

Invited Commentary

Terrorism, Risk and Self Defense: Review the Ethics of Self Defense

Maximiliano E. Korstanje, Department of Economics, University of Palermo, Buenos Aires, Argentina

INTRODUCTION

The arrival of Donald Trump to the presidency of US and his promises of legalizing torture to defeat terrorism triggered a hot debate after 9/11 in the United States and the rest of the world. For some pragmatist views, torture would serve as an efficient instrument to prevent the bloody terrorist attack. What would make the state when the attack is imminent but there is no precision on the exact place and date it will occur?, is torture a valid and legitimate practice to save innocent lives?

Though these questions were widely discussed in legal jurisprudence as well as the studies in sociology and anthropology, the philosophy of ethics has much to say in the field. While Jacques Derrida defined terrorism as a form of autoimmune syndrome that affects the functionality of institutions, Habermas delves on the semiotic nature of terrorism as derived pathology in the communicative process (Borradori, 2013). Scholars, specialists and pundits fail to reach agreement respecting to the nature and evolution of terrorism. Though there are countless studies oriented to understand the terrorist's motivations, the already-existent theoretical platform rests on two contrasting poles. Some voices focus on the negative effects of terrorism as irrational crimes, which should strengthen the international governmental cooperation intensifying more intrusive tactics (Huntington 1997; Kagan 2004b; Staub 2011; Chester et al. 2007), whereas other writers allude to terrorism as a disciplinary and ideological construction which is unfolded to control the frustrated and hapless work-force (Chomsky 1987; Bernstein 2005; 2015; Skoll 2016; Korstanje 2017). Irrespective of this discussion, over the recent decades, philosophers and psychologists toyed with the belief that terrorists far from being considered "demons", or "maniacs", they are lay-persons who gradually experience a process of radicalization that leads them towards the indifference for the other (McCauley & Moskalenko 2008; 2011). In this respect, it is vital to discuss the importance of ethics as a set of beliefs that encompass systematizing concepts regarding the right and wrong. Somehow, ethics were relegated as an efficient source of analysis in terrorism issues. In part, because we are educated to think that "terrorists" act beyond the borders of ethics, simply they are evil-doers. Secondly and most important, the degree of instrumentality which is proper of Occident embraces enthusiastically the torture within the circles of the doctrine of lesser evil. This means that there are no ethical constraints when we struggle against the evilness. Although torture is banned by many formal conventions, legislation and in the whole of Roman Jurisprudence, no less true is that some governments admit the controlled torture at time of anticipating terrorist attacks. The fact is that terrorism appears to justify some aspects of politics otherwise would be widely rejected. Is torture a new form of self-defense?

In one of the few the seminal texts in the field, which is entitled *The Ethics of Self-Defense*, Christian Coons & Michael Weber (2016) set forward an innovative but not for that less pungent argument, what are the key factors to construct a robust background for self-defense turns ethical. This moot point raises some interesting questions as why killing in war is preferably accepted while gun-shooting to innocent people in streets is considered as a crime, what are the limits and limitations of innocence as a social construal?

To put this in bluntly, terrorism ignites three ethical dilemmas which require further attention:

- While terrorists are deemed as “evildoers” for victims` culture, in other places they are labelled as warriors for freedom;
- Terrorism undoubtedly needs from precautionary principle because terrorists exploit the vulnerability of the others through the orchestration of sudden attack against civilians;
- Terrorism and Religious fundamentalism come from psychological resentment.

As this backdrop, it is important not to lose sight that this paper discusses critically some of the studies embedded within what experts know as “the ethics of terrorism”, a field which remains unexplored up to date. Beyond any speculation, terrorism paves the ways for the rise of an evident paradoxical situation. While we feel consternated by the disgrace of terrorism victims we are unable to stop in consuming terrorism through screens. This essay-review is prone to contribute with a fresh alternative, which orchestrates the current climate of terror with a new stage of capitalism that escapes to any moral connotation: *Thana-Capitalism*. This raises a more than intriguing question, what is the role of ethics in a world where disasters are being commoditized as spectacles to be consumed by a global spectatorship?

