

1 The Psychological Resources of Terrorism According to French 2 Philosopher André Glucksmann

3 Nicolae Luga¹

4 ¹ Social Sciences Departament, Western University Vasile Goldis

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6 **Abstract**

7 The religious fundamentalist terrorism makes its presence felt yet again, in Europe as well in
8 other parts of the globe. It is therefore important to find out what are its psychological
9 resources. To this end, we have studied the thematic analyses written by the French specialist
10 in political philosophy, André Glucksmann. The particularities of Glucksmann's research are
11 the ironic-essayistic and the fact that he guides his conclusions after presenting fictional
12 literary characters from the classical universal literature. It is our conclusion that, in such
13 cases, the presentation of unique literary characters, representative for an idea, can be more
14 relevant than the presentation of several empirical facts.
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17 **Index terms**— terrorism, hatred, fundamentalism, dostoievski, glucksmann.

18 **1 I. Introduction**

19 Therefore, Schopenhauer postulates the Will. Kant argued that the thing itself, correlative to the phenomenon,
20 is impossible to know. "Schopenhauer tells us however that the thing itself is the Will" 1 . For example, our body
21 is nothing but objectified will, the will to exist. And it isn't just our bodies, but also in the entire animal and
22 plant kingdom, even the mineral one; they are all nothing else but the objectification of a hypostasized instance.
23 In the mineral kingdom, the will manifests as magnetism and electricity, in the plant kingdom as tropisms and
24 tactisms and in animals and humans as sexuality and a struggle for existence. As a metaphysical principle,
25 such a will could have been presented as an impersonal force or energy, as a "vital impetus" as Bergson coined
26 it later. However, Schopenhauer preferred to use the Will as "the descriptive term best known to us" 2 . It
27 was the same in the case of Freud, insofar as the psychoanalysis compels us to go beyond the analysis technique
28 of some psychological contents, to issues that are philosophical and principled in nature. In essays such as
29 Beyond the Pleasure Principle or Civilization and its Discontents, Freud tackles not only the functioning of the
30 mental activity, but has also stated his ambition to contribute to the "unlocking of life's enigma". Freud hoped
31 to achieve this goal by presenting two fundamental forces of life, namely the instinct of life (Lebenstrieb) and
32 the death instinct (Todenstrieb) 3 But can hatred be a universal life principle, unequivocally explaining -or at
33 least primarily explaining -people's behavior? Is hatred a ubiquitous human presence? Is it a byproduct or is it
34 innate? By adopting a highly exuberant, ironic and caustic style, André Glucksmann seems to give an affirmative
35 answer. In one of his classic texts, Glucksmann unequivocally writes: "The thesis that I stand by here is that
36 claiming that hatred exists, we've all encountered it. At the microscopic scale of individuals, as well as within
37 large communities. The fervor to harass and destroy cannot be banished with skilled words" . The manifest,
38 exteriorized life is governed by the principle of pleasure and necessity, which were known since ancient Greece, as
39 "Eros" and "Anake"; but the hidden root of life is made up of the intertwining of two opposing and inseparable
40 principles, which condition each other reciprocally -the instinct of life and that of death. This Freudian theory of
41 instincts, developed in old age, surpasses the mere psychological significance, attaining an ontological dimension.

42 **2 .**

43 Traditionally, it was argued that hatred as such, capital hatred does not exist. Destructive, criminal behaviors are
44 explained by "circumstances". The gratuitous wickedness of an individual is placed in the charge of psychiatrists
45 or psychologists. Everything is explained, everything is forgiven understood and all is forgiven.

