DEFINITIONAL DILEMMAS OF TERRORISM AS A SOCIOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL PHENOMENON

Sosyal ve Politik Bir Olgu Olarak Terörizmle İlgili Tanımsal Çıkmazlar

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——————— **Özet** ———————

Terörizm kavramı tarih boyunca değişik anlamlar kazanmıştır. Terörizm, terörist, terörist grup ve terörist eylemlerle ilgili olarak literatürde yer alan çok farklı tanımlamalar, tanımsal çıkmazın/ikilemin boyutunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bugün, bu sorunun en büyük olumsuz etkisi, tanımsal ikilemlerin terörle mücadelede karışıklıklar, belirsizlikler ve zafiyetler oluşturmasıdır. Alanyazın incelemesine dayanan bu makale, terörizm ve ilgili kavramların temel karakteristikleri ve bunların kavramsallaştırılması konusu üzerine odaklanarak terörizm olgusunu incelemektedir. Terörizm kavramının tanımlanmasındaki çıkmazların nedenleri ve bunun terörle mücadeleye olumsuz etkileri de makalede tartışılmaktadır. Bu makalede ayrıca; tarihsel süreçte terörizm ve terörizm kavramının gelişimi üzerinde kısaca durulmakta ve terörizm tipolojisi ile ilgili çıkmazlar ve terörizm ile diğer suç türleri arasındaki farklar da tartışılmaktadır. Makale, bahse konu kavramlarla ilgili kapsayıcı ve evrensel bir tanımlamaya olan acil ihtiyaca vurgu yaparak tamamlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Terörizm, Terörist, Terör eylemleri, Terörist grup, Terörizm tipolojisi, Terörizm ve normal suçlar.

Abstract

The concept of terrorism has gained different meanings throughout the history. Different definitions of the terms of terrorism, terrorist, terrorist group and terrorist activity in the literature show the extent of definitional dilemmas. Today, the

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biggest negative impact of this problem is that definitional dissensus creates confusions, uncertainties and weaknesses in counter-terrorism activities. This article which is based on literature review examines terrorism phenomenon by focusing on basic characteristics and conceptualization of "terrorism" and related concepts. It then discusses reasons of definitional dilemmas and its negative impacts in the fight against terrorism. This article also briefly describes the development of terrorism and terrorism concept in the historical context and concludes with a description of dilemmas in terrorism typologies and distinction between terrorism and other types of crimes. It concludes by accentuating urgent need of an inclusive and universal definition of the term/s.

Key Words: Terrorism, Terrorist, Terrorist activity, Terrorist group, Terrorism typology, Terrorism and ordinary crime.

Introduction

Terrorism is a significant social and political phenomenon, but there is still dissension among politicians, experts, academicians and law enforcement officers on the meaning of the "terrorism" term and related concepts such as "terrorist", "terrorist group" and "terrorist activity". A strong body of empirical knowledge on terrorism is growing, but significant problems still remain regarding having a common definition of the term.

The concept of terrorism has gained different meanings throughout the history. The history has witnessed various violent events in different periods of time in different parts of the world which were labeled as terrorism either at that time or later. Accordingly, Oliverio and Lauderdale (2005:164) see terrorism as "a creature of its own time and place". The Zealots' use of chemicals against Romans, the Thugs' violent attacks against Indians, the Assassins' murder of the Christian crusaders are some of the historical events that are accepted as early roots of modern terrorism. Today, leftist, nationalist, separatist and religiously motivated movements carry out violent activities in various countries around the world which are also named as terrorist acts or movements. It is important to have brief information about these historical facts in order to understand how the meaning/definition of terrorism has changed in the history.

Varying definitions and conceptualizations of the terms of terrorism, terrorist, terrorist group and terrorist activity in the literature show the

extent of definitional dilemmas. So that exploration of reasons of definitional dilemmas and negative impacts of these in an effective and worldwide fight against terrorism is crucial.

