

**CRIMINOLOGICAL (ETIOLOGICAL) ASPECTS OF TERRORISM**

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**Abstract:** *The contemporary landscape of global security is profoundly influenced by the phenomenon of terrorism, constituting a paramount concern of unparalleled magnitude. While terrorism has historically permeated the annals of state formations, its contemporary manifestation has witnessed a marked escalation and proliferation in recent decades. Contrary to popular belief which may confine the specter of terrorism to the confines of the Old Continent or to nations characterized by democratic governance paradigms, its reach extends far beyond such boundaries, impacting diverse geographical locales and transcending conventional societal demarcations. Indeed, terrorism in the present era exacts a heavy toll, manifesting in myriad forms and encroaching upon all facets of communal existence. In its deleterious wake, terrorism undermines the foundational tenets safeguarded by global legal frameworks, thereby imperiling the bedrock principles that underpin civilizational norms. This scholarly exposition endeavors to scrutinize the multifaceted dimensions intrinsic to the phenomenon of terrorism, elucidating the intricate interplay of factors that precipitate recourse to violent means in the pursuit of political objectives.*

**Keywords:** *terrorism, criminal etiology, international security, definition of terrorism, violence.*

**Introduction**

The phenomenon of terrorism has garnered significant attention in academic, political, and public spheres due to its profound implications for national security, societal stability, and global order. Defined as the deliberate use of violence or the threat of violence to instill fear and achieve political, ideological, or religious objectives, terrorism poses a formidable challenge to the rule of law and democratic principles. Despite concerted efforts by governments and international organizations to combat terrorism, its prevalence persists, evolving in response to geopolitical shifts, technological advancements, and socio-economic disparities. Amidst these complexities, criminology emerges as a vital discipline for unpacking the underlying causes and mechanisms driving terrorist behavior. Rooted in the study of crime, criminal behavior, and societal responses to deviance, criminological theories offer a rich framework for understanding the etiological factors contributing to the radicalization, recruitment, and perpetration of terrorist acts. By applying criminological perspectives to the analysis of terrorism, scholars can discern patterns, motivations, and risk factors that shape individuals' pathways into violent extremism.

**„What Kills as Terrorism Probably is Terrorism“**

The contemporary landscape of global security is profoundly influenced by the pervasive threat of terrorism, which encroaches upon the fundamental values upheld by civilized nations worldwide. Despite its universally recognized affront to the international community, terrorism remains elusive in its definition, impeded by political discord and the entrenched interests of influential nations. Consequently, the task of delineating terrorism with precision and completeness encounters significant obstacles. The absence of a singularly accepted definition is a conspicuous outcome of this discord, underscoring the complexity inherent in characterizing terrorism. Scholars grappling with this issue often acknowledge the inherent challenge, expressing their intent to elucidate the phenomenon, yet remain cognizant of the elusive nature of an exhaustive definition (Simeunović,

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2009; Zinn, 2002). The absence of consensus on terrorism's nature is not merely a theoretical quandary but a practical impediment to comprehending and addressing this multifaceted threat. Beyond political dissension, various objective factors contribute to the failure to establish a universally accepted definition of terrorism. This failure not only hampers scholarly endeavors but also jeopardizes the efficacy of counterterrorism efforts, as inappropriate definitions proliferate, undermining the pursuit of scientific understanding (Simeunović, 2009). Given the absence of both scientific and political consensus, a diverse array of perspectives is indispensable in navigating this definitional quagmire.

