

What Makes a Terrorist?

Explanations as to why people become terrorists



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What Makes a Terrorist? Explanations as to why people become terrorists

Throughout human history there have always been waves of violent terror attacks, from the Jewish zealots after the birth of Christ, right up until the attack of September 11, 2001. This terrorist violence confronts the world with a great many questions to which there are no easy answers. What is the motive that would make a man willing to give up his life to kill others and wreak mass destruction in society? In other words: what makes a terrorist? What makes people adopt extreme views and turn to terrorism? What are the factors that lead to adopting these extreme views?

In order to understand why some people choose to engage in terrorist activities, an analysis of existing research has here been conducted, using five major sets of explanatory factors as its basis: political, economic, socio-cultural, psychological and religious factors.

There are many reasons for my interest in undertaking this study on the subject of terrorism. The foremost reason is that I belong to the Middle East; a region affected and branded with terrorism in general, and is considered the generator of the phenomena of terrorism and terrorist groups. The second reason is that terrorism has become the most significant obstacle globally, and especially in this region, to democracy, peace and respect for human rights, and economic development. Other motivating factors include the confusion and extreme differences in opinion that arise in any discussion about which groups can be labeled as 'terrorist'; the relationship between the Islamic religion and terrorism; and the need to distinguish between terrorism and liberation movements against foreign occupation.

This study will begin by providing a definition of terrorism that can account for a wide variety of causes. The word 'terrorism' has an emotional and political charge that makes the concept to which it refers controversial, and for which it is difficult to find a catch-all definition. This difficulty stems from many reasons, but mostly from the nature of the terrorist act itself and the different views or practices of the states involved, since what some see as terrorism, others see as lawful (Yahya al-Faqih, 1993: 4). In addition, some of these difficulties are due to the complexity and multiplicity of forms of terrorism and its objectives, and the multiplicity of motivations for committing these actions. The United Nations (UN) has tried on several occasions to arrive at a definition that the international community can find consensus on. This has proved impossible given that different states have different interests and different perspectives. The UN Secretary General Kofi Annan stated in Autumn 2011 that one man's terrorist could well be another's freedom fighter (Kumm, 1997: 24).

Having reviewed a wide range of definitions of 'terrorism' I found one definition that resonates particularly with my own research about the causes and motives behind terrorism. This definition comes from the Swedish terrorism specialist, Magnus Norell. He defines terrorism as follows:

The systematic use of illegitimate violence by non-state, sub-state, or state actor using "clients" [...] in order to achieve specific targets where the victims are intentionally selected so-called "non-combatants" and / or civilians. These goals can be political, social or religious depending on the group in question. Terrorism goes or becomes international when the deed is performed outside the boundaries that define a specific group / individual country of origin, or when citizens from the same country are objectives of the terror and murder carried out in a third country (Norell, 2002:5). [My own translation]

One sees here that Norell takes up a wide operational definition of terrorism, since he views both the individual and the state as potential perpetrators of terrorism, and mentions the political, social and religious motives behind it. But one should note that he omits the threat of violence from his definition, whereas others consider it as a part of the definition of terror. He instead goes directly to the use of violence. The strength of Norell's definition lies in its breadth, and it is for this reason that I believe it works well with the research presented here.

Another important aspect of the concept of terrorism is the distinction between different categories of terrorism. One main distinction is whether we are talking about state terrorism or terrorism from individuals and groups. It is my view that the two are two sides of the same coin.



1 State terrorism

It is historically known that dictatorships use terror as a tool of repression and control; thousands of people have been tortured and lost their lives at the hands of state terror, which means that state terrorism is the main form of terrorism (Yahya al-Faqih, 1993: 21). For example, Israel's practices in Arab territories in Palestine and Lebanon, and the daily practices of the United States in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and other countries in the world, bear witness to state terrorism in the contemporary age (Ibid). State terrorism can be committed by the state itself or through its support for terrorist individuals or groups and that what Parker called it, state-sponsored terrorism which is a war by proxy. A state chooses when to use terrorism as a tool for its own foreign policy interests, they support existing or newly created terrorist as a cost effective way which aim to undermine enemy states without the risk of direct military confrontation (Parker, 2006: 360).

For examples of state-sponsored terrorism, one could look to the United States, currently accused of supporting separatist movements in many of the world's countries against their governments, such as in Cuba, Iran, Libya, North Korea and Syria. Not to mention the US-led war against the former Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the eighties and nineties. Other examples of state-sponsored terrorist groups include Hezbollah which is supported by Iran, the Abu Nidal organization (ANO) supported by Syria, Libya and Iraq; and the involvement of the Japanese Red Army in Libya (Ibid).

However, there is a trend particularly in Western thought which refuses to recognize state terrorism. And even if they do admit its existence, they generally only mean terrorism committed by states of third world countries. They see that the increased risk of terrorism as coming from individuals rather than States (Leventhal, Alexander, 1987:7, 8).

Domestically, state terrorism refers to the state as the perpetrator of regular violence in order to provoke terror and so achieve political objectives. As a method to keep power or suppress the opposition and this kind of terrorism is called institutional because it preserves the authority, legitimacy and institutions (Yahya al-Faqih, 1993). This kind of State terrorism is clearly anchored in Arab regimes that have played a crucial role in the emergence and growth of seeds of modern terrorism due to unfair practices and the exercise of maximum violence and terror to maintain power.

2 Terrorism of individuals and groups

This kind of terrorism indicates terrorism which exists as a reaction to terror perpetrated by a state against its people, whether individual or groups, within the state's territory. In other words it is anti-violence against state terrorism. This kind of anti-violence, as a reaction to the state's authority, is arguably modern history's first experience of terrorism, and it can be labelled non-authoritarian terrorism (Aziz Shukri, 1991: 105).

Having provided a definition which can best explain what terrorism is and its different categories, I will now present my analysis explaining why terrorism occurs and the motivating factors behind it.

Explanatory factors behind terrorism

Terrorism occurs in a wide variety of economic, social, political conditions, and so in order to establish a comprehensive view of this phenomenon, it needs to be viewed through historical, social, cultural, economic, religious and political perspectives and lenses.

1 Political factors

To analyze the political motives behind people's joining of terrorist organizations, one must understand political environment in question. If one concentrates on terrorism directed against governments for purposes of political change, one will approach terrorism as a form of political action resulting from the deliberate choice for political change (Crenshaw, 1981: 379-390). Crenshaw argues that individuals join terrorist organizations as a challenge to the authority which is built on grievances, which is related to Krueger's view that terrorists care about influencing political outcomes (Krueger, 2007: 24). Terrorists hold strong political points of view and try to impose an extremist vision by violent means through joining terrorist organizations. Krueger observes that most terrorists do not suffer from poverty or economic deprivation, or believe they have nothing to live for, but on the contrary they are people who care so fervently about a cause that they are willing and ready to die for it (Ibid).

