Petra Terhoeven

Conclusions

How in the context of terrorist violence are our images of victims (and perpetrators) formed? What influences them, and what agents and narratives are involved? Anke Hilbrenner's essay on the early years of modern terrorism, with its detailed account of different reactions to the Russian social revolutionary party's 1905 murder of the unpopular governor of Moscow, gives an exemplary description of these mechanisms. Given the czarist state's crimes it was relatively easy for the social revolutionaries to brand their own actions as morally superior counter-violence – even if in the case at hand it was not just the generally unpopular Grand Duke who was torn apart by the dynamite explosion but also his coachman. Hilbrenner shows that apart from the official national mourning, an emotional community formed that spanned social classes and reacted to the assassination not with sorrow and shock, but (malicious) glee and relief. To guarantee this response it had been essential to carefully choose a victim whose branding as punishable perpetrator himself in the organization's written claim of responsibility would seem plausible even to readers who did not share the group's social revolutionary ideas. The governor's wife and children, on the other hand, had been deliberately spared in an earlier assassination attempt, which would prove decisive especially for the legacy of the perpetrator as a “just” angel of mercy. But even at the time, terrorists could label their own violence progressive and “civilized” and that of the autocratic state “barbaric” only if they restricted themselves to “legitimate” victims. The “slaves of capitalism and violence,” as the accused described his judges, could accordingly deliver only barbaric verdicts. All empathy had to lie with the heroic executed martyr who claimed to fight in the name of the people.

Parallels with the communicative strategies of leftist terrorist groups in the second half of the century are easy to see and suggest some interesting comparisons. “Serving the People” was also the title of an RAF text published in May 1972 in the run-up to the group's first “terrorist” actions as defined by Waldmann. Here they used a quote from Chairman Mao to express their philosophy of the different values human life and death could have: “if you die for the people's interests, your death is more ponderous than Mount Tai; if you are in the pay of fascists and die for the exploiters and oppressors of the people, then your death is lighter than the down of a swan.”¹ In reality, the RAF's claim to have a mandate

¹ Dem Volke dienen. Stadtguerilla und Klassenkampf, in: ID-Verlag (ed.): *Rote Armee Fraktion. Texte und Materialien zur Geschichte der RAF*. Berlin 1997, 112–144, here 112.

from the people was far less legitimate than in the case of the Russian social revolutionaries, even if the Meinhof circle did know how to use the flaw in legitimacy of the post-fascist democracy and the justified outrage over the Vietnam War of its American protector to its advantage. From the very start, drawing a Manichaeian distinction between “exploiters” and “little people” on whose behalf they claimed to fight meant performing a juggling act. “The question: ‘would the prisoners’ release have taken place if we had known that Linke² would be shot in the process?’ – a question we are often asked – can only be answered with ‘no.’ ... The cop who lets us go we will also let go,” stated the 1971 “Urban Guerilla Concept,” and the claim of responsibility for the May 1972 attack on the Springer Press building even specifically expressed regret “that workers and employees were injured.”³

Even so, the “innocent” victims did not prompt the terrorists to reconsider their strategy of violence. This was certainly due in part to the “leaden solidarity” of those 68ers who felt that what the RAF did “‘in principle,’ that is theoretically or hypothetically, was justified, just not right here and right now, and when, then differently.”⁴ In view of the overall very low tolerance for violence, even on the part of radical leftists, the RAF won considerably more sympathy by creating martyr legends with its own members in the role of victims of the state than it did with its deeds. Even carefully targeted attacks on figures hated by the leftists could at best occasionally produce “furtive happiness,” but nothing even remotely close to Russian society’s acceptance of social revolutionary terrorism.⁵ The claim that those killed had “deserved” their fate nonetheless remained an essential part of the RAF narrative up until the dissolution of the group. After the so-called “Third Generation” killed a 20-year old American soldier in 1985 merely for the purpose of using his ID card to park a vehicle filled with explosives

² Georg Linke was a 62-year old library employee who had been shot and fatally wounded during Andreas Baader’s release from prison on May 14, 1970. See Willi Winkler: *Die Geschichte der RAF*. Berlin 2007, 163–165.

³ Das Konzept Stadtguerilla, in: ID-Verlag, Rote Armee Fraktion, 27–48, here 30; Erklärung vom 20.5.1972, in: *ibid.*, 147. Responsibility for the wounded employees was attributed to the opposite side, however, who allegedly out of corporate greed had failed to have the building evacuated despite advance warnings.

⁴ Gerd Koenen: *Das rote Jahrzehnt. Unsere kleine deutsche Kulturrevolution 1967–1977*. Frankfurt a. M. 2002, 393.

