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Terrorism: An Attempt at Resetting the Concept

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Abstract

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This article explores the concept of terrorism across various disciplines, including language, religion, jurisprudence, law, and politics. It delves into the definitions provided by political dictionaries and examines historical events from both ancient and contemporary times. It explores a range of incidents, stances, decisions, and declarations. The dominant focus in all discussions and gatherings concerning security revolves around terrorism. It has become the fundamental basis for the nature of relationships between states, both politically and economically. It has also regained authority over the nature and extent of investments across all nations. Additionally, it has played a significant role in shaping the policies of major powers towards the rest of the world, particularly the United States of America, especially in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, events. Throughout history, powerful nations have worked to categorise countries based on their alignment with or opposition to their policies. Various aspects are carefully analysed to determine which actions are classified as acts of terrorism on an international scale. The lasting impact of these actions still casts a shadow over global affairs today. The article utilises a qualitative secondary technique for content analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding and reconstruct the concept.

Introduction

Terrorism transcends borders and affects numerous regions across the globe. It is not only associated with organisations, groups, and institutions, but also with individuals. There is a rich history behind terrorism that has sparked debates among researchers. Additionally, its various forms have been a topic of disagreement, particularly within political circles. Our goal is to explore this concept and delve into its intricate religious, social, political, and legal standing across the globe. There are various interpretations of the word "terrorism" in the Arabic language, including one derived from the abstract verb (rahab), which conveys the concept of fear. The linguistic origin of the word implies a sense of fear and terror, as recognised by experts in the field. The derived term "terrorism," in its basic form, conveys the act of instilling intimidation and terror, essentially spreading a sense of fear and terror.

Terrorism, when viewed through the lens of Sharia law, aims to intimidate adversaries and sow fear in their hearts, discouraging them from inciting conflict and causing chaos in society. This meaning of "terrorism" is quite distinct from the commonly understood definition. In the Glorious Qur'an, the word "terror" and its derivations are mentioned in twelve places (Abdul Baqi, 1936), all of which revolve around the meaning of fear. It was stated in the Almighty's saying: "Indeed, there is more fear in their hearts for you 'believers' than for Allah. That is because they are a people who do not comprehend" (The Holy Qur'an, Al-Hashr: 13). This that they fear you more than they fear their Lord (Al-Qurtubi, 1964). In another location, God Almighty says: "Prepare against them what you 'believers' can of 'military' power and

cavalry to deter Allah's enemies and your enemies as well as other enemy's unknown to you but known to Allah. (The Holy Qur'an, Al-Anfal, 60). This means that "You will frighten with such numbers the enemy of God and your enemy from the polytheists" (Al-Tabari, 2000).

According to the Dictionary of Political Terms, the term terrorism first appeared in French in 1355. An unfamiliar and unexpected threat evoked a feeling of fear or anxiety, prompting its use. The Oxford Dictionary attributes the idea of terrorism to the Jacobites, a group notorious for their violent actions during the French Revolution in 1793/1794 (Sobol, 1999). There are numerous explanations of terrorism in contemporary dictionaries. The Dictionary of Political, Economic, and Social Terms defines terrorism as the systematic and organised practice of terror (Thebian, 1991). An act of terrorism, even if its intention is to instill fear and panic, is only classified as such if it is carried out in a systematic and organised manner. This indicates that it is a deliberate act orchestrated by organisations, rather than an individual act.

When considering the connection between terrorism and the legal aspect, it's important to note that terrorism refers to criminal actions aimed at a state, with the intention or outcome of instilling fear and panic among specific individuals, groups, or the general public (Carlile, 2006). It is determined that terrorism is a criminal act targeting the integrity of the state and aimed at specific individuals, specific groups, or the general population. Nevertheless, there is an issue with this definition as it conflates the purpose with the outcome. This is because the classification of an act as a terrorist act depends on its occurrence, but it is also considered terrorism if the intended outcome aligns with the consequences of the act. This poses a significant legal issue, as the criminal act - and terrorism is considered a crime under both state and international law - lacks the criminal nature of the act is solely determined by the behaviour and its consequences.

Perhaps this is why many countries have implemented specific laws regarding terrorism. It is a unique offence within the legal system to address criminal activity (Fikri, 2000). Israel considers the Palestinian resistance as acts of terrorism, while Arab and Islamic countries, along with some other nations, view it as a fight for independence. Despite this, various international agreements, including the 1937 League of Nations-established Geneva Convention for the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism and the 1977 European Convention for the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism, define terrorism. The initial article defines terrorist crimes as acts of kidnapping and murder against individuals entitled to special protection under international law. It also includes attacks on their safety and lives, along with acts of blackmail linked to these crimes. On April 22, 1998, the Arab Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Justice in Cairo gave their approval to the Arab Convention to Combat Terrorism. This convention referred to six international conventions that dealt with terrorism (Shukri, 1990).