1.1 Grievances and suppression

According to Krueger's research (2007), people who are willing to sacrifice themselves for a cause have different motivations. Some are motivated by historical grievances, various kinds of nationalism, ethnic persecution, etc.

The nature of the contemporary political systems has cultivated the phenomenon of terrorism, particularly authoritarian political and religious systems whose repressive practices are considered one of the root causes of terrorism. Arab and Islamic countries in particular contain totalitarian regimes that repress their people and do not allow political pluralism as well confiscate civil liberties. These oppressive practices provoke extremism and form breeding grounds for terrorism (Ysine, 2005).

However, this does not necessarily mean that those Western and Asian societies which have embraced democracy are not linked to terrorism. There exists a critical view that behind the glittering facade of democracy there are authoritarian systems which do not allow pluralism and views radically opposed to the prevailing political system (Ibid). Such is the view of American political thinker, Bertram Gross, who, in his book *Friendly Fascism*, (1990) criticizes the American style of democracy, which he sees as having subjected opponents of the regime to fascist practices: it limits their freedom of expression, and their freedom of association.

Consequently, contemporary political systems that are either totalitarian in nature or deprive young populations from political participation compel young people to embrace anti-state or extremist religious ideas, which may eventually lead them to terrorism. For example, student movements in Europe and America at the end of the sixties show individuals can be transformed into terrorists after peace protests fail. This is what Yahya Al Faqih points to when he says that the governmental actions built on violence and repression have an influential role in provoking the feeling of resentment and hate, which in turn act as a catalyst for feeding terrorism, especially when governments resort to violence in response to peaceful protest (Yahya al-Faqih, 1993). This view is supported by Crenshaw's observation that many terrorists in the past and today are young students, well educated, and middle class in background. They are professionals, with prior political experience, who are disillusioned with the prospects of change in society and see little chance of access to the system despite their privileged status. She points out that much terrorism has grown out of student unrest; this was the case in the nineteenth century Narodnaya volya movement in Russia, which came about due to the Tsar of Russia's heavy-handedness in dealing with the populist movement, as well as the situation post-World War II in West Germany, the United States, Uruguay and Japan (Crenshaw, 1981).

We have seen, then, that in a given country the suppression of civil liberties and political rights, including the freedoms of expression and press, can motivate individuals towards terrorism. According to data from the Freedom House Index, Krueger finds that most of individuals who embrace terrorism and join terrorist organizations belong to countries that have very few civil liberties, if any. Additional support for his conclusion comes from research Krueger conducted on the nationalities of foreign insurgents captured in Iraq: all

these foreign insurgents, beside the native Iraqis, were motivated by domestic issues, and they came from countries with very few to civil liberties and political rights, such as Saudi Arabia (Krueger, 2007: 23-24).

1.2 Political unrest

Political discontent, alienation, marginalization, and despair are often associated with terrorism and religious fanaticism, but they are insufficient to illuminate the rise of terrorism in any specific time and place (Pilat, 2009:173). Pilat means these factors are motives for individuals to resort to terrorism as an instrument to express their grievances and the desire of retaliation against authoritarian regimes. Pilat argues further that “states poor governance; ethnic, cultural or religious tensions; weak economies; and porous borders will be prime breeding ground for terrorism” (Ibid: 174). This is what Ross indicates when she says that the forms of political and economic unrest inside outside the country may act as a catalyst for terrorism by influencing individuals to embrace violent extremist views and leading them to terrorist organization as a means to overcome their grievances (Ross, 2006:82-85). According to data gathered about terrorists in Turkey, terrorists claim that they resorted to violence and terror because they could not find another solution to overcome their grievances, and if they had had another chance, they would not have chosen the life of terror (Schmid, 2007: 11-12).

This leads many to consider that state terrorism as one of the key drivers of terrorism for both individuals and groups, since the latter is a reaction against the former. With this perspective state terrorism and terrorism of individuals and groups go hand in hand: escalation of terror on any side will result in more terror on the other side, and so the cycle of terror will not find its way to peace (Bashir, 1992). During 1969 -1970, government reactions to leftist movements and student protests could be regarded as fascist and as resulting in a terror apparatus, especially the brutality used against the young men’s demonstrations against the war in Vietnam, for example. These reactions led to the emergence of Baader-Meinhof and similar organizations, such as The Weathermen in USA, which carried out terrorist actions against the state. (Kumm, 2003: 177-180).

1.3 Independence and self-determination

The political grievances which result from occupation and ethnic repression play a crucial role in individual motives for joining terrorist organizations and embracing the culture of terror. The failure to achieve self-determination or to create an independent state pushes individuals to see terrorist organizations and terrorist acts as the only way to draw international attention to their cause.

They see themselves as freedom fighters against an oppressive authority (Parker, 2006, pp. 360-361). Contemporary examples of ethno-nationalist terrorist groups(1) include the IRA (Irish Republican Army), PLO

1 Ethno-nationalist terrorists or separatist terrorists strive towards the creation of an independent state of their own or their national group. Terrorist violence is used to draw international attention to the struggle for “national liberation” and / or force governments to deal with issues that would have otherwise been ignored (Parker, 2006:360).

(Palestine Liberation Organization), ETA (Basque separatist movement), and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the FNL (National Liberation Front) in Algeria, and Igrun and Lehi (a Jewish militia active in the 1940s).

The dramatic failure of alternative means of obtaining political ends leads to terrorist acts. Especially when individuals find themselves in a much weaker position than their opponents: as a result of their desperation they often resort to terror and violence in the hope of obtaining power through terrorist organizations. The Arab defeat in the 1967 war with Israel led Palestinians and militant nationalists to turn to terrorist acts in their struggle against Israel, hoping to elicit international recognition and intervention for self-determination. (Hoffman, 2006:74; Crenshaw, 1981: 389) Sometimes the failure to win international attention for a national cause has itself caused individuals to resort to terrorist organization as in the situation for the PKK and PLO (Ibid). "We have shouted from our tents year after year, no one listened to us" were the words Palestinian plane-hijacker Leila Khaled, who represented a new generation of resistance fighters. After a series of spectacular actions in the early 1970s, these fighters succeeded in placing their homeland Palestine on the political map (Kumm, 2003:90).

This answers Kumm's question: who are they that want to gain power through intimidation? They are individuals, groups or generations who are desperate and suffer from the feeling of impotence because their position is weaker than their opponents (Kumm, 2003:24). So the inability of some nations to obtain independence and their right to self-determination, although certified by international resolutions, has pushed the individuals and national liberation groups onto the path of terror to draw the attention of the international community to their cause. Of relevance here is Grant Wardlaw's observation that individuals and groups with no direct political power have always used direct terror to achieve effects on a target community which has more political power and military. Such tactics attract worldwide publicity, and create widespread panic in such a way as to make others listen to their voices and enable them to achieve their political ends (Wardlaw, 1989: 3-17).

