

ORIGINS OF TERRORISM

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*Some of those that were forces
are the same that burn crosses!
(Rage Against the Machine)*

It has always been very clear to me what terrorism is, who terrorists are and what they have been doing. So I decided to take the challenge of co-ordinating a workshop¹ entitled *Origins of terrorism*, as (of course!) I already knew everything about it. How wrong was I!

There are hundreds of definitions describing terrorism but somehow it manages to skip every one of them². The word *terror* originates from Latin and it means “(great) fear” (Rošker 1998: 76). The political co-notation was added to it after the French revolution in 1789³ (Čuček 1980: 17). And, as there are many definitions there are also many tries to put terrorism in a historical perspective and in a somehow chronological order, as it follows to date. Today (or better since New York and Washington happened) every (political or social) discussion on terrorism refers to the Middle East or to the Muslims. To put it in more radical terms, one has to admit that we see terrorism like America (Bush) or the media (CNN) wants us to see and understand it, as they offer nothing but the truth⁴.

What I would like to stress is that terrorism originates from people who are deprived, from those 80% of the world's population, which live in poverty. From those who understandably fear globalisation and are aware that the world order in which we live in is ruled by (CNN, Hollywood, MTV) capitalists⁵ who force us to a non-thinking way of live. The terrorism originates from those who have no power and have to use their force to prove their rights⁶ (Kuzmanić 2002: 162).

¹ The workshop will take place on 20th March 2002 during the international conference called Good morning, terrorism in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

² This is what terrorism is all about. When we will be able to define it, it will disappear (i.e. there was no terrorism before we defined it). So, the discussion that follows is on one hand meaningless, but on the other it is essential for the deeper understanding of our field of interest.

³ There are many (American) authors who try to prove that terrorism is very old but history teaches us differently. If you search the Net you can find thousands of pages related to terrorism and every page offering different views (see references).

⁴ So help us God!

⁵ That is why the first attack was on a trade building and not on a political (ideological) institution (more about it in Kuzmanić 2002: 157-183)

⁶ Another view could be that terrorism originates from those who think that the world is not turning the way they think it should (i.e. their way) (Rošker 1998: 76).

The limitation of the space allows me the conclusion that terrorism originates from those who claim that they are the greatest fighters against it, and that makes them the greatest terrorists themselves (Alkalaj 2002: 19).

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