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

One of the most confusing dilemmas introduced by terrorism seems to be its intersection with “the precautionary principle” (Sunstein 2003; Bellamy 2005; Gray 2007; Skoll & Korstanje, 2013). Although months later the attacks to World Trade Center, the US received the international support of other democratic nations in solidarity of its pain, no less true was that the arbitrary decisions made in favor to invade Iraq reversed the sympathy for Americans worldwide. Bush’s administration made the decision to vulnerate the autonomy of Iraq with the end of anticipating a would-be preventive attack with Mass Destruction Weapons, at the time that the doctrine of precautionary principle showed some limitations at the time of confirming the real relevance of threats, or in other terms how imminent the attack is. Here two assumptions should be made. On one hand, the US-led invasion to Iraq woke up a feeling of abhorrence for the unilateral decision made by the US, showing amply the conceptual problems of precautionary doctrine. It was unfortunate that the “radical conservatives”, known as “radcons” exaggerated the probabilities of a thermonuclear attack by the side of Iraq, simply because, ruled by their emotions, they never devoted their resources to conduct an objective investigation (Kagan 2004a; Weisberg 2008; Korstanje 2017). This suggests that risks not always are objective construes as popular parlance precludes. On another, modern terrorism operated in the limits of democracy constraining the autonomy of powers and branches which historically codetermined the check and balance order (Simon 2007; Altheide, 2006; 2007; 2009; Skoll 2007; 2011). In this respect, a wave of critical scholars laid the foundations to analyze terrorism within the specter of specialists in terrorism. As Lisa Stampnitzky (2013) eloquently observed, at the time terrorism consolidated as a matured option for applied research, specialists embraced a more irrational discourse revolving around terrorists, which adjoined to the previous stereotypes long-dormant through popular parlance. In the name of the war-on-terror governments foster financial reforms and economic programs otherwise would be rejected by citizenry.

Returning to the figure of self-defense and ethics, Coons and Weber (2016) understand that the imposition of false urgencies may very well lead towards biased justifications that ideologically legitimate the suspension of human rights in the name of security. Unless otherwise resolved, preemption, Coons and Weber add, serves to dismantle the democratic institutions as well as the necessary check-and-balance agencies that prevent the rise of tyrannies or dictatorship. Doubtless, the question whether the epistemological borders of self-defense or legitimate violence rest on philosophical foundations suggests that we can rationally construct the ethics that helps governments in nuancing violence. Undoubtedly, the 9/11 changed the ways of contemplating homeland security forever, laying the foundations to the tightening of controls and protocols at borderlands and airports. In this sense, Hence Coons & Weber (2016) pivot in bringing a hot debate to the fields of social sciences, which confirms that uncertainty and preemption are playing leading roles in the configuration of ethics, in our current world. In hindsight, it is important to revisit the main thesis and theories revolving around terrorism because many of them are flawed or rest on shaky foundations. In other cases, the specialized literature glosses over the importance of ethics as main points of entries in their debates. While the notion of self-defense is very hard to grasp, no less true is that the perception of what is an imminent attack depends on multiple factors which are associated to individual or collective perception. This represents a serious risk for governance and the derived political stability because social imaginary is highly malleable. By moving through the fields of uncertainty, the self-defense becomes in a buzzword, which deserves further attention. Ethically speaking, it seems as though never the involving actors are sure of the real consequences of their acts. Hence, external dangers lead towards moral justifications that invoke the principle of self-defense in any circumstance or context. No matter than the peligrority of the immediacy of the attack, humans are co-determined by their own perception of the world. Starting from this subjectivity, the psychological perception seems to be a key factor to deal with in the specialized literature. This applies not only for persons and social relations, but the interplay among state in a world fraught by the scourge of terrorism. Not surprisingly, the problem of killing non-combatants others escapes from moral conception of politics as well as the decision of state to yield wars. There is an interesting confrontation between authors with Jeff McMahan's argument in respect to the borders for a person to be called or blamed as potential threat. Broadly speaking, any person is morally responsible when it is aware of its acts (McMahan 2016). Rather, for Michael Otsuka (2016) it is "impermissible" to kill others in view of the fact that they represent a real threat. There would be an evident interest for the human judgment as the articulator that distinguishes the invented from real risks. The ethical quandary of ethics is prone to determine what is real from a fictional danger, but at the same time, it dangles the distortions in knowledge that usher us into false diagnoses. For some reason, the human will is not enough to reach truth but opens the doors to multiple interpretations on risks. To put this in bluntly, Alexander (2016) considers that *proportionality, necessity and retreat* are separate conditions to activate the right of self-defense. At some extent, proportionality should be understood as the level of used force, any people use to avoid the threat or its proportional danger, whereas the necessity signals to the needs the level of force to be no greater than what is requested to avoid the danger (Alexander 2016). Finally, the concept of retreat reminds how always by withdrawing from the hostile environment is always preferable than killing or conducting a preventive attack (Otsuka 2016).

