

ON THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH AND THE RISK OF TERRORISM IN EUROPE

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Abstract:

Terrorism is basically characterized as particular anti-social behaviour of people, individuals as well as groups or states, publicly also called terror. Terrorism is neither social, nor political or criminological phenomenon of the 21st century. Terror as a result of terrorism in a certain historical period surely is a logical product of particular social development. Therefore, the fight of the state and the majority of society against its acts has become natural. Fight against the terror. Considering the historical significance of the activities of various Christian churches in the area of current European Union, nowadays it might show as purposeful to increase the intensity of the engagement of not only Christian churches in the processes aiming to eliminate potential terrorist attacks. The paper tackles some of the possible ways of the pursuit of this initiative.

Key words: terrorism, terrorism, terror, church, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, state, European Union

Introduction

Violence is a social phenomenon that has accompanied human society since its creation. If one wanted to be overtly sarcastic, one might even say that violence became kind of “replacement” motor pushing humanity forward. It became a force for a man to rule over others, for man to rule over society, but also for society to rule over a man, while this force functions and continues to do so.

Violence has various roots, various, creative forms, and various goals. Therefore, it has been applied with varying intent both in the relationship of the individual to the individual, the individual to the collective, the individual to the community, and the individual to the state power. The reverse is also true. Because violence can also be recorded in relation to the individual both from the position of the state and from the position of a particular community. Violence in human society is undeniably a tangible manifestation of its social imbalance and moral immaturity.¹ This is regardless of whether it is perpetrated by an individual, a group of persons or even the state itself against other subjects. At present, the phenomenon of violence is mainly expressed in the form of *extremism*, which, in certain circumstances, develops into *terrorism*.² Indeed, in the contemporary world, war violence is ‘fashionably’ fitted into a peaceful role in the guise of a ‘form of struggle for peace’. However, from a certain evaluative point of view, war is also regarded as a form of state terrorism perpetrated against another subject of international law. In the case of civil war, therefore, national law. Terrorism, however, does not take note of any legal orders, nor of any moral norms. It has political objectives and is essentially directed against the institutions of the state. It seeks to eliminate or even paralyze them by provoking a revolutionary anti-state reaction in the population. The popular masses are revolutionarily aroused by the fear induced by the terror and their direct targeting of the ruling power. In such a situation, the still influential extra-state spiritual, yet organized, force that the European Christian churches accumulate at their core can effectively influence the ‘reconciliation process’ and the obliteration of antagonisms.

Church as barrier against violence

Every rationally thinking human being, every real public serving community, even the “healthy” part of human society tries to protect themselves against violence. The common man, burdened daily with the burden of mental or physical labour, has no interest in procreating, seeking or developing interpersonal relationships on the basis of violence. His mission and value-goal is primarily to secure the optimal means of life for himself and his loved ones. Such a person naturally wants to live and work in a peaceful, creative atmosphere. Violence, especially in the form of military violence, is usually the product of greed and lust for power, a morbid lust to control foreign territories and their human and

1 Compare with the ideas published in RAŠLA, A. 1991. *Inkvizícia nezomiera*. See BERGER, J. M. 2018. *Extremism*. p. 214. Also see more BÍLKOVÁ, V. 2009. *Terorismus*. In: *Encyklopedie mezinárodních vztahů*. p. 305-309.

