Metamorphosis of Terrorism

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ABSTRACT

In recent years terrorism has once again dominate the international agenda. The international community has witnessed successive violent demonstrations, and it is therefore appropriate to address the problems of this phenomenon and assess its changes over the years in order to identify the main differences. The conflict between States ceased to be the scene of armed conflicts, at least partially. The phenomenon of terrorism (re) arises but yet now on a global scale, surpassing tactical effects easily quantifiable and in a context where terrorism is presented as a violent action technique. This phenomenon, in itself, is not entirely new. Terrorism presents itself with a strategic reach capacity, not by actions but by its effects and consequences on a global scale and with significant impact on world public opinion. Thus, it is important to understand what are the main changes that terrorism has undergone over the last few years. This study consists in a holistic analysis methodology of terrorism concept, aiming to understand the concept itself and its adaptation in different moments in time. To this aim, an analogy between two different terrorism moments in time is made: during the Cold War, here designated by "traditional terrorism" and today's terrorism, here designated by "contemporary terrorism".

Keywords: Terrorist fundamentals. Structure of Terrorism. Contemporary terrorism.

RESUMO

Nos últimos anos o terrorismo voltou a dominar a agenda internacional e face às sucessivas manifestações violentas, testemunhadas por toda a comunidade internacional, parece-nos pertinente abordar a problemática deste fenómeno e verificar as suas mutações ao longo dos anos a fim de identificar as principais diferenças. O conflito entre Estados deixou de ser o pano de fundo dos confrontos armados, pelo menos parcialmente, ressurgindo o fenómeno do terrorismo, mas desta feita à escala global, ultrapassando efeitos táticos facilmente quantificáveis e inseridos numa ação em que o terrorismo se apresentava como uma técnica de ação violenta. Este fenómeno, por si só, não é inteiramente novo. O terrorismo apresenta-se com um alcance estratégico, não pelas ações mas pelos seus efeitos e consequências à escala global, com impacto significativo nas opiniões públicas mundiais. Desta forma interessa compreender quais as principais alterações que o terrorismo sofreu ao longo destes últimos anos, de forma a efetuarmos uma analogia entre o terrorismo durante o período da Guerra Fria a que nós designamos de tradicional e o terrorismo com que hoje nos deparamos o contemporâneo. Para tal desiderato efetuamos uma análise holística do conceito e sua adaptação aos diferentes momentos.

Palavras-chave: Fundamentos do Terrorismo. Estrutura do Terrorismo. Terrorismo Contemporâneo.

RESUMEN

En los últimos años el terrorismo ha vuelto a dominar la agenda internacional y ante las sucesivas manifestaciones violentas, presenciadas por toda la comunidad internacional, nos parece apropiado abordar los problemas de este fenómeno y ver sus cambios a lo largo de los años con el fin de identificar las principales diferencias. El conflicto entre los Estados dejó de ser la tela de fondo de los enfrentamientos armados, al menos parcialmente, resurgiendo el fenómeno del terrorismo, pero esta vez a nivel mundial, superando los efectos tácticos fácilmente cuantificables e incluidos en una acción en la que el terrorismo se presentaba como una técnica acción violenta. Este fenómeno, en sí mismo, no es del todo nuevo. El terrorismo se presenta con un alcance estratégico, no por las acciones, sino por sus efectos y consecuencias a escala mundial, con un impacto significativo en la opinión pública mundial. Por lo tanto interesa entender cuáles son los principales cambios que el terrorismo ha experimentado en los últimos años, de manera a realizar una analogía entre el terrorismo durante el periodo de la Guerra Fría, que hemos designado como tradicional y el terrorismo que hoy enfrentamos como contemporáneo. Para ello hacemos un análisis holístico del concepto y su adaptación a los diferentes momentos.

Palabras clave: Fundamentos del Terrorismo. Estructura del Terrorismo. Terrorismo Contemporáneo.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The challenge posed by the opportunity to discuss experiences and knowledge pertaining to the investigation of the phenomenon of terrorism is alluring – "The Metamor-phosis of Terrorism". No discussion on the subject should start without first stating the motive that drives us to say that this is an alluring challenge, but also because this is a potentially controversial subject, and the author assumes full responsibility for its content in the interpretation of the phenomenon. Our intent is to present and interpretation and a critical analysis of a phenomenon that brings into question the maturity and the effects of violence.

Terrorism carries a particular media attraction and danger factor, in the several in-stances it was perpetrated on the most diverse grounds and with different levels of suc-cess. Its secrete genesis and violence have been subject to developments and mutations, accompanying the natural evolution of civilizations, and this is why it is important to understand its specific dynamics to be able to understand the phenomenon itself and its reach. Despite the fact that the specific focus of this article is on the changes to which the phenomenon of terrorism was subject, reference should be made to the close connection terrorism has kept with violence along time, giving rise to pertinent discussions about its legitimacy and legality.

According to Lara (2007a, p. 43), terrorism is one of the elements of subversion[2], particularly in the actions of guerillas[3], a model adopted by guerrillas in movements that took place in Africa, e.g. Algeria, Angola, Congo, among other. Appearing as a tactic in which actions were part of a strategy put to the service of "violence" with political purpos-es.

