Critical terrorism studies (CTS): (State) (sponsored) terrorism identified in the (militarized) pedagogy of (U.S.) law enforcement agencies

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Abstract: For over a decade, scholars of Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) – a subset of terrorism studies identifying with the widening and deepening era of International Relations (IR) – have persuaded scholars of political sociology to push the disciplinary boundaries imposed by Orthodox Terrorism Studies (OTS). OTS academics reify a positivist conceptualization of terrorism that is exclusively theorized using an institutionalized problem-solving approach that wholly perceives perpetrators of terrorism as being non-state actors and (almost) never Northern democratic sovereign state actors. Adopting a critical and reflexive lens to the study of terrorism allows us to highlight the danger of ignoring the increased sanctioning of state sponsored terrorism identified in the militarization of law enforcement agencies after the events of 9/11. The militarized and terrorist pedagogy adopted by law enforcement and other representatives to secure the homeland is noticed in law enforcement agencies re-writing the social contract by presuming civilians as threats to national security thus ejecting them from the body politic. The paper concludes by proposing that we

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Khaled Al-Kassimi’s work seeks to critically approach politics occurring in (under)developed areas such as Africa, the Americas, and the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, his writings relating to the field of Political Science are contoured by critical approaches to International Relations and Security Studies, Post-Development and Decolonial Studies. His most recent publication in Cogent Social Sciences at Taylor and Francis (November - 2018 issue) entitled “ALBA: A Decolonial Delinking Performance Towards (Western) Modernity – An alternative to development Project” conceptualizes ALBA using concepts elaborated by decolonial scholars of the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region by proposing the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) as an alternative to development project that embodies the spirit of Bandung and principles of South-South Cooperation thereby contesting the supposed belief that only (western) knowledge systems lead to economic and social development.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

The militarization of law enforcement agencies has been an ongoing process in the U.S. in the 20th century. However, since President Bush declared pre-emptive defense as the preferred strategy to fight terrorism – following the declaration of the War on Terror and the passing of the Patriot Act – scholars have noticed an exponential increase in the (terrorizing) pedagogy of law enforcement agencies becoming militarized to the extent that citizens are no longer being protected by their sovereign but rather are presumed threats to national security. This paper seeks to highlight how such militarization adopts terrorizing tactics sponsored by the state thus bringing into fruition an imposed “Law and Order” that presumes citizens as threats to national security. By prioritizing the security of the state rather than the freedom and liberty of the citizen, this manuscript elaborates on the danger this legal development poses on the democratic promise based on contractualist theory.
identify university institutions as educational spaces that provide an opportune site to develop an oppositional critical pedagogy (OCP) ushering a demilitarized culture and social emancipation. The development of an OCP to militarization works in tandem with CTS contesting and immanently critiquing societal militarization by opposing educational spaces becoming sites that (re)produce and sanctify terroristic/warfare state actions which impede on the rights of citizens enshrined in the democratic experience of modern northern liberal states.

Subjects: Human Rights Law & Civil Liberties; International Criminal Law; Socio-Legal Studies; International Politics; International Relations; Security Studies - Pol & Intl Relns; Politics; Social Policy; Political Sociology; Criminology and Criminal Justice

Keywords: militarization; surveillance; terrorism; Department of Homeland Security (DHS); Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS); Orthodox Terrorism Studies (OTS); Oppositional Critical Pedagogy (OCP); communication; fusion center; Paramilitary Policing Units (PPU); presumption of threat; emancipation

“The principled problem of police militarization is not found in its actual use of military-style violence, but rather in the presumption of threat that it implies. The presumption of threat, manifested symbolically through the tacit acknowledgment that the possibility of combat is constantly present, carves out a domestic enemy, one which is excluded from the political order. Since this distinction is carried out by the police, which is an organ of the normal, rather than the exceptional legal regime, the distinction has an especially powerful potential to normalize and solidify this exclusion. This is what underlies the strong objections to such forces among policed communities.” – Lieblish and Shinar

1. Introduction

Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) is a relatively new subset of terrorism studies, borne out of a collective concern over the shortcomings of Orthodox Terrorism Studies (OTS). Over a decade has elapsed since the editors of Critical Studies on Terrorism journal highlighted to academics the importance of broadening terrorism studies by adopting a critical approach of security to (re)conceptualize terrorism (Jackson, Toros, Jarvis, & Heath-Kelly, 2017). Regrettably, after a decade, it seems clear that terrorism as a “growing industry” (Jackson et al., 2017) continues to mature in a particular manner, that is to say, it continues to suffer from an embarrassing list of methodological and analytical weaknesses as noticed with state sponsored terrorism remaining an (under)developed peripheral topic (Jackson et al., 2017; Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014). For instance, Silke (2004) notes that most research on terrorism is based either solely, or primarily, on data gathered from secondary, rather than primary sources, due to methodological limitation based on institutional bias, and funding directives which limit reflexive research (Blakeley, 2007, 2010; Gunning, 2007; Peoples and Williams, 2014). While a critical turn to the normative discipline of terrorism has mushroomed since the events of 9/11, dominant knowledge production of terrorism research remains founded, to a large extent, on positivist problem-solving theory (Blakeley, 2010, 2012; Gunning, 2007; Jackson et al., 2017) which renders “terrorism experts” being too closely linked to, or employed by, government organizations that reinforce (positivist) orthodox terrorism conceptualizations.

OTS scholars take the world as they find it, rather than critically approaching the status-quo by asking questions of power abuse, injustice and relations of power/knowledge that reproduce it (Cox, 1981; Peoples and Williams, 2014). This continued limited orthodox approach to researching terrorism is the subject of the first section of this manuscript. The section highlights the contours of OTS and suggests the importance of the discipline becoming methodologically eclectic and conceptually flexible by injecting the state in terrorism studies as an actor that perpetuates terrorism. To do so, it considers the advantages of broadening terrorism studies as it serves in opening up the “black box” of the state and reconceptualizing it from a non-realist approach in debates of terrorism, thus no longer perceiving research questions related to state-sanctioned domestic
terrorism as off-limits. In 2008, a speech celebrating the fifth anniversary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), President Bush declared that it was better to face enemies “over there than here in the U.S.”. However, since the securitization of terrorism was catalyzed with terrorist attacks conducted by non-state actors in September 2001, U.S. state security agencies have blurred the line between civilian police and the armed forces to counter terrorism by militarizing law enforcement agencies (civilian police) and transforming them into an active central agent in securing domestic homeland security. Overall, as the introductory quote highlights, the objective of this manuscript is to highlight how the increased militarized pedagogy of law enforcement agencies following 9/11 in the U.S. has made salient that the Sovereign state has ejected citizens from the body politic by presumably identifying them as threats to national security thus normalizing the reformulation of the social contract accentuating the democratic experience.

Since articles examining aspects of state sponsored terrorism\(^3\) is disappointingly low, (Jackson et al., 2017) the second section suggests that broadening terrorism studies allows us to highlight how the U.S. has reverted to fighting enemies over here (domestic relations) using a military culture identical to the method of engagement over there (foreign relations). The third section suggests that the stage was set after the events of 9/11 for a rapid blur between two state-sanctioned agents of violence—the military and the police—resulting in an increase in counter-measures involving increased state surveillance with the proliferation of fusion centers and threatening profiles (Giroux, 2008; Kraska, 2007). By broadening terrorism studies and reconceptualizing the state as a possible perpetrator of terrorism, the section suggests that these counter-terrorism measures constitute state terrorism (McLoughlin, 2013; Peoples and Williams, 2014). Unlike most consequentialist arguments which argue that an increase in police militarization leads to an increase in violence, this section suggests that an increase in police militarization perpetuates state terrorism violence in American society because networks of power linked to state security such as the DHS, the DoD, and law enforcement agencies—as made salient by Lieblish and Shinar (2018)—presume citizens as threats to national security thereby justifying (undemocratic) counter-terrorism measures that a priori prioritize state security over upholding values of informing liberal democracy. Considering the unconstitutional actions conducted by the state to fight terrorism, this section seeks to question the term “counter-terrorism” the same way CTS has questioned the term “terrorism” (Jackson et al., 2017).

The fourth and final section highlights the importance in scholars identifying academic spaces as sites where an opposition to militarization is possible with the development of an oppositional critical pedagogy (OCP)\(^4\) using CTS as an approach which ultimately leads to societal emancipation. The practice of OCP being identified as the road to societal emancipation demands terrorism studies to free up space to think, speak, and write differently about what terrorism means, how it might be studied, and how to make sense of predominant responses to it (McDonald, 2009). For terrorism studies to evolve into being an approach that is emancipatory we suggest similar to Gunning (2007) and McDonald (2009) the incorporation of immanent critiques deliberated in the first, second, and third section. Approaching terrorism studies by considering immanent critiques enables scholars to comfortably pose research questions that were traditionally ignored and overlooked because the dominant institutionalized definition of terrorism only perceived non-state actors as perpetrators of terrorism violence and under no circumstances (Weberian) Anglo-Saxon democratic states.

2. Critical terrorism studies and state-terrorism: Broadening the field of OTS by highlighting the limit of its traditional ontology and problem-solving methodology

Until the attacks of 9/11, terrorism remained a politicized rather than a securitized issue. While it was perceived as a “new world disorder” (Buzan & Hansen, 2009, p. 182), it was not discursively spoken of as a dominant threat to U.S. national security and international order (Buzan & Hansen, 2009, p. 182). Pre-9/11 literature characterized terrorism as a peripheral issue that belonged to the fringes of ISS (International Security Studies) concerns and was not discussed as posing a threat to national security (Buzan & Hansen, 2009). Since the attacks took place, security experts securitized terrorism by articulating speech acts\(^5\) that identified terrorism as constituting an existential threat to
U.S. national security (Peoples and William, 2014, p. 94; Al-Kassimi, 2017). This meant that security experts effectively spoke of terrorism in a discursive manner that constituted it inter-subjectively as no longer fitting to the realm of “normal politics” but rather an existential threat belonging to the realm of “emergency politics” (Buzan & Hansen, 2009, p. 214; Al-Kassimi, 2017). This shift was sanctioned by speech actors that possess political capital who spoke of terrorism in threatening terms, therefore legitimizing the use of extraordinary measures such as militarization of police, and an increase in surveillance for National Security purposes (Waever, 2000, p. 252). The event of 9/11 elevated in propensity the existing literature on terrorism and counter-terrorism, thereby initiating a surge in terrorism becoming an academic “growth industry” (Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Jarvis, 2009; Jarvis & Lister, 2014; Blakeley & Raphael, 2016)

Even though several new books and articles are published on terrorism every year (Smyth, Gunning, Jackson, Kassimeris, & Robinson, 2008, p. 2), scholars designated as critical security scholars point to the study of terrorism continuing to be operationalized and dominated by an epistemology centered on realism and positivism (Jarvis, 2009, p. 6; Blakeley, 2010, 2012). The inception of OTS in the late 1990s proliferated, and continues to be linked, to a particular (elitist) hegemonic pedagogical environment that is institutionalized legally, culturally, and academically (Smyth et al., 2008, p. 2). Not surprisingly then, incorporating qualitative methods to research terrorism such as collecting data based on primary sources i.e: ethnography (participant observation) remains taboo (Smyth et al., 2008, p. 2). Terrorism research being oriented towards generalizing results by adopting quantitative problem-solving methods and techniques to assemble data produces a context where scholars cannot find academic space to critically endeavor to reformulate the normative conceptual debates of terrorism studies. The lack of theoretical and critical reflection in traditional terrorism studies necessitates a critical lens to broaden terrorism studies and incorporate contemporary transformations in the characteristics and agents of (terrorism) violence (Jarvis, 2009, p. 5; Gunning, 2007; Jackson et al., 2017). However, before I delve into the vitality of terrorism studies adopting a “critical turn”, I will first detail the shortcomings of “problem-solving” logic dominating terrorism research thereby highlighting the current lacuna in terrorism studies.