Terrorism embodies a multifaceted social phenomenon with global ramifications, manifesting in diverse forms that have evolved over millennia. Throughout its historical trajectory, terrorism has adapted and metamorphosed while consistently posing a significant threat to societal well-being. Its evolution has been shaped by a myriad of factors and contextual influences, rendering it a complex and dynamic entity. As aptly noted by Laqueur, terrorism defies facile categorization and resists simplistic generalizations, thus serving as fertile ground for misinterpretation and oversimplification (Laqueur, 1987). Consequently, any attempt to reduce terrorism to a simplistic definition is fraught with peril, necessitating cautious deliberation. A pivotal challenge in understanding terrorism lies in the discordant and ambiguous nature of its conceptualization. Varied and conflicting interpretations abound, often propagated by political actors who wield rhetoric to manipulate perceptions. Politicians, in particular, are prone to employing inflammatory or hastily drawn conclusions to label actions as terrorism, irrespective of their alignment with established criteria. Such ambiguity clouds the discourse surrounding terrorism, necessitating a rigorous commitment to rational inquiry. In the absence of a universally accepted definition, discerning the essence of terrorism demands a rigorous examination of its essential attributes. As emphasized by Sir Jeremy Greenstock, a pragmatic approach rooted in rationality is indispensable, guiding us to discern that which exhibits the hallmark traits of terrorism (Collins & Grover, 2002). However, the question remains: what precisely constitutes the characteristic features of terrorism? Greenstock's inquiry prompts reflection but falls short of providing a definitive answer.

The task of defining terrorism is further complicated by intricate political agendas. A notable array of political interests actively dissuades from establishing a clear definition of terrorism. A more precise delineation of this phenomenon would inevitably elicit a robust response, both domestically and internationally, which would run counter to the objectives of certain individuals aiming to exploit terrorism for their political ends. Consequently, the lack of political consensus, which is essential for enacting comprehensive measures aimed at effectively combating and legally penalizing terrorism, serves as a significant impediment. In addition to political discord, numerous other factors hinder scholarly endeavors in defining terrorism. These include covert operations, the vilification of the term itself, diverse manifestations of political violence, ideological terrorism, varied methodological approaches in academia, the emergence of terrorism within armed conflicts, as well as the multiplicity of its goals and tactics. Despite ongoing scholarly discourse, a consensus remains elusive, particularly concerning the academic conceptualization of terrorism (Simeunović, 2009; Kešetović & Bajagić, 2003)

Divergent definitions of terrorism not only stem from geographical or linguistic disparities but also from the distinct purposes for which they are crafted, the disciplinary backgrounds of their proponents, and their practical utility. Scholars categorize these definitions into two broad groups: academic definitions and administrative definitions (Novaković, 2021). The former are formulated within academic institutions by professors and researchers for the purposes of scholarly inquiry and educational dissemination, hence termed scientific or academic definitions. Conversely, administrative definitions are devised for practical application within governmental institutions, serving the exigencies of governance and policy-making, hence designated as administrative or political definitions.

Scientific or academic definitions of terrorism epitomize the outcomes of rigorous scholarly inquiry and unfettered academic deliberation. From the latter half of the 20th century to the present day, a plethora of such definitions have emerged, indicative of the breadth and depth of academic engagement with the phenomenon. Among these, the contribution of Schmidt stands out significantly. Schmidt undertook a comprehensive interdisciplinary analysis, scrutinizing 109 scientific definitions of terrorism to distill the most salient elements of this complex phenomenon. This exhaustive

endeavor has positioned Schmidt as an indispensable resource for further scholarly exploration into terrorism. Central to Schmidt's analysis is the identification of key elements that collectively encapsulate the essence of terrorism. His endeavor aims to craft a scientifically robust and widely acceptable definition. According to Schmidt, terrorism is characterized as a method predicated on instilling fear, manifested through recurrent violent actions perpetrated by clandestine individuals, groups, or state actors. These actions are motivated by idiosyncratic, criminal, or political motives. Notably, unlike conventional murder, terrorism does not primarily target specific individuals but instead employs violence to generate fear indiscriminately among the broader populace. Victims are typically selected randomly, termed as „targets of opportunity“, or selectively, targeting representatives or symbolic entities. Crucially, terrorism is delineated as a communicative process, leveraging threat and violence to manipulate not only the immediate victims but also the broader target audience. This communication triad involves the terrorist (or organization), the victim (who is threatened), and the primary target (typically the public). Through intimidation, coercion, or propaganda, the terrorist seeks to sway the perceptions or behavior of the primary target, rendering them a subject of terror, a conduit for demands, or a focal point of attention, contingent upon the strategic objectives of the perpetrator (Schmidt & Jongman, 1988). Schmidt's formulation thus furnishes a nuanced understanding of terrorism, elucidating its multifaceted dynamics and communicative strategies. By distilling the essence of terrorism into its constituent elements, Schmidt's definition serves as a cornerstone for scholarly discourse and empirical analysis in the field.

