

ASPECTS ON THE IDEOLOGY OF THE FUNDAMENTAL ISLAMIC TERRORISM IN EUROPE

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The need for security throughout Europe is one of the fundamentals of modern societies. In particular, the technological and industrial development has led the contemporary communities to new directions in terms of their economic, social, political, cultural or other kind of evolution. Taking these into consideration, worldwide fight against terrorism has become a primary objective for most of the world governments. The Islamic fundamentalism is a justificatory reason for decoding the security realities.

Within the present article, we formulate hypotheses that might be starting points for the integrated approach of the Islamic fundamentalist terrorism phenomenon and several viewpoints concerning possible future solutions.

Keywords: terrorism; attack; Islamic fundamentalism; separatist ideologies; Jihad.

"Allah is our purpose, the prophet – our model,
The Quran – our constitution, the Jihad is our way,
and dying for Allah is our utmost desire."

Hassan al-Banna – founder of the Muslim Brotherhood¹

The beginning of the third millennium is characterized by an unprecedented scale of global terrorism and a great diversity of its forms of manifestation. In this context, the issue of analyzing the phenomenon of terrorism has acquired new dimensions and valences under the very controversial sign of the security systems globalization.

The concerns of the security structures responsible for terrorism suggest that an interdisciplinary approach is needed to understand the motivation of the actions of the organized terrorist groups. Studies and reports on terrorist events show that terrorists are motivated not only by psychological factors but also by social, political, religious or economic ones. Therefore, the motivations, the goals, the ethnic separatist, anarchist, revolutionary or religious fundamentalist ideologies differ significantly, and the ideological influence in the context of socio-economy, culture,

demography and other realities becomes extremely relevant and dangerous. In spite of all the difficulties, we can say that terrorism consists in the deliberate and systematic use of means capable of provoking terror in order to reach the most diverse purposes, which ultimately have a political agenda. Terrorism promotes interests, ambitions, and messages based on intimidation, threats, coercion and violence. It is the conscious exploitation of terror, the degree of fear being generated by the very nature of the crime in question, by the manner of committing it, by its absurdity and its uselessness regarding the number of human casualties and material loss².

General Features of the Phenomenon of Terrorism

In the light of their asynchronous hierarchical and dogmatic structure, the terrorist organizations have long stopped mistakenly being dubbed as rampageous uncritical religious factions of overzealous fanatics, as the literati arguably distilled the causes of the convoluted terrorist phenomenon and surmised that their intrinsic ontologies have multiple similitudes with various types of worldwide organizations, to each with their own peculiar characteristics. The indoctrinated ideologies and

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personal common beliefs of their faithful members reveal their antithetical and asymmetric traits, in antithesis to the other worldwide organizations in which their members share ubiquitously legitimate beliefs. Ultimately, the ambitions of the terrorist organizations in polarizations to the other existing myriad of international organizations in the usage of exacerbated violence as one an oppressive tool crafted to inflict fear and cause public havoc and panic in order to accomplish their goals. Metaphorically speaking, violence is a honed "saber" in the hand of the terrorist organizations and shall not be mistaken for their main purpose of existing as their supreme goal is always a political one.

Having an overt advantage over the army forces which are overtly more numerous and built on the grounds of the international treaties flanked by rigorous national and international laws and principles only operating under the strict rule of Law, the following characteristics in contrast to the military forces, perfectly mirror the image of the terrorist organizations: surprise in action, a generally strictly determined area of operations, a very good knowledge of the area of operations, one or more logistics support areas within their area of operations, often under very good conspiracy conditions. This entails a major difficulty in finding and destroying them by the police or the military forces in whose area the terrorist organizations act. In this context, it is worth pointing out that terrorist actions have become much more particular in the sense that they require relatively minor material resources, simple and remotely efficient communication systems that provide certain autonomy or even operational independence from the logistic requirements, which are much limited³. An important feature of terrorist attacks is that they usually end up with innocent and casual victims. By killing or injuring people, the terrorists promote their goals or shock the audience of the target. In many cases terrorism is regarded as the weapon of the weak against the strong, since the reasons behind their actions are political realities of the Western world. In addition, even if a suicidal terrorist act fails, or even if the government's anti-terrorist structures kill a terrorist leader, the results of an assault are often in favor of the terrorist group by martyring the fallen and praising his cause.