⁵ The oft-cited phrase “furtive happiness” (*klammheimliche Freude*) was coined by the radical leftists of the Sponti-scene following the murder of Attorney General Siegfried Buback. However, it did not mean the same thing as support for the methods of the RAF. See Stefan Spiller: Der Sympathisant als Staatsfeind. Die Mescalero-Affäre, in: Wolfgang Kraushaar (ed.): *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*. Hamburg 2006, 2, 1227–1368.

on the Rhein-Main airbase, their response to leftist critique was unequivocal: “for us the american soldiers in the frg are not both perpetrators and victims; we do not take this romanticized, social worker’s view of them. After vietnam (...) every gi has to understand that he is paid to make war, i.e. ALL OF THEM MUST UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS WAR – and decide for themselves.”⁶ Not until six months later did the RAF, addressing “those who fight with us,” admit that “the shooting of the GI in that specific situation in the summer was a mistake that (...) blunted the effect of the air base attack.”⁷ The group had to acknowledge that the attack had generated no feelings of triumph, only sympathy for the victim.

How an understanding of terrorist acts as “emotives,” that is, as both the expression and trigger of emotions as Hilbrenner suggests, might advance our thinking should certainly be explored further in future research. Precisely which emotions are articulated and evoked in this connection? What changes when democratically governed states are involved whose governments must defend their counterterrorism performance to voters? And might it be possible to explore the important issue of why states react as they do to terrorist attacks by drawing on the history of emotions? Feelings of shame and the resultant desire for revenge might be relevant here, since the state had proven unable to effectively shield its citizens from attack.⁸ This failure of the state assumes a concrete shape in the victims. In this sense they are always “uncomfortable” and cause disruptions that might lead to fantasies of revenge and destruction instead of eliciting empathy and acceptance of responsibility. Clark McCauley has recently noted that terrorist groups are by no means solely interested in producing fear and shock in their enemies, even if most definitions continue to focus on these emotions: “Terrorists count on anger and outrage at least as much as they count on fear,” writes McCauley. “Anger is the emotion sought by terrorists aiming to elicit overreaction to their attacks – using the enemy’s strength against him in a strategy of jujitsu politics.”⁹ Using the example of Israeli and American anti-terror measures in the 1980s and ‘90s, Andrew Silke has shown that military repression as a response to attacks is usually counterproductive; at the same

6 Zur Aktion gegen die Rhein-Main-Airbase und die Erschießung von Edward Pimental, in: ID-Verlag, Rote Armee Fraktion, 344.

7 “An die, die mit uns kämpfen.” Erklärung vom Januar 1986, in: *ibid.*, 349–360, here 349.

8 Ute Frevert: *Die Politik der Demütigung. Schauplätze von Macht und Ohnmacht*. Frankfurt a. M. 2017.

9 Clark McCauley: Constructing Terrorism: From Fear and Coercion to Anger and Jujitsu Politics, in: Michael Stohl, Richard Burchill and Scott Englund (eds.): *Constructions of Terrorism. An Interdisciplinary Approach to Research and Policy*. Oakland (Cal.) 2017, 79–90, here 83.

time, he emphasizes the unyielding desire for revenge and retaliation in the impacted societies: “Human psychology is inclined to support and tolerate such hard-line approaches even if the policies only exacerbate and prolong the conflict.”¹⁰ What role the exploitation of grief over the victims plays, and whether the indiscriminate expansion of allegedly “legitimate” targets in today’s religious terrorism might in some cases provoke equally indiscriminate responses from the state, thus giving victims a legitimizing purpose within the framework of constitutionally problematic counter-terrorism policies, would be worthwhile topics for further research.

As Hilbrenner’s example from a completely different context shows, grief over victims is an emotion that while not completely independent of outrage over the perpetrators is nonetheless a separate feeling, and one that actually has profound importance for symbolically re-establishing the moral order that the terrorists have violated. To counteract the terrorists’ discursive reversal of perpetrators and victims, it is essential for their opponents on the side of the attacked state that this grief also be made public. Only in this way can a community of mourners develop that not only very publicly denies emotional complicity with the perpetrators, but also counters the threatening delegitimization of the humbled power. Thus, in the case of the Grand Duke the absence of an intact corpse as the focal point for the usual mourning rituals was not only an emotional problem for his family members, but a political issue of the first order. This finding reflects the importance of funeral services for terrorism victims in morally discrediting the perpetrators and restoring disrupted order for the society that has been attacked – a little-researched topic until now and one with great potential.¹¹ Once more, the communicative opposition of competing victim constructs needs attention, as the example of the RAF again effectively illustrates: while at the close of the “German Autumn” on October 25 senior Bonn politicians attended a pontifical requiem Mass for murdered businessman Hanns Martin Schleyer in the Stuttgart Saint Eberhard’s Church, two days later at the Dornhalden Cemetery an antagonistic emotional community came together around the open graves of Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin and Jan-Carl Raspe.¹² The sympathizers who attended, many from other European countries,

¹⁰ Andrew Silke: Retaliating against Terrorism, in: id. (ed.): *Terrorists, Victims and Society. Psychological Perspectives on Terrorism and its Consequences*. New York 2003, 215–233, here 231.

