—		

tant each value is as a guiding principle in one's own life. A total of 57 items are rated on a 9-point Likert-type scale ranging from -1 (*opposed to my values*) to 7 (*of supreme importance*), and those items were classified into 10 scales having three to eight items each. In the present study, 57 items were not used. Instead, the Short SVS (Lindeman & Verkasalo, 2005) was used, which applies the same 9-point Likert scale to the 10 values scales as follows:

12. Power (assessing the importance of authority, wealth, social power, public image and social recognition);
13. Achievement (assessing the importance of ambition, success, capacity, influence, and intelligence);
14. Hedonism (assessing the importance of pleasure and enjoyment of life);

15. Stimulation (assessing the importance of variety and excitement);
16. Self-Direction (assessing the importance of creativity, freedom, independence, and curiosity);
17. Universalism (assessing the importance of broad-mindedness, social justice, equality, and the world at peace);
18. Benevolence (assessing the importance of helpfulness, loyalty, forgiveness, honesty, and responsibility);
19. Traditionalism (assessing the importance of respect of tradition, humility, devoutness, and moderation);

20. Conformity (assessing the importance of obedience, self-discipline, and politeness);
21. Security (assessing the importance of social order, family security, national security, and sense of belonging).

Another measure used in this study is derived from the work on social axioms (see Leung & Bond, 2004):

22. *Social Cynicism*. This scale captures a negative view of human nature and social events that may be related to militant extremism. This scale is based on four items. Example: "Power and status make people arrogant."
23. *Perceptions that one is in a failed state*. The FSI is produced every year by a panel of experts working for The Fund for Peace (see Footnote 1). For 2006, it provides a ranking of 146 countries in the world in terms of three groups of indicators—social, economic, and political. The list was headed by Sudan, with Norway being on the opposite, nonfailed, end. The measure used in this study is a subjective measure in the sense that it asks for the individual's assessment, or perceptions, of where the country he or she belongs to stands in terms of the 12 different indicators from the "objective" set of indicators. Example: "The government of my country just protects and serves the few people who hold power in the country." In this article, only the total Failed State Perceptions Index—a sum of ratings over the 12 indicators—was used.

Results

The Structure of the Militant Extremist Mind-Set

In this section, we describe the procedure that we used to arrive at an operational definition of the militant extremist mind-set based on a sample of 2,424 participants from nine countries. As we shall see, the outcome of this work is a creation of a short and reliable scale for the assessment of three components of such a mind-set.

As mentioned above, we started with 56 items that were compiled following the pilot study. In order to reduce the amount of acquiescence response set, 15 of these statements were worded in a reverse way from the majority of statements. We carried out a series of exploratory factor analyses (EFAs) of the item-level correlations in order to (a) establish the number of meaningful factors among the items and (b) eliminate items because of their low loadings on the retained factors. The process of item elimination showed that three factors based on 36 items provided an interpretable solution. At the next stage, we examined the content of the items that defined a particular factor and eliminated 12 items that were conceptually slightly different from the majority of items showing high loadings. We subjected correlations among the remaining 24 items to a series of further factor analyses. On the basis of root-one criterion, a three-factors promax-rotated maximum-likelihood solution presented in the last three columns of Table 2 was arrived at. The first two columns of this table contain means and standard deviations for the selected items. All these items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly and completely disagree*) to 5 (*strongly and completely agree*).

The Three Militant Extremist Mind-Set Factors

Factor 1: Provioleence. This factor has loadings from 10 statements, 3 of which are reverse coded (i.e., have a negative sign for their factor loading). The agreement with these statements indicates the acceptance of, justification, and even advocacy of the use of violence in certain circumstances like revenge or to gain redemption. The highest loading on this factor comes from the statement "War is the beginning of salvation." It is obvious from the means in Table 2 that our sample is endorsing mostly "1 (*strongly and completely disagree*)" or "2 (*moderately or mostly disagree*)," alternatives of the Likert scale for the statements that define this factor.

Factor 2: Vile World. This factor has loadings from six statements, all of which indicate that there is something importantly wrong with the world we live in. The highest loading is from the statement that the present-day world is vile and miserable. Other statements claim that the world is heading for destruction and that it is facing a calamity. Whereas four statements appear pessimistic and imply that the world is basically irredeemable, other claims—that modern governments have overstepped moral boundaries and that evil resides in the market-oriented materialistic approach to life—suggest the possibility of changing the present state of affairs. There is no reverse-scored item for this factor.

Factor 3: Divine Power. This factor has loadings from eight statements, three of which are reverse coded. The most salient are those that make reference to a divine power, heaven and God. Another couple of themes have to do with the role of martyrdom and pleasures that will be bestowed on a person in the afterlife. Possibly because authoritarianism is a part of this factor, the statement "Our leaders are decent people" also has a low loading here. We keep this latter item in the scale because of the empirical result even though its content is somewhat different from the other items that load on this factor. However, because its loading is only .30, this item (Item 22) may be removed from the scale with minor consequences for the object of measurement.

Factor intercorrelations are presented at the bottom of Table 2. The only noteworthy correlation is between Vile World and Divine Power factors (.35). This value should be compared with the .20 correlation between the scale scores for these factors at the top of Table 5. It appears that Vile World and Divine Power have only a small to moderate correlation; the three factors are relatively uncorrelated.

In order to gain a better understanding of the nature of these three factors, it is useful to bring in additional information that is relevant to our findings. We wish to note here a considerable similarity between our present results and those reported by Stankov et al. (in press), even though this earlier study is based on a different sample of participants and on a larger number of items. In the Stankov et al. (in press) study, for example, the three factors were labeled as "War" (substantively the same as Factor 1: Provioleence) and "God" (related to Factor 3: Divine Power). There is also considerable similarity between the present Factor 2 (Vile World) and "West" in the Stankov et al. (in press) data. Clearly, a militant extremist mind-set typically contains some sort of grievance against somebody, an "enemy."

On the basis of our findings, we can say that an extremist militant mind-set consists of three main ingredients. First, there is a belief that violence is not only an option, but it may be a useful means to achieve

one's personal and social goals. Those with terrorist inclinations tend to show stronger endorsement of such beliefs. This may be the essential psychological aspect of a militant extremist mind-set. But this is not enough to lead a person into terrorist action; on its own, this may as well be characteristic of a criminal rather than a militant extremist mind-set. In addition, there needs to be an "enemy" such as the West (Stankov et al., in press) or a belief in a corrupt and Vile World that is perceived as the cause of suffering of the group to which a person belongs. In communist ideology, for example, the enemy was the capitalist system that was seen as being the "oppressor of the working class." Also, violence needs to be sanctioned by someone, perhaps by a superior power (Divine Power/God) or, among the communist/atheist revolutionaries, by what is believed to be the inevitable, absolute tendency in history, a force in history with which they try to align.