1.4 Ethnic conflicts

When the international community, which has a stronghold on democracy, political freedom and human rights turns a blind eye to brutal race-related practices, ethnic conflicts, and even genocides, this can make individuals and groups resort to terrorism as a way of survival and self-defense against the persecution. Examples of such blindness include the Rwandan genocide of 1994 between the Hutu and Tutsi peoples, and the terrible acts of violence committed by the far-right Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the US against black people.

The inability of the UN Security Council to take serious legal actions against the violations of certain individuals and ethnic groups across the world can be seen as a justification for individuals and groups to resort to terror in order to defend themselves against campaigns of genocide (Yahya al-Faqih, 1993). Ross supports this when she states that increasing ethnic conflict in different regions of the former communist states has contributed to individuals joining terrorist groups and embracing armed terrorist tactics as a

means of survival (Ross, 2006). One example of such ethnic conflicts is what happened in Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, following the breakup of Yugoslavia between 1992 -1995. With this mind, there is the fear that the rise of intolerance in Europe, as seen in the increase in right –wing extremism and hate crimes against immigrants, particularly Arab immigrants, could spawn new terrorist movements in western society (Hertog, 2009:257-258; Krueger, 2007).

2 Economic factors

Economic factors play an important role in guiding the behavior of individuals and societies. Poverty and the economic crises can cause the foundations of a given social structure to break down, which will affect the members of society. In other words, economic construction causes the growth of certain social relationships. If this economy is based on a good foundation, then it will bring cohesion and social solidity, but if it is the opposite, then aggressive behavior and violence are born (Benhammedi, 2009).

According to this, the economic factors which make individuals and groups embrace terrorism can be limited to two levels: internal and external. Internal factors which lies in some of the major problems produced by the community or society, while external factors are manifested by globalization.

2.1 Poverty

While some experts on terrorism state that poverty is not a cause of terrorism, nor is it a cause often advocated by terrorists, they claim that many well-educated middle-class individuals engage in terrorism for political reasons, regardless of their economic status. Others claim that the impoverishment and marginalization of large segments of the community are crucial motivating factors, especially among young men, in following the path of terrorism and resorting to terrorist organizations. They are ready to sacrifice their life in order to achieve status or do away with the hard reality of their life (Benhammedi, 2009). Terrorism finds its way especially in slum areas in which millions of people live without the minimum requirements for a decent quality of life; these slums provide fertile soil for spawning disgruntled groups, which in certain circumstances may shift into terrorists.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair expressed after the 2005 bombings of the London Transit system; that deprivation and a lack of education cause people to adopt extreme views and turn to terrorism. "Ultimately what we now know, is that where there is extremism, fanaticism or acute and appalling forms of poverty in one continent, the consequences no longer stay fixed in that continent," (Krueger, 2007:16). Even President George W. Bush, after September 11, associated terrorism with poverty, by arguing that, "We fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror" and Laura Bush added, "A lasting victory in the war against terror depends on educating the world's children" (Ibid: 12). This in turn can lead to a conclusion that distorted education makes a vulnerable generation able and ready to embrace the ideologies and cultures behind terrorism.

Comprehensive data has been gathered about the economic background of terrorists which shows that they tend to come from lower classes and lack a good education; such data proves that many of the right-wing terrorists in US are impoverished and unemployed, for example. Muslim radicals who have grown up in western countries and engage in violence and terrorism similarly come from lower class backgrounds (Hertog, 2009: 254-256). Sri Lanka's Minister of Foreign Affairs Lakshman Kadirgamar stated that "neither we in the developing world nor those in the developed world can allow abject, desperate poverty, without any hope of a better future, to become a fertile field for those who wish to fan the flames of discord and hate and make it their business to wreak death and destruction and terror and mayhem" (Pilat, 2009:176). In other words, abject poverty, without hope for the future, will be a breeding ground for terrorism.

Poverty's effects on individuals can make them victim to radical extremists, and good evidence of this process can be seen in the Middle East during the 1990s, where the desperation and poverty that grew out of the refugee camps created a constant stream of recruits willing to sacrifice themselves for money for their families who live in miserable poverty in these camps. For example, Islamists began to use suicide as a weapon and recruited many desperate and poor men from refugee camps in Gaza and Lebanon, where poverty destroyed the lives and future dreams of inhabitants. The death of young men does not only make them to the martyrs in eyes of others, but even implicates the financial support for their remaining families both from the Palestinian Authority, and Iraq that support the Palestinian case (Norell, 2002: 15-16).

2.2 Unemployment

There is no doubt that the worsening phenomenon of unemployment, which affects millions of young people, and taints their hopes for the normal life of other working citizens, can be related to the phenomenon of terrorism.

Especially among the young, unemployment can generate a sense of helplessness and despair on the one hand, and anger and frustration on the other. Furthermore, the lack of a sense of something to live for can play a big role in making these young people an easy target for various groups which are religiously or politically extremist (Benhammedi, 2009:4-5). Those young men who are living with the ghost of poverty and despair without any hope in future become victims of opportunistic terrorist groups and easy target for recruiting by offering them material incentives and sometimes supplying monthly salaries. Thus poverty and unemployment, with the feeling of desperation are key motives for those youth who seek the meaning in their lives and are ready to do anything that will make them value themselves even if the acts they participate in are violent or bloody acts.

Schmid points out that education without chances for employment is an explosive combination that can result in frustration and depression among young men, especially in Arab societies where this explosive combination appears in the expansion of a traditional Islamic education that provides few skills for participating in modernizing societies, but allows for the growth of religious fundamentalist thinking that is

against modernization and secularization. The absence of chances and opportunities of jobs for young men results in the expansion in fields of religious education which in turn produces an extremist religious generation unable to emerge or integrate in modernization and try to fight it (Schmid, 2007:26).

Pedahzur 's research shows that Hezbollah, the PKK, and Chechen and Palestinian groups recruit young, unemployed men who have never found their place in society, rather than fervent nationalists committed to political change. Similarly, Marxist terrorist groups have historically recruited unemployed youth with unfulfilled personal lives and who have lacked political direction (Abraham, 2008:100). Gregory Johnson likewise suggests that al Qaida, at least in Yemen, focuses its recruitment not on committed Jihadists, but on youth and largely directionless socially marginalized Muslims (Jonson, 2007). It has also been pointed out that most terrorist organizations are composed of unmarried men or widowed women who were not gainfully employed prior to joining them (Schmid, 2007: 22-27).

2.3 Economic unrest

According to Ross economic unrest acts as a catalyst among individuals and wider populations to resort to terrorism and join terrorist groups. For example, Colombia and Northern Ireland have been wracked with all kinds of labor difficulties and criminal violence; lack of access to education and good jobs affects one's ability to get ahead socially and economically. Labor unrest is also a bone of contention for Palestinians, who are often paid little and seen as a source of cheap labor by the Israeli businesses who care to hire them (Ross, 2006: 131-136).