2.1. The limits of a problem-solving approach exclusively informing terrorism scholarship

Gunning (2007, p. 363) stated over a decade ago that reviews on the field of terrorism show that core problems consisting of epistemological, methodological, and political normativity continue to dominate terrorism research because it pays homage to a “problem-solving” approach which does not question its framework of reference, its categories, its origins, or the power relations that enable the production of these categories (Gunning, 2007). Terrorism research adopting a “problem-solving” framework implies that its referent object is state-centric therefore takes security to mean the security of the state, rather than that of the individual as proposed by critical security studies scholars who widened the definition of security and deepened its referent object (Gunning, 2007, p. 371; Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Peoples and Williams, 2014). A critical approach to Security Studies argues that the individual humans are the ultimate reference for security, as states are unreliable providers of security and too diverse to provide for a comprehensive theory of security (Buzan & Hansen, 2009, p. 206). According to R.W Jones (1995, p. 309), a Critical Security study implies “placing the experience of those men and women and communities for whom the present world order is a cause of insecurity rather than security; at the center of our agenda”. Equally important for critical theorist of security studies—for instance the Frankfurt School—is that emancipation functions as the goal of individual security as well as the analytical and political engine, which is defined by Booth (1991, p. 319) as “the freeing of people from those physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do”. Critical Security Studies concept of emancipation draws on the Habermasian account of the emancipatory potential in interaction and communication (Buzan & Hansen, 2009, p. 207). Thus, a critical approach to security highlights that the emancipated solution—at the level of individual security—has positive consequences at the level of collective security since it is deeply connected to global security which is when all communities have been emancipated, and more endogenous (alternative) constructions of political community have replaced the exclusiveness of Westphalian (positivist) ontology of the state informing security.
But more to the point, being state-centric implies that OTS scholars perceive interests as fixed and regard those who oppose the political (hegemonic) status quo as the problem, without contemplating whether the state is part of the problem or whether transformation on both sides is necessary for solving “terrorism” (Gunning, 2007, p. 371; Blakeley, 2012). Another shortcoming of terrorism studies being gripped by a “problem-solving” enterprise that is positivist and objectivist—even a decade later—is that it describes the “terrorist other” from within a state-centric paradigm (an external enemy) rather than recognizing the “other” inter-subjectively, using interpretive or qualitative idea-tional factors (Gunning, 2007, p. 371). It is this lack of reflexivity in navigating approaches which propagate (critical) debates over the field of terrorism lacking conceptual clarity, theoretical sterility, and most obviously primary research data (Gunning, 2007) or as Jarvis (2009) and Blakeley (2010, 2012) note, debates over definitions, causation, and response.

Defining the object of knowledge—terrorism—continues to be an important critical endeavor in ameliorating our understanding of what is and what is not terrorism. According to Meisels (2006) denoting our concepts clearly and accurately is mandatory for responsible academic reflection considering Ganor’s (2005, p. 2) emphases that “as long as there is no agreement as to ‘what is terrorism’, it is impossible to assign responsibility to nations that support terrorism, to formulate steps to cope on an international level with terrorism, and to fight effectively the terrorists, terror organizations and their allies”. Definitional contestation can be said to have emerged when RAND Corporation in 1999 published “Countering the New Terrorism” which grounded and developed the concept of terrorism using a problem-solving approach (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 4). According to Lesser, Hoffman, Arquilla, Ronfeldt, Zanini, and Michael (1999, p. 2), RAND suggested that “during the final decade of the twentieth century the fundamental facets of ‘terrorism’ had altered at a pace which had rendered much previous analysis obsolete”. The first fundamental way in which “new terrorism” shifted from “old terrorism”—as defined by RAND Corporation—is that perpetrators are assumed to be non-state actors belonging to organizations that do not possess an identifiable command structure (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 4; Stampnitzky, 2014). This idea of “new terrorism” being a conflict that is identified by its fluidity and intangibility has also been developed by RAND as terrorism being a “netwar” (Arquilla & Ronfeldt, 2001; Burnett & Whyte, 2005; Lesser et al., 1999; Wilkinson, 1992). The second characteristic “new” terrorism possesses according to RAND is that it is less discriminating in its targets thereby increasing the propensity of terrorists targeting civilians especially because it strikes from remote distances without warning (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 5).

Thirdly, security experts who adopt an orthodox terrorism approach speak of terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda not simply by using a threatening, apocalyptic discourse, but also in a discursive manner that makes it less amenable to traditional forms of control—such as negotiation or reasoning—assuming they are ideologically rather than politically motivated (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 5).

Sorel (2003, p. 370) states in regards to the underdevelopment of terrorism as a concept that “If one keeps searching for acts of terrorism without defining terrorism itself, then its denunciation is encouraged more than its understanding.... In place of proper definition, we have to cope with the descriptions of terrorist behavior, which is more a social judgment than the comprehension of a global phenomenon”. The lack of urgency in reaching a consensus on the definitional issue is related to the dominant methodology of terrorism being objective and based on: a lack of primary data, a dearth of interviews with terrorists, and the “field’s typical unwillingness to engage subjectively with the terrorists motives” (Gunning, 2007, p. 372). This unwillingness is a symptom of orthodox terrorism research adopting a problem-solving approach which over-identifies with the terrorists motives thereby inaccurately defining the causes of terrorism. This results in unproven ahistorical nationally containerized assumptions such as “Islam is an ideology that instigates terrorism” becoming part of political discourse while not being empirically tested
across different samples (Gunning, 2007, p. 373). In other cases, Berman (2003) and Laqueur (2003) have both linked the causes of terrorism to Islam by adopting Huntington’s infamous clash of civilization dichotomy by arguing that in “every place where Muslim populations border on non-Muslim populations—some kind of war, large or small, had broken out in recent years, Muslims against non-Muslims” (Jarvis, 2009, p. 11) thereby objectively dangerously assuming that Islam endogenously clashes with Western civilization.

The observed disregard of historical context and socio-political dynamics in locating the causes of terrorism can be traced to the ahistorical propensity of problem-solving approaches and their state-centric institutionalized understanding of security (Gunning, 2007, p. 373). Adopting such a framework in approaching terrorism makes it difficult to conceptually enquire whether the state is the cause of terrorism because it is not simply the definer of terrorism—by using dichotomous discourse—but is also seen as the primary referent being secured, and securing its security makes the perpetrators logically (non)state sponsored terrorist organizations targeting the state (Gunning, 2007, p. 373). The state being vindicated of any causal relation in causing or engaging in terrorism is intrinsically linked to the degree in which RAND initially and continues to influences the academic study of terrorism. According to Burnett and Whyte (2005), Blakeley (2007), and Gunning (2007), the two foremost academic journals publishing work in the field of terrorism—Terrorism and Political Violence and Studies in Conflict and Terrorism—include RAND employees and editors such as the late Paul Wilkinson and Bruce Hoffman. Their contributions to the causes of terrorism are in harmony with problem-solving approaches. Contributions on terrorism studies by these journals focus almost exclusively on terrorism caused against states rather than by northern liberal democratic states (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 9). Terrorism is featured as being perpetrated by states only when the accused state is not an American or Western European ally. This selectivity in causation is a methodological flaw that is directly linked to orthodox contributors to terrorism research (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 9; Blakeley, 2007) and persists in RAND-St Andrews’s database which was founded and linked to Paul Wilkinson’s and Bruce Hoffman’s Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV) (Blakeley, 2007; Stampnitzky, 2010, 2014). RAND archives incidents recorded as “international terrorism” as acts conducted by groups and individuals traveling abroad to strike targets. However, it rejects violence carried out by terrorists within their own country (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 9; Stampnitzky, 2014). Hoffman (1998, p. 139) encapsulates this research method by stating “Irish terrorists blowing up other Irishmen in Belfast would not be included in the database”.

Another vital omission conducted by RAND (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 10) and its sponsored publishers is the exclusion of acts of state terror committed by any government against its own citizens, and acts of violence occurring in a setting that is reminiscent of a war-zone (i.e.: The militarized responses of law enforcement agencies during riots taking place in Ferguson, North Dakota, and New Orleans). These causal omissions highlight that the contours of orthodox terrorism research hold a dominant institutionalized nexus of terror that is exceedingly based on a problem-solving approach. Underpinning Wilkinson’s work at RAND and CSTPV is an inbuilt assumption that Northern democracies are primarily victims and not perpetrators of terrorism (Blakeley, 2007). Wilkinson’s only discussion of state terrorism is by Marxist–Leninist regimes and their client insurgencies (Wilkinson, 1992, p. 232). He makes no mention of the extensive terrorism used by right-wing state which sought to repress left-wing movements across Latin America during Operation Condor habitually with U.S. backing. Wilkinson’s work (1977) overlooks state sponsored terrorism by northern democracies when he says that “liberal democracies provide a near-perfect environment for terrorism” implying that terrorism comes to liberal democracies but never comes out of it. This obvious selectivity between quantitative and qualitative approaches marginalizes alternative conceptions of the agents causing terrorism.

