Ti Esti State-Terrorism?

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to answer the raw philosophical question of "ti esti state-terrorism". It is a critical philosophical analysis of the concept of state-terrorism based upon an epistemological discussion, in an effort to re-formulate the question of terrorism by making the case that state-terrorism is the mother phenomenon and root of all forms of terrorism. My ambition is to contribute to our understanding of terrorism by revealing that, in the Greek language which is the language of concepts and philosophy, the term terrorism is terrorcracy and literary means state-terrorism, while it belongs to the same family of words as democracy, since the suffix –cracy, a recognition that may have the power to open new ways of viewing the term and phenomenon of terrorism, if not re-define the whole concept by describing it according to the term's original meaning. Under this logic, terrorism would refer to a form of government and a political system. A hypothesis that my essay introduces into the philosophical dialogues on terrorism, since it never before has been discussed within these terms. State-terrorism is a forbidden term according to legal experts, however should not be treated as a sterile term by critical thinkers.

Keywords: State-terrorism, critical terrorism studies, philosophy, law, human rights.

Resumen:

Este trabajo aborda la cuestión filosófica y urgente del "ti esti state-terrorism". El ensayo analiza críticamente y filosóficamente el concepto del terrorismo del estado, basado en una discusión epistemológica, que intenta re-formular la cuestión del terrorismo, donde se argumenta que el terrorismo de estado es el fenómeno inicial y la raíz del terrorismo en todas sus formas. Mi aspiración es contribuir a una comprensión del terrorismo que trate de revelar cómo en griego –el idioma de los conceptos y la filosofía– el término "terrorismo" es "terror-cracia" y significa literalmente el terrorismo del estado; también es parte de la misma familia de la democracia, al tener el sufijo "–cracia." Este reconocimiento puede revelar nuevas maneras de ver el concepto y fenómeno del terrorismo, o incluso puede ayudar a redefinir el concepto por completo al ponerlo en sintonía con su sentido original. Según este razonamiento, el terrorismo se referiría a una forma del gobierno y a un sistema político. En mi ensayo introduzco esta hipótesis al hilo de diálogos filosóficos sobre el terrorismo, ya que el asunto no se había discutido nunca antes en estos términos. "El terrorismo del estado" es un término prohibido según los expertos jurídicos, pero los pensadores críticos no deben tratarlo como término estéril.

Palabras Clave: Estado-terrorismo, estudios críticos sobre terrorismo, filosofía, derecho, derechos humanos

Prolegomena

Ti esti State-terrorism, and what this idea is referring to, is the question to be dealt with in the present essay. "Ti esti" literary means "what it is" and can be traced back to Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Is more specifically concerned with the essence and/or the fundamental elements that a subject or idea is comprised by, without which would seize to be what it is. Ti esti, is claimed to be the first question philosophers asked, and by its expression initiated a distinctive philosophical enquiry into the quest for the definitions of "things". Is a ticket for a deeper than a "what it is" question, because "ti esti" refers to the essence of the subject to be questioned.

My purpose is to examine the hypothesis that, terrorism means State-terrorism by definition, and test the suggestion deriving from my study's findings, that the essence of State-terrorism is in fact the same as terrorism's. I am examining this possibility of a shared essence, following the explanatory guidelines of such a possibility, outlined and defended from Aristotle within his Metaphysics. My ambition however is to look through, yet beyond the pragmatic, positive, empirical assertions that endeavor to portray reality, and into the normative of what should and ought to be, by attempting to contribute into the quest of defining terrorism, through the act of designating State-terrorism. As it has been affirmed: "Epistemology, too, can be seen as normative, in so far as it is concerned with the justification of our beliefs, and with judging the rightness or wrongness of our cognitive states."[1]

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[1] See: Proudfoot, Michael, A.R., Lacey, "The Routledge Dictionary of Philosophy", 2009, p. 277.

It is beyond dispute, that philosophy has an unbreakable bond with the Greek language, and it seems to me that whether we are readers or writers of philosophy, we have to acknowledge this fact, and trust into the teachings the Greek world have offered to humanity. However, I have been asked before why to give any validity to the Greek language today, and why to believe that it may enhance our understanding of philosophy, political or legal concepts. I should devote some paragraphs into illuminating the significance of such a belief, since my research has been greatly inspired by that fact and founded on utilizing the ancient Greek teachings and language. I am not going to defend the Greek language in its totality, but as far as philosophy is concerned it is definite that the contribution and value of that language is inestimable.

The terminology of political theory is being comprised in its majority by terms originating in Greek. As well as concepts, ways of philosophizing, syllogistic processes, theories, ideas, notions and principles, are similarly of Greek origin. It is true that most modern philosophical theories or at least their majority can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. Consciously I interrupt this reasoning, and by closing this intervention, allow me to simply argue, that, if democracy, politics, or philosophy, are terms relevant today, and since we are still struggling to understand them and decode them, then we should agree that looking back at their birth and origin, the environment of their emergence, and the cultural background as well as historical evolution within the geographical part that this explosion of ideas has taken place, may add into our comprehension of these terminological constructions in incalculable and unexpected ways.