In order to achieve the intended objectives, the terrorist organizations and groups resort to a wide variety of action forms and procedures, each with its own characteristics. The statistics of the last thirty years show that nearly 95% of the world's terrorist acts fall into the following basic tactics: bombings, assassinations, suicide attacks, armed attacks, kidnappings, hijackings, and hostage-taking. In the joint sense, any terrorist action is ultimately nothing more than a variant of the above. At the beginning of the 21st century, the essence of terrorism remained equally primitive in relation to the state of civilization, while, however, its methods and means of putting it into practice, as well as the capabilities of targeting strategic level targets have known a dramatic "development" for mankind. The variety of methods and procedures used in the terrorist actions determines the year-on-year increase in the number of terrorist acts and the danger they pose. They are in a way diametrically opposed to the characteristics of modern democratic society and symmetrical to them by the fact that the strategies and the tactics used by terrorists are part of the ingenious, violent, brutal, vindictive, surprising and cold asymmetry. It can also be added that in today's globalized world, terrorists can engage their targets much faster, since the potential targets are permanently exposed and the subversive news and ideas that can determine people to become partisans of the terrorist causes can be easily and quickly spread through global communications networks.

Today's terrorism has gained a global dimension in at least two aspects. The first is the possibility of terrorists, including known leaders of terrorist organizations, to move unhindered to any part of the world, and use false identities for this purpose and benefit from travel facilities similar to those of tourists or businessmen from the democratic countries. This allows them to study in detail the targets they aim to attack, to execute various banking and monetary operations, to attract proselytes to the cause of the terrorist group they belong to, etc. The second aspect of the globalization of terrorism lies in the fact that the terrorists have fully expanded their own logistics activities as well as the operative actions, making it difficult to monitor their organizational and planning efforts by the terrorism prevention agencies⁴. The terrorist is an invisible, dissimulated enemy, lost in the

crowd, without distinctive marks. He is part of a networked command and control system with an undefined, unclear geographical location but with secure, efficient and sustainable connections, the training in special camps having provided him with patience and care in the choice of targets and the execution of the attacks. It is very likely that, in the future, terrorism will mainly focus on targets in the field of information, in the system of common values of the world, and especially in the systems of values of the nations. Concepts of "net war", "cyber insurgency" and "information terrorism" create a dramatic image of an undeclared war in the undefined world of cyberspace – a "fourth dimension" created by the endless chain of computers. Indeed, war by means of computerized networks is both a new way of penetrating the range of economic, social and political conflicts, as well as a military conflict in itself^f.

Conceptualization of the Phenomenon of the Islamic Terrorism

The basis of terrorism is the Islamist organizations and the communities formed around the mosques that plant the seeds of radicalization, not necessarily through the actual recruitment of terrorists, but by politicizing the sermons, which give a sense of victimization to the Muslims. In the same train of thought, hatred has been widely inculcated in the Islamic population towards the non-Muslims and other social segments such as the homosexuals or the women, manifesting itself through mass demands of social equality and refusal to wear the veil or the burqa. In this regard, we note that a fundamental distinction must be made between Islam and Islamism. The Islam is the belief of a billion and a half people from all over the world. The Islamism is the political ideology that demands the enforcement of the sharia or the holy Islamic law throughout the world. These Islamists, individuals who believe that the Islam is a political and governing force can generate behaviors of the typology of social issues. However, an observation must be made in the fact that there are also moderate Muslims. They are the reformers who want to make Islam compatible with the freedoms and rights of all citizens and the society of the 21st century. Also, their status can become a serious duality in the sense that they are also the victims of the Islamists who believe that

they are not Muslim enough⁶. On the other hand, we can consider that the Islam perceives Western civilization as the seat of evil, illegitimacy and decadence, rejecting any other religion, including the pre-Islamic one. The fundamentalist Islam – as a religion that is supposed to be synonymous with politics and government – is incompatible with the rights of the Western world and with freedom in the sense that we understand it and with all the institutions familiar to the Western way of life, namely with the human made laws and the rights of the humanity to adapt, to progress and to modernize. In a democracy, the laws are a creation of man, as a result of their subjectivism, thinking, judgment and reason, or Sharia is the Word of Allah, therefore it is not a creation of man, which eliminates subjectivism, humane and free thinking, which leads to the conclusion that there is a total incompatibility between democracy and Islam.

