

Chapter 16

Terrorism in the Age of Information: Unpuzzling the Connection of Terrorism and the Media in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje
University of Palermo, Argentina

Adrian Scribano
University of Buenos Aires, Argentina

Freddy Alex Timmermann
Catholic University Silva Henríquez, Chile

ABSTRACT

While a lot of studies focus on the contours of cybercrime and cyber terrorism as well as their effects in daily lives, less attention has been given to the use of ICT by terrorists. In fact, through the ebbs and flows of technology, the society of information seems to develop a particular vulnerability to the fear instilled by terrorism. This particularly reveals a paradox because the original technology, which was oriented to make of our lives safer, is used by terrorist cells to inspire a terror-driven atmosphere, which only nourishes intolerance and ethnocentrism. The authors, in this review chapter, discuss critically the cutting-edge role of technology in the struggle against terrorism.

INTRODUCTION

Ethnocentrism should be defined as the act of judging others cultures under the lens of cultural values alone. No matter the time or the background, cultures have tended to develop an ethnocentric viewpoint of the alterity, which was widely theorized by ethnology and anthropology. Over years, the global empires have developed socio-centric explanations about their so-called superiority that were culturally

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-4763-1.ch016

Terrorism in the Age of Information

internalized by the peripheral nations. This symbolic center-periphery dependency not only paved the ways for the multiplications of discovery-related travels but also situated as the precondition for globalization (Martell, 2010). Any Empire combines the military stronghold with economic solvency and the monopoly of technological information. This opens the doors to what Baudrillard named as “the principle of reversibility”, which means that the foundations of a system are daily eroded while it is in expansion. As historians agree, this explains the rise and rapid declines of Empires worldwide, but what is most important, the role of technology in increasing the vulnerability of the Empire (Coulter, 2012). To set a recent example, the attacks to New York in 2001 were possible since terrorists weaponized civilian airplanes against important symbolic targets. While the blow hits the exemplary center – not the periphery – of capitalist culture, nations of the four continents reacted energetically expressing their solidarities with the US. Paradoxically, the same technology which made our life safer was used to create terror. In this process, the mass media played a crucial role not only packaging but also disseminating the terror-related news towards a global audience. This chapter explores the effects of terrorism, oddly closing the borderlands or neglecting hospitality to aliens, while it interrogates on the revolution of technology and information as one of the veins terrorism fills. For the sake of clarity, capitalism evolved through the articulation of different stages, which were defined as “revolutions”. The first revolution, which occurred during the 18th and 19th centuries, appealed to a mechanization of labor disciplining the bodies into standardized forms of production. The first industrial nations experienced a rapid migration to the cities, which were rapidly and densely populated in question of years. Instead the second revolution – during the 20th century – applied on the standardization of scale production stimulating not only a further specialization but also innovating extensively in the transport means. The third revolution alluded to a process of decentralization that was suddenly prompted by the Arab-Israeli War which derived in an Oil embargo that placed the western sources of energy in jeopardy. The Fourth Revolution consists of the use of robots and robotization not only for yielding the war abroad, but also to domesticate the workforce internally. This broader movement involves not only the media informational system but also the usage of technology to perform routine tasks. For some reasons, some voices have alerted that the rise of unemployment or economic instability are fertile grounds for the rise of terrorism globally, but especially in the Third World. Samuel Huntington said that the process of securitization, which the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) needs, leads to an inevitable clash between civilizations in which case the failures of capitalism to undermine poverty in under-developed nations increases the risks of a much deeper radicalization or anti-American sentiment. As a result of this, Huntington adds, the US should not only scrutinize migration but also promotes free trade to better the local economies of non-western nations (Huntington 1993; 1997; 2000). The climate of violence, where terrorism operates, needs from a previous state of resentment which is the combination of failed states, inefficient economic policies and political instability (Barro, 1991; Pollins, 1989; Phillips, 2008). This chapter not only confronts with such a belief but also it holds the thesis that Western ethnocentrism impedes the reconciliation with the alterity reinforcing the obsession for terror consumption in the publics. In the society of information, terrorism not only serves as a catalyst to produce a state of panic, which is conducive to the status quo, but also accelerates economic programs that otherwise would be rejected by citizenry. This review chapter explores the ethical dilemmas of media in a hyper-technologized world as well as how international terrorism uses technologies to instill its message of fear. Sociologically speaking, more than a century ago, Lebon and Tarde demonstrated that contagion took a collective dynamic of mimicry which merited

17 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/terrorism-in-the-age-of-information/206793

Related Content

A Comprehensive Perspective on Data Protection Practices in Organizations: Beyond Legal Considerations

Ine van Zeeland and Jo Pierson (2020). *Personal Data Protection and Legal Developments in the European Union* (pp. 239-255).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-comprehensive-perspective-on-data-protection-practices-in-organizations/255203

An Integrated Machine Learning Framework for Fraud Detection: A Comparative and Comprehensive Approach

Karim Ouazzane, Thekla Polykarpou, Yogesh Patel and Jun Li (2022). *International Journal of Information Security and Privacy* (pp. 1-17).

www.irma-international.org/article/an-integrated-machine-learning-framework-for-fraud-detection/300314

Privacy-Preserving Techniques for Online Social Networks Data

Yousra Belfaik, Abdelhadi Zineddine, Yassine Sadqi and Said Safi (2024). *Risk Assessment and Countermeasures for Cybersecurity* (pp. 62-78).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/privacy-preserving-techniques-for-online-social-networks-data/346080

A System Dynamics Approach to Evaluate Advanced Persistent Threat Vectors

Mathew Nicho, Christopher D. McDermott, Hussein Fakhry and Shini Girija (2023). *International Journal of Information Security and Privacy* (pp. 1-23).

www.irma-international.org/article/a-system-dynamics-approach-to-evaluate-advanced-persistent-threat-vectors/324064

Detecting Compliance Failures in Unmanaged Processes

Yurdaer N. Doganata (2012). *Strategic and Practical Approaches for Information Security Governance: Technologies and Applied Solutions* (pp. 385-404).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/detecting-compliance-failures-unmanaged-processes/63101