THE ROLE OF NATION-STATE IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM

Doubtless, the complexity of the theory of self-defense to be applied to individual cases triplicates at time we try to use it in international arena. The problem of terrorism, today, is posed nation-states to their moral limits, not only because they have to struggle against an internal enemy granting all human rights of their citizens, but also because it defies the rules of classic warfare, where traditional army forces are typically trained. Globally, nation-state opt for weaving allegiance to convene a self-protection against external enemies, or embracing international jurisprudence, which poses some

obstacles to the power of state over innocent, and lay-citizens. As Fishback (2016) puts it, even if states should limit legally their response in case of conflicts, even retreating to impede further harms, it is necessary to discuss again to what extent these steps are useful to reduce the level of proportionality in case of internal conflict or terrorism. The international relations among states emulate the social background of “an anarchic society”, where solution results from the ongoing negotiations among many actors. While involving actors agree an alternative solution, the probabilities that the conflict aggravates exponentially rises affecting the conditions of many non-combatants and their probabilities to survive. This relevant aspect of ethics is excellently addressed by Seth Lazar (2016) who opposes to the thesis that non-combatants lack of any responsibilities in contexts of warfare as soldiers were. He argues convincingly that the binomial combatants and non-combatants obscure more than it clarify. In his words:

I defended the overlap hypothesis: a morally significant number of combatants and non-combatants satisfy the criterion for liability to at least the same degree. This hypothesis is consistent with most combatants being liable and most non-combatants not. It supposes only that the overlap is morally significant – that the exception of the rule cannot be brushed aside. It implies that, on the responsibility account, either many u-noncombatants will be liable to be internationally killed, or, if we raise the threshold for liability to exclude them, many u-combatants will not be liable. (Lazar, 2016, p. 293)

This above cited excerpt ignites the discussion revolving around the *individual decision*, not collectively nor associated to the status of combatant or non-combatant, seems to be the touchstone for individual responsibility in wars. As this argument given, the ethics of self-defense calls for interrogating furtherly on the doctrine of lesser-evil justifications (Alexander, 1976; McMahan, 2009; 2010). In consonance with the same debate, liberal Scholar Michael Ignatieff (2013), in his book *The Lesser Evil*, interrogates on the role played by nation-state in struggling against terrorism. The Canadian philosopher polemically acknowledges that the state should protect the integrity of its citizens honoring constitution. In so doing, it should unfold a lot of strategies and policies to enhance the homeland security. Since terrorism not only defies the logic of democracy but appeals to controlled forms of torture by the ends of state to prevent the next blow, he holds the pungent thesis that the precautionary principle is the best course of action in context of uncertainty. Besides, the theory of lesser evil emphasizes on the effects of terrorism, accepting legal torture as an antidote against the virus of terrorism. No less true is that, like Ignatieff, those scholars, who enthusiastically embrace the lesser-evil doctrine”, overtly contend that the figure of torture would be helpful to gather information only if legally regulated by democratic institutions. In this vein, Cass Sunstein has exerted a radical criticism on the doctrine of prevention or preemption because it lacks of an all-encompassing theoretical framework to understand the problem of populism. For his stance, it important to start from the premise that fear or panic leads to irrational state of behaviour which obscures the decision making process. When this happens, the claims of citizenry for a more secure society or even risk-zero society ushers governments into a difficult position, which not only does not resolve the problem but aggravate it. The best example where this fits is 9/11 or the Attacks to World Trade Center. This traumatic event represented for the United States as well as the world the beginning of a new era. Those countries with previous experiences in dealing with terrorism supported rapidly to the US, but with the passing of years it was evident that terrorism was something more complex analysts precluded. Americans gradually experienced how their day-to-day lives were radically changed towards new forms where the securitization and the culture of surveillance prevailed. Sunstein (2005) explores the role played by rationality in the process of dread and its consequent relationship with democracy. From his point of view, in a democracy, or at least in a deliberative democracy, the debate predominates over other forms of deliberation to decrease somewhat involuntary errors. This is the point that distinguishes a deliberative democracy from a demagogic populism. In other words, the