The idea that the global war on terror since 9/11 encompasses an unpredictable adversary that encapsulates a threat never before encountered by positivist U.S. security experts (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 2) gained political currency within the Department of Defense (DoD) and defense policy-making circles. According to Buzan and Hansen (2009), speech actors decided that the most
appropriate response to the terrorist threat would be to declare war on terrorism since it was defined as a threat consisting of global networked non-state actors with no identifiable command structure, thereby accentuating that traditional practices of bargaining and negotiation not succeeding in countering this new form of threat (Jarvis, 2009, p. 12). This response rekindled “interest in the use of force generally, and the whole topic of war in particular” (Buzan & Hansen, 2009, p. 229) across terrorism studies. Flint (2003) and Turk (2004) highlight that the most urgent problem confronting terrorism studies—other than the issue of definition and causation—is how we decide to combat and respond to terrorism as a review of literature highlights that “efforts to understand terrorism have generally been incidental or secondary to efforts to control it” (Turk, 2004, p. 280; Stampnitzky, 2010). Because problem-solving as a framework conceptualizes terrorism as an unconventional war, the preferred response extended by policymakers is a militarized approach (Jarvis, 2009, p. 12) that includes psychological warfare as a counter-terrorist instrument, and the militarization of law enforcement to further reinforce homeland security (Burnett & Whyte, 2005, p. 12). Since problem-solving analysis permeates “how we respond to terrorism”, “how we define terrorism”, and “what causes terrorism” the issue becomes that espousing such methodology to analyze terrorism ensures that research remains constituted around a restrictively narrow conception of terrorism causality thus limiting the number of possible research questions and most unfortunately, accentuating academic (ir)responsibility.

Defining terrorism using RAND institutionalized nexus will not consider how the development of the modern state or international system might have contributed to the evolution of the definition of “terrorism” (Gunning, 2007, p. 374). This, in turn, limits scholarly space in exploring how securitizing terrorism marginalized alternative conceptions of terrorism, thereby legitimizing acts of state terror that transgress international law being discursively transformed into merely “counter-terrorism measures” (Burnett & Whyte, 2005; Gunning, 2007; Jarvis, 2009). The result of terrorism studies being undertheorized and dominated by a problem-solving approach develops a tendency where scholars and policy-makers support coercive counter-terrorism policies without conducting an adequate analysis of how these conceptualizations contribute to the reproduction of the very terrorist threat it seeks to eradicate. It is against this backdrop of academic decadence that this manuscript urgently notes that we no longer perceive “terrorism studies” as a minority pursuit in the hands of state-centric institutions (Gordon, 1999; Jarvis, 2009; Richardson, 2006) but suggests that we embrace a more self-reflexive and critical pedagogical approach in studying and researching terrorism. The request to adopt a critical lens to study the normative and analytical commitments of mainstream terrorism resonates with earlier appeals by critical security scholars to widen and deepen the field of security studies by countering the “iron cage of political realism” (Booth, 2008; Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Jarvis, 2009). The urgency of terrorism studies adopting a critical turn and fostering a self-reflexive approach to the study of terrorism is catalyzed by those who have studied terrorism, however, are not comfortable with, or are hostile to, the perceived “ontological, epistemological, and ideological commitments of existing terrorism studies” (Gunning, 2007). Motivated thus, the following section will describe the theoretical commitments of CTS thereby highlighting the urgency of OTS scholars broadening their definitional and conceptual normative parameters.

2.2. The state as an agent of terrorism

Critical Terrorism Studies is understood as an approach that is daring in challenging the dominant (positivist) knowledge of terrorism. As an approach, it questions the politics of labeling in the field by being transparent about its own values and political standpoints, thereby adhering to a set of responsible research ethics that is committed to a broad defined notion of “imminent critique” and/or “emancipation” for immediate social change (Smyth et al., 2008). Understood thus, CTS is not a precise theoretical label (Peoples and Williams, 2014) but rather is an approach that a priori adopts a “skeptic attitude towards state-centric understanding of terrorism” by not “taking existing terrorism knowledge for granted but is willing to challenge widely held assumption and beliefs” (Jackson, 2007, p. 246). According to Silke (2004), orthodox terrorism studies is “extremely applied” and insufficiently questioning of the theoretical or ideological assumptions which form the contours of mainstream terrorism studies (Gunning, 2007). This concern, as elaborated
previously, is linked to mainstream terrorism research overwhelmingly preferring an essentialist conception of terrorism, using problem-solving approaches and methodologies.

According to Jarvis (2009, p. 14), terrorism in realist circles is approached as a fully formed, extra-discursive object of knowledge that attributes an existence "entirely independent of the viewing subject's perceptions or values, terrorism is presumed to exist not as a social construction, performance or representation, but, rather, as an objective entity that is given, not made". The issue critical scholars have with an “objective” and “non-intersubjective" definition of terrorism is that it limits scholarly participation in reflecting on the historical social processes through which terrorism identity, behavior, or threat was constituted. As noted by Jarvis (2009, p. 14), scholars in mainstream terrorism studies presume largely irrelevant researching terrorism by “interpreting the symbolic and discursive contexts of its creation [resulting in] terrorism remaining consistently and artificially detached from the processes of its construction”. This institutionalized conceptualization of terrorism has been well received amongst the majority of scholars, who tie their understanding of the causes of terrorism to be simply perpetrated by non-state actors against innocent civilians (Blakeley, 2010, 2012; Jarvis, 2009). Silke (2004) observed that government funding opportunities extended by state sponsored institutions—such as RAND, the Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, and Brookings Institution—were extended to researchers that often displayed an uncritical orientation towards state-centric perspectives on terrorism.

According to CTS scholars, the consequences of mainstream terrorism studies uncritically framing the problem of terrorism using the state as a referent object while at the same orienting research using positivist methods, can be identified in both methodology and in the types of questions that remain unasked and are at the periphery of the field (Gunning, 2007). With the nature and causes of terrorism already pre-determined, the possibility of “state sponsored terrorism” becomes systematically excluded from research before it emerges. This orientation also makes it difficult for CTS scholars to pose questions about the extent in which “counter-terrorism policies perpetuate the “terrorist threat” or whether political transformation may be more effective than mere coercive force aimed at eradication (Gunning, 2007, p. 368). This is noted by Ilardi (2004), Gunning (2007) and Blakeley (2007, 2010, 2012) whom highlight that orthodox terrorism research excludes espousing CTS qualitative research methods and data collection techniques such as ethnography, open-ended interviews and/or archival research because the field is predisposed towards the sanctity of the state.

The shortcoming of this methodological preference highlights an over-reliance on secondary data rather than data inferred from fieldwork and participant-observation which is compounded with an uncritical adoption of state-centric conceptions of terrorism that limits imagining alternative conceptualizations unlikely addressed using a problem-solving paradigm (Blakeley, 2010; Gunning, 2007). O'Leary and Silke (2007, p. 393) observe that “much of what is written about terrorism is written by people who have never met a terrorist, or have never actually spent significant time on the ground in the areas most affected by conflict”. Critical scholars have been successful in broadening the field of terrorism to include qualitative methods that encourage critical scholars to adopt qualitative research methods that rely on a research process that seeks to develop an inter-subjective relationship with researched communities (participants), thereby producing new research questions that identify and challenge the impact of illegitimate state violence in broader communities (Blakeley, 2012). Various questions have since been posed by critical scholars—since they are methodologically eclectic—that seek to shed light on how the deployment of state terrorism to particular beneficiaries, interests, and structures, whether political, economic, or strategic have been legitimised and camouflaged as counter-terrorism forms of violence (Chomsky & Herman, 1979; Jarvis & Lister, 2014; Mckeown, 2011).

If “critical” (Gunning, 2007) is defined using a Coxian approach as not “taking institutions and social and power relations for granted but calling them into question by concerning itself with their origins and how and whether they might be in the process of changing” (Cox, 1981, p. 129), then
Adopting a problem-solving framework to research terrorism risks structuring the discipline in a way that limits academic responsibility from any notion of critical inquiry (Jarvis, 2009) since it neglects the process of terrorism’s construction by reducing the space available for discussing illegitimate state sponsored violence. Orthodox terrorism scholars are content with the aim of their research not challenging these institutions and power relations rather than considering the problem of terrorism within the context of these existing institutions and power dynamics (Blakeley, 2007). The limitations of the above-mentioned literature point to a shared attempt by critical scholars to rethink the politics of terror by necessitating a broadening of orthodox terrorism studies. A critically constituted field of terrorism would encourage scholars to broaden their understanding of terror by moving beyond state-centric interlocutors defining terroristic security notions, to a wider notion of human security that analysis how “terrorism and counter-terrorism affect the security of all, starting from the gendered individual, through the community to the state, and including such concerns as social justice, inequality, structural violence, culture and discrimination” (Gunning, 2007, p. 376). The broadening of the field of terrorism studies encourages scholars to rethink the unnecessary restrictive conceptions of terrorism that dominate mainstream debates (Jarvis, 2009).

While it is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate on every area the CTS project appealed to broaden terrorism studies, it will however critically highlight events related exclusively to state sponsored terrorism—an area that is overlooked by OTS scholars. Chomsky and Herman (1979), Stohl and Lopez (1984), Blakeley (2007), and Jarvis and Lister (2014) amongst others produced literature that is committed to broadening the analytical horizon of terrorism by moving away from the institutionalized (positivist) definition of terrorism which perceives that terrorism violence can only be caused by non-state actors. While this challenge was met with criticism (Hoffman,
since it unsettled the dominant institutionalized association of terrorism with non-state actors—the critique deliberated was central to academics taking responsibility in pushing critical inquiry to a neglected agent of terrorism—the state. Halliday (2002, p. 72) highlights this point by stating that it is “important in any evaluation of the use of violence in politics, and in the adjudication of crimes against humanity committed in the contemporary world, not to lose sight of what one can term terrorism from above”. Jarvis and Lister (2014, p. 44) are of the opinion that literature on the phenomenon of state terrorism has “been far stronger in typologising and detailing instances of state terrorism than it has been in delineating and problematizing this concepts meaning and scope”. To highlight the lacuna of state terrorism being absent in mainstream terrorism studies, CTS attempts to bring the state back in terrorism studies by injecting the ontology of state sponsored terrorism into the broadening agenda of CTS.