It is a given, that in 2013, from academia to politics, has been impossible to describe successfully what terrorism is, and consequently to reach agreement into a single definition. This essay is re-formulating the question of terrorism, from a critical terrorism studies standpoint, in an attempt to redirect the philosophical dialogues on the phenomenon. Scholars, such as Noam Chomsky have repeatedly stressed the need for further scholarly engagement with this field of study and argued for the responsibility of philosophers, to reflect on State-terrorism & terrorism, in order to clarify and define the concepts adequately, and this is where my work intends to pay a small contribution.

It seems to me, that there is a need to employ different disciplines, in order to explain sufficiently my thesis. The hypothesis I am examining, aspires to serve as a critical contribution to our understanding of terrorism, and my discussion contains findings, reached through a well premeditated methodological process, which travels from philosophy to law and from a critical terrorism studies to critical legal studies, while approaching on occasions at the unconcealedness of the "aletheia"[2] in language.

Disregarding the criticisms advocating against the existence of State-terrorism as a phenomenon, crime, or concept, this article aspires to deliver strong reasons and justifications of the opposite, by stressing that State-terrorism is indeed an existing phenomenon, not only of our modern era, but existing from the beginning of political thought, and the formation of the organized State, dating as back as democracy, and according to the theory developed and examined in my research, State-terrorism is not only an existing concept, but it might very well be, that this is what terrorism's original meaning is all about.

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[2] By aletheia I refer to the literal meaning of the term. A-letheia comprised by the prefix a- that expresses negation or absence, and the –letheia, which literally means: "forget", "conceal". So, the Greek word for "truth", aletheia (ἀλήθεια), meaning "un-forgetfulness" or "un-concealment".

Allow me to anticipate, that my main argument is based on the realization that in ancient and modern Greek the term describing terrorism is terrorcracy (from τρομοκρατία – to tromocratia – terrorcracy), given that this term had been constructed with the suffix –cracy, just as democracy or aristocracy, indicates that this terminological construction was meant to be used in the political context, referring to a political system.

My hypothesis is based on an examination of the original meaning of the term, by travelling back in the history of its conceptual development and terminological creation within the Greek language, and proceeds by employing the vehicles of a Socratic methodology, while in cases a modern Derridian logic. By doing that, I was led to examine what are the differences of the term in today's language in comparison to the past usage of the word, and to determine the ways and possible reasons for the departure of its original meaning.

Before I continue, I feel the need to return to my previous reasoning and stress the importance of knowing Greek when studying Philosophy. The majority of the Greek terms are transliterated into the Latin alphabet, but the importance of the capacity to comprehend the philosophical terminology which in its majority originates in the Greek language, should not be overlooked or diminished, as well as the obligation on philosophers to cultivate the ability of identifying a term wherever it may appear in a script. In my view, not knowing Greek would mean for a reader of philosophy, what not knowing the value of numbers for a mathematician.

Thus, I ended up talking about truth; truth that as a term in the Greek language means to uncover, to un-forget or remember again. The literal meaning of the word ἀ–λήθεια [aletheia= truth] is the state of not being hidden, or forgotten, of being uncovered. Based on that reading of truth as unconcealedness, I have advanced into a challenge to uncover the hidden or forgotten truth of the term terrorism and elucidate in a form of a reminder what philosophers and scholars have led to forget. As Heidegger claims: "To say that an assertion "is true" signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself. Such an assertion asserts, points out, "lets" the entity "be seen" (απόφανσις) in its uncoveredness."[3] In that line of reasoning, Sir David Ross's interpretation of Aristotle holds that:

> All teaching and all learning, Aristotle points out, start from pre-existing knowledge. The knowledge thus presupposed is of two types of fact; it is knowledge "that so-and-so is," or knowledge of "what the word used means." With regard to some things, the meaning of the words being quite clear, all that need be explicitly assumed is that the thing is so; this is true, for instance, of the law that everything may with truth either be affirmed or be denied.[4]

According to this logic, knowledge can be obtained from the examination of "what the word used means" since in our case the word "tromokratia" which means terrorism and was constructed by the ancient Greeks, has a meaning that is apparent, clear and recognizable. I am parallelizing this equivalent in meaning, scope and function ancient Greek term, with the modern term terrorism, (terrorism which I am treating as a neologism in this part of my discourse) in order to discover whether there is any crucial elements that could assist us in our comprehension of the phenomenon of terrorism, and whether there is any essentials that we are missing, and consequently their absence is blocking the scholarly comprehension of the concept of terrorism.

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[3] Heidegger, Martin, "Being and Time", trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, London: SCM Press, 1962, p. 261.

[4] Ross, David, "ARISTOTLE" With an introduction by John Ackrill, 6th Ed., New York, Routledge, 1995, p. 41.

It is astonishing to realize that nobody so far has talked about or discovered that the original meaning of the term and subsequently in many cases the original form of terrorism or mother phenomenon, has and always had as a starting point the State and therefore in the majority of the cases involved in that terrain, to talk about terrorism is to talk about State-terrorism. A conclusion reached by exercising the simplest reading of the term in its original form found in ancient (and modern) Greek, driven by the realization, that we are acting as political animals and exercising political thought, under the agreed understanding that our whole political systems, from raw material to constructed forms, are to find their origin in Greece, just like Democracy is, and just as her sister term Tromocracy (which is the Greek term for Terrorism, with "tromo" meaning terror), or allow me the construction, just as Terrorcracy is.

