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## **Constructing an American fear culture from red scares to terrorism**

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**Abstract:** Building on the work of social analysts who have identified the emerging culture of fear in the USA, this article argues that the current fears about terrorism derive from deliberate campaigns by the world capitalism's elites. It traces the history of political scares since the late 19th century to show an evolution from red scares to terrorism. While acknowledging the complexities of cultural constructions, the obsession with terrorism is shown as an outgrowth and offspring of earlier, anti-communist hysterias in the USA.

**Keywords:** terrorism; fear; red scare; McCarthyism; capitalism; racism; communism; USA.

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## 1 Introduction

Fears seem to be a forceful mechanism of social and political indoctrination for human beings. Although, ruling elites legitimate their authority by the introduction of certain enemy, there are some cultures that made from fear, their stepping stone. In this vein, Furedi (1997, 2007) and Glassner (1999) have convincingly argued that Americans and other Anglophones, especially those in Britain and the settler countries, Australia and Canada, have produced a culture of terror. That culture induces a generalised fear among the populations of those countries. With a focus on the USA, I argue that the culture of fear has evolved from the kind of fear associated with the anticommunist hysteria in the years following the Second World War and its predecessor red scares to its current incarnation of the terrorism obsession. While recognising popular participation in constructing this culture of fear, I further argue that elites in the centres of world capitalism have fostered its construction with planning and deliberation. It did not just happen. It did not arise from vague social forces and change. It is possible to lay the main responsibility for it at the feet of a relatively small number of powerful people. This essay is an interpretive work. It does not purport to offer new empirical data; it interprets that already existing, much of it historical. Further, it makes different if not novel inferences to support an argument about US culture. The term 'culture' here is broadly anthropological. It refers to the things people do and make collectively. Whether treated within a philosophically idealist or materialist metaphysic, the study of culture deals with observables – artifacts, behaviour, symbol systems, and so on. Although cultural studies sometimes infer beliefs, propositions about mental things are not observable directly. Therefore, this essay examines a culture of fear without assuming or arguing for particular beliefs, feelings, opinions, or other intrapsychic phenomena.

The methodology is phenomenological and genealogical. Its genealogical bent relies on the thought of Friedrich Nietzsche as employed in several studies by Michel Foucault. That is, it treats the phenomena associated with fear as it appears in observable cultural forms. It notes the ruptures and transitions over time without addressing the putative ontology of causes for fearful feelings. For instance, it brackets, in the phenomenological sense, the reality of threats from communism, crime, and terrorism. For purposes of this essay, it is irrelevant whether Communist spies threatened US security, or whether crime has increasingly threatened personal security since the 1960s, or whether terrorists have and continue to pose a substantial threat to Americans and their way of life. Causal relationships are set aside, for instance, between crime rates, the actual occurrence of crimes, and the burgeoning criminal justice apparatuses such as police and prisons. To take another example, this essay makes no assumptions about the ultimate authors and complicit actors behind the attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11). Similar to the ongoing industry delving into the history of the Reichstag fire, it matters little whether Marinus Van der Lubbe acted alone in setting the fire. It does not matter whether the Nazis planned it, or whether the Communists planned it. What matters is that the Nazis used the occasion to mould a culture of fear focused on various threats to the German people (Heller, 2004). The same obtains for 9/11. What matters are the observable cultural variables that arose in connection with the 9/11 attacks. What matters are the observables of a culture of fear – intense screening including body X rays for air travel, monitoring of virtually all electronic communications by the National Security Agency (NSA), the militarisation of policing in the USA, and most importantly the population's compliance with these measures.

A culture of fear differs from mass anxiety or hysterias. Hysterias or panics run through populations during limited durations. They remain focused on particular issues such as fears of diseases, natural catastrophes, economic panics, or political matters such as red scares. Humans construct cultures as their primary ecological niche. Simple societies have a single culture; complex societies have several along with multiple subcultures. Among other things, cultures provide a field for generating meanings. Patterned meanings develop into ideologies. Capitalist political economies not only entail certain patterns of social relations – that is, social structures – but also cultures and ideologies that validate those social structures. Dominant cultures sustain dominant ideologies that mobilise symbolic forms. Ideology, in this sense, “serves, in specific contexts, to establish and sustain relations of domination . . . [which they] create, nourish, support and reproduce” [Thompson, (1990), p.7]. Manufacturing an US culture of fear depended on several social changes in the 20th century: development of a Fordist and consumerist economy, deployment of mass communications, and finally development of marketing technologies. Constructing a culture of fear implies a relatively stable ethos continually reinforced by mass communication and marketing.

### *1.1 Preliminary debate*

Americans made a culture of fear in the last quarter of the 20th century. That cultural product evinces irony and arouses curiosity. In 1970 or thereabouts the USA did not hold title to the hegemon of the world because the Soviet Union disputed its global domination. Even so, Americans enjoyed the highest standard of living, the best health, nutrition, education, and generally the best of every measure of social well being and satisfaction. Over the next 25 to 30 years they scared themselves despite the collapse of their rival, the USSR. Americans become so frightened that as of 2009 they had incarcerated each other at an unprecedented rate in human history. With a population of just under 310 million, they incarcerated in prisons and jails 2.3 million with another 5.1 million under ‘supervision’ by the criminal justice apparatus (BJS, 2010) and another more than a third of a million (369,483) held in concentration camps for immigrants (TRAC, 2009). During the same period, the USA lashed out with its military might against increasingly smaller and weaker enemies. Its immense military that consumes over half of all military expenditures in the world and boasts of full spectrum dominance – land, sea, air, and outer space, and most recently cyber space – relegated itself to attacking villages in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Yemen in search of a few disaffected individuals who object to US imperialism (*Al Jazeera* 2 December 2009, *Christian Science Monitor* 18 December 2009, *Press TV* 18 December 2009, Valentine 2010, WSWS 5 January 2010). At the end of 2009, the US bombed Yemen and put its military and intelligence apparatuses on what would have been called red alert in the Cold War, because a young man thought he could blow up an airplane with some incendiary explosives in his underwear (Pell, 2009). Such a paranoid response by an individual would justify calling the person mentally unbalanced to say the least, but by an entire nation, it almost defies imagination.

This begs a question hard to handle, is fear a cultural value inherited in US culture from its inception as nation, or was a sentiment developed later. If the second answer is the correct, who and why imposed the culture of Fear in USA?. Bailyn traces the historical foundation of US and its ways of making politics. He found that this young country received from England the sense of freedom but there were some inconsistencies

between the colony and Empire. While England focused on the hierarchy and Monarchy as unquestionable mechanisms of good-politics, US preferred the organisation of assemblies which honoured the power of Empire only in equal conditions for trade. The functions of these assemblies not only changed forever the culture of colonies but also paved the ways for the advent of a revolution. The revolutionary nature of democracy was originally not determined by politics freedom, but to liberal circulation of goods (Bailyn, 1968).

