

## TYPES OF TERRORISM BY WORLD SYSTEM LOCATION

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**Abstract:** *Omar A. Lizardo and Albert J. Bergesen—Graduate Student and Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Arizona—offer a new typology of terrorist activity based on world system structural location of sub-state groups and state targets. Making use of this classification, they examine the dynamics of terrorist activity during the past 130 years by connecting it to larger processes of world systemic change. A clear pattern emerges from the analysis: during waves of decolonization and system reorganization, or during periods of hegemonic supremacy, terrorist activity is contained in either the periphery or the core structural locations of the system, and its ideological cast is pragmatic and relatively coherent (national liberation or radical leftist ideology). The international community typically considers this type of terrorist activity as internal and “domestic” and within the purview of the disciplinary forces of the nation states affected. But the systemic chaos produced by a shift toward a more competitive configuration of power under conditions of hegemonic decline, produces the “spillover” and projection of transnational terrorism from the semiperiphery to the core, in the form of ideologically ill-defined nihilist brands of terror. This leads toward a rhetorical re-definition of the terrorist threat, from a local problem to a general affront “against humanity and civilization” as both the anarchist wave of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the Arab-Islamic variant of the current religious wave have been characterized.*

Current research on terrorism<sup>1</sup> has focused primarily on issues of either normative definition or practical prevention. The little social scientific inquiry that has been directed at the subject has taken either an essentially reductionist psychological viewpoint, or has failed to get past the level of the internal group dynamics and idiographic case studies of isolated organizations (Reich 1990; Crenshaw 1992; Hoffman 1992). We have recently argued that

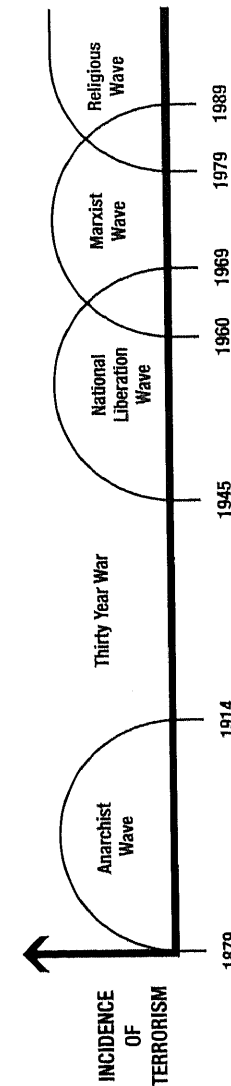
while approaches that focus on the micro to meso-level of social organization are useful, the study of terrorism will not be furthered until the level of analysis is ratcheted-up one more level, to that of the world-system and its reproductive dynamics (Bergesen and Lizardo 2002a). In this paper we aim to contribute recent debates on the classification of terrorist activity assuming a wider theoretical and historical perspective. We attempt to move beyond extant classificatory attempts by taking into account the larger international embedding of terrorist organizations and activities within the structural core/semiperiphery/periphery division of the world system. After introducing our new typology, we go on to discuss how the history of modern terrorism (1870 to the present) can be put in the context of recent historical transformations of the world system. Through this exercise we attempt to demonstrate that beyond specific local and organizational idiosyncrasies, modern terrorism—just like other forms of conflict such as war—is a *systemic phenomenon* inherently tied to the reproductive dynamics of capitalism and the interstate system (Bergesen 1985).

### A TYPOLOGY OF TERRORISM

Substatal terrorism<sup>2</sup> in the modern world-system possesses two major dimensions of variation: structural location in the international system, and ideological justification. Structural location varies along the three-tiered division of the world-system into a core, semiperiphery, and a periphery. Thus we may have terrorism perpetrated by core actors against core government organizations (Type-1). We may also observe terrorism that originates in the periphery or semiperiphery and is directed either at other peripheral or semiperipheral governments (Type-2) or terrorist activity that originates in the periphery or semiperiphery and is turned against core states (Type-3).<sup>3</sup> In terms of the second dimension, the ideological variation that has been exhibited by terrorist groups during their modern history (i.e. since the emergence

of anarchist terror in the 1870's), it has ranged from anarchic-nihilist, to nationalist-separatist (along racial, ethnic or religious dimensions), and radical leftist. David Rapoport (1999, 2001) uses a similar classificatory scheme in order to identify "four waves" of terrorist activity in the western world since the last third of the nineteenth century. A first wave of Russian inspired anarchism (from 1879-1914) swept Europe and the United States and came to a dramatic end by the beginning of the Second Thirty Years War<sup>4</sup> (1914-1945) in Europe, itself sparked by an anarchist assassination. The second wave (1945-1960) consisted of anti-colonial/separatist terrorist activity in the periphery as African and Asian nationalist movements rose up against European colonial rule and attacked their occupants with an assortment of military tactics, including indiscriminate terror. The third wave (1960-1989) emerged in the European Core and the Latin American semiperiphery in the form of radical leftist terrorist groups, and ended with the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1989 (Chalk 1999). The fourth wave subsequently emerged, consisting of—primarily Arab-Islamic—religiously inspired terrorism (1979 to the present).<sup>5</sup> Rapoport argues that this fourth wave of terror is qualitatively different from the nationalist-separatist brand of terror practiced by radical Palestinian groups to this day; its goals seem amorphous and its justifications—theology and the right to wage holy war—hark back to the type of religious terrorism, with which the west was familiar before the rise of modern terror (Rapoport 1984, 1988).

