

# PHASES OF TERRORISM

## *in the* AGE *of* GLOBALIZATION

*From Christopher Columbus to Osama bin Laden*

ASAFA JALATA



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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2016 978-1-137-55233-4

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First published 2016 by  
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

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Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of Nature America, Inc., One New York Plaza, Suite 4500, New York, NY 10004-1562.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

ISBN 978-1-349-56866-6                      ISBN 978-1-137-55234-1 (eBook)  
DOI 10.1057/9781137552341

Distribution in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world is by Palgrave Macmillan®, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Jalata, Asafa, 1954–

Phases of terrorism in the age of globalization : from Christopher Columbus to Osama bin Laden / Asafa Jalata.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

1. Terrorism—

History. 2. State-sponsored terrorism—History. I. Title.

HV6431.J3227155 2015

363.325—dc23

2015017995

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

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# Preface

The earthshaking terrorist episodes of 9/11 and their devastating effects on the United States of America were the main impetus for the writing of this book. Because of the complexity and difficulty of the subject matter of terrorism, it took me several years to complete it. One of these complexities involved unpacking contradictions between the knowledge for domination and maintaining the status quo and the knowledge that embraces and promotes principles of human liberation, social justice, human rights, and democracy. Another complexity was developing the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological frameworks that would enable me to critically study terrorist practices for over five centuries from “above” and “below” in the capitalist world system. While thinking about the tragedy of 9/11 and the injustices committed against innocent Americans, I realized that most indigenous peoples around the world have been exposed to state or state-sponsored terrorism for more than five hundred years. Unfortunately, the media, academia, government, and international institutions have more or less neglected to report or to explain the tragedies of indigenous peoples around the world. Only recently have human rights organizations briefly addressed their lethal problems. Nowadays, terrorism is affecting powerful institutions and countries and is not limited to powerless peoples.

As history demonstrates, starting in 1492, Christopher Columbus, his associates, and other Europeans arrived in the Americas and initiated state or state-sponsored terrorism, committing genocide against indigenous peoples and dispossessing them of their land and other resources. Ignoring this stark reality, most peoples of European origin in the Americas today celebrate the year 1492 calling it the year Christopher Columbus discovered the Americas. How could one discover a place that was already inhabited? Nevertheless, the descendants of indigenous Americans and progressive intellectuals of diverse backgrounds vehemently denounce this so-called discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus by recognizing its subsequent devastating effects on indigenous Americans.

Over five hundred years later, Osama bin Laden and his associates engineered and executed the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 on the United States and against its institutions and citizens. The subtitle of this book is *From Christopher Columbus to Osama bin Laden*: while the crimes that Columbus and other Europeans committed against indigenous Americans cannot be forgotten, the crimes that *al Qaeda* committed against American citizens and their institutions and infrastructures under the leadership of Osama bin Laden will be remembered forever. Although Christopher Columbus and Osama bin Laden still have worshippers around the world after their death, they are both symbols of terrorism.

The impact of Ethiopian state terrorism on my life, my wife, and our people, the Oromo, and my scholarly interest in global studies also motivated

and empowered me to take on the difficult project of writing this book. The Oromo have been suffering from the consequences of Ethiopian colonial and state terrorism for more than a century. Former European colonial countries, such as England, France, and Italy, and later successive global powers and their institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have been indirectly financing Ethiopian state terrorism.

Successive Ethiopian regimes have been terrorizing and eliminating members of the Oromo community in general and Oromo political activists who have been struggling for the natural rights of the Oromo people in particular. Consequently, millions of Oromo refugees have been scattered around the world. I am one of these displaced refugees, and I know firsthand the tragedies of different forms of violence, including terrorism. Therefore, the terrorist attacks on my adopted country, the United States, and fellow American citizens renewed in me my previous psychological and emotional pains and traumas. I have started to realize that one cannot be sure about her/his safety in a world system born out of conflict, war, and terrorism, and that continues to use the same logic and approaches.