After the fall of the Berlin wall, in 1989, and the resulting end of the Warsaw Pact, in 1991, the international system was affected by unbalance with the rise of erratic actors, in a variable geometry of power (ROMANA, 2004, p. 258), that allowed the appearance of non state actors with unbridled ambitions and prepared to do anything to fight for their cause, capable of carrying on large scale and transnational attacks.

Next it is our intent to present a conceptual approach and to make use of this op-portunity to discuss the most important differences between terrorism in the last decades and what are now witnessing. Given the dimension and the pertinence of the theme, this article is far from being a finished product, where the selection of the present contributions are related to the study of the phenomenon to be used as input for the development of a possible analysis model, facilitating its investigation and equally enabling a consistent analysis avoiding significant dispersion.

Aiming at providing for easier understanding, this article presents references to practical cases, case by case (with specific location, time and the levels of violence in each situation), with empirical situations coming from analogies to the core subject, that is, representativeness of the situation presented in relation to discussed concept.

A global view is presented of the concepts that allow us to understand the grounds that may be claimed by terrorism. To this end, and given the breadth of the subject, a basic question was adopted for the development of this article: "How can the evolution of terrorism be characterized?"

We believe this question allows us to approach of the phenomenon, by defining guiding concepts that will enable understanding this violent type of action. Considering that terrorism equates with asymmetric threats[4], this basic question results from the need to find an epistemological explanation to a possible mutation of terrorism. Thus, its most important characteristics must be examined and the premises of this phenomenon[5] vali-dated if we are to know and subsequently understand it.

In order to facilitate the analysis and the development of the object of the study, a holistic and multiform approach was adopted to determine and touch on the most signif-icant aspects to be considered when analyzing a possible evolution of terrorism.

Considering the broad scope of the subject, for an improved development of this article the study was limited to the following analysis variables: foundations of terrorism (brief characterization) and objectives (relying on an organization structure and its motiva-tion. To this end, the study will be limited to two large periods, from the sixties to the fall of the Berlin wall (that we will be calling traditional terrorism) and after the fall of the Berlin wall (that we will be calling contemporary terrorism).

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2 Different from what happens in Brazil in Portugal the word insurgency is not commonly used. The term subversion is generally used meaning " a social process conducive to a total or partial breakdown of a given established order, and characterized by an informal or marginal position outside the established values and juridical order, aiming at replacement of such order by a different one" (LARA, 2007b, p. 364).

3 Armed branch of a political faction, whose behavior is based on non compliance with the stra-blished rules and that survives in clandestinity.

4 The current international system, and consequently the operational environment, is volatile, un-certain, complex and dangerous. It is an environment where the presence of asymmetric threat is increasing. These threats are characterized by influencing the international system and are evi-denced by hard to control dynamics, such as: (i) terrorism itself; (ii) organized crime, where drug trafficking is a highlight; (iii) ethnical and religous nationalism; (iv) proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, among other.

5 We are aware that this article is centered on references to Portuguese authors on the subject, and it is also subject to Anglo-Saxon influences.

This paper comprises five sections. Initially, the concept of terrorism will be pre-sented together with brief considerations about traditional and contemporary terrorism. Next, the typology of the objectives will be characterized. The organizational structure of traditional and contemporary terrorist groups will be presented in the third section. A mo-tivational analysis will follow, presenting the fundamentals that drive terrorists to implement their causes prioritizing violence. Final considerations about the study will be presented in the last section.

2 FUNDAMENTALS OF TERRORISM

Different authors and scholars have described different phases and mutations along the years. It is our intent to approach terrorism as of the sixties, but the origin of the word must also be mentioned.

Different from other whose origin determined with a certain degree of accuracy in terms of time and space, there is no physical moment in history allowing to accurately determine the real the origin of terrorism. Notwithstanding, the origins of terrorism can be found in the first century after Christ, "when the Sicarii group started to use terrorism tac-tics […] in an attempt to break free from Roman domain, in the region of Palestine" (SIL-VA, 2011, p. 127). As this article does not intend to approach and develop an historical framework, we will start from the premise that the term terrorism derives from the word "terror", used during the French Revolution, essentially in the period that goes from 1793 and 1794, to characterize the Jacobin dictatorship, when the Committee of Public Safety took over control of the country. The term "terrorism" represented the actions that took place this period. Since then, it started to be interpreted and operationalized in several ways, but let us focus on the periods defined in the introductory part of this article.

The sixties and in the following decades, the peak of the Cold War period, are characterized by their bipolarity and their spaces of influence. The possibility of an armed conflict between the two major powers could lead violence to escalate ultimately leading to nuclear war. Besides the confrontation between the leading States in the two blocks, other regional conflicts existed subject to significant ideological influence, once again with the phenomenon of terrorism involved as a tactical revolutionary tool, manifested in the guerilla action, in the then called "armed fight" against the established power, and the ap-pearance of separatist and nationalist groups among which political-ideological confronta-tion prevailed.