We utilize a modified version of Rapoport's paradigm (See Figure-1 for a schematic diagram). We agree that the qualitatively different character of each wave of terrorist activity can be partially tied to their ideological justification. However, we want to add an emphasis on the larger international dynamics of the world system, especially the structural origins and location of the state targets that each wave of terrorist activity attempts to target. Hence we produce a two dimensional typology, combining world system location with



**Figure-1:** *Waves of Terror in the World-System*

ideological frame (Benford and Snow 2000). Further we dispute Rapoport's assertion that the current wave of religious terrorist activity represents a qualitatively different "fourth wave" of modern terror. Instead, we contend that religiously-inspired terrorism is simply the return—in holy disguise—of the anarchist-nihilist brand of terror that swept Europe and the United States during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hoffman 1995; Joll 1979). We argue that then, as now, the conditions of the international system foster the appearance of this type of terrorism. In particular, the disorder and systemic chaos that was brought about by conditions of then British, today American hegemonic decline, help to produce the emergence of this new type of terror (Arrighi and Silver 1999). The fact that anarchic-religious terrorism does not easily fit the received conceptual structures to which we are accustomed (nationalism, extreme right or left wing), reflect its direct link to the new world disorder produced during the transition of the system from its hegemonic unipolar moment, to a multicentric, competitive condition.

### **TYPE-1 TERROR: TERROR IN THE CORE**

Type-1 terrorism is familiar to students of collective violence in the West, as it has manifested itself in the form of relatively sudden popular violence and revolt in core states facing crisis, as during the world revolutions of 1848 and 1968.<sup>6</sup> It has also taken the shape of more protracted struggles between smaller, left or right leaning factions that have specific ideological grievances against particular core governments. These groups are usually active for several decades, after which their resource and support base becomes exhausted, resulting in either a turn toward less radical action and more traditional forms of contention—as in the case of the Klan, or a cease fire and complete dissolution—as happened to the German Red Army and various other radical leftist terrorist organizations after the revolutions of 1989 that swept the communist semiperiphery. The wave of Leftist-Marxist terrorist activity that inaugurated the postwar resurgence of modern

terrorism in the core European states after 1968 is the prototypical example of this kind of terrorist activity (Pluchinsky 1993).

As with all types of terrorist activity, Type-1 terror can assume one of the three ideological forms discussed above: an ethnic separatist garb, as with the Basque Struggle in northern Spain led by the *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (ETA) group; radical leftist organizations such as the Japanese Red Army, Germany's Red Army Faction, or the Italian Red Brigades; or an anarchic-nihilist variant of core origin/core target terror such as the Japan-based millenarian group *Aum Shinrikyo* which released a nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subways in 1995. Type-1 terrorism of either the leftist radical or ethnic separatist brand is characterized by a high degree of ideological coherence and militancy. Terrorist groups of this type have very clear belief systems guiding their actions (whether these are right or left leaning). Current government structures are seen as too compromised by multiple contradictory interests to effectively serve the populace. These organizations thus operate according to the Gramscian logic of serving or standing for the general interest. Their primary goal is to garner the type of popular support that will result in an ultimate take-over of state power. They usually practice a form of relatively controlled and targeted form of terrorist activity, choosing their targets carefully in order to maximize their symbolic value. They prefer to avoid the shock of indiscriminate attacks on the general populace, directing their violence instead to representatives of the corrupt state order that they oppose as well as architectural or private corporate structures. Their activities are stereotyped and well organized, with routine protocols in terms of issuing warnings, releasing manifestos, and claiming responsibility.

These core-based radical leftist or ethnic separatist terrorist organizations are not anti-state per se, but they stand against the currently dominant state organizations in the core. These are perceived as too corrupt and uninterested in the welfare of the people to be of any use. Bruce Hoffman contrasts this type of terrorism

to the new terrorism (religious anarchic-nihilist) that has become prominent since the end of the Cold War:

In the past, terrorism was practiced by a group of individuals belonging to an identifiable organization with a clear command and control apparatus who had a defined set of political, social, or economic objectives. Radical leftist organizations... as well as ethno-nationalist terrorist movements... reflected this stereotype of the traditional terrorist group. They issued communiqués, taking credit for—and explaining—their actions and however disagreeable or distasteful their aims and motivations were, their ideology and intentions were at least comprehensible. Most significantly however, these familiar terrorist groups engaged in highly selective and mostly discriminate acts of violence. They bombed various “symbolic” targets representing the source of their animus (e.g., embassies, banks, national airline carriers) or kidnapped and assassinated specific persons whom they blamed for economic exploitation or political repression generally in order to attract attention to themselves and their causes (2001, 417-418).

Anarchic-nihilist Type-1 terrorists, however, do not share the high degree of ideological coherence and specificity of targets of the Marxist and separatist groups<sup>7</sup>. Their ideologies are usually vague and general, and they seem to stand for no particular political or social program. This type of terror has recently been dubbed the new or postmodern terrorism (Laqueur 1999, 1996). The recent emergence of this type of terror in core countries however is far from new. Indiscriminate anarchist attacks swept Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and just like the new postmodern terrorists, anarchists stood for ill-defined political and social programs. They seemed to revel in violence and bloodshed for their own sake, and their degree of coordination and organization was low or non-existent (Geifman 1993; Joll 1979; Laqueur 1977).

## TYPE-2 TERRORISM: STRUGGLING AGAINST OPPRESSION

Type-2 terrorism constitutes the bulk of terrorist activity in the world system. Terrorist groups that arise in the periphery and semiperiphery and attempt to attack local governments are the springboard from which all other forms of modern terrorist group—including Type-1 terrorists—have developed by diffusion and imitation.

