CALL FOR PAPERS

Terrorism and Modernity:
Global Perspectives on Nineteenth Century Political Violence
Tulane University, New Orleans, LA
October 23-26, 2008

Co-sponsored by the German Historical Institutes Washington and London and the Murphy Institute of Political Economy at Tulane University

Since September 11, 2001, talk of “postmodern terrorism” has become ubiquitous. “Postmodern terrorism” presupposes “modern terrorism.” Accordingly, in the past few years, sociologists, political scientists, and specialists in contemporary history have often classified specific forms of political violence in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe and the US as “modern terrorism.” Thus far, however, they have neither been able to define convincingly the characteristics of “modern terrorism,” nor shown the concrete connections between modernity and terrorism. Moreover, the work tends to be Eurocentric: irregular political violence in Latin America, South and East Asia, as well as Africa—i.e. regions of the world not counted among the forefront of modernity—tends to be excluded from discussions of terrorism.

Through this conference we seek to explore the emergence of terrorism in the nineteenth century. Taking the critique of Eurocentric history writing into account, we want to examine this form of political violence on a global scale without presupposing “modernity.” Instead, taking up recent trends in the writing of global history, we will research the connections between large-scale political and social changes in the world of the nineteenth century and the changes in the use of political violence towards what has come to be understood as “terrorism.” In this way we hope to contribute to the understanding of terrorism and the discussion of modernity, as well as to the new ways of writing world history.

Topics might examine the relationship between terrorism (and related forms of political violence) and:
- Globalization, Colonialism, Imperialism
- Democratization, Capitalism, Urbanization, Technology
- Media, Literature, Art
- Gender, class, race
- Modernity/Modernities

as well as Terrorism and related forms of political violence in Historiography.

The conference will be held in English and focus on the discussion of pre-circulated papers of about 7,000 words (due by September 15, 2008).

The cost of travel and accommodations will be covered by the sponsors.
Please send an abstract of 200-300 words, a short CV, and a list of relevant publications by e-mail to Bärbel Thomas of the GHI at B:Thomas@ghi-dc.org by February 15, 2008.

Conveners:
Benedikt Stuchtey (German Historical Institute, London)
Carola Dietze (German Historical Institute, Washington)
Claudia Verhoeven (George Mason University/EUI)

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