In order to figure out definitional dilemmas, it is also essential to address some distinctive characteristics of terrorism phenomenon compared to other types of crimes. Terrorists and offenders (of other type of crimes) usually commit same type of illegal activities such as kidnapping, robbery, shooting or murder, but in fact they have different characteristics and motives that must be explained in detail. Another important issue with regard to definitional dilemmas is the terrorism typologies that include a wide array of classifications in the literature. Most of these typologies, however, do not have high degree of functional utility that makes it difficult to have clear picture of terrorism in mind.

With aforementioned issues in mind, the main purpose of this study is to discuss definitional dilemmas of terrorism phenomenon. More specifically, this study aims at reviewing; different meanings of terrorism in the history, basic characteristics of terrorism, and dilemmas in conceptualization and definition of terrorism and related concepts. Also, this study attempts to explain reasons of definitional dilemmas that end up failures in counter-terrorism efforts. Lastly, dilemmas in terrorism typologies and distinctions between terrorism other type of crimes are other topics discussed in the study in order to have clear and full understanding about the term.

1. Terrorism and Terrorism Concept in the History

A brief focus on the historical development of terrorism is necessary to see the characteristics of different historical events named as terrorism and so the development of terrorism concept in the history.

Terrorism has meant different things in different periods of the history. As Oliverio and Lauderdale (2005:164) note "Terrorism is not a discrete topic that can be easily and conveniently examined apart from the political, social, and economic context in which it takes place. Terrorism is a creature of its own time and place." The roots of terrorism extend to two-thousand years back. At that time, terrorism was religiously motivated. In A.D. 66-73, a millenarian Jewish sect fought against the Roman Empire's occupation of Israel. The zealots relied on ruthless assassination campaigns against Roman legionnaire, and Jewish citizens who were blamed with betrayal. They tried to have a psychological influence on their targets. The zealots also used chemicals to poison wells and granaries used by the Romans. Then, starting from

seventh century to mid-nineteenth century, the Thugs terrorized India. The Thugs believed that through their murders, they were serving the Hindu goddess of terror. They killed more than one million people. The terrorism history also witnessed the Assassins. Between A.D. 1090 and 1272, the Assassins who were the radical Shi'a Ismaili sect fought against the Christian crusaders who were trying to conquer today's Syria and Iran. Murder was a kind of holy act for them. The Assassins were eating hashish before murdering people. Therefore they were named as Assassin which meant "hashish eater" (Hoffman, 2006).

The first modern revolution took place in France (1789-1795) that the power was transformed from the nobility to the middle class. The violence in France at that time is known as the "the reign of terror." It was the first time that the term terrorism used. It was used to describe the bloody attacks and actions of the new government against the French nobles, their families and sympathizers. The 1800s witnessed the struggle of the European democrats who sought democracy in the Europe. They, however, did not have unity in their aspirations. That is, while some of them wanted constitutional democracies, others targeted to eradicate the upper class's power. In 1848, these democrats who used violent tactics and involved in several revolutions were called as radical democrats. They were also labeled as terrorists by the media and the governments. Since they sought equal distribution of the wealth, they, afterward, were called as socialists. Their suppression by the governmental forces gave rise to increased level of revolutionary movements that included assassinations, planting bombs, setting factories on fire (White, 2006).

The rise of the anarchism is another period in the history of terrorism. Until the 1850s, the radical democrats who were separated as militant and more peaceful socialists named their movements as anarchism. French anarchist Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) sought democracy for all classes through the elimination of government[1]. This elimination, nevertheless, would not include violent ways. But, contrary to Proudhon's ideas, many anarchists advocated violent ways to eliminate governments that in the 1880s they started to assassinate governmental leaders. The anarchists were called as terrorists by governments and upper classes. Anarchists were active in Russia as in Europe. They founded an anarchist organization named as the People's Will (Narodnaya Volya). This organization was active between 1878 and 1881 and responsible for assassinating Russian leaders including Tsar

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[1] Contrary to Proudhon who saw the government as an evil which needed to be destroyed, the Communist leader Karl Marx advocated the necessity of the centralized government and saw it as a necessary evil (White, 2006).

