Call for Conference Proposals

Moral Psychology of Terrorism: Implications for Security

April 19-20, 2012

East Carolina University
Greenville, North Carolina, USA

The terrorism of the past decade has been driven by the interface of psychology, morality, faith, religion, and politics. This modern terrorism reflects terrorists' pursuit of their beliefs and even aggressive promotion of the exclusivity of their world-views at the expense of the lives of those who do not share them. In this sense, the act of terrorism is fueled by arguments of morality and views that are rooted in the psyches and beliefs of terrorists.

Recent terrorism, wherever it spreads, under the banner of major monotheistic religious traditions or Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism, brings into the forefront the need to better understand the moral psychology of terrorism. This need is more critical in the areas where youths might be recruited and socialized or 'brain-washed' by terrorist leaders. The heinous events committed by terrorists and sympathizers against the citizens of New York, London, Madrid, Bombay, and various cities of Pakistan and Afghanistan further emphasize the need to understand terrorists' moral psychology.

Examination of the moral psychology of terrorism opens up new insights into security issues. Indeed, a link between the psychology of terrorism and security analysis must be made. That is to say, terrorism and anti-terrorism measures must not be restricted to political and military plans. Rather, identifying and addressing terrorism and its implications for security requires that scholars and politicians delve deeper into the psyches of terrorists to avoid further insecurity.

This is the fourth conference in a series on morality and terrorism. The Organizing Committee invites scholars of psychology, political science, security studies, philosophy, theology and all other relevant disciplines to participate. If finances are available, a selection of the conference contributions will be published in a volume with the working title: Moral Psychology of Terrorism: Implications for Security Issues. Otherwise the accepted papers will be published on the conference website as conference proceedings.

Tentative Conference Themes

Conference topics include, but are not limited to the following areas:

Part One: Terrorism, Morality and Psychology

- Psychological theories of terrorism
- Psychological issues in understanding of terrorism
- Unresolved traumas and the cycle of terrorism
- Moral-psychological responses to terrorism at personal and community levels
- Hate groups and terrorism
- Youth and terrorism: How may psycho-educational approaches help treatment of terrorism?

Part Two: Terrorism and Security Issues

- Encountering insecurity in the minds of terrorists
- Psychological de-radicalization and security considerations
- New terrorist mindsets and security dilemmas
- Examination of the one-sidedness of security measures and strategies
- War on terror and terrorist responses; a futile cycle

Part Three: Terrorism, Religion, and Implications for Security Issues

- Healing the psychology of terrorism; role of religious communities
- Religious communities and assessment of the youth potential for terrorism
- Radicalizing communications in religious communities

Part Four: Religious-Based Case Studies

- How Islamist terrorists socialize (brain-wash?) and train new recruits
- Anger against the west; truth or delusion?
- Moral psychology of Al-Qaeda
- Christian motivations behind terrorist groups
- Psychology of terror in Jewish perspective
- Within the mind of Sikh extremism

Part Five: Alternatives for Transformation

- What to do for misperceptions of religion and violence
- The promise of reformed religious faith
- The sense of being human versus selfishness and terrorism

Submit a Proposal (New Deadline)

For consideration please send an abstract (250 word maximum) and a short biography (approximately 150 words) no later than **December 30, 2011** to any of the below-listed organizers of the conference. The Committee will review the proposals and respond by the end of January 2012.

Organizing Committee:

Dr. Jalil Roshandel
Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Security Studies
East Carolina University
Brewster A - 116
Greenville, NC 27858-4353
Phone: 001 1 252 328 1062
roshandelj@ecu.edu

Dr. Mahmoud Masaeli
Adjunct Professor of Philosophy, Ethics, and International Relations
Faculty of Philosophy
Saint Paul University, Ottawa
Phone: +1 613 236 1393 Ext. 2454
mmasaeli@ustpaul.ca

Dr. Rico Sneller
Assistant Professor of Ethics and History of Philosophy
Institute for Religious Studies
Leiden University
Phone: +31 71 527 2583
h.w.sneller@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Dr. Alethia Cook
Assistant Professor of Political Science and Assistant Director of Security Studies
East Carolina University
Brewster A-132
Greenville, NC 27858-4353
Phone: (252) 328-5869
Fax: (252) 328-4134
cooka@ecu.edu