In addition to scholarly interpretations, there exist administrative or political definitions of terrorism, which are formulated by governmental or international bodies. Typically, these definitions emerge as a result of bureaucratic processes within governing institutions. Sederberg characterizes the definitions crafted by such bodies as reflecting the „scholastic task of government“ (1989). However, these administrative definitions are not without their limitations. Foremost among these limitations is their susceptibility to being influenced by the interests and ideological perspectives of the ruling authorities. Such definitions may exhibit a bias towards the political agenda of the governing structure, resulting in the imposition of ideological preconceptions. Moreover, administrative definitions are often characterized by bureaucratic verbosity, laden with jargon and pre-normative language. This tendency towards excessive generalization serves the pragmatic purpose of facilitating the application of a single definition across diverse contexts, but it can also dilute the precision and specificity required for scholarly analysis (Simeunović, 2009). Administrative definitions of terrorism are frequently enshrined in legal statutes, resolutions, official declarations, and operational manuals of military and law enforcement agencies. These definitions play a pivotal role in shaping policy frameworks and guiding the operational strategies of state institutions (Novaković, 2021). However, their utility must be tempered by an awareness of their inherent limitations and susceptibility to political influences.

Terrorism fundamentally constitutes a specific manifestation of political violence, distinct from other forms of violence aimed at achieving political objectives. It is imperative to differentiate between terrorism and mere terror, as not all instances of political violence qualify as terrorism. At its core, terrorism involves the deliberate use of violence by individuals or organized groups to advance particular goals. Certain scholars posit that terrorism functions primarily as a method of political struggle, wherein systematic and organized violence is employed to instill fear within a broader populace. This tactic aims to erode trust in existing social structures and institutions, ultimately facilitating the imposition of political power through the execution of terrorist acts (Novaković, 2021). Wilkinson contends that terrorism represents a systematic application of violence orchestrated to achieve specific political objectives (Wilkinson, 2002). Central to the nature of terrorism is its reliance on fear as a tool of persuasion. By intimidating the masses and inciting provocation, terrorists seek to compel authorities into action or inaction through the threat of violence. This strategic use of fear serves to exert pressure on societal norms and political processes, thereby influencing decision-making and societal behavior (Novaković, 2021).

### **Terrorism and Criminology**

Criminological theories provide a robust foundation for examining the multifaceted nature of terrorism. From classical perspectives emphasizing rational choice and deterrence to contemporary

theories focusing on social disorganization, strain, and subcultural influences, criminology offers a diverse array of frameworks for understanding human behavior in deviant contexts. Importantly, these theories can be adapted and extended to elucidate the specific dynamics of terrorist involvement, encompassing both individual-level motivations and broader structural determinants. Terrorism encompasses a spectrum of criminal activities perpetrated by both groups and individuals, driven by diverse motives, objectives, and methods. These assertions find support in the works of various scholars such as Hamm (2007), Albin (2001), Silke (2008), and Hewitt (2000a). Adaptability is a hallmark trait of terrorist groups, as they continuously adjust their tactics to suit the dynamic landscapes of their physical, social, and political environments (Hamm, 2007). Central to their modus operandi is the manipulation, exploitation, and utilization of the resources available from their adversaries or targets, as elucidated by Kupperman, Opstal, and Williamson (1982), and Chermak (2003). The overarching objective of terrorists is to maximize the impact of their actions, either by inflicting harm directly on victims or by instilling fear and garnering support through symbolic threats. This sentiment is echoed by scholars such as Berks (1990), Price (1977), Combs (2006), and Crenshaw (1988). Notably, terrorists defy easy categorization based on specific physical or behavioral characteristics. They can emerge from any social or educational background, religious affiliation, ethnic group, gender, or age bracket, as highlighted by Hudson (1999).

