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The New Patterns of Warfare: Terrorism against Innocent Civilians

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Terrorism surfaces in a most brutal manner in the global conflicts in the early 21st century. It is a question of a new form of terrorism that is different from classical terrorism by the French and Russian revolutionaries. This new form of struggle by religious fundamentalists and ethno-nationalists occurs in a band of countries from Algeria to the Philippines. It destabilizes the state and results in massive losses of lives among innocent civilians as well as injured innocents.

Key words: Heidelberg Conflict Barometers, old and new terrorism, Muslim civilization, ethno-nationalism, terrorism as rational choice, terrorism in the name of God

1. Introduction

Violent political conflicts dominate in the global mass media sending almost every day. It is a matter of the new terrorist related conflicts that have become so conspicuous in the 21st century. How are we to understand the new pattern of political conflicts involving the massive and indiscriminate employment of terrorist attacks? To reply to this question, one may contrast the new pattern of fighting with the traditional models of political conflicts that covered the old pattern of conflicts that prevailed after the Second World War up to 2001 roughly.

Political conflicts constitute zero-sum games of interaction between organized groups of actors or governments (Neumann and Morgerntstern, 2004). Its basic logic cannot be explained by using models of interpersonal conflicts with often hidden or unconscious motivations (Jeong,

2008). Political conflicts refer to the struggle over real things, such like territory, people, power and dominance as well as economics assets. What one captures, the other loses, if both parties to the conflict do not destroy each other.

Political conflicts used to be neatly classified into interstate and intrastate conflicts (Aron, 1966; Morgenthau and Thompson, 1985; Nye, 2008). Tensions, struggle and fighting between governments was analyzed within the discipline of international relations, whereas domestic political violence, or the threat to use it, was confined to the discipline of comparative politics (Coser, 1998). There are still many examples of interstate and intrastate conflicts today, but the newly emerging pattern of political conflicts transcends this distinction. With the process of globalization there has surfaced a new pattern of fighting and terrorism that is both domestic and international (Diehl, 2005). Militants in a country



have out of state or even global connections, and may receive government backing from outside countries, at least tacitly or indirectly.

The aim of this article is to theorize the rise of the new terrorism against civilians as a type of political conflict – strategy and tactics – as well as to indicate how it occurs around the globe. The empirical information is drawn from the so-called Heidelberg Conflict Project with its yearly Conflicts Barometers, which has developed an intricate database for recording the occurrence of political conflicts since 1945 - see Appendix.

2. Data

The Heidelberg Conflict Barometers are compiled by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research and made public in socalled Conflict Barometers. The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK) is located at the Department of Political Science, University of Heidelberg, registered as a nonprofit association. The CONIS database contains all the data the Conflict Barometer is based on. It comprises information on all forms of interand intrastate political conflicts from 1945 until today. It aims with more than 12,000 conflictyear data on comprehending the dynamics of conflict and war. CONIS was developed on the basis of KOSIMO in the course of two research projects at the University of Heidelberg co-financed by the European Union and in collaboration with the HIIK. More information on CONIS, containing data on affected countries, conflict parties, conflict items, and annual intensities, can be accessed at conis.uni-hd.de.

"Conflict" refers to the clashing of interests (positional differences) over national values of some duration and magnitude between at least two parties (organized groups, states, groups of states, organizations) that are determined to pursue their interests and achieve their goals. Conflicts concern the following items: Territory, Secession, Decolonization, Autonomy, System/ideology, National power, Regional predominance, International power, Resources and Others.

3. On the Nature of Political Conflicts

Conflict behavior is omnipresent in all social systems. There occur many kinds of conflicts and the causes or reasons of conflict are diverse, to say the least. A general theory of conflict is hardly feasible, as it would be so general as to consist mainly of platitudes. A more fertile

research strategy is to theorize various subsets of conflicts, like the political conflicts.

A conflict is political when it revolves around the basic properties of a state: territory, citizens, legitimate authority and the employment of force. Other governments or social groups within a country may challenge the established position of a government to exercise its state power, aiming at inter alia regime change. The challenge may start by peaceful means but inherent in the logic of a political conflict is the implications of this challenge for the use of physical violence in one form or another. A challenge turns into tensions that go over into violent actions that may become full scale war and lead to the overthrow of a government or the complete surrender of a state (Deutsch, Coleman and Marcus, 2006).