¹¹ For a general introduction to the topic see Volker Ackermann: *Nationale Totenfeiern in Deutschland. Von Wilhelm I. bis Franz-Josef Strauß. Eine Studie in politischer Semiotik*. Stuttgart 1990.

¹² See the scenes from both funerals in Volker Schlöndorff’s final segment of the collaboratively made 1978 film “Germany in Autumn” (“Deutschland im Herbst”).

mourned the RAF founders as ostensible victims of a “barbaric” regime that was constitutional in name only. Parts of the funeral ceremony itself thus had “the character of a protest demonstration.”¹³ It goes without saying that in this connection, the media as the means for relaying social and personal grief takes on particular importance.¹⁴ While the state funeral for Schleyer was broadcast live, thereby expanding the community of mourners to include virtually the entire German (television-viewing) nation, the radical leftist oppositional public sphere was a forum for mourning the allegedly “murdered Andreas, Gudrun and Jan” – just as the leaflets of the Russian social revolutionaries had kept alive the memory of Kalyaev.¹⁵ As Alex P. Schmid and Janny De Graaf observe, media reports on terrorism can act as not only “information machines” but also “identification machines.”¹⁶

On closer inspection, the key role that Hilbrenner assigns the Grand Duke’s widow in the community of mourners may also prove not be an isolated case. Just as in the cultural symbolism of war the killing of women and children was traditionally seen as taboo, in the history of modern terrorism, especially the social revolutionary type, victims of physical assault were long almost exclusively men. This was of course partially due to the imbalance of political power between the sexes: as long as victims were carefully selected based on their political “guilt,” it was literally almost impossible to attack women. On the other hand, from the 19th century on, the pain and the sorrow of those left behind had and still have primarily female connotations.¹⁷

Widows also had a particularly important function after the weeks-long hijacking dramas ending in hostage deaths that marked the culmination of confrontations between the state and leftist terrorists in Italy and West Germany

13 Martin Steinseifer: *‘Terrorismus’ zwischen Ereignis und Diskurs. Zur Pragmatik von Text-Bild-Zusammenstellungen in Printmedien der siebziger Jahre*. Berlin 2011, 316.

14 Habbo Knoch: Mediale Trauer. Bildmedien und Sinnstiftung im ‘Zeitalter der Extreme,’ in: Frank Bösch and Manuel Borutta (eds.): *Die Massen bewegen. Medien und Emotionen in der Moderne*. Frankfurt a. M. 2006, 193–216.

15 On the “blindness with which a number of West German leftists and an even greater number of leftists outside the country committed to the murder theory from the very first day,” see Peter Schneider: *Der Sand an Baaders Schuhen*, in: *Kursbuch 51. Leben gegen Gewalt* (March 1978), 1–15, here 10.

16 Alex P. Schmid and Janny De Graaf: *Violence as Communication. Insurgent Terrorism and Western News Media*. London 1982, 54.

17 Karl S. Guthke: *The Gender of Death. A Cultural History in Art and Literature*. Cambridge 1999, 82–127; Norbert Fischer: Die Trauernde. Zur geschlechtsspezifischen Materialisierung von Gefühlen im bürgerlichen Tod, in: *metis* 5 (1996), 25–31.

in the late 1970s.¹⁸ By standing beside Schleyer's widow at the church funeral service, the Chancellor was symbolically apologizing to the family for the state's earlier hard-line approach; and in allowing him to sit between her sons and herself, the widow was accepting this gesture. This was by no means a matter of course, as a comparison with Italy shows: there, the Christian Democratic party leadership's conduct during the kidnapping of multiple prime minister Moro had caused such deep rifts between the government and Moro's family that no reconciliation took place. Moro's widow not only refused to participate in the state funeral; she refused to even hand over her husband's body for the official burial. Yet in both countries, already at the time of the kidnapping but even more importantly afterwards, a conspicuous social need had become apparent: the need to turn the kidnapped and ultimately killed victims into heroes, even saints, in order to re-cast their passively endured fates as heroic acts of self-sacrifice for the community.¹⁹ Especially in the case of Germany, these narratives contained elements of soldierly masculinity that should raise general awareness of how the category "gender" figures in the process of constructing images of victims. Not coincidentally, rumors of alleged homosexuality – i.e. a supposedly problematic, feminized masculinity – in the case of the Moscow governor helped to discredit the victim, playing right into the hands of the social revolutionaries.