The emergence of revolutionary ideologies represented by communist left-wing organizations as a reaction to the capitalist system and its consequences like monopoly, injustice and inequality, have affected people who have the same ideology and reactions against this new world and worked together to fight and eliminate it. These ideologies were embraced by the student movements in various countries of Europe and America in the sixties of the last century. These movements resorted to terrorist acts after failing to achieve their objectives in changing the new political and economic structure (Yahya al-Faqih, 1993: 32, 34).

In addition, the process of socialist transformation at the end of the sixties, especially in the third world, has aroused a sense of individual fears and social dispersion. The emergence of new social models created by industrial society could not reduce the growing complexity of living. These models produced economic crises, which produced some of the economic conditions that may help the emergence of some of the movements that practice violence and terrorism (Ibid).

Besides all this, the crisis of an internal economy which lacks social justice and promotes class struggles plays a crucial role in creating the feeling of anger and resentment among a certain class which can manifest itself in extreme reaction accompanied by terrorist acts. The absence of justice and fair distribution of wealth and resources for development creates and widens the gap between rich and poor which in turn

leads to a defective social system characterized by collective social deprivation that may incite individuals to embrace terror as a reaction to their grievances (Benhammedi, 2009:5). In other words, the increasing gap between classes and growing inequality have led individuals to join terrorist organizations that commit terrorist acts in the name of a more equitable distribution of wealth and justice society (Schmid, 2007: 25-26).

Poverty, unemployment, repression and oppression, exclusion and marginalization and the absence of social justice are factors that lead to the deviation of individuals and groups into the path of terror and joining terrorist organizations. Alongside this equation there are several external factors that need to be taken into it account. One such factor is globalization and its consequences on the national and international level.

2.4 Globalization

The emergence of globalization as a new world system has had several negative consequences: it has unleashed capitalism at its highest level which has resulted in increasing stratification between the rich Global North and the poor Global South which in turn fuels discontent and hatred between countries as the rich countries become richer and poor ones become poorer (Benhammedi, 2009:5). The injustice and inequality on the international level has reinforced the poverty and underdevelopment in poor countries as a result of a new system which is built on rich nations' interests. Poor countries become more immobile and unable to navigate this asymmetrical system. In other words, growing inequality as a result of economic globalization and its unfair policy is working as a catalyst to individuals joining of terrorist organizations which embrace terrorism in the name of a more equitable distribution of wealth on the national and international levels (Schmid, 2007: 21). In the same line of reasoning Marwan Bishara argued that "when people feel so inferior militarily and economically, they adopt asymmetric means –not the usual means – to get what they want" (Johnston, 2001).

Yahya al-Faqih states that modern world is more destabilizing and more prone to create extreme responses such as terrorism. Terrorism becomes resistance to radical change resulting from globalization, where people feel that it is beyond their control and it only brings more injustice and poverty to their countries. That is why the jihadists are striking out against the perceived takeover of their societies by global corporations and as a backlash against globalization (Yahya al-Faqih, 1993: 33-34; Schmid, 2007: 181). To put it in other words, the very success of capitalism over most of the world with the power of global corporations has affected the lives of billions of people who are strewn at the margins of radical economic change. Those who experience these changes as threats to their own self-identity, they are the ones who are drawn to terrorist organizations like al Qaeda.

Having surveyed the arguments that terrorist engagement derives from economic unrest, poverty, unemployment and the negative effects of globalization, I would like to mention an opposing point of view

represented by the economist Alan Krueger who has applied rigorous statistical analysis to terrorism and the factors that motivate individuals to participate in terrorism, drawing conclusions from terrorists' own backgrounds and the economic, social, and political conditions of the societies from which they come. He states that economic deprivation and a lack of education does not cause people to adopt extreme views and turn to terrorism. He mentioned that half of the world's population lives on \$2.00 a day or less and more than one billion people worldwide have a primary school education or less and some 785 million adults are illiterate (Krueger, 2006: 3).

So if poverty and inadequate education were causes of terrorism, then the result will be that the world would be teeming and overcrowded with terrorists. He states that terrorists are motivated by strong political goals and that they try to impose their extremist vision by violent means. Marc Sageman has come to the same conclusion through a study on Al Qaeda terrorists in Afghanistan that close to 35 percent of its member were colleges educated and middle class in origin (Sageman, 2004). But this begs the question: what about the 65 percent? Is this not evidence that economic deprivation and lack of education can cause individuals to join these terrorist organizations? Is it possible that the other 35 percent can exploit them because of their economic deprivation, and use them as an instrument to achieve their objectives, which are politically or religiously motivated? And is it not clear that all these contrasting views about the causes and motivations behind the individual's deviation reinforce the complexity of the terrorism phenomenon at the national and international level?

3 Socio-cultural factors

3.1 Social bonds

Max Abraham challenges the strategic model - the dominant paradigm in terrorism studies - which assumes that terrorists are rational actors who attack civilians for political ends, and rational people participate in terrorist organizations to achieve their stated political goals (Abraham, 2008:78, 84). Using empirical evidence Abraham introduced a competing theory that social ends are what really motivate terrorism: he argues that the motive for people who participate in terrorist organizations is not a personal attachment to their political or ideological agenda, but rather it is a kind of individual search for identity and the desire to be part of a community. In other words, they seek their identities through social solidarity, and this feeling of solidarity could be achieved in a social collectivity, which is called "condition communion" (ibid: 95).

Many studies in the field of terrorism show that these terrorist organizations attract people who are socially alienated and isolated, people who suffer from the feeling of loneliness, rejection, and exclusion from their societies. As a result, individuals seek to maintain or develop social ties with fellow terrorists and at the same time to reduce their sense of alienation from society. This argument emphasizes that "social bonds preceded ideological commitment, which was an effect, not a cause, of becoming a terrorist mem-

ber" (Ibid: 98). This is proved also by Johnson's study about al Qaida in Yemen which shows that a group of experienced leaders focuses its recruitment on directionless and socially marginalized young Muslims (Johnsen, 2007).

Abraham conducted studies on members from different terrorist organizations, such as the IRA, ETA, Italian Community Party, RAF and the Red Brigades, as well as the Weather Underground and finally, Kurdistan Workers Party, and showed that most members of these groups have joined these organizations not because of their attachment to political or ideological agendas, but to connect and develop social relations with terrorist members from other groups. According to a new study on Al -Qaida, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad, terrorists also join these organizations because there are already friends and family within them (Abraham, 2008:97). This is also supported by a study based on interviews with Turkish terrorist organizations, where terrorists are joining organizations because family members or friends are already there (Schmid, 2004:11). Sagemen's study on 114 Salafi mujahedin produced a similar result, whereby the bonds of affinity and friendship are very important in terrorist recruiting (Sageman, 2004:79). This confirms that social affiliation plays an important role in individuals joining terrorist groups.