Stohl and Lopez (1984, p. 3) remind scholarship that to understand state terrorism, it is essential that the field of terrorism “invest in theory building and analysis and not simply description and condemnation”. To begin such investment one would need to become eclectic and reflexive thus realizing the limits imposed by traditional security studies which cite that states simply cannot engage in terrorism and that the “application of this label to their violence’s is either misnomer or erroneous” (Jarvis & Lister, 2014). OTS has expended no interest in scrutinizing events of violence that were perpetrated by northern democratic states because the majority of terrorism literature infers a realist approach of the state being an “instrumental unitary actor with a singularity of interest and purposes” which we argue in this paper limits critical scholars opening the “black box” that underscores state terrorism violating the Republican Contract8 (Jessop, 2010, p. 44; Levy, 2013; Jarvis & Lister, 2014, p. 53). In other words, to begin such critical inquiry scholars would need to destabilize Weberian arguments that revolve around sovereign prerogatives, or as mentioned earlier, institutionalized hegemonic definitions of terrorism (Blakeley, 2007, 2010, 2012; Hoffman, 1998; Jarvis & Lister, 2014). Rethinking the state as a strategic selective terrain and outcome of social struggles (Jessop, 2010) rather than a unitary/entity or an actor that displays singular agency as the victim in the face of terrorism, presents an opportunity to highlight the preconditions and possibilities of state terrorism (Blakeley, 2010, 2012; Jarvis & Lister, 2014).

Motivated thus, the (critical) approach adopted in this paper rejects arguments made by orthodox scholars such as Hoffman (1998) and Crenshaw (2011) who cite that state terrorism is different than terrorism conducted by non-state actors. Rather, we suggest, advancing the discipline of terrorism begins by scholars rejecting any distinction made between state and non-state actors engaging in terrorism by considering this dichotomy to be “analytically, politically and morally problematic” (Jarvis & Lister, 2014, p. 45). Critical authors who pursue this broadening and critical approach to terrorism studies have stressed the danger of state terrorism remaining understudied as a phenomenon because scholars want to publish “policy relevant” research by uncritically adopting the institutionalized conceptual framework du jour. Fetishizing policy-relevant issues is unprincipled when we consider that the “number of victims produced by state terror is on a scale exponentially larger than that of insurgent terrorists” (Stohl, 2008) or as made clear by Falk (2008, p. 28) that it is “abundantly clear that from the perspective of civilian values, that the state terrorism associated with counter-terrorism and one-sided warfare is by far the greatest cause of harm throughout human history”. While this manuscript is interested in highlighting the consequences of a militarized-terrorizing pedagogy in the U.S., it is vital to briefly note that since the war on terror was instigated following 9/11, the Bush administration identified the Third World, especially the Arab world Levant, as a space that harbors terrorism because of its ethnic and religious composition. As highlighted by Mutimer (2007), the war on terror is the most recent expression of a colonial relativist discourse that allows for (western) sovereignty and biopolitics to function together in one of its most virulent articulations as emphasized in the subjugation of the life of an Arab to the terrorizing whims of capital accumulation (necrocapitalism) and the subjugation of the life of an Arab to the power of death (necropolitics) (Al-Kassimi, TBA).9 Mutimer (2007, p. 173) stated that the war on terror has “produced a global discourse more racist than any we have seen since the time of European colonialism”. The war on terror in the Global South is
fought in its most necro form and is legalized since International Law and its Sovereignty component have been rethought and reformulated after 9/11 to accommodate the doctrine of Pre-Emptive Defensive Strategy which is operationalized by adopting a Benevolent discourse contoured by the proliferation of democracy and the responsibility to protect human rights (Anghie, 2004; Blakeley, 2009). Motivated thus, the constructive anarchy doctrine adopted by the U.S. while invading Iraq in 2003, or subjugating the of Arabs in Gaza to the power of death, and/or, the Atlanticist strategy adopted in Yemen, Libya and Syria—through the usage of local colonial agents—following the Arab Winter of 2011 have all been legal interventions because they have been articulated using speech acts that espouse a language of pre-emption that refers to Arabs not as bearers of rights—and thus active agents in their own emancipation—but as passive beneficiaries of an external responsibility to protect. Here we notice the danger in OTS deliberating a positivist idea that what is legal need not be morally ethical. Therefore, in the case of the Third World, the U.S. rewrote and rethought international law and sovereignty in a way that legalized imperial (terrorizing) violence relating to the management and manipulation of Arab life thereby rendering it bare and invaluable (Mamdani, 2005, 2010).

Therefore, a critical approach would enable scholars to add breadth to the discursive language of terrorism by wrestling “control of the terminology of terrorism away from the politico-military elite of the world, to keep them from using it to flog their real or imagined enemies” (Mustafa, 2005, p. 76). Critical research would encourage research into how discourse is used by oppositional groups to discredit state elites and what structures make such discourse possible—since mainstream discourse on terrorism is used to discredit oppositional groups and justify state policies (Jarvis, 2009). Moreover, broadening terrorism research moves the process of conceptualizing beyond paradigms that a priori seek militarized responses to eradicate non-state actor violence and by enabling scholars to adopt self-reflexive methodologies that consider all sides a priori as being part of the problem and solution (Gunning, 2007; Stampnitzky, 2014). The significance of these contributions become clearer when we compare the struggle (critical) security studies scholars engaged in for decades by pursuing the broadening and deepening of security as a political signifier (Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Jarvis & Lister, 2014; Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014). Just as those discussions were monumental in theorizing and conceptualizing security using a critical lens that stimulates reflection on the fields normative and political commitments, critical approaches to the literature of traditional terrorism studies have a similar potential for dramatically recasting the perpetrators and agents of terror (Blakeley & Raphael, 2016; Jarvis & Lister, 2014). Put more bluntly, the broadening of terrorism studies has the potential of incorporating new agents of violence into the purview of terrorism research that may have traditionally been conceptualized differently because their perpetrators are (Northern/Western) Sovereign states.

3. State terrorism: An agent of terrorism identified in the pedagogical militarization culture of U.S. law enforcement and increased surveillance

As elaborated earlier, the way in which terrorism is defined and theorized by orthodox terrorism studies is the main reason why the state as an entity has been absent from academic debates as a source of terrorism. The parameters of analysis for most terrorism scholars has been dictated according to Blakeley (2007) by the “dominant neo-realist” paradigm and “problem solving” methodology which explains why the U.S. department’s office of the Coordinator for Counter-terrorism defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatants targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience”. Theorizing the state as a possible entity that could possibly engage in terrorism is considered heretic in dominant realist circles, and simply does not fit within the established frame of reference of dominant terrorism scholarship (Blakeley, 2007, p. 231). Therefore, critical studies on terrorism makes an appeal for scholarship to begin conceptualizing the state as an agent of terrorism since most western democratic states have been accused of acquiring the “terroristic” characteristics of the enemies they seek to overcome (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014, p. 142; Blakeley & Raphael, 2016). In this section, we highlight what is discovered by academics when they adopt qualitative methodologies to study terrorism. By being
Critical terrorism studies seek to transcend the hubristic argument articulated by traditional theorists of International Relations (IR) and Security Studies (SS) which argues that states as agents of terrorism is unthinkable. Chomsky (1991, p. 12) and Blakeley (2007, p. 230) lament that critical scholars adopt a “literal” approach to terrorism by “determining what constitutes terrorism. Then seek instances of the phenomenon—concentrating on the major examples, if we are serious—and try to determine causes and remedies”. The vitality of this literal approach is that it removes any preconceived conceptual obstacles relating to the identity of the terrorist. By recasting the state contra positivist logic—as not possessing singular agency but is, in contrast, a plural decentered terrain that cross-pollinates with other power terrains—we dispense away the challenge of identifying intentionality (Jarvis & Lister, 2014). Blakeley (2009, p. 36) reminds academics that even though determining the intentions of a state being complicit in terrorism is not easy and at best ambiguous, such intentions can be “inferred if not directly accessed” (Jarvis & Lister, 2014, p. 55). By adopting a critical or literal approach to analyzing and researching terrorism and by ontologically conceptualizing state power as being constructed through multiple agencies, inferring state intentionality in terrorism can be resolved.

Inferring state complicity in terrorism can be deduced by analyzing patterns that 1) reflect on the reasonably anticipated likely consequence of an act (Blakeley, 2009; Jarvis & Lister, 2014) such as the undermine of democracy by the act of militarizing law enforcement resulting in the presumption of citizens being a threatening body; and 2) by discerning temporally that the longer it takes for state agencies to prosecute individuals to the full extent of the law, and/or if the state is moderate in its response to the perpetrator of terrorism, we can presume that the state is “to some extent condoning the actions of that individual”(Jarvis & Lister, 2014). Put more bluntly, Blakeley (2009, p. 42), Jarvis and Lister (2014, p. 56) note that the “longer the abuses go on, the more confident we can be that the violence’s should be attributed to the upper echelons of the state”. CTS recognize that the differentiation made between terrorism conducted by states, and terrorism conducted by non-state actors as intellectually unbefnicial and most importantly unethical. Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010, p. 3) and Jarvis and Lister (2014), make this point clear when they argue that to suggest “when state agents engage in the very same strategies as non-state terrorists, such as when they blow up civilian airliners (the Lockerbie bombing) or a protest ship (the Rainbow Warrior bombing) or plant a series of bombs in public places (the Lavon affair), it ceases to be terrorism is effectively the abandonment of scholarly research principles.”.

To open the black box of “the state”, it is vital to no longer reify the state using a (positivist) Weberian lens which perceives it as a unified organizational actor in its own right but rather approach the state as a site of contestation possessing only “symbolic and imagined unity” (Jarvis & Lister, 2014, p. 53), which exercises power through coordination of specific political actors (DHS, DoD). The state is then an ensemble of power centers that are strategically coordinated and enabled through the selectivity of the state system and the roles of parallel power networks that cross cut and unify its formal structures (Jessop, 2010, p. 44). Terrorism studies approaching the state in a critical manner permits terrorism research to highlight transformations in sets of institutions—military and police—that are mobilized for certain objectives while at the same revealing that such objectives are attained using state-sanctioned terrorism. In this, we echo post-positivist scholar Doty’s (1993) plea concerning the importance of asking “how-possible” questions...
to discover not simply how state terrorism can come to pass, but also how is it possible that “relevant subjects, objects, and interpretive dispositions were socially constructed such that certain practices were made possible” (Doty, 1993, p. 298). Similarly, Bulkeley and Shroeder (2012), Jarvis and Lister (2014) argue that instead of focusing on who did what—in this case acts of terrorism—it is important to examine how possible courses of actions—which would be deemed unconstitutional at other junctures—become possible as citizens are discursively presumed as threats to national security.