The world of crime is an expansive and gritty realm that knows no bounds or quantification. It includes numerous definitions and descriptions, one of which covers terrorism. Terrorism manifests in various forms and is intertwined with religion, politics, and the governance of a nation. Although there are various forms, images, and goals, there is no universally agreed-upon list of crimes that fall under this concept or definition. Once considered a heinous crime, extremism has now evolved into the complex world of terrorism. Understanding its motives, goals, and elements, as well as the individuals and entities that support its expansion and sustainability, has become increasingly challenging ([Abdel Fattah, 2006](#)). Terrorism is a crime that affects all countries, regardless of their location. Terrorism has emerged as a global menace, encompassing criminal acts that defy international law and pose a threat to the interests of nations. Legal measures safeguard these interests, encompassing any action or conduct that falls under the jurisdiction of international criminal law, leading to the imposition of criminal sanctions, either through the International Criminal Court or specialised criminal tribunals. Every country, region, and religion have its own unique understanding and interpretation of crime and terrorism. Establishing a universal definition of terrorism is crucial for international cooperation and ensuring that countries can effectively combat such acts. The varying criteria for defining crimes at national and international levels have led to widespread confusion, resulting in the occurrence of terrorism-related offences worldwide.

Given the global nature of terrorism, it is crucial to consider it as an international crime. International criminal law defines an international crime as any act or behaviour, whether positive or negative, that is prohibited and carries a criminal penalty for the perpetrator ([Al-Qahwaji, 2001](#)). Crimes are categorised based on the international system into offences that target non-material values, specifically intangible values that cannot be quantified or measured in monetary terms. These include global social harmony and the well-being of humanity (aggressive war crimes and terrorism, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the crime of genocide, and crimes of slavery and enslavement, and trafficking in drugs or immoral publications). Terrorism, on the other hand, remains significant on a global scale when it comes to matters of religion, politics, and law and jurisdiction. Terrorism is recognised as a serious offence under international law, specifically in Article Two of the sixth crime approved by the International Law Commission. It is considered a crime against the peace and security of humanity. The article says: “The sixth crime is directing or encouraging state authorities to carry out terrorist activities in another country or permitting organized activities intended to commit terrorist acts in another country” ([Al-Qahwaji, 2001](#)). In order to fully grasp the significance of terrorism on a global scale and its far-reaching effects on different facets of a nation, it is crucial to engage in academic research. This will provide valuable insights into the subject matter.

The study emphasises the definition of terrorism and its origins, as well as the varying standards that different countries use to classify certain criminal acts as acts of terrorism. To truly redefine the concept of terrorism, it is crucial to shed light on the prevalent crimes that are universally recognised as acts of terrorism.

Historical Background

Islamic History and Terrorism

There are notable instances of terrorism with Islamic roots, such as the actions of the Sikari group, an organized Jewish movement that emerged from the "Zealut" sect and committed acts of terrorism against Roman rule (Jaafar, 2016). This movement derives its name from the use of short swords known as "sika" in its combat against the Romans. It is known for its unconventional methods. In the past, they concealed their actions beneath their abayas, carrying out their acts of violence openly, amidst public celebrations and crowded gatherings. The perpetrators carried out a multitude of heinous acts, such as committing murders, destroying, and setting fire to homes. Their actions even extended to poisoning water sources and burning important documents. Israel's actions towards the people in occupied Palestine are a continuation of this historical pattern (Khamis, 2015). During the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the concept of verbal exaggeration, first discussed by the Messenger, may God bless him and grant him peace, evolved to such an extent that it caused harm. Abu Lulu'a Al-Majusi tragically assassinated Caliph Omar bin Al-Khattab during his reign. Uprisings in Egypt and Iraq against Caliph Othman bin Affan followed, ultimately leading to his untimely death at the hands of the rebels.

Undoubtedly, the assassination of Caliph Othman marks a significant milestone in Islamic history. Throughout the history of the Islamic nation, there have been unfortunate instances of violence. Extremism and murder have unfortunately become all too common in society, with a noticeable absence of tolerance, forgiveness, and mercy among its members, which Allah commanded in His Holy Book, as the Almighty' say: "Remember Allah's favour upon you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so you—by His grace—became brothers (The Glorious Qur'an, Al Imran: 103). Certain Islamic sects have taken their religious beliefs to extreme levels, going as far as attributing divine qualities to Ali bin Abi Talib (Saqr, 1991).

In light of this, the rise of extremism in religion has caused fear among believers, leading to the emergence of a disturbing trend where individuals are labelled as infidels, subjected to violence, and their property is desecrated. The excommunication of Othman bin Affan, Ali bin Abi Talib, and Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan, along with their respective groups, marked significant turning points in history (Al-Tabari, 2000). Instances of radicalism persisted throughout Islamic history, with its scope broadening as various Islamic sects emerged. One such sect was the Sabaeans, whose adherents sought to introduce new ideas among Muslims, drawing inspiration from past beliefs and religions (Saqr, 1991).

The Kharijites emerged as an Islamic sect, introducing the concept of fanaticism. They held the belief that those who commit major sins are considered infidels, and that violence and the seizing of wealth are justified. According to their doctrine, these individuals will be condemned to eternal damnation in the fires of Hell. They also deemed immoral individuals as infidels in this world, destined to remain in Hell on the Day of Resurrection. It is acceptable to confiscate his funds and deem his life expendable. He experienced the hardship of enslavement, and unfortunately, his marriage ended in divorce. Praying for him or burying him with Muslims is not allowed, and he has no hope for God's mercy in the afterlife. They exploited the political power struggle, rather than the religious one, to disseminate their ideas and beliefs, even resorting to violence. This is evident to anyone who examines historical events and evidence ([Al-Mawardi, 2006](#)).