To explore the applicability of criminological theory in understanding terrorism, this paper undertakes a comprehensive examination of three prominent criminological frameworks. Each of these theories offers unique insights into different aspects of terrorism. Firstly, strain theories elucidate the mechanisms underlying terrorist recruitment processes. Secondly, control and learning theories provide crucial insights into individual behavior, shedding light on the factors influencing the decision to engage in terrorism and the conditions conducive to the expansion of terrorist group membership. Control theory, in particular, offers insights into the process of joining a terrorist organization and undergoing indoctrination, while learning theory underscores the significance of education and information dissemination within and among terrorist groups. Throughout the discussion, diverse examples are employed to illustrate the breadth of criminological theories' explanatory power in elucidating terrorist acts and organizational dynamics. By leveraging these theoretical frameworks, this paper aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in terrorism and its multifaceted manifestations.

### **Terrorism as a Crime**

The comprehension of criminological theories in elucidating the behavior of terrorists is contingent upon recognizing the breadth of terrorism and its perpetrators. Analogous to the accessibility of criminal conduct to individuals, the prospect of becoming a terrorist is open to anyone. Terrorism, in its scope, encapsulates a myriad of illicit activities including but not limited to kidnapping, homicide, coercion, possession and utilization of explosives and other armaments, theft, and the despoliation of both public and private assets. The gamut of actions categorized as terrorism spans a spectrum of violent transgressions, notably encompassing hijackings, bombings, poisonings, and assassinations (Kupperman, Opstal & Williamson, 1982; Ross, 1993). Preceding their involvement in acts of terrorism, terrorists frequently resort to a spectrum of conventional criminal activities to bolster their operations. Commonly observed criminal behaviors include theft, counterfeiting, and participation in drug and arms trafficking, all of which serve as means to finance their endeavors (Hamm, 2007).

A more comprehensive comprehension of terrorism can be attained through an examination of both its parallels with and distinctions from other forms of criminal activities. Analogous to bias or hate crimes, terrorism embodies a symbolic essence wherein the perpetration is imbued with messages aimed at the victim, members of the victim's social or demographic group, prospective assailants, public officials, and the broader public sphere (Berk, 1990). However, terrorism extends beyond the mere commission of acts to encompass „the magnitude of the threat as perceived by the prospective victim or victims“ (Crenshaw, 1988).

Previous analyses of terrorism have underscored the significance of psychological dimensions by emphasizing terrorism's multifaceted targeting strategies (Berks, 1990; Price, 1977; Combs, 2006). These targets extend beyond immediate victims to encompass groups sharing similarities with the

victims, who can empathize with their plight, as well as individuals who, though not directly affected, react in accordance with their sympathies, loyalties, and emotional responses (Price, 1977). Combs (2006) delineates three primary target audiences for terrorists when leveraging media as a tool for propaganda dissemination: firstly, current or prospective supporters; secondly, the general populace; and thirdly, adversaries or those identified as prospective victims of forthcoming attacks (Combs, 2006). Similar to other forms of criminal conduct, terrorism exhibits evolutionary dynamics over time. Terrorist entities adeptly adjust to technological advancements, innovate new methodologies, assimilate lessons from setbacks, and navigate shifts in both foreign and domestic policies (Hamm, 2007). Analogous to street gangs or organized crime syndicates, each terrorist faction harbors distinct motives, targets, and operational modalities (Albini, 2001; Silke, 2008; Hewitt, 2000b).