The distinction between cooperation and peaceful conflicts is a very fine one (Myerson, 1997). Two or more parties in collaboration often collide on some issues. Among the socalled variable games one finds both the game of cheating - PD game - and the threat game - Chicken. However, they differ from the zerosum games in that a peaceful cooperative solution is available - a win-win situation. Political conflicts constitute zero-sum games when there is a confrontation of interests that is conducive to the occurrence of violence. Manifest use of physical violence may take time to emerge, with the confrontation staying in a deadlock. Or the parties may decide to resolve their differences, finding some sort of compromise solution. Yet, many political conflicts develop into armed struggle of one form or another.

In the Heidelberg Conflict Barometers, based upon reports from local observers around the globe, political conflicts are ranked from 1 to 5, depending upon the employment of force-see Appendix 1 concerning the CONIS data.

4. Political Conflicts since 1945

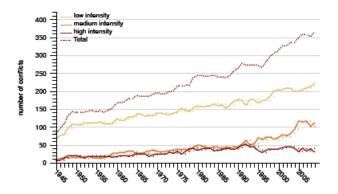
According to the Heidelberg Conflict Barometers, there has been a steady increase in the number of yearly political conflicts. The increase from one year to another reflects that many conflicts continue year in and year out. And a few new conflicts appear from time to time. It is not that conflicts do never disappear. They do. But the life span of a conflict may cover decades. Let us look at some Tables that render not only the progression of the total number of conflicts but also classify them according to type and intensity.



Graph 1 displays the total number of conflicts since the end of the Second World War. The number of conflicts observed per year has risen more or less continuously. Most of the con-

flicts are low-intensity conflicts (no people killed) but regarding high-intensity conflicts (many people killed), there is an increase albeit with some fluctuations.

Graph 1 Global conflicts of low, medium and high intensity 1945 to 2009

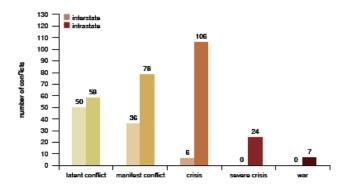


Source: Conflict Barometer, 2009: 2

There occurred some 100 political conflicts every year in the first decade of the 21st century where people lose their lives. *Graph* 2 shows

that the number of intrastate conflicts is far more numerous than the interstate ones.

Graph 2 Number of Intra- and Interstate Conflicts in 2009 by Intensity Level



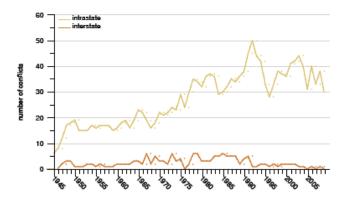
Source: Conflict Barometer, 2009: 2

The interstate conflicts have gone down quite significantly after the fall of the Iron Curtain. But the number of intrastate conflicts has

increased on the other hand. *Graph* 3 indicates that intrastate conflicts have on average a higher level of intensity.



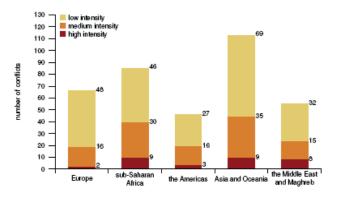
Graph 3 Intra- and Interstate Conflicts of High Intensity 1945 to 2009



Source: Conflict Barometer, 2009: 2

Where do these intrastate conflicts occur? Graph 4 shows that Asia has most of them.

Graph 4 Distribution of all Conflicts in 2009 by Region and Intensity Type



Source: Conflict Barometer, 2009: 2

The region of Asia and Oceania has the most conflicts of all regions in the world, according to the Heidelberg data archive. The number of conflicts per year is significantly higher than that of sub-Saharan Africa, which again is much higher than the numbers for the other regions. High intensity conflicts occur also frequently in the Middle East and North Africa.

Let us look closer at the conflicts in the Asia-Pacific region as well as in the region of North Africa and the Middle East to find out whether they belong to one category of conflicts or another. The Appendix comprises a list of conflicts according to the classification of conflicts in the Conflict Barometer where terrorism is practiced.