I have also started to ponder and wonder what would happen if the movers and shakers of the capitalist world system began to mobilize their economic and intellectual resources and energies toward genuinely building durable peace and democracy in the world rather than believing that might is right and trying to solve political problems through war and terrorism. As we know, terrorism has no boundaries. Unfortunately, the appetite for money, power, and fame is overpowering and leads to shortsightedness and contradictory behaviors and practices. History demonstrates that the powerful individuals, groups, corporations, and states, and those who struggle against their oppressive policies and actions, are failing to learn from past mistakes. This book attempts to demonstrate the sickness of capitalist civilization that claims to promote universalism, justice, human rights, and democracy while in effect violating and destroying these principles.

The oppositional projects of “revolution” or “socialism” have also repeated the same or similar mistakes, as the examples of the former Soviet Union and China have demonstrated. Furthermore, extreme ideologies of racism and religious and ideological fundamentalism have contributed to the intensification of conflict, war, and terrorism in the modern world because of narrow cultural, ideological, and political thinking and practices. This book identifies and critically assesses the devastating consequences of all forms of terrorism. My hope is that it will lead people to understand the importance of social justice, democracy, and multicultural knowledge and wisdom and will inspire them to start struggling to develop a peaceful and egalitarian democracy within their local contexts and beyond. I invite all people to consider the possibility of developing a better world that moves us beyond conflict, war, and terrorism.

Finally, I thank Palgrave Macmillan and its staff—particularly Mireille Yanow, publisher, Scholarly Division, and Mara Berkoff—for helping me publish this book. There are many people, including the anonymous reviewers,

who helped me strengthen my arguments. Furthermore, the University of Tennessee at Knoxville contributed to this project by providing me with a sabbatical semester to work on the book. Finally, I abundantly thank my wife, Zeituna Kalil, and others for supporting me in many ways. Particularly, Zeituna deserves special appreciation for constantly reminding me how Ethiopian state terrorism has been affecting Oromo women and children, and for encouraging and motivating me in working hard and completing this book.

Asafa Jalata  
Knoxville,  
October 2015

# Introduction

This book considers terrorism as an aspect of the capitalist world system for more than five centuries. My previous research revealed that terrorism emerged from above (i.e., state and/or state-sponsored terrorism) and below (i.e., subversive organizations or groups). This book addresses these issues in greater depth by identifying and exploring the causes and main characteristics of terrorism. Several scholars have written on the emergence of the capitalist world system in the late fifteenth century and its subsequent development through the processes of broadening (expansion to new regions) and deepening (increased activities in the already incorporated regions) (Wallerstein 1980, 1988; Frank 1966, 1978). What has not been explained is the function of terrorism during the emergence and development of capitalism and why it has persisted in the global system. This book fills the gap in our understanding of all forms of terrorism so that we can develop research-based policy measures that can help address this lethal global phenomenon and social “cancer.”

The consequences of 9/11 and my personal life experience and intellectual background motivated me to write this book. I have been living in exile in the United States since 1981 because Ethiopian state terrorism has been targeting activist Oromo<sup>1</sup> like me for elimination, suspecting our participation in the Oromo national movement for decolonization, national self-determination, and multinational democracy. As an Oromo American, I experienced the fear of 9/11 terrorist episodes, too. In addition to my life experience, my intellectual development as a scholar of the modern world system has engendered within me a scholarly interest to study terrorism. The terrorist episodes of 9/11 and my experience and knowledge of terrorism in my birth homeland, Oromia (Jalata 1998, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2005a, 2005b), stimulated me to write this book. Let me introduce these painful experiences to the reader to express my inner feeling about all forms of terrorism before I engage in the central issues of the book.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks shocked Americans and the international community as a whole. The use of commercial planes for terrorist warfare was new and unexpected. The attack on the United States, the most powerful country

in the world, by a terrorist network was new. Attesting to this reality, Noam Chomsky (2002: 11–12) states the following:

The horrifying atrocities of September 11 are something quite new in world affairs, not in their scale and character, but in the target. For the United States, this is the first time since the War of 1812<sup>2</sup> that the national territory has been under attack, or even threatened. Many commentators have brought up a Pearl Harbor analogy, but that is misleading. On December 7, 1941, military bases in two U.S. colonies were attacked—not the national territory, which was never threatened. The U.S. preferred to call Hawaii a “territory,” but it was in effect a colony. During the past several hundred years the U.S. annihilated the indigenous population . . . intervened violently in the surrounding region, conquered Hawaii and the Philippines (killing hundreds of thousands of Filipinos), and, in the past half century particularly, extended its resort to force throughout much of the world. The number of victims is colossal. For the first time, the guns have been directed the other way. That is a dramatic change.

This new dramatic change in world affairs should force us to go beyond an ideological and cultural blind lens to critically and thoroughly study and understand the causes and effects of all forms of terrorism in the modern world system.

The terrorist events of 9/11 “changed the world dramatically, that nothing will be the same as the world enters into an ‘age of terror’”; due to new technology and new organizational capacity, the West “lost their virtual monopoly of violence” and “for the first time in modern history, [the West] . . . were subjected, on home soil, to the kind of atrocity that they routinely have carried out elsewhere” (Chomsky 2002: 119). One would expect that this terrorist tragedy would motivate us to correctly and profoundly identify and reflect on the proximate and immediate causes of terrorism in order to find a lasting solution for this crime against humanity. The 9/11 terrorist episodes renewed in my mind my nightmare, pain, frustration, and hopelessness about terrorism that forced me to leave my homeland in 1980 and resettle in my adopted country, the United States, in 1981. It made me feel that terrorism was following me in the United States, a place I thought immune to terrorism. The events of 9/11 traumatized the citizens of the United States, including myself, just as successive Ethiopian regimes have been terrorizing the Oromo and other peoples (see chapters three and seven). The only difference is that the former was committed by a transnational terrorist organization, and the latter has been committed by a colonial state supported and financed by global powers of the West as well as China.

Terrorism first emerged as a major global issue on September 11, 2001, when al-Qaeda, a previously unknown multinational global terrorist network, attacked the United States and shook its political, economic, technological, military, cultural, and ideological foundations. The destruction of the American lives and properties was devastating (see chapter three), and it convinced Americans and others that no one is safe from the threat of terrorism in the modern world system. The United States, the current superpower

of the modern world, with its massive nuclear arsenal, complex intelligence networks, and highly advanced military capabilities, was attacked on its own soil by members of a terrorist organization willing to commit suicide in order to murder innocent civilians and destroy symbols of American power, namely the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center and the headquarters of the Department of Defense, the Pentagon, in Washington, DC. Before these events, the possibility of using commercial planes for terrorism was never imagined. Although these dramatic events have focused our awareness of terrorism, this phenomenon is not new.

When the indigenous peoples of the Americas, Australia, Africa, and Asia resisted European colonial expansion between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, European powers responded by engaging in terrorism and genocidal massacres, as we shall see in this book. These colonial powers, and their descendants and collaborators, terrorized indigenous American, Australian, African, and Asian peoples in their search for land, minerals, free or enslaved labor, and other resources. This was a form of state or state-sponsored terrorism since it was planned and executed by the Euro-American states or state-sponsored companies. These devastating problems have been ignored or glossed over by both mainstream and leftist scholars. Consequently, our understanding of the behavior of humanity and what has occurred in the world system in the name of religion, commerce, civilization, culture, and ideology has not been adequately explored. This book intends to tell what has been unfortunately neglected intentionally or unintentionally so that we can humanely confront human self- and ethno/racial-centered biases and ideologically blinded thinking in order to improve global civilization.