state of a disaster that involves a community might be prevented or partly mitigated whenever the issues that impinge on the public life are previously discussed, debated and forecasted. This belief would explain the reasons as to why democratic societies have more instruments to face disasters than totalitarian or authoritarian ones. Whereas the latter does not provide their citizens with the necessary steps to evaluate the pre-existing risks, the former invests a considerable amount of capital in the process of mitigation and preparedness for natural catastrophes. The problem of public fear is inextricably interrelated to the extent potential hazards are censored by the state. Sunstein goes on to acknowledge “democracies do best if they abstract from the largest questions and try to obtain a consensus from people who disagree on, or are unsure about, how to resolve those questions. In the context of fear, I suggest, it is possible to obtain just such a consensus... I understand fear to depend on some kind of judgment that we are in danger (Sunstein 2005:3).”

Starting from the premise that fears are pre-determined by previous beliefs rooted in the ways of perceiving disrupting events, people seem to be prone to experience serious risks in matters that are relatively safe whereas in some circumstances avoid real threats because of ignorance or even imprudence. He toys with the idea that the precautionary principle stems from a focal belief about health, safety and environment born in the core of European enlightenment during XVIIIth and XIXth centuries. Nonetheless, fear like other underlying emotions works as a cascade or better a virus that contaminates others hosts. In prospective, the social day-to-day interaction determines what can be considered a frightful event (Sunstein 2005). While accepting that the “precautionary principle”, Sunstein adamantly criticizes Europe admits that the external world should be contemplated within the hegemony of experts and risk analysts. That way, the sense of risk lays the foundation for the appearance of new problems which were un contemplated because governments followed irrational or demagogic propositions. Besides, the overexposure of spectatorship to precautionary principle leads very well towards a frenetic climate of panic. The precautionary principle hides the real reasons of risks, initializing a set of erroneous proceedings which are enrooted in the future (Sunstein 2005). Jean Baudrillard cited the plot of Minority Report to explain the limitations of precautionary principle. In a futurist World, the precogs previsualize crimes before they were committed. This helped not only police to arrest potential criminals taking advantage of their “predictive power”, but also the crime was curbed to zero. Though this sounds -at a preliminary stage, as a wonderland, something works wrong and Captain John Anderton unjustly accused from a crime he never will commit. What Baudrillard discusses is that the precautionary principle not only determines the free choice of citizens, but also over-valorizes events that never have taken place in reality (Baudrillard 2005; 2006). This begs a more than interesting question, is 9/11 the start of a climate of panic that legitimated the precautionary principle?

9/11 AND THE ETHICS OF TERRORISM

Although the economic and political effects of 9/11 were widely studied, amazingly few thinkers know the real reasons and consequences of this traumatic event in popular culture. Hence Professor Luke Howie (2010) fleshed out an interesting diagnosis of terrorism and 9/11 which merits being re-discussed. Centered on the legacy of Baudrillard, Zizek and Lacquer he writes that terrorism should be understood as something more complex than an illegal form of violence as specialized literature accepts. Terrorists do not want a lot of people died, they rather want a lot of people watching, or in terms of Howie, witnessing:

The witness is a central figure of this book. I base my arguments in this book on the assumption that no witness terrorism is to be a victim of terrorism since, as Jenkins has argued, terrorist want a lot of people watching, not just a lot of people dead. Those who watch, those who bear witness, are the intended targets of terrorism. (Howie, 2010, p. 7)

The media reproduces, Howie adds, not only a biased image of 9/11 but also locates the discussion into the borders of ocular-centrism. In this token, Howie argues that the culture of simulacra reconfigures the problem of terrorism into the same fields of celebrities. Like celebrities, terrorists are often in quest of fame and visibility inasmuch as everything what they do is oriented to captivate the spectatorship attention. Combining the methods of self-ethnography with 105 interviews, Howie reminds that terrorism as social phenomenon is based on two main issues. At a first glance, there would be a division between us and them which reanimates old rivalries and confrontations among ethnicities or groups. Secondly, the other is envisaged as “an evil-doer” or declared “as the axis of evil”, which impedes a frank dialogue of both sides to negotiate more peaceful alternatives. 9/11 associates, doubtless, to the concept of “traumascapes”, in a way that those who had not faced a direct experience with terrorism feel more panic than those who are in the theatre of operations. We live in a culture of witnessing which evokes our own vulnerability as city dwellers, but in so doing, many racist practices emerge to point on Muslim collectives. Indeed, one of the main risks consists in “islamophobia”, or any other related chauvinist expression of racism. All lies in the same Pandora box. What remains clear, is that without witness terrorism would never exist:

The spectacle of terrorism depends of the co-existence of witnesses, images of terrorism, and – in contemporary times- cities. 9/11 happened, it happened on 11 September 2001 in New York City, Washington DC and a field of Pennsylvania. The image, however, is not bound to this temporal and geographic logic. 9/11 was an atemporal event that can be understood in time and space in apparently unlimited coordinates of temporality and spatiality. It resides in the desert of the real of the contemporary city. (p. 60)

The power of amplification of media terrorism is based on the needs of captivating audience in order for enhancing further profits. Just there, where observers or pundits place terrorism as a great evil for West, Howie sees another point in the discussion. As social field-workers, we will never understand terrorism if we reject the idea that 9/11 was a founding event that forged “a culture of witnessing”, which worked as a conduit of terror. Instead of speculating on where the next blow will take place, specialists should explore the effects of terrorism in our daily life. The war on terror declared by Bush’s administration pressed towards many of the changes worker unions face today, or even the climate of paranoia, through neoliberal programs are introduced within societies (Howie 2010).

Other seminal book, which fits with the same argumentation, is edited by Senior Professor Mahmoud Eid (2014) *Exchange Terrorism Oxygen for Media Airwaves*. The editor coins the term *Terroredia* to denote that interplay between terror and mass media. In this respect, there is an uncanny coexistence between professional journalism and the needs of terrorists to gain the attention of global publics and audiences. In consonance with Howie, Eid acknowledges that the discourse of 9/11 introduced in American Society the demons of intolerance, appealing to the demonization of terrorists while at the same time they were enthralled “as celebrities”. While 9/11 accelerated a trend to demonize the nonwestern others (Muslim), the serious violation to human rights perpetrated by authorities are not denounced. This opens the doors for a paradoxical situation simply because what media portrays are only partial truths. The main thesis in Eid’s book is that terrorism and media’s swamp is explained by the co-dependency to fabricate “oxygen”. Without terror, both parties would be never benefited as now they are. In this vein, Editor writes:

Meanwhile, in order for both to survive, terrorists seek to garner public attention and the media seek to find top-stories to sell. In a sense, both parties target wide-ranging audiences (although for different purposes); hence, they interact in a highly toxic relationship that involves a process of exchange necessary for their survival. The exchanging process contributes to the survival of each

party; acts of terrorism provide media stories that result in more broadcasting airwaves, press texts, and digital data bytes, while the media coverage brings public attention to terrorists—the oxygen necessary for their existent. (Eid, 2014, p. 24)

To put this slightly in other terms, the question whether media plays a crucial role in disseminating the fear that terrorism engenders, *terroredia* is created by the dialectics of fear and violence. At time media covers explanations on how terrorists plan their attacks, global audiences devote considerable attention in this issue. Paradoxically, this attention paves the ways for “terror-inspiring” messages (Eid, 2014, p. 25).

As the previous argument given, A. Hoskins and B. O’Loughlin (2009) explored the conflicting discourse imposed by television and media as an ideological core that delivers a climate of terror as never before. The discourse of terror is externally designed combining various elements and factors which correspond with external threats, or dangers. This oscillates from Muslim terrorism to climate change. Though the nature and the subsequent evolution of these risks maintain different diagnoses, Media elaborates a pastiche that serves as a form of entertainment for uninformed masses. As stated, authors analyze what they dubbed as “CNN effect”, which explains the effects of journalism in the real life. Over centuries within the US two contrasting discourses coexisted and confronted in international relations: Democratic Imperialism, and assertive multiculturalism. While the former signals to the intervention of main powers in rogue states or undemocratic cultures which in major or lesser degree threatens the global peace, the latter circumscribes to the political discourse that finds international problems trying to resolve with allies with other autonomous nations or in the legal circles of preexisting institutions. The inflation of risk, which ushered audiences into a climate of extreme terror, paves the pathways for the rise and expansion of democratic imperialism as the main discourse of international politics inasmuch as the interests to strengthen a more assertive multiculturalism declines. The discourse of terror appears not to be limited to terrorism but it is widely applied to other contexts as climate change, per the outcomes found in Chaturvedi and Doyle (2015). The external risks as “climate change” engender serious changes in the social institutions reinforcing the centre-periphery dependency which was installed from colonial rule. As Korstanje (2017) alerted, terrorism not only wakes up Western civilization from the slumber it was, but also engenders serious problems to understand the alterity. While the figure of hospitality was created in the west to colonize the globe, making from the nonwestern natives something that can be adjusted to the ideals of Enlightenment; terrorism is eroding the basis of hospitality compromising seriously the mainstream cultural values of Occident such as mobilities, democracy and hospitality. A world where uncertainty prevails, is a world where the presence of the other should be radically effaced (Korstanje 2017). What indeed causes terror in whole postindustrial societies seems not to be terrorism in the strict sense of the word but our inherent incapacities to understand the otherness.