What role the victims' surviving family members in general and their widows in particular played in collective processes of mourning and coping, and whether they met attempts to use their murdered husbands for political purposes with resistance, support, or passive acceptance, must be examined on a case-by-case basis; the same applies to opportunities these women were given or denied because of their special charisma as victims.²⁰

18 According to Thomas Scheffler, kidnapping is the "most publicly effective form of modern terrorism" and "a highly personalized human drama" that touches on "a sensitive juncture in modern politics," namely: "the conflict between an ethics of personal space ... and the impersonal logic of state reason." Cf. id.: Vom Königsmord zum Attentat. Zur Kulturmorphologie des politischen Mords, in: Trutz von Trotha (ed.): *Soziologie der Gewalt*. Special Issue of *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*. Opladen 1997, 183–199, here 197.

19 On the general problem of investing the term "victim" with too much heroism and/or holiness, and on the dangers of its political exploitation, see Gerhard Botz: Opfer/Täter-Diskurse. Zur Problematik des ‚Opfer‘-Begriffs, in: Gertraud Diendorfer (ed.): *Zeitgeschichte im Wandel*. Innsbruck 1997, 223–236.

20 For the more recent past, see the history of the four so-called "Jersey Widows" or "Jersey Girls" Kristen Breitweiser, Patty Casazza, Lorie Van Auken and Mindy Kleinberg, who were widowed as a result of the 9/11 attacks and played a key role in the appointment of the 9/11 Commission, in Philip Shenon: *The Commission: An Uncensored History of the 9/11 Investigation*.

Not everyone who endures suffering develops a sense of victimhood, and not all those who claim to be victims have suffered themselves – as the essay by Marie Breen-Smyth reminds us. On the other hand, acknowledgment of victimhood can also be withheld when the pain suffered does not count in the eye of the beholder. Insistence on their jealously guarded victim identities and emotional isolation from the suffering of the opposite side were perhaps the most serious impediments to appeasing Northern Irish society, deeply divided by a decades-long pattern of violence and counter-violence. Several aid and self-help groups had already formed during the conflict to meet the needs of injured parties, but after 1994 the number of victim associations increased dramatically. A bitter dispute arose against the backdrop of the now-available compensation funds over the issue of who had the right to reparation payments and – perhaps even more importantly – who did not. The introduction of a disability pension for people with permanent physical injuries ultimately failed, since several politicians refused to include former members of the republican paramilitary in the pool of beneficiaries: under no circumstances could “terrorists” (also) be “victims.” For its own part, Sinn Féin rejected any ruling that did not also include the “victims” from its side. Initiatives to establish the Northern Irish equivalent of the 1990s South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission were – and still are – just as controversial.

In Italy, the rampant violence of the “years of lead” was not the result of ethnic or ethnicized conflicts but genuinely political ones. During this period terrorists on the left and right did not act independent of each another; instead, they radicalized one other in many ways through their own interaction and their close dealings with state agents, primarily intelligence agencies.²¹ The many still-unanswered questions surrounding the ambivalent role of the state make coming to terms with the past south of the Alps especially challenging, both politically and emotionally, as Anna Cento Bull makes clear. She writes that in Italy, as in Northern Ireland, it was the ongoing political exploitation of the past *after* the final shots and bomb explosions that presented the greatest obstacle to healing the wounds that they had caused. Like in other fields, the Berlusconi era had particularly negative effects in this regard, since the Milanese businessman regularly poisoned the political arena by continually reviving anachronistic, anti-communist grudges while his own policies, driven by his own personal interests, eroded trust in the government even further instead of re-stabilizing

New York 2008; also Kristen Breitweiser: *The Wake-Up Call: The Political Education of a 9/11 Widow*. New York 2006. My thanks to Hannah Rudolph for the “Jersey Girls” reference.