The prototypical modern terrorist group, the *Narodnaya Volya* (People’s Will), was formed in Russia, a semiperipheral empire, in the wake of radical struggle against the tsarist regime during the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The emergence of the *Narodnaya Volya* stands as a watershed event in the history of modern terrorism. No other organization did more to define and lay down a template of how to conduct and organize terrorist activities (Bergesen and Lizardo 2002b, Rapoport 2001). Even after its demise, the People’s Will became a model for countless terrorist organizations throughout the world (Joll 1979).

The more popular and media-covered forms of terrorism, so popularized because they directly affect core states (Type-1 and Type-3), represent the tip of the terrorist iceberg in comparison to Type-2 domestic terrorism in the periphery and semiperiphery. The vast amount of death and destruction occasioned by type-2 terrorist activity, while vast, is essentially impossible to measure, primarily because it leaves little trace in the form of media coverage or official documentation. Suffice to say, that in Turkey one semiperipheral country, over 10,000 people have died from domestic terror, more than in all episodes of transnational terrorist activity combined since the 1960’s (Johnson 2001). Type-2 terrorists seldom espouse complex Marxist or Neo-Fascist ideologies.<sup>8</sup> These are the terrorist groups around which most researchers of terrorism developed their frustration and deprivation theories in the 1960’s and 1970’s (Gurr 1970). Their plight is clear, their grievances are straightforward,

and their targets are oppressive, undemocratic governments that sustain rule through the ruthless use of state violence.

The peripheral governmental organizations against which Type-2 terrorist groups aim their attacks are usually the leftovers of previous colonial empires. They are not nation states in the same political mold as the core states, but protectorates or simply *de jure* state entities established by the major powers with little internal legitimacy. Due to this set of circumstances, most of this type of terrorist activity blends in with the revolutionary violence of anti-colonial and separatist-emancipatory movements and their ideology takes the tinge of nationalism and ethnic recognition in the international community. These goals are usually either actively or tacitly supported by the rising world power, eager to secure the destruction of the old hegemon's colonial regime and the institution of its own neo-colonial order based of expansive rights to national self-determination.

Type-2 terrorism can occur either at the beginning of the breakdown of a hegemonic colonial-systemic order or at the end of one. The initial breakdown phase is a period marked by rising systemic instability in the semiperiphery, where multiethnic quasi-empires previously supported by the declining world power begin to splinter. Major powers struggle to gain control by taking advantage of the instability produced in this zone, a situation that usually leads to a 30-year conflict known as a major power war.<sup>9</sup> After the war, we enter the end of the breakdown crisis. This is a restructuring period that is also characterized by instability, this time due to the shedding of the remnants of the previous order and the laying down of the infrastructure of the new system by the leading post-war power. If it occurs at the beginning of the hegemonic crisis, national liberation terrorist activity may be used to demarcate the area of the international state system that is referred to as a problem by the principal core states, such as the Prussian principalities in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, or the Middle East today.

Core states usually fight wars of succession and try to control the interstate system using the disruption produced by Type-2 terrorism in the semiperiphery as an excuse. The event that sparked the beginning of the Second Thirty Years War, for instance, was the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand by a Bosnian anarchist. Territorial core powers usually view the instability caused at this kind of terrorism in semiperipheral areas as an opportunity to extend their zone of influence, while the reigning commercial sea-power views this kind of meddling by a competing core state in a sensitive area of the world system as a challenge to its global dominance. This was the situation between Spain and the Dutch/French alliance *vis a vis* the Prussian principalities in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and between the British and the German-Austro-Hungarian Alliance in relation to the Balkans during World War I. Today, American influence in the Middle East is similarly challenged by attempts on the part of members of the European Union (especially France) and the Soviet Union to extend their influence in the area.

After World War II, terrorism arose again, this time harnessed toward the cause of completing the "liberation" of the ethnic/religious groups that was initiated in the pre-war phase, but concentrated in the peripheral areas of the system. In the semiperiphery, the obsolete protectorate/quasi-imperial structures of domination espoused by the old hegemon before the war are finally scrapped and replaced with legally-recognized nation states following the model of the core states in the system (Bergesen and Lizardo 2002b). Thus, the Holy Roman Empire did not survive the post Thirty-year war reconstitution of the European interstate system under the Treaty of Westphalia, and neither did the Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian empires survive the onslaught of the Second Thirty Years War of 1914-1945 (Bergesen and Lizardo 2002b). Similarly, the peripheral Latin American colonies were decolonized after the Napoleonic Wars and the peripheral African and Asian colonies shared the same fate at the end of the Second Thirty Years War. Today the

most internally illegitimate and politically obsolete structures are the petro-monarchies and autocratic governments of the Middle East, remnants of the attempts made by U.S. to procure political stability in the area in the wake of the Cold War struggle for regional supremacy in the interstate system. This is the area of the world that has produced not only a large share of type-2 terrorism, but has also produced the most notable current variant of transnational (Type-3) terrorist activity in the world system.

Type-2 terrorism does not usually present itself in the anarchic-nihilist ideological mode, but takes either an ethnic-separatist cast in the prewar phase of destabilization and subsequent breakdown of the international system, and primarily affects semiperipheral multiethnic empires and protectorates that gained their support from the old hegemonic order. In its postwar form, in contrast, Type-2 terror accompanies the peripheral anti-colonial liberation movements in line with the system reorganization espoused by the new world leader.

### **TYPE-3 TERRORISM: THE TRANSNATIONAL TURN**

Type-3 terrorism is projected from one area of the world system core/periphery structural division of labor onto another. In terms of direction, it is perpetrated by groups located in the semiperiphery, but is directed at core targets, either at core outposts (military bases or embassies) throughout the world, core citizens in the semiperiphery, or civilian and governmental targets and architectural structures in the core states themselves (Bergesen and Lizardo 2002a). This type of terrorist activity is usually referred to as transnational, because core elites did not start to notice terrorist activity that crossed state boundaries until it was exported from semiperipheral states (mostly the Middle East) toward European core states in the 1960's. This is what has been dubbed spillover terrorism (Pluchinsky 1987). But the transnational character of terrorism cuts across all types. As David

Rapoport observes: (2001: 422). "Every [terrorist] wave contains international ingredients, namely group commitments to international revolution the willingness of foreign governments and publics to help, and the sympathies of Diaspora populations."