Psychometric Properties of the 24-Items Measure of a Militant Extremist Mind-Set

Although the main decision about the items to be included in the measure of a militant extremist mind-set was based on the analysis reported above, we carried out further analyses in order to assess its psychometric properties. We report here the outcomes of confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs), the application of item response

theory (IRT), and our attempt to examine structural invariance across the nine nations.

CFAs and IRT Outcomes

We used the Mplus 5.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 2007) package in the analyses reported in this section. The first attempted analysis tried to fit the solution of Table 2 without the overlap (i.e., Statements 1 and 20 had only one free parameter, on Factors 1 and 3, respectively). This solution produced borderline fit indices, $\chi^2(249) = 2868.61$, comparative fit index (CFI) = .807, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = .786, root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .066, standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) = .077. In the next step, we relied on modification indices (MIs) from the first run to free some of the loadings. After freeing loadings with the highest eight MIs, we obtained the solution reported in the middle columns section of Table 3. This solution shows satisfactory fit, $\chi^2(241) = 1907.73$, CFI = .877, TLI = .860, RMSEA = .053, SRMR = .051. Substantively, the differences between the EFA in Table 2 and CFA solution are small. In the latter, the additional six loadings are all small in size and they do not change the essential interpretation of the three factors, although they do point to somewhat more pronounced cross-loadings among the factors.

Table 3

Solution Based on Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Slope Parameters (Standardized) for the Item Response Theory (IRT) Logistic Model

Statement	CFA factors			2 PL IRT slope parameters		
	Provience	Vile World	Divine Power	Provience	Vile World	Divine Power
1. We should never . . .	-.448	.329	.118	.483		
2. Armed struggle . . .	.505			.682		
3. All problems . . .	-.411	.265		-.399		
4. Killing is justified . . .	.529			.679		
5. If violence does not . . .	.588			.756		
6. The only way to teach . . .	.545			.715		
7. Our enemy's children . . .	.565			.727		
8. War is . . .	.548			.730		
9. Those who claim . . .	.542			.642		
10. A good person . . .	-.438	.273	.151	-.486		
11. Today the human . . .		.552			.483	
12. Modern governments . . .		.465			.467	
13. Evil has been . . .		.477			.482	
14. The world is headed . . .		.653			.702	
15. Our people are . . .		.592			.584	
16. The present-day . . .		.675			.746	
17. Only an idiot . . .		.212	.546			.483
18. Those who obey . . .			-.761			.872
19. I do not believe . . .	.164		.577			-.719
20. Martyrdom is . . .	.232		.391			.467
21. All suffering in . . .			.765			.867
22. Our leaders are . . .			.219			.292
23. If you believe . . .			-.571			-.665
24. At a critical moment . . .			.748			.821
Factor correlations	1	2	3			
1. Provience	—					
2. Vile World	.251	—				
3. Divine Power	.000	.346	—			

Note. The first parameter in each scale was fixed in fitting the nonstandardized version of the IRT model. 2 PL IRT = two-parameter logistic item response theory.

The three right-hand columns of Table 3 contain the output of IRT analyses. Each of the three factors was treated as a scale, and a 2-parameter logistic IRT (2-PL IRT) model was fit to each scale. The purpose of these analyses was to address the question of whether we are justified in constructing scales reported in the next section. All goodness-of-fit indices produced by Mplus for all three IRT analyses were very good. The coefficients in Table 3 are correlations between each statement and a latent dimension of the scale—in effect, they are slope IRT parameters. Inspection of the values in Table 3 clearly shows that the only possibly problematic item is Number 22 (“Our leaders are decent people”), even though for that item the slope parameter was significant at the .05 level as well. In contrast to other items, visual representation of the item characteristic curve for this particular item is closer to being flat. Thus, the IRT result agrees with the related EFA findings in Table 2 and CFA finding in Table 3. In order to save space, we do not present threshold (or item difficulty) values for the items. Suffice it to say that they are all statistically significant and do not indicate anomalous behavior for any of the statements.

Factor Structure for Each Nation

Our repeated efforts to use Mplus to carry out multigroup analyses aimed at fitting the CFA structure from Table 4 to nine

national samples simultaneously proved futile—we could not get the algorithm to converge on an acceptable solution. We therefore ran EFAs for each country and examined the patterns of factor loadings in order to establish whether the interpretation of factors in every country differs substantially from the solutions presented in Tables 2 and 3. Stankov and Lee (2009) and Lee (2009) reported that for the scales collected in their cross-cultural studies, there is little discrepancy between the solutions based on aggregated (sometimes referred to as “pancultural”) data and solutions based on individual countries or world regions. For the present data, we obtained essentially the same outcome for eight countries. In other words, the pattern of loadings for each country was substantially the same, and the interpretation of factors does not change at all. The nature of the overall results of the EFAs can be grasped from the consideration of the outcomes of IRT models summarized below.

Thus, in addition to EFA, we ran 2-PL IRT, analogous to the three analyses reported in Table 3 for the total sample, within each of the nine national samples. Using two-tailed .05 significance criterion, for eight countries the outcomes can be summarized as follows: Altogether, 11 out of 192 (24 items times eight countries) slope parameters were not significant. In one country (Serbia), all 24 slope parameters were significant. For four countries (the

Table 4

Belarus Data: The Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis and Slope Parameters (Standardized) for the Item Response Theory (IRT) Logistic Model

Statement	Factor			2-PL IRT slope parameters		
	Provience	Vile World	Divine Power	Provience	Vile World	Divine Power
1. We should never . . .	-.551			.483		
2. Armed struggle . . .				-.164 (<i>ns</i>)		
3. All problems . . .	-.707			-.978		
4. Killing is justified . . .		.477		.152 (<i>ns</i>)		
5. If violence does not . . .				.160 (<i>ns</i>)		
6. The only way to teach . . .	-.349	.629		-.090 (<i>ns</i>)		
7. Our enemy's children . . .				.140 (<i>ns</i>)		
8. War is . . .	.373			.639		
9. Those who claim . . .	.436	.567		.277		
10. A good person . . .				-.165 (<i>ns</i>)		
11. Today the human . . .		.610			.483	
12. Modern governments . . .		.463			.501	
13. Evil has been . . .		.387			.292	
14. The world is headed . . .		.576	.305		.759	
15. Our people are . . .		.542			.467	
16. The present-day . . .		.711			.790	
17. Only an idiot . . .			-.931			-.483
18. Those who obey . . .			.607			.854
19. I do not believe . . .			-.306			-.344
20. Martyrdom is . . .	.428					-.191
21. All suffering in . . .	-.332		.403			.514
22. Our leaders are . . .						.249
23. If you believe . . .			-.772			-.969
24. At a critical moment . . .			.570			.613
Factor correlations	1	2	3			
1. Provience	—					
2. Vile World	.040	—				
3. Divine Power	.127	.045	—			

Note. The first parameter in each scale was fixed in fitting the nonstandardized version of the IRT model. 2-PL IRT = 2-parameter logistic item response theory; *ns* = not significant at the .05 level.