This importance of social affiliation is also suggested by the phenomenon of international terrorism, where terrorists flocked to the places where other terrorists are gathered, despite their existence together having little to do with their political orientation. In 1970, thousands of terrorists from many organizations from different countries descended on training camps run by the Palestine Liberation Organizations and the same happened through the war in Afghanistan in 1980 and mid-1990. Terrorists shifted first to Afghanistan to train with the Afghan mujahideen and then to al Qaida camps (Abraham, 2008:100). And what we now notice internationally after the rise of the Arab spring is evidence showing that terrorists have shifted their focus to where the war has started. An example can be seen is Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria. Many thousands of terrorists from many parts of the world have flocked to its training camps.

Solidarity, social collectivity, the eagerness to challenge and find adventure are all enticing experiences for young men who are seeking friendship and excitement without taking into consideration the political backgrounds of other terrorists (Stern, 2003:4-7). Accordingly, Abraham recommends that Counterterrorism operations must concentrate their efforts on diminishing of terrorist organizations' social benefits, which are what these individuals value most. (ibid: 105).

3.2 Cultural alienation

One of the most important problems which constitute a critical cause in the deviation of youth towards violence is cultural alienation. Those who live in the margins of society can see terrorist organizations as a shelter or refuge for finding an identity of belonging. This is especially the case for unassimilated immigrants in Europe, particularly young Muslim immigrants in western countries who have left their native homeland and separated from their families and friends, feel they are also separate from the host society in

which they live (Sageman, 2004:92). Many European Muslims feel that they are underprivileged, and that their host society does not accept them. Consequently, many young men have been radicalized by Muslim clerics who warn them against integration and instead offer them a Salafist or jihadist vision of Islam.

According to Sageman, most terrorists who participate in the global Salafist Islamic jihad movement are immigrants from North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) and other Middle Eastern countries who grew up in western societies with feelings of isolation. They were not religious generally as young men, but their personal sense of grievance and humiliation were intensified by several experiences: loneliness and consequent emotional alienation in these new individualistic societies; the lack of spiritualism in a utilitarian culture; as well as underemployment and discrimination within local society. And because of loneliness they sought local mosques which give them community friendships and emotional relief (Sageman, 2004:73-80). These Mosques have played a crucial role in the transformation of those young alienated Muslims into global Salafi mujahedin, transforming them into fanatics eager to kill, and yearning for martyrdom.

This is what Schmid has found in his research: that many uprooted Muslim immigrants in Western Europe search for an identity and role in life and society as result of their standing between two cultures. These marginalized young Muslims who feel impotent and humiliated in the West are sensitized to the suffering and grievances of other Muslims in other parts of the world like Iraq, Kashmir and Chechnya, through Imams, videotapes and the internet websites, and turn their anger towards the perceived source of injustice, where this anger may lead them to jihadist terrorist organization (Schmid 2007, 15).

3.3 Closed minds

There is no doubt that cultural factors sometimes play a crucial role in the production of terrorism, especially when these cultural factors embrace a vision of the world characterized by intellectual fixity and psychological stagnation (Ysine, 2005). Often this closed vision of the world is configured within the framework of Islamic terrorist groups because of the process of violent criticism of the state and society and culture.

The essential characteristic of the minds that are being invaded by this poisonous thought or vision is that they are closed minds that cannot accept the other, nor tolerate diversity of opinion, and completely reject dialogue with the other. They seek to change reality by force in pursuit of the ideal drafted by the ideas of the princes of terrorist groups ('Al Amraa' in Arabic). They want to establish a religious state which is based on Al sharia. These individuals with closed minds are victims of this vision which refuses 'modern' culture and tries to fight it by all means, including armed conflict, because they consider it a culture invaded by corrupt western culture.

What we see from the violent terrorist acts of the Arab region in the last decades is that they are the result of sharp ideological and cultural divisions between two different streams of thought in the Muslim world.

One stream calls to build a life based on secular legitimacy, and refuses traditions, social customs and religion, considering them obstacles in the path of civilizational progress. The other is an extremist religious stream, opposed to modern civilization and everything related to ideas of civilizational progress: they regard modern civilization as a corruptor of morals, and a cause of family disintegration (Al-Hussein, 2011). This division in thinking is a result of the existence of intellectual and religious fault among some religious groups that believe in the defense of Islam and jihad in the name of religion as a result of their feeling of sense of inferiority and marginalization by the state.

These groups can recruit vulnerable individuals who are victims of an educational system that lacks intellectual dialogue with the other and is limited in its methods of learning. Such methods revolve around memorization and rote learning of study materials, where there is an absence of critical thinking and constructive dialogue by educator, educational institutions and the media. All this plays a role in paralyzing the thought of individuals and making them susceptible to terrorism culture and radical intellectual trends which embrace violence (Ibid). This supports and strengthens the role of intellectual factors in the formation of terrorist's behavior and thought, where individuals refuse reality and seek to fight the modern principles and beliefs through murder and destruction of others, reflecting their incapacity for individual thought.

4 Psychological factors

Psychology plays a crucial role in the behavior of terrorists because individuals are drawn to the path of terrorism with the aim to commit acts of violence where their particular logic, which is grounded in their psychology and reflected in their rhetoric, becomes the justification for their violent actions (Reich, 1998: 25). The rhetoric of terrorists is based on polarization and absolutism; a rhetoric of us against them where there are no shades of gray. They consider the other, "them", as the origin of evil and themselves, "us", as fighters for freedom, and the other as the source of their problems according to their special psychology which is why they should be destroyed (Ibid: 26). This rhetoric is driven by the terrorist's search of identity which helps explain their joining terrorism later in life.

4.1 Narcissistic –aggression hypothesis

The narcissism-aggression hypothesis is an approach that accounts for the mental wellbeing of terrorists right from the early development of their behavior. Fundamentally, "if primary narcissism in the form of the "grandiose self"(2) "is not neutralized by reality testing, then this produces individuals who are sociopathic, arrogant and lacking in regard for others". This produces a condition of narcissistic defeat which can lead

- 2 The grandiose self, is described and developed as a normal narcissistic configuration. It is according to, Kohut 1971, a normal part of the developmental process of self –structure or the reality ego- structure. Grandiose self happens when this latter went astray, producing vertical splits between "I am grand" and "I am wretched" with very little communication between them - would a narcissistic disorder set in (Klein, 1987: 222).

to reaction of anger and the wish to destroy narcissistic injury (Hudson, 1999: 20) and as a manifestation of narcissistic anger terrorism occurs in the context of narcissistic injury, where the terrorism is an attempt to acquire or maintain power by intimidation (Ibid).

There is a personality characteristic of people who are drawn to terrorism which "is the reliance placed on the psychological mechanisms of "externalization" and "splitting" (Ibid: 21) .These psychological mechanisms are found in individuals who suffer from narcissistic or borderline personality disturbances, which contribute significantly to the uniformity of terrorists' rhetorical style and their special psycho-logic (Ibid).