Surely, Bailyn does not examine the role played by fear in this process; but he makes a bridge to understand the connection between elites and fear, a point to be analysed in the course of this paper. The question of fear seems to be enrooted from the 29th century, when the idea of industry is being engendered. Elites needed for expanding their economies, first and foremost during Wilson's presidency, two things, money and the enough legitimacy to control the work-force. The mass-migration, at some extent, dispersed the loyalties of lay people introducing new anathemas and theories proper of anarchism that helped the existent liberal conditions. If the love for money was conducive to bank system and business, the fear disarticulated temporarily the incipient trade-unions. Following this, Elites adopted a new tactic instrument to keep their power in contexts of uncertainty and crisis, the fear. To discuss to what an extent fear is a key factor of politics is a way of exerting criticism about the democracy in the USA. In view of this, R. Freeland, in his seminal book *Truman Doctrine and the origin of McCarthyism*, accepts that US is not a democratic country in the strict sense of the word, simply because laws are passed to benefit certain groups and citizenry is unable to change this situation. From Freeland's view, McCarthyism not only is a product of an Anglo-democracy (this means the democracy of business corporations) but also was a tactic produced by Truman a couple of years later. The Marshall's plan was not originally aimed at creating a barrier between West and East, not at least as the worker-union threatened the liberal economy. The read-threat resolves the problems of economic exploitation inside and outside US. Freeland, calls the attention to the fact that institutions are manipulated to serve for the interests of aristocracies passing from a democracy to a dictatorship.

The present examination of fear culture differs from other social analyses of fear. It does not treat it as a mass hysteria such as the Great Fear in the French countryside in July and August 1789 (Mayer, 2000). It does not see it as a momentary mass panic like that occasioned by Orson Welles' *War of the Worlds* 1938 radio broadcast (*New York Times* 31 October 1938). Fear culture did not emerge from the recurrent financial panics in US history of 1819, 1837, 1873, 1893, 1907, and 1929. Constructing a culture of fear, whether in 1947 or 2001, required a long term project using all the tools of public relations (Bernays, 1934, 1955; Ewen, 1996). Analysis of a fear culture also differs from a sociological analysis of emotions, which largely depend on a kind of constructivist paradigm (Hare, 1986; Kemper, 1978; Scheff, 1997; Scruton, 1986; Turner, 2000; Turner and Stets, 2005). In contrast, a culture of fear established a normative context for behaviour without necessarily operating at the level of psycho-physiological affect among individuals in a population. The present culture of fear does not require people to feel frightened all or most of the time, but it does entail patterns of behaviour and a colouring of social relations grounded in a fearful outlook. Moreover, the construction of a fear culture does not rest exclusively on the fear mongering campaign. The campaign helps set it in motion. It manages and channels it, but cultural creation of any kind needs mass participation. It is a collective enterprise. Drawing on US pragmatism associated

with William James, Charles Sanders Peirce, and George Herbert Mead, Walter Lippmann (1956, pp.16–17) explained it as public opinion: “The analyst of public opinion must begin then by recognizing the triangular relationship between the scene of action, the human picture of that scene, and the human response to that picture working itself out upon the scene of action”.

Despite the psychology, or maybe alongside of it, the building of a fear culture was fast and furious after 9/11. Whatever Americans thought or felt did not translate directly into collective action. It passed through a filter, the filter of culture, which determines what is knowable and therefore actionable. As Karl Marx (1963, p.1) put it, “Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past”. Moreover, culture construction consists of bricolage. In his *Savage Mind* (1968), Claude Lévi-Strauss argued that the basis for culture construction and categories of thought was primitive – that is a primal kind of thinking. Symbolically expressed in mythologies, primitive thought operates as a bricoleur, a handyman who takes whatever is at hand to build a sensible story about reality. Especially at times of shock, if not trauma, primitive thought relies on bricolage to make a story, some kind of coherent narrative. To do so, it must use whatever is at hand. On the occasion of 9/11 the outlines of such a story already lay about. It was the story of fear and terror that had been under construction in the USA since the late 1940s. The subtitles of the story went like this: first Communism, then Crime, then Terrorism.

What follows is a genealogy of that story. It begins with the ancestral generation of the first fear of communism in the USA in the 19th century, and moves toward the era following the Second World War, the latter often designated by the sobriquet ‘McCarthyism.’ It recounts the mounting crises of the 1960s and the racially coloured story of crime and disorder. With hardly making an effort, the story transferred to a word given new meanings in the 1980s. It was then that ‘terrorism’ changed from meaning “the systematic use of terror especially as means of coercion” (*Websters*, 1965) to the kind of political terrorism associated with people in the Middle East. Note the difference in the *American Heritage Dictionary* of 2007: “The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons”. The latter adds a legal requirement and political ideology. Famously Ronald Reagan ran on *inter alia* a platform of terrorism to defeat Jimmy Carter in the 1980 presidential election. From that point on the meaning of the term took on its legal, ideological, and political baggage (Skoll, 2007). As linguistic change is among the most observable cultural phenomena, a phenomenological analysis benefits from its study.

## 2 History of US fear from 1871 to 1947

The Paris Commune of 1871 prompted the first red scare in the USA. Although US history shows regular financial panics, they did not engender an enduring fearful populace. Persistent fears about various out-groups, typically defined by race, have plagued the country from colonial times. Hysterias about all manner of things from diseases to religious ideas also litter the US historical landscape. Nonetheless, the Paris communards posed the first truly political red scare.

Despite the inflammatory rhetoric of the bourgeois press, the USA of the late 19th century could hardly qualify as a culture of fear. Perhaps the propertied classes had some worries about rebellious lower classes, but the populous in general did not throw over their independence in the hope of gaining some modicum of security. Furthermore, the red scare of the 1870s did not extinguish radical thought or collective action by workers against elites. Along with the red scare came a crime scare. Then it was a ‘tramping’ scare – fear of itinerants looking for work. “They were everywhere, these wandering poor, and theft and violence followed their path”. The terror campaign’s target audience was the new middle class who also feared the violence and social upset threatened by the communists [Bellesisles, (2010), p.113]. The scares, however, did not stop the working class from the Great Railroad Strike of 1877.

At the turn of the 20th century anarchism and anarchists, this time from Russia and Eastern Europe, replaced the French communards as threats to the social hierarchy (Avrich, 1988). In 1901 at the Pan-American exposition in Buffalo, New York, September 6, 1901 Leon Czolgosz shot President William McKinley who subsequently died from an infection of the wound. In response to such assassination attempts by self-professed anarchists, and later incidents such as the bombing of the *Los Angeles Times* in 1910 and the car bomb on Wall Street in 1920 (Adamic, 1960; Davis, 2007; Foner, 1980), Congress criminalised radical beliefs. In the Immigration Act of 1903 it outlawed anarchist beliefs. Then, anarchism mixed with communism, syndicalism, and anti-war sentiments became criminalised in The Immigration Act of 1917 and the Espionage and Sedition Acts of the same year. Various state syndicalism laws outlawed the Industrial Workers of the World. The Smith Act, also known as the Alien Registration Act of 1940, made political beliefs and activities conditions of immigration, and made advocacy of overthrowing the government a crime (Goldstein, 1978; Preston, 1963). These laws, although couched in the apparently objective language of the Anglo-American legal tradition, aimed at suppression of what authorities deemed dangerous ideas held by dangerous people, particularly the recent immigrants from Eastern Europe and Black migrants from the South to the North. The confluence of politics, political beliefs, and status identities did not just apply to nationalities or ethnic groups, it also applied to salient racial categories in the USA.