Thus, there is transnational terrorist activity that is internal to both the core (Type-1) and the periphery and semiperiphery (Type-2), and that crosses state boundaries within those structural divisions (Type-3). One example is the network of leftist terrorist organizations that flourished in Europe and Latin America during the 1960's and 1970's. The transnational character of Type-3 terror becomes accentuated because it crosses both national and structural locations. Two waves of Type-three terror have been recorded in the history of modern terrorism: anarchist terrorism that spread from Russia at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the current wave of religious terrorism, that began during the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Bergesen and Lizardo 2002a, 2002b). Both waves began in the semiperiphery (the Russian empire and the Middle East respectively) and were projected toward Western Europe and the United States.

Type-3 terror has a long history, probably starting as early as the conflict between the *Sicarii* Jewish Zealot group and the Romans troops occupying ancient Palestine (Rapoport 1984). In its modern guise, it arises in the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as an outgrowth of the anarchist terrorist activity originating in Russia. Major anarchist figures crossed state lines to either assassinate public figures in other states, or to orchestrate civilian attacks, primarily in France by Russian and Italian anarchists:

Between 1894 and 1900 four European heads of states—a President of France, the Prime Minister of Spain, the Empress of Austria, and the King of Italy—were assassinated by professed anarchists. Then, on September 6, 1901, President William McKinley, visiting the Pan-American exposition in Buffalo, was fatally wounded by Leon Czolgosz, who declared prior to his execution: "I

don't believe we should have any rulers. It is right to kill them." But these assaults, committed with daggers and revolvers, were less unnerving than dynamite attacks on "bourgeois" cultural and institutional centers. In France and Spain during the 1890's, bombs were flung into an opera house, a police station, a church, a mining company's Paris office, and the Chamber of deputies. Innocent bystanders, women and children, were blown to bits. Such episodes justified the use of the term terrorism. Nothing could be more paralyzing—literally more full of terror—to the average citizen, far removed from power, than the fear of death or mutilation at any moment, in any place, at the hands of an unknown fanatic. In the United States the image of the terrorist as a whiskered foreigner, holding a round bomb with a sputtering fuse, became a fixture of cartoonists' repertoires and the public's consciousness. After McKinley's death, President Theodore Roosevelt declared that anarchism was "a crime against the whole human race" and asked that the immigration laws be amended to exclude persons "teaching disbelief in or opposition to...organized government" (Weisberger 1993).

The recent wave of Arab-Islamic terror has followed a similar pattern, starting as a purely national liberation variant in Palestine and domestic grievance-induced terror (Type-2) in other Middle Eastern countries such as Syria, Saudi-Arabia, and Pakistan. It began to internationalize with the aid of state sponsors like Libya in the 1970's and 1980's, and it has recently produced organizations strictly dedicated to transnational terror such as al Qaeda.

The two major waves of semiperiphery to core terrorist activity in the modern world system—the anarchist wave of 1870-1914 and the current Arab-Islamic religious wave—have so far been characterized by their primarily anarchic-nihilist ideological component. As Niall Ferguson notes:

Since the 1860s, men like the Russian anarchist Sergei Nechaev had been preaching a doctrine of terrorism in which violence—notionally to further the revolution—came close to becoming an end in itself.

It was Nechaev who wrote *Principles of Revolution*, which grimly declared, 'We recognize no other activity but the work of extermination.' As far as his tactics are concerned, Osama bin Laden owes a bigger debt to the nineteenth-century Russian nihilists and narodniki than he does to the CIA...The obvious objection is that there is a profound difference between pre-1900 nihilism and the Islamic fundamentalism espoused by bin Laden and his al Qaeda organization. Yet it would be a grave mistake to overstate the difference. One of the dangers of Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' thesis is that it exaggerates the homogeneity of Islam as a world religion. It might be more illuminating to regard al Qaeda as the extremist wing of a political religion...That is not to imply, as some writers on the left have hastened to claim, that al Qaeda, or indeed the Taliban regime, represents some kind of 'Islamofascism'... 'Islam nihilism' would be nearer the mark, or perhaps "Islamobolshevism"—for we should not forget that in their early years Lenin and Stalin were also terrorists in Nechaevian tradition. Indeed there is more than a passing resemblance between 'Hereditary Nobleman Ulyanov' as the young Lenin liked to style himself, hatching his plans for the overthrow of tsarism from dingy Swiss hotels, and the renegade Saudi millionaire orchestrating mayhem from an Afghan cave (2001: 119-120).

In a similar manner, 19<sup>th</sup> century anarchist radicals can be considered the extremist wing of a political movement (leftist populism) that readily acquired religious and millenarian overtones. Radical anarchist pamphlets of the time written by major figures such as Michael Bakunin, Karl Heinzen, and Sergei Nechaev explicitly mixed in religious themes taken from the Christian apocalyptic tradition. Some deified the anarchist perpetrator; others sanctified the cause of cleansing the world from what where perceived as the evil embodied in government and the ruling classes. In reference to Bakunin's theory of revolution, Walter Laqueur (1977) writes:

The revolutionaries, however, should show indifference toward the lamentations of the doomed, and were not to enter into any compromise. Their approach might be called terroristic but this ought not to deter them. The final aim was to achieve revolution, *the cause of eradicating evil was holy*, Russian soil would be cleansed by sword and fire.

