

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM – A SERIOUS CONFLICT BETWEEN THE OCCIDENT AND THE ORIENT

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Abstract

International Terrorism represents the main threat on the global security, and the history of civilizations let us to discover that there is an important link between this serious menace and the Occident-Orient Relations. The studies and analyses made by the experts in the international security field proved that not the misery is the cause of the terrorism, but the appetite for domination. In order to win in the fight on terror, the Occident should be more humanitarian, respects the Orient values and use the negotiation – the principle function of diplomacy - as much as possible.

Keywords: Terrorism, The Occident-Orient Relations, Negotiation, Diplomacy

“Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent. (...) Nationalist *sentiment* is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfillment. (...) In brief, nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones...”

Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*

1. International Terrorism concept and phenomenon in the context of The Occident-Orient Relations

Nowadays, the concept of terrorism is not unanimously defined by the sociologists and political scientists, being highly debatable, due to the issues of cultural, political and social perception of the act of violence and of the political purpose pursued by the terror. Internationalized, the terrorism became a serious threat to peace and understanding between peoples. Through its actions, it encourages the distruction, the scepticism, even the hostility and the destabilization of national and international equilibrium.

The contemporain international terrorism is seldom analysed from the perspective of the so-called The Occident - Orient or West-East or North-South Relations, being preferred the clash of the different cultural concepts and the varied defence systems, in this way being avoided the comparation between the strong and weak states, between the opulence and misery. The results of the different studies and analyses made by experts in international security point out or prove that there is not the misery that cause or generate the act of terrorism. Trying to have a review of the history of the civilisations directly implied in the fight against terrorism, we can see that a major significance in solving this crucial problem could be indentified in the past and the present of The Occident-The Orient Relations.

Lato sensu, the phrase the Occident - the Orient Relations refers to those relations between the West and the non-European state, where is found the history of the imperialism and colonialism, that in terms of politics involve foreign control and influence upon the populations and territories. After the international recognition of the Third World States, the mechanism of the informal control and of the indirect domination were again manufactured or revived and they were adjusted to the sovereign states. So there were created superpower-client relations, there were conducted conspired actions during the Cold War in order to eliminate the independent nationalists, there was tried to captivate the autohtone leaders and the invisible forms of the financial governance, by the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and the stock markets.

2. The Occident-Orient Relations and their impact on people and states' perception

Performing the foreign control and influence, as well the so-called process of rebuilding of other states using the First Class World or the Occidental World states model generated new opposition forces defined by the continuity and violence. Such an example could be the reformational movement of the Islamic nationalists Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh, who, as a response of the occidental pressure, tried to prove to the West that the Islamism does not represent a barrier in front of the progress and evolution and that at the core of any religion we could find the belief in a transcendental authority and a system of moral values and guidelines for a life pleasing to God, so no one could say that one religion is better than another.

As the top billing of the first pages of the newspapers or of the international main news broadcasts these acts are classified as belonging to the fanaticism and of the intransigency of an

“another world” as it was and still it is perceived in a wrong way the Orient, irrespective the contemporain muslim world by the Occident.

For the West, the Imperialism does not represent the domination and the exploitation upon the others, but a mirror in which there are reflected the Occidental virtues. Edward Said a Palestinian-American literary theorist, an advocate for Palestinian rights, an influential cultural critic and author, known best for his book Orientalism (1978), defined the Orientalism as a new sign of the Occidental power, irrespective “the power of self-defining, of defining the West up against the others”. So the Orientalism implies a connection, a bound or better says a dependence between the strong and weak states, between what means the West and the rest of the world.

If the Occident’s mission is to civilize, dominate and help a country to become free, then the Orient should be grateful for this gift. In this context, one question arises: Is the Occident a tyrant or it blazes the way to civilization and wellness? Most of the Americans really believe that they released the Iraq and they are very proud about this. The most European are sceptics about this. It is an irrefutable truth that the Americans had a major contribution to the freedom of Iraq, but if we have a look at the Iraqi people we could see that their reaction wasn’t according to the expectations. The assault upon Baghdad and the destroying of the national Museum and Library reminded them about the depredation of this city by the mongols in the XIII century, being another sign of the unsafety feeling generated by the new conquerors.

There must be accepted the idea that the Occident is seen in a different way in the perception of the non Euro-Atlantic community. The colonialism is not remembered as a world civilization phenomenon. For most of the people that were colonized the arrival of the European were an unprecedented calamity. They passed through wars, genocides, epidemics, starvation and other disasters and they were exposed to the foreign commercial and circulation control. And we must not forget that the Middle east of the XX century is a creation of the United Kingdom and France, that weren’t acquainted with the dynamics of this region.

