

SUMMARY

A few weeks after the September 11, 2001 attacks, the US administration enacted a document referred to as the Patriot Act. Among the numerous remarks or assumptions made concerning terrorist attacks, the following statement was included there: “we are not going to know precisely where and when global interests will be threatened”.¹ This brief and allegedly very general observation is actually a very accurate rendition of the essence of modern terrorism which emphasizes its key features, such as unpredictability, destructiveness, or global range. There is one additional, particularly important element, which is frequently neglected, though. Namely, terrorism needs to be treated as a ‘system of communicating vessels’. This refers to the individual manifestations or types of terrorism as well as to the multitude and diversity of its components, features, mechanisms or reasons, and above all – the interactions among them.

Among the more extensive attempts to reveal the essential features and specific character of terrorism is the **interferential concept of terrorism** created by this author and presented in this study. It assumes, among other things, the multitude and diversity of connections linking the national (state related) and international aspects of terrorism. Significant emphasis is also placed on the interdisciplinary nature of terrorism, which means that it needs to be analyzed from a political, historical, ethnic or religious perspective, as well as take into consideration sociological, psychological, economic, cultural, and other aspects. The cause-and-effect duality of terrorism should also be highlighted here, as we are dealing with the two-way permeation of causes and

¹ The act was enacted on October 26, 2001. PUBLIC LAW 107–56 UNITING AND STRENGTHENING AMERICA BY PROVIDING APPROPRIATE TOOLS REQUIRED TO INTERCEPT AND OBSTRUCT TERRORISM (USA PATRIOT ACT) ACT OF 2001, <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc> (13.01.2011).

effects, which may mean that a factor considered a reason for terrorism (e.g. an ethnic conflict or fundamentalism) may become its effect as time goes by.

In the interferential model, terrorism is treated as a system² composed of various elements, such as individual components (different terrorist organizations), the environment,³ and their mutual relations. This system has inputs and outputs⁴, such as the factors it is influenced by (religious, ethnic, geopolitical, ideological, economic, social and other factors) and consequences that are directly or indirectly related to its occurrence (such as financial costs, human toll, lower level of safety or deteriorated feeling of safety, etc.).

The interference of terrorism can refer to different aspects of this phenomenon. The interferential concept of terrorism presented in this book makes reference primarily to three fundamental planes, namely:

- 1) **Conceptual interference of terrorism** which is concentrated around the following issues: the extensive semantic range of the notion of 'terrorism', its frequent use, similarity to other notions (e.g. terror), multiplicity of definitions of terrorism and the absence of a commonly accepted one, as well as the diverse methods applied in analyzing the notion and the interactions between its elements (e.g. **five components of the notion of terrorism**).⁵
- 2) **Subject-object interference** concerns various correlations occurring among the individual features, elements, forms or mechanisms of terrorism (object interference). On the other hand, it concerns the relations among the given subjects that make up a terrorist system and its environment (e.g. a terrorist

² See: J. Kowalski, Państwo a system polityczny, in: Z zagadnień teorii polityki, Warszawa 1978; W. Ratyński, Z rozważań nad systemem politycznym, Warszawa 1985; D. Easton, Analiza systemów politycznych, w: Elementy teorii socjologicznych, Warszawa 1975; W. Lamentowicz, Funkcje systemu politycznego a żywiołowa dynamika makrostruktury życia społecznego, in: Z zagadnień teorii polityki, Warszawa 1978; Z. Blok, Teoria polityki, Poznań 1998.

³ The environment should be understood as all the elements, processes and other systems that are indirectly or directly related to the system analyzed.

⁴ See: M. Sułek, Metody i techniki badań stosunków międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2004, p. 144; J. Kukułka, Problemy teorii stosunków międzynarodowych, Warszawa 1978, p. 162 i n.

⁵ This concerns five questions that are helpful when defining a majority of the components of the notion of terrorism. The questions concern the perpetrator(s), form(s) and method(s) of operation, motive(s)-reason(s), target(s) and consequence(s). These elements are discussed in detail in the first part of the paper.

organization, indirect and direct environment, etc.)⁶ – which constitute a subject interference. The starting point for this analysis is the so-called **four-element matrix of terrorism** comprising the subject(s) of terrorist activity analyzed, the territory considered, determinants (external and internal factors influencing terrorism), and the object (the form, essence or strategy of terrorists' activity).

- 3) **Causal interference** emphasizes the multitude, complexity and mutual interrelations among different sources of terrorism. The interferential model of causes for terrorism is of key importance here, and its so-called **triad of terrorist motivation**, which involves three principal groups of determinants that affect the phenomenon of terrorism. These factors involve ideology, economy, society and psychology and their interactions.