United States, Slovakia, Korea, and Chile), one slope parameter was not significant. For three countries (Malaysia, Guatemala, and China), 2 out of 24 slope parameters were not significant. The largest number (6 out of 11) of nonsignificant slope parameters appear on the Divine Power factor, and 4 of those are for Item 22 that was also low in the overall analysis presented in Table 3.

Therefore, the outcomes of EFA and 2-PL IRT analyses provide evidence for the existence of what is known in the literature as *configural invariance* (substantial though not perfect) in eight national samples.

Problematic Structure in Belarus Data

Belarus is an exception. We present Promax-rotated factor pattern matrix following maximum-likelihood extraction for Belarus data in Table 4. It is apparent that interpretation of the Divine Power factor remains essentially the same. However, major changes do appear in the interpretation of the Proviolence and Vile World factors. The Proviolence factor is barely recognizable in Table 4—the largest loadings are from the reverse-coded items in Tables 2 and 3, suggesting that this has become an Antiviolence factor. Smaller loadings on this factor are hard to interpret. However, the essential features of the Vile World factor remain clearly visible in the Belarus data—all six variables that define this factor in Tables 2 and 3 have salient loadings in Table 4 as well. However, high loadings of three Proviolence items (“Killing is justified when it is an act of revenge”; “The only way to teach a lesson to our enemies is to threaten their lives and make them suffer”; and “Those who claim to be against the use of any form of force are on their way to become slaves”) changes the interpretation of this factor in a major way. For Belarusians, these three Proviolence items are an integral part of the tendency to see the world as vile.

The three right-hand columns in Table 4 help clarify the issue further. Separate 2-PL IRT models were fitted to each of the three scales; for Vile World and Divine Power scales all slope parameters were significant. A major problem is the measurement of Proviolence. As can be seen, 6 out of 10 slope parameters for the Proviolence factor are not significant. Thus, in agreement with the EFA analysis, the main problem in our data is poor measurement of Pro-violence in Belarus.

Translation of Factors into Scales

After the reversal of six items, we calculated scores for the three scales by adding the numerical Likert scale values for the items that define a particular factor. We then divided these scores by the number of items in the scale in order to be able to compare means that are presented in the first column of Table 2. Whereas two scales—Vile World and Divine Power—have means that are close to the middle of the 5-point range, the Proviolence scale has a mean of 1.90. This indicates that our sample, by and large, disagrees with the use of violence—the distribution of the Proviolence scores is markedly skewed to the left. In this case, perhaps, one can classify those whose score is higher than 3 (3.5% of our sample) as being unusually high on the Proviolence dimension.

Across all the subsamples, Cronbach's coefficient alpha reliability estimates for the scores from the three scales are satisfactory:

.80, .79, and .74 for Proviolence, Vile World, and Divine Power scales, respectively.

Correlates of the Militant Extremist Mind-Set

Table 5 contains descriptive statistics for measures of Personality, Social Attitudes, Social Values, and Social Norms that were described in the Method section of the present article. The rating scale for the 10 values items was based on essentially a 7-point scale (−1 and 0 from the 9-point scale appearing rarely among the answers), and it is clear that for our global aggregate sample overall, the most important are values of Self-Direction ($M = 5.22$) and Benevolence ($M = 5.03$). However, the least important are Power (3.00) and Hedonism (3.30). Dimensions of Personality, Social Values, and Social Norms are based on a 5-point scale. From among all these three domains, the highest endorsement is for Gammaisms (Western democracy beliefs, 3.92) and Extraversion (3.76), whereas the lowest endorsements are for Betaisms (unmitigated self-interest beliefs, 2.45).

It is worth noting that the average for the measure of *perceptions that one is in a failed state* (i.e., subjective measure of the FSI) was close to 3, suggesting that although participants from different countries that were included in the sample vary in terms of their perception of the problems facing their nations, the average of the nine countries is around the midpoint of the rating scale. From among the nine countries, the highest scores on this measure were from Guatemala (3.58) and Serbia (3.46) and the lowest were from Slovakia (2.57) and the United States (2.71).

The three right-hand columns of Table 5 contain correlations between measures of Personality, Social Attitudes, Values, and Social Norms and the three militant extremist mind-set scales. Given the large sample size, many small correlations are significant. The correlations can serve a dual purpose. First, they can tell us whether our new scales measure something that is already captured well by established constructs in psychology. Clearly, the highest correlation (.75) in Table 5 is between the Divine Power scale and the Alphaism scale. The size of this correlation is so high that we can confidently conclude that the Divine Power scale is largely just another measure of Alphaism or of tradition-oriented religious beliefs. The other two noteworthy, but considerably smaller, correlations of the Divine Power scale are with Tradition (.400) and Conformity (.258) facets of the Values domain. In studies reported by Stankov (2007, 2009) and Stankov and Lee (2008, 2009), the Alpha scale together with Tradition and Conformity values loaded on a well-defined Conservatism factor. The present result is therefore in good agreement with previous findings showing that the Divine Power scale is measuring tradition-oriented religious beliefs that, in turn, are a component of a broader Conservatism dimension.

Proviolence and Vile World scales have decidedly lower correlations than does the Divine Power scale with the extension measures in Table 5. Even when correlations are not high, they can be helpful in providing convergent and discriminant validity information (i.e., moderate correlations can tell us whether the scale is measuring construct(s) that are conceptually related to it, and low correlations point to a lack of communality).

