

Abstracts

Theme 7: Violence, Security and Conflict

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1. Lisa Bald

Once totalitarian, always totalitarian? Political communication concerning left-wing terrorism in European Countries

France, Italy, Germany and the UK shared a common problem in the 1970s: the threat by left-wing terrorist groups with social revolutionary aims. In Germany, the *Rote Armee Fraktion* scared the post-war society, while in Italy the *Brigate Rosse* drove bloody attacks against the state and against violent right wing organizations. Even if they caused fewer victims, also in France and the UK, left-wing terrorist groups emerged (namely *Action Directe* and the *Angry Brigades*) which turned out to be the states' most dangerous challenge since the end of the Second World War. What distinguished these groups from other criminal organisations were their social revolutionary aims, which they tried to underline with robbery, arsons and bombings. This project analyses how the four countries dealt with this threat; interpreting terrorism as a communication process, and examining the messages which were sent out by terrorist groups and the respective states. Just considering numbers of attacks, Italy and Germany, both countries with a totalitarian past, were challenged more violently than those which did not experience national fascist leaders in the first half of the century. But was this just because extreme left groups took the idea of a socialist revolution less seriously; or also because governmental countermeasures were more effective in France and England? If the latter is true, which were the elements that distinguished the strategies? Or was the reference to the totalitarian past the crucial factor for the intensity of the struggle thirty years later?

Apart from the actors' performance, also the discourse in those countries, which had to deal with their fascist past, seems different from the patterns of communication in France and England. Here the research project sets in, challenging this assumption and comparing the communication processes on a discourse analytical level. Considering utterances from terrorists and state actors as well as attacks and legislative measures, patterns of interaction appear; and changes of strategies according to different phases illustrate a multi-faceted communication process in every single state. In a second step, these out-coming images of the four different countries will be set in a comparative view. Contrasting these processes, and comparing the aggressiveness in their rhetoric, concluding, the study focuses on the addressed *lieux de memoire*, to draw a comprehensive picture of the role of terrorism in coping with history. Especially the last aspect, although a fundamental element in the West European left-wing terrorism, is a perspective which is still neglected in historiography and which offers innovative answers to the questions asked above.

Regarding social revolutionary terrorism of the 1970s in this perspective, apart from confronting the conflict culture of four different European countries, the study will elucidate the processes of terrorism as an interaction, and evaluate counter terrorism policy from the view of political communication. In a larger historical context, it will help to understand better, how different West European states dealt with their totalitarian history.

In my presentation I will outline my PhD project and explain how I combine the approaches from my backgrounds in history and linguistics.

2. Anselm van der Peet

Operations outside the NATO Treaty area by the Royal Netherlands Navy 1945 - 2001

In his research on Dutch naval missions, conducted outside the North Atlantic Treaty area, in a UN, WEU or NATO setting, the candidate analyses the classical features of the concept of sea power: diplomacy, police and military enforcement action. A number of Anglo-Saxon political scientists and maritime historians state that, given the approval of international organizations like the UN, such multinational military maritime operations are characterized by a high degree of legitimacy. This is in sharp contrast to a more traditional kind of naval action like gunboat diplomacy which is both coercive and unilateral. According to the aforementioned academics, in conflict situations national interests can still be safeguarded by the navy, but nowadays more in the framework of international peacekeeping and peace support missions. This view is nearly absent in Dutch historiography on national foreign and security policy.

The sparse academic literature on the Dutch Navy after 1945 generally subscribes the thesis that after the loss of New Guinea in 1962, the Royal Netherlands Navy concentrated almost all its efforts on coping with the Soviet maritime threat in the North Atlantic area. The candidate states that this prevailing view does not take into account the rather persistent promotion by the Dutch Admiralty of worldwide operations by its own navy. It did so with the main purpose (apart from prestige) of maintaining a harmonious fleet and hence it capitalized on desires that lived inside and outside the Ministry of Defence regarding worldwide fleet deployments. This fact is a much neglected aspect in existing historical analyses on Dutch naval missions. This lack of attention also applies to the extensive cooperation with the British Royal Navy which the Dutch navy pursued during the postwar period. The aforementioned neglects in Dutch historiography in the field of violence, security and conflict, is the candidates' subject of research. Given the fact that the British naval forces have always been an inspiring example for the Royal Netherlands Navy, also regarding the subject of NATO out-of-area operations, the impact of the Anglo-Dutch relationship during these multinational missions is thoroughly discussed, and issues such as strategy and tactics, but also socio-cultural ties are reviewed.

3. Chiara Zampieri

The Italian democracy at the test of subversion: a first summary of the political debate on the counter-terrorism legislation (1979-1982).

The aim of my paper is the analysis of the political debate about the Italian counter-terrorism legislation passed between 1979 and 1982. The Italian terrorism was a phenomenon particularly violent, long-lasting and deep-rooted in the society, nevertheless there are several researches about origins and activities of the subversive organizations, but only few about the dynamics of their decline in terms of legislative initiatives and public policies. Therefore it is necessary to deepen the Italian state reaction in terms of legislation adopted and political debate related.

Studies on this topic are mostly sociological (i.e. the researches of Donatella Della Porta) and legal (in particular, one of the most significant is the book series *La legislazione dell'emergenza*, edited by Giovanni Conso), whereas there are few

insights from an historical or political perspective or based on an interdisciplinary approach (i.e. the most recent contributions of Cento Bull, Cooke 2013, Hof 2011). Therefore a depth analysis could help to understand the political positions of different parliamentary parties about the most significant Italian counter-terrorism laws (especially the decree-law n.625/1979 on public security and the law on “pentiti” of 1982), the most controversial issues of the parliamentary discussion and the sharing or disagreeing points of view between political parties. I aim in this way to make a first picture of the Italian political reaction to the terrorism emergency through the analysis of the positions of the main parties that took part in the parliamentary discussion. My intention is also to identify whether there were connections and influences between the parliamentary debate and public opinion through reading national newspapers and magazines.

It would be a “working paper” because I intend to make a first summary of my research results based on reading the parliamentary and Judiciary Committee session minutes and consulting the party sources and newspapers.