²¹ Guido Panvini: *Ordine nero e guerriglia rossa. La violenza politica nell’Italia degli anni sessanta e settanta (1966–1975)*. Turin 2009.

it. Those who bore the brunt of the renewed polarization between left and right were the victims, who thanks to public interventions in these years were emerging for the first time from the shadows of the perpetrators and promptly found themselves caught between political fronts. If and how what Cento Bull sees as Italy's "turn to the victim" in the new millennium was linked to international trends and events – first and foremost the terrorist attacks of 9/11, but also the growing number of transnational justice proceedings²² – and which specifically national forms it takes have yet to be determined. In pursuing these issues further, particular attention should be paid to not only church representatives' key role in the debate, but also the Catholic character of the country as a whole – by adapting the principle of confession and absolution for the political sphere, for instance. In any case, the questions that in Cento Bull's view dominated the Italian public sphere could help provide new insights in other contexts or when comparing different national approaches: What preconditions need to be met if reconciliation is to succeed? What role does traditional jurisprudence with its focus on perpetrators play? And what is even a realistic goal to strive for when seeking reconciliation – on the level of the individual, but also that of society? How important is "truth," including the sharing of confidential information about perpetrators?²³

As Cento Bull shows, surviving relatives of Italian terrorism victims are by no means in agreement when answering these questions. The considerable heterogeneity of the victim group she describes is itself one of her essay's most significant findings. Even those family members who since 2007 have participated in an experimental dialogue with former members of leftist terrorist groups, organized and moderated by church representatives, expressed a wide range of different feelings and attitudes toward the perpetrators. Drawing on Chantal Mouffe's work on the theory of democracy, Cento Bull emphasizes the social relevance of such encounters: although they cannot reconcile contradictory

22 Vincent Druliolle and Roddy Brett: Understanding the Construction of Victimhood and the Evolving Role of Victims in Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding, in: iid. (eds.): *The Politics of Victimhood in Postconflict Societies. Comparative and Analytical Perspectives*. Oxford 2018, 1–22.

23 José Brunner und Daniel Stahl have recently drawn attention to the right to truth as an important new concept in the discourse about human rights that has been the object of fierce debate since the end of the 20th century. See José Brunner and Daniel Stahl (eds.): *Recht auf Wahrheit. Zur Genese eines neuen Menschenrechts*. Göttingen 2016. The editors also note how the right to truth is violated in connection with the fight against terrorism, for instance when the CIA in its "war on terror" after 9/11 detained terrorism suspects without informing their families. See iid. (eds.): Introduction, in: *ibid.*, 9–22, here 9. This meant that the families of presumed perpetrators experienced the same agonizing uncertainty about the fate of a detainee as the families of the victims.

memories and experiences, they can enable these memories and experiences to co-exist in the same space and be borne in their oppositionality. Not only could bitter enemies become adversaries and imagined monsters become human beings in this way. Democracy itself could also profit from such initiatives in civil society in that they might be able to provide a sense of restorative justice where institution-bound approaches had failed.

The Italian example at the same time also helps to highlight the differences between left- and right-wing terrorism. The reconciliation efforts just described have certain limitations due to, among other things, the persistent refusal of former right-wing terrorists to acknowledge the human and political turmoil they had caused. Even in the mediated dialogue initiative it was the victims alone, not the perpetrators, who recalled the consequences of right-wing violence. This violence, which at the time eschewed written claims of responsibility so that its bombings would sow blind terror – the Red Brigades deliberately chose not to use explosives, since they were viewed as the weapon of the right – seems largely anonymous and faceless, even in retrospect. This finding is closely linked to the disappointing judicial balance sheet for “black” violence in Italy: while *pentiti* legislation led to widespread success in fighting left-wing terrorism, nothing even remotely comparable exists in regard to crimes committed in connection with the strategy of tension.²⁴ It would certainly be worthwhile to look more deeply into how differences in the way the state pursued left- and right-wing terrorism respectively affected victims.²⁵ In any event it is hardly surprising that, as Cento Bull shows, many of the victims’ loved ones feel that continuing the reconciliation talks only makes sense if government representatives are also included, so that they can at least get closer to finding the historical truth.

Especially since written claims of responsibility are often lacking, government agents such as investigators, prosecutors, and judges play a decisive role in the matter of whether victims of right-wing terrorist attacks are even considered

24 On this topic see Guido Salvini: *La legge sui terroristi pentiti: un primo bilancio*. Milan 1983; Maurizio Laudi: *Terroristi pentiti e liberazione condizionale: artt. 8 e 9 l. 29 maggio 1982 n. 304, con un'appendice a cura di G. Conso*. Milan 1984. For a more general picture see Antonella Benazzo: *L'emergenza nel conflitto fra libertà e sicurezza*. Turin 2004. The attacks on public institutions in Italy between 1969 and 1980 are considered part of a covert “strategy of tension” that in all likelihood also involved several members of intelligence agencies; issuing no written claims of responsibility, it was intended to produce social unrest and in turn a greater willingness to accept authoritarian political models. See Mimmo Franzinelli: *La sottile linea nera. Neofascismo e servizi segreti da Piazza Fontana a Piazza della Loggia*. Milan 2008.