2 See e.g. BELLA, P. 2016. *Trestnoprávna kvalifikácia extrémizmu*. pp. 71 – 94.

material resources. Today, the struggle for peace is literally becoming a necessity of life. A credo for a rational humanity seeking to avert, through peaceful activities, a possible catastrophe that is actually threatening the entire planet Earth. Humanity is, by its own doing, on the brink of its own extinction. It is allowing itself to be led by forces that hold different values than the majority of the human population. The peaceful forces that the Christian churches harbour at their core can help to avert humanity's impending doom. Perhaps only they can mobilise the masses of European nations against terrorism and war. Against their public propaganda. But this requires strengthening the positions of these churches in the secularised, so-called post-modern, decadent European civilisation. However, it is not a simple matter to search for and find answers to the possible developmental tendencies in the perception of the meaning and position of churches in society, the transformation of religion, the vision of its changes and the expansion of other faiths in the European Union through the eyes of its inhabitants. The Church, initially described as Christian, later diversified in Europe into a Roman Catholic (universal) branch, an Orthodox (Eastern Orthodox) branch, a Greek Catholic (Uniate) branch, Protestant branches, but also a Jewish (Judaic) tribal branch, and marginally later an Islamic branch, has played an irreplaceable role in the history of Europe since the beginning of our era. The Christian churches were instrumental in shaping European civilisation and its values. The Roman Catholic Church, in particular, became part of the everyday life of man for a long historical period. It can be said to have, in effect, 'pulled' Western European culture forward along the spiral of historical development, from slavery to capitalism. It did not disappear even in socialism of the so-called Eastern European type. Despite the high degree of atheisation of Western European society, despite the extreme liberalisation of interpersonal relations and the promotion of the principles of (pseudo)humanity to the brink of rational acceptance of the distortions of the so-called Euro-bureaucrats, almost every church, especially the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches, have so far retained a solid position and a certain influence in the social structures of the Member States of the European Union. However, the observed development tendency points to a latent transformation of the ideological, moral, ethical and legal foundations of European society, which may develop into a revolutionary transformation of European civilisation, accompanied by phenomena incompatible with the principles on which the cohesion of Europe is conceived. The erosion of rational thinking and pragmatic action by the citizens of the European Union is determined by the decadent policies created, shaped and enforced by the bureaucratic apparatus of the European Union in the territories of all its Member States. The response to the brutal imposition of a decadent way of life on the population of the European

Union, particularly on immigrants of Islamic origin, may be an explosion of terrorism.³ It is clear that contemporary European civilisation of the so-called Western or Euro-American type is undergoing profound transformations, including permanent crisis phenomena. These manifestations of decline are determined by the internal moral destabilisation of the so-called consumer society, both manifested and accompanied by a general process of decadence. The policy of camouflaging reality, the enforcement of the principle of limited public information for the public, hiding, for example, the genocide of Christians in Africa (Nigeria, Mali, Egypt) and in the Middle East (Syria, Iraq), allows the latent growth of so-called extremist movements, which have already been considered historically overtaken.⁴ However, their 'outlaw status' is precisely conducive to strengthening their viability and further growth. The erosion of social relations in the states of Western Europe is a signal that the cohesion of a community is subjected to external pressures, including in particular to the wave of immigration apparently resulting in the eventual colonisation of Europe by sub-Saharan and Middle Eastern Muslim populations, which cannot be merely taken into consideration. In order to maintain, at least temporarily, an acceptable state of social and confessional peace, the pacification of the aggressive elements of the migrants can only be kept within reasonable limits by the participation of the various churches in the education and training of the newly settled population in Europe. This is particularly true of immigrants and their descendants of the Islamic faith. Thus, an ethnically heterogeneous, but religiously homogeneous society, whose members, for the most part, have no global or even partial interest in cultural, social and legal convergence with the native population. The role of the churches and the priests, rabbis and imams working within their structures, cooperating effectively and selflessly with the public authorities of the various host Member States of the European Union, will, depending on the degree of success and the degree of mutual cooperation achieved, be decisive for the future tendency of the European Union. Either towards internal convergence or internal divergence.⁵ In this context, there is also a societal demand for increased quality parameters in the personality of religious or ecclesiastical leaders on the one hand, and on the other hand, for the installation of only those political, state and security representatives of the European Union and its Member States in leadership positions and functions who will be personally responsible for the implementation of the original programme that led to the foundation of the European Union. We are therefore of the opinion that the churches in the European Union should, on the basis of the results of a society-

3 CARR, C. 2002. *Dějiny terorismu. Kořeny války proti civilistům. Od starověku po současnost.*

4 MENDEL, M. 1992. *Židé a Arabové. Dialog ideí a zbraní.*

5 MELVIN, N. J. 2006. *Islam, conflict and terrorism.*

wide dialogue, gradually take over from the state the governance and responsibility for certain aspects of the development of society. In particular, they should focus on the protection of the biological status of man, the protection of the human individual (the personality of the human being), the protection of the family (man, woman, children), the protection of each individual European nation (promotion of birth rates), the protection of socio-cultural relations (promotion of good coexistence between individuals and communities), and, in particular, the protection of the cultural heritage of European nations. Particular attention should be paid by Christian Church leaders to cooperation with the Orthodox Eastern European Churches, in particular with representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church. In this way, too, the fractured relations between the nations of the European Union and the eastern part of the European continent could be mended. For the sake of lasting peace between the nations. A shift or transfer of competences from the state to the bodies of the Christian churches could be implemented in all the Member States of the European Union in a spirit of unity, for example by taking over the responsibility and control of these churches over education, social welfare and the family, health and culture, international relations and internal food security, by installing statutory bodies and persons designed by them in agency bodies which would replace the relevant line ministries.