5. The New Tactics of Terrorists Against Innocents

Terrorism has been employed as a strategy for political purposes since at least the French Revolution. The so-called "La Terreur" was directed towards the "enemies of the people" by the "General Will". It targeted the families and relatives of political opponents as well as the entire population in regions that were disobedient. Terror against dissidents was also employed in a large scale by the Bolsheviks, targeting enemies of the regime and their relatives by means of the secret police: the *Cheka*. What is new in the 21st century is the indiscriminate use of terrorist tactics against innocent civilians on a huge scale.

Senseless attacks on civilian population have occurred many times throughout human history. It follows the conduct of war and may be engaged into either overtly or covertly, implicitly or implicitly. Thus, already Julius Caesar in his Gallic wars decimated the towns of Gaul systematically, after enemy forces had been overcome. Systematic attacks on civilian populations were done by the Axis Powers during the Second World War, with atrocities amounting to genocides. However, typical of the new terrorism is that it is not part of the conduct of regular warfare, nor does it target any special ethnic group like the Jews, Armenians, Tutsis or Slavs.

Terrorism was justified in one political ideology, namely anarchism. However, it was definitely not conceived as aiming at the population. Instead, terrorism was a legitimate means of revolutionary tactics and strategy when it removed or eliminated heads of state or high state officials. The new insurgents differ from the old guerrillas in attacking anybody, not establishing support among peasants for instance.

What, then, are the ends and means of the new terrorism in the 21st century? In the first decade of the 21st century, terrorist acts occur daily in a set of countries stretching from Northern Africa to the Pacific Ocean over the Middle East, South Asia and South East Asia. Its distinctive features include that it is:

- 1) Indiscriminate: it does not target political leaders or major personalities in society but merely aims at killing or molesting as many ordinary citizens as possible;
- 2) Unsystematic: it does not aim at the elimination of a specific group of people but only at disrupting the lives of innocent people, also women and children;

- 3) Unpredictable: it strikes where nobody is expecting any terrorist attacks, preferable at some public meeting place like the market or the religious building as well as the local police station;
- 4) Unconventional: it employs the suicide attack or the hidden car bomb attack making it very difficult to discover and undo.

These characteristics 1-4 make the new terrorism different from both anarchist tactics and the genocide strategy. The basic goal of the new terrorism is to create chaos in society that may open up for a regime change. Thus, the new terrorism is a rational form of political behavior, highly intentional and planned in time and space.

6. Terrorism as a Rational Strategy

Violence against other people occurs in several forms. The new terrorism is an extremely violent strategy aiming at killing or molesting as many innocent civilians as possible, including even persons with sympathy for the perpetrators. Its employment of violence is not random like sudden household violence or blind like mass hysteria in the spread of ethnic violence like the contagion of a virus. The new terrorism adheres to the logic of rational behaviour, i. e. for any group I it holds that

The new terrorism will continue up until C > B for the terrorist group i. There are many such groups, although their size and resources are little known. They are supported locally, regionally and internationally. They organize on the basis of religious fundamentalism, as well as ethnic identity.

a) Benefits

Terrorist groups draw upon volunteers who decide to share the cause of religious fundamentalism or ethnic mobilization, or both. The army of these terrorist groups is recruited among poor uneducated males whose marginal value is low, as they are often unemployed with grim prospects, like the students from the thousands of *Madrasahs*. Thus, the opportunity cost to engaging in terrorism is also low. The leaders of terrorist groups may be well educated persons with a burning zest for the cause the group is oriented towards.



Terrorist groups also draw upon monetary support from various sources, one bring secret financial assistance from governments. Religious fundamentalists, for instance, may count upon help from fellow brothers and sisters in other countries. Ethnic groups receive assistance from their Diasporas in rich countries. Saudi Arabia, as well as the Gulf Monarchies, provides monetary assistance to various fundamentalist efforts. Iran backs Shiite groups in other countries like Lebanon. Neither India nor Pakistan has refrained from supporting insurgents in neighbouring countries. The Kurds in Turkey, for example, are supported not only by the Kurds in other parts of Kurdistan but also by Kurds in the Western Diasporas.