Within the Conference on the Transnational Terrorism, organised by the Royal United Services Institute, the British Secretary of State on Foreign Issues, Jack Straw, stated: “Terrorism is not new; nor is it new to Britain. In the great medieval chamber of Westminster Hall, they have just taken down the exhibition marking the 400th anniversary of the Gunpowder plot. Read the Hansard records of 1853 and you will find my predecessor as Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary, Lord Palmerston, defending the seizure of a stockpile of 'war rockets' from a warehouse in Southwark – allegedly intended for use against the Austro-Hungarian imperial family. And no one in this country will forget the decades of terrorist attacks carried out by the Provisional IRA. In fact, it was from a white van parked just outside RUSI that the Provisional IRA launched three mortars at Downing Street. Had they been just ten metres more accurate, they would have wiped out the entire Cabinet. It was the second time that PIRA had attempted to destroy that democratically-elected Government. I do not, then, underestimate the threat we have faced in the past. But what we have seen develop over the last decade is of a different order of magnitude to previous domestic and international terrorism. It combines global ambition, global reach and powerful means in an unprecedented way”. But the gap between the varied ways of perception on the Occident was probably better than anywhere surprised by Frantz Fanon, the seminal theorist of anti-Western Third Worldism and, not incidentally, college touchstone of President Obama, who wrote: "When the native hears a speech about

Western culture, he pulls out his knife". On the other side, there were also underlined the wrong tracks that results from the terrorist messages that provide a fake image of the history.

For the Occident, the democracy and the stock markets are the main sources and resources for the peace and prosperity of the human society and for sure the process of adopting this values by the non Euro-Atlantic states is the way to stability and evolution. However, the processes of modernization and rebuilding, the impact of new forms of organization for policies and society, the new concepts and technologies often led to violence and conflict. French revolutionary ideas of the late XVIII century determined the outbreak of the war in Haiti, the establishment of a dictatorship and endurances hard to be passed over. In the XIX century, when China was forced to open its goods market and ideas to Europe, the result was the revolt of the masses, manifested by violence on a large scale. The efforts made in order to modernize Iran were also associated to violence.

Intellectual heritage Al-Qaida is certainly a reaction against the implementation of the West's modernism in the Islamic world. We could remember the following ex-group leader Osama bin Laden comments: "The West's occupation of our country goes back a long time, but takes new forms. These events have divided the whole world into two sides. The side of believers and the side of infidels, may God keep you away from them. Every Muslim has to rush to make his religion victorious. The winds of faith have come. The winds of change have come to eradicate oppression from the island of Muhammad, peace be upon him. To America, I say only a few words to it and its people. I swear by God, who has elevated the skies without pillars, neither America nor the people who live in it will dream of security before we live it in Palestine, and not before all the infidel armies leave the land of Muhammad, peace be upon him."¹

Consequently, the Humanity, entering the XXI century, inherited a number of unsolved issues from the last century, among these being the international terrorism, often supported indirectly by means of mass communication, which continues to provide "oxygen" to this phenomenon, even if there is interdependence between The Occident-The Orient culture. But we could remember the Melian Dialogue, where is mentioned that „the weaker does what it must to do and the stronger does what it wants”.

3. Diplomacy as the best solution for fighting against International Terrorism

To win the fight against terror, the West must realize that its values and needs may be different from those of others, to realize the real degree of vulnerability to terrorist attacks, the fragility of liberal political systems, and that there is no one who holds the absolute truth and justice in the world. Only in these circumstances there could be chosen the path between extremism and compromise for the benefit of establishing stability and lasting peace in the Orient.

At the end of the Cold War and especially after September 11, 2001, the diplomacy, defined by Ludwik Dembinski as being "art and practice in international relations"², seemed to have a second place in solving the international crises. However, the evolution of those crises

¹ Osama bin Laden, Statement on 6 October, 2001.

proved that no one can give up to the traditional diplomacy and the contribution of thousands of experts in this domain.

Traditional diplomacy is considered a specialized activity carried out by a state in order to achieve its foreign policy. It is the work that helps the states to relate each other and to negotiate. Martin Wight offers a more concise formula and perhaps a current one for diplomacy, defining this term as "a system and art of communication between powers, as the leading institution of international relations".

We live in a time when the old world order collapsed and there could not be seen the horizon, no new world order: our only hope lies in the skillful handling of diplomatic relations. It is obvious – and the deploying of the international events demonstrate this daily - that in international relations nothing could be built in a sustainable way than on the granitic foundation of the rules and principles of international law. The idea of “prevailing the law over the force”, that is stressed in a bright way by the lawyer and diplomat Nicolae Titulescu, acquires special meanings nowadays and generate the gathering of the efforts in order to strengthen the role of international law in a world dominated by expansioniste ambitions, revisionist tendencies, disregarding the interests of various countries and peoples.

Through negotiation, the macropolitic actors interact each other to reach a number of objectives that could be achieved or could be achieved in the most efficient way, through a common agreement.

4. International Terrorism and globalization

The terrorism also appears as a response to the global policy, having deep implications on international security. Maintaining the control over the terrorist structures becomes impossible, since their expansion is invisible and sharp, and the only plausible way to control them is to increase security in every region of conflict and strengthening the security of each state.

Because it expands economic freedom and spurs competition, globalization raises the productivity and living standards of people in countries that open themselves to the global marketplace. For less developed countries, globalization offers access to foreign capital, global export markets, and advanced technology while breaking the monopoly of inefficient and protected domestic producers. Faster growth, in turn, promotes poverty reduction, democratization, and higher labor and environmental standards. The result for citizens is greater individual freedom. In this sense, globalization acts as a check on governmental power that makes it more difficult for governments to abuse the freedom and property of their citizens³.