Risk of terrorism in the European Union

Nowadays, terrorism is undoubtedly an international phenomenon.⁶ Phenomenon with a high-risk character. This has its own reasons. Since, until recently, the process of globalisation has become more dynamic, there has naturally also been a globalisation of international crime, in which global terrorism is included.⁷ However, it can be said that terrorism is an extreme means and the final consequence of not addressing antagonistic social relations of racial, ethnic, social, national, ideological, cultural and religious nature. Terrorism in general, however, is both the product of extreme right-wing thinking and extreme left-wing 'straying'. The racial roots of the organized far-right terrorism flourishing in the United States of America have been "made famous" in the world by the Ku Klux Klan in particular.⁸ Far-right fascists, Nazis and Falangists led bloody terrorist actions against left-wing populations in Italy, Germany and Spain in the second third of the 20th century. However, the protest anti-imperialist left-

6 DAVID, V., MALACKA, M. 2005. *Fenomén mezinárodního terorismu*.

7 HENDERSON, H. 2001. *Global Terrorism: The Complete Reference Guide*.

8 GLÜKSELIG, J. 1993. *Tajné společnosti*, p. 169 etc.

wing potential of terrorism was especially strengthened by the US-Vietnam War, which was waged by the superpower world-power-oriented, aggressive United States of America against Vietnam, an country of the so-called Third World, which was underestimated by the “West”. In a climate of international opposition and dissent to the US military presence in this East Asian country, a number of terrorist groups emerged in the developed Western world in the 1960s and 1970s.⁹ Each presented different forms and methods of perpetrating violence in public. It is then all the more difficult to say unequivocally what terrorism actually is. The fact remains that it was only at the United Nations that an adequate characterisation of it was formulated. However, this definition is not binding for the Member States. We feel it necessary to state that the many definitions presented often obscure the real motives behind terrorism. It is common for variations of terror in which ‘extenuating circumstances’ can be found, such as underground, national liberation or guerrilla movements or commandoes, to be labelled as terrorist organisations. Often these may be movements that are only pretending to be such, and just as often their designation as terrorist organisations may be deliberately tendentious and misleading. Such an attitude then allows terrorist groups and organisations to easily appropriate more positive and legitimate motivations. It is natural that political science terms that do not directly contradict liberal democracy, such as ‘revolutionary violence’ or ‘national liberation’, are much more acceptable than the term ‘terrorism’. In the immediate aftermath of the ‘live-streamed’ terrorist attack on the United States of America on 11th of September 2001, this form of a certain justification for terrorist acts could also be read into those reactions which, while condemning the attacks on the United States of America, also added that exclusive ‘but’. That is to say, they were of the opinion that the foreign policy of the United States of America, as implemented, had brought these acts upon itself. These reservations were often voiced, particularly in political circles and in states or countries where traditional anti-Americanism reigned, and not unjustifiably so. In the European Union, however, it has been virtually impossible to encounter such a manifestation. However, the evaluation of such violent activity in society today depends on the

9 It is common knowledge that in the world history of war crimes and global terrorism the unit of the United States Army, an infantry platoon composed of 18 - 19 year old soldiers, commanded in occupied Vietnam by Lt. William Calley has made itself infamously known. On the 16th of March 1968, it massacred the peaceful population of the Vietnamese village of My Lai. Among the 504 dead, slaughtered in the rice paddies and houses, were only women, children and old men. The victims of the war crime of mass murder of civilians were beaten, tortured, mutilated, stabbed, and the women were raped. The war criminals were acquitted by an American court, only the commanding officer, Lt. W. Calley served 4 1/2 months in Fort Laevenworth prison for brutal mass murder. This act also initiated the rise of anti-American so-called anti-imperialist leftist terrorism in the world.