Laqueur adds that the most famous revolutionary document of the time was written by Bakunin and came to be known as the "Revolutionary Catechism." In it a mixture of propaganda and tactical advice is mixed with a theory of revolution that seemed to sanctify violent struggle (Laqueur 1977). It is not difficult to see the parallels between Bakunin's dream of cleansing Russian and European soil from what he deemed the illegitimate usurpers of power, and Bin Laden's similar claims regarding American bases in Saudi Arabia desecrating the holly lands of Islam. Rather than concentrating on the "civilizational" (Huntington 1997) differences between Arab-Islamic fundamentalism and 19<sup>th</sup> century anarchist revolutionary theory, it is more useful to view both as similar variants of nihilist political religions. If the current wave of Arab-Islamic terror uses religion to cover up its nihilist politics, 19<sup>th</sup> century anarchism used nihilist politics to conceal its religious-apocalyptic overtones.

Type-3 terrorist organizations surface out of the failure and frustration of radical domestic (type-2) terrorism in the semiperiphery, and therefore their ideology and plans of action acquire a darker cast. No longer content with the more limited goal of trying to gain political power in the oppressive local state from which they appeared, anarchist terrorists shift their attention toward more general and diffuse targets, including state structures in the core, which are deemed to be corrupt because of their larger cultural, political, and military influence and reach. Transnational anarchists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example, emerged out of the violent state response in Russia, Italy, and Spain against anarchist

organizations tied to left-leaning labor movements. Their demands and worldview became radicalized to such an extent that they started to view their mission as one of ridding the world of the oppressive power of state structures in general. Therefore, their targets become the more "advanced" (western European and American) states of the time.

Both 19<sup>th</sup> century anarchists and the currently active Arab-Islamic terrorist organizations view the secular state model of the Euro-American core of the world system as an *essentially* illegitimate and oppressive institution and therefore do not wish to redeem it, but simply to further its destruction. To that effect, they become increasingly indiscriminate in their choice of targets, and do not practice the type of measured terrorist activity of the other two types (Laqueur 1999; Hoffman 2001), but rather practice a kind of "total terror" that can in principle be directed at anyone that is associated with the putatively oppressive core government institutions in question. Nineteenth century anarchists were limited by the low degree of development and availability of objects that could be turned into weapons of mass destruction, whereas Arab-Islamic anarchic terrorists of today have not only all of the lessons learned from 130 years of modern terrorism, but also a plethora of potentially available technological artifacts that can be used to cause mass casualties (Laqueur 1999). Such was the confluence of conditions that lead to the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

### STRUCTURAL LOCATION, IDEOLOGY, AND SYSTEMIC TRANSFORMATION

While any type of terror has the potential to acquire any of the three ideological forms, the history of modern terrorism has shown more regular patterns, with the emergence of waves of terrorist activities characterized by similar ideological themes concentrated on particular areas of the world system. The anticolonial wave of

terrorist activity (1945-1960) concentrated in the periphery, and the leftist radical wave (1960-1979) concentrated in the core European states. The Anarchist-religious waves (1879-1914 and 1979 to the present) are distinctive because both start in the semiperiphery (Russia and the Middle East) and become prevalent in the core at a later time: France and the United States in the 1890's and all of western Europe and the United States today (Bergesen and Lizardo 2002a, 2002b). We can thus think of the history of modern terror as two distinct terrorist waves, one ethnic separatist and the other Marxist radical, sandwiched between two anarchist-religious waves (Figure-1). During each, the state of the world system is going through specific periods of recurrent organization and restructuring.

During the anticolonial terrorist wave of 1945-1960, the former colonies of the war-exhausted European powers revolted against foreign rule. This change was indirectly fostered by the reigning world power (the U.S.), which was attempting to transform the system from one based on formal colonialism to one structured around the ideology of national self-determination and ethnic/national recognition in the international community. The new system was undergirded by the emergence of transnational organizations such as the United Nations, which provide legal recognition for those states that are able to shake off colonial rule. Decolonization, of course is synchronized with the expansionary "A" phase of the world economy underwritten by the rising world power of the United States (Bergesen and Schoenberg 1980). The end of the restrictive colonial rule fostered by the defeated European powers was beneficial for the free trade system instituted by the United States after the war. The previous system based on formal colonialism centered in the European core, was in this way replaced with a neo-colonial system centered in the American core.

The leftist radical wave of terror in the European core (1960-1989) marks the emergence of contemporary terrorism. This

terrorist wave produces many of the features which are later adopted by the Arab-Islamic religious wave, such as major state sponsorship (from the Soviet Union during until 1989) and high degrees of networking and decentralized organizational structures.<sup>10</sup> The international context under which this wave emerges, is of course, that of the Cold War bipolar world order. But the bipolarity of the interstate system during this time would turn out to be a nothing but a mirage. The Soviet Union and its satellite states were no match for the economic-productive power of the U.S. and its multinational, vertically-integrated corporations (Arrighi, 1994). It is no surprise, therefore, that Marxist ideology plays an important role during this wave, as it is the only ideological system that seems to be able to stand against the global economic integration and mass consumption oriented organizational modes of capitalist production espoused by the United States.