The North had always practiced de facto discrimination and segregation, but the Great Migration, more or less coincident with the First World War, brought new African American migrants to northern and western cities. Between 1916 and 1927 1.2 million African Americans fled north and west [Jones, (1992), p.213]. Far from halcyon havens, the urban centres in the first decades of the 20th century had plenty of intergroup antagonisms. White enmity toward African Americans just added to the mix. The end of the First World War saw exacerbation of racial strife and political oppression in the red summer of 1919. So-called race riots were really pogroms in which White mobs invaded Black enclaves beating, burning, killing, and raping.

Roughly at the same time as the racial pogroms that made red summer, the red scare of 1919 targeted those on the political left, communists, socialists, and Wobblies, members of the Industrial Workers of the World. Led by the Bureau of Investigation, later the FBI, federal authorities conducted the Palmer raids in 1919–1920. One target became African Americans who had joined or allied themselves with the left political groups seeking racial equality. In this the Bureau anticipated its later role in the 1960s and 1970s. “The Bureau’s first priority was to protect the existing racial hierarchy” [Schmidt, (2000), pp.202–203]. At about the same time, the Military Intelligence

Division of the Army shifted from passive to active defence of White supremacy (Kornweibel Jr., 1999, 2002).

In the face of public opinion opposing US entry into the First World War, US elites turned to the emergent professions of advertising and public relations to sell the war. Memorialised in his 1972 book, George Creel explained the propaganda campaign. It relied on fear, but not fears of the enemy or possible enemy invasion. Instead, it used social worry, a combination of fear and shame. The advertising used print media, posters, newspapers, and magazines. It adjured young men to enlist by raising the specter of social scorn for those who did not. For the civilian public, the emphasis differed. In the latter case, fear drove consumer behaviour (McCarthy, 2007). War mongering combined with consumerism and Fordism solidified the new political economy.

Following the war, authorities and elites relied on advertising and public relations to generate social fears, but not about enemies foreign or domestic. Like the anti-communism of the 1870s and the anti-anarchism of the 1900s, private and public armed forces, not public fears, controlled the enemies of the established social hierarchy. The Second World War opened new avenues and new strategies of fear mongering.

Unlike the First World War, the US public did not need fear of an enemy sold to them. Pearl Harbor did that. Moreover, threats of attack and invasion were far more real in 1941 than in 1917. Without the Japanese attack, US entry into the European war remained unlikely as “a surprising proportion of American workers during the ‘40s were not only ambivalent toward democracy but virtual Nazi sympathizers” [Worrell, (2008), p.xiv]. Nonetheless, the government still had to sell the war. It mobilised advertising and public relations to support the war effort. It was not just a matter of buying war bonds, but an orientation to a home front. Americans had to comply with rationing, new ways of working, sacrificing material rewards in all manner of ways. The Second World War Advertising Council took over from the First World War Committee on Public Information. The Second World War version had not only print media but movies and radio with which to create a patriotic orientation. In the 1940s the public did not need propagandistic fear. It was only after the war that fear came to play a central role in what must go down as one of the great public relations triumphs. Beginning less than two years from the cessation of hostilities, former allies (the USSR and later China) had to assume the mantle of enemies while enemies (Germany, Italy, and Japan) must appear as reliable allies.

### **3 The post-second world war red scare**

Beginning in the aftermath of the Second World War fear mongering took on a new aspect. With important strategic changes, the postwar construction of fear about Communism evolved into the 21st century fear of terrorism. Both differ from the earlier political scares in that during the two later scares control of the masses relied mainly on manufacture and shaping of their fears rather than on force. Both the postwar red scare and the terrorism scare campaigns recognised the central role of driving popular fears to make the masses do, or not do, what the elite desired. They both took advantage of the key to the control of public consciousness. That key strategy relies on two behavioural patterns: fear both engenders and channels action. As the journalist Haynes Johnson argued, “In today’s America, no less than in the time of McCarthyism, fear again contributes to a climate in which abuses of power, infringement of civil liberties, and

pervasive secrecy thrive” [Johnson, (2005), p.4]. During both periods, 1947 to about 1955 and 2001 to the present, propaganda stimulated a culture of fear that differed from scares of the past.

The postwar red scare and the terrorism scare differed from scare campaigns of the past, because the technology of public relations greatly improved after the Second World War. Elites created a culture of fear: a field of meanings within which variable enemies could serve as targets. This difference from earlier periods of fear qualifies the red scare after the Second World War and the terrorism scare as moments in constructing a fear culture. The postwar red scare exhibited several phenomena that illustrate the collective construction of a fear culture. Blacklists in a variety of industries and institutions – moviemaking, publishing, education, and government civil service – required mass complicity. They could not have come only from the top. Another, perhaps even pithier development included a rush of former leftists to the right. Former Trotskyists, a grab bag term that included leftists of many stripes who were not members of the Communist Party, suddenly saw the light of US capitalism and its growing national security state. Among liberals, along with rightward moving socialists, a Panglossian assessment of the state of the USA became the new received wisdom. Instead of a country born of revolution with a history of bloody social turmoil, the accepted assessment in the academy and the literate lay public assumed a comfortably managed and channelled debating society. The postwar cultural transformation depended on a combination of political and legal manoeuvres coupled with the creation of a culture of conformity.

“A new, more demonized image of communism took hold with a heightened sense of danger that it posed. The nation’s policy makers and the public had to be convinced . . . By changing Communism from a matter of politics into one of law enforcement . . . The aura of criminality . . . turned them [Communists] into crooks. . . . By the late 1940s, almost anything a Communist did could be the pretext for a criminal prosecution.” [Schrecker, (1998), p.120]

Ellen Schrecker also pointed toward the cultural construction. Stereotypical imagery of Communists and Communism constructed a dangerous ‘other’ similar to, but even more dangerous than the perfidious Japanese who attacked Pearl Harbor, because Communists did not necessarily reveal identifiable racial traits. Imagery of dangerous Communists became a cultural product, a commodity of the culture industry (Benjamin, 1969; Horkheimer and Adorno, 1990).

At the same time, cultural arbiters interpreted the imagery in keeping with an anti-Communist ideology. The new cognoscenti, for example Clinton Rossiter and Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., ruled out of court ideological constructions of class and class conflict. According to them, race relations, while not perfect, showed definite signs of amelioration and appropriate gradualist reform. Discussions of sex, sexuality, and gender relations either did not occur, or when they did, they took the form of rarified scientific findings, for example the Kinsey reports (1953; Kinsey et al., 1948). The postwar fear culture did not limit its writ to politics, but engaged cultural products and practices widely. This is not to say that countercurrents remained absent. The Beats, for example resisted the demand for conformity. Diehard Communists and other radicals continued to protest and work for a variety of causes, as evidenced by the massive Madison Square Garden rally to support the Rosenbergs and continuing work in the South against racial oppression. The 1950s seemed to represent a victory for big business, but its struggle to regain ascendancy went back to the 1930s in its resistance to, and later its fight to roll

back the New Deal. In these struggles, business tried to construct a vision of Americanism that emphasised social harmony, free enterprise, and individual rights [Fones-Wolf, (1994), p.2]. The keys to the success of the business program called for technically enlightened management, continually increasing industrial productivity, and celebration of consensual democracy based on the presumptive principles of the founding documents, the Declaration of Independence and Constitution. These last implied equality and equity for all US (Foner, 1998). The CIO used the same public relations claim for union action beginning in the 1930s and continuing through the post-war period [Rondinone, (2010), p.137]. The problem with such idealisations was an old one in the USA. Equality and equity only applied to certain status groups defined by race and gender. Moreover, equality of opportunity had been shrinking as early industrial capitalism turned into monopoly capitalism, and finally the imperialist capitalism that emerged full-fledged after 1945.