25 For the German situation see the sociological study by Andreas Böttger, Olaf Lobermeier and Katarzyna Plachta: *Opfer rechtsextremer Gewalt*. Wiesbaden 2014; for Italy see Anna Cento Bull and Philip Cooke: *Ending Terrorism in Italy*. London 2013.

“terrorism” victims and remembered as such. No consensus has been reached yet, for instance, over whether parents of the young people killed on July 22, 2016 in Munich lost their children to a single individual who had “run amok” or to a “right-wing terrorist attack.”²⁶ And the NSU murder victims were not the first ones to be defamed and partially criminalized by investigators following their violent deaths since the crimes were not acknowledged as right-wing terrorism.²⁷ When at the end of 1980 in Erlangen, the Jewish publisher Shlomo Lewin and his partner Frieda Poeschke had been the victims of an anti-Semitic murder, the investigators viewed him as a suspicious character with a “colorful past” and looked for the murderers first primarily from within the Jewish community.²⁸ Considerable evidence suggests that this crime, like the devastating attack at the Munich Oktoberfest several months earlier, can be ascribed to the paramilitary sports group (*Wehrsportgruppe*) Hoffmann, though even today the many dead and injured are still officially considered the victims of a single mentally disturbed perpetrator.²⁹

If only the victims of autumn 1977 and not those of autumn 1980 have found a place in the Federal Republic’s collective memory, it is no doubt partially because of how their respective victimizations were labelled by official agencies, and this in turn rests on the widespread and persistent underestimation – also among academics – of the right-wing potential for violence in the history of the Federal Republic.³⁰ An additional factor should be mentioned here: the lack of societal

26 The expert Matthias Quent, director of the Institute for Democracy and Civil Society in Jena, considers the incident a case of “lone wolf terrorism.” A counselor reported that for the parents of the victims, why their child had to die was a crucial question that “is not answered as long as society does not clearly identify the motive for the deed. The family members can have no closure.” See Lena Kampf and Kassian Stroh: Die Tat eines “echten Deutschen”. Drei Gutachter werten den Münchner Amoklauf als rechtsradikale Tat – anders als die Ermittlungsbehörden, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (4 Oct. 2017). URL: <https://lenakampf.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Artikel9.pdf> (16 July 2018).

27 See the Editorial.

28 See Schleppende Aufklärung des Erlanger Doppelmordes. Der Journalist Ulrich Chaussy über seine Recherchen zu den Morden an Poeschke und Lewin (10 Mar. 2016). URL: <http://www.nordbayern.de/region/erlangen/schleppende-aufklarung-des-erlanger-doppelmordes-1.5048543> (10 Jun. 2018).

29 Ulrich Chaussy: Das Oktoberfestattentat 1980. Der Vorhang wieder auf und alle Fragen offen. Erfahrungen eines Journalisten, in: Sybille Steinbacher (ed.): *Rechte Gewalt in Deutschland. Zum Umgang mit dem Rechtsextremismus in Gesellschaft, Politik und Justiz*. Göttingen 2016, 93–108.

30 This ignorance is also found among historians. In the relevant overviews of German history, or more specifically the history of the Federal Republic, right-wing terrorism is not mentioned at all (Herbert, Görtemaker, Wolfrum) or only in passing (Conze). My thanks to Tim Schanetzky for this reference.

support for the “classic” victims of right-wing violence noted earlier in the editorial who are usually chosen from among social minorities. Hence during the wave of right-wing violence that accompanied the early ‘90s debate over restricting asylum rights, the federal government spokesman saw nothing amiss in declining the request that Chancellor Kohl attend the funeral for the Turkish-born victims of the Mölln attacks (November 23, 1992) with the remark that the government did not want to “slip into condolence tourism.”³¹ Instead of decisively countering the “Foreigners Out” and “Germans First” slogans circulating at the time, the federal government’s callous neglect of the victims helped encourage a vigilante kind of terrorism that saw itself as supposedly defending the common good against stigmatized minorities: “vigilante violent offenders are non-state agents fighting with illegal means (primarily) in the name of an established group against outsider groups.” Accordingly, the anxiety that is by definition part of terrorist violence should only be unleashed in the target population group: “The deeds are intended to limit or further marginalize the social standing of the vulnerable group to which the terrorists think their victims belong and for which individuals as its representatives are attacked.”³² Viewed against this backdrop, the 1993 restrictions placed on the asylum law can definitely be interpreted as a political concession and a legitimizing win for the vigilantism that would ultimately escalate to a new level in the right-wing terrorist NSU.³³