The period that followed the end of the Col War came all of a sudden when the world was poorly prepared to face a new reality, the asymmetric[6] threats and the presence of new actors[7] in the international system. Globalization has significantly contributed to this situation, as a process enabling the transformation of activities and spaces with regional scope organizations and institutions into situations extending across the globe and the international community. This was a factor that contributed to the transnationalization of terrorism, giving it global capabilities and resources and facilitating its concealment.

Throughout this article the type of terrorism developed from the sixties to the eight-ies and showing marked ideological influence developed from the sixties to the eighties will be named traditional terrorism. On the other hand, the so called contemporary terrorism is characterized by the Post-Cold War Period, where an evolution of the previous type of terrorism can be pinpointed due to the presence of state and non state actors, appearing crosswise and with multiple dimensions, with no respect to physical spaces or concern with the size of its effects, subject to strong religious influence.
It will, however, be evidenced that both traditional and contemporary terrorism re-sort to violence in their different modes of action, with distinct dimensions and keeping a violent mode of fighting.

Terrorism has kept the same premises and, by the way, it has improved its tech-niques and spread to all continents. Actions perpetrated by radical religious groups man-aged to evidence that this mode of fighting was capable of destroying the myth of the in-vulnerability of the super power United States of America.

But for an improved understanding of the dynamics of terrorism, let us proceed to the following sections of this article. Despite the fact that terrorism is an old phenomenon, the current area it is still subject to dubious interpretations and to significant diversity of concepts. As core questions we have the issues related to terrorism evolution and possible mutation (TOMÉ, 2004, p. 174).

The polysemy of the term is undisputed in the most diverse studies by analysts, military and statesmen. Once there is no unanimously accepted definition, there are sev-eral approaches to this subject, notably with respect to its "legality" and the justification for its use, once an individual, or group of individuals, can be seen as terrorist by a segment of society and by another one as a champion of freedom and of the rights of a minority (TOMÉ, 2004, p.177-179).

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6 *Threats became diffuse, complex and multiform, contributing to battlefield complexity.*

7 *Non state actors.*

The operational environment presents a whole set of new conflicts[8], in which the asymmetric threats [9]are prevalent. The evolution of the typology of conflicts gave rise to political, cultural, social, psychological and anthropological changes. As we will be able to evidence in the next section, new non state and multifaceted actors come to the stage driven by unclear motivations, but it is important to make an early mention to the global projection to terrorism.

Terrorism is distinguished from common violence, even when common violence is extreme, for having detailed planning, tangible objectives, designed to reach the proposed goal and its structured is cloaked by a system of secrecy (ROGEIRO, 2003, p. 60), it can even be said that terrorism does not engage in violence for the sake of violence and it has always a goal to be reached.

In conceptual terms, different definitions can be found, as well as distinct modes of adoption. For example, the United States of America, Russia, Colombia, China and India took different approaches to the phenomenon. Each one of these actors has concrete concerns about terrorism that are not fully similar, having a similar broad view of the phe-nomenon, but their own particular distinct view where each one is concerned with a certain type of terrorism and modes of action. Such discrepancies prompt us chose a sector-based view of the problems it causes due to the need to ensure internal security and, in some cases, national unity itself (LOUSADA, 2007, p. 24).

In Europe[10], a specific mode of action has been designed defining a deterrence strategy, enforced even globally, which is essentially based on prevention.

After careful consideration, free from regional, political or religious influences the author has ultimately selected the following definition of terrorism: deliberate action that exploits fear, resorts to the use or threatened use of violence for political purposes, of un-foreseeable nature and with marked exposure of its feats to the media.

This conceptual approach enables us to cover and interpret both the traditional and the contemporary forms of terrorism. As an example, from the sixties to the eighties, the concept of terrorism was directly linked to violent attacks to entities of the executive power or intended to push for changes in society. Terms like militant, revolutionary, separatist, nationalist and radical, among other, were easily applied to the perpetrators of the attacks. By the end of the seventies and the early eighties, an extremist separatist left and right wing trend can be evidenced, resorting to techniques that would allow them to use violence to achieve their political objectives (DYSON, 2008, p. 15). We then faced traditional terrorism. This type of terrorism involves an irregular mode of combat, as part of possible subversive moment or action, included in one of the phases of the subversive movement -flagellation (DYSON, 2008, p. 34; FERREIRA, 2006, p. 41). Terrorism operated as a simple guerilla technique, based on which it appears as the "weapon" of the poorest, so that they would benefit from its asymmetry to gain advantage in combat. The guerillas resort to this technique once they have no other way of fighting a significantly more powerful contender (GRAY, 2007, p. 247), and Tomé (2004, p. 175) defines these actions as latent or incipient subversion.

Traditional terrorism

> is above all a technique to call attention to the cause […] rarely involving indiscriminate killing, having reached the conclusion that this would disgust the social support base (TOMÉ, 2004, p. 176).

In its specific concepts, traditional terrorism is part of an internal war, sometimes said to be a subversive war resorting to resorting to actions defined as selective terrorism and indiscriminate terrorism (FERREIRA, 2006, p. 41), viewing itself as a political effort towards a specific objective.