Alexander II and governmental officials. They aimed at ending the tsarist autocracy and appalling injustices associated with it. As in France, they wanted to eliminate class distinctions. Two important names as anarchists at that time were Mikhail Bakunin and Sergey Nechaev who were inspired by later revolutionaries. In the late 19th century and early 20th century revolutionary movements continued and reached the peak level when Lenin with the help of Germans gained the control of the Bolsheviks (the Communist revolutionaries) and used terrorism as a primary means to gain power and remove the bourgeois and government (Weinberg and Eubank, 2004; White, 2006).

In the last periods of the 19th century, many parts of the world including European countries and America experienced "propaganda by deed" and "philosophy of bomb." Having the idea of propaganda by deed anarchist groups and individual anarchists murdered some high level political figures, bureaucrats, police officials and businessmen in order to initiate popular revolutionary movements to end capitalist states. They used bombs and guns against selected targets. Violent attacks such as bombing were considered as the best way for effective propaganda (Weinberg and Eubank, 2004).

As well as revolutionary movements, beginning from the 1800s, nationalist movements have appeared. For instance, in the West, nationalists utilizing the anarchists' tactics fought against the forces occupied their lands. Terrorism in Ireland might be shown as a good example of the nationalistic terrorism. After the 1960s left wing groups emerged. Many of them have had revolutionary ideology (i.e. DHKP/C) and some used nationalistic/separatist approaches (i.e. PKK). Today, religiously motivated terrorism is in the agenda of many countries no matter developed or undeveloped. They challenge the peace and security systems of the democratic nations. They also have international characteristics with their connections across the world (White 2003 and 2006).

2. Basic Characteristics of Terrorism

Throughout the history, terrorism has gained some general characteristics that appear essential to address in order to have complete understanding of the phenomenon. Stern (2003) points out two characteristics of terrorism that make distinction between terrorism and other type of violent activities: first, noncombatants are the target of the terrorism; and second, terrorism is violence for a dramatic purpose. In this manner, bringing about fear in the target's mind is generally more important than

the physical and material damages. Ferracuti (1982:135, cited in Hazelip, 1980) lists 12 characteristics of terrorism and terrorists:

> "1- Violence is necessary to overthrow repression. 2- There is no limit to the extent of violence justified. 3- Action should clearly convey their purpose. 4- Reprisal killings are counterproductive. 5- Ruthlessness and extraordinary violence are essential to terrorist success. 6- Government's failures can be used to gain popular support, 7- Terrorism exposes the repressive side of government. 8- Terrorists aim to incapacitate government directly or indirectly. 9- Secrecy is important to terrorist operations. 10- Systematic planning and executions are critical to terrorist success. 11- Small-scale, persistent attacks are most effective. 12- Terrorists are dedicated to destruction for the sake of their cause".

In this list, violence appears to be the most significant and common feature of terrorism. Tilly (2004:9) contends that there are three main signals sent through terrorist activities: "vulnerability of the target, existence of the terrorist group, and the group's capacity to strike again. These signals are sent to "the targets themselves, potential allies of the perpetrators, and third parties that might cooperate with one or the other."

Terrorist groups have some distinctive characteristics compared to other violent groups. Smith (1994) emphasizes on the clandestine nature of terrorist groups as one of the fundamental characteristics of terrorism. Cell type structures that generally consist of 3-5 persons, nick names given to the members, communication with secret codes, or leaderless networks are some examples of clandestine structure of terrorist groups. Smith goes on to indicate that terrorists need political and propagandistic activities to have public support to carry out the activities and recruit new members. As a consequence, terrorist groups are faced with dilemma of maintaining secrecy and publicity. More publicity may help terrorist groups make propaganda that may result in participation of new members. However, more publicity may also be problematic since it may endanger the secrecy which is necessary for the security of the terrorist group. Gurr's (1988) analysis of terrorist groups revealed that most terrorist organizations are small and do not live long. The main reason of this short-term existence of terrorist groups is that they, usually, are not able to get support of the public which is essential to challenge the authority or existing political system. Those which manage to gain the public support become effective for long years (i.e. ETA, IRA).