Aristotle in answering: ti esti to be a citizen? "…relies partly on his own reasoning, partly on the ordinary usage of the word."[5] Still, in order to know one thing, we need to recognize its first cause, its substance or essence (ousia). As Ross[6] interpreted the Aristotelian view, even if we break down the compound of the entity, it is imperative to acknowledge that the why is ultimately reducible to the definition and the final why, is a cause and principle. The substance to be revealed refers to the first thing it is comprised by, and the last into which is resolved, meaning that this essence is permanently kept. As it was mentioned above, terrorism and State-terrorism, from a philosophical perspective, might be found to share the same essence, since if we attempt to break down their compounds, accompanied by the attribute of "the instrumentalization of terror for political ends", into their last parts, it seems to me, that in both cases we will end up with three elements: State, terror, and political goals. While it could be argued that the first and last element that stays unchanged in any manifestation or form of terrorism, is a "State of terror".

I find important to draw the attention of the reader on the fact, that terrorism and State-terrorism, are more political than legal terms. This is why I find important to elaborate and deal with this phenomena by interpreting them through the political theory's reasoning paths and through philosophical analysis, while anticipating that State-terrorism can be proven to be more of a political system, rather than just a criminal act, or better put, a criminal political system.

The Essence of State-Terrorism

In philosophical terms, to talk about essence, is to discuss the attributes or characteristics that makes a being or entity, what it fundamentally or essentially is, by discovering its "ousia" or in Aristotelian terms the "substance" of the entity in question, which if deprived of that core substance, would lose its identity.

It is a common assertion throughout the majority of the Platonic dialogues, within which one can observe the customary usage of the ti esti (TI EΣTI) question; as for instance in Laches, Euthyphro, Charmides, Protagoras, or in Meno where the proposition is expressed, that in acquiring knowledge or have episteme of an entity, it is imperative to first of all discover the essence of it, a syllogism which is initiated by asking ti esti the thing of our syllogistic investigation, the idea that we are trying to understand and define. While afterwards and only then, to base one's knowledge of other matters about this entity, on the explicit knowledge of its essence. (Meno 71b, 86d-e, 100b). It is clear that for Plato, just as

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[5] Idem p.260.
[6] Ross, W. D., "Aristotle's Metaphysics", Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1924, Book 1, Part 3.

it was for Socrates, the essence of a thing is a fundamental unchangeable feature of it, and there is a priority of discovering, explicitly required, by the location of the question "ti esti" to be in the top of the ladder.

It should be noted, that the Socratic inquiry through asking ti esti, directs the focus of the inquirer into identifying what a thing is in itself. As Aristotle[7] himself acknowledges, Socrates was the first to fix his mind on the universality of definitions and the struggle to discover the essence of things in the political, or within ethics, through expressing the ti esti question, which by principle triggers a quest of discovering the essence of the entity, in questions of "horismos" (definition).

Because what Plato did within his dialogues, was to place Socrates in a state of puzzlement and "aporia", while leading him into initiating quests for definitions through the expression of the ti esti question. While in most cases, Socrates was depicted as being unsatisfied with the path of reasoning the interlocutors were taking in their attempts to answer his inquiry, and although there is not a really clear-cut methodological procedure one should take, in order to be in lines of the "correct practice" of this form of questioning, however the relevant literary review can be found of assistance in illuminating certain requirements, that are distilled from Plato's writings in describing the Socratic questioning of the definitions of things.

Dr. Politis in a very relevant article titled "what is behind the ti esti question"[8] proceeds in lining up the most important and relevant requirements of bringing this question into existence. However as Dr. Politis acknowledges, and is in line with the underlying belief of my engagement with the ti esti question, this question is not of Platonic property, but is in the Greek as in the English language, a call for a standard for a thing's being, a demand for understanding and defining, by indication to which we can conclude of a thing, whether it is such as it is, through the employment of the requirements of: "(a) generality, (b) unity, and (c) explanatoriness". However he concludes that there is nothing behind or before the ti esti question, since any priority over other inquiring method or question has not been proved necessary or as a pre-requisite, according to the Socratic engagement with the question, except and it is notable in the case of "aporia", which in certain dialogues might be fiercer.

Yet, I have made a conscious choice of words, and methods, by using the ti esti question, through which I am attempting to follow the same path of reasoning, while challenging the definitional inadequate knowledge that is to date offered to us, and I am struggling to discover whether the standards of the generality, unity, and explanatoriness requirements mentioned above could be satisfied, in the process of discovering elements that may be of further help into the definitional struggles of the concept of terrorism, and State-terrorism in particular. Since the generality requirement, always according to Politis, is sufficient in providing an answer to the ti esti question in its basic sense, and offering something that could serve as a standard for a thing's being. Since according to the basic sense of the ti esti question, there is no evident justification to reject a particular thing as an example of a thing that is, instead of an abstract general account, that can serve as such a standard. While it should be anticipated that in the case of State-terrorism, even the requirement of unity and explanatoriness could be satisfied, while the standard I am trying to discover in our case could be better explained in terms of its essence, and the basic elements that without which it would seize to be what it is.

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[7] Ross, W. D., "Aristotle's Metaphysics", Oxford, Clarendon Press. 1924. Book 1, Part 6, p 15.