It is well known as classical of African countries in the sixties and seventies during the insurrections in the so-called "colonized" countries. Where they avoided resorting to indiscriminate terrorism, once this form of terrorism generally involves civilian targets. Once they used the population for concealment, as already mentioned, indiscriminate terrorism was avoided because civilian targets could negatively influence the population itself against terrorist purposes.

In Europe, the use or threatened use of this violent tactic was characterized as an activity marked by strikes against power by separatist groups, with their own internal or domestic dynamics, as for example in Germany and Italy that suffered from the actions of the Red Army Faction – the Baader-Meinhof group and the Red Brigades, respectively (TOMÉ, 2004, p. 176).

Following an absence of threats resulting from the end of the Cold War, nontraditional threats appeared with global and anti-West designs, where the States, in general, established guidance and support to terrorism-

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8 *Combat was changed because the enemy you are fighting is not easily identifiable, thus reducing direct confrontation (attrition) between the parties and incrementing the informing and influencing activities.*

9 *A State, institution or organization perceives the existence of some degree of danger arising out of the possibilities, intentions and estimated actions by a state or non state actor.*

10 *From its fight against terrorism came the five "D" – Dissuading, denying, deterring, developing, defending.*

related actions.

> Specialized studies appeared then distinguishing between State sponsored terrorism, of which the Hezbollah, inspired by Iran, is an example, and the "autonomous" terrorism" acting outside the specific orbit of a State, as in the case of the Al-Qaeda" (ROMANA, 2004, p. 259).

The September 11 events came out of nowhere, and according to Tomé (2003), gave rise to a new definition of terrorism, namely, "hyper terrorism" or "post-modern terrorism", in which besides the escalation of the levels of violence, different from the previous form of terrorism, there is a global feature, characterizing not just its type of organization, but also the scope of its objectives. Thus, traditional terrorism made room for a new mode of expression.

We take the view that, these new aspects characterize contemporary terrorism, but when the variables of the analysis of terrorism are interpreted, namely, violence (means), ends (objectives) and dissemination (media factor), it can be evidenced that terrorism, after all, just gains a new dimension comprising a mutation and an evolution, most of all at the level of its effects. According to Laquer (apud GRAY, 2007, p. 259), the nineties were the initial period of transition from traditional to contemporary terrorism. Beyond that, the distinction between these two periods lies in their motivation, objectives, methods and organizational structure. Thus, traditional terrorism is related to limited geopolitical objectives, which, in its theory, implies a possible negotiation capacity. Notwithstanding, it is important to mention that the lack of a political moves it away from the classification of terrorism, confronting us with an action that fits the definition of crime and varying according to its genesis and organization (ENDERS; SANDLER, 2006, p. 3). This situation can be evidenced in the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionárias da Colômbia/Colombia Revolutionary Armed Forces), which despite being seen as a terrorist group, is also viewed as an organized and "armed" group whose chief purpose is to "profit" from its action and to fund criminal and violent activities (HABERFELD; HASSELL, 2009, p. 12). Many scholars call it drug trafficking terrorism, while others classify it as crime resorting to extreme violence.

Contemporary terrorism presents new features in several dimensions. It comes from the information era, which enables much faster broader scope actions and is networked, setting aside the traditional hyerarchical structure, thus the task of identifying and fighting it much hards. It is completely indifferent to human aspects, has no concern for human life and resorts to high levels of violence, getting even to the point of having its members sacrificing their own lives, claiming obeisance to a superior will.

Next, contemporary terrorism spread across global borders lacking, however, a correlation to any activity of a military nature and imparting a religious nature to their actions (FERREIRA, 2006, p. 45-47), among this type of action the Al-Qaeda must be mentioned as responsible for the expansion of terrorism and its use as a form of subversion[11] and instrument of power (SILVA, 2011, p. 129). Despite acknowledging an attack to power, with the possibility of aiming at the establishment of a State, it can be evidenced that Al-Qaeda[12] will not shy away from causing significant damages in a religious war against the infidel and the West and deriving legitimacy from the Islamic experience and sharia law. In a brief analogy between types of terrorism, traditional as opposed to contemporary terrorism, it can be inferred that in order to achieve its goals terrorism may resort to two different modes of action: (i) as a technique to achieve strategic purposes; and (ii) as a tactic to achieve political goals (GRAY, 2007, p. 256).

Adding to this contemporary complexity, somewhat unexpectedly for the time, highly sophisticated acts of terrorism are seen executed single handedly by individuals best known as lone wolves[13].

This new mode of terrorism shows marked independence that hinders analysis and monitoring tasks, once its true intent is only revealed after the fact, and up to the moment of the attack there was no related activity or indicator enabling surveillance. It can also be defined as a tactic employed by contemporary terrorism, emerging from the "right wing" to hinder detection and ensure freedom of action to plan future actions.

