

## Transnational terrorism: Globalization and its effects on social movements

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### Introduction

Wearing branded apparels and shoes; operating gadgets which are manufactured in one end of the world and assembled in other end; enjoying Thai, Chinese, Italian delicacies in Somalia; traveling countries from Japan to United States to Denmark to Australia. Calling relatives from Delhi in Chennai; pursuing MBA from *Pennsylvania*, shopping online and purchasing latest products with the help of Internet - all are the gifts of Globalisation. Thanks to the liberal approach adopted during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Well it becomes important to understand the context in the times when such approaches were introduced.

The very idea of global economy penetrated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century after the end of world war and during the cold war era. Where we find the entire world getting divided into two factions- US with NATO members forming the first world countries and USSR with Warsaw pact supporters making the second world countries. Also what we see is the huge accumulation of nuclear warheads, weapons of mass destruction, ammunition arsenals- a kind of race for the weapons, simply to assert the supremacy and hegemony of each other. The peculiarity was the formation of third world countries; which then was created by providing them the sovereignty which earlier were colonies under the imperial control.

It is inaccurate to state that globalisation is responsible for terrorism but when technology is accessed by these terror groups, it leads nation's security, integrity, safety in an exploitative and dangerous stake. In particular, technologies have increased the ability of terrorist groups to work together, share information, and reach out to the audiences which they previously could not. James D Kiras <sup>[1]</sup> defines terrorism as a weapon of the weak, conducted by a minority who promote an extremist ideology-it often fails to create political change. At the same time the global community is not powerless to tackle the growing problem of terrorism. Through the means of globalisation only vigilance and awareness can be created to protect life, property and endowments provided by the nature. Here it is very vital to underline the importance of the global institution like United Nations, conferences and meetings which are specially concentrated on curbing the vicious spread of Terrorism. Terrorism and globalisation share at least one thing in common-both are complex phenomena open to subjective interpretation. Globalists and Skeptics differs on the view that globalisation has created the divide which in turn has created the labels of losers and winners in this process. At the same time terror groups make use of violence as a

'justified means' for their interests to get fulfilled. On the contrary are the global citizens who do not believe in their methods of achieving their interests especially when it comes to the use of: attacking, bombing, and causing destruction to life and property. Terrorism is defined by the use of 'violence'. Revisionist view terrorist acts legitimate only if they meet the criteria of 'Just War', where Realist suggests the political violence used by these terrorist groups is illegitimate on the basis as the state is the only one who has the monopoly on the legitimate use of the physical force. Audrey Kruth Cronin has tried to categorised types of terrorism <sup>[2]</sup>: left wing, right wing, ethno-nationalist/ separatist and religious or 'sacred terrorists'. Therefore terrorism is defined as 'the use of violence by sub-state groups to inspire fear, by attacking civilians and /or symbolic targets, for the purpose such as widespread attention to a grievance, provoking a severe response, or wearing down their opponents moral resolve, to effect political change.' Political scientists believe that terrorism is designed to achieve political change for the purpose of obtaining power in name of right which in reality is perceived wrong. However it is the weakest mechanism to alter political landscape. But understanding the pattern of such groups analysts have tried to draw some observations like, these group generally lack support of the population characterising insurgency and revolution and their objectives are based on radicle ideas that do not have widespread appeal.

Technology acts as one of the binding forces between terrorism and globalisation as it allows easy transfer of goods, capital, services and information almost anywhere in the world. As stated earlier, as we move towards advancement; globalisation has penetrated in the international systems resulting in the interconnectedness and 'homogeneity' <sup>[3]</sup> of the world. While some believe this connectivity has provided 'cultural heterogeneity' <sup>[4]</sup>. The paper however will delve, as how terrorism emerged from transnational obstacle to global phenomenon.

According to the researches there is consideration of three factors which led to the birth of transnational terrorism in 1968: the expansion of commercial air travel, the availability of televised news coverage, and broad political and ideological interests among extremists that intersected around a common cause. As a result, terrorism grew from a local to a global threat. Air travel provided unprecedented mobility e.g. The Japanese Red Army, trained in one country and attacked the other such as 1972 Lod Airport attack in Israel. For accomplishing the motives, air travel appealed to terrorists for other many

reasons, airport security measures including passport control were almost non-existent when terrorists began hijacking airlines. These skyjackings suited terrorist purpose well. State also agreed to the terrorist demands, which encouraged further incidents. The success of this tactic spurred other terrorist groups, as well as criminal and political refugees, follow suit. As a result, incidents of hijacking skyrocketed from 5 in 1966 to 94 in 1969. Even if the state authorities tried to curb nuisance of such groups, we see these groups demanding the release of imprisoned 'fellow revolutionaries' in different country, giving the impression of a coordinated global terrorist network.

Television news coverage also plays important role in expanding the audience who would witness the theatre of terrorism in their own homes. Taking the example of the 'plight of Palestine' became notionally aware of the issue after incidents such as the live coverage of the hostage taking conducted by Black September during the 1972 Munich Olympics. Although media coverage was termed the oxygen that sustains terrorism, terrorist discovered that reporters and audiences lost interest in repeat performances over time. The Iranian 'Islamic Revolution of 1979 was a watershed event in transnational terrorism. Although Israeli interest remain the primary targets for attack, due to continued sympathy for the Palestine cause, a number of groups began to target citizen and other symbol of the United States<sup>[5]</sup>.