Like Euro-American states, several postcolonial states have been engaging in all forms of political violence, including terrorism, to control territories as well as economic and labor resources and to construct political and ideological domination (Oliverio 1998, 1997). But subversive terrorism has emerged also from the weak and dominated groups in reaction to the process of the intensification of globalization and acute political, economic, and social crises and the policy responses to them. Yet what the mainstream scholarship focuses on is terrorism from below and more or less ignores state or state-sponsored terrorism. Also, most critical scholars have ignored or glossed over the role of terrorism in the capitalist world system; scholars including Karl Marx (1867), Immanuel Wallerstein (1980a, 1980b, 1988a, 1988b) and Andre Gunder Frank (1966, 1978) have written extensively on the emergence and development of the capitalist world system, but have neglected to explain that state or state-sponsored terrorism had laid the foundation of the capitalist world system.

To make up for these shortcomings, this work takes a balanced approach to all forms of terrorism because all of them are crimes against humanity. In the capitalist world system today, some states that engage in terrorism are supported by global powers that ignore the principles of human rights and democracy by turning a blind eye to acts of terrorist violence committed by the states they support. Under these circumstances, state terrorism begets subversive

terrorism. This book examines further how in certain cases terrorism from below, or subversive terrorism, has developed into global terrorism, and it explores the dialectical interconnections among state, subversive, and global terrorism. Finally, this book considers whether the current dominant political, intellectual, and ideological paradigms about terrorism and globalization will lead us into perpetual conflict and the breakdown of the global order, or whether they will bring about a just, democratic, and peaceful global order. In other words, the book makes a balanced critique of the modern world system by evaluating the ruling ideas, ideologies, scholarships, and political practices.

### **Theoretical and Methodological Insights**

To date, terrorism studies focus primarily on wide structural changes or behavioral issues and pay little attention to the role of human agency. In order to overcome these limitations, this work combines a structural approach with a social constructionist model of human agency. Further, this work employs the French *Annales* School approach, which rejects overspecialization of social science disciplines by combining idiographic and nomothetic modes of analyses to understand collective human behavior in relation to terrorism and globalization. It also recognizes the theoretical contributions of modernization, dependency, and world system theories, and goes beyond their limitations of universalizing history and culture by neglecting to look at the world from multicultural centers. This critical and historical study also utilizes critical discourses and the particular world system approach that deals with long-term and large-scale social changes. As V. G. Kiernan (1982: 230) puts it, "There are, after all, good reasons for prying into the past with the historian's telescope, and trying to see more clearly what happened, instead of being content with legend or fantasy. Of all reasons for an interest in the colonial wars [and terrorism] of modern times the best is that they are still going on, openly and disguised."

This work employs critical approaches and interdisciplinary, multidimensional, comparative methods to examine the dynamic interplay among social structures, human agency, and terrorism. Recognizing the significance of such approaches for this kind of study, Theda Skocpol (1994: 333) notes, "Convincing narratives of historical processes—at least narratives of those continuities and changes that are relevant to macroscopic social science—cannot be devised at all without the use of systematic comparative analyses to sort out causal hypotheses and discover new causal analogies. Without tough-minded, analytical comparisons—necessarily cutting through the webs of history for the duration of a given investigation—we can never get straight which structures matter, or which processes count." This comparative and historical study also requires critical social history that looks at societal issues from the bottom up, specifically critical discourses and the particular world system approach that deal with long-term and large-scale global social changes. Data for this work are collected from newspapers, historical and anthropological

accounts, scholarly books and journals, government documents, memoirs, biographies, electronic media, and other available sources.