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11 *"This organization has been using terrorism as a counterpower, whse may gola is to achieve a specific political objective: rescover the honor of Muslims by restoring the Califate wiped out by r Mustafa Kemal Ataturin Turkey, in 1923" (SILVA, 2011, p. 129).*

12 *The author decided to discuss the Al-Qaeda instead of the Islamic State, because in the previous issue there is an superior article depicting and presenting data on this group that was bon inside the Al-Qaeda, but is nowadays operating independently.*

13 *The lone wolf concept is a ramification of terrorism that has no acknowledged leadership. In this case it is important not to mistake for anti-system terrorism (fuelled by hate, for something that has not been achieved and driven by a purely national motivation), the lone wolf develops his own of action mode based and rooted on the group to which he belongs or to the group whose philosophy he endorses (DYSON, 2008, p. 35). As an example of this type of terrorism we have the Breivik case in the Utoya island, in Norway, where, despite the attempt to related it to certain ideologies, the terrorist acted by himself devoid of any motivation that could enable connecting him to other groups.*

3 OBJECTIVES

As to the definition of objectives there are several similarities between traditional and contemporary terrorism with respect to the ultimate objective. While traditional terrorism lacks the capacity needed to defeat political power, or de facto authority, it is only able to shake its credibility, resorting to selective or indiscriminate terrorism, but always aiming at discrediting the lawful or de facto authority in the eyes of the population and of the international community (GRAY, 2007, p. 247), the chief objective of contemporary terrorism is size power in a global or transnational move. While traditional terrorism influences all counter-power actions in a concerted and spatially delimited action.

Normally, the objective of any terrorist attack follows a strategy linked to its specific category. Objectives may be immediate or long term and comprise from a show of force by a group, revenges, getting hold of logistic resources or provoking a government and normally support to a given group or its cause.

As to the immediate objectives, the organizations and individuals involved in terrorism may alternate between selective and indiscriminate objectives, normally according to a strategy related to the effects, the tactical level intended. The long term objectives result from the previously mentioned immediate objectives, with the specific characteristic of being manifested by attacks to political power (LARA, 2007b, p. 523).

These types of immediate and long term objectives were broadly used by the Red Brigades in Italy that launched over fourteen thousand terrorist actions in the seventies, including kidnapping and subsequent murder, in 1978, of Italian Christian-democrat former minister Aldo Moro (HABERFELD; HASSELL, 2009, p. 10).

The immediate objectives can easily be identified and set in operation in situations that develop in subversive environments. In this case, terrorism is materialized as a stage in a subversive war, which can be seen as a guerilla offensive (ROGEIRO, 2003, p. 60), appearing as a tool of a non conventional war.

There are several examples to be mentioned, but the subversive movements rec-orded in the sixties and seventies in Africa will be highlighted. The objective of these ref-erences is to show that the method and its objectives validate targets physically to the benefit of sought objective, but notwithstanding involve an activity around a terrorist action of subversion.

Traditional terrorism comprises both the indiscriminate and the selective types. All actions where no specific target is selected and just aim at the media factor and at spreading fear are related to the first type. The second one, selective terrorism, is directly related to a careful selection of the target and aims at hitting a specific site and exploiting some vulnerability perceived in it (LARA, 2007a, p. 44).

After a period where the traditional type of terrorism prevailed, the international system now presents us a new era, the era of globalization, with interesting culture and knowledge sharing moments and aspects but, on the other hand, it helps terrorism allowing deterritorialization of the phenomenon, featuring meticulous links between groups and facilitating terrorism funding and increasing its invisibility (Tomé, 2003).

Despite the fact that the Word Trade Center attacks had no declared concrete political objectives, "terror was manifested as some form of punishment against the behavior of the United States" (TOMÉ, 2003), showing discontent with the social behavior and power of the USA. It can be seen that in Grays (2007, p. 262) "key point" all wars are political, but none more than terrorism.

Independent from the type of terrorism, it can be evidenced that the "targets" to be hit by these activities are directly related to the objectives. It can also be said that such actions aim at different targets, featuring three basic elements: (i) attack target; (ii) fixation target; and, (iii) influence target.

The target of the attack is directly related to the victim of the attack or action. The fixation target whose purpose is to select and fix a given international community audience to draw the eyes of those whose attention the attack intends to draw, through media resources, thus raising the media factor to higher levels. The influence target aims at changing the behavior of the decision, or the behavior of decision makers, who subject to significant influence from the surrounding community are pressed to give in. It is precisely at this moment that the media factor has a major impact on the community in order to affect the decision makers.

4 STRUCTURE

To Lara (2007a, p. 44) the structures that feed terrorism can be broken down into two generations. The first one lies on a hierarchical structure, with functional flows depending on hierarchical command and control actions on a system of cells. The second generation features a set of independent cells that are initially organized around the activity and subsequently infiltrate society until it actually takes place.

Comparing the first generation to what we are calling traditional terrorism[14] it presents initial structures based on groups with direct links to subversive movements and sharing the same objectives. Such organizations used

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14 In the course of the comparison were were able to conclude that the second generation of terro-rism described by Lara actually fits into the concept of contemporary terrorism.

to operate according to a vertical hierarchical structure and in clandestine environments, with resources provided by the local population or part of it.

