

An Introduction to Conflict, Violence, & Terrorism

Spring 2010
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MVZ
Spring 2010
First Meeting

- Course materials available on MU Information System (IS)
 - Lecture materials uploaded to IS along with many critical readings
- Today's agenda:
 - Distribution of syllabus, discussion of assignments, key dates, & course tasks;
 - **MIDTERM EXAM DATE: Wednesday, 21 April 2010**
 - **NO CLASS: Wednesday, 28 April 2010**
 - **READING WEEK: Wednesday 31 March 2010**
 - Where you can obtain research assistance: on the web, at UMD START program, U. of St. Andrews and Penn State U., and through CIAONet, EBSCO, & JSTOR.
 - Discussion of concepts to be introduced by readings & discussion

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- First central questions:
 - Why terror is critical & poorly understood, examples:
 - Identify one “terrorist” entity besides Al Qaeda, and identify counterterrorist entity (organization) besides the FBI/CIA.
 - What would be an objective definition of “terrorism”?
 - Discussion:
 - Almost ten years after 9/11 is the US more or less vulnerable to attacks on the “homeland”?
 - How would one measure/analyze “terrorism” and “counterterrorism”?
 - Why would one measure/analyze “terrorism” and “counterterrorism”?

The uncertainty of the danger belongs to the essence of terrorism.

-Jurgen Habermas

- Locating terrorism on “Spectrum of Conflict & Violence:”
 - Assumption: Conflict inherent part of all human civilizations, material universe. Correct assumption? Why/why not?
 - Conflict is managed through coercion, persuasion, reward, status

- The traditional Political Science “Spectrum of Conflict & Violence:”
 - Norms, Mores, Taboos
 - Civil Law
 - Criminal Law
 - Crime
 - Organized Crime
 - Disorders, Riots
 - Terrorism
 - Guerilla War
 - Low-level (intensity) war
 - Limited Conventional War
 - Unlimited Conventional War
 - Selective mass destruction
 - Mass destruction up to “omnicide”

Typology of Political Crimes

Perpetrator	Government	Antigovernment
Violent Crimes	Genocide Police Violence	Assassination Terrorism
Nonviolent Crimes	Corruption Illegal Domestic Surveillance	Sedition Treason Espionage/Spying Internal Security

One Typology of Terrorism

	Direct involvement of nationals of more than one state	No direct involvement of nationals of more than one state
Government controlled or directed	Interstate/state-sponsored terrorism	State terrorism
Non government controlled or directed	International/transnational terrorism	Domestic terrorism

- Are we in the “Dawn of a New Era” of terror, post-9/11?
 - Asymmetrical
 - New groups and new strategies and tactics adopted by terror organizations
 - Post-Cold War
 - Statelessness, state failure, correlates of econ progress
- Historical periodization of Political Violence & Terrorism
 - Antiquity
 - Roman Era
 - French Revolution
 - Modern Era

- Extremism versus Terrorism: Important differences
- Sources of terrorism
- Ideologies and terrorism
 - Key – ideological spectrum shifts over time
- Terrorism Confusion in Definition
 - Pejorative Term
 - *Mala prohibita vs. Mala in se*
 - Four moral questions
 - Terrorist or ‘freedom fighter’
 - Terror of “heroic sacrifice” (an army of one)
 - Extremism in defense of liberty
 - Destroy a village, city, country, planet in order to save it
 - Degree of Criminal Sophistication
 - Baumhammers, Kaczynski, Yousef
 - Al Qaeda (AQ)

- Contexts of Terrorism: Complex, Over-lapping
 - History
 - Conflict
 - Power
 - Repression
 - Media
 - Crime
 - Religion
 - Specific Forms:
 - Technical/Cyber/Narco - terrors
 - Bruce Jenkins / Walter Laqueur
 - Use or threatened use of force w/political objectives
 - Legal Definitions
 - Terrorism as a specific criminal act
 - US prosecution for acts, terrorism not separate crime
 - Martha Crenshaw
 - Terrorism vs. Revolutionary Violence