3.1. A State Sponsored (Terrorizing) Militarizing Pedagogy in Law Enforcement Agencies

Since President George W. Bush securitized terrorism on September 20th, 2001 by declaring war on terror, developments among state security agencies/networks located at the local and federal level have indicated a methodological and practical shift towards a hegemonic militarized pedagogical culture in their enforcement of social control (Giroux, 2008; Kraska, 2007; McLoughlin, 2013). Militarization is a complete break with militarism in its intensification and expanding values, practices, ideologies, social relations and cultural representations (Giroux, 2008). Militarization is the contradiction and tense social process in which civil society organizes itself for the production of violence (Giroux, 2008, p. 59). Thus, the underlying logic of police militarization is the process whereby civilian police adopt and apply the central pedagogical cultural elements of the military (Giroux, 2008; Kraska, 2007; McLoughlin, 2013; Lieblich and Shinar, 2018). It should be noted that the trend toward a more militarized domestic police force began before the attacks of 9/11 (Balko, 2014; Kraska, 2007). The growth of the military model has been historically salient in American life since it celebrates war as the truest measure of the health of the nation, and the soldier-warrior as the noblest expression. Therefore, when a declaration of war is adopted to solve problems such as crime, drugs, and terrorist attacks, we should not be surprised that police militarization follows (Giroux, 2008; Lieblich and Shinar, 2018) in conjunction with an increased state surveillance. Militarized policing proceeded uninterrupted starting in the 1960s with the establishment of the first SWAT unit in Los Angeles and has increased exponentially in the decades since the “War on Drugs” during Nixon’s administration, to the “War on Terror” throughout the presidential tenure of George H. Bush (Giroux, 2008; Kraska, 2007) and presently, Donald Trump.

The incremental militarization of the police can be traced to the late 1970s “war on drugs” where concerns over a supposed “drug epidemic” forced states agencies and local law enforcement to become involved in federal drug policy. Richard Nixon declared “war on drugs”, while Reagan declared illicit drugs a threat to national security. In 1981 Congress passed the Military Cooperation Law Enforcement Act which encouraged and allowed the Department of Defense (DoD) to give local, state, and federal police access to military bases, research, and equipment to combat illegal drugs (Balko, 2013, 2014; Hall, 2017; Kraska, 2007). In 1988, Congress authorized the National Guard to aid local police in drug interdiction which according to Balko (2014) resulted in “National Guard troops conducting drug raids on city streets and using helicopters to survey rural areas for pot farms”. In 1994 the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) enacted program 1033 which permitted the DoD to transfer excess military equipment to local police departments. As of 2014, 8,000 local law enforcement agencies participated in the realignment program that has transferred $5.1 billion in military hardware from the DoD to local American law enforcement agencies (Poynton, 2014). It should be obvious that the police since their inception have been to some extent “militarized” as the foundation of military and police power is the same: state-sanctioned capacity to use physical force to attain their respective objectives (Kraska, 2007). However, what is incriminatory about increased militarization following 9/11 is that it has become naturalized in that it serves as a powerful pedagogical force that shapes our “lives, memories and daily experiences, while erasing everything critical and emancipatory about history, justice, solidarity and the meaning of democracy” (Giroux, 2008, p. 60). Militarization after 9/11 has made salient not only that war is now a norm and peace the exception, but rather that militarization has made war the organizing principle of society and shifted the role of the state from the “welfare state to the warfare state” (Hardt & Negri, 2004; Giroux, 2008, p. 60). This shift is highlighted in the
increased militarization of the police at an unprecedented scale as the federal government spends billions of dollars in military hardware by producing militarized subjects to combat the supposed terrorist threat (Giroux, 2008; Hall, 2017; McLoughlin, 2013).

There has been a systematic transfer of military equipment by the DoD and the DHS to bolster local civilian law enforcement agencies under the banner of fighting terrorism (McLoughlin, 2013). Police forces while able to employ physical coercive force are intended in spirit to “use the least amount of violence possible in the maintenance of peace and internal security, bound by regulation and accountable to civil society” (Kraska, 2007; Brown, 2011; McLoughlin, 2013, p. 90). The military, in contrast, is intended to respect the Republican contract (Levy, 2013) which dictates that the military composed of citizen-soldiers is authorized to execute the external will of the state and has free reign to employ violence against its designated targets. Regrettably since 9/11, the line between civilian police and state military has since been blurred because the two bodies have collated. As the network of police law enforcement began adopting the ideological and material culture of the military, boundaries regulating their respective functions collapsed (McLoughlin, 2013; Lieblich and Shinar, 2017). Since 9/11, speech acts espoused by law enforcement agencies and respective of their institutionalized state-centric political interests is one of waging war on terrorism and social problems. The consequence of such discourse is evidenced in law enforcement agencies across the country increasingly modeling their policing units using a military paradigm known as Paramilitary Policing Units (PPU) commonly known as SWAT teams. Kraska (2007, p. 6) and Kraska and Kappeler (1997) ethnographic research lamented that as of the late 1990s near 90% of police departments in the U.S. had a PPU, almost double of what existed in the 1980s (Kraska, 2007). This increase is compounded with a 1400% increase in the total number of police paramilitary deployments between 1980 and 2000 which means that there are over 40,000 PPU deployed every year (Kraska, 2007; Kraska & Kappeler, 1997). PPU’s derive their appearance, tactics, values, and beliefs from a military ideology that further distinguishes these units from everyday police (Kraska, 2007, p. 6). PPU’s culture is characterized as “distinct techno-warrior garb, heavy weaponry, sophisticated technology, hyper-masculinity, and dangerous function” (Kraska, 2007, p. 6; McLoughlin, 2013). Their use of non-standard camouflage or all black uniform knows as Battle Dress Uniforms (BDUs) further emphasizes their distinctness from traditional police uniform thereby reinforcing their military warrior pedagogy (Balko, 2011; McLoughlin, 2013). Balko’s (2011) ethnographic research has also shown that a more militarized uniform can change both public perception of the police and how police see their own role in the community.

In relation to equipment, police departments currently possess battlefield military equipment. Law enforcement agencies benefited from the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security after 9/11 which enabled agencies to access billions of dollars’ worth of equipment through federal funded programs such as the Urban Area Security Initiation (UASI) to pursue the “needs of the new war on terrorism” (Brown, 2011; McLoughlin, 2013, p. 91). These programs granted police agencies grenade launchers, armored personnel carriers, assault rifles, and even tanks for both paramilitary units and everyday policing (Brown, 2011; McLoughlin, 2013). In 2007, Clayton County Georgia whose sheriff complained that “the war on terrorism and drugs is being fought like Vietnam and should be fought like the D-Day invasion at Normandy” received his first tank in 2008 (Balko, 2011). In 2008, South Carolina Sheriff Leon Lott procured an M113A1 armored personnel carrier which moves on tank-like tracks with a turreted machine gun that utilizes .50-caliber rounds (Balko, 2011). Departments in Indianapolis and Chicago also acquired sophisticated heavy weaponry such as M-79 grenade launchers and several M-16s; all in the name of fighting terror (Balko, 2011).

Like any military campaign and war, law enforcement agencies require intelligence on the supposed enemy. Since 9/11, U.S. domestic rise of surveillance and intelligence gathering apparatus has also catalyzed the development of militarized law enforcement. With the formation of DHS in 2002, the U.S. administration consolidated a legislative and administrative framework under “which numerous domestic intelligence gathering agencies could operate with expanded power”
The result of this consolidation is the development of intelligence processing hubs known as fusion centers which mine civilian information using grants extended by the DHS to state and local law enforcement agencies (McLoughlin, 2013; Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014). Through fusion centers, security analysts generate threat profiles based on aggregated data received from law enforcement agencies which gather passive or soft data generated by the internet, cell phone use, and proactive surveillance operations (McLoughlin, 2013). Consequently, this information is then passed on to law enforcement agencies to execute pre-emptive, counter-terrorist operations against threats to national security. Just as there was an expansion in state authorized military material to law enforcement agencies, there was in conjunction an increased demand in policies that regulate domestic surveillance that has exponentially increased since the passing of the Patriot Act in October of 2001 (Bentley, 2012). It should be noted however that those two elements form a powerful synergy that make salient the pathos of state sponsored terrorism. Intelligence fusion centers form threat based profiles using privileged access to government and private information database. These profiles are citizens presumed as terrorists or insecure bodies to be targeted with a police force that resembles the U.S. National Army (McLoughlin, 2013).

These threat assessments generated by information hubs enable extensive political and racial (Othering) profiling by the (terrorist) state which is then followed up by on the ground investigations (Balko, 2014; McLoughlin, 2013; Monahan, 2010). For instance, PPU’s and intelligence agencies have increased surveillance on Maryland’s peace, and anti-death penalty advocacy organization despite officers reporting no signs of the violent intent of activity throughout the course of the investigation (Monahan, 2010, p. 89; McLoughlin, 2013). These activists under surveillance were then categorized as engaging in terrorist activity by state security networks which subsequently authorized law enforcement agencies to further marginalize political dissent by setting the parameters for acceptable political expression which increasingly criminalizes citizens engaged in protesting state policies. Ironically, even though activism and political contestation is a constitutional democratic right, the institutionalized orthodox definition of terrorism is limited in labeling such events as terrorism since activists are citizens of a state—thus necessarily state and non-state actors. Nevertheless according to McLoughlin (2013, p. 95), state networks of power pursuing the discursive labeling of activists in Maryland as domestic terrorism to justify terrorizing actions points to the expression of an “institutionalized political will designed to marginalize and isolate particular types of political behavior. The label of ‘terrorism’ designates an enemy for law enforcement to pursue; attacking terrorism provides ample justification and heavy-handed prosecution”.

At this point one can surely detect that the attacks on the World Trade Center by non-state terrorist actions catalyzed the development of state terrorism by enacting more militarized law-enforcement policies, increased surveillance, and ethnocentric intelligence gathering (McLoughlin, 2013). This becomes especially salient when we highlight the process in which the state socially constructed citizens as subjects of insecurity thereby increasing the propensity of police militarization and state surveillance becoming a supposed integral response to eliminate terrorism (Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014). The problem with this “mangling of domestic policing with military operations” (Balko, 2014) or blurring the “line between police and military” (Kraska, 2007) is that the modern democratic nation-state experience has explicitly demarcated the police and military as two distinct agents of security (Giddens, 1985). The U.S. military is thought to handle external security through the threat and practice of war, while civilian police should be handling internal security through the enforcement of federal and local laws (Kraska, 2007). The Posse Comitatus Act in 1878 was passed because constitutional lawyers recognized the divergence in function of the police and the military. Police are domestic peacekeepers whose job is to uphold the law and protect the rights of citizens—offender and victims alike—by reverting to violence as a last resort (Hall, 2017)—while the military has a job of annihilating a foreign enemy. The outcome of this process which includes the pedagogical fusion of the soldier and civilian peacekeeper further develops “the militarist mindset of viewing crime as a threat to national
security and alleged lawbreakers as enemy combatants: both to be executed as such” (Kraska, 2007; McLoughlin, 2013, p. 90). Therefore, it is an ethical and moral obligation that we go beyond the (positivist) consequentialist argument which states that a more militarized police leads to excessive force since that could be resolved with extensive training and discipline because the problem remains that civilian police resemble the military (Lieblish and Shinar, 2017, 2018).