Without touching on "political support", a political organizations may have the following components: (i) supporting elements making sure that needs are met and resources provided to the development of the whole structure; (ii) clandestine support elements, making sure that the requirements for target selection capability, information gathering, concealment of operational elements, among other, are met; and, (iii) operational components, generally called guerilla, which, among several activities, engage in sabotage and terrorism actions (FERREIRA, 2006).

This organization is included in a process of subversion, structured into cells, but with hierarchical command and control structure so as to prevent the whole structure to crumble in case one of the elements is captured (COUTO, 1989, p. 273).

As already mentioned, traditional terrorism has a technical and tactical face, frequently mentioned as a stage of subversion. This results from the fact that this type of terrorism is directly related to the subversive movements that "raced" mostly across Africa and Latin America concealed among the population and counting on their support. On the other hand, in Europe, it has close relations with separatist groups.

The groups springing up from contemporary terrorism need to adjust to the envi-ronment, sometimes without support from the population, being thus forced to disappear among the population around them, and here we can find the origin of the independent cells.

It is important to note that, just as any other organization, the terrorist groups develop functional organizational structures to suit the environment where they intend to operate. According to Rogeiro (2003, p. 140).

> the most qualified analysts [e.g.] like to say that [current terrorist groups and movements] seem to be a «result-oriented organization», in opposition to a bureaucratic structure that lives to justify itself.

Terrorist groups exercise command and control just like the military and security forces but, on occasion, it can be found that the discipline and the understanding of the chain of command is not fully clarified to operate along clear lines of authority and functionality. Interactions in the group, egos and philosophic differences blur the organizational principles and give rise to faulty actions, ultimately enabling identification of the group and its activity.

The typical contemporary organization consists of : (i) command and leadership that defines the policy and guides the action; (ii) operational structure, functionally

structured as cells; and (iii) supporters, normally broken down into two categories – the active and the passive ones (Romana, 2004: 268).

Figure 1: Typical organization of a terrorist structure,
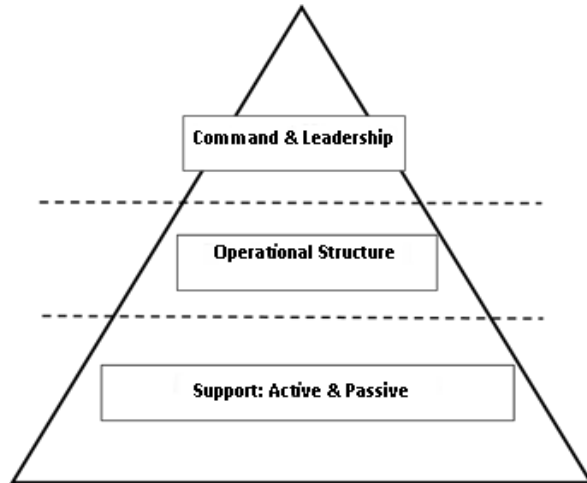
Source: Adapted from Romana (2004, p. 268).

Normally, command is committed to the cause and exercises leadership providing guidance to the whole group. The operational elements are those that trigger actions and are committed to group cause and subject to significant influence from their leader. Active supporters are the entities that do not engage in violent terrorist attacks, but support the terrorists being involved in direct support tasks. Passive supporters are sympathizers of the cause, without any connection to the operational activities.

Bearing in mind that terrorists are supposed to act in a hostile environment, the primary concern of the organization is security. As a result, normally at each level or section a terrorist group has a cellular organization, where each element is relatively isolated from the others. This type of organization protects group elements in case of arrest or dissidence. As such, besides security, networked organizations enable a certain amount of savings, without entailing any significant loss, being defined by Eugénio (2010, p. 56) "as a set of nodes and a set of relations", where each node is linked to another one according to its complexity[15]. Notwithstanding, these cells may also develop ramifications enabling interconnections, that is, branching to the different levels or sections.

Thus, cells may present three dimensions or formats, namely: (i) star, where each element is linked

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15 "More or less centered, more or less directed, more or less connected" (EUGÉNIO, 2010, p. 56).

to a coordinator and the cell is capable of independent operation; (ii) node position, where each element directly depends on a coordinating element, but the cell receives guidance from a higher entity; and (iii) mesh, where the elements are inter-connected, and single connection or any element coordinating the activity can be identi-fied.

The star and mesh shaped cells tend to be independent, thus hindering detection and prediction of cell activities. The structure of the Al-Qaeda[16] can be seen as a mix of the above mentioned situations, where the top level has a large set of cells, operational and support groups that are interconnected, representing a complex organization where the "constituting elements […] [also] interact with each other, giving rise to a certain order" (EUGÉNIO, 2010, p. 54).

A structure organized in cells, allows keeping a base "unit" defined by a minimum number of elements capable of developing concrete activity, either by themselves or in cooperation with other cells.

have metastases of the operational organization.

When the center of gravity is identified, the most vulnerable link of a terrorist organization can be easily identified, and a neutralization force may be set up against this center of gravity, and the whole organization may crumble. Thus, it can be easily inferred that the mesh-type network has been significantly developed in any terrorist organization.