This wave of radical leftist terror is concentrated along those core states with the closest proximity to the Soviet Union's region of influence (Germany, Italy, France, and Spain). The terrorist organizations exemplary of this wave propose coherent plans of social change and stand against the liberal-democratic consensus organized by U.S.-lead capitalist expansion. But after the U.S.-led world economic expansion came to an end in the 1970's, the semiperipheral command economies of the USSR and its satellites began to encounter serious difficulties.<sup>11</sup> Core countries abandoned the American program of global integration and open markets, and entered a phase of increased protectionism and bloc formation (e.g. European integration). Semiperipheral economies, the Soviet Union included, reacted to the pressure toward change by turning inward and reforming their autocratic regimes and command economies (Bergesen 1992a, 1992b). This process led to the implosion and disintegration of the Soviet Union. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the so-called "bipolar" world order also comes to an end. This development dealt a grave blow to the radical leftist terrorist

organizations in Europe, which in an amazingly short span of time (1989-1992), withered away and ultimately disappeared as a credible threat. The “cease fire” put forth by the most famous and deadly of these organizations, the German Red Army Faction in 1992, best symbolizes this process which essentially brought the end of the Marxist terrorist wave (Pluchinsky 1993).

The end of the Soviet Union, therefore, is strictly correlative to the end of the U.S.-led expansion of the world economy (Bergesen 1992b) and the beginning of American hegemonic decline and loss of economic dominance (Bergesen and Sonnett, 2000). By 1989, the United States had already gone from being the world’s largest creditor to the world’s largest debtor nation as its Cold War was predominantly financed with foreign capital (Arrighi and Silver 1999). In addition, the American ability to project global order had already been seriously deflated by its defeat in the Vietnam War and alternative productive regimes of capital accumulation and production that emerged in East Asia, seriously challenged the economic dominance of the U.S.. Japanese post-war growth had been unmatched in modern economic history and the “Asian Tigers” newly industrialized economies along with mainland China, were beginning to follow suit (Arrighi and Silver 1999). In other words, the conditions for hegemonic stability had already been seriously challenged and the system was starting to enter into a multicentric phase, characterized by rising competition and the decline of the previous hegemonic center (Arrighi 1994).

The fact that a “new” wave of nihilist religious terror emerges from the Middle East at about this time, beginning in 1979 and rising to prominence after 1989 (Enders and Sandler 1999, 2001, 2002), is no coincidence. The international system had found itself in almost the same conditions under which the Russian anarchist wave of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had emerged (Bergesen and Lizardo 2002b). Then the economic, political and military supremacy of the British complex began to encounter serious challenges. The

rapidly industrializing German state began to challenge England’s military supremacy in the Europe, while the newly industrializing United States, a continental nation that dwarfed the British Island in terms of size and potential productivity, was beginning to exert its economic and financial muscle. The standard ideological divisions of Marxist inspired labor movements versus British-led free trade liberal economic policy had broken down with the defeat of the workers revolutions of 1848, and the nationalist turn of the workers movement after a period of growing international class formation. Similar to the manner in which anarchist radicalism filled in the ideological vacuum produced by the breakdown of the liberal regime espoused by Britain in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, today’s “Islamismo-nihilism” (Ferguson 2001) emerges to fill the vacuum left after the defeat of the communist alternative to American global capital after 1989 (Barber 1995).

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS: TERROR AND THE NATION STATE IN THE WORLD-SYSTEM**

This analysis of modern terror aims to show the usefulness of a classification of terrorist activity that takes into account both structural location and more dynamic system processes. In the above considerations however, one aspect of modern substate terrorism was purposefully left underdeveloped: its connection to the rise of the nation state. In fact, terror use by representatives of state power—by Robespierre during the French Revolution—has become the model by which most autocratic states secure their hold over the civilian population (Carr 1996). Insofar as the two pillars of the modern nation state correspond to its monopoly over the means of violence and its monopoly over international trade (as only substate entities recognized by the state are able to engage in commerce with representatives of other nation states)<sup>12</sup>, its continuing viability will depend upon securing its hold over those monopolies. Terrorism by challenging one of them (the right of the

state to engage in targeted violence) thus represents a direct affront to the international order that first developed in Europe after the First Thirty Years War (1618-1648) with the peace of Westphalia and that was extended to the rest of the world after U.S.-led post war decolonization (Arrighi and Silver 1999).

Thus as Wallerstein (1995, 1999), has noted, the socio-political stability of the modern world system, has rested on the precarious balance between centrist liberalism, the hierarchical-conservative right wing and the socialist-egalitarian left wing. The liberal elite in the core of the world system has, for the most part, been able to bring both the conservatives and the socialists of the core into collusion, thus temporarily deferring a major systemic crisis. But radical anarchism has always been the element that has not had a proper place in the geo-cultural triad. It is no surprise, therefore, that the protracted post-1848 crisis in Western Europe and the Ottoman Empire—the last time that the balance between these three components of the world system's geo-culture was radically in peril—was characterized by the emergence of this strand of terrorist political activity. However, the Bolshevik revolution in the Russian semiperiphery, coupled with the beginning of the Second Thirty Years War, constituted the two major developments that helped forestall major systemic crisis. First, the development of socialism as a powerful political force after 1848 and of state socialism in Russia after 1917, forced the liberal centrist compromise in the Western European and American core. This came in the form of the double package of extensive political participation rights and the welfare state. Second, the beginning of the war gave a major push to the reactionary forces of nationalism and hierarchy, thus appeasing the adherents of conservative ideology. To Lenin's dismay, the socialist political forces in the core were also swept up in war-induced nationalism, thus consolidating the centrist compromise between the three components of the geoculture.

After World War I, the United States once again took up the centrist liberal leadership vacated by a now war-exhausted Great

Britain and was able to temporarily bring the world-system's geoculture back into its precarious pre-war balance. But that would be a short-lived development: the 1968 rejection of the American double package of mass consumerism in the core and developmentalism in the semiperiphery, coupled with the turn against the bland multicultural ideology that replaced radical leftist politics, brought the world-system's geoculture into its second post-1789 crisis. And just like the post-1848 crisis, the present one is characterized by the emergence of anarchic terrorist trends—in the form of religious fundamentalisms—emerging out the semiperiphery, the fourth element that seems to appear whenever the liberal-conservative-leftist geocultural balance enters a period of crisis.