Another characteristic of terrorism is that terrorist organizations are generally hierarchical systems in pyramid type structures. White (2006, citing to Fraser and Fulton, 1984) explains that there are four levels in the

hierarchical structure. The first level is the leadership cadre at the top of the pyramid that is responsible for making decisions, setting policies, and planning strategy and operations. The second level in the hierarchy is the active cadre who are responsible for implementing the mission of the terrorist group. The third level in the hierarchy is the active supporters who are critical to terrorist campaigns. They keep the terrorist in the field and provide logistical support. The passive supporters are at the lowest level of the pyramid with the biggest number of individuals. They do not join terrorist activities. Their presence gives power to terrorist groups in their claims.

Unlike, this traditional structure of terrorist groups, in recent years, many terrorist groups (i.e. Al-Qaeda) have adapted a new structure which is known as "leaderless network" or "leaderless resistance." It includes several terrorist cells that do not have connections with each other and do not belong to a chain of command. This kind of formation gives them more secrecy. Although they do not have connection, they, however, share same ideology and philosophy.

3. Conceptualizations and Definitions of Terrorism and Related Concepts

The terrorism literature features extensive discussions on the definition of terrorism, terrorist, terrorist group, and terrorist activity and presents varying conceptualizations of the term.

3.1. Terrorism

Despite the recent proliferation of interest in terrorism, there is not yet conceptual clarity or disciplinary unity in the definition of terrorism. Governments, national and international organizations, including the FBI, United Nations (UN), and European Union (EU), individual researchers, policymakers, experts, and security specialists tend to define terrorism according to their own contextual interpretations and experiences (Hoffman, 2006; Martin, 2006; Schmid and Jongman, 1988; Smith, 1994; White, 2006). For instance, while many definitions stress the "political" aspect of the term (Enders and Sandler, 2006; Hoffman, 1998, 2006; Laqueur, 1987; Turk, 1982), some definitions also include targets (Gibbs, 1989) and social motives (Enders and Sandler, 2006) of terrorists, and terrorism's psychological effects (Crenshaw, 1983; Weinberg and Eubank, 2004). These discussions, however, have not yet led to conceptual clarity and unity on the subject (Smith, 1994).

Many studies argued that terrorism is a political concept. According to Hoffman (2006:2) terrorism is "fundamentally and inherently political" which use violence in pursuit of political change. Turk (1982:119) defines terrorism as "an ideology or strategy justifying terror-defined as lethal or nonlethal violence intended to deter political opposition by maximizing far, specifically by random targeting". Laqueur (1987) indicates that terrorism includes unlawful use of force against innocent people to have political change.

As well as political motive, Enders and Sandler (2006:3) include a social motive in their definition, "Terrorism is the premeditated use or threat to use violence by individuals or subnational groups in order to obtain political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of the immediate victims".

Target of terrorists is among the main concerns in some other definitions. In this respect, Gibbs (1989:330) defines terrorism as an "illegal violence or threatened violence directed against human or nonhuman objects…". Gibbs points out that not only human beings but also nonhuman objects might be the target of the terrorism. Some legal and academic definitions posit that terrorism is a sort of violence that is carried out to have psychological effects on individuals and societies (Crenshaw, 1983; Weinberg and Eubank, 2004).

National and international organizations and legal documents also present diverse definitions. Terrorism is defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as "...the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives." The FBI further classifies the definition of terrorism as domestic and international terrorism depending on the origin of terrorists, location of their bases and objectives of the terrorist organization (The FBI, 2001). The US Department of Defense use the definition of "The calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological" (The US Department of Defense, 2001:544). The United States Code defines terrorism as "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents."[2] This definition was adapted by the US State Department with some additions to the end of it; that is "…, usually

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[2] The United States Code, [section 2656f(d) of Title 22], retrieved October 24, 2007 from http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/65464.pdf.

intended to influence an audience" (Hoffman, 2006). Given the content of these definitions, it could be concluded that the US definitions are narrow and legalistic (Martin, 2006). It is also interesting that although all these definitions belong to same government's agencies-the US, all of them to a considerable extent have different contents. For instance, whereas one of the components of the US State Department's definition is the premeditated nature of terrorism and it does not exist in the FBI's definition, the FBI's definition considers the psychological dimension of terrorism which is not included in the US State Department's definition. Also, while the US State Department identifies noncombatants as the targets of terrorism, the FBI's definition included broader categories such as governments, the civilian population and even properties.