Thus, terrorist groups dispose of both manpower and capital that may be put to use in the terrorist strategy. In poor populous countries where the value of peaceful life may not be higher than social degradation in filthy unemployment, a short life as martyr may be considered valuable. It may even bring concrete financial benefits to the family of the martyr.

b) Costs

A terrorist group incurs costs as it meets with fierce resistance, both in the community and by the police and the armed forces of the country. Terrorists get killed or knocked out somehow every day. Terrorist groups typically fail to receive support from the community in which they operate, because their violence is indiscriminate. As the terrorist groups move from one community to another, they cannot establish roots with local citizens, town dwellers or peasants. Even when the terrorists aim at promoting an ethnic group in some locality or region, they fail to receive popular support for their violent tactics (e. g. Spain, Mindanao, and Punjab). If the armed forces are strong enough to inflict heavy costs upon terrorist groups, then one may arrive at the end of such behavior where C > B for the group i. However, fighting flexible and movable terrorist groups is costly also for the government, even when the armed forces are not infiltrated by terrorists or government is uncorrupted.

Rational terrorism where B > C for the group i may be driven by other worldly components that affect that calculation of B and C. Metaphysical ideas about Paradise and Holy War drive up B while at the same time lowering C, at least for the individual joining a terrorist group i.

7. Religious Fundamentalism and Terrorism

Looking at the list of conflicts dominating the world recently (2008 and 2009), according to the Heidelberg Conflict Data (Appendix 1 and 2), one cannot bypass the role of religion in several of these conflict items. This constitutes a new feature in the global conflict pattern. Religious fundamentalism triggers violence from Algeria to the Philippines, whether it is a matter of Islamic, Christian, Sikh or Jewish fundamentalism.

Ethnic conflicts have always been violent, but they do not occur as often as religious conflicts today. It is not that ethnic struggle has disappeared. On the contrary, one finds several examples of ethnic conflicts in the Heidelberg Conflict Barometers for 2008 and 2009. Yet, the new terrorism is mainly driven by religious fundamentalism.

It is true that ethnicity often mingles with religion as the reason of a conflict, like in Tibet, Sri Lanka or China's western province. But the systematic use of terrorism against innocents – the suicide bombers and the hidden car bombs – is to be found with religious fundamentalism, while ethnic struggle tends to take the form of insurgency warfare by guerrillas, like in Turkey and around parts of the borders of India where secessionist groups operate.

The rise of religious fundamentalism during the second half of the 20th century has resulted in a new conflict pattern where terrorism plays a major role. Somehow religious tensions become so extreme that religion is employed to legitimate atrocities against innocent civilians.

Religious fundamentalism is a peculiar phenomenon, as it goes against the main trend of secularization that has been typical of the world since the French Enlightenment movement. Fundamentalist groups are to be found in all the world religions, but fundamentalism as a political movement is especially strong in the Muslim civilization.

For reasons that have not been sufficiently researched, the civilization of Islam has not arrived at a definitive solution to key problems such as:

- a) Role of Faith Reason in society:
- b) Economic Development Secularization in modernization;
- c) Gender Equality Traditional Values.

Whereas other world religions have finally endorsed the requirement of modernization, the Muslim civilization continues debating the



pros and cons of modernization. There is nothing inherent in the Koran that makes the adaptation of religion to modernization especially difficult in the Muslim civilization. However, the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism in the Arab world and in Pakistan is a 20th century phenomenon, as is the rise of a Shiite state in Iran.

8. Terrorism as the War of Attrition

The new terrorism does not like the old terrorist aim at the elimination of targeted people who are of special importance: royalties, enemies of the people, family members of key personalities, etc. Instead it wages a war of attrition against the regime in place by means of a long-term strategy of wearing down the support for it. The new terrorism presents a struggle in which you harm your opponent in a lot of small ways, so that they become gradually weaker. The rubbing away or wearing down by friction involves:

- 1. A gradual diminution in number or strength due to constant stress.
- 2. A gradual reduction in power or personnel, as through resignation or death.

The pestering and endless hostile activities are done so as to tire out the enemy who becomes demoralized and gives up.

The process of attrition targets anyone in the new terrorism: government, officials, police, and army, as well as innocent civilians. It is the erosion of the country – public or private - by friction upon the cement of society, i.e. trust. By engaging in all forms of abrasion, corrosion and detrition the new terrorism accomplishes a wearing down of social relations – public or private – in order to weaken or destroy the regime, however long it may take.