For the Islamists, the foundation of the Caliphate is another sign that the End of Times is approaching; the success of the ISIS terrorist organization by founding the Islamic State is irresistible and draws young recruits from all over the world, including Europe and the United States of America, fighters who want to participate in the battle before the final apocalypse, giving them an ideological sense. Every murderous act committed by ISIS, each barbarous assassination that appears on social pages becomes legitimate because it announces the beginning of the apocalypse. Cruelty is the core of their governing method, the basis of their strategy, in order to shock, draw media attention and discourage enemies. Their actions aim at fulfilling Mahomet's prophecies about the coming of Judgment Day. The Mahomet's doctrine materialized in the Word received from God transposed into the Quran becomes the basis of the Islamic fundamentalism, and the fact that it has come directly from God makes this Word immutable; it cannot be changed, interpreted and passed through the filter of thought and subjectivism. What the Islamists blame today and what Mahomet condemned is the corruption and the immorality (depravity) of the Western or the whole world. Al-Qaeda and its Islamic Sunni allies have not only removed from power the most important secular government in the region, the one in Egypt, but also managed to incite a civil war in Syria against the Bashar al-Assad regime, which is part of the Alawite (non Sunni) majority.



Syria, is the area where Dabiq is located, the place considered by many Muslims to be the place of the final confrontation between the forces of the Islam and the infidels. Equally important is the threshold to be crossed in order to destroy Jordan and Israel, a good reason why Syria enjoys special attention in the 20-year plan drawn up by Al-Qaeda. We are about to witness the merger between Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. Before the Islamic State there was ISIS, and before ISIS there was the Al-Qaeda wing in Iraq. Al-Qaeda has evolved from a terrorist organization to a model ideological movement, to which ISIS and dozens of other Jihadist groups have sworn allegiance⁷.

Mixing the Sharia fundamentals in the area of justifying the terrorist actions is that corrupted codification of Allah's life rules, which can be interpreted as a perfect expression of his will and his divine justice. That is why, in this environment of religious, it is considered the supreme law governing over everybody and everything, everywhere people lives. There is no aspect of life that Sharia will not handle; it governs and dictates everything. As the law of the Islamic State, Sharia goes beyond the religious domain and goes into the public one (holding control over all domains). Approaching the ways to disseminate the concept, we can say that the Muslims do not accept another sovereign or authority unless they guarantee the enforcement of the Sharia laws in their entirety. In this sense, any other legal system, no matter how attractive it may seem at first glance, is rejected by the Muslims and is unlikely to be the solution to their problems and it would be compromised from the beginning. It is therefore deduced that one thing can unite every group of the Islamic terrorism worldwide, and that is the desire to make Sharia the law of the place everywhere on the surface of the earth. All the propaganda messages through the media mention the obligation to impose Sharia, primarily in the Muslim-controlled places and then all over the world. The Quran orders that Sharia will always guide all the Muslims from all the corners of the world, says Abdur Rahman Doi, an Islamic law researcher from Malaysia. The Jihadists do not distort their religion, and without an obviously fundamentalist support, the shocking violence of the beheadings, the crucifixions and the murders of women and children cannot be meaningless. They have a particular meaning, which justifies the

appearance of fear and the creation of a persistent impression that the foundation of the Caliphate is inevitable, that its supporters will resort to every means necessary for founding it. The Islam as a religious justification is becoming increasingly intolerant not only to those who seek to support freedom and the human rights, but to millions of Muslims. People favoring moderation and a classical liberal approach that consider faith a connection between God and man, not something imposed by the authorities, are silenced and, in some situations, hunted and killed. This is the problem which requires a necessary and rapid reform of Islam. If the Islamic advocates systematically reformed their religion - dissociating themselves from its former barbaric forms, we would no longer be in a situation where religion itself would be at the core of the debate and, unfortunately, of terror and deaths everywhere in the sense of committing acts of terrorism.

The total rejection of the Western values is their declared openly expressed intention. The war is declared against Christians, Jews and all non-Muslims, because there are no Muslims and true Muslims, Islam being based on conquests and violence, rejecting the Western ideas. The Jihadists take Islam very seriously, which is a religion of war, not of peace. Islamic radicalism has become the most serious threat to Western secularism and capitalism. For those who feel disappointed with the Western materialism, disoriented and lonely, groups like ISIS come with a full offer: jobs, acceptance, dignity, and the feeling of being in the winning camp. The so-called Islamic State, self-proclaimed Caliphate, needs people, faithful supporters, ready for any sacrifice. ISIS requires men to fight and rule over the occupied territories. It recruits even young women, to become the wives of the fighters then settle them in the ISIS-occupied territories where they form families. Thus they manage to attract those who yearn for action and are indifferent to notions such as patriotism or duty towards the community. They would have the chance to see their fantasies come true and to live in a world where the main attraction is war, and they are the heroes. Foreign fighters also serve the propaganda goals of the organization, playing an important role in the psychological warfare. First of all, ISIS uses them to prove that the Islam is more appealing than the Western materialist

culture. ISIS is not an insurgency movement born in Iraq or Syria, even though most fighters come from this region. More accurately, ISIS is a mixed organization of Jihadists from the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, North and West Africa, which tries to impose its rules and values on a vast territory regardless of the religious or political beliefs of the locals. Expansion is part of the ISIS ideology. So are rape, slavery, torture and genocide. In addition, ISIS invented something revolutionary, recreating the strategy of terrorist combat, by transforming the social networks into a psychological, offensive warfare, whose power will now be an important battle tactics⁸.