The history of the Islamic sects is a chronicle of ongoing conflict and attempts at reconciliation between different factions. This conflict led to extensive violence and turmoil, with multiple coups that instilled fear among the peaceful population. It serves as a stark reminder that any form of extremism, be it ideological, sectarian, or religious, only breeds further chaos. Behind it lies fear and violence. In today's society, it brings with it a sense of fear and creates individuals who engage in acts of violence. The name may be different, but the outcome remains unchanged. The concept takes on its own unique identity through language and is subject to different interpretations.

As a result, its definitions can be multiple, diverse, conflicting, and occasionally contradictory, influenced by various sectarian, political, and ideological perspectives. These concepts of a criminal nature, such as terrorism and human trafficking, remain relevant in today's world. The progression of an offence and its execution methods transform it from a simple crime to a terrorist or human trafficking crime. The organization of secret migrations, defilement, and rape is deeply concerning. It is important to address these issues and work towards ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals, particularly in countries where the marriage of minors is prevalent. Recognizing these practices as crimes and implementing stronger laws can help us combat human trafficking and protect vulnerable people from harm.

Historic Significance in Other Cultures

Many people view the French Revolution of 1793 as a prime example of a government characterized by terror. The French Revolution aimed to liberate France, culminating in the demolition of the Bastille prison. This was a response to the rejection of injustice and slavery, and a call to spread the principles of freedom and justice, ultimately seeking to establish a more just society. The issue necessitated the trial or execution without trial of forty thousand individuals. People often refer to the period from 1789 to 1799 as the "period of terror." During this time, the French Jacobins played a significant role in shaping the concept of terrorism, which has been in use since 1793. One of the notable figures among the Jacobins is

Robespierre (Al-Shakir, 27). As per [Al-Hawari \(2005\)](#), the Jacobins gained control of France in 1793 through violent means, led by Maximilien Robespierre. They later joined forces with the Committee of Public Safety, established by Danton, and together they conducted a brutal campaign of executions that had a profound impact on all of France. Estimates place the number of lives lost during this period at... The final six weeks of the Reign of Terror saw the execution of a staggering number of French citizens, both men and women, in Paris. Chaos engulfed the city, with bloodshed, terror, and panic reaching their peak ([Al-Hawari, 2005](#)).

This behaviour is comparable to exaggeration in extremism and deliberate insult to Islam at both official and popular levels. The anthem sung by the Italian soldiers heading to war in Libya was found to contain an extremely offensive insult, and we will present it in full with scientific integrity:” Mother, pray and do not cry, but laugh and meditate. Do you not know that Italy is calling me as I am going to Tripoli, rejoicing and rejoicing, to shed my blood to crush the cursed nation, and to fight the Islamic religion, and I will fight with all my might to erase the Qur’an? If anyone asks you why you do not mourn me, answer him that he died fighting Islam” ([Alwan, 1988](#)).

Literature Review

Morgan defines terrorism as “a type of deliberate violence driven by political motives and directed towards specific goals, practiced by specific groups or secret agents of a country” ([Morgan, 1989](#)). When it comes to the spread of terrorism in another country, there are two main ways in which a country can contribute. The first is through loyal groups, while the second is through individuals referred to as “agents” by Morgan, who are often described as “lone wolves.” Another interesting aspect of this definition is that it addresses the motive behind terrorism without mentioning its objective. If the intention is related to politics, the objective doesn’t necessarily have to be as well. It is worth noting that Imam Hassanein’s definition lacks specificity regarding the goal, as he says that terrorism is “the method or method used, which by its nature is to cause terror and dismay to reach the final goal” ([Hassanein, 2004](#)).

According to [Thebian \(1991\)](#), terrorism can be seen as a method of revolutionary action aimed at creating a state of insecurity and fear in order to exert control through force. Terrorism aims to disrupt the social fabric through targeted attacks on individuals or groups, seeking retribution through various acts of violence. If we consider this statement as it is, then all the revolutionary movements witnessed by humanity were not without acts of violence, and this may be why the government of the French Revolution that we discussed earlier was seen as a government associated with terrorism. If this perception is accurate, terrorism in the political context is not a recent phenomenon, but rather has been associated with various revolutionary movements that have toppled governments throughout history. Within the framework of Islamic political history, we can consider the initial assassination as an act of terrorism. The initial overthrow of a government can also be classified as an act of

terrorism, implying that numerous ruling systems throughout history have been founded on acts of terrorism. According to [Thebian \(1991\)](#), “anarchists have practiced terrorism for a long time.” This statement highlights the immorality of terrorism and its association with disorder.