When terrorism is employed as the chief tactics in a war of attrition, then the losses in human lives become enormous. The new conflict instruments of suicide bombers and car bombs hit anyone: males, women and children, old and young alike. When the regime is supported by a certain ethnic group, clan or religious sect, then anyone in these sets of people may be targeted at any time.

The terrorist groups – several may be operating independently in a country – want to overthrow the regime in place. But they are not strong enough militarily to launch a straight forward attack with a decisive outcome. Instead the tactics of attrition is resorted to, not only against

the forces of the regime and eventual foreign army support but also against the innocent civil-

By abrasion and corrosion of all existing structures in society – public or private, the defeat of the regime will appear obvious to each and everyone. There will be no realistic alternative to a final takeover by the militants, as the fighting spirit has been detracted, not only among civilians but also in the police.

9. The New Terrorism: What Kind of Rational Behavior?

If it were not for the size of the new terrorism in terms of both attacks and dismal results, one would perhaps regard it as an expression of religious or ethnic fanaticism – a mere aberration from the conduct of rational business. However, the number of people killed or molested in terrorist attacks is so huge that the new terrorism must be analyzed as a rational strategy in a zero sum game.

One may object that the new terrorism is irrational from the point of view of the suicide bomber or the single small terrorist sacrificing his/her life. How could it be rational for an individual to offer his/her life in the conduct of bloody business where so many people may suffer innocently?

Although the family of the individual terrorist may be compensated for his/her sacrifice, and albeit the individual terrorist may be driven by a fanatical zest, it is the case that the new terrorism is rational mainly from the point of view of the leaders of these groups.

Max Weber (1922) distinguished between two forms of rational behavior: value rational (wertrational) and means-end rational (zweckrational). The individual terrorist who sacrifices his/her life engages in value rationality, whereas the terrorist organization as a whole and its leaders pursue means-end rationality. The success of the latter form of rationality depends to some extent upon the willingness to engage in personal sacrifice when pursing value rationality. To put it shortly: the more devoted to the cause or fanatical an individual terrorist may be, the stronger the organization becomes in pursuing its ultimate goal of toppling the regime in a country.



10. The New Terrorism as a Challenge to Conventional

Constituting a form of warfare, the new terrorism displays a strategy and a set of tactics that deviate from established theories of war and conflicts. Comparing the new terrorism with other forms of warfare (Jomini, 2008; Handel, 2001; Keegan, 1994), one may note the following differences:

- 1) It targets both military personnel and innocent civilians, although it is not a form of total war (Clausewitz, 2008);
- 2) It employs guerilla tactics (Tse-Tung, 1963), but it also attempts to spread anarchy among innocent people;
- 3) It cannot afford the use of advanced weaponry (Kahn, 2007), but its attacks remain highly lethal;
- 4) It relies upon a defensive strategy against a stronger opponent (Sun Tsu, 1971), but its strikes are completely unpredictable and disorderly;
- 5) It lacks a time frame for its activities, as it is difficult to tell whether it is successful or not.
- 6) It lacks a so-called Zermelo point in time, i. e. the moment when one can predict that one of the players in the warfare will most likely win or lose:
- 7) It is not open to rational deliberations about how to start a seize fire that may become a peace process (Schelling, 1990; Kissinger, 2003). It can only be defeated by a military strategy that eliminated the support for the movements employing the new terrorism.
- 8) It does not aim at a limited victory (Machiavelli, 2004), as it will not stop until it arrives at a final and complete triumph.

In Sri Lanka, the government and its military forces were successful in completely defeating the ethno-nationalist terrorist groups, with the result that the island is now free from political violence. However, in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as Pakistan the situation is undecided (Griffiths, 2009). The final outcome will depend upon what happens once the Western military presence starts to decline significantly.

11. Conclusion

The new terrorism is not conducted *von oben*, as was the case in the French and Russian revolutions. It does not target specific groups or enemies of the state or nation. Instead, coming *von unten* it is indiscriminate, unpredictable and directed in a large scale manner against civilians. The new terrorism has made several states from Algeria to the Philippines instable and has as well resulted in the loss of life for hundred of thousand innocents.