In considering the Proviolence component of the militant extremist mind-set, it is convenient to divide extension variables in Table 5 into two groups—those that have positive correlations and those that show

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations on Three Scales of Militant Extremist Mind-Set, Extension Variables, and Correlations Between Scales and Extension Variables

Scale and variable	Descriptives		Correlations		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Proviolence	Vile World	Divine Power
Militant Extremist Mind-Set					
Proviolence	1.90	0.59	—		
Vile World	2.96	0.74	.031	—	
Divine Power	3.00	0.80	−.076	.201	—
Personality					
1. Conscientiousness	3.36	0.76	−.125	.016	.124
2. Honesty/Propriety	3.31	0.68	−.306	.019	.067
3. Agreeableness	3.42	0.70	−.177	−.048	.053
4. Resiliency	3.25	0.67	−.124	−.114	−.058
5. Extraversion	3.76	0.71	−.309	−.076	.015
6. Originality/Intellect	3.35	0.66	−.205	−.012	.000
7. Disintegration/Psychoticism	2.50	0.66	.315	.322	.132
Social Attitudes					
8. Alphaisms	2.95	0.99	−.024	.246	.754
9. Betaisms	2.45	0.66	.453	.122	−.026
10. Gammaisms	3.92	0.53	−.223	−.050	.230
11. Deltaisms	3.32	0.66	−.039	.133	.167
Values					
12. Power	3.00	2.20	.232	.052	.049
13. Achievement	4.63	1.94	−.037	.125	.064
14. Hedonism	3.30	2.14	−.025	.150	.055
15. Stimulation	4.15	1.96	−.036	.099	.001
16. Self-Direction	5.22	1.80	−.272	.073	.043
17. Universalism	4.67	2.07	−.254	.106	.080
18. Benevolence	5.03	1.77	−.337	.112	.213
19. Traditionalism	3.18	2.12	−.042	.116	.400
20. Conformity	3.94	2.14	−.045	.153	.258
21. Security	4.51	1.89	−.138	.118	.160
Social Axioms/Norms					
22. Social Cynicism	3.42	0.77	.052	.304	−.017
23. Perception of failed state	2.93	0.56	−.009	.255	−.080
<i>R</i> ²			.377	.310	.589

negative correlations. Thus, Proviolence has positive correlations with Betaism (unmitigated pursuit of self-interest, .45), Personality Disintegration (or Psychoticism) (.31), and Power from the Values domain (.23), all of which have unfavorable connotations. The Proviolence component has negative correlations with all six personality traits and three (positive valence) Values dimensions (Benevolence, Self-Direction, and Universalism). Because personality traits can be interpreted as favorable self-evaluations, their negative correlation with Proviolence indicates that this latter factor reflects dispositions that are seen as unfavorable. Indeed, in our previous work (Stankov, 2007; Stankov & Lee, 2008, 2009), the same bipolar pattern of correlations did emerge. It is quite possible that if we had included measures of Toughness and Maliciousness (Stankov & Knežević, 2005; Stankov & Lee, 2008) in the present study, the Proviolence scale might have had much higher correlations (perhaps in the .70s) with these two constructs. At present, the moderate correlations listed above allow us to say that the Proviolence scale measures constructs that are conceptually related to it, but it cannot be reduced to other constructs that have been assessed in the present study.

As for the Vile World scale, its overlap with other constructs is relatively small. This scale is related to the Social Cynicism scale from the Social Axioms measure and to a perception that one lives in a failed state (.30 and .26) and to the Personality Disintegration

(or Psychoticism) dimension (.32). Clearly, the Vile World scale represents a gloomy view of humankind, and it is marginally related to some of the established constructs in psychology.

The last row in Table 5 contains *R*² values from a regression analysis for predicting scale scores from all 21 extension variables. These *R*² values provide additional support for the above conclusions that Divine Power is well accounted for by the extension variables (*R*² = .59), whereas Proviolence and Vile World scales tap additional unique variance.

In summary, all three scales of the militant extremist mind-set have meaningful relationships to similar constructs. One of these, Divine Power, does not assess anything new—it is just another measure of tradition-oriented religiosity. The Proviolence scale measures some aspects of negative (i.e., Anti-) Social Attitudes, but it cannot be reduced to those that have been used in the present study. Finally, the Vile World scale measures a new dimension, and even though it is related to Psychoticism, Social Cynicism, and a perception that one lives in a failed state, it is clearly independent of all these.

Gender Differences and Correlations With Age

Table 6 provides information about gender differences on all three scales of militant extremism and, in the last column, their

Table 6
Gender Differences and Correlations With Age

Factor	Men (<i>n</i> = 869)		Women (<i>n</i> = 1,516)		<i>t</i> (2384)	Correlation
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Proviolence	2.06	0.63	1.80	0.55	10.72**	.10
Vile World	2.97	0.73	2.93	0.73	1.08 (<i>ns</i>)	-.17
Divine Power	2.89	0.79	3.05	0.80	4.85**	.07

** $p < .01$.

correlations with age. As can be seen, the most pronounced gender differences are on the Proviolence scale, with men scoring significantly higher than women. There are also significant but smaller differences in favor of women on the Divine Power scale. Finally, there are no gender differences on the Vile World scale.

Correlations with age are low—the only noteworthy correlation being $-.17$ with the Vile World scale. The sample of participants in our study were young ($M = 20.01$, $SD = 3.20$), with 98% being younger than 27 years of age. Thus, younger participants in our sample had a somewhat stronger tendency to see the world in a negative way than did older participants.

Differences Between Countries

We carried out one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) on nine countries in our sample to ascertain the significance of mean

differences. The F tests for all three scales proved significant. Of particular interest, of course, is the pattern of the means across different countries. Figures 1–3 show these patterns for each of the three scales.