### **The Organization of the Book**

The book is organized in ten chapters. This introductory chapter provides an overview of the book focusing on the central organizing theme and subthemes and its theoretical and methodological approaches. Chapter two deals with conceptual issues and critically and broadly looks at existing theories of terrorism by investigating the dynamic relationship between terrorism and the global system. It also demonstrates that since terrorism has been conceptualized, defined, and theorized by those who have contradictory interests and objectives, and since the subject matter of terrorism is complex, difficult, and elusive, there is a wide gap in establishing a common understanding among the scholars of terrorism studies. The scholarly insights that are developed in this chapter help frame new theoretical and historical perspectives that guide the analysis of this book. Chapter three explains how the intensification of globalization as the modern world system has increased the occurrence of terrorism from above and from below. It also illustrates that we cannot adequately grasp the essence and characteristics of modern terrorism without understanding the larger cultural, social, economic, and political contexts in which it takes place. It further examines the role of political violence as a form of terrorism during European colonial expansion, and how this violence has been justified in the name of religion, business, modernity, and civilization. In addition, the chapter explores how this recurrent violence led to the formation of the global system that has unequal parts—the West and the Rest—and how these contradictory relationships sometimes facilitate conflict, war, and terrorism. In other words, this chapter explains how the intensification of globalization has increased the occurrence of terrorism from above and from below.

Chapter four critically explores the role of colonial terrorism and its consequences on the indigenous American peoples during their colonization and incorporation into the European-dominated capitalist world system between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. Raising some complex moral, intellectual, philosophical, ethical, and political questions, the chapter examines impacts of colonial terrorism on indigenous Americans. Specifically, it explains the relationship among capitalist incorporation, colonialism, and various forms of violence. The chapter also identifies and explains different kinds of ruling ideas and ideological justifications that Euro-American colonial settlers and their descendants used when engaging in terrorism, genocide, and continued subjugations of the indigenous American peoples. Chapter five examines the consequences of colonial terrorism and genocide on the indigenous Australian peoples during their colonization in the late eighteenth century. First, it provides background historical and cultural information. Second, it specifically links capitalist incorporation and colonialism and various forms of violence with terrorism.

Chapter six deals with European colonial terrorism and its consequences of racial slavery, colonization, and incorporation of Africa into the European-dominated capitalist world system between the late fifteenth and twentieth centuries. It focuses on the first and second waves of European colonial terrorism that were practiced via racial slavery and colonialism; further, the chapter explores the dialectical connections among various forms of violence and genocide by focusing on the process of colonizing by violently destroying African peoples and their institutions. These processes enriched European colonialists and their African collaborators and their governments and companies. This chapter also explains that since most of these indigenous peoples are still not represented in government, academic, economic, and media institutions of neocolonial African states, their voices are muzzled and hidden, and most people of the world are misinformed and know little or nothing about them. It further demonstrates that by degrading and erasing the cultures, histories, and humanity of indigenous Africans, the descendants of the settlers and their African collaborators have convinced themselves that with the help of global powerful states they can continue to terrorize and dispossess the resources of these people without moral/ethical and political responsibilities.

By focusing on the states of Ethiopia and Sudan, the terrorism of African neocolonial states is further illustrated in chapter seven. The same chapter compares the effects of Ethiopian and Sudanese state terrorism by focusing on the commonalities between the two states. It also explains how these two peripheral and neocolonial African states have used global and regional connections and state terrorism as political tools for creating and maintaining the confluence of identity, religion, and political power. Explaining how Ethiopia primarily depends on the West, and Sudan on the Middle East, the chapter demonstrates how the racialization/ethnicization of these states, external dependency, and state terrorism have prevented the implementation of national self-determination and the construction of legitimate multinational democracies that could have solved the political, social, and economic crises in Ethiopia and Sudan.

Chapter eight challenges the political and intellectual position that has failed to explore the dialectical connections between Israeli state terrorism and Palestinian oppositional terrorism in the global context. It also demonstrates the inability of global powers to facilitate the resolution of this conflict because of their lack of objectivity and neutrality due to their economic, political, and strategic agendas in the Middle East and beyond. It further explains why the partisan position of blaming Palestinian oppositional terrorism or Israeli state terrorism without connecting and exploring the relationship between the two has limited our understanding of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and prevented the emergence of a fair and just society in the Middle East. The chapter also illustrates that the unresolved Palestinian-Israeli conflict has contributed to the emergence of different forms of terrorism in the Middle East including that of al-Qaeda.