In this study, interference⁷ is understood as a process of the mutual interaction of various elements and mechanisms that lead to the emergence of new forms or concepts of a given phenomenon, in this case – terrorism. This is a result of different interactions that occur among the aspects, factors or waves of terrorism (wave interference) on the one hand, and the occurrence of two main types of terrorism (global and local terrorism) and their interrelations on the other. The elements which are subjected to terrorism are frequently correlated in the sense that they have common elements which overlap and complement one another. They are also frequently similar in terms of their causes or mechanisms.

The notion of '**terrorism**' analyzed in the present monograph, is complex and ambiguous and, consequently, difficult to define. The international

⁶ For more on this topic see the end of the study.

⁷ The word 'interference' comes from Latin. This notion is functional in numerous fields of science, e.g. physics or linguistics, and has been adapted for the needs of the interferential concept of terrorism.

community has failed to work out a single, commonly accepted definition. At present, there are several hundreds⁸ of definitions in the literature on the subject. The reasons for, and consequences of this state of affairs can be sought among various factors which are discussed in the first part of the publication. The definition of terrorism created by this author is also presented there. This definition assumes that terrorism is a form of political, religious, ethnic or other violence (or its threat) which has various motivations, its implementation violating the existing legal order, and its perpetrators being individuals or groups of people whose activity involving different means and methods results in physical, psychological or material damage. It is aimed at direct target(s) (e.g. individuals representing a given state) or indirect ones used by the perpetrator(s) to produce the final effect.

This definition emphasizes several significant and universal traits of terrorism at the same time. First, it reveals the diversity of causes (motivations), which embrace a broad range of factors that generate and escalate terrorism. Second, it stresses the fact that such activity breaches the law, producing an extensive range of consequences. Third, it marks the fact that (contrary to a common assumption) terrorism covers the activity of groups as well as that of individuals. Fourth, it points to the multitude and diversity of means and methods available to terrorists. The definition is obviously not universal and should be treated as a proposal.

Among other significant concepts used in the study there is **diffusion**⁹ of **terrorism**, which involves the evolution of terrorism, the ‘permeation’ of its components and adaptation to existing factors or changing reality. Diffusion is present both on a horizontal dimension, where it concerns the escalation of

⁸ As early as the 1990s there were over two hundred different definitions of terrorism in the literature on the subject. See: J. Simon, *The Terrorist Trap*, Bloomington 1994, p. 29.

⁹ The chemical sense of diffusion accounts for the process of molecule movement, allowing substances (elements) to permeate (mix with) one another, or spread. See: *Słownik pojęć współczesnych*, pod red. A. Bullock, O. Stallybrass, S. Trombley, Katowice 1999, p. 119.

terrorism in an increasing number of global locations (e.g. the strategy of new fronts of combat), and on a vertical one, as it seeks new methods or forms of activity (to take cyberterrorism as an example). Diffusion of terrorism stems both from endogenous factors (such as antiterrorist activity) and exogenous ones (e.g. globalization and its consequences).

The interferential concept of terrorism employs elements of **Huygens' Principle**. This refers to the observation that each territory (region) where terrorism has occurred can become the source of its further escalation or evolution.¹⁰ The so-called **interference of processes** also plays a significant role. This is about the interferential concept being applied in the analysis of various disintegrative tendencies,¹¹ whether with reference to terrorism or separatism, nationalism, or fundamentalism, accounting for their similarities and mutual relations.

The author has undertaken to discuss the above-presented research issues given the shortage of literature (particularly in the Polish language) concerning the explanation of the notion of 'terrorism', the presentation of its components and the reasons that make the definition of this notion so difficult, the presentation of the methods to describe the escalation of terrorism, approaching terrorism as a 'system of communicating vessels', the indication of its traits or mechanisms, the analysis of terrorism against the background of other disintegrative tendencies, the analysis of the integrative and disintegrative

¹⁰ J. Yoder, *Unrolling Time: Christiaan Huygens and the Mathematization of Nature*, Cambridge 1990.

¹¹ Disintegrative tendencies are to mean deferent processes or mechanisms leading to the destabilization of a given territory. They can be triggered by various factors and assume various forms. For more, see the second part of the study and final remarks. See: E. Polak, *Integracja i dezintegracja jako współzależne procesy współczesnych przemian cywilizacyjnych*, Gdańsk 2001; P. Borkowski, *Polityczne teorie integracji międzynarodowej*, Warszawa 2007.

functions of terrorism, the systematization of its reasons and numerous other more or less important issues.

Another stimulus concerned the intention to order, or even classify, such elements of terrorism as its forms, reasons, waves or traits, and to emphasize their evolution and adaptation to reality, including the influence of globalization, certain disintegrative processes or the so-called terrorist environment.