[Thebian \(1991\)](#) defines collective fear as a state and feeling that arises from acts of violence and assassination that have the potential to impact anyone ([Thebian, 1991](#)). This reference is ambiguous as it distinguishes acts of violence from assassination, implying that assassination is not a form of violence. Nevertheless, it addresses a crucial aspect of conceptual definition by emphasising its linguistic significance. Terrorism's transition from inducing fear to inducing terror is characterized by a shift from individual impact to collective impact. Therefore, we classify an act as terrorism only when it affects a group, not just an individual. The dictionary may have separated acts of violence from assassination due to the latter's impact on collective memory, as it affects societal legal figures across cultural, political, religious, and legal domains.

Al-Tabari linked terrorism with extremism and traced its origins back to Islamic history. The speaker defined extremism as an idiomatically characterised state of fanaticism, marked by exaggerated enthusiasm and narrow-minded adherence to a religious belief or idea. This mindset often leads to belittlement, opposition, and struggle against the opinions and beliefs of others, as well as those who hold them. Pathological conditions can lead to reckless, extreme, and irrational behavior, as well as a disregard for others and their beliefs, both individually and collectively. The historical origins of extremism can be traced back to the time of Noah, when certain individuals developed an excessive love for righteous men and began worshipping them instead of God. The pre-Islamic Arabs created idols as symbols of their worship, which later became associated with heresy before the arrival of the Messenger ([Al-Tabari, 2000](#)). Allah Almighty says: “urging their followers, ‘Do not abandon your idols—especially Wadd, Suwâ’, Yaghûth, Ya’ûq, and Nasr.” (The Glorious Qur’an, Noah: 23).

Extremism has been found among the Jews and Christians since ancient times ([Khairy, 2011](#)). This matter appears when Allah Almighty addresses them by saying: “O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about Allah except the truth.¹ The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of Allah and the fulfilment of His Word through Mary and a spirit created by a command¹ from Him.² So believe in Allah and His messengers and do not say, “Trinity.” Stop! —for your own good. Allah is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs.” (The Glorious Qur’an, An-Nisa’: 171). The Jewish people believed in their divine election and justified the killing of those who opposed them, considering themselves superior to those they deemed unworthy of life. The individuals involved in this matter exhibited extreme behaviour, including insulting the divine essence and causing harm to the prophets and messengers. These actions were used as a rationale for their subsequent attacks on

human beings. Judaism examines murder as a strategy for attaining desired objectives, as a large number of its rabbis say: “Cursed is he who withholds blood from his sword” (The Bible, Book of Jeremiah, chapter 48).

Terrorist activities were observed and attributed to the Qarmatians. [Zakkar \(1987\)](#) stated that the Qarmatians implemented a policy of violence, including murder, robbery, and instilling fear. They targeted both Muslims and non-Muslims, launching attacks on villages and innocent individuals in Iraq and the Levant. The leader, known as Abu al-Tahir, assembled an army and launched an invasion of Kufa. This resulted in the murder of its male inhabitants, the capture of its women, and the displacement of the remaining population to perish in the desert. The Assassins, like the Qarmatians in Islamic political history, also attempted similar crimes. The group gained widespread recognition as the most radical faction within Islam. The sect engaged in deceptive actions, ultimately aligning themselves with the Crusaders and causing the deaths of numerous Muslim leaders and men ([Al-Matwi, 1959](#)). The Mongols observed a parallel pattern of behavior, reminiscent of the Qarmatians and Assassins, as they expanded their influence across the eastern countries, from the Near East to the Middle East. Upon reaching the Levant, they concluded their conquest by executing the male population, capturing women and children, and enslaving them. They instilled fear and gratified individuals with a craving for malevolence and hostility. If this is true, then terrorism is not primarily caused by Western countries, including France. However, if France relies on terrorism to advance its revolution, it raises concerns about the revolution's alignment with principles such as freedom, justice, equality, and fraternity, which are not inherently related.

[Sandler \(2011\)](#) examined theoretical articles to investigate the concept of game theory and its application to the interactions between terrorists, governments, and other allies. It is essential to understand the significance of counter-terrorism policies, the root causes of terrorist attacks, and the dynamics of terrorism. Suicide bombings are a global issue, with numerous countries experiencing attacks carried out in the name of terrorism or to instil fear. The government provides aid to counter-terrorism efforts, which serves political and social objectives ([Sandler, 2011](#)). Indoctrination of jihadists occurs in the name of their religion, yet they function as mere instruments in a larger strategic agenda.

The political significance of terrorism was emphasised by [Nuzzo \(2004\)](#). The events of September 11 greatly impacted the political standing of the United States. The terrorism attempt had a lasting impact that is still remembered today. The events of 9/11 had a significant impact on American history. Following the 9/11 terrorism attempt, accusations of anti-Americanism, anti-patriotism, and anti-war protests emerged in history. These protests were subsequently suppressed by opposition forces. Individuals who opposed the war in Iraq were perceived as being against the American people due to their opposition to the conflict. The oppositions remained silenced due to fear of America. The interference was inaccurately concluded, with those opposed to the war being wrongly

perceived as supporters of Saddam Hussein and often labelled as dissenters of the prevailing ideology. The Dogma asserts that Saddam Hussein is the covert force driving all the motivations of Al-Qaeda, thus attributing responsibility to him for the 9/11 attack on the United States. Despite the available evidence, many Americans chose to disregard Osama bin Laden's actions and instead embraced a particular belief system. Opposition to the war was sufficient grounds to label a group as terrorists. The public's acceptance of the ideological and illogical link between the Iraq War in 2003 and the events of 9/11 implied the success of Bush's propaganda. The public opinion and opposition were effectively overcome. The events of 9/11 have been theorised by some to have been a strategic plan to justify military action and label Muslims as terrorists. The statement highlights the significant influence of politics on the ideology of terrorism (Nuzzo, 2004).