Critical terrorism research argues going beyond adopting problem-solving/cause-effect methods in explaining the issue of police militarization to identify the core problem with police militarization which is that it establishes a presumption of threat thereby justifying state-sanctioned terrorism using a discourse that labels these activities as a preventative force or preventative counter-terrorism measures (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014; Lieblish and Shinar, 2017, 2018). A presumption of threat normalizes a state of war which presumes that those being policed are threatening to the point which justifies the deployment of combat ready-forces becomes legally sanctioned. With the terrorist state replacing the social state—because the possibilities of democracy are now answered not with the rule of law, but with the threat of violence (Giroux, 2008)—this turns on its head the Weberian social/republican contract since a self-confessed liberal order must assume the exact opposite. Citizens cannot be presumed to be a threat because “if the state is to be any different from the nasty and brutish reality of the Hobbesian state of nature…the threat/non-threat dialectic is a key difference between liberal democracies and totalitarian states” (Libelish and Shinar, 2017).

Furthermore, the danger of police militarization presuming citizens as threats implies that policing has become 1) preventative rather than reactive, and 2) collective in blame rather than individualistic. In the case of the former, the increase in PPU deployments reflects the police “anticipating” extreme violence which demands a combat response. In the latter, the danger of police militarization is that it tends to assume collectively that all citizens are assumed to be potentially violent, thus a threat to national security. Peoples and Williams (2014), Lieblish and Shinar (2017, 2018) highlight the danger of police militarization presuming a priori citizens’ as threats by affirming that when militarization becomes normalized, the presumption of threat becomes normalized, and when it is the police that becomes militarized, normalization of the presumption of threat is enhanced because the police—in difference to the military—belong to the realm of normal politics (desecuritized) rather than exceptional legal order (securitized). Military power accentuated in the militarization of the police is a biopolitical force which produces identities, goods, knowledge, modes of communication, and affective investments which bears down on all other aspects of social life and the social order which undermines the liberal democratic struggle and hope for a better future (Giroux, 2008, p. 60).

The presumption of threat13 is a law that is foundational in armed conflict as the enemy is presumed threatening and thus targetable. The process in which preventative counter-terrorism measures are adopted to neutralize the threat or develop fear is then channeled to the policed community through perceptible symbolism such as equipment, weapons, or vehicles. This is a reminder to the policed community, that law enforcement perceives the policed community as enemy or in the words of Carl Schmitt as “excluded from the body politic”, for even if the militarized police does not engage in actual combat and/or put into use the military equipment extended to them by the DHS, the mere deployment of militarized police carries the symbolic power to exclude the policed community from the political community (Lieblish and Shinar, 2017, 2018). The state being intentionally involved in terrorism is clear in this case since one can identify (state) terrorism even in cases where the intention “to terrorise”—inferred or explicitly stated—is not the primary intention (Blakeley, 2009, p. 43). Ethnographic research conducted by Kraska (2007) and Balko (2011) highlights the extent to which presuming citizens as a body of insecurity has been internalized by law enforcement agencies. Their research noticed the DHS agency extending grants to police departments to acquire military equipment, even though they were located in areas i.e. Winnebago County, Wisconsin; Longview, Texas; Sante Fe, New Mexico, with low homicides rates and is implausible terrorist targets (Coburn, 2012; McLoughlin, 2013). Fargo,
a city in North Dakota, with fewer than two homicides per year since 2005, was granted an armored truck with a turret gun, while Burbank in California replaced its older, unused, armored BearCat truck with an updated version (Coburn, 2012; McLoughlin, 2013). Similarly, Senator Tom Coburn’s inquiry highlighted the extent in which law enforcement agencies internalized citizens being a threat when he noticed that the DHS granted such a high volume of military equipment to low crime locations that the DHS began extending “how to” guides to acquire a variety of military material (Coburn, 2012; McLoughlin, 2013).

If we consider an act of state terrorism as being defined as “a deliberate act of violence against individuals that the state has a duty to protect, or a threat of such an act if a climate of fear has already been established through preceding acts of state violence threats” (Raphael, 2010, p. 165; Jarvis & Lister, 2014, p. 55); or as “acts of violence carried out by representatives of the state against civilians to instill fear for political purposes” (Blakeley, 2007, p. 228); or as Bigo (2009) and Peoples and Williams (2014) highlight “illiberal practices” that include adopting severe legislature included in the Patriot Act leading to the development of a more sophisticated technology for mass surveillance, exchange of individual data, and the merging of the vision and role of the police, military, and intelligence agencies in response to the perceived threat of terrorism; then it is without a doubt that since the securitization of terrorism occurred after 9/11, liberal democratic governments have adopted terroristic practices/illiberal practices to cope with terrorism (Blakeley & Raphael, 2016). These eclectic definitions destabilize the post-9/11 militarized security paradigm adopted in the U.S. which further blurred the line between “citizen” and “enemy”, “military” and “police” by privileging “the logic of security over liberty” that formed a “generalized suspicion” of citizens being terrorists to justify “illiberal practices through references to exceptional national security imperatives” (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014, p. 149). The danger of such paradigm sanctioned by state security networks is that by presuming citizens as terrorists (Bigo, 2009), the state authorizes counter-terrorist initiatives—such as the increased militarization of police—that is decoupled from judiciary control; and the intensification of surveillance techniques which involve not “only a watchful gaze of the state over the citizen, but also vigilance among citizens” (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014, p. 150).

This section was interested in seeking instances of sanctioned domestic state terrorism by concentrating on major examples such as the militarization of police and increased surveillance that inform the necessity in broadening mainstream terrorism scholarship. For this reason, an appeal to broaden terrorism studies’ conceptual framework is necessary if we are serious in highlighting unconstitutional acts of state sanctioned terrorism that would have otherwise been overlooked because they fall under the label of “counter-terrorism measures” and more importantly because they adhere to an orthodox methodology and ontology of terrorism (Blakeley, 2010, 2012). Terrorism studies being methodologically eclectic by including qualitative methodologies that recast the state in the definition of terrorism studies as not possessing singular agency—but is in contrast a plural decentered terrain that is interwoven with a variety of security agencies—drastically reshapes our understanding of how state terrorism becomes legal because its subjects (citizens) are constructed as presumed terrorists. The final section is interested in highlighting the benefits of identifying education spaces as sites for the development of CTS oppositional critical pedagogy to state sanctioned militarized/terroristic pedagogy.

4. Au lieu a conclusion let’s suggest practicing OCP as a way forward

4.1. An oppositional critical pedagogy and immanent critique targeting militarized pedagogy
Since to be critical means one has to have some normative notion of what is wrong and how things should be different, it is then no surprise that the critical project of terrorism studies has been explicitly framed within an emancipatory framework (Gunning, 2007, p. 385; Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014). Addressing terrorism studies from an emancipatory approach is necessary to reflect on the limit of dominant (terrorism) research concepts and their application to particular
contexts. Addressing CTS from an emancipatory lens has proven to be useful in this manuscript because by broadening terrorism scholarship we are capable of posing different research questions and provide philosophical anchorage to voices and critical analyses that are perceived a priori peripheral and/or marginalized because they do not adhere to an ontology located among orthodox scholars conceptualizing terrorism (Blakeley, 2010; Booth, 1999; McDonald, 2009). The appeal to broaden terrorism studies can be understood as a process of emancipation that seeks to free up space to engage in dialogue—or speak security—with security experts and policy-makers thereby enabling a focus on neglected critical questions such as the militarization of law enforcement—the danger of perceiving citizens as terrorist threats—by incorporating the state as a perpetrator of terrorism. After all, emancipation resembles the original meaning of “imminent critique” (Gunning, 2007) that underpinned the critical project which involves engaging with core commitments of particular orthodox terrorism discourses and institutional arrangements, with the prospect of discovering the latent potentials in situations i.e. educational spaces, on which to build and initiate political change and social progress. To practice oppositional critical pedagogy and emancipate terrorism studies one would need to adhere to a CTS that is already contesting and immanently critiquing societal militarization by opposing educational spaces being sites that (re) produce and sanctify terrorist/warfare state actions which impede the rights of citizens enshrined in the democratic experience of modern northern liberal states.

The university as a site of immanent critique, dissent, and critical pedagogical dialogue has been demoralized with the increased alliance between the university and the (national) warfare state after the tragic events of September 11th. While higher education in the U.S. has long developed relations with hegemonic (political) statist actors during the Cold War with programs such as COINTERLPRO (Chomsky, Nader, Wallerstein, & Lwontin, 1998; Giroux, 2008), the post 9/11 resurgence of “patriotic commitment and support on the part of faculty and administrators towards the increasing militarization of daily life runs the risk of situating academia within a larger project in which the militarized narratives, values and pedagogical practices of the warfare state” (Armitage, 2005; Giroux, 2008, p. 58) has become widespread. Similar to the appeals of broadening CTS being ignored by hegemonic pedagogical discourses, the transformation of educational sites becoming vital production and reproduction spaces of militarized subjects and hypermodern militarized knowledge factory, has also largely been ignored as a subject of public concern and critical debate (Armitage, 2005, p. 221; Giroux, 2008). To address this lacuna in academic education and provide CTS fertile academic space to address questions of state-sanctioned terrorism, educators need to first reclaim higher education as a democratic public sphere that provides the pedagogical conditions for students to be critical agents “who connect learning to expanding and deepening the struggle for genuine democratization...students should be versed in the importance of the social contract, and provide classrooms opportunities to become informed citizens” (Giroux, 2008, p. 72). Motivated thus, any serious opposition to OTS and its militarized ontological pedagogy will demand the development of an oppositional critical pedagogy as a counter-hegemonic form of cultural politics that raises the issues of how education might be understood as a moral and political practice that takes place in variety of sites outside of schools (Giroux, 2008, p. 72). CTS as an approach identified through an OCP pedagogy develops a kind of a praxis that addresses the processes required to develop a rigorous immanent critique of dominant conceptions of terrorism studies while identifying education as a pedagogical space of learning not only through “the critical consumption of knowledge” but also through its production for peaceful and emancipatory ends.