Proviolence. Figure 1 shows arithmetic means for the Proviolence scale. For these data, $F(8, 2415) = 86.77$, $p < .01$, and the overall mean is low ($M = 1.90$ in Table 3). It is apparent that the three Asian countries in our sample have means between about 2.20 and 2.40, indicating that, although not demonstrating overall approval of violence, they are closer to being undecided (i.e., endorsing “neither agree nor disagree” point on the scale) than the remaining six countries. Thus, the overall level of rejection of violence is somewhat lower in Asian countries than in countries from other regions of the world. This is in agreement with the findings reported by Stankov and Lee (2008) that show that

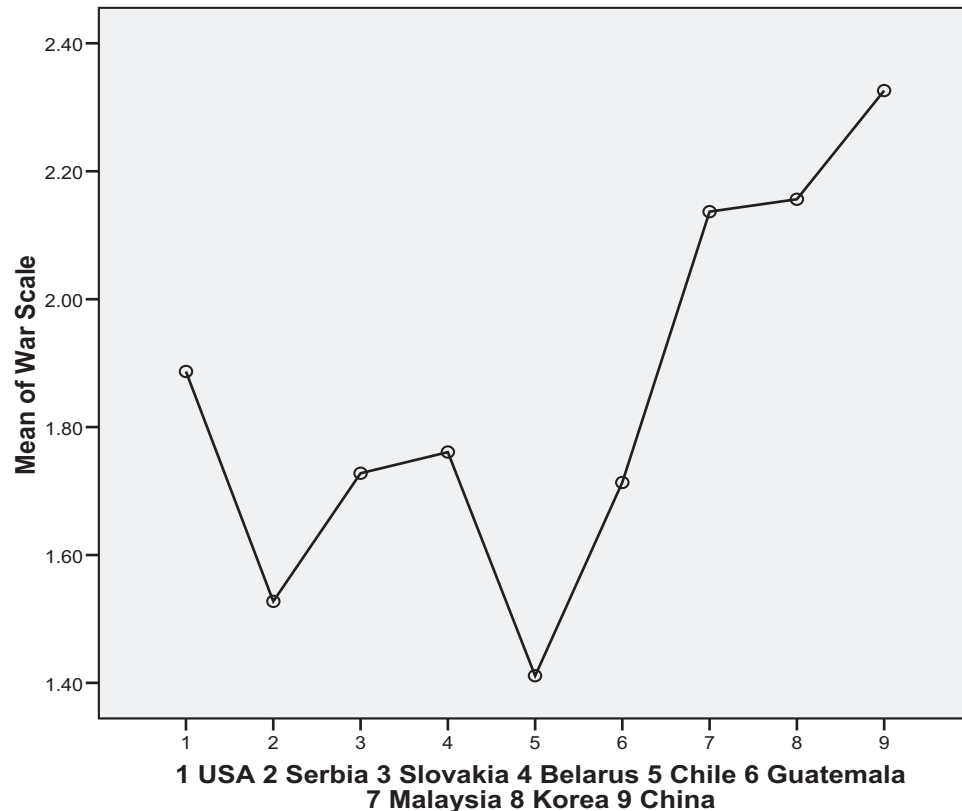


Figure 1. Arithmetic means for nine countries on the Proviolence scale. USA = United States of America.

Confucian Asians score higher than other world regions on measures of amoral and antisocial attitudes. Two countries with the lowest means on the Proviolece factor are Serbia and Chile. For a country that has been involved in some of the most vicious acts of violence in recent years and at the time of this writing it is being sued by Croatia for perpetrating acts of genocide, it may be surprising to see such a low score of Serbia on the Proviolece scale. One interpretation is that our student sample from Serbia is unusually peace-loving. This is an unlikely explanation because participants from other countries are comparable to Serbian students in terms of gender, age, and other demographics. Another interpretation is that this is a true reflection of the feelings of Serbian people. This second interpretation is in agreement with the findings of Stankov and Knežević (2005) that compared Serbs and Australians (both university and high school students) on several scales measuring amoral social attitudes. In that earlier study, Australians endorsed more strongly than Serbs statements that advocate malicious actions that are known to be related to delinquent behavior. However, Serbs endorsed more strongly than Australians statements reflecting toughness in life and behavior. The message appears to be that even though Serbia as a nation may be less supportive or perhaps as supportive of violence as most other nations, there are Serbians who support the use of violence and are prepared to commit it. Small proviolent groups must exist in most countries, even in those that endorse more peaceful sentiments than other countries, and these groups, if they can gain disproportionate political and military power, can also inflict considerable harm and damage to the national reputation.² Finally, it is possible that several years after the last war on the territory of former Yugoslavia, all nationalities, including Serbian, have become opposed to the use of violence.

Vile World. Figure 2 shows arithmetic means for the Vile World scale. For these data, $F(8, 2415) = 68.77, p < .01$, and the overall mean is very close to the neutral point ($M = 2.96$ in Table 5). Two countries with higher scores on this scale are Serbia, which is understandable given its recent history, and Malaysia. Because Malaysia has not been involved in violence recently, the reason for the more strongly felt dissatisfaction with the conditions in the world today may be attributed to its identification with the world's Muslim community (see Noor, 2009). Muslims all over the world feel mistreated by the rest of the world and by the West in particular. We also wish to note that participants from China have the lowest scores on this scale—they see the world as less menacing than people from other countries.

Divine Power. Figure 3 shows arithmetic means for the Divine Power scale. For these data, $F(8, 2415) = 106.77, p < .01$, and the overall mean is spot-on on the neutral point ($M = 3.00$ in Table 3). The two extreme positions on the Divine Power scale are held by low-scoring Serbia, a postcommunist country whose religion is Orthodox Christian and high-scoring, predominantly (about 80%) Muslim Malaysia. We may note that communist Chinese are also low scoring on this religiosity scale, whereas Catholic Guatemalans and Chileans are closer to Malays in their belief in Divine Power.

Citizenship versus religion: Malays and Chinese citizens of Malaysia. In this and the next section, we focus on Malaysia, the country that scores highest on Divine Power and Vile World scales and is among the three highest scoring countries on the Proviolece scale. For Malaysia, we do have data for two ethnic groups

living within the country—Chinese ($n = 59$) and Malays ($n = 180$)—and it is possible to compare these two groups in their standings on the three scales.

The difference between Chinese and Malays proved nonsignificant for the Proviolece scale but highly significant for the Divine Power (Chinese $M = 3.41$; Malay $M = 4.03$) and significant for the Vile World scale (Chinese $M = 3.30$; Malay $M = 3.64$). Clearly, if no Chinese Malaysian citizens were to be included in the analyses, then Malaysia's standing among the nine nations in Figures 2 and 3 would be even higher. For the only predominantly Muslim country in our sample, it appears that religious affiliation may be linked to a stronger endorsement of Divine Power and Vile World, which are components of the militant extremist mind-set.

The effects of acquiescence response set. Although Proviolece and Divine Power scales have three reverse-coded items each, neither scale is balanced (i.e., has an equal number of positively and negatively coded items). Therefore, it is possible to argue that acquiescence response set is not adequately removed from these two scales and that it is definitely present in the Vile World scale that contains no reverse-coded items. We address the effects of acquiescence further mainly because Malaysia, as we shall see shortly, shows the strongest tendency toward acquiescence. It is therefore necessary to ascertain further the acquiescence's impact on the three factors of the militant extremist mind-set because Malays' high standing on militant extremist scales may be a reflection of their high tendency to acquiesce.