Nonetheless, mainstream the USA embraced security, conformity, and a constructed brand of Americanism. This last bit of the postwar red scare campaign led to a backfire against the ruling elites, and contributed to a renewed radicalism of the 1960s. Indeed, the countercurrents, combined with the incessant celebration of US values, sets the postwar red scare apart from the terrorism scare of the 21st century. For a generation raised and bathed in the propaganda of Americanism, the USA of about 1960 failed to measure up, at least in certain respects. Consequently, the generation born during or shortly after the Second World War set out to bring the national reality in line with its ideals.

#### **4 Capital's crisis, 1968–1973**

The Fordist economy reached its apex in 1968. By 1973 it was in collapse. Signified by the oil embargo, the underlying problem lay with the entire strategy of capital accumulation that had finally reached its limits. Fordism has three legs: concentrated productivity, mass consumption, and civil regulation. Concentrated production meant production in the centres of capital such as the USA and Western Europe while exploiting the periphery – Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Mass consumption coincided with mass production. Workers in the centre received enough pay to make profitable markets. The state regulated these complex processes. The problem for the strategy arises from costs that reduce capital accumulation as Harvey (2005) and Wallerstein (2003, 2004) have explained. Moreover, the Fordist strategy requires a relatively affluent working class, and relative affluence can translate into political power. The political power of the postwar working class manifested through liberation movements, despite the post-war McCarthyist attempts to curtail them.

Race had been central to elite control in the USA from the first. Whiteness became the dominant status so that other 'races' – which more recently became 'ethnicities, nationalities, and the like' – aspired to it. Whiteness was an achieved status, albeit transgenerationally (Ignatiev, 1995; Roediger, 1999, 2005). Race also served as a status wage (Cassano, 2006, 2009b). Elites used race as a divide and rule strategy for control of the masses. Challenges to the strategy failed repeatedly after the Civil War because of reassertions of White supremacy such as Jim Crow – what Omi and Winant (1994, p.66) called a racial dictatorship – the red summer, lynching, and even the studied indifference by the Roosevelt administration until mildly called to account during the Second World War. The success of Fordism by mid-20th century allowed a broader and firmer base for

challenges that manifested as the Civil Rights movement. The social and civil tactics associated with the movement – sit-in, boycotts, mass demonstrations, and the like – mobilised not only many heretofore silent African Americans, but many White Americans, especially among the youth (Ayers, 2003; Ayers and Dohrn, 2009). Experiences and successes in the 1950s and early 1960s laid the foundations for the sixties radicalism both ideologically and tactically. When those radicals found themselves confronted with increasing resistance to their demand for putting Americanism into practice, many turned to the ideas propounded by the prison writers such as George Jackson, Eldridge Cleaver, and Malcolm X. The civil rights movement was pivotal in two ways. It brought together Black and White agitators, and it provided grounding for radical thought and demands.

The political agitation began with the civil rights movement, then the anti-Vietnam War movement, and soon involved the feminist movement, and later the gay movement. At the 20th century's mid-point, the idealistic liberation movements were nowhere more obvious than in the South, the old Confederacy. In the early years, direct confrontation would have been too dangerous so the NAACP Legal Defence Fund and other organisations sponsored legal challenges in federal courts. By the mid-1960s, the pace began to pick up. The civil rights movement of the South led to passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act. Economic inequality, large racially defined urban ghettos, and exclusion from political power combined to make the Southern tactics less effective. One result was the urban uprisings of the middle 1960s, typically triggered by provocative tactics from the still almost exclusively White police forces.

Strikes, sit-ins, and building seizures on university campuses also broke out, usually around a combination of anti-war protests and demands for racial equality. Latinos, led initially by agricultural workers but soon including city dwellers, added an additional ethnic dimension to the liberation movements. The National Organization for Women (NOW) formed in 1966 signalling an increasingly radical feminist movement. These movements used mass protests and various kinds of public demonstrations as important parts of their tactics. Taken together, they challenged the prevailing public order to a degree unseen since the labour militancy of the 1930s. The iconic clash took place around the Democratic National Convention in Chicago during the last part of August 1968. Called a police riot in the Walker Report (1968), the scene soon shifted to the courtroom of federal Judge Julius Hoffman in the trial of the Chicago Eight. With Black Panther leader Bobby Seale bound and gagged in his defendant's chair the message became clear.

“The young militants know or sense that what is at stake is simply their life, the life of human beings which has become a plaything in the hands of politicians and managers and generals. The rebels want to take it out of these hands and make it worth living; they realize that this is still possible today, and the attainment of this goal necessitates a struggle which can no longer be contained by the rules and regulations of a pseudo-democracy in a Free Orwellian World.” [Marcuse, (1969), p.10]

The ruling class in the USA did not allow the growing radicalism to go unanswered. They fought back. They relied on a few deeply ingrained and emotionally laden orientations in the US populace. The primary orientation is racism. It takes the form of a White supremacy basic to US social structure. Without its racism, the US would have to undo several centuries of social and cultural history. Without an account of White supremacy, US history is a mere fairy tale (Roediger, 2008). Another orientation used by the ruling

class strategy connected to a religiosity almost unique among industrially developed societies in the world. Concomitant with the religiosity and its puritanical and fundamentalist roots – the former from the New England tradition and the latter from the Southern – are a host of attitudes toward liberalised social relations, sexuality prominent among them. For example, recurrent politicised issues around the turn of the 21st century were gay marriage and abortion.

Bob Herbert (2005, p.24), a New York Times columnist, reported a 1981 interview with Lee Atwater. “Tired of losing elections, it [the Republican Party] saw an opportunity to renew itself by opening its arms wide to white voters who could never forgive the Democratic Party for its support of civil rights and voting rights for blacks”. In the South, it was the civil rights movement that they first demonised, and then criminalised. In the North, it was a combination of anti-Vietnam War protesters, and the whole sex, drugs, and rock-n-roll youth subculture. Racist politics put the fears of the White working class together to blame a concatenation of ‘blacks, communists, crime, hippies, and Welfare’ on the Democratic control of government [Beckett, (1997), p.86]. The campaign succeeded even as the real economic and political situation continued to worsen for the US working class, beginning in the 1970s and accelerating to the 21st century.