"Splitting," Post explains, is a mechanism characteristic of individuals whose personality development is shaped by a specific type of psychological damage (narcissistic injury) during childhood. Those individuals with a damaged self-concept have failed to tolerate the bad aspects of himself and his environment and to integrate them with the good ones into a realistic whole. In other words, they fail to integrate the good and bad parts of the self, which instead splits the good and the bad into the "me" and the "not me" (Post, 1986:678).

An individual with this personality idealizes his grandiose self and puts on or projects on others all the hated and devalued weakness within. They place high dependence on the mechanisms of splitting and externalization, looking outward for the source of difficulties, and therefore they need an outside enemy to blame. This reflects the dominant mechanism of the destructive charisma which is unable to face his inadequacies. These individuals such as Hitler, they need outside enemy to blame and attack for their inadequacies and weakness (Ibid: 681). The statement, it is not us – it is them; they are the cause of our problems, provides a psychological explanation for what has gone wrong in their lives.

The data examined by (Post, 1986) including West German terrorists shows that they are characterized by narcissistic wounds and predominantly rely on the psychological mechanism of splitting and externalization (Reich, 1998:29). They are terrorists who have severe conflict especially with fathers, and at the same time it demonstrates that they have failed both educationally and vocationally in their lives. Thus, they are drawn to terrorist groups which have us –versus –them point of views. But this study appears to be contradicted by the increasing number of terrorists who are well-educated professionals, such as engineers, physicists and chemists, as was the case with Aum Shinrikyo, where almost all members were educated professionals (Hudson, 1999:21).

Shaw (1986:365) developed what he termed the "Personal Pathway Model"(3), considering that terrorist behavior is a result of unresolved narcissistic injuries and traumatic personal setbacks, giving individuals profound psychological wounds that account for why they engage in terrorist acts, traceable to suffering from early damage to their self-esteem, disturbed identity and the inability to cope with the significant

3 "The personal pathway model suggests that terrorists come from a selected, at risk population, who have suffered from early damage to their self-esteem [...] the underlying need to belong to a terrorist group as symptomatic of an incomplete or fragmented psychosocial identity" (Shaw, 1986: 365).

frustrations of life (Arena & Arrigo, 2005:486). In this regard, Post (1984) has pointed out that the underlying need of the individual to belong to a terrorist group is a result of an incomplete or fragmented psychosocial identity.

4.2 Frustration-aggression hypothesis

There are underlying causes behind the forms of terrorism and acts of violence, which lie in misery, frustration, a sense of injustice, and despair, which drives some individuals to resort to terrorism in order to bring about radical changes (Yahya al-Faqi, 1993). Ross takes up the argument of some scholars that terrorism can be caused by frustration. They argue that some of the frustration can manifest or express itself as aggression, and frustration would depend on the accumulation of unresolved dissatisfaction and grievances. Frustration –aggression causes individuals to lash out at the targets of their frustration on their own. Many terrorists experience frustration, a need to make up for the lack of meaning in their previous careers or want to amend or redress grievances held by others (Ross, 2006: 83-89). The idea of justice or fairness may be more centrally related to attitudes toward violence and terror than is the feeling of economic deprivation (Crenshaw, 1981:383). She means that it is the perceived unfairness underlying the deprivation that causes rage and frustration at terrorists and for terrorism to happen the governments must be singled out to blame for the grievances and suffering of people.

This can be seen in Tsarist Russia 1870, where young and enthusiastic students saw no other way than throwing bombs to change the political situation. And in postwar Germany a frustrated young generation's protests were clubbed down by the brutal government who did not want to listen. Out of that frustration the Red Army Faction was born as were parallel West German terrorist organizations that sheltered those frustrated individuals who refused to give in (Kumm, 2003:25).

4.3 Negative identity

According to Erikson's theory of identity formation, particularly his concept of negative Identity(4), Knutson (1981) sees that in the event of aggravated crises, an individual may despair of the ability to contain these negative elements in a positive identity. He suggests that the political terrorist consciously assumes a negative identity. He gives an example of a Croatian terrorist who belongs to an oppressed ethnic minority that was disappointed by the failure of his ambition to get a university education, and as a result assumed a negative identity by becoming a terrorist (Hudson, 1999:20). Knutson believes that terrorists engage in terrorism as a result of feelings of rage and helplessness over the lack of alternatives, which seem to coincide with the frustration-aggression hypothesis. Abu Nidal, for example, was able to recruit

4 Negative identity is used by Erikson which states on that "every person and every group harbors a negative identity as the sum of all those identifications and identity fragments which the individual had to submerge in him as undesirable or irreconcilable or which his group has taught him to perceive as the mark of fatal "difference in sex role or race, in class or religion" (Erikson, 1970:20).

alienated, poor, and uneducated youths thrilled to be able to identify themselves with a group led by a well-known but mysterious figure (Hudson, 1999:25).

The negative identity prompts these individuals to turn to the collective identity of the terrorist and extremist groups in order to experience purpose and meaning in their lives. A study based on examining incarcerated terrorists has proved that individuals adopted the negative identity when they perceived themselves as having been living in a marginalized community. They are living on the fringes of society without any support and at the same time they feel that they are too disenfranchised to be a part in the society's membership (Arena and Arrigo, 2005:486). Crenshaw (1986) offers a similar conclusion, stating that individuals are drawn to terrorist organizations or extremist movements because they lack a strong sense of identity and find comfort in an organization's authoritarian doctrine. The same goes for Post, who found that these terrorists suffer from fragmented psychosocial identity and the political violence is driven by an individual's search for identity (Ibid: 488).

4.4 Identity crisis and gain of power

Identity crisis, which is the failure to achieve ego identity during adolescence, plays a crucial role for individuals in finding their way into a terrorist group. The lost identity and the need of belonging motivate most individuals to join extremist and terrorist groups. These groups provide for the first time the feeling of belonging and the sense of significance (Hudson, 1999:35; Reich, 1998:31). Membership in a terrorist group often provides a sense of identity, meaning, belonging and social approval for those personalities whose underlying sense of identity is flawed. They are especially alienated and isolated young people who are living on the margins of society. So these terrorist groups provide them identity and self-importance and thus achieving a traditional role in society, albeit a negative one as a compensation for past losses as individuals. Thus the terrorist identity is a solution to all their pressing personal needs which they suffer from (Hudson, 1999: 13& Shaw, 1986:365-366 & Arena&Arrigo, 2005:500 & Borum, 2004:25). That is why terrorists whose only sense of significance comes from being terrorists cannot give up or drop out of terrorist groups because by doing that they will lose their very reason for being (Reich, 1998:38).

So, religious fundamentalism, and especially Islamic fundamentalism, concerns more of a revolt of young people caught between a traditional past and a secular Western education (Hudson, 1999:42). Being caught between an Islamic culture that provides moral values and spiritual satisfaction and a modernizing Western culture that provides access to material improvement often results in anxiety, alienation, and disorientation identity which finds its way to terrorist groups.