We first describe the procedure for calculating our measure of acquiescence response set and report on cross-countries differences on this measure. In the last part of this section, we used analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to assess the effects of acquiescence on cross-countries differences on scales of the militant extremist mind-set.

We calculated the acquiescence response score from 49 items measuring personality and social attitudes. This was done because separate acquiescence scores from each of the two (i.e., personality and social attitude scales) produced essentially the same ANCOVA result (see below). We wish to note, however, that our use of a single score from measures from different domains rests on an assumption of the existence of a general acquiescence tendency that is independent of the domain (-isms, personality, and, indeed, the militant extremist mind-set) being studied. From among the 49 items, 28 are positively keyed and 21 are negatively keyed. The first step was to calculate, for each participant, the average (i.e., mean score) for the positively scored items and another average for the negatively scored items. The second step was to calculate the average (i.e., the mean) for the two new scores (i.e., average positive and negative scores). This last mean is the acquiescence score. A high positive score implies tendency to endorse "4 (*moderately or mostly agree*)" and "5 (*strongly and*

² In fact, once the fighting started in former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, the media in Serbia proper did not report truthfully on the actions of Serbian paramilitary units or, in some cases, even glorified them. Politicians were quick to point out that "the whole world misunderstands and even hates us" (Vile World) and that it is important to fight for the homeland (Divine Power). Many instances of desertion from the Serb-dominated Yugoslav Army and ultimate defeat of the move toward creating a "Greater Serbia" point to the fact that Serb's low standing on Proviolece in the present study is not entirely surprising.

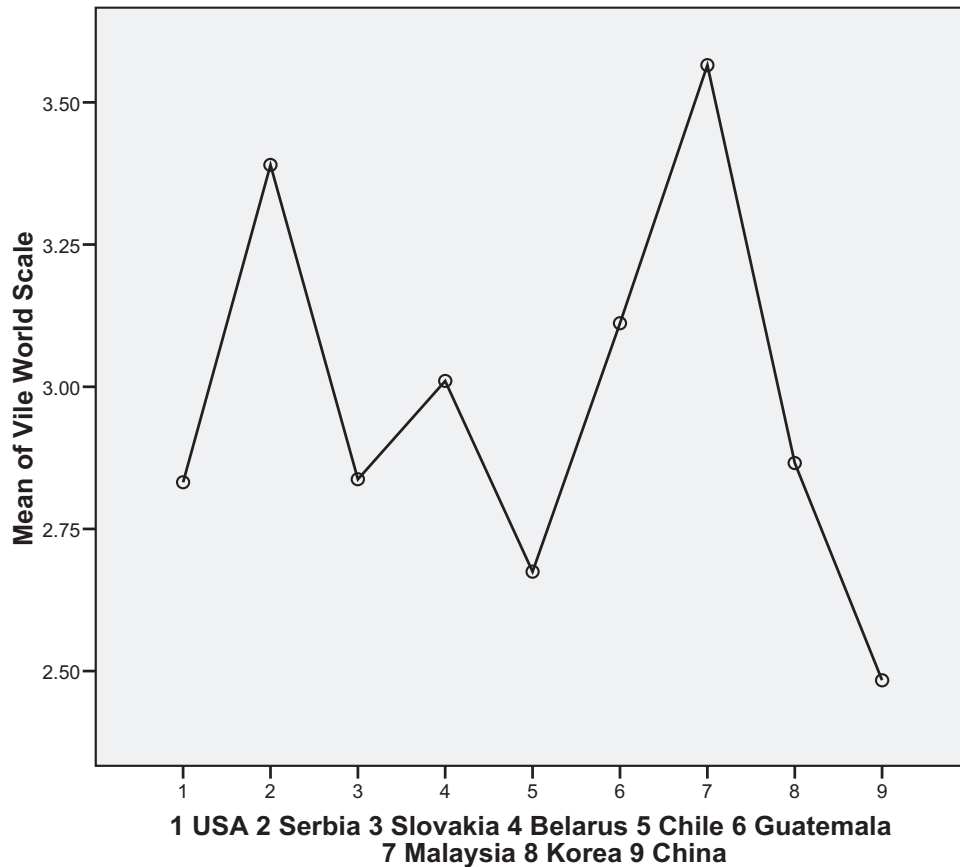


Figure 2. Arithmetic means for nine countries on the Vile World scale. USA = United States of America.

completely agree)” statements on a 5-point Likert scale used for the assessment of -isms and personality traits.

Figure 4 shows acquiescence scores for nine countries included in our study. The differences are significant, $F(8, 2414) = 31.388$; $p < .001$, but not as pronounced as they are on the three militant extremist mind-set scales. The highest acquiescence score is for Malaysia and the lowest is for Chile. We may note, however, that the difference between the highest and the lowest scoring country on acquiescence in Figure 4 is much smaller (less than half) than the differences in Figures 1–3. The effect size in the ANOVA is captured by the partial eta squared, which can be obtained in the SPSS from the univariate analyses based on the general linear model. The formula for the calculation of partial eta squared is based on the between-countries F test and the associated degrees of freedom. For the acquiescence scores, the value of partial eta squared is .094. We may conclude that cross-countries differences in acquiescence are significant, although less pronounced than differences on militant extremism scales.

To address the question of whether acquiescence can account for the cross-countries differences in militant extremism scales, we used the ANCOVA procedure, using acquiescence scores as co-variables. The logic of the approach is simple: If acquiescence is responsible for cross-countries differences, then co-varying acquiescence will make the differences between countries substantially lower or even nonsignificant. In other words, the significant F test

in ANOVA will become a nonsignificant F test in ANCOVA, or, equivalently, there will be a noteworthy reduction in the size of partial eta squared values. Table 7 presents partial eta squared values for the ANOVA and ANCOVA analyses and for the three scales of militant extremism. The last column shows the differences between the first two columns, and it is clear that co-varying acquiescence affects minimally between-countries differences on Provioleance and Divine Power scales. However, the difference between ANOVA and ANCOVA partial eta squared (.054) on the Vile World scale cannot be ignored—co-varying out acquiescence does change the between-countries differences on this factor. Notice, however, that the effect is the opposite from what is expected—co-varying acquiescence increases rather than decreases the between-countries differences on the Vile World scale! We have to conclude that acquiescence as measured here cannot account for the between-countries differences on measures of the militant extremist mind-set, and for one of the scales, it, in fact, suppresses these differences.