In several countries in this band of states from Algeria to the Philippines, it is Islamic fundamentalism that is a major driving force behind the new terrorism, although there is also Hindu, Sikh and Christian as well as Jewish fundamentalism fuelling conflicts.

The religious tensions within the Muslim civilization can only be resolved on a long-term basis by the Moslems themselves. What the Western powers can do is to clarify the role of religion in their own societies, but to attempt to stem the new terrorism by invading Muslim countries is bound to fail. It seems obvious that the Iraq and Afghanistan invasions have fuelled the new terrorism without in any way resolving the basic issue at stake: How is Islam to be reconciled with the requirement of modernity or post-modernity in a peaceful manner?

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Appendix: Cases¹

Country	Intensity of Conflict	Starting Year
Afghanistan (Taliban)	5	1994
Algeria (AQIM)	3	1989
Bangladesh (JMB)	3	2005
China (Uyghurs/Xinjiang)	4	1990
Egypt (Islamic groups)	2	1992
Iran (PJAK/Kurdish areas)	4	1979
Iraq (al-Sadr group)	5	2004
Iraq (al-Zarqawi group/AQI)	4	2003
Iraq (insurgents)	4	2004
Israel (al-Fatah – Hamas)	3	1994
Israel (Hezbollah)	2	1982
Israel (PNA, al-Fatah, Hamas)	4	1920
Jordan (al-Qaeda)	3	2005
Lebanon (Fatah al-Islam)	3	2006
Lebanon (religious groups)	4	1975
India (Hindus - Christians)	3	1999
India (Islamists)	4	2001
India (Kashmir)	4	1947
India (MPLF, ZRA, KCP/Manipur)	4	1964
India (NLFT/Tripura)	3	1980
India (Sikhs - DSS)	3	2007
Indonesia (Jemaah Islamiyah)	2	1981
Indonesia (OPM/Papua)	3	1949
Nepal (Madhesis/Terai)	3	2006
Nepal (opposition)	3	2002
Pakistan (BLA, BRA, BLF/Balochistan)	4	1998
Pakistan (Islamists)	5	2001
Pakistan (Waziristan)	4	2002
Pakistan (Sunnites - Shiites)	4	1998
Philippines (Abu Sayyaf/Mindanao)	3	1991
Philippines (MILF/Mindanao)	4	1977
Sri Lanka (LTTE)	5	1976
Thailand (Muslim separatists)	4	1992
Turkey (PKK/KONGRA-GEL/Kurdish areas)	5	1920
Yemen (Believing Youth Movement)	4	1998
Yemen (Islamic Jihad)	3	1994

Source: Conflict Barometer 2008, 2009

¹ Non-violent Low: 1 Latent conflict: A positional difference over definable values of national meaning is considered to be a latent conflict if demands are articulated by one of the parties and perceived by the other as such. 2 Manifest Conflict: A manifest conflict includes the use of measures that are located in the stage preliminary to violent force. This includes for example verbal pressure, threatening explicitly with violence, or the imposition of economic sanctions. Violent Medium: 3 Crisis: A crisis is a tense situation in which at least one of the parties uses violent force in sporadic incidents. Violent High: 4 Severe Crisis: A conflict is considered to be a severe crisis if violent force is used repeatedly in an organized way. 5 War: A war is a violent conflict in which violent force is used with certain continuity in an organized and systematic way. The conflict parties exercise extensive measures, depending on the situation. The extent of destruction is massive and of long duration.



Novi obrazac ratovanja: terorizam protiv nedužnih civila

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Terorizam izvire na površinu na najbrutalniji način u globalnim konfliktima ranog 21. stoljeća. Radi se o pitanju novog oblika terorizma koji je drugačiji od klasičnog terorizma francuskih i ruskih revolucionara. Ovaj novi oblik borbe vjerskih fundamentalista i etnonacionalista događa se u nizu zemalja, od Alžira od Filipina. Ta borba destabilizira državu te za razultat ima masovne gubitke života i ozljede među nedužnim civilima.

Ključne riječi: Heidelberg Conflict Barometers, stari i novi terorizam, islamska civilizacija, etnonacionalizam, terorizam kao racionalni odabir, terorizam u ime Boga