The third aspect referred to the fact that the analyses of a terrorist system can be used in practice, for example, by security forces. This is provided by the model of shaping the system's safety or monitoring the system's security level.¹² They involve both a national and international system and a threat posed to it by terrorism, as well as the use of a defense potential, or the so-called potential of threat.¹³ These issues could be applied by academic circles as well as used in practice by analytical centers in order to learn more about the methods of terrorists' operations, recruitment techniques, reasons for terrorism (a model of terrorist motivation triad), or the forecasts for escalation of terrorism (the so-called image model of terrorism).¹⁴

The above aspects should also be considered in the context of the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The tenth anniversary provides a good opportunity for analyses or assessments of the threat posed by global terrorism and for highlighting the changes that have occurred both with respect to terrorism and the way it is perceived. A number of questions arise here. How have the September 11 attacks influenced the shape of modern terrorism? Can they be considered as a turning point in the evolution or escalation of terrorism? Should these attacks be interpreted as the cause or rather the effect of the transformation in the global system and terrorist system?

¹² J. Jaźwiński, K. Ważyńska – Fiok, *Bezpieczeństwo systemów*, Warszawa 1993.

¹³ M. Sułek, *Metody...*, op.cit., p. 116- 121.

¹⁴ It indicates the complexity of terrorism and can be used to analyze and forecast its range in a given territory. For more, see the end of the book.

Taking into consideration the above aspects and the interferential concept of terrorism employed in this paper, three groups of research problems have become the main point of reference. The first one concerns the notion of 'terrorism', its origin, diversity, specific nature, and characteristics. It corresponds to the second research category, devoted to the essential features of modern terrorism, including its traits, mechanisms, and interferential nature. The third group of issues refers to the analysis of the reasons for terrorism.

The main course of the dissertation is divided into two parts. The first one discusses the origin and escalation of terrorism and on the one hand it indicates several key events that have had a particular influence on the shape of modern terrorism, and on the other it presents the main methods used in describing the stages of the history of terrorism. How can the essence of terrorism be grasped? How to define terrorism most accurately? Why is not there a single, universal definition of this phenomenon? What are its main components, traits or mechanisms? These are only a few examples of research issues that have been the starting point for the considerations in further parts of the study. It also discusses the different ways of perceiving and defining terrorism and the differences and similarities between the two, a catalogue of factors that can be considered to answer the question why the international community has failed to work out a single, commonly applied definition of terrorism, despite the long-lasting and different attempts. What are the consequences of this status quo and why is the coining of this definition so significant? The answers to the above questions are accompanied by the author's concept of the classification of definitions of terrorism as well as his own definition.

The following chapter is devoted to the presentation of components of terrorism and the interactions among them. The considerations are founded on a trilateral model including the terrorist, terrorist organization and the so-called 'environment'. It comprises a number of different subjects either supporting or combating terrorist activity. Here, terrorism is treated as a system comprising

many different elements, their interrelations and the mechanisms that control them. This part also analyzes selected features and rules shaping modern terrorism. It is perceived as a state and process at the same time. This is confirmed by its dynamic and evolutionary nature, assuming the form of gradual transformations or rapid metamorphoses that occur as an aftermath of changes affecting both terrorism and its surroundings. This is not to mean, however, that the changes have to be permanent and affect all components of terrorism. The question of the range and nature of the transformations occurring within terrorism arises. Can they be graphically represented as a wave, or rather as a straight line whose elements are partially modified at a faster or slower pace, while other aspects remain stable or repetitive? Are ‘the waves of terrorism’ accompanied by ‘the waves of retreat from terrorism’, as in Samuel Huntington’s concept? Or maybe they more resemble Alvin Toffler’s model of several simultaneous ‘terrorism waves’?¹⁵

Other issues discussed herein include the forms and types of terrorism, the interferential model of terrorism and the above-mentioned four-element matrix of terrorism. These considerations are concluded by a model of **terrorism continuity and change**, a recommendation that a separate science be established to study terrorism (science of terrorism or terrorism studies), the concept of **counter-anti-terrorism**¹⁶ created by this author and the previously mentioned image model of terrorism.

The main subject of analysis in the second part of the study concerns the reasons for terrorism. Initially, their complexity and diversity is outlined, as nearly twenty selected classification methods discussed in the literature are presented. The observation that the issue tends to be marginalized, whether in theoretical studies or practical applications, is stressed here. A reference is also

¹⁵ What is meant here is that the waves may overlap, as is the case in the theory of civilizational development waves. See: A. Toffler, *Trzecia fala*, Warszawa 1997, S. Huntington, *Trzecia fala demokratyzacji*, Warszawa 1995.

¹⁶ This concept assumes that different elements, mechanisms or activities concerning counteracting or combating terrorism are considered together.

made to the discussion of the feasibility of a single universal model of reasons for terrorism or a hierarchy of them.