#### *4.1 Ruling class counteroffensive*

The clearest smoking gun for the construction of a fear culture comes from a quintessential spokesman of the ruling class, the former Supreme Court justice, Lewis Powell. Lewis F. Powell (1907–1998) created a pivotal document in the class war. August 23, 1971 he sent a confidential memorandum, “Attack of the American Free Enterprise System”, to Eugene B. Sydnor, Jr., the chair of the Education Committee, US Chamber of Commerce. In the memo, he decried the attack on the USA’s ruling class, which he called ‘business leaders,’ by “Communists, New Leftists and other revolutionaries”. Powell laid out a multiple point program for the ruling class to defend itself. The first order in the program identified higher education. He called for establishing a ‘staff of scholars’ supported by corporate interests, a ‘staff of speakers’ and ‘speaker’s bureau’, ‘evaluation of textbooks’, and ‘balancing of faculties’. Next he said that ruling class interests should be represented in the mass media, scholarly journals, books, advertising, and political activism. Viewed in retrospect and by its effects, the ruling class adopted his program. Powell’s memo and program initiated a flow of enormous resources to the promotion of ideas, policies, and political ventures already underway (O’Connor, 2008). Powell himself apparently decided to join the fray shortly after he wrote his memo. He earlier had turned down Richard Nixon’s request that he serve on the US Supreme Court in 1969 because of his lucrative law practice. In 1971 he accepted, and Nixon nominated him and William Rhenquist on the same day. Various politicians had been working against the leftist movements of the 1960s, but Richard Nixon put them together into a winning strategy in 1968. There are two kinds of explanations for the reactionary shift in US political opinion. The first speaks vaguely of some sort of mood change among Americans. The other, not so willing to accept magical explanations for observed phenomena, attributes the shift to deliberate efforts that bore fruit, because of shifts in structural factors of the political economy along with concerted efforts backed by elements of the ruling class (Schulman, 2001; Schulman and Zelizer, 2008).

#### 4.2 *From blacks and communists to terrorists*

With origins in the late 1960s, the campaign to turn US culture around and away from its apparent path toward greater social freedom and cultural liberation acquired increasing force and effectiveness during the next two decades. From the status anxiety of the White working class' antipathy toward blacks, communists, crime, hippies, and welfare; the 1970s and 1980s saw a host of scares assiduously promoted in the mass media and by opportunistic politicians of all stripes. A steady drum beat of rising crime rates found official and popular resonance, despite a slow but steady decline in measures of crime victimisation [Skoll, (2009), pp.111–112]. Promotion of the image of the *criminalblackman* [Russell, (1998), p.3] synergistically fuelled fears of interpersonal predatory crime. According to this view, juvenile superpredators, who it was implied were non-White, ostensibly roamed public spaces of cities (Bennett et al., 1996). Missing children coupled with rising anxieties about child sexual exploitation, hair raising stories of stalkers, serial killers, drug induced berserkers, and similar scares continually gained notoriety in the closing decades of the 20th century (Bohm and Walker, 2006; Kappeler and Potter, 2005). The overall picture presented an increasingly dangerous world, although by most measures Americans and people in other developed societies had measurably lower risks from untimely deaths, disease, and accidents. Perhaps most dramatic of the lowered threats to life was the end of the Cold War and consequent plummeting of the risk of nuclear war. Each new scare provided another building block in the culture of fear culminating in the fear of terrorism in the 21st century.

David Altheide says fear is cumulatively integrated over time and in the process becomes associated with certain topics. The process binds meaning through concerted action, ideology, and policy. Certain topics are associated with terms as if there were an invisible hyphen. Eventually, the fear term becomes implied and unstated. Altheide (2002, p.37) goes on to link fear of crime with fears about major events, such as the September 11 attacks. The resulting linkage becomes part of an ideology of fear as described by Valentine Nikolaevič Vološinov, the aim of which is social control. Volosinov (1930, pp.23–24) captures the problematic.

“In actual fact, each living ideological sign has two faces, like Janus. Any current critical word can become a word of praise, any current truth must inevitably sound to many other people as the greatest lie. This *inner dialectic quality* [sic] of the sign comes out fully in the open only in times of social crises or revolutionary changes. In the ordinary conditions of life, the contradiction embedded in every ideological sign cannot emerge fully because the ideological sign in an established, dominant ideology is always somewhat reactionary, as it were, to stabilize the preceding factoring the dialectical flux of the social generative process, so accentuating yesterday's truth as to make it appear today's. And that is what is responsible for the refracting and distorting peculiarity of the ideological sign within the dominant ideology.”

#### 4.3 *The millennial generation and terror*

The cover of *Time* magazine, November 30, 2009, shows a prepubescent boy tied with strings, puppet fashion. The headline story for the issue carried the title “The Case against Over Parenting: Why Mom and Dad Need to Cut the Strings” (Gibbs, 2009). The story relates a growth in over-protective parenting despite increasing child safety. The phenomenon serves as both an index of a fear culture and contributes to its growth. Two

explanations connect the fearful direction of culture change with changes in parenting styles. The historian Peter N. Stearns makes a sort of mass psychology argument. “Americans have steadily heightened their commitments to predictable safety and security, reducing their willingness to accept explanations based on chance and increasing their fears and guilts when their expectations are contradicted” [Stearns, (2006), p.137].

Stearns compared the fear of terrorism to other risks. He noted that since the 1960s more Americans have died from allergic reactions to peanuts or automobile crashes with deer than by terrorism. Authorities, especially those of a military bent, have repeatedly warned that terror attacks threatened the very existence of the nation. Stearns conceded that “Obviously, all sorts of groups have gained a self-interest in keeping the nation scared” [Stearns, (2006), p.195]. Nonetheless he retreats from identifying those with both motive and means to maintain the ‘emotional hyperbole’ by their access and control of public pronouncements. Ultimately, Stearns fails to offer anything but a vague and unsupported argument that the safer people become, the more they also become risk averse. His is an agentless argument that clings to unspecified social developments instead of examining the production of fear as emanating from a purposeful public relations campaign to encourage a docile public willing to tolerate an increasingly invasive and authoritarian intrusion into everyday life.

Another explanation, at least for the emergence of over-protective parenting, has the advantage of identifying a causal mechanism, if not a specific cause. William Strauss and Neil Howe describe a four part generational cycle in US history. Child rearing styles play a contributing role in changing generational characteristics. The parenting styles follow a wave pattern moving from under-protective through supportive to over-protective and lastly indulgent before starting again at under-protective. Over-protective styles have dominated during eras of crisis [Strauss and Howe, (1991), pp.97–100].

Linking risk, fear, and social conflict, anthropologist Mary Douglas prefaced her 1992 collection of essays on *Risk and Blame* by saying “The day anthropologists give up their attempt to ground meanings in politics and economics will be a sad day” (p.ix). In the modern contemporary world, “. . . we have disengaged dangers from politics and ideology, and deal with them by the light of science” (p.4). Dario Melossi (1993, 2008) applied this to crime fears and criminal justice policies, but it also identifies the specific cause of the construction of the fear culture.

## **5 The capitalist world system and the fear culture**

Elites within the world system of capitalism and especially those in the centres of the system, the USA and Britain, have been threatened ever since the liberation movements of the 1960s. These liberation movements coincided with the flowering and then death of Fordism. A new economic strategy followed – neoliberalism. Neoliberalism helped restore capital accumulation and elite control differently than the Fordist approach. Fordism relied on state regulation. Neoliberalism depends on deregulation. Fordism depended on a productive working class in the centres of capital. Neoliberalism depends on shrinking working class compensation, replaced by credit and geometrically increased financial speculation (Krier, 2008). A new marketing strategy ensued centred on new adaptations of technologies: cell phones, mega-channel television broadcasting, wireless internet connections, and so on. New marketing techniques used the new technological

hardware to transform mass marketing into segmented marketing. The new post-Fordist production strategies combined with the new marketing to create a new working-consuming class, atomised and segmented.