Last but not least, Professor Geoffrey Skoll (2016) debates hotly the role of fear culture in American society. At a first glance, the culture of fear was enrooted in the DNA of America from its inception. The fear to the strangers and to the tyranny played a crucial role in configuring the social scaffolding of the United States. Over the recent decades, this fear was exported to other cultures and nations in order for the ideals of Empire to be legitimized. Its position of global power was used to instill fear worldwide, Skoll adheres. In the counties at the center of the world capitalist system fear served to protect the status quo social order. After 9/11 this culture of fear became globalized in conjunction with the US-led Empire. The US dominated culture industries, in cinema especially, shaped public consciousness in support of the empire. Culture construction aided and abetted securitization, which promised a safer world, and governments relied on both to protect against domestic terrorism internally. In fact, the securitization of global imperialism has really been pacification of segments of populations who posed a threat to the interests of capital owners (Skoll 2016). Skoll questions What are the ethical limits of torture and terrorism in our contemporary society, if terrorists are demons

or evil doers who can we judge them or put in a just trial? After all, demons are evil-doers and their nature is inexpugnable to human control. While terrorists are mistakenly demonized the human justice does not fall over them. In the next section, we will discuss not only the ethical limits of terrorism and torture but also would delve into the fields of philosophy of terrorism.

THE ROLE OF FEAR AND THE ETHICS OF TERRORISM

Over the recent years, to be more precise after the stock and market crisis occurred in Wall Street in 2008, well-renowned specialists question the privilege role of the US in making from the world a secure place (Williams 2016). Some voices alerted on the needs of forging a “sustainable security”, which regulates not only the financial discipline of state respecting to the defense budget but also implementing new policies and instrument towards the material foundations to a new American security strategy. In their book *Sustainable Security* Suri and Valentino formulate the following questions:

This book poses four fundamental questions of America’s security commitment, aimed at assessing core interest and long term sustainability. First, what benefit does the United States obtain from a given alliance? Put differently, what negative consequences might the United States suffer if it ended a particular commitment, and how likely are those consequences to occur? (Suri & Valentino, 2016)

As this backdrop, J. Kirshner (2016) explores how the wrong policies in financial austerity may lead to military catastrophes. After 9/11 Americans and American government has fallen prey of fear, and this had a serious cost for them. Today, the rise of costs and inflation which was generated by the current financial crisis makes almost impossible to keep on the strategies of Cold War World. The long-lasting crisis that started in 2008 and continues in the present not only press the United States to rethink the strategies in national security for the years to come, but also reminds that economic imbalances create serious constraints for central powers. Equally important, S. Soyinka (2005) brilliantly explores terrorism as the sign of social decomposition and the ends of democracies. The 9/11 marks the epicenter of a more radicalized violence that does not seem to discriminate by ethnicity or class. Underpinned in the proposition all we are the prey, the discourse of fear initialized by terrorism alternates a false fundamentalism with resentment. Terrorism, after all, exhibits the moral crisis democracies are experiencing due to the decline of human right the respect for the other. As a citizen of Third World, Soyinka is familiar with the climate of terror coming cross undeveloped nations. The sentiment of vulnerability developed nations are facing today is not new for Soyinka, who argues that the world cannot escape social instability when perpetrators of crimes can sell their stories to the media. Latin America and Africa have experienced this state of affairs for many years. Generally, the 70’s and 80’s are characterized by the advent of bloody dictatorships that silenced their dissenting voices by violence and removal of dignity. This provided the springboard for the post-9/11 events that are shocking the US and Europe. Soyinka claims that 9/11 did not surprise him. From that moment onwards, international public opinion (even in Africa) experienced a new climate of fear, in spite of the previous experiences of political terror. Soyinka believes that the world has faced extreme situations of panic before 9/11 ranging from Nazism and the Second World War to nuclear weapon testing. One of the aspects of global power that facilitates this feeling of uncertainty seems to be the lack of a visible rivalry once the USSR collapsed. The politic terror promulgated by states diminishes the dignity of enemies. These practices are rooted inside a territory but paved the way for a new form of terrorism which ended in the World Trade Center attacks. It is incorrect to see 9/11 as the beginning of a new fear but as the latest demonstration of the power of an empire over the rest of the world. Mass communications, though, transformed our ways of perceiving terrorism