Approaching terrorism studies through a critical oppositional pedagogy that leads to emancipation allows us to discover voices that are marginalized and silenced, while at the same time, and most importantly, recognizing whose voices are primarily heard and prioritized in defining terrorism. As terrorizing state actors increase the militarized frame monopolizing dominant mediums of communication and interaction, students, activists, and educators must imagine ways to expand the limits of OTS to enable critical educators to shape the future of terrorism studies scholarship by not simply negotiating the old media forms, but also generate new electronic (alternative) media.
that bypasses (positivist) forms of media that proliferate (instrumental reasoning of) militarized and terrorizing pedagogy (Giroux, 2008). It should be noted that instrumental reason objectifies the media and journalism as mere means of communication to achieve the ends of capitalism, i.e., its reproduction through capital accumulation and concentration of power. Auguste Comte, the father of positivism and communication studies, argued that the role of the media and social science is to promote the adjustment of consciousness to systemic structures (Comte, 2002; Klaehn et al., 2018, p. 168). Positivism advocates for the eviction of moral values in media analysis. But this is impossible since what happens in reality is that instrumental reason is grounded in the values of capitalism. On the other hand, emancipatory reason questions existing ends, intends to promote new ends of human dignity, and reflects on how the media can become appropriate means for the population to develop their own awareness and critical analysis (Klaehn et al., 2018, p. 168). It does not attempt to persuade people to comply with objectives that have been established by external powers, but instead aims to show and explain the world so that citizens can establish their own objectives. Emancipatory reason focuses on how communication can provide tools for people to think how they can free themselves from oppressive structures and builds a more just society on the grounds of shared knowledge and collective action (Klaehn et al., 2018, p. 169). In the early twentieth century, Antonio Gramsci, In Hoare, and In Nowell-Smith (1971) contended that any social order and dominant historical bloc relies not only on violence and coercion, but also on the production of cultural hegemony, which leads to the attachment of the subordinate classes to the worldview and interests of the dominant (bourgeois) classes. This cultural hegemony aligned with the early (positivist) founders of U.S. communication studies such as Edward Bernays and Paul Lazarsfeld which believed that a sophisticated system of propaganda was needed to persuade the masses to comply with the interests of the dominant classes (Caranana, Broudy, and Klaehn, 2018, p. 7).

What is noteworthy is that it is these positivist theories of the early founders of U.S. communication that provided the intellectual and historical foundation upon which Herman and Chomsky constructed the propaganda model (PM). However, it should be noted that while the work of Herman and Chomsky pays homage to positivist thinkers, it is mostly aligned with the Frankfurt School of analysis. Frankfurt's main starting point as mentioned earlier is the critique of instrumental reason reified by positivists. Capitalism is a society that is based on instrumental reason: capital tries to instrumentalise human labour, domination tries to instrumentalise the public, and ideology tries to instrumentalise human consciousness for partial interests. Critical approaches to communication and media differ from (positivist) bourgeois approaches in that the latter take the instrumental character of communication and power structures for granted and neutrally describe who communicates what to whom in which medium with what effect, whereas critical approaches show what role communication plays in power structures and into what contradictions of society it is embedded (Blakeley, 2009, 2011; Klaehn et al., 2018, p. 169). For instance, Herman and Chomsky's PM predicts that media typically treat victims of oppression and state-sponsored terrorism differently depending upon the perpetrators by making salient that there will be qualitative and quantitative differences in treatment accorded as "unworthy victims" and "worthy victims" (Klaehn, 2002, p. 166). By adopting a critical approach to communication, Herman and Chomsky used qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to make salient the limitations of positivist liberal gatekeeping studies prioritizing micro-issues when investigating journalistic selection and production processes in newsrooms. When building the PM, Herman and Chomsky consequently argued for the need to navigate both micro and macrolevel news media analyses thus not reifying a relativist (positivist) approach in analysing (unworthy) victims of terror located in the South compared to "worthy" victims located in the North. Here we notice being critical and emancipatory as indistinguishable notions since the remedy offered by critical terrorism scholars to close the gap between CTS and OTS is possible by adopting a critical pedagogy that emancipates terrorism studies by being concerned with the “diffusion of power to speak security” resulting in the opening up of space to engage in dialogue between OTS and CTS scholars.

After all, the first section of this manuscript crystallized the notion of emancipation by appealing to the need to recognize the importance of policy engagement. It maintained that to remain
critical and academically responsible, we need to imminently critique the limits placed on scholars by adhering to the orthodox theoretical framework of most terrorist scholarship and the way spaces for dialogue are still dominated, constructed, and limited to realist problem-solving approaches. It highlighted similar to Tilly (2004), Blakeley (2007), and Jackson et al. (2017) that terrorism studies is still to a large extent an institutionalized domain that privileges state-centric solutions to terrorism—militarization of law enforcement and increase in surveillance—and conceptualizes terrorism using an institutionalized Weberian, positivist, and problem-solving discourse that excludes the state as an agent of terrorism. It also highlighted the pursuit needed by critical scholars to make salient the setbacks produced by reinforcing orthodox assumptions of what constitutes terrorism because it reinforces a false claim that liberal (state) democracies are simply agents that counter terror but never conduct terror because they act to “uphold liberal values and protect their populations from threats” (Blakeley, 2007, p. 233, 2012). Taken together, these immanent critiques rejuvenated appeals to broaden terrorism studies by reclaiming the term terrorism as an analytical tool that does not take institutional and social power relations for granted, but calls them into question.

In other sections we also imminently criticized the rhetorical and policy commitments adopted by executive members and security experts in the Patriot Act to allegedly counter terrorism thereby defending democracy and protecting liberal values. It highlighted using qualitative and quantitative data that the case of police militarization and increase in surveillance reveal the suspicion of these “national counter-terrorism measures” because the state ejects the citizen from the political community by presuming them as a terrorist threat and a body of insecurity. We also took the opportunity to highlight situations that reveal the pressing need of emancipating terrorism studies in redefining terrorism to include the state as perpetrator of violence since terrorism should be defined “as tactic and not an ideology, therefore, making any state of any kind capable of such violence” (Blakeley, 2007). Rather than simply critiquing the problems of terrorism scholarship being dominated by state-centric positivist scholars and issues coming from an unproblematized acceptance of problem-solving theorization, the following final section suggests a solution to the current decaying political social environment. While considering the fact that the critical turn of terrorism has already exacerbated tensions between critical and traditional scholars, we propose similar to Gunning (2007) that such tension could be turned into a creative pursuit by emphasizing the need for inclusion and cooperation. As pointed by Gunning’s (2007) seminal symposium “even while historicizing the state and oppositional violence, and challenging the state’s role in reproducing oppositional violence”, we cannot dispense away the term but should appreciate the importance of the state as a concept of the modern liberal state which embodies a coherent response to the many central problems of political life. By complementing, rather than supplanting traditional approaches, OTS must overcome the hubristic approach of the state being approached as possessing some degree of singular agency by pursuing “objectivity” and a statist focus inferred from the problem-solving approach. By recasting the state as a plural decentered terrain, intermingled with other state security agencies, we are capable of foregrounding the emancipatory objective of CTS by expressing its commitments to the “values and priorities of universal human rights and societal security, rather than traditional narrowly defined conceptions of national security in which the state takes precedence over any other actor” (Jackson, 2007, p. 249; Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014, p. 140).

4.2. Emancipating terrorism studies

Emancipation is a necessary appeal to be considered by terrorism scholars since President Donald Trump has stated that he will defend program 1033 because it “is an excellent program that enhances community safety” (Hall, 2017) and since he thought that the nomination of David Clarke as assistant secretary to the DHS who is on the record stating that members of Black Lives Matter (BLM)—whom he calls “Black Lies Matter”—are “black slime” and should stop trying to “fix the police” but should instead “fix the ghetto” (Chait, 2017) is a “democratic” idea. Not only that, Clarke symbolizes the dominance of OTS (militarized) pedagogy still informing the highest echelons of political power by refusing to conceptualize the state as
perpetrator of terrorism but rather indicates in his book that the DHS should “assume police-state powers to round up internal enemies, scoop them up, charge them with treason, and under habeas corpus, detain them indefinitely at GITMO” (Chait, 2017). This is nothing short of an uncritical and unaccountable militarized punishing state which we are historically acquainted with since the American government included torture as integral to its military and clandestine operations overseas as made visible in the prisons of Abu Ghraib in Iraq, GITMO in Cuba, Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan, and numerous other detention centers known as CIA black sites. OTS refusing to consider or cooperate with the findings of the “critical” turn will be highly costly in terms of knowledge lost through fragmentation because emancipation and immanent critique seek to go beyond “critique and deconstruction” in order to offer a perspective that positively constructs an agenda for social change.

Since 9/11 it has become salient that the security of the state is more important than upholding democratic values and citizenship rights (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2014). Cox rightly observes that one needs to combine critical and problem-solving approaches to be policy relevant and to fulfill the potential emancipation of terrorism studies (Gunning, 2007, p. 387). More recently, Lisa Stampnitzky (2010, p. 3) suggested that we ought to expand our vision to incorporate the many arenas of expertise that occupy interstitial spaces, moving and travelling between multiple approaches of terrorism. She suggests that since the industry of terrorism has been dominated by statist and elitist think-tanks, we should “pay more attention to processes of reflexivity, in which the models and discourses of social scientists travel among and influence those actors whom they are intended to describe (Stampnitzky, 2010, p. 17). Therefore, since practicing OCP requires reflexivity it should be underlined that scholars cannot claim to be reflexive and emancipatory by prioritizing CTS as an approach and overlooking the contributions of OTS scholars, but rather should navigate both approaches and utilize their contributions to the field of terrorism. Failing to do so would make CTS scholars guilty of what they accuse OTS of—hubris and a lack of reflexivity. In other words, scholars who adhere to a CTS approach while practicing OCP with the objective of emancipating terrorism studies should make it clear to researchers and readers of terrorism research that CTS scholars are not so much interested in “disciplining terrorism” as much as they are interested in freeing up terrorism from a problem solving straightjacket that hinders scholars “navigating different disciplinary boundaries” regardless if they are influenced by positivist and/or critical conceptualizations of terrorism that adopt qualitative and/or quantitative data collection techniques.