Chapter nine explains why and how global terrorism emerged recently. This chapter focuses on the formation of al-Qaeda, its essence and main

characteristics, the role of Osama bin Laden and Islamic fundamentalism, and what makes al-Qaeda different from state agencies and other organizations. It explains the ideology of this organization in relation to Islam, and how it justifies the crimes against humanity in the name of religion and Allah. It also shows the parallels and differences between this form of terrorism and state terrorism. The chapter also addresses the issues of terrorism from moral, ethical, philosophical, and legal perspectives in the capitalist world system. The major consequences of al-Qaeda terrorism are identified and studied too. Further, the chapter identifies and explains the psychological, emotional, political, and economic consequences of state and global terrorism in both the West and the Rest. The final chapter offers certain conclusions. It makes assumptions based on two possibilities: if human civilization is capable of redeeming itself from political violence such as terrorism in order to establish just world peace or if the search for more money and power leads to more conflict, which may involve nuclear weapons and the destruction of the world. It also provides a critique of a modern civilization and suggests how to overcome all forms of violence including terrorism from above and below by establishing a single standard for humanity that is based on the rule of law, egalitarian democracy, and justice for all.

## Defining, Conceptualizing, and Theorizing Terrorism<sup>1</sup>

This chapter explains the impossibility of adequately defining, conceptualizing, and theorizing, as well as understanding, all forms of terrorism without recognizing that it has been an integral part of the global capitalist system since the late fifteenth century. However, terrorism as a “technique is as old as warfare contrary to the widespread notion that [it] was the offspring of nineteenth-century nationalist movements. The confusion may be a result of the late [emergence] of the term in the French Revolution and its Terror” (Chaliand and Blin 2007: 5–6). For instance, the Mongols, between 1206 and 1400 under the leadership of Genghis Khan and his sons and generals, practiced terrorism, slavery, and conquest on Asian and Eastern European peoples to plunder their economic resources, exploit their labor by enslaving them, and dominate trade (Gabriel 2004; Turnbull 2003; Weatherford 2004). The invading Mongols had burned villages and cities frequently and used unbridled terror and surprise attacks to impose fear on the targeted population groups so that they would submit with little or no resistance<sup>2</sup> (Weatherford 2004: 8, 146).

Although there have been human groups that have engaged in peaceful coexistence and cooperation and shared their available resources, history demonstrates that since time immemorial, certain individuals and groups or organizations have engaged in terrorism over economic interests such as land, water, and commerce (Black 2004: 21–22; Wilkinson 1979). Nevertheless, modern terrorism is different from previous terrorism because of its intensity, frequency, and level of destruction. The development of capitalism as the modern world system with its ideological intensity of racism, religious extremism, concomitant advancement in technology, and organizational capacity had strengthened the interconnections among world-system processes, colonization, incorporation, and the use of violence as terror to intensify these complex processes. Without various forms of violence, particularly terrorism, it is impossible to separate people from their homelands and means of production.

The chapter identifies and explores at least five central points that make the tasks of defining, conceptualizing, and theorizing the issues of terrorism challenging and complex. These points are (1) the absence of interest in studying terrorism in all its forms by focusing mainly on non-state-terrorism and ignoring or glossing over state terrorism, (2) the problem of drawing a clear boundary between legitimate and illegitimate political violence, such as just and unjust wars that usually involve terrorism, (3) the complexity and multiplicity of terrorism, (4) the lack of adequate study of terrorism in terms of conceptualization, definition, theorization, and empirical studies, and (5) the failure to recognize in terrorism studies that modern terrorism has been committed on the powerless human groups in the name of money, God, race/culture, and civilization for many centuries due to the lack of a single practical moral, legal, and intellectual standard for all human groups. Because of the absolute commitment to the accumulation of money and power by certain individuals and groups or classes in the modern world system, the disregard for human rights by powerful groups and their states, most commentators and scholars have ignored certain forms of terrorism and focused on the form that particularly affects them or their interests. In other words, most experts on terrorism are self-centered and/or group centered and they look at this issue from a narrow perspective by ignoring the reality that terrorism is a “social cancer” for all human groups affected by it.