Suarez (2018) debated that the advocates of Zionism “admitted that their political goal could only be achieved by using violence against the population - or what is known as terrorism” (Suarez, 2018). Similar to this is what happened in America, when “the beginning of the migration of blacks and their desire to work in the southern part of America for racial reasons, and as a result of the Civil War in America, whites (veterans) for the period from 1856–1866 formed a terrorist organization that bore the name (Ku Klux Kline), which was the symbol (KKK), which used to burn black farms and homes, and carry out liquidation campaigns against them by setting up gallows and using trees to carry out mass executions against them, and keeping the bodies hanging there for long periods” (Attiya Allah, 1968). Terrorism is a form of violence that impacts individuals, organisations, and physical assets. Terrorism is classified as a criminal act in the dictionary of political terms that “is violent to the extent that it results in spreading strikes and chaos between individuals and authorities and involves a disturbance of public order that threatens the entity of the state and disrupts its political functions to obtain conflicting interests.” with the objectives of the authorities” (Massad, 1994). This definition implies that a criminal act and a terrorist act differ in their intentions. While personal gain or harm typically motivates a criminal act, a terrorist act aims to create widespread chaos and disrupt public order in pursuit of a political agenda. Only groups opposing a state's policy fall under this definition.

Methodology

The examination method utilised here is the qualitative secondary technique. Through the use of meticulously chosen terms, information pertaining to the subject of the literature was gathered and thoroughly analysed to provide meaningful responses to the research inquiries. The approach employed in this case involves conducting a thorough examination of the literature gathered. The content under examination was analysed from three perspectives: religious, political, and jurisdictional. The aim was to gain a comprehensive understanding of terrorism's international standing.

Results and Discussions

Terrorism and Religion

The Glorious Qur'an contains observations about the derivatives of (rahab) at two distinct levels, which are crucial to understand. The primary aspect of one's connection with Allah and the secondary aspect of one's connection with fellow human beings. Regarding the first point, it refers to a deep reverence for God, which stems from recognising God as the source of all blessings. In this context, fear can be seen as a form of respect and intimacy. In the second context, there is no mention of any violent acts; instead, it is a means of protecting against the threats posed by the enemy. Specifically, it refers to the psychological battle between Muslims and their adversaries, aimed at preventing any aggressive actions. The enemies that posed a danger to the young state were the non-believers in Kreish and the Jewish community. Therefore, the derivatives of (Rahab) do not involve any physically aggressive actions. Rather, they concentrate on preventing moral violence. Hence, the implications of Rahab in the Qur'an bear no connection to the political implications referenced in contemporary dictionaries or the proclamations made by various organisations. Furthermore, they are not entirely tied to the definitions put forth in scholarly studies and research, as we will explore in due course.

Regarding the hadiths of the Messenger, peace be upon him, there is no direct mention of the term "terrorism" as we know it today. However, we can find references to its related concepts and derivatives. The concept of "terror" was mentioned in the hadith of Al-Baraa bin Azib, where the Prophet, peace be upon him, offered advice to a man regarding fear, saying: "When you go to sleep, say: O Allah, I surrender myself to You, entrust my affairs to You, turn my face to You, and turn my back to You out of desire and awe of You" (Al-Bukhari 1422 AH, vol. 8: 69). We attempted to examine the hadiths that referenced the linguistic root (rahab), but unfortunately, we were unable to find any evidence within them that conveys the usual meaning. This was true whether we consulted modern dictionaries or international and Arabic sources.

In order to understand the concept of terrorism in Islam, it becomes clear that it revolves around fear and intimidation. The Qur'an explicitly states that it is prohibited, except in cases of self-defence. However, it is important to note that terrorism is fundamentally forbidden, as it aims to instil terror and fear in innocent individuals who are living in peace. There seems to be a prevailing sentiment of animosity towards Muslims and unfair treatment towards various groups. It is worth noting that the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the consensus of scholars explicitly condemn any form of injustice. It is unacceptable to unjustly and aggressively intimidate and terrorise individuals, regardless of their religious beliefs. God Almighty says: "Allah does not forbid you from dealing kindly and fairly with those who have neither fought nor driven you out of your homes. Surely Allah loves those who are fair" (The Holy Qur'an, Al-Mumtahana, 8). Documents have documented various incidents

throughout the history of caliphs that align with the principles of Islamic legislation. These incidents emphasise the importance of honouring commitments, refraining from unjustified self-harm, and forbidding the killing of specific groups such as women, newborns, monks, and elderly individuals among non-believers.