even if it did not alter the conditions that facilitate the new state of war. Unlike classical totalitarian States which are constructed by means of material asymmetries, the quasi-States construct their legitimacy by denouncing the injustices of the World. Quasi-States are not only terrorist cells but also mega-corporations which work in complicity producing weapons for one side or the other. Making profit of human suffering is a primary aspect that characterizes these quasi-states. The uncertainty these corporations engender denies the minimum codes of war by emphasizing the inexistence of boundaries and responsibilities. Once rectitude has been substituted by the right to exercise power, pathways towards a moral superiority are frustrated. Unlike the disaster of the Napalm-bombing of non-combatants by the United States in Vietnam, this new war-on-terror is characterized by targeting innocents as a primary option. In opposition to conventional wars, war-on-terror expands fear under the following two assumptions: a) hits can take place anywhere and anytime, and, b) there is no limits on brutality non-combatants. Wars depend on the capacity to control others based on the principle of power. Governments often need the material resources of their neighbors. Where the expropriation method of capitalist trade fails, war finds success. One might speculate that war should be understood as an extension of economic production or the continuation of economic exploitation which characterizes the capitalist system by other means (Soyinka 2005).

Last but not least, Igor Primoratz (2004) crosses the lines of ethics confronting with the nature of terrorism in its own soil. The scourge of terrorism raises numerous ethical questions respecting to the role of victims as well as the moral repugnance in society. Per his viewpoint, terrorism not only is based on an “illegal violence” as discussed in earlier sections, but represents a form of “intimidation” with the end of vulnerating others through the articulation of terror. The ethics of terrorism not only rests on shaky foundations, simply because it defies any ethical basis, but also terrorism should be defined as a “crime”. Although some studies emphasize on the subjective connotation of terrorism, which means that their acts are legitimated by some groups, Primoratz considers the issue terrible unjust. To put this slightly in other terms, terrorists select “innocent targets” to amplify a message of extortion against a third party. It is vital to discuss the reasons why guerrilla planned the attacks against chief police officers while modern terrorism vulnerates “lay citizens”. What is more than interesting to discuss is the turn of direction respecting to how terrorism becomes more cruel and insensible to human suffering. In the 70s decade, terrorists carefully selected celebrities, important officials or Chief Police officers as targets of their attacks. Such a tactic, gradually, sets the pace to the assassination of journalists, businessmen or tourists. The tourist and leisure spots have situated as the main targets for Muslim terrorism in the recent years.

If the society of risk was envisaged by postmodern scholars after the Chernobyl’s accident (Beck, 1992; 2004; Giddens 1999), the ethics and liability for decision made were playing a vital role in the configuration of the self with its ethos. The Beck’s paradox reveals two important things. Firstly, humans are not familiar with the total truth, which led sometimes to decisions that precipitate to disasters. Secondly, humans even in their bad decisions are responsible for the generated risks. This happens simply because risks, which are enrooted in the abstract future, are co-determined by a previous decision by the end of agency (Beck 1992; Lyng 2004). Most certainly, the sociology of postmodernist was helpful for risk society but it changed a lot after 9/11. Precisely, this event showed not only the end of risk society but also the rise of a new stage of capitalism, where the consumption of death situated as the main exchangeable commodity. In his recently-published book, Korstanje (2016) coins the term Thana-Capitalism to signal a new epoch where human relations are mediated by the consumption of death. The rise of a new type of tourism where visitors, instead of enjoying from sun and beach, visit spaces of mass death and tragedies embodies the sign of an unarguable proof. In fact, the classic patterns of consumption during holidays have