The social –psychological motivations for anarchic-ideologues and ethnic separatists are quite different: the first is bent on destroying their own society, the world of their fathers who represent the regime and establishment; and the second carries on the mission of their fathers. But the act of joining terrorist group represents an attempt to consolidate a disturbed and fragmented psychological identity to resolve a split

and be at one with oneself and with society and the most important is to achieve belonging. It is the same in the case of Middle Eastern terrorist groups, where their members come from the margins of society and belonging to these terrorist groups consolidates psychological identity at a time of societal instability (Reich, 1998:30-31; Hudson, 1999:28).

4.5 Personal characteristics

Why do some individuals decide to break with society and embark on a career in terrorism? Do terrorists share common traits or characteristics? Is there a terrorist personality or profile?

According to Ross, attempts have been made to see what characteristics of people can explain why they become terrorists. The underlying assumption here is that some trait makes the individual predisposed to carry out terrorist acts or join terrorist organization. The following is a selection of the more prominent characteristics from most important to least important: alienation, risk appetite, extreme extroversion, and self-centeredness, a perceived lack of manliness, anti-authoritarianism, guilt, depression, hostility and fear (Ross, 2006: 87).

4.6 Psychological needs and rewards

The life of terrorism can satisfy needs such as support and approval from other members of the terrorist groups, opportunities for violence, and one can attain wealth, power, prestige, and privilege. All these can be attractive to young men who are coming from impoverished backgrounds to join terrorist groups. And the rewards of joining can offer a chance at world fame and accumulating wealth, a way of demonstrating one's courage and even a way for improvements, an opportunity for glamour (Reich, 1998:271).

4.7 Revenge

Hatred and desire for revenge against acts of repression characterize the feelings and motivations of many terrorists (Schmid 2007, 26). A dangerous consequence of this is that high levels of violence in a society may be self-perpetuating. That is to say, if children are socialized and bred to hate in patterns of violence as in Northern Ireland, Lebanon, Tamil and Palestine, then destructive behaviors become part of the social fabric and are passed down from generation to generation through families, schools, and religion. Therefore terrorist attacks on civilians may become routinized and habitual due to the motive of revenge and hate (Reich, 1998: 256; Hudson, 1999: 28, 33). In addition, the experience of torture that individuals are exposed to by domestic dictatorship regimes and inhuman practices in political prisons can create intense feelings of revenge (Schmid, 2007: 16).

5 Religious factors

During 1990s, one can observe the appearance of a new trend: religious fundamentalists and new religious groups espousing the rhetoric of mass-destruction terrorism. This religious terrorism has political goals, but is designed to serve primarily religious objectives. It employs the mechanism of terrorism to seek publicity for their cause and to gain recognition for this cause as being just, bringing about a new cleansed and revitalized theological and social order ((Reich, 1998: 264). Thus bringing the history of terrorism full circle to its beginnings in that troubled corner of the world where the Zealots began two thousand years ago. Religious terrorism sees violence as a divine duty and religious terrorists see their use of violence as justified by a higher power that sanctions almost limitless violence against open targets (Parker, 2006: 361).

Examples of this terrorism include Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network, the Palestinian Sunni Islamic organization Hamas, the Lebanese Shiite group Hezbollah, the radical Jewish groups adhering to the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, American white racist groups, and the doomsday cult Aum Shinrikyo in Japan (Ibid). The most dangerous type of this terrorism is Islamic fundamentalism, namely radical Islamic revivalism which is giving rise to a global Salafi ideology which is motivated by religious imperatives and divides the world simplistically into "them" and "us" (Hudson, 1999: 1, 6).

5.1 Grievances that give rise to holy war

Political and economic grievances are primary causes or catalysts to individuals to join terrorism, and religion becomes a means or device to legitimate and mobilize individuals. Individuals turn to religion especially in times and places where societies suffer from uncertainty, and are traumatized by violence and so seek comfort (Schmid, 2007:21, 27). While some seek peace and communion in religion; others abuse religion to recruit and indoctrinate vulnerable individuals for violent projects and to achieve particular interests. This is what Fredrick Jameson (2002:301) means when he states that the role of religion in society today is overestimated and suggests that "religion today is really politics under a different name [...] Indeed, maybe religion has always been that." This argument denies the deepest existence and purpose of religion which is a search for human roots and meaning, and that almost all religions have an extremely violent component as well and religion cannot be separated from other spheres of human life e.g. politics, culture (Coetzee, 2010: 2).

The grievances of alienation, humiliation and marginalization are often associated with religious fanaticism because it makes death and paradise more appealing. There are always volunteers for martyrdom because of the belief that it is better to die fighting than to live without hope (Stern, 2003: 38).

A statistical study shows that religious extremists around the world have these grievances in common. Al Qaida's complaining about the new world order is similar to religious groups in United States who are fighting this new world which is based on humanism and materialism. The religious extremism in USA believes that the eradication and purging the world of Jews, Blacks and sinners would facilitate the Apoc-

alypse and the Messiahs' return while the Al Qaeda looks at this new world order with its Western forces that employ international institutions, such as UN and multinational companies as weapons in their "new Crusade" to dominate and control the Islamic world. They consider this new world order as humiliating to Muslims as Ayman Al Zawahiri expressed it (Ibid: introduction).

Religious extremists see themselves as under attack by western values, such as secularism and individual liberties. They accuse the "new crusaders" of spreading "immorality" under the slogans of progressiveness, reformism and liberation. In addition, they see the American way of life as motivated by Satan and evil and as a threat to human beings with its materialism, individualism and secularism. In other words, religious extremism, as an example Al-Qaeda network, challenges the secularization as differentiation.

This differentiation takes the form of the self-other binary, in which radical Islamic revivalism creates its identity by describing the western world through images as 'jahiliyya', the state of paganistic barbarism that wishes to impose its corruption on Islam through its superior power. These images of evil are effective propaganda tools to mobilize new members, who support violence discourse and the holy war against modern jahiliyya, where Sharia rules insufficiently and religion is confined to a private sphere (Philpott, 2002:68- 87). In other words, they want to give Western democracy an Islamic dimension, and to use the sharia as the basis for political legitimacy.

Religious terrorism exploits feelings of alienation, humiliation, deprivation and the loss of identity, which result from economic and political circumstances, to create holy warriors out of individuals. The religious sect Aum Shinrikyo, for example, spread after the fall of the Berlin wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union through recruiting individuals who sought meaning in life. Most members of Hamas are young Muslims, who feel stranded in a world where the old community has broken up, and the new globalized world has shut them out, and so they seek meaning through religion (Kumm, 2003: 212,255).