Their campaign to roll back challenges to their power and authority has used an extensive and many faceted public relations campaign. Since the 1970s, elites have steered and promoted public relations toward fear. They use their influence, now increasingly outright control of media of all kinds – print, broadcast, news, and entertainment. Political discourse has become increasingly narrow since the 1970s with fewer dissenting politicians every year so that by the end of the first decade of the 21st century, dissenters are an almost extinct species in Congress. Both overt and covert military and intelligence operations have no apparent connection to the popular will. A 40 year campaign of fear mongering over crime, sex, disease, heterodox lifestyles, and so on has turned an US people once renowned for a sort of frontier adventurousness and insouciance toward authority into masses who look forward to subjecting themselves to body scanning with a hope of saving them from non-existent terrorists on airplanes. A populace conditioned by an ideology of fear has increasingly looked to the armed forces of the state, police and military, for protection. That dialectic of the ideological sign, in Vološinov's terms, has set the 21st century terrorism scare juxtaposed to the red scare of the mid-20th century. Denouncing Communists in the late 1940s and 1950s assumed and relied on a presumption of solidarity and common ideals. The part they played in the terrorism scare bound together consumers. The line that they hate us (Americans) for our freedoms should add the word 'consumers.' Americans after 9/11 feared attacks from individuals, not a competing world power. Twenty-first century Americans were not bound together by their ideals. They only had shared fears and consumerist desires. Apathetic obedience replaced determined and righteous, if misguided, antagonism to Communism.

### *5.1 Postmodernism and the age of terror*

Premised on a mythical archetype of modern mass-consumption, Jean Baudrillard's contributions range from political comprehension of war to hyper-reality in late modernity. He argues that post modernity is substantially eroding the basis of traditional legitimacy. In his view, artefacts and objects of the culture are abstracted beyond their functionalities. The boundaries between consumed goods and consumers are increasingly blurred. Postmodern consumers strive to feel in control of the environment even when they failed to consume the object as it really is. This means that the importance of aesthetic is often conflated with the symbolism of functionality. The World Trade Center attack aimed at generating panic, not to kill all, or even a substantial number of Americans. A nuisance aspect of late modernity seems to be the problem of subjectivity, the systematic reproduction of symbolic meaning. Objects come to personalise the human bonds re-signifying their functionality depending on the epoch. Baudrillard's primary point of entrance here is that symbolic and usage values of objects are circumscribed within the organisational values. This recurs to the Nietzschean tension between pathos and logos, order and chaos, meaningful and meaningless. This convergence explains the roots of tragedy as psychological need to intellectualise nature are bewildering [Baudrillard, (1995b), pp.20–24].

It is important not to lose the sight of the fact that fear interacts with tragedy and voyeurism. The former refers to the psychological effects of terrorism on an audience while the latter works by reifying the suffering of others into a product of consumption. Political fear works as a mechanism of self-indoctrination and paves the way towards a total control. Terrorism is only an excuse encoding a much broader and deep-seated issue. Thus, Baudrillard argued in 1995 that “*the Gulf War did not take place*”. An assumption of this caliber not only incited criticism but also attention among scholars. Baudrillard (2006, p.8) would say that 9/11, in spite of its spectacular condition, never existed.

“[A] whole strategy of deterrence that does service today for a global strategy. Steven Spielberg’s recent film, *Minority Report*, provides an illustration of such a system. On the basis of brains endowed with a gift of pre-cognition (the precogs), who identify imminent crimes before they occur, squads of police (the precrimes) intercept and neutralize the criminal before he has committed his crime ... ruptural events, unforeseeable events, unclassifiable in terms of history, outside of historical reasons, events which occur against their own image, against their own simulacrum. Event that breaks the tedious sequence of current events as relayed by the media, but which are not, for all that, a reappearance of history or Real irrupting in the heart of the virtual.”

This excerpt, not only connotes the idea that space and time have changed forever, but also the judicial view of considering and punishing terrorist acts. One of the questions anti-terrorism laws raise is why a crime should be considered a crime before being committed. This type of preventive model, defies the classical interpretation of law. The laws of various nations; including the USA, Britain, Australia, and Canada; criminalise what are in effect thought crimes. That is, so-called terrorist plots could not rise to the level of crimes under those countries’ well established conspiracy laws. Terrorist plots are instead treated as a special and new form of crime – thought crimes. Of course, terrorism and WTC attacks triggered the US-led invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, and two preventive wars that violated numerous international treaties, including the United Nations Covenant.

In late-modernity, existing information plays a pivotal role as the most effective machinery for reproducing interpretations of events. Disasters are commoditised and consumed 24 hours a day from television. *Minority Report* reminds us how the visual fabrication of events replaced the facts. This suggests that mediated-events are elaborated, transformed, and disseminated so that viewers feel a combination of amusement and excitation. Exactly, similar concerns can be seen in Kailash Baral who assesses the terrorism’s effects in North-East India reminding us how pervasive can be the role of Mass-media in the reconstruction of the former British imperial hegemony. Examination of Devi’s case wherein police forces supposedly tortured and assassinated to a dissident, Baral (2008, p.5) argues that “Baudrillard understands terrorism as both a product, of and a challenge to, modernism. As a challenge, terrorism problematizes the modern state’s conception of order versus chaos as it substitutes one reality for another”. From this point of view, discourses of terror emphasise the need to keep people under control by means of subrogating a politics of virtuality. In terms of Baudrillard, terrorism generates an excess of reality that mobilises material and symbolic resources to administer the idea of sovereignty. Of course, even if territorial vindications are channelled by terrorists as well as by industrialised countries’ officials whenever they

appear in TV, their aims are intended to recreate a new order based on tradition and customs for formers, and in novelty for latter ones (Baral, 2008).

Baudrillard studied the spirit of terrorism as a continuance of contemporary history. His argument rests on the belief that the 9/11 attacks represent a new kind of terrorism, which exhibits a virtualised action that ends history. Terrorists employ not only the western means of transport, but also all the media technologies to install terror in *consumer's* mind. Note that here the target audience is a *cumer* audience, not or not necessarily an audience of citizens in a democratic polity. The point is to sell terrorism to the masses. This is the way postmodernised societies produce fear (Kellner, 2005). One of the outcomes that characterised 9/11 was the jubilation at the humiliation of a super power accompanied by a rising sentiment of fear produced by uncertainty. Paradoxically, in a world that prioritises the technologies of mobilities, the mass of people are caught and immobilised by frights and panic. The needs of control drive our civilisation toward the chaos. Unless otherwise resolved, existing complicity between mass media and terrorism looks to be unquestionable. Another noteworthy theoretical contribution of Baudrillard in the study of fear lies in the conceptual distinction between what is global and universal. Whereas globalisation very well refers to a movement which encourages the circulation of goods and humans, the conceptualisation of what is universal revitalises the tendons of humanism as well as the necessary concerns for being more sensible to the suffering of others. Democracy, in Baudrillard's view, is not enough to fight to the spirit of terrorism. To this debate, Kellner (2005, p.4) adds the following.