But even the “German Autumn” as the peak of left-wing terrorism in the Federal Republic left many of those it impacted feeling bitter and disappointed. The essay by Florian Jessensky and Martin Rupps illustrates the ambivalent experiences of the October 1977 plane hijacking victims in their attempts to find recognition and restitution for their ordeal. Lufthansa felt that as the airline involved, it was first and foremost an injured party, and while the unfortunate passengers were reimbursed for personal belongings they had lost, the airline deemed it the government’s duty to address any further claims. And in fact, by staging the successful recovery of the hijacked plane as a political “victory over terrorism,” the government had raised former hostages’ hopes for speedy,

31 Quoted in Christian Fuchs and John Goetz: *Die Zelle. Rechte Terror in Deutschland*. Reinbek b. Hamburg 2012, 65. In his entire time as chancellor, Kohl neither visited nor received a single victim of right-wing violence, nor did he participate in any funeral services.

32 Matthias Quent: *Rassismus, Radikalisierung, Rechtsterrorismus. Wie der NSU entstand und was er über die Gesellschaft verrät*. Weinheim 2016, 158.

33 Ibid., 157–163. The right-wing perpetrators’ sense of vindication over the change to the law is evidenced by among other things the attack three days later in Solingen on a house inhabited by two families of Turkish descent, which killed five people and seriously injured 14 more. Ibid., 178. On the NSU also see the editorial.

unbureaucratic aid. That the chancellor was nonetheless unable to perform some generous act, and instead deferred to the victims' compensation law passed just one year earlier, led to considerable frustration among many of the surviving passengers. This law actually turned out to be a completely inadequate way to make restitution for the comprehensive damage caused by a terrorist attack. Jessensky and Rupps show that in the end, the political character of their victimization nonetheless provided the "Landshut" survivors better chances for recompense than those of "ordinary" crime victims at the time. Their leverage lay primarily in their potential ability to create a media scandal over government lapses: at least some segments of the population apparently felt that it was most definitely the politicians' duty to care for people who had been taken hostage in an attempt to blackmail the state. The federal government was well aware of this fact, too – and accordingly sought to contain the damage to its image as best it could.

The thesis that the "Landshut" case helped raise general awareness about the psychological consequences of any violent experience, as the authors contend, will need to be studied further in future research. What the essay does highlight once more is the issue of what is specific to being victimized by terrorism. "It is highly questionable whether the mere fact that an act is classified as terrorism has specific consequences for its victims," wrote Anthony Pemberton recently – a claim in need of additional support.³⁴ For while Pemberton is doubtless correct in warning against essentializing victimhood by terrorism, the case explored by Jessensky and Rupps suggests that the political context in which the crime occurs can provide survivors with a greater power to act even when they are politically denied any special status. It must be said, though, that the successful recovery of the plane by the GSG 9, which cost no additional passengers their lives, is a key part of the image we have even today of the fortunately rescued passengers. While in the case of Hanns Martin Schleyer, whose family enjoyed no comparably happy ending, the government's hard-line approach to the kidnappers was repeatedly criticized and questioned as the cold triumph of state reason, in the "Landshut" case the narrative of the strong state has triumphed. The risk the hostages faced when Schmidt's appointed crisis team allowed ultimatum deadlines to pass, but even more importantly when the GSG 9 intervened, was and still is abundantly clear to the survivors and their families, yet the general public is largely unaware of it. Met on their return to Frankfurt by various second-tier politicians but above all by a gaggle of inquisitive journalists, the victims had no wounds that were

³⁴ Antony Pemberton: *Al Qaida and Vicarious Victims: Victimological Insights into Globalized Terrorism*, in: Rianne Letschert and Jan van Dijk (eds.): *The New Faces of Victimhood. Globalization, Transnational Crimes and Victim Rights*. Heidelberg 2011, 233–252, here 234.

visible to the public, which made their good fortune that much clearer, especially when compared with the unfortunate widows of the year 1977. General sympathy focused accordingly on Monika Schumann, whose husband had been shot to death in the aircraft in front of all the passengers. Only the psychiatrists on site seemed to grasp that those who had been forced to witness the brutal murder – threatened with death themselves – had also suffered, and these psychiatrists now turned their professional gaze on the former hostages. Of those who received treatment, however, the majority felt less like patients than scientific guinea pigs.