The UK government's definition in the Terrorism Act 2000 is "The use of serious violence against persons or property, or the threat to use such violence to intimidate or coerce a government, the public, or any section of the public for political, religious, or ideological ends" (Silke, 2004). It appears that it is similar to the US agencies' definition.

Turkey, one of the countries that fights against terrorism for long years, has a long definition which includes all necessary conditions to consider an act as terrorism. Article # 1 of the Turkish Anti-terrorism Law[3] (1991, 2006) defines terrorism as;

> "…any kind of act carried out by one or more persons belonging to an organization by means of force and violence, using the methods of pressure, terror, intimidation, oppression or threat with the aim of changing the characteristics of the Republic defined in its Constitution and its political, legal, social, secular and economic regime; impairing undividable integrity of the State with its territory and nation; endangering the existence of the Turkish State and Republic; weakening or destroying or overtaking the State's authority; demolishing the fundamental rights and freedoms, and damaging the national and international security, public order or general health of the State."

As an example to international approach to the concept, the European Union's (the EU) definition might be discussed. The EU draws a general frame pertinent to terrorism for the use of member states. Accordingly, the EU provides a list of serious crimes against persons and property and then complements that these offenses might be considered as terrorism "given their nature or context, may seriously damage a

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[3] The Turkish Anti-terrorism Law. Application Date: 4/12/1991. Law No: 3713 (Last amendment on 6/29/2006, Law No: 5532).

country or an international organization where committed with the aim of: seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a Government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization"[4] (Official Journal of the European Communities, 2002).

In one ambitious attempt to compile and synthesize the contents of diverse definitions of terrorism, Schmid and Jongman (1988:5-6) identified 109 different definitions of terrorism, and counted the frequency of definitional elements, finding twenty-two (22) elements common to the 109 definitions. The most frequent definitional elements were "violence /force (83.5%), political (65%), fear, terror emphasized (51%), threat (47%), effects and reactions (41.5%), victim-target differentiation (37.5%), purposive, planned, systematic, organized action (32%), method of combat, strategy, tactic (30.5%), extra-normality, in breach of accepted rules, without humanitarian constraints (30%)…". However, the authors' themselves believed that the compiled list did not contain all the elements necessary for a good definition. In a similar vein, Sauter and Carafano (2005:66) synthesized the definitions of terrorism and found that many of them contained following elements "conducted by sub-national groups; targeted at random noncombatant victims; directed at one set of victims in part to create fear among a larger audience; aimed at coercing governments or populations; planned to get publicity; motivated by political, ideological, or religious beliefs; based on criminal actions". Martin (2006:47) summarizes the common features of the definition of terrorism as "the use of illegal force, sub-national actors, unconventional methods, political motives, attacks against soft civilian and passive military targets, acts aimed at purposefully affecting an audience".

There are further significant definitional diversities in the concepts of *terrorist, terrorist group,* and *terrorist activities.*

3.2. Terrorist and Terrorist Group

Payne (2000) defines a terrorist as "an individual or group who uses acts of violence and intimidation desired social, political, or religious outcome". She stresses that in the American society, a terrorist has a broader definition. That is, an individual or a group that uses violent

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[4] Article #1 of Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism.

tactics against the domestic and foreign policies of the US might be considered as terrorist. The US Department of Defense (2001:544) describes a terrorist as "an individual who commits an act or acts of violence or threatens violence in pursuit of political, religious, or ideological objectives."

The U.S. Department of Defense defines a terrorist group in the course of defining terrorism, as "any number of terrorists who assemble together, have a unifying relationship, or are organized" to carry out the acts described above in the definition of terrorist is called as terrorist group by the US Department of Defense. According to the EU, terrorist group is "a structured group of more than two persons, established over a period of time and acting in concert to commit terrorist offences" [5] (Official Journal of the European Communities, 2002). In Turkish Anti-terrorism Law, the term terrorist is defined as a person who takes part in an organization that is formed for committing the crimes mentioned in the first article mentioned above. There is no distinction between a person who commits the aforementioned crime(s) alone or with other members of a terrorist group, or who does not commit any crimes at all, but is a member of a terrorist group. The same article specifies that even if a person is not a member of a terrorist group, if that person commits abovementioned crimes on behalf of a terrorist group, he or she is considered a terrorist.