Terrorism and Politics

When the concept is viewed in political dictionary, terrorism is defined as “an attempt to spread fear and terror for political purposes. An oppressive government uses terrorism as a tool to coerce the populace into submission to it. “The act of terror is also a means by which a state imposes its sovereignty over a people to spread a spirit of defeatism and submission to its arbitrary demands, or a group uses terrorism to intimidate civilians to achieve their ambitions so that the minority imposes its rule over the majority”. Up to this point, there is nothing new about the two dictionaries’ views of terrorism, except that the Political Dictionary gives an example of group terrorism. It sees the example of this group as “Jewish terrorism that preceded the Zionist groups’ occupation of some parts of Palestine in 1948, and these acts were carried out by gangs whose members were mostly Jews.” Extremist groups, such as the Argun Zvai Leumi, Stern, and Agardat Israel gangs, were responsible for a series of violent acts, including bombings, attacks in public places, and targeted killings. Their actions caused widespread devastation, as well as the loss of innocent lives.

The Zionists intended these acts of violence to force the population to leave their homes and communities, thereby securing control ([Attiya Allah, 1968](#)). If this is the case, then the practice of terrorism - according to the dictionary - does not only take place “using means that can harm the lives and security of people, but rather involves the violent destruction of public or private services, or collective facilities” ([Thebian, 1991](#)). Whenever violent behaviour has a collective impact and harms facilities or institutions (services), it is called terrorism. On the other hand, “terrorism can also be a method of governance, in which authority is imposed by putting the people in a collective state of constant terror and fear (the regime of terrorism)” ([Thebian, 1991](#)). The phenomenon can be characterised as internal state terrorism. The relationship between the ruler and the ruled pertains to totalitarian, authoritarian, dictatorial, and semi-democratic regimes, where freedom of opinion and expression is severely limited.

Many individuals interested in international politics have adopted a concise term for terrorism, allowing for interpretation based on specific circumstances, situations, and privacy concerns. This includes Wilkinson’s definition, which states that terrorism is “an organized act of terror by an organized group to spread terror among individuals, society, and authority ([1979](#)). [Ali \(2015\)](#) states that “terrorism is a complex and thorny issue that poses its confusing questions to everyone.

Terrorism Law and Universal Jurisdiction

The discussion surrounding the connection between the law and terrorism emerged following the significant terrorist attack on September 11th in New York City and Washington, D.C.'s Pentagon. Understanding how terrorism is classified as an international or transnational crime presents a significant challenge. It is important to determine the appropriate context for both the offence and the offender in order to establish the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC) or other national and international criminal jurisdictions. There is an ongoing debate about including terrorism within the scope of universal jurisdiction. The events of 9/11 led to a global state of emergency, prompting the introduction of various legislation aimed at addressing the issue of cross-border terrorism. However, these efforts fell short of meeting the standards set by the International Criminal Court. This is due to a lack of clearly defined parameters for such actions. The ICC faced significant pressure to achieve its objectives and provide justice for the victims of 9/11. In response to both external and internal threats, certain nations implemented measures that infringed upon fundamental rights in order to combat the largest crime of the 21st century. Previously, Israel prosecuted the Eichmann case in 1961, applying universal jurisdiction.

Belgium used universal jurisdiction in its 1995 trial, leading to the eventual conviction of multiple Rwandans for war crimes against their fellow Rwandans. In 1996, Spain invoked universal jurisdiction to prosecute General Augusto Pinochet, the Chilean dictator, for crimes committed in Spain by Chilean citizens. When it comes to crimes like genocide, torture, human rights violations, and other serious offences, it is evident that universal jurisdiction has some significant drawbacks. However, discussions regarding terrorism often overlook this aspect. On the other hand, piracy has been extensively discussed due to its strong and enduring connection with universal jurisdiction. It is important to consider including piracy cases, such as the hijacking of ships and aeroplanes, under universal jurisdiction. The current situation extends the scope of universal jurisdiction to address terrorist crimes, regardless of their occurrence at sea or in the sky. The jurisdiction's universality enables it to have a voice even in international territory. Terrorism shares similarities with various serious crimes that should be subject to universal jurisdiction. Crimes such as genocides, violation of fundamental rights, violence, torture, and spreading fear and insecurity for political gain are grave offences that demand universal jurisdiction for proper resolution. Every act of violence committed against humanity, whether it is intended to instil fear or cause harm, can be classified as an act of terrorism ([Nagle, 2011](#)).

Key Findings

The attributes gathered from extensive research and arguments put forth by numerous scholars reveal the recurring themes that characterise terrorism, including fear, intimidation, and violent actions that have a widespread impact, causing harm to facilities or institutions. Additionally, it is noteworthy that certain jurisdictions do not take a strong stance against crimes such as genocide and massacres.