As we have seen during waves of decolonization (Bergesen and Schoeberg 1980) and system restructuring, or during periods of hegemonic dominance, the threat of terrorism is contained within the periphery or the core divisions of the system respectively and its ideological cast is pragmatic and relatively coherent (national liberation or radical leftist ideology). This type of terrorist activity can thus be safely classified as internal and "domestic" and within the purview of the disciplinary forces of the nation states affected. But the systemic chaos produced by a shift toward a more competitive multicentric configuration under conditions of hegemonic decline, produces the "spillover" and projection of transnational terrorism from the semiperiphery to the core, in the form of ideologically ill-defined nihilist brands of terror. This leads toward a rhetorical re-definition of the terrorist threat, from a local problem to a general affront "against humanity and civilization" as both the anarchist wave of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the current religious wave have been characterized.

One of the advantages of the above typology is that it explains why terrorism has been such a difficult phenomenon to identify and categorize and why there is so little agreement among researchers and policymakers when it comes to the proper characterization of

the phenomenon (Crenshaw 1992). Inasmuch as the character of terrorist activity covaries with the structure of the international system within which it is embedded, it will present a wide and sometimes contradictory array of features. Those who think of terrorists as “rational actors” and “freedom fighters” who choose to use terror because it is the only available “weapon of the weak” are taking as their prototype the type of violent terror more likely to occur during periods of decolonization and system restructuring. Theories of terrorism and revolution emphasizing deprivation and autocratic exploitation (Gurr 1970) were developed with this type of terrorist organization in mind.

In contrast, those who think of terrorists as urban guerrillas, composed of loose cells with internally differentiated ranks, and who stand for complex radical ideologies aiming at “changing the system”, take as their model the sort of terrorist activity that emerged in Europe during the 1960’s under the auspices of the Cold War American hegemonic order. It is hard to apply the paradigm of exploitation and deprivation consonant with Type-2 terrorists to this group; after all, this type of terrorism emerges in core states where liberal democratic freedoms prevail. Many of the theories of terrorism that emphasized psychology, indoctrination, and the “terrorist personality” popular during the 1960’s and 1970’s were a direct outgrowth of this type of terrorism. Researchers were able to get close to the subject through interviews and direct observation, due to the sudden availability of first-world terrorists across the European landscape.

With the demise of radical terrorists in the core after 1979, a new breed of theories of terrorism emerge that emphasize the extreme fanaticism, mass destruction rhetoric, and the “ad hoc” (Chalk 1999), indiscriminate and random character of the new postmodern terror (Laqueur 1999; Stern 1999; Jurgensmeyer 2000). This shift is concomitant with the decline of ideologically-motivated Marxist terrorism and the rise of religious terrorist organizations. But this

emphasis on the novelty and irrationality of religious terror represents a theoretical regression, back to 19<sup>th</sup> century theories of terrorism which conceived of (anarchist) terror as a senseless phenomenon, primarily perpetrated by sick and deranged individuals. The pathologization of terrorism is thus strictly correlative to its religious-nihilist turn in the world system today. But indiscriminate targeting, dreams of mass destruction, and heroism through suicide are not a new development in the terrorist imaginary. As the 19<sup>th</sup> century anarchist theorist Karl Heinzen proclaimed:

If you have to blow up half a continent and pour a sea of blood in order to destroy the party of the barbarians, have no scruples of conscience. He is no true republican who would not gladly part with his life for the satisfaction of exterminating a million barbarians (as quoted in Laqueur, 1977: 26).

While the anarchist terrorists that put these kind of theories into practice did engage in indiscriminate acts of terror against civilians (such as throwing bombs in crowded cafes and other public venues), they were never able to perpetrate acts of mass destruction. But this was relative to the technological limitations of the time and not by a lack of motivation or ideological justification.

Both the anarchist and the current religious waves of terror have been spurred by rising waves of globalization (in the form of increasing flows of international trade) and economic integration in the world system. The first came on the heels of a globalization wave extending from the 1850’s to the 1880’s, and the current wave appears at the peak of third modern wave of globalization — beginning after 1945, but reaching its highest levels after 1985 (Chase-Dunn, Kawano, and Brewer 2000). Thus, the current religious-anarchist wave of terrorism interacts with rising degrees of global integration through telecommunications and transportation technology. In this sense, the increasing globalization trend has provided a double boost to religious terrorists. First, the threat

of homogenization and loss of communal identity becomes one of the principal motivational catalysts for their action. Second, the increased technological dependence of most nation states also facilitates the religious-anarchist terrorist process by providing them with more opportunities for indiscriminate mass targeting. As Magnus Ranstorp observes:

As such, the virtual explosion of terrorism in recent times is part and parcel of a gradual process of what can be likened to neocolonial liberation struggles. This process has trapped religious faiths within meaningless geographical and political boundaries and constraints, and had been accelerated by grand shifts in the global political, economic, military and socio-cultural setting, compounded by difficult local indigenous conditions for the believers. The uncertainty and unpredictability of the present environment as the world searches for a new world order, amidst and increasingly complex global environment with ethnic and nationalist conflicts, provide many religious terrorist groups with the opportunity and the ammunition to shape history according to their divine duty, cause and mandate while they indicate for others that the need of time itself is near (1996: 58).

The last wave of anarchist terror became interrupted by the beginning of the Second Thirty-Years War. This wave of Islamic religious anarchism may lead the major powers down a similar path, or in the absence of major power confrontation and alliance formation, may become along with the other recurrent sources of system chaos engendered by American hegemonic decline, a protracted source of instability in the international system.