## **Etiology of Terrorism**

### ***Strain Theory***

Strain theories direct attention towards crime as an individual's response to the array of societal challenges, norms, cultures, values, and objectives. These theories find application in understanding delinquent reactions to personal violence and victimization (Baron, 2009; Manasse & Ganem, 2009), as well as in predicting patterns of drug use (Lo, Kim & Church, 2008). Additionally, strain theories shed light on disparities in race, gender, and age concerning decisions to engage in delinquent behavior (Manasse & Ganem, 2009). Hudson (1999) emphasizes that terrorists can emerge from diverse age groups, genders, and racial or ethnic backgrounds.

Robert Merton posited that society highly values certain goals and ideals, such as monetary success. However, access to legitimate avenues for attaining these goals varies based on factors such as social class, education, gender, and ethnicity. According to Merton's theory, individuals are rational actors who select behaviors based on their circumstances to advance their personal interests and achieve their objectives (Merton, 1938). Individuals with limited or no access to legitimate opportunities still aspire to these goals and may resort to illegitimate means, such as engaging in criminal activities, to fulfill them (Merton, 1938). When individuals encounter obstacles in pursuing their desired goals, they respond in diverse ways: some conform or ritualize their conduct, others withdraw from societal engagement, and still others innovate or rebel against societal norms. While criminological inquiry often emphasizes the innovator response, in the context of terrorism, rebellion becomes the focal point of interest.

Merton's theory was originally intended to apply to American society, given that individual desires are shaped by cultural influences (Passas, 1995). Nonetheless, the fundamental tenets of the theory hold implications for the examination of terrorism on a global scale. Groups targeting the United States and other Western nations frequently perceive the norms and values of these societies as undermining their organizational structures or traditional beliefs and cultural heritage. Individuals are drawn to terrorism or join terrorist organizations with a distinct purpose, often inspired by a complex interplay of social, cultural, and religious ideologies.

Agnew's general theory of strain was initially formulated to elucidate middle-class delinquency. Within this framework, Agnew (1992) posited that societal goals are perceived as ideals rather than attainable realities. Consequently, the inability to achieve these goals or the limited opportunities available does not necessarily evoke frustration or anger. Instead, this author contends that individuals' future behaviors are more profoundly influenced by the manner in which they are treated. According to Agnew's theory, individuals engage in delinquent behavior through a three-step process. Firstly, there is the actual or anticipated failure to achieve a desired goal. Secondly, individuals may experience the removal of positively valued stimuli, either actual or anticipated. Finally, strain arises from the encounter with actual or anticipated negatively valued stimuli, such as punishment (Agnew, 1992). Delinquent behavior ensues when individuals respond to this strain with negative emotions, often compounded by familial or social pressures urging corrective action to alleviate or resolve the strain. In engaging in delinquent acts, individuals are not solely driven by the pursuit of goals, but also by the desire to evade pain, sometimes resorting to delinquent behavior as a coping mechanism to avoid situations perceived as distressing (Agnew, 1992).

In the context of terrorist recruitment, Agnew's theory maintains relevance, particularly in the distinction he draws regarding its applicability to members of the middle class. Terrorist groups recruit individuals from all segments of society, not solely from the economically disadvantaged, but also from the well-educated, upwardly mobile, and affluent strata (Hudson, 1999). Previous studies, primarily focused on Europe and the Middle East, have revealed that approximately 75% of terrorist group members possess some level of higher education (Russell & Miller, 1977). Moreover, many terrorists hold legitimate professions, enabling them to evade detection, as observed in the cases of members belonging to sleeper cells (Hudson, 1999).

For these middle-class or upper-class terrorists, the objectives of the terrorist group take precedence over their social standing in the community (Russell & Miller, 1977; Hudson, 1999). The perceived failure lies in the group's inability to achieve its agenda through legitimate means; although they may never endeavor to pursue these goals through lawful channels, they believe no such avenues exist. Consequently, the pursuit of the group's goals outweighs considerations of life, wealth, or status, rendering these markers of their societal position devoid of allure and providing no positive incentives to continue their conventional careers while ignoring the terrorist agenda. Given that the objectives of terrorist groups often entail advocating for social or political changes, the absence of these changes and the middle-class terrorist's continued adherence to societal rules and norms deemed unacceptable by the group serve as negative stimuli, compelling their ongoing involvement until the group's agenda is realized (Breen, 2019).