[8] Politis, Vasilis, "What is behind the ti esti question?" in J. Fink Ed. "The Development of Dialectic from Plato to Aristotle", Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, Pp. 232 –260.

These elements will be later on discussed in the pages to come, but, as it has been acknowledged, and may illuminate the syllogism behind my particular discourse, one should consider the Aristotelian methodology and questioning of essence for the purposes of a definition, through which: "Aristotle means that to ask whether A is, is to ask whether there is an intelligible essence answering to the name, and that to ask what A is to seek to unfold this essence in a definition."[9]

However, taking an aporetic path, it does not automatically mean that you are going to reach a solution to your problem. What I mean is, that most of Plato's dialogues that are demonstrating this methodological process, of the Socratic aporia in questions of definition, they end up in their majority by maintaining this aporetic state, without real satisfaction of acquiring definitional knowledge. However, this is not an unbreakable rule, since in Protagoras for instance, the dialogue ends with a firm answer to the question of whether or not virtue can be taught.[10]

It is worth noting that according to the "Principle of the Priority of Definition for Knowledge", "knowing the definition of F is the one and only way of knowing whether or not F is G. Common to the traditional reading and the interpretation I am proposing, these passages are addressed to Plato's important distinction between the ti esti question (what is it?) and the poion esti question (what is it like?)."[11] So, if I apply this principle to my research, it seems plausible to argue, that knowing the definition of terrorism is the only way of knowing whether State-terrorism is terrorism.

Is Terrorism by Definition State-Terrorism?

In the introduction of "Philosophy in a time of terror"[12], Borradori claims that philosophy has a crucial contribution to make to the understanding of terrorism, she is in a way inviting philosophers into a dialogue, by emphasizing the necessity faced by philosophers, to assume the responsibility of philosophy in assessing the importance of a present event.

There are many scholars that have accepted a broad definition according to which terrorism is simply politically or ideologically motivated violence that is directed against civilians or non-combatants. There are different trends of dealing with the theory of terrorism, that they have even been categorized[13], into orthodox, radical or moderate terrorism studies.

The phenomenon of terrorism has fueled endless debates and caused numerous controversial definitions without accomplishing a comprehensive description. What is terrorism is a question that has not met a satisfactory answer.

"Whether terrorism should be treated primarily as an international crime or should be viewed mainly as a political problem [which may have international criminal elements], has been debated by the international legal community for years."[14] We are witnessing for

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[9] Ross, David, "ARISTOTLE" With an introduction by John L. Ackrill, 6th Ed., New York, Routledge, 1995. p. 49.
[10] See: V. Politis / Phronesis 57 (2012) 209-239 p.213.
[11] Idem p. 211.
[12] Borradori, Giovanna, "Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida", University of Chicago Press, 2004.
[13] Franks, Jason, "Rethinking the Roots of Terrorism: Orthodox Terrorism Theory and Beyond", Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
[14] Rosalyn Higgins, The General International Law of Terrorism, Terrorism and International Law, eds. Rosalyn Higgins and Maurice Flory, London: Routledge, 1997, p. 21.

decades, the attempts of the international law-making organs to create a complete and legal bounding document to cover the phenomenon of international terrorism in its entirety, but the issue of state-terrorism is repeatedly avoided. However, there is the undeniable fact of state-supported terrorism, and accordingly the relevant international laws covering the forbidden acts, like the United Nations Resolution 1373, but there are still a number of unresolved issues, and numerous shadowed areas that shout for clarification. Yet, this is the closest, "western" international law has come to state-terrorism, because there are other pieces of international law, like in the African Union, or the Arab Convention on Terrorism, which are explicitly using the term state-terrorism, but unfortunately these laws do not enjoy the universal applicability and power that a United Nations Resolution does.

By proceeding, allow me to employ the term democracy to strengthen the basis of certain ideas. The relevance and importance of the links between the two terms will be later on explained in greater detail. Let me clarify though, that I chose to use the term democracy as a tool to prove my point, since the majority of the readers have some basic understanding of the term and its function. It is not in my intention to analyze the term democracy if this analysis is not connected to my discourse on state-terrorism. At this point, I will try to attain a justified conceptualization and a philosophical hypothesis driven by language, by looking into the relationship of Democracy and State-terrorism or Terrorcracy, the most relevant link will be celebrated by recognizing that democracy and terrorism, in the Greek language, belong to the same family of words, and share the suffix kratos, while another connection, is the possibility of a democratic State using terror as a tool, as means and form of government.

It is also in the purposes underlining this paper, the parallel consideration of the hypothesis, that state-terrorism can take the form of a political system, and a form of government or an executive tool, where for instance the governmental power is preserved through the fueling of terror within the population, examples can be found from the Arab world to America, and from Asia, to the former USSR. A noteworthy idea comes from Michael Stohl[15] and George A. Lopez, which argue that, terrorism carried out by a State, can take an institutionalized form, which has been developed as a product of changes that appeared after World War II. In this line of reasoning, state-terrorism takes the form of foreign policy, shaped by the presence and use of weapons of mass destruction. The normalization of such violent behavior led to an increased international toleration and silent legitimation, as long it was employed by States. We are talking about a "legalization" of harm and acts, which had earlier been labeled terroristic and criminal.