The United Nations recognises the connection between terrorist acts, methods, and practices in all their forms and manifestations with human rights, as it considers them “activities aimed at undermining human rights and fundamental and democratic freedoms, threatening the territorial integrity and security of states, and destabilizing legitimately constituted governments, and that the international community should take the necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism.” The conventions also affirm that “terrorism cannot and should not be linked to any religion, nationality, civilization, or ethnic group.” The document also stresses “the need to address the conditions that lead to the spread of terrorism.” ([United Nations \(2009\)](#), Study on Anti-Terrorism Legislation in the Arab Gulf States and Yemen) On its third, fourth, and fifth pages, the document provided a comprehensive action plan to address the issue of terrorism. Notably, on its seventh page, it highlighted the crucial involvement of regional organisations in the fight against terrorism. It also mentioned the Arab Convention to Combat Terrorism and the efforts of the Arab Conference dedicated to combating terrorism, the Gulf Cooperation Council Agreement, and the Conference Organization Treaty. Islamic jurisprudence, the Mecca Statement, and the decision of the Council of the International Islamic Jurisprudence Academy are all important aspects to consider.

In 1998, the Arab countries issued the Arab Convention on Combating Terrorism. This was a significant milestone because it provided a comprehensive definition and description of terrorism crime in an international forum, which states: “Every act or threat of violence, whatever its motives, occurs in the implementation of an individual criminal project or collective and aims to spread terror among people, intimidate them by harming them, endangering their lives or security, harming the environment or any public or private facility or property, occupying or seizing them, or exposing a national resource to danger.” This agreement introduces new provisions that classify actions that harm the environment and national resources as acts of terrorism. Additionally, the occupation or seizure of public property is also deemed a form of terrorism. Despite the lack of intimidation associated with this occupation, it is worth noting that the definition of terrorism can vary in different Arab countries. As we mentioned earlier, the inclusion of specific details in the definition of terrorism can carry ideological or political implications ([Ezz El-Din, 1986](#)).

Conclusion

Implications

Religious Implications

Linking religion to terrorism based on its inclusion in holy practices is not an accurate definition, but rather an inference. Acts of religious terrorism are typically carried out in response to theological demands or as a means of defence. Transcendental dimensions and the individuals involved in them are unfortunately associated with acts of terrorism, operating without the usual moral and political boundaries that constrain other terrorists. Religious

extremists view indiscriminate acts of violence as morally wrong and ineffective. Religious practices are carried out based on their beliefs in justifying authority, which is communicated to individuals through sacred texts or other religious leaders who claim to represent the divine. According to [Hoffman \(1995\)](#), while each religion may have its own implications, the fundamental idea remains the same: killing innocent people in the name of religion, politics, or morality is not a divine act but rather an expression of human extremism. There is a common association between Muslims and terrorism, as acts of terrorism conducted by some Muslims in the name of Jihad are widely considered acts of terrorism worldwide.

Attributing actions to a specific religion does not validate or justify the actions carried out by various religions worldwide. Both Muslims and non-Muslims employ different approaches when conducting these acts. This phenomenon can be attributed to the divergence in opinions, moral principles, and approaches, as well as the varying perspectives on the conflict in terms of positivity and negativity. Before discussing the concept of terrorism, it is important to acknowledge the need to understand whether it involves distorting facts or reality. The concept of terrorism, though deeply ingrained in our society, is a result of the ideological culture fostered by religious intellectuals and institutions. These individuals have dedicated years to shaping these unfortunate consequences ([Ezz El-Din, 1986](#)). The entire notion of terrorism extends beyond those who wield guns and weapons. It also encompasses the individuals and groups who spread rumours and incite others to carry out these acts ([Fouda, 1992](#)). Globally, we often attribute terrorism to religion, but in reality, it is a manifestation of material behaviour. Nowadays, it is carried out with the assistance of skilled strategists, purveyors of misinformation, and individuals who perform the acts. A notable instance of this implication is the actions taken by the US State Department during the war in Iraq, where they propagated the idea of weapons of mass destruction and supported terrorism. This suggests that the actions carried out by America against Iraq can be considered acts of terrorism without any religious affiliations.

Political Implications

Globally, terrorists carry out their acts for political gains or motives. Bush carried out his actions in response to the 9/11 event. Bush's instigation of the war against Iraq bears a resemblance to the terrorist acts of 9/11. The international community views terrorist crimes as unjustifiable. America attempted to rationalize their acts of terrorism as acts of war, claiming they were retaliating against the initial crimes perpetrated by Saddam Hussein, such as the events of 9/11. Coercing the entire nation into participating in this act led to widespread suffering for Muslims across all countries. Muslims in America faced the repercussions of acts of terrorism perpetrated by another individual. Countries with a strong academic focus expressed their concerns over the crimes committed at the United Nations and appealed for the safe return of individuals to their home countries. A political strategy against various Muslim countries led to a justification for war. Under the cover of war, America silenced the voices of individuals and

other nations. Ironically, acts of terrorism often serve as a political tool for countries to manipulate and gain leverage over others. In the realm of politics, actions often seem to have no discernible cause, but rather result in unexpected consequences. While we cannot justify effects, we can understand their historical significance and logical reasoning.