Also in contemporary terrorism network-supported structures can be found with different types of levels we call circles. These circles are intentionally connected in order to add complexity to the network and to make it hard to interpret. Nonetheless, the inner level admits a hierarchical structure concealed by its connections and types of communications between its members. As an example, we are identifying a body that Guedes (2007, p. 66) calls the military committee, which is connected to other circles, at the same hierarchical levels, such as the finance and business and legal committees, and another one in charge of analyzing information.

Figure 2: The cells and their shapes.
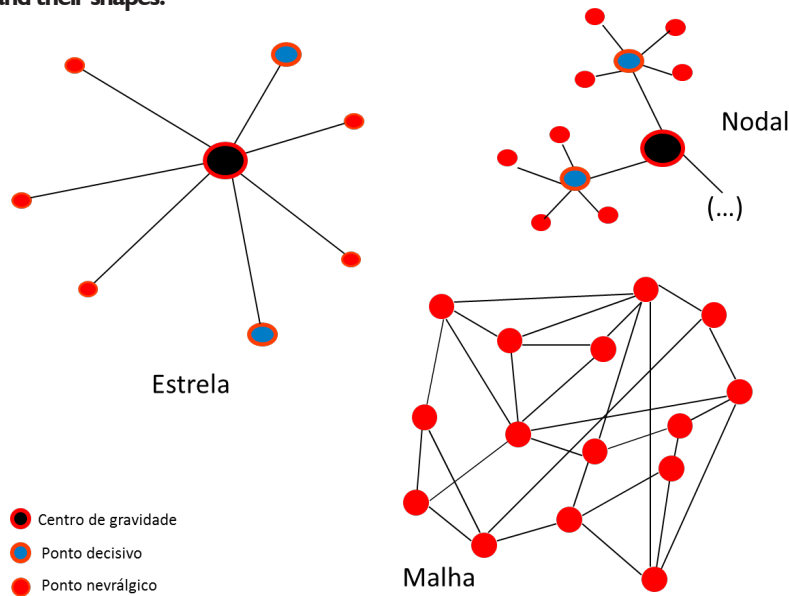
Source: Elaboração própria (2015).

The mainstay enables the activity to be developed continuously without clear iden-tification of "who does what", making the identification of its leaders, operational and sup-porting elements much harder.

The mainstay is an element of great significance in a terrorist organization, and once it is identified a cell can be easily identified and neutralized, but such cell may

5 MOTIVATIONS OF CONTEMPORARY TERRORISM

The terrorism faced in our era is significantly more diffuse than the previous one given the multiple motivations and types of objectives, the proliferation of cells and groups worldwide, driven by revenge and hate, obscured by ideological and religious factors and employing extremely violent techniques to indiscriminately kill the largest number of peo-ple possible (TOMÉ, 2003).

16 "Al-Qaeda sprang from an entity dubbed Maktab al-Khadamat «MAK, literally – The Service Office», a mujahidin organization established last century, in the eighties, to fight the Soviets that had just invaded Afghanistan" (GUEDES, 2007: 63).

To this end, according to Costa (2005, p. 289), it is necessary to break apart and interpret the means employed concurrently by the causes. Evaluating the fairness of the causes is not enough, it is necessary also to evaluate the fairness of the means of combat employed.

There may be a full range of motivations, despite reference by many authors to the low education level, the opposite can also be seen, when elements with higher aca-demic and social level are also found in terrorist networks and groups.

For an investigation of the causes and actions of violence terrorists are motivated and grouped by different types of distinct motivational activities.

While Lousada (2007, p. 23) presents two main aspects of terrorist motivation, namely nationalist and ideological religious motives, we are considering other basic distinct, albeit related, motivations, that is: (i) rational; (ii) psychological; and, (iii) cultural motivations.

The actions driven by the rational factor reflect their options and objectives and involve a cost/benefit analysis. Lower cost and more effective methods are considered in order to achieve the desired objective. This feature is directly related to the nationalist dimension (HOFFMAN, 2006, p. 36).

The psychological motivation for terrorism, grosso modo, associated to personal terrorist discontent with his own life, lack of personal achievements or rational, cultural or even religious motives (HOFFMAN, 2006, p. 224). In order to overcome their anguish, despair or unhappiness these individuals find in terrorism the answer to their prayers.

The cultural motivation shapes the values and prompts individuals to perpetrate apparently irrational actions. Daily life is a cultural characteristic with an enormous impact on Islamic fundamentalist terrorism[17]. Societies where its members see themselves as elements of a group, seem to have own will and unselfishness rarely found in other circumstances. In this case, the terrorists seem to be anxious to give their lives for the organization or the cause.

On the subject of religious motivation no mention was made to a specific and particular situation, however the psychological and cultural motivation both lie at its source. Religious motivation encompasses the cultural aspect, as this element may lead the masses to extreme situations, in other words, to go beyond faith, and in certain situations and places, the political and religious circles come together in a scenario where the "State cannot be separated from religion, once religion is

a condition for power and sometimes used as a tool to achieve previously set political objectives (SILVA, 2011, p. 159). However, history reveals instances where a type of violence was resorted to lacking type of rational, psychological, cultural or even religious motivation. As a rule, such cases are directly associated to phenomena related to crime or to radical and fanatical elements.