Today Al Qaeda appears less as a terrorist group and more as a global movement which is trying to achieve their motives by the means of suicide bombing, hijacking, destruction of life and property et cetera working on the basis of religion and new form of terrorism. Al Qaeda in particular- focus on the three areas linked to the aspect of globalization: Religion, Economics and Culture. The reason militant Islam's call for armed struggle has been successful in underdeveloped countries is one, these organisations target the geo-politics of the region and second most important factor is the culture. They endorse their ideas by glorifying violence as the only method of preserving traditions and values against a cultural tsunami of western products and materialism. Here is the need to ponder upon- is the use of violence to preserve culture, the means of counter reflection of the changes and advantages brought by globalisation.

The social changes associated with globalisation and the spread of free market capitalism appear to overwhelm the identity or values of groups who perceive themselves as the losers in the new international system. Especially talking about the ones who are possessive about their Islamic identity, Samuel Huntington suggests that a major fault-line exists between the liberal western civilisation and an Islamic one' humiliated and resentful of the west's military presence in the Persian Gulf, the west's overwhelming military dominance, and... to shape their destiny'<sup>[6]</sup>. The present developments tell about the opposing take of middle-East Asia with the intervention of the western forces especially the propagator of the 'integrated economies'- USA. The question is why these dominant forces have to cross their peripheries of power and intervene in other regions. The reason being is the limited availability of resources, which is not

proportional in relation to growing demands. The peak time of the intervention of the two dominant can be traced with the end of world war II- cold war.

Whereas the critics of Huntington believe that the justification of the use of violence by the Islamist state is not solely because of western forces but the growing schism between the two factions of their own community- Sunni and Shia. Militant Islamic calls to kill non-combatant and fellow Muslims represent another internal fault-line. The internal contradictions lay to such an extent that, there stand Apostates (those Muslims who do not share their interpretation of the Quran). Foe eg- in 2005, Osama bin Laden gave unequivocal sanction to Abu Musab al-Zarqwi to kill Muslim Shia in Iraq. Thus the victims of militant Islamic terrorist violence have been other Muslims and not Western 'other', a fact bin Laden acknowledged in 2011. Many political analysts see economic aspects as the crucial motivating factor in the use violence to effect political changes. Although globalisation provides access to world market but the net result has been the perceived as a form of 'Western economic imperialism'. The above written statement can be understood in the light when it comes to the policy formation of the world institutions like IMF, World Bank, United Nations and other international organisations, all the rules, set exchange rates and fiscal policies are determined by United States and the post-industrial states of western states from the global north. In realities these actions and plans can be highly unfavourable to the underdeveloped countries of global south, which comprises the periphery or gap. Following these policies, which are actually the 'impositions' of north world countries, political decisions by the leaders of the underdeveloped countries to deregulate or privatize industries to be competitive globally may lead to significant social and economic upheaval. And this might result in the shift of loyalties to illegal activities such as terrorism if the state breaks its social contract with them. The next important component influenced by the west is the 'idea of luxury life' which is derived wealth. It is directly linked to security and violence.

Paradoxically, rising standards of living and greater access to educational opportunities associated with globalisation may lead to increased individual expectations. Ted Robert Gurr hypothesized that such unfulfilled expectations can turn to extreme political views and actions against the system, if such opportunities are denied. One study suggests that a sense of alienation and lack of opportunity among some Muslim males is a contributing factor in their decisions to turn violence globally. Sage man proposed that within the Islamic groups, most of the leaders and senior operatives attended graduate schools around the globe in the fields of engineering, theology etc. were neither poor nor downtrodden. Now here we need to ponder that educational opportunities can motivate the nasty ideas of such organisation where they fuel their militants in name of cultural identity completion, isolation, religion, region etc. Other views, such of Franz Fanon point out that it is the imbalance which exist economic and political power. James D. Kiras explains it that the terrorist violence is motivated by inequalities of the global economy.

Therefore terrorist attacks against the World Trade Centre in 1993 and 2001 were reactions against an icon of global capitalism. Also when we mention the divide between rich and poor, it becomes important to talk about the stimulus provided by poverty. When state does not provide enough infrastructures for the growth and development<sup>[7]</sup> of the citizens, getting recruited into such aggressive activities remains the only resort. Many militant Islamic terrorist in Europe have employment rates and salaries that are close to EU averages for their age group.