² Ludwik Dembinski - The Modern Law of Diplomacy. External Missions of States and International Organizations, Boston, Dordrecht, Lancaster, 1988, p. 17.

³ CATO Institute, Benefits of Globalization.

“The backlash against globalization draws its force not only from the perceived damage done to developing countries by policies driven by ideology but also from the inequities in the global trading system. Today, few—apart from those with vested interests who benefit from keeping out the goods produced by the poor countries— defend the hypocrisy of pretending to help developing countries by forcing them to open up their markets to the goods of the advanced industrial countries while keeping their own markets protected, policies that make the rich richer and the poor more impoverished—and increasingly angry.”

There could be noticed the following results: half or more of the adult population of twenty-three countries, mostly in Africa, are illiterate; half or more of women are illiterate in thirty-five countries; life expectancy is below sixty years in forty-five countries; children under five die at rates in excess of 100 per 1,000 in at least thirty-five countries.

The global development crisis feeds into ongoing violence in complex and contradictory ways, even as we can put to rest the simple-minded nostrum that poverty breeds violence.

We are dealing with a threat with demonstrated global reach that knows neither borders nor boundaries: the International Terrorism. A good way to envision this terrorist threat is as a cycle. The roots of terrorism germinate in the populace. Core Motivations are usually unchangeable. Underlying Conditions however are much more responsive to effective action. These are the factors that our governments can mitigate to reduce support for terrorism. These motivations and conditions create both tacit and active support. Safe havens are created in both threatened states that have Counterterrorism capabilities and complicit states like Iran that act as state sponsors. From this safe haven come local terrorists that in turn affiliate, interact and support one another in an international matrix of logistical, financial, and operational terrorist activity. Terrorist operations ...successful or not ...create the oxygen that keeps terrorists alive.

There could be identified The Three Forms of „main causes“ that could degenerate in terrorist acts: 1. Social Revolutionary Groups Fighting for political, economic, social and ethical changes in their own countries; Liberation Movements Fighting for: National liberation from an occupation power, Independence, Secession, 3. Ideology of a new „Third World Movement“, feeding on: Increasing poverty / authoritarian regimes, no prospects for the future/humiliation/hatred, Globalization, Power politics of the West, GWOT.

As wrote Robert I. Rotberg, “Nation-states fail when they are consumed by internal violence and cease delivering positive political goods to their inhabitants. Their government loses credibility and it itself becomes questionable and illegitimate in the hearts and minds of its citizens. The rise and fall of nation-states is not new, but in a modern era when national states contribute the building blocks of world order, the violent disintegration and palpable weakness of selected African, Asian, Oceanic and Latin American states threatens the very foundation of that system”.

Culture as the “entire way of life of a society”: its values, practices, symbols, institutions, and human relationships – too broad; if the definition embraces everything, it explains nothing. For analyzing security challenges, culture needs to be defined subjectively, for example in terms of the values, attitudes, beliefs, orientations, and underlying assumptions prevalent among people in society. “The central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics, that determines the success of a society. The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself” as said Daniel *Patrick Moynihan*.

5. Conclusions

As a conclusion we could say that in the age of identity politics, we must have a clear message about what our culture stands for - the issues are real, but the conflict should not become "the West vs. the Rest". Unfortunately, anger, resentment and frustration have deep roots in the psychology of the Middle East. "What the United States tastes today is a very small thing compared to what we have tasted for tens of years. Our nation has been tasting this humiliation and contempt for more than 80 years. It's sons are being killed, its blood is being shed, its holy places are being attacked, and it is not being ruled according to what God has decreed. Despite this, no body cares." UBL, 7 Oct. 2001. Psychic landscape of the Middle East is shaped by a sense of betrayal & humiliation by the West. There is an abiding sense of rights and destiny denied; of being constantly victimized; of being entitled, but never responsible. All these perceptions contribute to an Arab mindset that makes defiance of the powerful attractive to the alienated and powerless.

Under the forces of communication, modernity, and cosmopolitan values, human identities are more fluid than ever. In response, new ideological conditions of purity are regularly imposed on communities by authoritative claims privileging one religion, race, or nation. The proclamation of a singular ethnic, religious, political, national identity - the more imagined the better - is often the precursor to conflict.

Diplomacy and its central function negotiation play a key-role in fight against terrorism, alleviating the suffering of the civilian population, analysing and eliminating the roots of Islamist violence, dealing with Islamism as a political phenomenon. It is necessary to establish a permanent and sincere dialogue between the intelligence and security services. Without this dialogue, without a close cooperation between states the fight against terror can not be ended. There must be concluded an international programme on counter international terrorism that provides not only military operations, but also political, social, cultural, educational, ideological measures that could make easier the fight against this phenomenon and the Security Council of the United Nation Organization could have a very important role in this issues, that could generate a new reform of this entity and that could determine the weak and strong states' population to feel that together defeted the International Terrorism and defend and promote their national and international values.

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