Discussion

The militant extremist mind-set consists of three main components—Provioleance, Vile World, and Divine Power. Those scoring high on measures of this mind-set tend to support violence more than most people in the population, they are unhappy about the

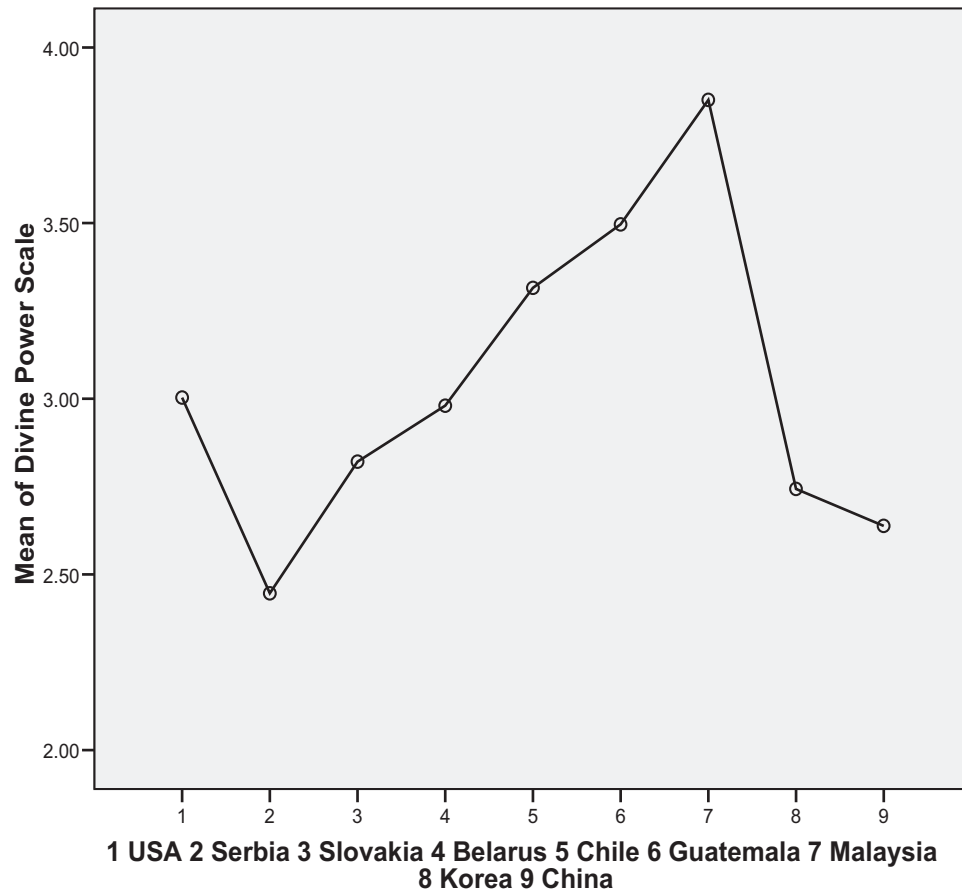


Figure 3. Arithmetic means for nine countries on the Divine Power scale. USA = United States of America.

situation in the world today, and they seek justification for their views about the use of violence from a higher authority.

The first component, Proviolence, is readiness to use violence in order to solve social problems. This component belongs to a broader class of social attitude measures, together with authoritarianism and dogmatism and toughness and maliciousness. Proviolence is related to Saucier's Betaism (endorsement of statements that reflect justification of unmitigated self-interest), but it differs from Betaism in being more narrowly focused on the acceptance of violence. This scale is also positively correlated with Personality Disintegration (or Psychoticism), and it may be related to Toughness and Maliciousness scales from Stankov and Knežević (2005). However, the Proviolence scale is negatively correlated with all six personality variables, and it is negatively correlated with positive value orientations. Overall, people are opposed to the use and justification of violence—the distribution of scores on Proviolence scale is skewed and the mean is low ($M = 1.90$ on a 5-point scale). Men score significantly higher on this scale than women. It is plausible to assume that incarcerated individuals would have high scores on this scale.

The second component of the militant extremist mind-set, Vile World, is not a part of the typical personality make-up. Instead, it reflects negatively tainted descriptive beliefs about the world we live in. From among the three components of the militant extremist

mind-set, Vile World represents the blaming or grudge factor that provides justification for anger. Vile World may turn out to be the most unique aspect of militant extremism in that it provides an opportunity to distinguish specific anger of the ordinary criminal from the "injustice towards my people" anger of the contemporary terrorist. Its two noteworthy correlations are with the Personality Dissociation/Psychoticism scale, indicating that people who are unhappy about the situation in the world today may be more disturbed than the rest of the population, and with Social Cynicism. This latter construct is measured by items that suggest that in our society kind-hearted people are often taken advantage of and that those in power tend to abuse it. The distribution of scores for the Vile World scale has a mean that is equal to the middle of the range and it is symmetric.

The third component of the militant extremist mind-set, Divine Power, arises from a need to justify unfriendly thoughts and the use of violence by resorting to something sacred, something for which recourse is sought from higher moral principles. Violence can be justified if it is committed in the name of God or in the name of the group one belongs to and that group is suffering unbearable hardship. One can strive to help this group and sacrifice himself or herself, becoming a martyr in the process. In the present study, the scale of Divine Power correlates very highly with Saucier's Alphaism. Thus, there appears to be little new informa-