Advancing in my analysis, it would be useful to consider the genealogical style of deconstruction, which recalls the history of a concept, since it is being used as another method of analysis and examination of the concept of state-terrorism. As Derrida has said: "So we have to go back to the Greek origin, not in order to cultivate the origin or in order to protect the etymology, the etymon, the philological purity of the origin, but in order first of all to understand where it comes from..."[16]. Yet, the kind of deconstruction I am engaging with is closer to the Platonic intellectual tradition and his teacher's maieutic analysis.

Under this logic, the word democracy derives from the Greek word, *"democratia"* (δημοκρατία in Greek), formed from the roots *demos* (gr. δήμος), "people", "the mob, the many" and *"kratos"* (gr. κράτος) "rule" the holder of power. My hypothesis is based on the

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[15] Stohl, Michael & Lopez, George A., "Terrible beyond Endurance? : The Foreign Policy of State-terrorism", Greenwood Press, 1988.

[16] http://hydra.humanities.uci.edu/derrida/vill2.html [Retrieved on 12 March 2012].

fact that, in the Greek language, where the term democracy originates from, the word democracy and the word terrorism have the same root and belong to the same family of words, since both terms share their second synthetic "kratos", which can be translated as power, holder of power or State. Keep in mind that the terms describing political systems in Greece, were mainly consisted by –kratos or –arche. Kratos being by far the worst and normally was referring to abusive forms of political power. Yet, democracy's popularity led her to evolve into a more inclusive system, and has covered up over the centuries this negatively charged value.

A linguistic analysis of the terms in question follows below. In that sense, from Greek, "Δημοκρατία – Τρομοκρατία" transliterates in English as "Democratia – Tromocratia". So, "democratia" is in the English language the term democracy, and "tromocratia" is the modern word terrorism, with tromo translating as terror, and the substitution of the suffix –kratos by the suffix -ism.

Tromocratia (terrorism), then etymologically means the "tromo-cratia" or "terror-cracy" in which the holder of power is the "kratos" [the State], and keeps this power under control through the tool of terror. Since we are dealing with a polysynthetic term, which is comprised by two synthetics from which the first signifies the "who", like in our case the terror, and the second synthetic and suffix indicates the "what". Under this logic, if we use an analogy with Democracy, we could say that, in terrorcracy the people are no more the possessors of power but terror is. The difference in the two terms can be found in the first part of the word, the "demos" (people), in the word demo-cratia, and the "tromo" (terror) in the term tromo-cratia. The second part is the same (and is defined as the power and control, and the holder of power, or State), then the first part of the terms constitutes who is the holder, indicates who has the power the control and in the case of democracy is the people, "demos", in the case of terrorism, "tromocratia"→ "tromo-cracy" or →terrorcracy, the holder of power is the terror.

According to this reading, terrorism is dictating its lexical meaning[17] and it seems to me, that this new interpretation could serve as a vehicle for our better understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism and state-terrorism in particular.

The suffix –cracy[18] in the term tromocracy, which refers to forms of government, has not been transferred in the international literature as tromocracy, in contrast with democracy, autocracy, aristocracy and so on and so forth, which have been adopted unchanged. It seems plausible to ask at this point, whether a natural transliteration from Greek into Latin, with a more accurate representation of the term, by preserving the originally attributed suffix –kratos, since its importance and the extra value that it attributes to the term cannot be emphasized enough, entailed the danger of referring automatically into a political system and consequently the word to describe and mean by definition state-terrorism. It is undeniable a good and useful question in reflecting on the matter, and the reasons that may have justified such a departure of the original term. In my view it is more likely that this negligence occurred due to the scholarly ignorance about the importance of preserving the integrity of the terms referring to political systems in the process of translating philosophical Greek scripts and theories. The act of translation has more power than we attribute to it. It can alter the meaning of a script and can deform it, or even change the function of terms.

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[17] In semantics, the message conveyed by words, sentences, and symbols in a context. See: www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/329791/language/27173/Lexical-meaning [Retrieved on 21 June 2012].

[18] World English Dictionary: suffix, -cracy, indicates a type of government or rule: plutocracy , theocracy. http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/-cracy [Retrieved on 03 May 2012].

It is interesting, to examine the fact that terrorism has been transferred in English, automatically having the ending –ism.[19] The suffix –ism, is usually shared by terms describing political theories, such as Commun-ism, Liberal-ism, Capital-ism, Anarch-ism. An interesting question would be to ask, why the word has been transliterated into Latin, having the suffix -ism, and not stay more accurate by keeping the suffix –cracy, like all the other terms of the same family had, as democracy or aristocracy. Yet, the suffix -ism, which also originates in Greek (see: –ισμός), refers to a system of ideas and is destined to form abstract nouns of action. Through this loan of the suffix –ism, the term automatically lost the negative reference that –kratos bears and brings to a term, as in the original Greek term describing terrorism. If for instance there was a faithful adoption of the word from Greek into Latin, as is the case with all the other terms of this family of words, then the suffix -kratos would be dictating a different route into our understanding of the concept through its terminological formation. A research into literature may hold a possible answer to these issues, but this would fall outside the purpose and prescribed length of the present paper, however, it could shape the theme of a follow-up essay.