“Most theorists, including myself, see globalization as a matrix of market economy, democracy, technology, migration and tourism, and the worldwide circulation of ideas and culture. Baudrillard, curiously, takes the position of those in antiglobalization movement who condemn globalization as the opposite of democracy and human rights. For Baudrillard, globalization is fundamentally a process of homogenization and standardization of crushes the singular and heterogeneity. This position, however, fails to note the contradictions that globalization simultaneously produces homogenization and hybridization and difference, and that Baudrillard links with a dying universalization. In fact, the struggle for rights and justice is an important part of globalization and Baudrillard's presenting of human rights, democratization, and justice as part of an obsolete universalization being erased by globalization is theoretically and politically problematical.”

The new, postmodern capitalism has been suspended the logic of morality precisely in a world where torture and pleasure are not differentiated. September 11th, 2001 is a date reminded all years as the epicentre of tragedy. Three commercial airplanes were directed as weapons towards World Trade Center and Pentagon while the fourth forcefully grounded in Pennsylvania with no survivors. Symbolically, this attack not only paralysed and shifted the way of thinking politics in US soil but also in other Western nations. Some years later, March 11<sup>th</sup> 2004, a similar attack was perpetrated in the core of Spain, Atocha's station. Almost ten bombs exploded simultaneously from 07: 46 to 07: 40 killing 191 passengers. While 9/11 was considered a national cause, allowing George W. Bush a new mandate, Atocha's attack prompted Jose M. Aznar towards a spectacular failure. A couple of days after this tragic event, voters realised that the Spanish government manipulated the evidence to blame the ETA (Basque Revolutionary Army). Although USA and Spain suffered terrorist attacks, the effects on political scaffolding and the audience varied. This suggests that terrorism is something else than an act of political violence.

At some point or another, terrorism seems to be determined not only by the violence expressed in the casualties or damage it provokes, but also in the uncertainty wakes up in survivors and witnesses. This is exactly the innovative thesis posed by Luke Howie in his book *Witnesses to Terror: Understanding the Meanings and Consequences of Terrorism*, recently published by Palgrave Macmillan. In this seminal work, readers will find an all encompassed view about terrorism and its psychological effects in West. Uncertainty plays a pivotal role configuring the debate to what extent freedom should be restricted in context of emergencies. One of the most troubling aspects of terrorism is not its direct aftermaths, but also the doses of ambivalence installed by the mass-media that ultimately engender panic.

The fact is that the world and economies have changed forever after 9/11, trying to predict what in nature unpredictable is. Even if the obsession for gaining further security remains in USA, Howie's research shows how years change the interviewees' viewpoints depending on the degree of exposition. It is important not to lose the sight that there is a strong complicity between terrorists and journalism. The knowledge imparted by journalism, which supposedly makes a safer environment, becomes in a double-edge sword. As the previous argument given, this book examines exhaustively not only the limitations of existent conceptual frame-work but also many other studies as the work of Baudrillard, Zizek or Laqueur that connects the theories of terrorism with late-modernity. To be more precise, Howie (2012, p.12) adds, terrorism must be defined as more than a political technique or strategies to dissuade the states of certain claims, terrorism is stronger in the witness's terror.

“Terrorism works this way for witness. If there was one way to describe the outcomes of the research that I have conducted for this book, I would say that terrorism causes people to feel terror. Terror is the name we give to the uncertainty we feel in the feel of global violence in some of the world's most populous cities. If Terrorism does not cause terror, it is not terrorism.”

This definition is of paramount importance to understand the connection between terrorists and eye witnesses. Targets are not necessarily selected to create mass death, as many pseudo-specialists suggest, but to lead a panic in the rest of population. Howie's essentially psychological approach pays attention to the effects of terrorism in daily life and how people intellectualised their fears and changed their behaviour after 9/11. Enrooted in the core of routine, fear of next terrorist attack has been combined with other fears. This point is brilliantly examined in chapter 5. The West has constructed its hegemony centred on visual paradigm (Said, 1978). Vision represents an alternative route to access and power to others worlds. As mediators between the self and external reality, camera, vision and media exert considerable control inside and beyond the boundaries of society. ‘Like a weapon in the street’, the title of Howie's third chapter explains that the visual strength of West is politically manipulated by terrorists to create a sentiment of isolation and terror. One might speculate, if 9/11 as a mediated event would be possible in country other than USA or similar societies like Britain where the journalism and cameras broadcast the reality 24 hours day; probably not. Howie reaches three conclusions about public knowledge and creating the culture of fear:

- a Knowledge about terrorism and studies are conducted outside the hot-spot where terrorism marked common-place. This orthodox literature not only trivialises the role of the media but also do not contribute too much to the debate.

- b Terrorism has been pushed to be a theme of discussion in academic fields, or universities.
- c Many of pseudo-analysts not only make personal appearance in the media, reinforcing the symbiosis between terror and terrorism, but also erroneously associate Muslim world and 9/11 to terrorism.

The friendly attitude to the media, many terrorist developed, depends upon the publicity their potential acts may have. For that, terrorism may be compared to a drama. The potential audience should be involved in the performative endeavour to be credible, because “terrorists terrify by being witnessed. If they do not terrify and are not witnessed, they are not terrorists” [Howie, (2012), p.49]. From this perspective, terrorism may be defined as a form of communication where some actors want attention and a lot of people watching, not people dead. Following this, Howie explains that many terrorists fight their wars in cyber space, seducing thousands of US citizens with spectacular images and discourses. Use of cyber space, draws attention to the vulnerability of the USA respecting messages of support for Al-Qaeda or other terrorist organisations. Media complicity with politicians and structures of power raises the question of the extent that fantasies of violence that characterise the West are part of the psyche of an era that transforms suffering into a product. Today, terrorism has been commoditised to be disseminated to distant geographical points throughout the globe. The oxygen of terrorism, using the Howie’s metaphor, seems to be given by capitalism and its uncanny satisfaction for visual values. Like capitalism, somehow terrorism needs to preserve the life of witnesses in order to install a discourse offering a one-sided gaze. The qualitative interviews, as already stated, conducted by Howie in Australia demonstrated two important aspects of terrorism. At a first glance, people in Western societies think not only Islam and terrorism are inextricably intertwined, but also terrorists hate or seek to destroy their style of life. Secondly, security or homeland safety is a hyper-utopia. The sense of security is never completely taken for granted. Security can only impede or restrict risk, but it achieves its aim only by posing limitations on democracy. Paradoxically, all our acts are not free of danger, but we live as if bad things will never happen to us. Based on the metaphor of emulation, Howie acknowledges that terrorism holds two key features: first, witnesses see terrorism in an overly exaggerated way; secondly, terrorism should be re-defined as the ability to engender a wider audience which transcends the boundaries of affected countries.