The Islamic world is a complicated one. The tribal and national alliances are twisted, and the interests of the non-Muslim powers in the region are directed to the oil existing here and the center of influence given by the Saudi Arabia, which complicates things even more. Yet, from the origins to the present, Muhammad's followers have not beheaded men nor did they throw grenades or missiles on cars in which people were blocked. These crimes are committed with the purpose to shock and intimidate and deepen the moral gulf that separates the terrorists from the rest of the world. The ties that these atrocities create are strong enough to last a lifetime and survive after the cause has already been lost. Terrorists hope that through the image they provide, they will attract many followers, funds and other forms of support. Guerrilla fighters and organized crime practitioners, as well as terrorists, generally want to have positive relationships with the population they come from, whose interests they defend or serve. There are also cases where terrorist groups attack and kill civilians without making a difference between "friendly" and "enemy". Thus, Al-Qaeda has probably killed more Muslims than Christians and Jews, being unable to avoid collateral victims, or even deliberately targeting the Shiite Muslims (the case of the Al-Qaeda organization in Iraq, led by 2006 by the leader Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, a declared enemy of the Shiite)⁹.

Specific Aspects of Islamic Terrorism in the European Space

The European Union is faced with the development of the Islamic terrorist groups also

within its borders, which is mainly due to the high number of Muslim immigrants who have found refuge on its territory. The issue of the re-Islamization of the Muslim population from the European territory is also due to the "protectionist" policy of some European states, which is manifested by the preservation of the national traditions and the religious precepts. The West, as a rule, has a position of rejecting everything that is foreign influence, whether it originates in the East or in Eastern Europe. This is the circumstance under which the Muslim immigrants are usually isolated, not so much by political will, but by the attitude of the citizens in the country of immigration. Muslims are not assimilated to the European civilization, being considered incompatible with the traditions of the European democracies. In this regard, it should be noted that numerous terrorist attacks in Europe have been committed by young Muslim European citizens educated in the European values system. Thus, the Western governments must also manage the threat posed by the Jihadists raised in their own countries who have been inspired by Al-Qaeda or ISIS but cannot travel to Syria. ISIS claims that rebuilding the Caliphate has awakened the extremists around the world. Most likely, the conscious use by the fundamentalist organizations resorting to some barbarous forms of violence resonates with a single audience of people who not only that lack embarrassment to such atrocities but who might even try to participate in such activities. The large-scale publicity of terrorist attacks such as those in Brussels, Ottawa, Sydney, Paris, London and Copenhagen, where the victims were stabbed or there were cars that simply crashed into crowds, excite the fanatical Jihadists even more.

In the context of what has been said above, Europe can be both a target for attacks and a possible base for training the terrorist groups. However, the threats to Europe were mainly due to the involvement of certain states in the wars in the Middle East (Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria) and not to a continuous and proclaimed aversion of the Arab world to the European states, as in the case of the US – the fundamentalist terrorist attacks are seen as the main forms of aggression against the number one enemy of the Islamic world. As a result of the terrorist attacks in Europe, a worrying truth becomes more and more obvious, namely that the terrorist threat does not come from the religious

schools in the Muslim states, but it is represented by the citizens of the Islamic religion in the Western States, the second generation of Muslims, who are European citizens. They have never been in a training camp of a terrorist group; they have not fought in Iraq, Afghanistan or other Jihadist fronts, and yet adhere to the preparation and committing of the abominable acts. The identification of "religious conceptual balance" brings Westernism to its forefront with its role in the European physical space, especially since the westernizing did not produce the expected results in the 20th century. Just as fascism or communism combined masses of dissatisfied individuals, the Islamic fundamentalism unifies the traditional religious symbols with the ideology of revolutionary action. "Opposition Unity" allows all Muslims dissatisfied with dealing with a globalized world they are about to lose, to embrace the Islamic fundamentalism - an ideology that has gained its legitimacy as the only alternative to the deterioration of the living standards, to the dissolution of the cultural, political and social system of the Muslim world¹⁰.