I find important at this point to note, that Greek is a "polysynthetic language", "a polysynthetic or syntactic construction of language...It is that in which the greatest number of ideas are comprised in the least number of words."[20] This is what law is trying to do, in some way. Is like the legal codification of action, conduct, ideas into legal terminology. Where law ends and language begins, is in my view impossible to determine, while the significance of philosophy of language in jurisprudence cannot be stressed enough.

I find essential to mention "deconstruction" at this point. J. Hillis Miller has described deconstruction this way: "Deconstruction is not a dismantling of the structure of a text, but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself. Its apparently-solid ground is no rock, but thin air."[21] That is exactly what I am doing in the present paper, deconstructing in the most "brutal" but natural way. I am exercising deconstruction in its most pure and original form, by breaking down the construction of language, of language representing a form, a structure, into its raw material and previous beings, beings as unique and sole words, that were before they were merged to create a new entity into this world, a new word and term, and consequently to form, the medium and means of describing a new concept. I am exercising deconstruction in this way, or I am according to Miller "demonstrating that the text has already dismantled itself". Deconstruction is an approach, introduced by French philosopher Jacques Derrida,[22] he also refers to the power of language, in the term of "Logocentrism" a term devised by Ludwig Klages in the 1920's, directing the focus on language, since is a synthetic term comprised by logos (Λόγος) which mean words in Greek, and centrism (Κεντρικός) which indicate where the central interest and value is. Logocentrism is wisely claimed by Jacques Derrida to be manifested in the works of Plato, Aristotle, and many other philosophers of the Western tradition.

Nonetheless, it is claimed in the majority of terrorism literature, that the first documented reference on terrorism comes from the Reigns of Terror on 1793, when the Jacobins cited this precedent by imposing a Reign of Terror during the French Revolution. Although, even in that case, a government imposed the terror, in a form of state-terrorism, still, in modern times terrorism refers to terrorism perpetrated by non-state actors.

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[19] A word ending that indicates action, manner, condition, beliefs or prejudice. See: http://myword.info/definition.php?id=ism_1-a [Retrieved on 23 May 2012].

[20] Patterson, Thomas, "A Social History of Anthropology in the United States", Berg Publishers, 2006, p.11.

[21] J. Hillis Miller, "Stevens' Rock and Criticism as Cure", Georgia Review 30, 1976, p. 34.

[22] Derrida, Jacques, "Of Grammatology", G. Spivak trans., Baltimore, The J.H. University Press, 1974.

My reading of terrorism is based on the fact that the term was in existence centuries before, in ancient Greece, enjoying its existence next to political construction such as democracy.

Aristotle, for example, criticized the use of terror by tyrants against their subjects.

Terrorism is as old as the existence of the organized State, or as the ancient Greeks have named –kratos which would translate as power, for example, in the Greek mythology originating more than 3000 years ago, the Kratos is depicted as a person with sisters the Violence and the Victory. This myth demonstrates the strong connection of the State with violence and consequently fear, and its well-established understanding of such a connection by its representation in mythology.[23]

In ancient Athens for instance, a well-known terroristic attack[24] would be the destruction of the Hermon[25], dating back before the 5th century BC.

The ancient Greeks were explicitly saying, "control the people through their fear of the divine and the rage of the gods". A belief and statement that can be found in ancient drama and tragedies amongst other philosophical writings, demonstrating the instrumentalization of fear for the purpose of controlling a population and achieving further political goals. If that last sentence does not ring a bell, allow me to draw your attention to the orthodox terrorism theory and its definitional attempt, which is almost the same.

It seems plausible to say, that, in order to understand the term and its function we need to look at its original meaning, contra the existing beliefs and terminological definitions that are based on findings from the 17th century onwards and the "Reign of Terror".

One way to start this new understanding of the term could be to view the term from an etymon point of view, etymologically then, the term terror-cracy, would refer to a form of government by terror, in other words state-terrorism. In this line of reasoning, terrorism is a political system and a form of government and the terror holds the power (cracy). There is an undeniable necessity to engage in further dialectic examination and analysis of the above assumptions, and this essay aspires to fuel the initiation of further dialogues on this theory.

Logically then, since the two terms, democracy and terrorcracy are being constructed by the same roots, the same "raw material", then they were both originally constructed and destined to describe political systems, or forms of government. It is time to put an end to this confusion of concepts and terms, by setting the record straight, and illuminating the original meaning and purpose of politically fuelled language constructions.

Terrorism in this line of reasoning, in the Greek language means terror-state, just as democracy means peoples-state. If we accept this rightful re-definition of the concept, then the chain of events may generate further constitutional implications and trigger the necessity to re-consider for instance the unconstitutional criminalization of "terror-cratic" practices, since it could not be possible to punish a terror-ist for her beliefs and according practices, no more than it is possible to jail a commun-ist for her beliefs, as long as harm to others is not involved. This would be against her political freedom of thought, conscious and belief. An idea that is clearly contra the current practices prescribed by the counter-terrorism legislation around the globe, and which initiates a number of legal paradoxes.

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[23] Mythology, which had as main function the ethical education of the people.

[24] As in the case of the philosopher Critias, who in 415 BC, has been accused and imprisoned together with Alciviades, for the mutilation of the statutes of Hermes. See: http://www.iep.utm.edu/critias/ [Retrieved on 21 March 2012].

[25] In my translation, from the original "Αποκοπής των Ερμών", referring to destruction of the statues of Hermes the ancient Greek god serving as the messenger of gods to humans.