Albert Cohen endeavored to elucidate the mechanisms by which certain young boys gravitate towards delinquent behavior, either independently or as part of youth gangs (Cohen, 1955). Cohen's theory revolves around the concept of status frustration, wherein individuals from lower socioeconomic strata find themselves subjected to the standards of respect or recognition typically associated with the upper class. This disjuncture engenders a sense of frustration among these individuals, prompting them to form delinquent subcultures. Within these subcultures, social values undergo redefinition, and individuals dismiss, disregard, and discredit the norms and values espoused by other social groups (Cohen, 1955). This process is further accentuated by the derision directed towards authority figures or proponents of opposing viewpoints or rejected values. In response to social and situational strains, individuals within these subcultures coalesce, collectively establishing new norms, values, and objectives that diverge from those of the middle class (Cohen, 1955). Membership in such a deviant subculture becomes the pinnacle of status for delinquents, akin to how membership in a terrorist group serves as a status symbol for individuals raised in environments permeated by terrorist ideologies, such as refugee camps or other areas where such ideologies are prevalent. These locales often offer few opportunities for young people, with extreme poverty widespread and access to aid limited or nonexistent. Faced with these circumstances, young individuals may perceive membership in a local terrorist organization as the sole means of attaining status and respect within their community (Hudson, 1999). Hamm extended this concept by proposing that bonds among individuals can be forged through a shared antipathy towards societal out-groups (Hamm, 2004).

### ***Control Theory***

Control theories constitute a fundamental framework for elucidating an individual's inclination towards engaging in terrorist activities or affiliating with a terrorist organization, as well as the decision to sustain such involvement. These theories have been instrumental in explicating a spectrum of behaviors ranging from extreme drinking patterns (Costello, Anderson & Stein, 2006), marijuana usage and cessation (Maume, Ousey & Beaver, 2005), to participation in gangs and perpetration of school violence (Hall, 2009). By virtue of its examination of the social bonds individuals forge within groups sharing similar inclinations, control theory presents an apt framework for scrutinizing terrorism. While lone wolf terrorists, devoid of any discernible ties to established organizations, can execute terrorist acts, a considerable portion of terrorism is perpetrated by individuals affiliated with identifiable groups (Hudson, 1999; Hamm, 2007).

Travis Hirschi (1969) posited that social bonds serve as pivotal determinants in predicting an individual's proclivity towards delinquent behavior. These bonds encompass attachment to both peers and family, commitment to conventional norms, engagement in lawful activities, and adherence to the

moral legitimacy of societal conventions. Attachment denotes the significance an individual accords to the opinions and expectations of their social circle, including friends and family. Commitment entails the extent to which an individual embraces and upholds societal expectations, the violation of which would jeopardize their standing within society (Hirschi, 1969). Inclusion of involvement in conventional activities within Hirschi's framework underscores the temporal dimension, wherein individuals allocate more time to lawful pursuits, thereby reducing opportunities for criminal engagement. Belief refers to the adherence to societal norms and values, and the degree to which individuals perceive them as valid and integral to their lives. Hirschi's theoretical framework holds significant relevance within the discourse surrounding terrorism, particularly in elucidating the process through which individuals become integrated into terrorist groups and adopt their associated lifestyle. Typically, individuals who gravitate towards involvement in terrorist organizations initially espouse sympathies towards their ideologies or harbor shared ideological convictions, often coupled with a disillusionment towards established political or social mechanisms (Hudson, 1999). In the absence of alternative social structures, individuals forge and fortify social bonds within the terrorist organization. Upon initiation into the group, most external connections are severed, supplanted by affiliations with fellow members and the organization's alliances. The newly-inducted terrorist assimilates the norms and values of the group as paramount, eclipsing any external perspectives (Hudson, 1999). Walter Reckless (1961) introduced containment theory, which posits that individuals' engagement in delinquent behavior is influenced by external pressures from the environment and social groups, alongside internal attractions from peer circles. Simultaneously, individuals are deterred from delinquency by their adherence to the directives of authority figures. Additionally, containment is reinforced by an individual's internal sense of guilt and a positive self-concept. The formation of this self-concept occurs early in life and undergoes alterations based on life experiences. A positive self-concept functions as a protective barrier, shielding individuals from succumbing to delinquency and criminal conduct (Reckless, 1961). This self-imposed barrier represents the individual's primary defense against the allure of deviant behavior (Reckless, 1961).