In the West xenophobia and racist attitudes multiplied after the World Trade Center attacks. Discourses of terrorism appeal to emotional arousals, some of them irrational, that seize on otherwise repressed imaginings. Purported wrongdoers (terrorists) want to kill the innocents, in the name of a false faith. This belief not only demonises Muslims, but paves the way for the manipulation of fear. Under this pretext, policies and strategies based on fear manipulation can make it easier for politicians to renovate their mandate, such as in the USA. It can also generate unforeseen problems for politicians such as the Atocha’s attack in Spain. Like a runaway fire burning everything, fear gradually paralyses social life breaking the bonds between citizens and state. Fear draws a special geography that frames people’s encounters. By means of mass media people can learn steps to avoid risks. However, generating irrational anxiety increases risk. Emotionally, the spirit of terrorism survives in daily habits and customs, but it can cloud clear headed decisions about public policies.

“Pre 9/11 assumptions of safety and security were shattered by 9/11 and denizens of cities longed for a time to again be naïve and ignorant of the devastation of global violence. But it was not long before signs of ignorance were returning. Shortly after 9/11, over two-thirds of Americans knew that 9/11 was connected to the US’s policies toward Israel. After a month, that had changed to 22%.” [Howie, (2012), p.106]

The age of terrorism is determined by the US expansion Worldwide. In addition to his public opinion research, Howie points to similarities between terrorism and capitalist corporations. After all, terrorist activists are not only educated in Western universities, but they use tactics stemming from Management and Marketing. It is curious to see how in First World terrorism is considered the primary threat and Muslim terrorists the first public enemies of society while in Latin America the concept is better linked to the role of state in the 1970s. As an inoculated danger, terrorism allows the revitalisation of legitimacy from one or another side. The production and distribution of wealth and the mega-structures of economies are key factors in understanding why terrorism varies from one country and culture to another. The age of terrorism reminds that attraction and financial accumulation are the counter-effects of vulnerability; they are dialectically related.

“People congregate in restaurants, cafes and bars during lunch periods, and again after work. People attend major events and often feel comfortable in large crowds. These are among the many benefits of organization existences. They are also vulnerable to terrorism. The same things that make these spaces attractive are what make it vulnerable. And most people would rather be unsafe than give up the benefits that organizational spaces provide. Social and culture belonging, money and influence, social status and feeling of self-worth are the rewards Insecurity is its consequence.” [Howie, (2012), p.131]

Terrorists undoubtedly were educated and trained in the core of Western civilisation. The facility to host innocent is not an invention, proper to Islam. This legacy resembles the history labour unions and strikes. In the USA until the 1930s, striking workers were treated as terrorists by employers and governments alike. Their claims and grievances called forth armed force. Today strikes have a claim to legitimacy, although the weakening to the point of disappearance of US labour unions makes the tactic a virtual dead letter. Nonetheless workers’ strikes and terrorism bear a certain similarity. As the vaccine is the inoculated virus, encrypted to strengthen the body, strikes are processes of discontent that mitigate the negative effects of conflict but can take consumers hostages. Strikes can strand passengers at an airport or train station in Europe or Latin America, but such strikes are forbidden in the USA, and the strikers would be treated not much differently than terrorists – that is by force of arms. Capitalism allows strikes only to facilitate the replication of capital. More benefits, money and rights for workers result in further consumption in a Fordist economy, but in the post-Fordist US economy, strikes and unions are suppressed. Like the example of ground-zero demonstrated to the world, capitalism creates the necessary conditions of disasters in order for the site to be recycled and commoditised in a tourist attraction.

Last but not least, one might speculate that US psyche now seems not to be centred on fear but hope or indignation, after the problems of economy. However, beyond this general sense of hope, fear surfaces. What is the differences between fear-mongering and hope?. To respond this, we have to delve into the sentiment of hope. Unlike fear, this emotion promotes a positive response before uncertainty; the self is not familiar with the

situation and future remains open or complex to be duly understood. If the expectancies of future may be changed, or the subject feel may be improved, hope overcomes fear, but if uncertainty is not being controlled, fear predominates in all spheres of society. To put this in another way, uncertainty is created by the needs of anticipation, enrooted in US culture. At this vein, the culture of fear resolves the problem of uncertainty opened by liberal market. If the liberty engenders new margins to decide, fear closes these boundaries in order for the society not to face schizophrenia. Therefore, it is not strange to see how US society alternates states of hope and fear with the passing of years. Both are two said of the same coin. Hope may open the boundaries for introducing liberal trade, but this disorganises the social bonds international. Fear resolves the asymmetries of hope. By the imposition of fear, elites try to avoid the fragmentation generated by the lack of certainness. The question is may this situation be changed?, or is democracy a result of risk? USA seems to be a country founded in cultural ideals based on liberty, trade and equality. They trivialised the benefits of British monarchy by providing a more secure stile of life. If the Union expanded its economy by the introduction of democracies and trade, it paid a high cost. This process of growth and expansion was based on the control of uncertainty. The rational made from future the best setting. US techniques of production, anyway, experienced serious imbalances whenever European workers migrated in quest of better opportunities. The economy-machine, for the first time in history, was threatened by the organisation of workers. As a result of this, elites designed an effective plan to dissuade migrants to persist with their ideas. Deportation was undoubtedly one of the first policies that facilitated the culture of fear.

## 6 Conclusions: changing relations of production and the fear culture

Restructuring world capital after the 1968–1973 crises produced a neoliberal economy and a neoconservative politics. It coincided with changed relations of production along with all other social relations. Fordist production gave way to post-Fordism. The cubicle replaced the shop floor for workers relations. Consumption changed too. Segmented consumers replaced mass consumers. Advertising, based on selling lifestyles since the 1920s (Marchand, 1985), used ever more refined market research to sell commodified social relations. Instead of tens of millions of television viewers watching an episode of *Lassie* or *MASH*, programs and advertisers pitched their products to ever smaller market segments on hundreds of channels defined by demographically researched appeal: race, gender, ethnic identification, sexual orientation, income level, educational level, national region, and so on. Instead of viewers watching the same programs in the company of their primary reference groups, families for instance, a family might have each of its members following a different electronic spectacle on different kinds of devices. Mass media can only present generalised ideas, images, and meanings. Reference group interactions and relations transform them into personalised meaning of a population to produce social realities (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955). In the post-Fordist era, atomised workers and segmented consumers got their social realities from reference groups that increasingly lacked cohesion. By loosening ties within reference groups, individuals face the fearful prospect of having little social capital to make sense of their experiences.

An important consequence of this relative casting adrift is that persistent fear is easily transferred to irrational objects. The working classes have had residual, and often realistic, anxieties about losing jobs, losing homes, not getting healthcare, and not having

sufficient retirement income, to name some of the more prominent. These are not new. The culture of fear does not and cannot neutralise such fears, but it can offer transference objects. Unlike obvious scapegoating, the transfer resembles the transference neurosis in psychoanalysis where analysands transfer their desires and fears onto the person of the analyst. An ideology centred on fear of crime or fear of terrorists offers a face, a personification, ultimately an ersatz social relation composed of imagery. Those objects as personifications serve the interests of the ruling classes. Therefore, fears of job insecurity transfer to fear of the *criminalblackman*. Fears of home foreclosure transfer to juvenile superpredators. Fears about lack of healthcare transfer to Arab terrorists. The culture of fear encourages diffidence and dependency on authorities, just as does over-protective parenting. Atomised social relations turn the potential for liberation movements such as those from the 1960s into identity politics. Together, the new social relations and the dominant culture of the 21st century produce a ‘great and powerful OZ’ that demands fear and obedience.

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