point of view and the purpose and interest of the evaluator, the bearer of a certain ideology and its target political programme.¹⁰ So naturally there is on the one hand a condemnation of terrorism, but on the other hand also an endorsement of it as one of the necessary forms of militant activity directed against the structures of dominant power in the state. However, society has long been seeking means and instruments aimed at eliminating this anti-social phenomenon, in particular through the creation of the institution of crisis management.¹¹ For terrorism poses the greatest risk, even a direct danger, to the socially loyal and politically “disinterested” masses of the peaceful ordinary working population. People of everyday mundanity, who are very far from perceiving the threat of ‘some’ terrorism. The 2001 terrorist attack of foreign provenance on the often propagandistically exploited major facilities located in the United States of America, including the so-called Pentagon, set off a previously unprecedented process of worldwide open warfare against world terrorism.¹² Terrorist attacks have also plagued the European Union. However, following the calming of the social situation in the European Union and public opinion, which has been inflamed by the massive and targeted terrorist attacks on selected targets in Madrid, Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen and Vienna, it is possible to anticipate a resurgence in the activities of terrorist cells and the terrorist actions planned by them. This is particularly so in the context of the armed conflict taking place in Ukraine. The immigration of masses of refugees or ‘defectors’, often from war-torn areas of Ukraine, to the Member States of the European Union, initiated by their boundless, often unjustified, all-round political, material and financial support, supports the assumption of a potential increase in the risk of terrorist attacks on the territory of the European Union. The uncontrolled importation of small arms into the European Union states, which were freely distributed among the population in Ukraine by the government authorities there, is likely to be reflected not only in an increase in crime, but also in the revitalisation of terrorist activity. The consequences of such an irrational immigration policy will have to be dealt with, especially by the political authorities of the European Union and their representatives, who are responsible for the situation. In view of the displacement of Christian religious communities from the public life of the population of the European Union at the end of the 20th century, in view of the existing low national consciousness of the young generation of Europeans, in view of the moral devastation of their collective spiritual make-up, it will be inevitable, in order to minimise the risks associated with violence in society,

10 See e.g. EICHLER, J. 2007. *Terorismus a války na počátku 21. století*. 330 p. Also MARUŠINCOVÁ, L. 2009. *Terorismus - problém minulosti i současnosti*. Bakalářská práce.

11 ALEXY, J., MEČÁR, M. 2006. *Strategický a krizový manažment*. p. 153 etc. Also compare with the information in KÚTIK, J., KRÁLIK, J. 2015. *Verejná správa a krizový manažment*.

12 CLARKE, A. R. *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror*.

including terrorism, to call on these Christian religious communities once again to assume co-responsibility for the state of European society. Their participation in the management of national and EU affairs could become a guarantee of a gradual turn in European Union policy towards intelligent and pragmatic solutions to the accumulated political, economic, social, cultural, military and, above all, moral problems.

Conclusion

Terrorism is undeniably a socially undesirable method, an irreversible method and an extreme form of venting social tensions. It is a solution to unresolved conflict. It is a consequence of the breakdown of social relations, not its cause. It will turn into cause when the state takes the baton and continues with its agenda. State terrorism is the most dangerous form of terrorism because its only real rival can be the United Nations, a revolution or a civil war. However, diplomatic support for the global fight against terrorism can also be effectively applied by revitalised European Christian churches. Indeed, the fear of indiscriminate violence, spawned in an atmosphere of confrontational international and national relations and materialised in terrorist actions carried out for various reasons by individuals and collectives in an environment characterised by its peacefulness, is a serious threat to the overall development of human society and its spiritual and material advancement. Terrorism has therefore become an existential obstacle to the forces striving for a peaceful life for the majority of the population of planet Earth. The fight against terrorism on a global scale, but above all the search for and elimination of its causes, is a topical part of the broad spectrum of today's modern peace policy, diplomacy and military. If the European Christian churches can be involved in this process, which is of general benefit to humanity, they could, in cooperation with the representatives of European Judaism and Islam, make an effective contribution to the rapid elimination of the threat of terrorism throughout the European Union. For the sake of its peaceful, tranquil life, free from the accumulation of deformations, the pathological political products of the first two decades of the 21st century in particular.

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