The wretched state of affairs of domestic state terrorism being overlooked because of institutionalized scholarly differences is intrinsically related to academics insufficiently challenging policy-makers to question the basis of their policies and develop new policies based on an OCP. The lack of scholarly activism by critical circles suggests that they are still concerned with the deconstruction of the status quo, and have not fully internalized emancipation. Critical scholars need to persist in demanding the reconstruction of terrorism scholarship by considering alternative orthodox and non-orthodox discourses related to terrorism and counter-terrorism because aside from moral concerns, “suspending liberal democratic values to fight terrorism risks undermining the efficacy of the anti-terror campaign” (McDonald, 2009). Critical scholars and orthodox scholars need to recognize the contributions of all scholars in the field of terrorism as having merit as opposed to dividing them, thus hindering the objective of emancipation.

Our appeal is that for terrorism studies to become more policy-relevant it requires developing new policies based on an OCP that valorizes demilitarization thus rejuvenating an entreaty to include marginalized research questions ignored by the industry of OTS which reifies a problemsolving approach. A number of issues that present themselves as opportunities for critical and orthodox terrorism scholars to collaborate include among others: analyzing the (neoliberal) political economy of terrorist groups in the Global South and their relation to Global North intelligence agencies; the unintended consequences of increased civilian casualties since state security agencies revert to Private Military Contractors (PMC)—who are not accountable to the justice
system—to neutralize “internally presumed terrorists” (Al-Kassimi, 2017; Gilsinan, 2015; Isenberg, 2009; Scallill, 2009); the degree in which fighting terrorism by curtailing civil liberties runs the risk of constituting intentional state terrorism; the degree in which the privatization of law enforcement embodying hegemonic masculine traits (Agathangelou, 2007; Agathangelou & Zalewski, 2005; Blakeley, 2011) suggests that the state is engaging in gender terrorism; how is the democratic experience destabilized when considering that a recent report released in April 2017 by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GOA) labelled anti-governments groups and environmental organizations advocating for federal ownership of public lands as “perpetrators of terrorism” even though they are expressing their democratic right? (Ford, Sims, Sterman, & Bergen, 2017; Valverde, 2017); and finally, how does adopting a critical decolonial (Al-Kassimi, 2018) or a post-colonial research program give credence to state terrorism possessing an element of ethnocentricty by producing threatening terrorist profiles that are disproportionality identified in areas located in the Third World and/or almost always constituting minority groups as recently noticed in U.S. cities such as Baltimore, Michigan, Missouri, New Orleans, Ferguson, and North Dakota?.

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Notes
1. Jackson, Jarvis, Gunning, and Smyth (2011, p. 160) highlight the limit found in the traditional methodology of studying terrorism by saying that “to obscure all the many and important similarities between acts of state terrorism and acts of non-state terrorism...The analytical blindness brought about by these separate categories can then be an obstacle to the knowledge that could potentially be gained by considering them together”.
2. By reflexive I am highlighting the importance CTS scholars place on being methodologically flexible in adopting quantitative and/or qualitative methods to answer and/or develop research questions.
3. Raphael (2010, p. 165) notes that “state terrorism can be understood as a deliberate act of violence against individuals that the state has a duty to protect, or a threat of such an act if a climate of fear has already been established through preceding acts of state violence...which is intended to induce extreme fear in some target observers who identify with the victims”.
4. Giroux (1985, p. 88) mentions concerning oppositional critical pedagogy that “Critical intellectuals are ideologically oppositional but do not see themselves as connected either to a specific social formation or as performing a general social function that is expressively political in nature. Their protests constitute a critical function, which they see as part of their professional status or obligation as intellectuals. In most cases, the posture of critical intellectuals is self-consciously “apolitical,” and their relationship to the rest of society is best defined as free-floating. As individuals they are critical of inequality and injustice”.
5. A speech act is a securitization move articulated by security actors that ensues when an issue not previously thought of as a security threat (threatening a referent object) begins being spoken of as a security issue by officials with political capital.
6. This was once again confirmed in the February 2019 Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS meeting of 79 coalition partners including the U.S. that prioritized a militarized approach in fighting terrorism.
7. In other words, while some scholars might conduct interviews, they are interviewing the terrorist to substantiate their already preconceived assumptions that terrorists conduct terrorism because they are terrorists—a clear tautology. More on this in note 8.
8. The Republican contract dictates that the military composed of citizen-soldiers is the sole authority authorized to execute the external will of the state and has free reign to employ violence against its designated targets which are external (foreign) to its borders. The republican contract is essential to the democratic experience post-French and American revolutionary wars since the republican contract is the foundation of the Hobbesian social contract which notes that the sovereign has the duty to protect their citizens.
9. Here I utilize a conceptual framework adopted and elaborated in my doctoral research entitled “Syrian Displacement is the (Creative) Chaos of the Arab Spring: Defensive Imperialism Multiplying Exceptional Zones—An Unstable Compound of Necrocapitalism & Necropolitics”.
10. Condoleezza Rice famously stated in 2006 that “anarchy that involves reforms and democratic transformations in the Middle East is a constructive
one to the extent that it can create a much better and more acceptable situation than the one existing today in this part of the world” (Chican, 2013, p. 3). This creative anarchy—also known as constructive chaos—was highlighted also in the doctrine of Shock and Awe.

11. Lisa Stampnitzky (2016, pp. 179–180) mentioned in her book that negotiations with terrorists are not optimal in advancing the field of terrorism. She highlights that the “conceptualization of the terrorist as evil, irrational, and immune to both rational explanation, and second, the emergence of terrorism as a problem that resists rational techniques of management and governance [have] led to the proposition that terrorists commit terrorism because they are terrorists. The identity contains its own explanation: ‘terrorists’ are evil, irrational actors whose actions are not normal moral norms but, instead, by their very nature as terrorists. According to this framework, terrorists did not necessarily commit acts of violence for any rational political purpose (as they claimed) but, rather, because of their inherently evil nature.”

12. As Gillis (1989, p. 1) argues, militarism in difference to militarization is “the older concept, usually defined as either the dominance of the military over civilian authority, or more generally, as the prevalence of warlike values in a society”. Similarly, Giroux (2008, p. 59) argues that “militarism is often viewed as a retrograde concept because it characterizes a society in which military values and beliefs reside exclusively in a ruling group or class...it is derived for its anti-democratic tendency to either celebrate or legitimate hierarchy of authority in which civil society is subordinate to military power...militarism makes visible the often contradictory principles and values between military institutions and the more liberal and democratic values of civil society. Militarism as an ideology has deep roots in American society, thought it has never had enough force to transform an often-faltering liberal democracy into a military dictatorship”.

13. Lieblish and Shinar (2018, p. 1) state that “a presumption of threat...assumes that citizens, usually from marginalized communities, pose a threat that might require the use of extreme violence. This presumption, communicated consciously through the deployment of militarized police, marks the policed community as an enemy, and thereby excludes it from the body politic. Crucially, the pervasiveness of police militarization has led to its normalization, thus exacerbating its exclusionary effect. Indeed, whereas the domestic deployment of military forces has always been reserved for exceptional times, the process of police militarization has normalized what was once exceptional”.

14. À La Gramsci et al. (1971).

15. Pedagogy here is understood in Giroux’s (2008, p. 72) terms where he says that it “is fundamentally concerned with the relations among politics, subjectivities and cultural and material production, and takes place not only in schools, but also through the myriad technologies and locations that produce and shape the educational force of the wider culture”. For more information on this conceptualization see Antonio Gramsci et al. (1971).

16. See also, Paulo Freire (1973).

17. Counter the “common-sensical” (superstructural) hegemonic aesthetics espoused by the (hegemonic) political society.

18. Giroux (2008, p. 75) states that the “militarization of everyday life—from the production of video games to the uncritical analysis of war and violence in the nightly news—must be challenged through alternative media. Examples of this type of oppositional public pedagogy is evident in the work of a wide range of individuals and groups who make cultural politics and public pedagogy central to the opposition to a number of anti-democratic forces” such as the militarization of the police force.

19. From a positivist-behaviourist functionalist perspective, the founding figures of U.S. Communication offered elaborated theories for alternative terms of the “engineering of consent”, “crystallisation of public opinion”, “management of the public mind”, or “public relations”. In their view, regarding the governance of society, since there remains many fundamental issues evidently too important and complicated to be left in the hands of what they saw as the ignorant masses, the ruling classes would need effective ideological and axiological tools to maintain their dominance in an increasingly complex world that might otherwise see the widespread emergence of movements toward genuine social justice. Elemental to these conceptual tools were Sigmund Freud’s theories of psychoanalysis, which would serve to hasten public consent to new behaviours (e.g. consumerism and indebtedness), to the establishment of repressive policies (e.g. curbing workers’ rights) and to decisions the population did not originally desire (e.g. war) (Caranano, Broudy, and Kloehn, 2018, p. 7).

20. On 21 May 2018 Gina Haspel assumed the position of the Director of the CIA. In 2002 Haspel became chief of a CIA “black site” base located in Thailand. She also worked at a site that was codenamed “Cat’s Eye”, which would later become known as the place where suspected Al Qaeda terrorist members such as Ab al-Rahim al-Nashiri was detained and tortured with waterboarding.

21. Operation Timber Sycamore is one of the most recent covert missions funded and orchestrated by the CIA in collusion with European and Arab intelligence agencies which extended financial and logistical backing to mercenaries engaging in constructive anarchy in Syria.

22. Members of congress have attempted to prosecute activists contesting the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) at Standing Rock as terrorists. Guha (2017) mentions that “in case a military-style takeover wasn’t enough to deter pipeline protesters at Standing Rock, some congressional lawmakers are pushing to treat environmental activists like terrorists. A group of 80 congressional Republicans and four Texas Democrats in October submitted a letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions asking him to look into the possibility of prosecuting pipeline protesters under the domestic terrorism statute. The bipartisan group claims that “maintaining safe and reliable energy infrastructure is a matter of national security.” Research conducted by New America—An American think-tank—highlights that the terrorist threat in the United States is almost entirely homegrown, as no foreign terrorist organization has successfully directed and orchestrated an attack in the United States since 9/11 (Ford et al., 2017). Of the 418 individuals tracked by New America who are accused of jihadist terrorism related crimes in the United States since 9/11, 85 percent of them were either U.S. citizens or U.S. legal residents, and about half were born American citizens (Ford et al., 2017; Valverde, 2017).
23. I make a distinction between Decoloniality à la Mignolo and Post-colonialism à la Said. Jackson et al. (2017) highlights that a postcolonial approach in tackling issues relating to terrorism is rarely adopted.

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