### END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> There are numerous types of terrorism occurring in the world and various attempts at typology and definition of the phenomenon have already been attempted (Cooper 2001; Ganor 2001; Gibbs 1989; Ruby 2002). Therefore, we will not add to the cacophony here. As a working definition, we lean on Peter Chalk's conceptualization of terrorism as "the

systematic use of illegitimate violence that is employed by sub-state actors as means of achieving specific political objectives, these goals differing according to the group concerned." (Chalk 1999, p. 151, italics added). We endorse this definition because it differentiates terrorism by sub-state actors from state terrorism, which we acknowledge as a phenomenon of great importance in its own right. However, our focus here is upon substate terrorism proper.

<sup>2</sup> The term substate terrorism is used to refer to terrorist activity that originates from groups of individuals that are not directly connected to governmental agents and are thus located below the level of the state as such. While substate terrorists may receive support from external government agents they remain under our definition as long as they continue to act on their own interests and not as representatives of some existing government.

<sup>3</sup> A fourth type, terrorist actions that originate with a substate core agent that attacks a semiperipheral government, is a residual category that while not rare, rarely occurs without the support of the core government to which that substate actor subscribes. Most CIA "intelligence" operations in weak semiperipheral and peripheral governments that aid and abet coups and popular revolts against unpopular leaders in Washington, fit into this category.

<sup>4</sup> Otherwise known as World Wars I and II.

<sup>5</sup> We do not mean to imply that the rise of recent religious terror is an exclusively Arab-Islamic phenomenon. As has previously been pointed out (Hoffman, 1995; Ranstorp, 1996), the new holy terror is a general phenomenon that cuts across religious divides. Thus, there exist Sikh separatist groups in India and Christian identity cells in the United States. Further, not all Islamic terror emanates from the Middle East: the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka have become notorious for their relentless use of the suicide attack method. Middle Eastern Islamic terrorist groups, however, stand out because they are the most self-consciously transnational of all the religious terrorist groups, having been able to produce the most audacious attacks against highly charged symbolic targets of the U.S. international order, such as military installations, embassies, and the September 11<sup>th</sup> 2002 attacks on Washington and the World Trade Center.

<sup>6</sup> Contemporary theorizing in world systems analysis postulates that in addition to localized revolutions at the level of nation states, the modern world system has experienced two episodes that qualify as world revolutions, consisting of massive unrest and political crisis in the core.

These are usually referred to as the revolutions of 1848 and 1968 (see Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2001, chapter 2 for details), even though the 1848 revolutions did not abate until at least 1865 and the 1968 revolutions did not culminate until 1989 (Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2001; Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein 1992).

<sup>7</sup> Type-1 ethnic separatist terrorists, however, may also direct their attacks at civilians, but these usually belong to different ethnic or religious groups, as the populist ideology of right-wing terrorists is less inclusive than that of left-wing terrorists. Right-wing terrorists only extend their populism to those belonging to their racial, ethnic or religious group and therefore everybody else may become fair game. In that sense, 1 terrorists may exhibit more indiscriminate behavior than left leaning Type-1 groups (as in the Oklahoma City bombings).

<sup>8</sup> The Marxist terrorist groups that spread all across the periphery and semiperiphery of the world system during the post-colonial wave of leftist terror, represented simply the surface manifestation of Type-2 terrorism during the Cold War. While receiving intensive coverage from the Western press, semiperipheral terrorist groups with Marxist leanings never represented more than a new wave of peasant unrest across the underdeveloped world. Most major terrorist activity in the periphery and semiperiphery has actually been composed of separatist ethnic and proto-nationalist movements, such as Turkish PKK (Kurdish Workers Party), the radical Sikh factions in India, or the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka. The fact that most Marxist groups in the Latin American semiperiphery were composed of self-consciously identified indigenous groups fighting for particular rights, precluded unification between them and the more ideologically motivated core Marxist terrorist organizations in Europe, which was by an d large a middle class radical movement. When speaking of Type-1 core terror, therefore, we refer to those groups located in Europe and not to the indigenous identity peasants movements that emerged in the periphery in a Marxist garb.

<sup>9</sup> The three major examples of this type of conflict in the European interstate system are the First Thirty Years War (1618-1648), the Napoleonic Wars (1789-1815), and the Second Thirty Years War (1914-1945), otherwise known as World War I and II (Boswell and Chase-Dunn, 2001).

<sup>10</sup> State sponsorship may have been present during the anarchist terror wave of the 19<sup>th</sup> century especially, those terrorist organizations operating in the Balkans (such as the Serbian Black Hand) against Ottoman rule that were supported by Czarist Russia.

<sup>11</sup> This is evidence against the alleged bipolarity of the world at that time. Since the Socialist command economies were always part of the larger capitalist world system, once the Western economies encountered trouble, the socialist countries followed in their wake, making the post-1970's economic crisis a truly global one (Frank 1977, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> Pirates are the primary substatal agents that have challenged this monopoly during the modern history of the capitalist world economy. Semi-feudal drug lords operating in areas of Colombia outside of government control, are a close contemporary approximation of the pirates of yesteryear. Piracy was done away with after the British assumed full hegemony at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The British used their superior naval power to destroy any ability of pirates to freely function, thus freeing the seas from any trade disruption. The current U.S.-led international "war on drugs" has had less effective results today. The reason that pirates and drug lords have drawn such a strong and costly response on the parts of state agents has to be imputed not to some inherent evil in their activity—after all the British used "piracy" in order to break down the Chinese imperial ban on the import of opium—but simply to their direct challenge to the state monopoly on international trade.

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