Constructing ‘Arab Terrorism’—The Slow Emergence of Terrorism Discourse in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s
Annika Brunck

Abstract
This article traces the beginnings of the discourse on “Arab terrorism” in the U.S. after World War II. I argue that the discourse emerged slowly in the early 1970s, growing out of political concerns in the aftermath of the 1972 “Munich Massacre” as well as previous work by scholars on political violence. Prominent cultural products like Leon Uris’ Exodus and Thomas Harris’ Black Sunday contributed to the vilification of Arab populations in the Middle East and merged with these political and academic discourses to construct Arab aggression in terms of terrorism.

Keywords
Terrorism; Middle East; United States; Terrorism Studies

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The opening sentence of a textbook on terrorism states, “Terrorism has been a dark feature of human behavior since the dawn of recorded history” (Martin, 2010, 3). If this is the case, what makes the ‘new terrorism’ different from the old? Isabelle Duyvesteyn points out that this would indicate evidence for the emergence of a new type of terrorism, if it were not for the fact that the article was written in 1984 and described a situation from the 1960s (Duyvesteyn, 2004, 439). It seems that there have been many new phases of terrorism over the years. So many so that the definition of ‘new’ has been stretched significantly and applied relatively across decades. Political Investment in New Terrorism. There are two main categories that explain the popularity of new terrorism. Terrorism in the United States also emerged. Groups such as the Weathermen grew out of the non-violent group Students for a Democratic Society. They turned to violent tactics, from rioting to setting off bombs, to protest the Vietnam War. Terrorism in Europe in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Lufthansa 151 In the spring and summer of 1968, when the Tet offensive escalated the war in Vietnam, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King were assassinated and demonstrations turned violent at the Democratic Convention in Chicago, there was also a lot of political unrest in Europe. Universities in Madrid and Rom What is linked with the emergence of right-wing terrorism in the United States? The civil war (1861-1865). Right-Wing Terrorism. The second Ku Klux Klan emerged after the release of D.W. Griffith’s motion picture Birth of a Nation, which glorified the first Klan and the southern power structure and racial discrimination it stood for. At the peak of the second Klan period in the mid-1920s, the organization had a total membership of 3-4 million. The left-wing groups in the United States that turned to terrorism in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of the Vietnam War and the civil rights struggles were inspired by Marxist ideology.1.