Analysis of motivational factors enables us to look into how counterterrorism faces its actions, and the approach taken by certain countries, reveals a peculiar modus operandi of motivational analysis (HABERFELD; HASSELL, 2009, p. 11) that would deserve a specific deeper study, which is out of the scope of this article. Nonetheless, mention must be made to the need to fight this phenomenon that results from hard to quantify endogenous and exogenous factors.

Also with respect to religious terrorism, to which the psychological and cultural motivation were integrated in this paper, religious terrorism has taken a highly complex and hard to define leading role, having as main catalyst the 9/11 attacks to the "twin towers" in 2001.

Despite the fact that the tactics employed by terrorists differ according to several factors and conditions, suicide terrorism represent the utmost manifestation of violence distinct from the conservative tactics of terrorism. It should not be viewed as an irrational act of despair, but as an action driven by higher motivation, leading Hoffman (2006, p. 132) to interpret such decisions as actually calculated, determined and conscious actions.

Supported by rational motivation, the suicide mode is not a new form of terrorism, but it is in fact a way to put a given intent into action, appearing as a new identity, not because of its individual statement, but for being against the identity of others. Thus, contemporary suicide brings about a "new weapon" extremely difficult to detect and fight, because the act of violence is perpetuated by the author himself, and where the operational agent proves to be willing to display the most extreme face of violence. This behavior allows it to develop and hit a new typology of targets, as those who are to commit suicide can adapt and adjust to the plan, according to the proposed intent.

6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Intentionally this article does not include a case study because a holistic multidisciplinary analysis can be carried out by presenting examples of different situations.

While preparing this article we were able to evidence that the phenomenon of terrorism has been the target of studies and investigations driven by a full

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17 Generally, Islamic fundamentalism is confused with Islamic terrorism. These are distinct pheno-mena. Islamic fundamentalism can be defined as Muslim's struggle to define the role of religion in their own society, with different interpretations of the sacred law, aiming at the islamization of society (SILVA, 2011: 130).

range of motives. Culture itself, objectives and interests paved the way for multiple interpretations and definitions, thus preventing the assignment of a definition generally accepted by society in general.

Here we would like to stress how difficult it is to come up with a common definition across the whole international community, as the approaches and points of view are absolutely distinct. As mentioned in the introduction to this article, a group may be considered terrorist by a segment of society and as a freedom warrior, among other designations, by another segment.

Nonetheless, while studying the definitions of terrorism and its analysis variables some common points were evidenced, among which the following should be stressed: (i) the level of the objectives, where the presence of the political objective is highlighted setting it apart from common criminality; (ii) high levels of use or threatened use of violence; and (iii) its media-focus, revealed in the attacks on civilian targets, which is a hallmark of terrorism. However, it is important to go back to the main line of investigation discussed in this article: "How can the evolution of terrorism be characterized?".

Hence, we have reached the conclusion that contemporary terrorism did not put an end to traditional terrorism or took over new shapes. Traditional terrorism suffered a mutation, with internal changes going on to global ones, which can even be detected from the change to the level of intended effects, where a changed reach of its objectives and structure can be seen taking a transnational approach. We are concluding that contemporary terrorism is not new, actually it comes from a mutation of its previous form – from traditional to contemporary terrorism – acquiring more violent features, developed by the phenomenon of globalization. Similarities are evidenced in the structure of both types, most especially, its clandestine nature. Even though, to us, the largest and most significant one has to do with the higher acceptance of traditional terrorism by the population, which may even get to establish a bond of complicity between the native population and the elements engaged in the actions.

Normally, the organizational details are specific to each situation. Notwithstanding, common organizational principles can be evidenced, whether in the support or in the operational structure. Once they need to operate in a naturally hostile environment, both individual and organization security is the primary concern, having gained increased effectiveness by resorting to a cellular structure, as insulated as possible, so that its elements only get to know and identify their peers.

By its own projection and violence, contemporary terrorism calls into question the goal that, generally, the population wishes to keep and develop - safety and wellbeing. Unintentionally, the effect of globalization brought about a set of population agglomerations - "free zones - for terrorists that allow them to stay perfectly concealed among the general population, and therefore, to fund and organize themselves and train others.

Hence, we have reached the conclusion that far from having disappeared, traditional terrorism is a tool to reach a goal of limited scope. It appears as a destabilizing and violent element whose purpose is to discredit the established order. While in its essence it its essence a tactic to exploit the media factor of terrorism, in order to call attention to its cause, with normally selective objectives, which are generally related to the established power. It holds on to its genesis of seeing itself as means to achieve a goal. As a corollary, its analysis variables show that, at the regional level, traditional terrorism appears as a technical resource, part of a concerted action, designed to strike the established power. Contemporary terrorism appears in a global universal scale, employed as a strategic line of action aimed at diffuse objectives, with selection of indiscriminate targets, which are normally civilian and located in public places, marked by extreme violence, resorting to and claiming religious, cultural and social grounds to justify its actions.

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