3.3. Terrorist Activities

Terrorism literature also contains diverse perspectives to describe *terrorist activities*. *Terrorist activities* range from legal or acceptable type of actions, such as oral protests, petitions, or demonstrations, to illegal but mostly tolerated activities such as illegal demonstrations, vandalism, seizure of property, and violent and unacceptable forms of acts such as sabotage, assassination, kidnapping, bombing, murder, mass murders or use of WMD (Ferracuti, 1982). The FBI's (2001) definition of terrorism related activities include three important concepts; a terrorist incident, a suspected terrorist incident, and a terrorism prevention. A terrorist incident is carried out to meet political and social objectives through a violent act or an act which is dangerous for human life, against the laws, or coercive for government and civilians. A suspected terrorist incident refers to a potential act of terrorism that the responsible individual or terrorist groups are not known at that time. Terrorism prevention denotes

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[5] Article #2 of Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism.

a successfully interdicted violent act which is planned by a known terrorist group or an individual.

The EU provides a list of offenses that are considered as terrorist offenses. Some of these offenses are: attacks upon person's life and physical integrity, kidnapping, hostage taking, extensive destruction to a government or public facility, seizure of aircraft, ships or other transportation means, manufacture, possession, acquisition, transport, supply or use of weapons including nuclear, biological and chemical, release of dangerous substance, disrupting the fundamental natural sources. In order to label these offenses as terrorist offenses they should be committed with the aim of "seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization" (Official Journal of the European Communities, 2002)

4. Reasons of Definitional Dilemmas

There are numerous reasons that thwart having a common definition of terrorism:

First, there has been a frequent change in the meaning, and so it meant different things in different periods of the history (Hoffman, 1998; Laquer, 1999).

Second, it has a derogatory meaning; once a person or a group is named as a terrorist, that person or group is politically and socially degraded. So that many people would not easily attempt to give this label to those individuals or groups that engage in illegal acts and movements. Accordingly, White (2006:3) emphasizes that "routine crimes assume greater social importance when they are described as terrorism, and political movements can be hampered when their followers are believed to be terrorists".

Third, as Smith (1994:5) stated, "scholars have defined, refined, and redefined terrorism to accommodate personnel preferences regarding what should or should not be labeled terroristic". In other words, different perceptions, preferences, priorities, and particular interests of those who define the term affect the content of the definition. As White (2006) exemplifies, while criminal codes might have priority in the law enforcement agencies' definitions, governments might focus on opponent movements that threat the security of the nation. In like manner, a group

might be seen as hero or terrorist by different countries depending on the countries' self-interests. For example, while Lebanese Hezbollah is a legal organization for Lebanese people and many Arabic countries, it is considered as a terrorist group by Israel and many Western countries.

Fourth, perception of a target is an important factor in terms of defining the concept. If the target is military forces, some people would not call it as terrorism. To them, terrorism occurs when civilians are targeted. However, others do not discriminate between the civilians and military forces as targets while defining the term (White, 2006). On the other hand, some definitions also include destruction and damage to the nonhuman subjects such as buildings, vehicles, animals, or crops (Gibbs, 1989).

Fifth, terrorism is an abstract word, and abstract nature of the term creates variations in the approaches of those who define the term (Schmid and Jongman, 1988; White, 2003).

Sixth, the political, geographical, social, and cultural contexts in which terrorism take place affect the definitional approaches (Oliverio and Lauderdale, 2005). These and similar perspectives and assessments make it difficult to reach a consensus on the definition of terrorism concept.

5. Negative Impacts of Definitional Dilemmas

Lack of a widely accepted definition of the term is troublesome for several reasons. Definitional dissensus can create confusion in counter-terrorism activities. Due to different approaches to the term, one's terrorist becomes other's freedom fighter, rebel, or warrior which results in lack of joint efforts and response of governments against terrorism. This situation sometimes gives rise to toleration and even support to terrorism in other countries.