Explaining the work play of both cultural and economic explanations, it is mandatory to discuss the religious explanation. Motivated by the promises of rewards in afterlife, some terrorists are driven by religious reasons to kill as many of the non-believers and unfaithful as possible. Although suicide tactics had been observed in Lebanon as early as 1983, militant Islam had previously been viewed as a state-sponsored regional phenomenon. New terrorism which is explained with the help of global Jihad: reaction to the perceived oppression of Muslims worldwide. Jihad is understood by most Islamic scholars and imams to mean internal struggle for purity spirituality, although it has also been interpreted historically as a method to establish the basis for Just War. On this basis there is dividing between religious and secular terrorist. It is the difference in the value structures which makes the 'deterrence' of religious terrorism difficult, as secular states cannot credibly threaten materially that which the terrorists value spiritually can do. Secular terrorism has had as its goal the pursuits of power in order to correct flaws in society but retain the overarching system. Religious terrorists do not seek to modify but rather replace the normative structure of society. All the difference depends upon their definitions of 'Sacred Value'. Western observers opine, religious reasons appear to explain how in decidual terrorists are convinced to take their own lives and kill others. Religion provides terrorist groups with crucial advantage: the mandate and sanction of the divine to commit otherwise illegal or immortals acts. There is a substantial difference between religious motivation as the single driving force for individuals to commit acts of terrorism and the ultimate purpose for which violence is being used. Others believe that the use of violence can also be used for the popular support in a process of 'outbidding' or self-determination, to convince foreign occupiers to withdraw their forces.

The nuisance led by terror groups and their cells cannot be understood in isolation without understanding the deconstruction caused to environment, heritage and civilians. The incident of 9/11, the fall of twin tower led thick layer of soot and smoke for three consecutive days that many died because of the suffocation and lack of oxygen. War, battles, attack has done no good to humanity. The lethal arms, ammunition and Hi-fi gadgets used which includes the use of chemical bombs, nuclear warheads, weapons of mass destruction. The World War II ended with the dropping of nuclear bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which eventually led 1degree increase in the global temperature and which resulted in the exponential rise in global warming. Also the two

major cities of Japan are infertile to grow any crops on that land and every third child born there is deformed. The point of mentioning these facts and figures is to highlight the hypocrisy of the advanced man of the modern state that- to guard our territorial integrity, to safeguard our interests, to provide security and to not indulge another WWII, we are investing more than half of our share of economy's GDP in upgrading and accumulating latest weapons, tanks, rifles etc. Directing towards heritage, the middle East-Asia is the hub of many Mesolithic and Neolithic sites which provides new excavation discoveries and evidences of the beginning of Human History.

Especially sites like Catalhoyuk in turkey, Jericho in Palestine etc are on the verge of distinction and distortion as the sites are being regularly attacked by terrorists. The disappearance of twin tower in USA, Taj Hotel attacks in Mumbai is another example of destruction of monuments. But the question here arises how these organisations and cells acquire military equipment? How do they mobilise, recruit/trap innocents in their vicious world of violence and hatred? How are they able to employ their militants? Answers to all these questions lie in 'Globalisation'. It is the cunning and economic play of the dominant countries like USA, RUSSIA, Western countries of EU and may more which are capable of producing and of course exporting these highly advance weapons of mass destruction under the mask of qualifying 'integrating economies'. It is because of the easy access of internet facilities, Global System for Mobile Communication; that they keep themselves interconnected and keep fulfilling their motive of infringing peace and security of nations and communities. The second important question arises, if the one side of the globalisation is that cruel and brutal then it is inhumane in nature then why do we need such economic, political, social working system in place, why the world can't eliminate such system? As rightly said every coin has two sides, similarly globalisation too is very necessary. It is crucial because the global institutions such as United Nations, where all the countries working on the framework of liberal democracy tries to find solutions and firm measures to curb the demon of terrorism from our society. Global conferences like such help in making transnational authorities aware and vigilant about the evil planning of terror organisation. All the conventions and the acts which are unanimously accepted by the member states and followed by the almost all countries, which are based on Geneva Convention, Hague Conference in 1970 and many more. NGOs such as Human Right Watch, Amnesty International keep checks on the suspicious activities of terror groups. At the same time the technology which is used by these groups to create ruckus in nations, same technology helps in accessing and analysing to sense the pattern of the terror activities, it also tries to keep tract of flow of both human and financial capital all over the globe.

Precisely, how the processes and technologies of globalisation can assist in delegitimising the pedagogy that incites terrorists will remain one of the vexing challenges for the international communities. Thus the debate remains open for the interpretation to rank pros

and cons of globalisation. Hence, globalisation remains necessary evil for the world.

### References

1. James D Kiras. Terrorism and Globalisation p.392.
2. Left wing terrorism intertwined with the communist movement, Right wing drawing its inspiration from fascism, Ethno-nationalist inspired by the wave of decolonization, immediately after the second world war, the religious are moved by ethnic and religious sentiments.
3. The use of word homogeneity here has been used to highlight the imposition of the western cultures on the third world countries. For eg. The idea of wearing blue jeans is representational of liberty, which Americans used to attain their independence, while it was banned in erstwhile Russia.
4. Heterogeneity, one in the favour of this, believes that it has provided new options to the world for eg- food choices available today are distinct across the globe.
5. James D.K Kiras pg. 394; Globalization and terrorism
6. James D. Kiras p.396; Globalisation and terrorism
7. Growth and development here means, in terms of employment facilities in proportion to the rising population.
8. Kiras D. James, Terrorism and globalisation chapter. 26, 392-404.
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