The fact that victims deserved sympathy and appropriate offers of help seems to have been realized by very few people in the Federal Republic at the time, though in the Netherlands it was already widely acknowledged. Synchronic and diachronic comparisons with other contexts are needed to give sharper contours to this still blurry picture. Generally speaking, the historicization of victimology including its political premises and the consequences of therapies provided represent a particularly urgent need for future research in the history of knowledge.³⁵ In this context it will definitely be necessary to also consider civic initiatives undertaken on the victims' behalf: initiatives that promoted information about victimology, worked for its dissemination, and pushed for its translation into action in therapeutic, political, police, and legal practice.³⁶

The essays in this yearbook suggest that even more than being a history of knowledge, a history of terrorism victims must be a history of the media, including the shifts in moral order that it both reflects and itself produces. Unlike the “symbiotic” relationship between the media and terrorists, the “super-entertainers of our time,” the complicated relationship between terrorism victims and the “fourth estate” has been the subject of very little research.³⁷ Here, too, the essay by Jessensky and Rupps offers first glimpses into a doubtlessly complex reality. Members of the media can voyeuristically exploit the suffering of victims,

35 Only first steps are taken in Lyane Sautner: *Viktimologie. Die Lehre von den Verbrechensopfern*. Vienna 2014, 5–13. See also David von Mayenburg: “Geborene Opfer“. Bausteine für eine Geschichte der Viktimologie – Das Beispiel Hans von Hentig, in: *Rechtsgeschichte* 14 (2009), 122–147. An impressive history of how victims of war have been perceived from the early 19th century up until the present, with special emphasis on the category “knowledge,” is found in the latest monograph by Svenja Goltermann: *Opfer. Die Wahrnehmung von Krieg und Gewalt in der Moderne*. Frankfurt a. M. 2017.

36 For the German context, see for example the many activities and publications of the “White Ring.”

37 From a victimological perspective see Betty Pfefferbaum: Victims of Terrorism and the Media, in: Silke, Terrorists, 175–187. On the history of the media and terrorism still see Schmid and De Graaf, Violence. The quote is taken from Walter Laqueur: *A History of Terrorism*. New Brunswick 2001, 223.

multiply it, and reproduce it repeatedly. On the other hand, many victims gain agency by successfully manipulating the media; a handful even enjoy “careers,” become “prominent,” and achieve material success. Especially in the recent past, the tendency to use the appropriate treatment of terrorism victims as a yardstick for measuring a government’s counterterrorism performance has above all been the mission of engaged journalists.³⁸

But members of the media not only voice critique and create norms for action in politics. As a result of the “turn to the victim” they themselves have also long been the recipients of new moral demands, as the essay by Charlotte Klonk shows. According to this widespread claim, it is not the perpetrators themselves but rather the fatal consequences of their deeds that should be the focal point of public engagement with terrorism. In Klonk’s view, however, the counter-images laid spontaneously at crime scenes showing the victims while they were still alive, do not live up to this postulate. By visually overwriting the deed, these photographs actually avoid shock and keep pain at a distance. The author also sees an inability to mourn in the post-9/11 storm of protest directed at the media after the now-famous photo of the “falling man” was published,³⁹ an interpretation that finds support in the desperate attempts to discover the identity of the anonymous man who fell to his death. Klonk’s own main purpose is to warn about the potential danger of emotions aroused by images of victims, which in public spaces might be difficult to control. In her view, ostensible sympathy with the victims all too often conceals substantial political interests trying to exploit individual loss in connection with deliberate strategies of polarization. The top priority in any case should be the protection of victims’ privacy, including the right to their own images, whose public display they should also have the power to refuse.

By emphasizing the close connection between politics and medially conveyed emotionality, Klonk closes the circle begun in the essay by Anke Hilbrenner. Klonk and Hilbrenner’s essays, but also the others introduced here, pose the fundamental question: which moral systems, views of human beings, and notions of justice actually framed the social processes of negotiation around victimhood that are discussed? For the history of modern terrorism is above all a history of the moral legitimization and delegitimization of violence. As this volume shows, victims play a key role in this history – even and perhaps especially when they are categorized by political circumstances, when their suffering goes unrecognized, or when they do not agree on forms and goals of social reappraisal.

38 This applies for instance to reporting about the federal government’s dealings with victims of the attack on the Breitscheidplatz Christmas market in Berlin.

39 See among others Godehard Janzing: *The Falling Man. Bilder der Opfer des 11. September 2001*, in: Gerhard Paul (ed.): *Das Jahrhundert der Bilder. 1949 bis heute*. Göttingen 2008, 694–701.