Law

It is also equally important, to recognize that criminal law, has the capacity and tools, to deal with all the different actus reus, that a 'terrorist' may employ to achieve her ends. This is the main objection by scholars and practitioners of international law, since they argue that we don't really need a new crime, referring to state-terrorism, given that whatever the criminal act, there is an equivalent law to render it punishable.

However, in my view, trying to fit this extremely long list of actus reus, and the problematic relevant mens rea under the umbrella of the term terrorism, is rather an impossible task, and it seems to be misleading, since it creates more legal problems than it solves.

Hence, there is a legal detail that makes the difference, and that is that the weight of a crime classified as terroristic, is automatically significantly increased. Its immorality and severity reflects even in the practical terms of sentencing and punishment. Similarly important is the fact that the international legislation, has been working over-time into creating a better-organized justice system to deal with these crimes more efficiently. Also, the fact that, by making a case in a court of law, as soon as the term terrorism can stand in front of a Judge, then we have the initiation of an automatic procedure with a number of legal doors opening simultaneously for the better, faster and more effective functioning of the legal process and system. That is to say for instance the immediate consideration of the highest possible sentence, amongst other legal tools and procedures available only to terrorism cases. Not to mention the negative side of that coin, through this over-production of legal tools which led to grievous violations of human rights, secret prisons, illegal secret extraditions and unconstitutional custodial procedures that have mainly damaged any justice system that have adopted them, yet, it is still an indicator of the legal "back" doors that a terrorist case may open inside a criminal legal system, an illustrating example is the case of "Guantanamo bay".

It seems to me, that if we successfully manage to recover the meaning of terrorism, the well accepted statement, that 'historically, terrorism has been the tactic of the weak against the strong', can be proven to be deceptive.

There has been a plethora of drafts and pieces of international and national legislation regulating terrorism, yet, little and inadequate expansion on state-terrorism, except in the case of state-supported terrorism, or State terror. This information can be better evaluated, by the mobilization of techniques that Comparative Law has to offer.

In this line of reasoning, a bright exception is the Arab Convention on Terrorism, which States in Article 3, "Contracting States undertake not to organize, finance or *commit terrorist acts* or to be accessories thereto in any manner whatsoever."[26] In this law, the lawmaker clearly forbids the State from assuming the role of the perpetrator of the crime of terrorism. The legitimate user of violence as the State is being called, must 'not commit terrorist acts". The crime of state-terrorism, exists in national and regional legislation, but does not enjoy a universal applicability and actual international legal consensus. However, its existence in a legally binding document, as the Convention mentioned, as well as in the Organization of African Union's Convention[27], could be plausible to say that it proves its actual existence as a crime.

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[26] Arab Convention on Terrorism, Part Two, Principles of Arab Cooperation for the Suppression of Terrorism, Chapter I, The Security Field, Section I, Measures for the prevention and suppression of terrorist offences: Article 3.

[27] Organization of African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, 1999.

Noteworthy is Resolution 1373, which obliges all States to criminalize assistance for terrorist activities. However there are many States that provide assistance to terrorist organizations, including some of the greatest powers of the globe; western State's activities which could easily fall under the prohibited acts of terrorism, under the European's Arrest Warrant[28] list of terrorist acts, the Academic Definition of Terrorism, or the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.[29]

Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, viewed as ground-breaking thinkers in relation to state-terrorism[30] argued that "the distinction between State and non-state terror is morally relativist, and distracts from or justifies state-terrorism perpetrated by favored States, typically those of wealthy and developed nations".[31] Chomsky described low-intensity warfare as state-terrorism, and writes: "The U.S. is officially committed to what is called *low-intensity warfare*... If you read the definition of low-intensity conflict in army manuals and compare it with official definitions of terrorism in army manuals, or the U.S. Code, you find they're almost the same."[32]

It is not the only case that the USA, has been accused and found to be acting in accordance with the purposes of state-terrorism. There have been many accusations against the country, like from Latin America, and the Nicaraguan case.

Thought-provoking ideas on state-terrorism, can be found in the moral analysis of Igor Primoratz, through which he proceeds in the formulation of four reasons that show state-terrorism as morally worse than non-state-terrorism.[33] The philosopher pointed out some very important arguments, to demonstrate the severity of the immorality of the phenomenon, and hence, he indirectly adds value to the validity and importance of the term.

Conclusion

The optic corner that this essay is viewing the phenomenon of terrorism is through its other hypostasis, of terrorism committed by the State, state-terrorism. By reversing the roles of the parties in a terrorist assault, where the State seizes to be the victim, and is a participatory party, but in the role of the perpetrator.

Yet, it seems as if these phenomena have developed through time and practice an immune system against their legal analysis and criminal coding. Legal experts, lawmakers and academics have failed repeatedly to efficiently deal with the criminal analysis of the act itself, just as philosophers failed to theorize. The concept of terrorism travels around linguistics, political science, philosophy and law without a nuisance, and even the International Criminal Court failed till now to include the crime of terrorism in its jurisdiction[34]. Irrefutably, consensus on a legal definition of terrorism or state-terrorism within international law is yet to be reached[35].

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[28] http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l33167.htm [Retrieved on 06 July 2012].

[29] International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 9 December 1999.