Considering the historical and global context in which terrorism has been intensified and practiced as the capitalist world system developed over the last five centuries, we need a more comprehensive and broader definition of this concept. So, *I define terrorism as a systematic governmental or organizational policy or strategy through which lethal violence is practiced openly or covertly to terrorize and impose fear on a given population group, beyond the direct victims of terror, to change their behavior of political resistance to domination or to challenge the dominating group through a similar means to change its behavior and practice of imposing deadly violence for political and economic gains and/or other reasons.* I have developed this definition to overcome the limitation of previous definitions of terrorism. Generally speaking, there is a lack of consensus on a precise definition among the experts of terrorism studies, other scholars, commentators, and politicians. After examining more than 100 pages of 109 definitions of terrorism, Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman (1988) note the nonexistence of a broadly acceptable and comprehensive definition of terrorism. The longitudinal study of these two scholars has 22 conceptual categories that include violence, politics, terror, threat, coercion, and intimidation.

Whether terrorism is committed by states or by nonstate actors, its consequences are devastating for the targeted individuals and population group. All forms of terrorists attempt to hide the lethal consequences of terrorism and the crimes against humanity by the discourses of civilization, progress, development, and democracy or national liberation or religion. Some people are easily persuaded by such discourses and take sides even though the lethal consequence of terrorism is the same for the people at its receiving end.

Unfortunately, terrorism that is visited upon powerless or colonized peoples receives less attention while terrorism that is visited upon the powerful groups or nations receives more publicity and attention. Powerful people do not recognize that all human groups have the right to life and liberty and that they should be protected from terrorism. What are the other deficits of the existing terrorism studies?

### **One-Sided and Unbalanced Studies of Terrorism**

Most terrorism-research projects focus on nonstate organizations that have engaged in various terrorist activities (Bergesen and Lizardo 2004; Black 2004; Crenshaw 1981; Goodwin 2006). For instance, without linking his definition to state terrorism, Jeff Goodwin (2006: 2031) considers indiscriminate killings of noncombatants to be “categorical terrorism” and defines this as “*the strategic use of violence and threats of violence, usually intended to influence several audiences, by oppositional political groups against civilians or noncombatants who belong to a specific ethnicity, religious or national group, social class or some other collectivity, without regard to their individual identities or roles*” [author’s emphasis]. We cannot adequately understand categorical terrorism without understanding its direct or indirect link to state terrorism or state policies. Terrorism is an essentially contested concept resulting from the failure of scholars of terrorism studies to establish a commonly accepted definition.

Despite the fact that scholars of terrorism studies agree that terrorism primarily involves lethal violence on innocent civilians in order to influence an audience, they do not agree on identifying the agency of all forms of terrorism. Some scholars define terrorism as premeditated or intentional violence by nonstate actors for imposing fear on a target population to achieve certain political objectives.<sup>3</sup> There are also some who define terrorism without identifying state or nonstate actors as terrorists.<sup>4</sup> A few acknowledge how state terrorism begets nonstate terrorism: “When terrorism is theoretically examined as a form of social control, fundamental controlling apparatuses of the state may be viewed as terrorist. Organizations . . . who legitimate the use of violence to achieve their goals may be viewed as products of, extension of, or models of the essential structure of a state when its purpose is to regulate behavior via various forms of repression, domination, and terror” (Oliverio 1998: 27). These representative definitions demonstrate that some scholars recognize only the terrorism of nonstate organizations while others identify that terrorism can be initiated by state agents or nonstate actors.

All these definitions are too general and lack historical specificity. They do not explain why human beings seek to impose control on other human beings through terrorism. Most of these definitions do not include the essence and characteristics of all forms of terrorism; they also do not explain under what conditions terrorism emerges, and how it has been used in the modern world system over the last five centuries. Although several representative definitions of terrorism converge on the notion that terrorism is “*the deliberate*