A common definition appears to be very important in terms of ensuring effectiveness of the national and international legislation and punishments, implementing successful international cooperation, stopping state sponsorship of terrorism, receiving public support for counter terrorism activities, and improving public relations (Sezgin, 2007). Today, there are some attempts to ensure common grounds between the states in the fight against terrorism, but it is not mature enough to put these shared perspectives into daily practices. For instance, despite similarities in the definition of terrorism used by UK and the US, the lists of terrorist organizations proscribed by these two countries create

the potential for confusion, impediments to collaborative international responses to the problem, and may promote tolerance or support for terrorism in different countries. For example, thirteen (13) different terrorist organizations (i.e. PKK, Al-Qaeda, Hamas, ETA) are included in both the US and UK list of terrorist organizations, however, 15 terrorist organizations on the US list do not appear on the UK list, and 8 terrorist organizations identified by the UK were not proscribed by the US. This means that some of these organizations may operate, raise funds, conduct activities and even recruit new members freely in the country where they were not listed as terrorists while being pursued by or in another allied country. Silke (2004) rightly asserts that disagreement between two close allies indicates significant challenges in how the problem might be addressed by diverse regimes. Besides, there is a significant variation in the definitions within the US government itself. For instance, one component of the US State Department's definition is the premeditated nature of terrorism; this element does not exist in the FBI's definition. The FBI's definition considers the psychological dimension of terrorism which is not addressed in the US State Department's definition. While the US State Department's definition identifies noncombatants as the targets of terrorism, the FBI's definition included broader categories, such as governments, the civilian population and even properties.

It is also necessary to note that dissensus on the definition of terrorism negatively influences the studies on terrorism. The lack of a common definition prevents uniform data collection, reducing the availability of reliable findings and rendering scientific studies on terrorism questionable and ambiguous (Silke, 2004).

6. Dilemmas in Terrorism Typologies

There is a wide array of classifications of terrorism in the literature. Smith (1994) examines terrorist groups under three categories: Left wing, right wing, and single issue terrorism. Similarly, Alkan (2002) divides terrorist groups in Turkey into 3 categories of left wing, right wing and separatist. The FBI (2001) classifies terrorist groups as domestic and international terrorist groups. Hoffman (2006) builds his argument on the typologies of religious, ethno-nationalist/separatist, international, and state-sponsored terrorism. Martin (2006) employs a broader perspective while discussing terrorist formations: state terrorism (terrorism from above), dissident terrorism (terrorism from below), religious terrorism, left and right terrorism, criminal terrorism (profit oriented), and international terrorism. Flemming, Stohl and Schmid (1988) who examined different typologies used in the terrorism literature identified

four general categories of typologies: group-based classificatory schemes, motivational classificatory schemes, tactics and targets (underlying nature) based classificatory schemes, and origin- based classificatory schemes. Group based classification includes listings of different groups such as left wing, right wing, or nationalist terrorists. It simply, focuses on actors of the terrorism. Motivational typologies have analytic characteristics and mainly interested in figuring out the goals and motivations behind terrorist formations (i.e. religiously motivated, revolutionary). Unlike previous classification, tactics and targets based classifications are interested in terrorism rather than terrorists, and more specifically concentrates on tactics (i.e. kidnapping, hijacking) and targets (i.e. direct terrorism which is selective in targets, and indirect terrorism which refers to indiscriminate attacks) of the terrorist organizations. Origin-based typologies focus on the environment that terrorists operate in, historical roots of terrorist groups, and the institutional structure of terrorist organizations (i.e. anarchic-ideologues such as the Red Army Faction, or nationalist-secessionists such as the ETA of the Basques).

According to Flemming, Stohl and Schmid (1988) the best of them are those which are mutually exclusive, valid and reliable, and have high degree of functional utility. Mutually exclusive typologies are easy to assign a terrorist group to only one category. What makes a typology valid and reliable is that each terrorist group should be correctly labeled so as to fit in an adequate category by different persons. On the other hand, the characteristic of high degree of functional utility facilitate predicting different behaviors or actions of terrorist groups assigned to those categories. White (2003) notes that classification is advantageous because, it helps figure out the range of terrorist activities; it facilitates identification of terrorism that is to be analyzed; and it helps decide on the level of response. Yet, as White concludes, typologies are not solution for the definitional dilemmas.