Once terrorism was acknowledged as a significant issue, countries' political focus shifted towards countering it and devising alternative strategies for combating war and terror, distinct from those implemented during the Bush administration. Politics often resorts to violence and war crimes, fully aware of the consequences they will inevitably face. The American war against terrorism has been a significant event for many years and continues to impact the stability of the global situation. The International Criminal Court failed to take action against the war crimes committed by America, which were carried out without regard for any legal constraints. However, in contrast to the United States, other countries cannot evade legal consequences for their war crimes. The war on terrorism is unquestionably unjustifiable. The nature of such a war does not necessitate any form of justification or public explanation for its initiation (Nuzzo, 2004). Political advantages are perceived, leading certain groups to engage in war crimes against both foreign and domestic targets, often with the aim of instigating conflicts in other regions.

Legal Implications

It is the responsibility of the law and jurisdiction to take appropriate measures against acts of terrorism. However, no legal action was taken when Bush disregarded moral principles, principles of peace and humanity, international regulations, political norms, and laws pertaining to war and crime. The fear associated with acts of terrorism suggests that they operate beyond the boundaries of legal systems and jurisdictions. It is not possible to define it at an international level. Addressing terrorism requires a military approach rather than relying solely on legal or jurisdictional measures. The fight against terrorism operates outside the boundaries of conventional law, highlighting the chaotic nature of these acts (Nagle, 2011). After this discussion, it's clear that people no longer view terrorism solely as a criminal act that calls for conflict. Instead, numerous nations have exploited it as a justification to pass laws that suppress dissenting voices, particularly Islamic groups in Arab countries. Following the events of September 11, 2001, President Bush initiated a war with the aim of combating terrorism. In response, Arab governments started to suppress popular opposition under the guise of fighting against terrorism. In addition, this allowed governments that refused to enter into this coalition to be described as "involved in terrorism" (Garudi, 2004). Thus, terrorism is no longer carried out by anti-government elements who see terrorism as a means to achieve their own goals, or terrorism as an asset to political movements that use violence as the only way to achieve their goals, but rather "terrorism is a process carried out by the authority to strengthen its grip on society" (Al-Muatasem, 2019).

Limitations

Terrorism encompasses violent actions, whether committed by individuals, groups, or states. Regardless of the perpetrator, such behaviour is criminal in nature. In the realm of academia, it is important to recognise that a person can be labelled as a terrorist not solely based on their direct involvement in violent acts, but rather by their active promotion, endorsement, planning, support, and sympathy towards such behaviour, both within and beyond borders. The variety of these types determines the nature of terrorist behaviour, methods used, and objectives pursued. Given its elusive nature and enigmatic objectives, it remains a mysterious presence in modern global society.

Regardless of the various theories used to define terrorism, it is clear that all political definitions of terrorism are essentially a compilation of historical crimes committed by individuals, groups, or governments. In the modern era, it is important to remember the grave atrocities committed against various communities. These include the crimes against the Armenians, the actions of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the brutalities carried out by Stalin and Hitler, the ongoing situation in Myanmar, and the tragic events that occurred in Ahmedabad involving the Hindus. Regardless of the definition used, it is evident that acts of terrorism can be attributed to individuals, groups, or governments, regardless of their specific characteristics or origins. The Americans caused the deaths and instilled fear among numerous vulnerable civilians. There is no greater tragedy than the loss of innocent lives during armed conflicts, especially when they are under the protection of international law. Despite the abundance of information available, our understanding remains constrained, preventing us from engaging in a comprehensive discussion about the nature of terrorism carried out under the guise of freedom and power. The narrow understanding of terrorism often constrains the discussion surrounding criminal acts in international law. The only viable solution to combat terrorism on an international scale is through military action.

Future Research

Further studies could explore the Arab world, societies with racist tendencies (such as Zionism), religious societies with extreme beliefs (like ISIS), and political societies with extremist ideologies (such as Iran). In comparison, those who deviate from societal norms, those who are considered outsiders, atheists, and the uninformed, may seem relatively more benevolent. Regarding Zionism, it symbolises state terrorism backed by the world's largest country, which purports to champion democracy, freedom, and human rights. The actions of jihadist organisations can be seen as a deliberate and coordinated effort to undermine the Arab world. These groups, regardless of their names and affiliations, are causing significant harm. It is concerning that the international community seems to be either supporting or claiming to fight against these organisations, while the world watches in silence and feels powerless. Further investigation is necessary to gain insight into the characteristics of these individuals and their influence on the diplomatic ties among multiple nations.

The State of Iran does not oppose the Arabs based on their Sunni beliefs, but rather opposes the Sunnis because of their Arab identity. The historical victory of the Arabs over the Persians continues to have a lasting impact on their relationship, leaving a lingering effect on the Iranian perspective, both in the past and in the present. The lasting impact of that defeat still lingers in memory, creating a deep and unresolved wound. This has resulted in a complex and strained relationship between Iranians and Arabs, characterised by a mix of animosity and resentment. There is a sense of superiority towards the Arabs, yet Iranians cannot distance themselves completely due to the Arab origins of Islam and the obligation to practice it. His religious identity is in Arabic. This sense of internal conflict is what leads to a change in Iranian behaviour, resulting in a tendency towards engaging in terrorist activities within Arab culture. Additional research can uncover the primary cause of conflict and explore potential solutions to promote peace between nations. Additionally, the significance of the issue to non-Muslim countries will underscore the conflict between two Muslim nations in the perspective of nations outside the Muslim community.

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