The main motivations of modern terrorist groups' activities are revealed and a model of the integrated topologies of sources of terrorism is shown. It divides the reasons for terrorism in terms of the time of their occurrence, their range (territory), the subject (e.g. religious, psychological, or economic sources) and their evolution. These considerations are crowned by the author's model of reasons for terrorism. Apart from the above issues, the main goal of this part of the study is to provide an answer to the following research questions, among others. What are the main reasons for terrorism? What factors trigger their evolution? How does the evolution of reasons for terrorism affect the traits, elements or the scope of the entire phenomenon? Is it possible to identify one or several dominant determinants among the sources of terrorism? Are they specific, i.e. universal only in a given historical period, territory or kind of terrorism? Another significant research problem involves the analysis of the sources of terrorism in the context of other disintegrative phenomena (e.g. separatism or fundamentalism) and the answer to the question of whether there is a common catalogue of reasons, at least for a portion of disintegrative tendencies.

The second part of the study is completed by the concept of a triad of terrorist motivation. It comprises three main components. Firstly, there are various political, ethnic, religious, and other ideas a given terrorist organization identifies with to a greater or lesser extent. Secondly, we have economic and social conditions pertaining to a given territory, including the issues of poverty, illiteracy, economic disparities, and so on. Thirdly, there are the so-called psychological aspects comprising highly diversified factors and emotional attitudes (e.g. the will to take revenge, feeling of being wronged, hostility). All the above complement one another, interacting with each other and with a range of different other factors.

In order to verify the assumptions the following research hypotheses were adopted:

1. In the interferential approach, terrorism should primarily be analyzed in consideration of four main aspects. These involve its components (e.g. individual terrorist organizations), the interactions among them, internal and external factors that influence the above, and a determined territory of analysis (say, Afghanistan or the European Union). The process can employ a cause-and-effect interference (investigating the sources and consequences of a given phenomenon), the range of interference (concerning the influence of individual factors) and the interference of subject (analyzing the elements of terrorism).

2. The interferential concept presented in this work is universal and can be applied when discussing terrorism or its components, as well as when analyzing other social phenomena, mainly disintegrative theories, such as nationalism, separatism, or fundamentalism. These phenomena are similar in many respects, such as some reasons, mechanisms, components, consequences, and so on. Therefore, this is another argument to justify their common classification and analysis as so-called disintegrative processes.

3. Terrorism is usually considered to be a negative phenomenon. However, it can sometimes assume a positive form, the so-called 'positive dimension of terrorism'. This may refer to the situations when a certain manifestation of terror or terrorism contributes to a blood-shedding tyrant being toppled, the removal of an individual who destabilizes the state, or the cessation of breaches of human rights. This would be the scenario in the assassination of the Emperor Caligula, or Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, and so on.

4. One can point to disintegrative as well as integrating functions of terrorism. The former primarily comes down to the destabilization of a given

social system and can occur at a local, regional, or even global level. In the latter meaning, terrorism integrates not only the individuals or other subjects that identify themselves with a certain terrorist activity, but also those who feel threatened by it in a direct or indirect way.¹⁷

5. The concept of a triad of terrorist motivation is among the more efficient methods to systemize and analyze the reasons for modern terrorism. This concept identifies three main groups of determinants, i.e. ‘the realm of ideas’ (ideologies, such as nationalism, separatism, fundamentalism, etc.), economic and social sources for terrorism (such as poverty or financial disparities), and psychological reasons (such as certain behaviors or psychological factors).

6. In the case of terrorism, the phenomenon of so-called dualism is among the more important mechanisms, which tend to be overlooked. Dualism means that some elements of terrorism can be considered as both cause and effect. This means that a certain factor, e.g. violence, fear or separatism can be both a reason for and an effect of terrorist activity.

7. In the analysis of terrorism a new research instrument needs to be applied, namely the author’s model of the four main planes of terrorism. It takes into account the reasons for terrorism, the manifestations of this phenomenon (e.g. forms, methods and strategies of terrorist activities), the consequences of terrorism and so-called counter-anti-terrorism (including a total of means and initiatives related to the prevention and combating of terrorist threats), and their interrelations. This model is applicable both for theoretical analysis and in practice, by various analytical institutions.

8. The currently conducted research into terrorism has to be deemed insufficient. In order to comprehend this phenomenon more fully it is necessary to conduct a significantly more in-depth interdisciplinary scientific activity

¹⁷ This topic is considerably broader as both positive and negative aspects of the integrating and disintegrative function of terrorism can be discussed. For more on the so-called positive disintegration. See e.g. K. Dąbrowski, *Dezintegracja pozytywna*, Warszawa 1979.

applying new methods and concepts (such as the interferentiality of terrorism). Initiatives should also be undertaken in order to create a separate field of science dealing with the issue of terrorism both in theoretical (including the concept, traits, mechanisms, forms, reasons, etc.) and practical (e.g. occurrences of terrorism and the ways to overcome it) dimensions.