7. Definitional Dilemmas between Terrorism and Other Type of Crimes

There are some distinctive features of terrorism that separate it from ordinary crimes and other type of crimes. Being aware of these distinctions is important for those who attempt to define terrorism. Although terrorists and ordinary criminals commit similar offenses such as murder, robbery, kidnapping, or shooting, the motive behind these offenses are not the same. While ordinary criminals are generally selfish that aim at obtaining money and material good for their self-use, terrorists

believe that they promote the ideology of the group by committing these kinds of crimes (Hoffman, 2006; Smith, 1994). Motivation behind the crime help security forces label individuals as terrorist. For instance, while the FBI does not recognize motive as an intrinsic element of any criminal offense, the motivation of terrorists is the most important factor for due investigations. That is, those who are identified as terrorists by the FBI are considered to commit crimes for political reasons (Smith, 1994).

For terrorists, the psychological impact of a terrorist incident is more important than the damage or casualty that occurs as a result of that incident. The ordinary criminals, however, do not aim at psychological impact. Unlike terrorists, the ordinary criminals, further, do not try to give message to the public so as to influence their opinion. The monetary gaining is the basic concern of the ordinary criminals in most cases. In addition, terrorists want to change the existing system and build a new system in direction of their ideologies. Nevertheless, such a big dream is not in the scope of the ordinary criminals, but just their self-interest. Another important dissimilarity is that whereas terrorists believe that they are the servants of a good cause which is believed to be in favor of the public, the ordinary criminals just serve their own material interests (Hoffman, 2006).

Contrary to terrorists, ordinary criminals tend to be opportunistic, impulsive, uncommitted, undisciplined and mostly untrained (except for career criminals). They usually do not plan their criminal activities and commit an offense when they have an opportunity. On the other hand, terrorists appear to be more focused, selective in targets of opportunity, planned, and committed to their ideology. Team based activities are more common for terrorists even if they operate as individuals. While terrorists are strongly connected to the cause and so could be volunteer for the risky missions, ordinary criminals are not well disciplined and does not want to get high risks (White, 2003 citing to Bodrero, 2000). As in the case of suicide bombers, terrorists might unhesitatingly give their lives for the ideology and the cause of the group which is very rare, if any, for the ordinary criminals. In many cases, it is possible to observe a kinship effect and support and even joint involvement in terrorist activities, but ordinary criminals usually do not get this kind of support. Terrorists groups have very complex hierarchical structures. They might have terrorist cells in different cities of a country and even in the different countries of the world. Ordinary criminal groups including gangs do not have such organizational structures. Besides, weapons used, operational tactics employed, targets selected, finance sources utilized, and many

other relevant subjects put a huge distance between terrorists, and ordinary criminals and criminal groups.

Given these dissimilarities, it seems important to emphasize that these differences might be one of the reasons of numerous problems that are faced in the study of terrorism. For instance, due to these diverse characteristics, it may not be that simple to utilize ordinary crime theories in the study of terrorism. Also, these disparities might entail different methodological approaches in terms of data collection and data analyzing.

Conclusion

The terrorism phenomenon has gained different meaning and characteristics throughout the history. Today, despite the recent proliferation of interest in terrorism, the literature still lacks conceptual clarity and disciplinary unity in the definition. Similarly, there are significant definitional diversities in the concepts of terrorism, terrorist, terrorist group and terrorist activity. Findings of this study point out the fact that the world urgently needs an inclusive and universally accepted definition of the term/s in a close future on which everybody, every organization or every country could have consensus.

Although typologies of terrorism in the literature is advantageous to a considerable extent in terms of figuring out the range of activities and deciding on the level of responses, these typologies are not solution for the definitional dilemmas. Due to the definitional dilemmas of terrorism phenomenon and related concepts, there appear confusions in counter terrorism activities because of failures in ensuring international cooperation, punishing those involving in terrorist crimes, stopping state sponsors, and gaining public support.

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