[30] Sluka, J., ed., "Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror", University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000. p. 8.

[31] Chomsky, Noam & Herman, Edward S., "The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism: The Political Economy of Human Rights: Vol. 1". South End Press, 1979.

[32] *Barsamian, D., "The United States is a Leading Terrorist State An Interview with Noam Chomsky", Monthly Review, 2001.*

[33] Primoratz, Igor. Terrorism: The Philosophical Issues. Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. . pp. 119-120.

[34] www.un.org/law/icc/statute/iccq&a.htm [Retrieved on 17 Sep. 2012].

[35] www.icc-cpi.int/home.html&l=en [Retrieved on 04 May 2012].

Terrorism and state-terrorism are not easy subjects to work on, but at the same time the challenges surrounding their unclear properties, impose a duty upon academics to address the necessary questions in order to contribute in the scholarly labor process, in the production of knowledge, and eventually assist into the birth of a complete convention on international terrorism, leading the way into disrupting the silent consent to the international legal justice system's current practice of law, which eclectically criminalizes the act, depending upon the perpetrator.

In other words when the same terroristic act is committed by a State, there should be the same confrontation and punishment for the crime by the appropriate court, as if it has been committed by a private individual, a group of individuals or any other non-state actor.

There has been a lot of ink used about terrorism, but in contrast, the bibliography on state-terrorism is limited and insufficient, plus, suspiciously neglected as a field of study. There is the urgent need for further research in order to outline the main problematics of these multidimensional and evolving polymorphic phenomena. It is important to note that terrorism as a phenomenon of this globalized and highly technological era, is a continuously evolving concept, a fact that holds a contributing role in the constantly procrastinating legal environment surrounding the concepts of terrorism and state-terrorism, and their not so different routes and roots. In terrorism, fear is the tool used for achieving the realization of the desired goals, and at the same time, fear is the re-action of the terroristic action. While, it should be highlighted that, terrorism cannot exist without the pre-given existence of the State, and apparently, we cannot really talk about terrorism outside the context of the State, they are bound to exist together in an interlinked and dependable relationship.

I am referring to terrorism and state-terrorism as being in cases one, and the same phenomenon, while being termed differently allowing the circumstances. Allow me at this point to clarify, that while they are two different phenomena, it is the thesis of this paper to prove that, in the original terminological appointment, the Greeks, in aiming to describe the concept through the polysynthetic Greek language, constructed the term terrorism[36] in order to describe firstly the terrorism employed by a State actor, and not by a criminal individual as in the modern established understanding. Governmental power of any sort, and terrorism were meant to share an unbreakable bond, a bond that has been broken by the unsuccessful transliteration of the term from Greek into Latin, and consequently into the majority of the western languages. Yet, state-terrorism is the worst, most dangerous and greatly immoral form of terrorism.

Apart from the significance of history and the past in my research, I should note the importance of the future, which is also a motivating power inherently underlying my scholarly engagement. The future that is connected to the prevention of human rights violations, a prevention that can be an important instrument and could have great effect on the future. "Prevention that also means to address the root causes of systematic human rights violations."[37] In this sense it is important and necessary to address the practice of state-terrorism as the roots and cause of systematic human rights violations.

The Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[38] states: "freedom from fear". While the drafters of this pioneering document explicitly condemn fear, they say

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[36] Terrorism in Greek is the word tromocratia, or terrorcracy.

[37] Nowak, Manfred, "Introduction to the Human Rights Regime", The Raoul Wallenberg Institute For Human Rights Library, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Leiden/Boston, 2003, p. 341.

[38] Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948.

nothing on state-terrorism, although it would be rational to expect a condemnation of the phenomenon in a document that was drafted in the aftermath of the worst form of state-terrorism the world has ever faced, under the Nazi's atrocious violence. I have not met a satisfying answer, to justify the neglected by legal experts, state-terrorism. Politics are being ruled by different ethics than law, therefore the marriage of law and politics under the need to give birth to international law has produced more suspicious paradoxes than it actually solved.

However, irrespectively of means and perpetrators, we are facing at an interference with the individual's enjoyment of fundamental rights necessary for the fulfillment of the person's natural desire and need for freedom, and all the conditions that may contribute to the self-fulfillment, autonomy, and the development of her capabilities[39] in order to render possible the individual's unique blossoming into a society. From a human rights perspective, facing all this terror-phobia triggered by the counter-terrorism measures, and the total security obsession of the Western governments, it is apparent that we are witnessing a diminishment of the value of human rights.

Still, a law with universal applicability, explicitly forbidding state-terrorism, do not exist. A law with the legitimation that organizations such as the United Nations can provide, or with enforceability in the International Criminal Court. The postponing international legal setting, cannot serve as an excuse for the neglected issue of criminalizing state-terrorism, or for the diplomatic denial to bring it on the table, when discussing terrorism legislation.

The urgency for scholarly engagement with the phenomenon have been advocated by some of the greatest minds of our times, and the screaming necessity for legal recognition of terrorism committed by state actors cannot be silenced no more.

Under this logic, the establishment of a proven act of terrorism committed by a State actor ought to formulate state-terrorism, while trumping over the curtain of immunity and impunity of the perpetrators, whilst the possibility to bring a case in a court, in order for justice to be restored, should always be available.

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