been replaced by more morbid forms, where the others' death is prioritized by international demand as the main criterion of attraction. Dark tourism exemplifies a new emergent trend to visit spaces of mourning, death and suffering in order for the proper visitor's life to be re-interpreted. However, Korstanje does not end his work with this conclusion but even he doubles the bet arguing that similar tendencies in witnessing others' death are not limited to tourism or leisure consumption, but also remains present in almost all the lifestyle in contemporary societies. From the videogames, to movies, and literature, we are fascinated by the others' suffering because it confirms our privilege status as first world citizen. The best analogy that explains how the Thana-Capitalism works can be found in the plot of the novel *The Hunger Games*. In this futurist world, a powerful and healthy capitol city monopolizes a cruel exploitation over 13 districts situated in the periphery. The president Snow invites to participants to play a bloody competition where only one will reach the glory. These games not only are televised to all districts, participants are forced to fight against others to death. Because each participant over exaggerates its own probabilities to win, it is why Snow keeps his hegemony over the districts. These districts are poorer and people there struggle to survive in extreme condition of poverty while the capitol manages advanced technology and is exorbitantly rich. As an ideological discourse, the Hunger Games emulate the lack of empathy which is necessary for social cooperation to defy status quo. In times of Thana-Capitalism, the same place is occupied by the news on terrorism which offers to spectatorship a mantle of protection. In a secularized society where death is seen as a weakness, Korstanje adds, the life is metaphorically represented as a great trace where only few will win. This real winner-takes-all-narrative bespeaks of an atmosphere of extreme competition where the material asymmetries between have and have-nots are gradually enlarged. The rise of death-seekers denotes a new class, which is self-regulated by egoism, narcissism and oriented to consume "the other's suffering" to validate how special they are (Korstanje 2016).

As M Eid (2014) or L. Howie (2010) envisaged, terrorism and news-related to terrorism provide to "death-seekers" the necessary oxygen for their narcissist character to persist. In the liberal market, few concentrate a major portion of wealth while the rest is forced-fully marginalized to live with nothing. In this climate of social Darwinism, gazing at the other's death implies a sentiment of happiness because after all, we are still in trace, towards the trophy of chosen peoples (Korstanje 2016). In the world of death seekers, morality, ethics and responsibilities are no longer necessary because behaviour is judged by the effects, never by the underlying causes. This is the main reason why the society of risk simply faded away.

CONCLUSION

The society of risk imagined by Beck or Giddens posed the ethical risks for the decisions on the hands of citizens, eluding the nation-state's liability for the homeland security. With the turn of the century and after the 11 September of 2001, the capitalist system changed forever, or mutated towards a new but irreversible facet. The question whether Beck argued that risks served as a mediator between citizens and institutions, it was possible because citizens internalized the ethical responsibilities for decisions the elite made. By the advent of Thana-Capitalism, ethics was emptied losing all its meaning and connotations. As we have debated in earlier texts, the obsession to consume the "other's pain" was conducive to the needs to reaffirm the proper status as part of the privilege class, or chosen peoples. Thus, this essay review went through the ebbs and flows of precautionary principle, discussing critically the conceptual limitations of accepting torture as the "lesser Evil". Still further, the ever-increasing climate of terror plays a symbiotic role with the media, which remains as a topic that merits to be revisited. Lastly, we start from the thesis that one of the most troubling aspect of terrorism seems not to be associated to the instilled fear, but to our obsession to consume it. The theory

of Thana Capitalism successfully describes how at the time we do considerable efforts to demonize terrorism as a “global looming risk”, we fail to stop watching the bloody crimes terrorist cowardly perpetrate.

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Maximiliano E. Korstanje is Editor-in-Chief of *International Journal of Safety and Security in Tourism* (UP Argentina) and *International Journal of Cyber Warfare and Terrorism* (IGI-Global, USA). With more than 700 published papers and 25 books, Korstanje was awarded as Outstanding Reviewer 2012, *International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment*, University of Salford, UK; Outstanding Reviewer 2013, *Journal of Place Management and Development*, Institute of Place, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK; and Reviewer Certificate of Acknowledgement 2014, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* (IJCHM), University of Central Florida, US. He now co-edits almost 10 specialized journals in such themes as human rights, mobility, tourism and terrorism. Korstanje is subject to biographical records for Marquis Who's Who in the World since 2009. He was nominated to 5 honorary doctorates for his contribution in the study of the effects of terrorism in tourism. In 2015, he was awarded as Visiting Research Fellow at School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds, UK and Visiting Professor at University of La Habana Cuba 2016.