Jackson Toby delineates a pivotal aspect influencing the decision of youth to affiliate with terrorist organizations: the notion that „for those with social honor, disgrace is a powerful sanction“ (Toby, 1957). Toby contends that individuals must possess a certain level of investment in the conventional norms and values prevalent within their community, thereby fostering a commitment to conformity (Toby, 1957). Additionally, he argues that youthful involvement in delinquent behavior often stems from a deficiency in guardianship. The manifold responsibilities and challenges confronting parents and other responsible elders result in a dearth of time or attention devoted to overseeing the activities of the young (Toby, 1957).

### *Learning Theory*

Social learning theories encompass a spectrum of comprehensive frameworks that scrutinize the communal, cultural, and individual factors contributing to the acquisition of both conventional and deviant or criminal skills and behaviors. These theories find application in understanding generational patterns of domestic violence and interpersonal abuse (Ireland & Smith, 2009; Josephson & Proulx, 2008), as well as in elucidating the influence of peers, guardians, and family members on an individual's propensity towards delinquency (Baerveldt, Völker & Van Rossem, 2008; Ryan, Testa & Fuhua, 2008).

Within the context of terrorism, these social learning theories can be leveraged to scrutinize the processes through which individuals or cohorts acquire the skills and ideological convictions that precipitate their engagement in actual or attempted terrorist activities. Such acquisition may occur through formal indoctrination and training conducted at terrorist training facilities (Forrest, 2006), or alternatively, via online recruitment, informal associations, or self-directed study facilitated by the Internet (Weimann, 2006). This section advances upon the insights extrapolated by Ruby (2002) and the case analyses presented by Hamm (2007), which advocated for the utilization of these theories. However, previous works have often failed to explicitly establish the nexus between these theoretical frameworks and their respective case studies.

Edwin Sutherland posited in his theory of differential association that criminal behavior is acquired through a process of learning. Individuals accumulate a repertoire of definitions favorable to

deviant conduct through sustained interaction and communication with other deviants over an extended period. These definitions undergo frequent and intense reinforcement during this process. Central to this theory are the content of what is learned and the mechanisms by which individuals internalize these lessons. Learning may occur within formal educational settings or within more intimate peer groups, each of which may shape the context and circumstances surrounding the acquisition and assimilation of these definitions. Sutherland underscores that individuals, beyond merely acquiring the skills to engage in criminal behavior, also develop a rationale for their involvement in such activities and articulate motives for their actions. These motives encompass appropriate rationalizations and attitudes that serve to alleviate feelings of guilt and fear, as well as to navigate responses to potential sanctions and threats of punishment (Sutherland, 1947).

Burgess and Akers (1966) build upon Sutherland's conceptual framework by advancing the notion that learning occurs through operant conditioning in both social and nonsocial contexts. Within these environments, desired behaviors are reinforced while others are discouraged and subject to ridicule. Of paramount importance is the consistent availability of significant sources of reinforcement. Deviant behaviors must be continuously and effectively reinforced by the individual's primary reference group – those deviant peers with whom the individual shares the closest bond or connection. Daniel Glaser further refines these concepts with his theory of differential identification, suggesting that individuals need not necessarily encounter or interact directly with other deviants to adopt deviant beliefs or engage in particular behaviors; instead, they need only identify with such individuals or groups as reference points (Glaser, 1978). This concept extends Burgess and Akers' notion of a reference group. This process of identification can occur through exposure to media depictions of real or fictional characters in various forms of media such as books or movies.