5.2 Oriented Islamic jihad Adopting religious extremist ideology

A critical cause of why individuals embrace terror and join terrorist groups is that they believe in the ideology of the Islamic jihad, which is rooted in al Qaida's ideology which uses religion as a motive to achieve political objectives. Al-Qaeda's ideology was expressed in the Declaration of the World Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders (World Islamic Front Statement, 1998). This Ideology is motivated by the U.S. presence in the holy places in Saudi Arabia, the U.S. aggression against the Iraqi people, and the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. These alleged crimes are considered as an American declaration of war on Allah, his messenger and all Muslims. These motivations are seen as a culmination of centuries of Muslim humiliation at the hands of non-Muslims. Therefore, all Muslims should participate in a holy war against the Crusader-Zionist alliance, and thus they are required to kill Americans and their allies, including civilians and non-combatants, with all available means whenever the opportunity arises (World Islamic Front Statement, 1998).

Besides this, Al-Qaeda also wants to attack and overthrow the regimes in the Muslim world who do not rule by al Sharia law officially. It believes that most Muslim regimes, including Saudi Arabia, are corrupt and cooperative with the West and therefore they can also be seen as legitimate targets.

The ultimate goal for this ideology is to expand the Muslim nation, which shall be governed under strict Islamic Sharia law, to finally re-establish the Caliphate and reach a single Islamic state (Mannes, 2004, p 17). In line with this ideology, Osama bin Laden issued his declaration of war against the United States for their occupation of the two holy places in Saudi Arabia, which resulted in the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

This attack was a war against U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia since the invasion of Iraq in 1991 (Osama bin Laden, 1996). His declaration expressed that it is an individual duty for every Muslim to kill Americans and their allies whenever and wherever it is possible, to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy Mosque in Mecca and to expel the Western presence from the Muslim world. Given that many people have suffered and still suffer from the USA presence in the Middle East, in addition to the current regimes that conspire with them, it is perhaps not strange that this ideology can find some resonance.

Religion can contribute to a culture of violence where violence becomes a defining feature for the identity of individuals and groups. For example Al Qaeda's participation in terrorist violence is considered as a kind of tax paid to remedy the collective grievances that Muslims have suffered of as a result of West and its policy (Stern, 2003: 4). According to Ramzi Bin Al- Shibh, an orchestrator of the September attacks on USA on September 11, violence is the tax that every Muslim is obliged to pay "for gaining authority on earth". He says that "it is imperative to pay a price for Heaven, for the commodity of Allah is dear, very dear. It is not acquired through rest, but [rather] blood and torn-off limbs must be the price" (Ibid). This means that the moral obligation of jihad is equally significant as the prayer duties and charity for every Muslim and he urges that all Muslims are obliged to Jihad in the name of God, claiming that those who neglect this duty will have divine punishment waiting for them, while promising heavenly rewards for those who participate in terrorist violence.

5.3 Indoctrination

Madrasas and mosques play a crucial role in indoctrinating extremist Islamist ideology based on the fanatical beliefs that refuse everything new and cherish everything traditional, and in doing so close people's minds to modernization and secularization. This indoctrination happens through a process of education in which a person is convinced of the importance of the cause and the means necessary to implement this cause. The second type of indoctrination is mission-oriented persuasion and the inducement of the intended individuals for suicide; usually this process is led by a charismatic military, political or religious leader (Reich, 1998: 199; Kumm2003: 245).

The process of indoctrination generally happens from an early age, and instills in individuals the importance of the spiritual world and life after death: these two come together to convince the individual of the spiritual importance of donating their lives to holy war through martyrdom. This kind of indoctrination plays a crucial role in recruiting individuals in extremist religious groups.

Martyrdom is considered the ultimate deed of heroism and worship and at the same time it provides an escape from life's dilemmas especially for those who feel deeply alienated, desperate and humiliated (stern, 2003:6). In other words, the economic and psychological deprivation produces characters with a trend of aggressiveness against the others. That is what Hassan Nasr Allah, leader of Lebanese Hezbollah, says about the Palestinians who are born in the occupied territories and experience constant humiliation from the Israeli army and the Jewish settlers who are able to lead a good and respectful life, while they themselves cannot. The harsh environments in which these individuals have been brought up strip them of their hope for the future and instead induce a kind of fascination with death. He likens their situation to a sauna: it is so extremely hot, but you know that in the next room there is air conditioning, a comfortable chair, classical music and a cocktail. Then it is easy to go into the next room. In this way one can explain to a Westerner how a martyr thinks (Kumm, 2003: 256).

Conclusion

The review conducted in this study aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the factors that have led to the emergence of terrorism and how terrorism has taken religious and doctrinal covers within Islamic and Arabic societies. A terrorist who commits acts of violence, murder and destruction is subject to several internal and external influences that contribute to his decision to kill.

This study firstly reviewed the political factors, which are considered the major factors in building or forming the cognitive environment for the meaning and concept of terrorism, especially after the great openness and the entry of people in the era of globalization and the challenges of postmodernism which is known as neo-liberalism and the changes in the ethics of international politics.

Moreover, economics has a crucially important influence in the increasing prevalence of terrorist organizations. The economy, as an essential element in meeting the needs of individuals and communities, continued to play a major role in the uprisings and protests, and thus has a great potential in the manufacture of terrorism against regimes, individuals with excessive wealth and brutal capitalism. In terms of its production of poverty, disruption of the social justice system and expansion of the gap between the rich and the poor (so-called class struggle) and the reproduction of the slavery system in its modern form in work, industry and production.

The third factor is the community culture, which is especially important because of its inherent motives and habits in education, temples and media. It can support terrorist trends and allow its legislation reli-

giously, legitimately and ethically, as well as it can create extremism, racism and discrimination.

Finally, psychological factors also play a role that is no less important than the other factors that produce terrorism, because of the inherent motivations in the human psyche towards different cultures and civilizations.

The study concluded the importance of paying attention to the following key issues:

- Re-study of the Islamic religion according to historical realities.
- Archaeological excavation of the religious texts that may be the source of terrorism, including some verses of the Koran and the Prophet's Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence formed during Islamic history.
- Encourage and support the reform initiatives carried out by some Arabic intellectuals to purify the Islamic heritage from violence, hatred and atonement.
- Supporting of educational institutions with ethics and eliminating the teaching of Islamic religion through opening the curriculum of philosophy and comparative religions.
- The need to establish enlightenment centers in Arab and Islamic societies.
- Giving serious attention to democracy, secular transformation, support for good governance projects, the circulation of power and the establishment of civil society institutions concerned with human rights, freedoms and equality.
- Encourage women and support their equality with men and the abolition of religious texts that run counter to their rights, dignity and humanity.
- Encourage children to think critically and ask questions and protect their human rights.
- Respect for individual freedoms of citizens.

All of these recommendations should have political, social and economic programs of action and follow-up, which shall take the form of monitoring and implementing by the force of international law and domestic support in order to reach complementary cooperative forms aimed at eliminating terrorism.

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