On the other hand, the Islamic terrorism is vulnerable to several counterattacks right from within. The most convincing comes from the educated Muslims who can bring arguments against the simplistic and violent interpretation of the Islam. It is already happening, but there must be more Muslims involved, who also need to develop communication skills through media networks to be able to confront the terrorist organizations in the virtual environment. Also, the moderate Muslims must ensure that the mosques and their social communities are not dominated by the radicals. At the same time, the state authorities have to support these people and do more than arrest those suspected of terrorism. Due to the existence of the Muslims who feel intimidated by the extremists, the former need to be protected in order to speak openly. Companies with socializing platforms have already improved their protection methods. We consider that resources should be allocated to these companies to be one step ahead of the terrorists. On the other hand, Europe will have to spend substantial sums of money in this direction. Programs devoted to young people - immigrants and non-immigrants - from the Western countries are needed to help them find a decent job, to help them have a say on how the

country in which they live is governed and to stay optimistic about the future. Thus, the alternative to a military response of the West to terrorist attacks is the operationalization of a strategy based on dialogue and not on intimidation, on implementing the democracy and on supporting the economic progress rather than on territorial domination, on multicultural approach and not on border controls. In other words, a strategy that provides an answer to the phenomenon of the radicalization of the Islamic world is not given by a world that believes it has no chance in the face of the hegemonic West. Although terrorism appears to be an ever-present threat or a system of chaotic action that generates an apparently hopeless situation that expands to almost all areas of political, economic and social life, it cannot be controlled and countered by measures lost in a vicious system. Solving this situation involves multiple solutions, some direct, radical and categorical, even violent, intended to nip the evil in the bud, other indirect consisting of well-designed strategies to reduce the discrepancies and the effect of fracture, to harmonize social and international relations and on this basis to improve the human condition.

However, in our opinion, the only solution that can be used to resolve conflicts of any nature must be dialogue and compromise. Unfortunately, when terrorism occurs, reason disappears; it is replaced by fanaticism, the loss of logical thinking and of essential human values. Although terror means crime, no matter what motivation is given to it, crime has to be severely sanctioned by mankind, being considered not only a serious violation of the natural morality, but it can be religiously viewed as a capital sin sanctioned by the Divine Force, no matter how it is called throughout history. Therefore the challenge of terrorism as an act that pleases Allah is a monstrous mistake. Europe is made up of diversity: there are Christians, but also Europeans who have another religion or have none and all must be respected. We defend the freedom to embrace a religion, as well as the freedom to have no religion. This characterizes Europe: freedom of choice and tolerance. Europe is a multiethnic, multicultural and multi-religious continent, from which we cannot exclude the Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist communities which live together, giving it a new physiognomy.

Conclusions

Few peculiar characteristics outline the contemporary terrorism/the terrorist phenomenon and anticipate their impending future evolution as a volatile asymmetric entity with its new form of manifestation, the super terrorism and mega terrorism and recently, the nuclear terrorism:

- The imminent ascension and enhancement of the ideological contemporary terrorism as a target to the main global mass-integration processes, such as the European policies of integration and immigration policies;

- The terrorist phenomenon caresses a tremendously exacerbated psychological impact-oriented strategy. Its devotees aim to attract more aspiring adepts, new forms of external funding and other means of support, by emphasizing and augment their revolting savage image of extreme violence, assaulting every form of mass-media, actively targeting their enthusiasts on the social networks;

- By exploiting the psychological impact produced by their violent actions and augmented by the massive exposure in the mass-media, they successfully reach to the minds and hearts of the specific branch of the population, with tremendous consequences; the political and ideological segregation of the population within a society with heftier chances of attracting new recruits and more external support;

- The flourishing of the new forms of contemporary terrorism, such as cyber terrorism, as a chain reaction of the technology breakthrough and the emerging of the new cyber-technologies.

In the light of the contemporary international context in its compelling complexity and versatility, one of the major concerns is the universally acclaimed freedom of the people to a harmoniously seamless self-development governed by the rule of Law and the international human rights principles. The international protection of the human rights is imperative for a universal climate of democracy, freedom and evolution in the light of an intertwined world marked by the phenomenon of massive globalization. Thereupon, amorphous phenomena such as the cross border terrorism – which have no respect or consideration for the human rights and the healthy democratic principles of the society

and their orderly values and use extreme violence and forms of terror and repressive force to reach their own goals, pose a serious threat to the world peace and the imperative respect for the principles of fundamental human rights.

NOTES:

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