Moreover, advancements in technology have led to expansions and modifications of Sutherland's theory of differential association and Burgess and Akers' concept of reference groups. Warr (2002) contributes to these theories by examining virtual groups wherein individuals maintain contact and interaction with others whom they may never meet physically but with whom they have established strong bonds through the Internet, such as in chat rooms, multiplayer computer games, or other forms of virtual interaction.

### **Conclusion**

The criminological exploration of terrorism constitutes a multifaceted endeavor that seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics surrounding violent extremism. This pursuit necessitates the integration of diverse theoretical perspectives, innovative methodological approaches, and empirical findings to discern the underlying causes and mechanisms driving terrorist behavior. Through such interdisciplinary engagement, scholars endeavor to illuminate the complex interplay of individual, societal, and structural factors that contribute to the emergence and perpetuation of terrorism.

Central to the criminological examination of terrorism is the utilization of theoretical frameworks that offer insights into the motivational, psychological, and social dynamics underlying violent extremist ideologies and behaviors. Scholars often draw upon established criminological theories such as strain theory, social learning theory, and rational choice theory to elucidate the pathways to radicalization and involvement in terrorist activities. For instance, strain theory posits that individuals may turn to terrorism as a response to perceived societal injustices and inequalities, while social learning theory highlights the role of social networks and peer influences in the transmission of extremist beliefs and behaviors. Additionally, rational choice theory underscores the rational calculations and decision-making processes involved in the adoption of violent extremist ideologies.

In conclusion, the criminological exploration of terrorism offers a multifaceted and nuanced approach to understanding the complex phenomena of violent extremism. Through the integration of theoretical insights, methodological innovations, and empirical research, scholars strive to unravel the etiological underpinnings of terrorism and inform more effective strategies for prevention, intervention, and counterterrorism. Moving forward, interdisciplinary collaboration and dialogue are essential for advancing our understanding of terrorism and fostering resilient communities resilient to the threat of violent extremism.



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## KRIMINOLOŠKI (ETIOLOŠKI) ASPEKTI TERORIZMA

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**Apstrakt:** Savremeni krajolik globalne sigurnosti duboko je pod uticajem fenomena terorizma, koji predstavlja najveću zabrinutost neusporedive veličine. Dok je terorizam kroz historiju prožimao anale državnih tvorevina, njegova savremena manifestacija svjedoči izrazitoj eskalaciji i proliferaciji posljednjih desetljeća. Suprotno uvriježenom uvjerenju koje može ograničiti avet terorizma na granice Starog kontinenta ili na nacije koje karakteriziraju demokratske paradigme upravljanja, njegov doseg se proteže daleko izvan takvih granica, utičući na različite geografske lokalitete i nadilazeći konvencionalna društvena ograničenja. Doista, terorizam u sadašnjoj eri uzima veliki danak, manifestirajući se u bezbroj oblika i zadirujući u sve aspekte društvenog postojanja. Na svom štetnom tragu, terorizam potkopava temeljna načela koja štite globalni pravni okviri, ugrožavajući tako temeljna načela koja podupiru civilizacijske norme. Ovo izlaganje nastoji pomno proučiti višestране dimenzije svojstvene fenomenu terorizma, razjašnjavajući zamršeno međudjelovanje faktora koji ubrzavaju pribjegavanje nasilnim sredstvima u potrazi za ostvarivanjem političkih ciljeva.

**Ključne riječi:** terorizam, kriminalna etiologija, međunarodna sigurnost, definicija terorizma, nasilje.

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