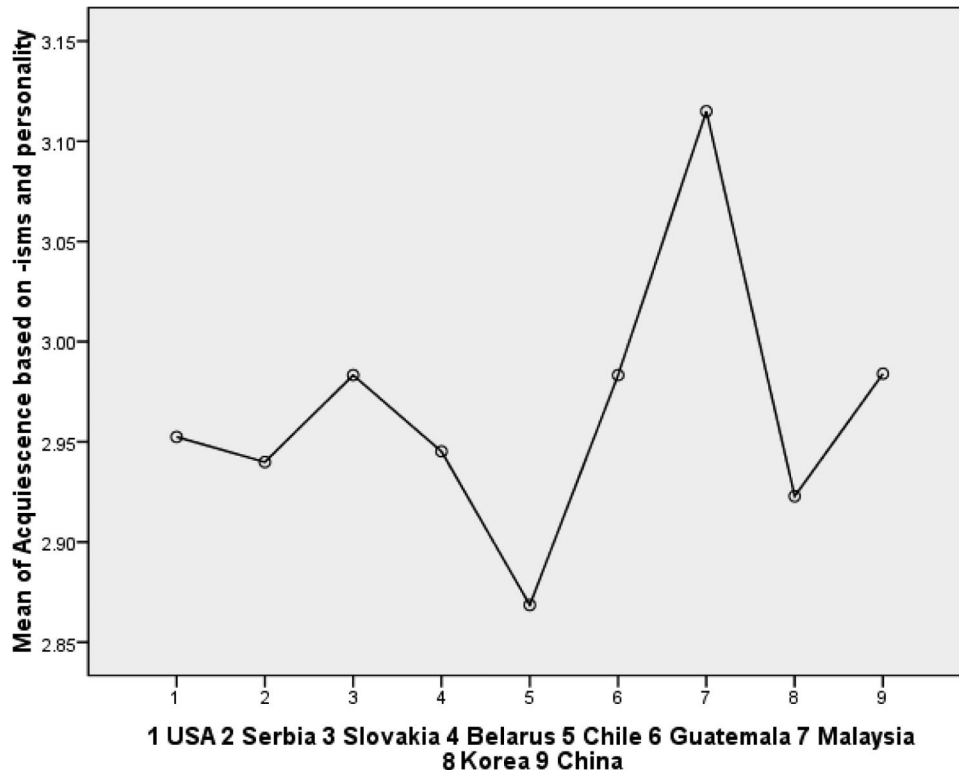


Figure 4. Arithmetic means for nine countries on Acquiescence. USA = United States of America.

tion because the scale measures mainly an aspect of tradition-oriented religiosity. Because values of Tradition and Conformity also correlate with the Divine Power scale, the present data suggest that both Divine Power and Alphaism may be markers for a somewhat broader trait of Conservatism, as suggested by the findings of Stankov (2009). However, there is no suggestion in our interpretation of this component that religious or conservative people will be more likely to engage in terrorist activities. This is because militant extremism is a low base-rate phenomenon, and religiousness is a high base-rate one. Religiousness can facilitate or accelerate radicalization, but because radicalization is low base-rate, it does not follow that religiousness necessarily leads to increased radicalization.

All three components are important. From a psychological point of view, Provivence is perhaps crucial. Without being Provivent,

being high on Vile World and on Divine Power will not necessarily spur a person to action. And obversely, those high on Provivence can probably be manipulated to become more extreme by making them increase their endorsement of both Vile World and Divine Power statements. High standing on all three components may provide useful information to clinical psychologists and, perhaps, security professionals.

Our data indicate that measures of the militant extremist mind-set have good psychometric properties and that acquiescence response set cannot account for the observed differences in these measures. There is good evidence for factorial invariance in eight countries, with Belarus showing a somewhat aberrant pattern of loadings.

Do Terrorists Have a Militant Extremist Mind-Set?

The guarantee that our three scales measure aspects of terrorist thinking patterns comes from the procedures we used in collecting items for this study. The three procedures we described in the introduction are all based on examining both primary (texts produced by militant extremist and terrorist groups) and secondary (psychological, sociological, and political) analyses of terrorism. At this stage, of course, the items have not been given to people convicted of terrorist activities. Once this research is carried out, the predictive validity of our scales can be addressed.

We wish to stress, however, that the purpose of our work has never been the prediction of terrorism—there are many studies in the literature in which the usefulness of “profiling” has been examined, and, as is well known, these procedures have met with limited success to

Table 7

The Role of Acquiescence Response Set in Between-Countries Comparisons

Factor	Partial η^2		Differences in partial η^2
	ANOVA	ANCOVA	
Provivence	.217	.225	.008
Vile World	.168	.222	.054
Divine Power	.257	.261	.004

Note. ANOVA = analysis of variance; ANCOVA = analysis of covariance.

say the least. Our purpose has been to develop instruments that capture the mind-set of those on the extremes of the psychological and political spectrum and establish whether there is something within the militant extremist mind-set that has not been a part of the existing arsenal of constructs and measures in psychology. The findings of this study and the reports of Saucier et al. (2009) and Stankov et al. (in press) bear testimony to this effort.

Possible Uses of Measures of the Militant Extremist Mind-Set

We see two main uses of our measures of the militant extremist mind-set. First, these measures can be used in cross-cultural comparisons. Our findings indicate significant between-countries differences, some of which are in agreement with the expectations and others that are perhaps surprising. We have commented on the between-countries differences on each of the three scales in the Results section of the present article. Here, we turn to the countries' comparisons on all three scales. One observation is that the United States' standing is in the middle on all three scales, and two of the three East European countries (Belarus and Slovakia) are similar to the United States on all three scales. Two Latin American Catholic countries (Chile and Guatemala) are close to Malaysia on the Divine Power scale, but they are removed from Malaysia on the Proviolence scale. In fact, Chileans score lowest on the Proviolence scale, and they are one standard deviation lower than Chinese and .80 of a standard deviation lower than Malaysians. Thus, for the countries in our sample, Catholic religiosity is associated with more opposition to violence than is Muslim religiosity. The three Asian countries (Korea, China, and Malaysia) are close together on the Proviolence scale, but Malaysia scores much higher than Korea and China on both the Vile World and Divine Power scales. It is an open question whether Malaysia may experience violence in a foreseeable future. Finally, Serbia is low on Proviolence but, understandably, high on the Vile World scale. Given that there exist such pronounced between-countries differences, it is clear that evaluation of an individual's standing has to be made with respect to the group to which he or she belongs not with respect to the overall performance on a given scale. Otherwise, one runs the risk of classifying all members of a national group as potential militant extremists.

Second, measures of the militant extremist mind-set can be used to assess longitudinal changes in public beliefs and feelings. They may prove to be particularly useful in tracing the impact of major political events in the world or within a particular country. Needless to say, a sudden increase in a country's standing on the three scales may signal political volatility and a potential for an increase in violence.

In evaluating the quality of research of the kind reported in this article, it is always useful to consider sampling issues that circumscribe the generality of the findings. The main emphasis in our approach has been on the sampling of constructs and variables from the *psychometric* domain. Our three approaches to item selection and a broad sample of related constructs from the domains of Personality, Social Attitudes, Social values, and Social Norms make us reasonably confident in our conclusion that the discriminant and convergent validity of our scale is satisfactory. However, we wish to emphasize that *participants* from different countries represent samples of convenience. Without representative sampling of participants from every country, cross-cultural comparisons that focus on group means allow

only tentative conclusions at these initial stages of the study of the militant extremist mind-set.

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