46 Volume XV Issue V Version I For example, a pedophile might be considered a victim of older abuse, of an
47 unhappy childhood. A thief or an assassin might invoke an urgent need for money, a rapist that he is the
48 result of a precarious education, an incestuous of promiscuity. The common feature of antisocial acts, hatred,
49 is reduced to a variety of external causes, which some might claim precede it: poverty, humiliation, moral and
50 physical misery, frustrations, offenses, misunderstandings, misfortunes. Although, in terms of terrorism, counter-
51 arguments can also be found, the terrorist activity cannot be explained satisfactorily by the social misery they
52 might be recruited from. For example, it has been noted that "the Basque Country is one of the most prosperous
53 provinces" 5 and, despite this, it is an inexhaustible source for terrorist activities. Similarly, Islamic terrorism
54 is financed by some of the planet's wealthiest countries, such as Saudi Arabia, which financed Bin Laden's
55 organization, as well as other fundamentalist ones which are active in Algeria and Europe. One might rather
56 say that "the Islamic terrorism is the result of a religious obsession, unrelated to the causes of global poverty"
57 ?? According to Glucksman however, hatred exists as a psychological root, preceding the social causes of an
58 antisocial behavior. It is comparable to the "display of the will to destroy, just for the sake of destruction".

59 **3 7**

60 . In Glucksman's conception, like Heidegger, Care is the innate determination and the only innate human
61 "phenomenon", all others (understanding, anxiety, curiosity, ambiguity, emotional positioning etc.) directly
62 deriving from Care ?? Since Homer and up till now, the ancient Greek civilization and the Latin one afterwards
63 explored the souls of men and in the societies' mentality "the tenebrous, intimate workings of some destructive
64 powers"

65 . Similarly, for Glucksman Hatred seems to be the determination, the innate human emotion. In support his
66 thesis, Glucksman provides proof from the entire history of human spirituality, starting with ancient Greece. 9
67 , called by different names from one age to another and from one civilization to the other, but all subordinate
68 to the contemporary notion of hatred. Thus, in Homer's Iliad, the poet speaks from the very beginning of
69 the fabled "anger" (mania) of Achilles, then of the furious madness of Ajax, describing in detail the unleashing
70 of the most violent human passions, that "primary hatred which is so difficult to explain" ??0 . Things add
71 up. King Agamemnon sacrifices Ifigenia, his daughter, to appease the gods and calm the opposing wind on
72 the sea. This beginning, provoked by destiny and the gods, suffices for the number of manifestations of hatred
73 and vengeance to begin. Clitemnestra, the mother of Ifigenia and Agamemnon's wife, overcome by grief and
74 hatred, will kill Agamemnon to avenge Ifigenia's death; afterwards, Orestes, Agamemnon's son, will murder
75 Clitemnestra to avenge his father -and so on ??1 In order to illustrate his idea, Glucksman analyses Medea's
76 tragedy, as depicted by the roman writer Seneca . 12 . As a character of an ancient tragedy, Medea is a legendary
77 witch from the Argonaut's cycle, daughter of the king of Colchis. When Jason, who went in search of the Golden
78 Fleece, landed on the shores of Colchis, Medea fell in love with him. In order to help Jason obtain the Golden
79 Fleece, Medea battles against the ferocious creatures guarding this valued item, and doesn't even hesitate killing
80 her own brother, Absyrtos, when Jason is in danger. Afterwards, Jason and Medea take refuge in Corinth; they
81 get married and have two sons, Mermeros and Pheres. However, after a while, Jason rejects Medea, so he may
82 remarry, out of interest, Creusa, the daughter of Corinth's king, Creon. Humiliated, Medea offers her rival a
83 chest with a poisoned robe and crown, which kill Creusa and burn set the royal palace on fire. But Medea's
84 vengeance does not stop here. In order to inflict greater emotional trauma upon Jason, she kills her two sons by
85 him, Mermeros and Pheres, in front of him -an outburst of hatred which greatly surpasses the vengeance caused
86 by Jason's infidelity. This hatred becomes "affirmative", not "reactive" 13 . This is what makes man superior
87 to animals, in terms of hatred. An animal may also be provoked to violence, it can be riled up etc. and it is
88 then when it becomes aggressive. But the animal will be reactive, it will react in accordance with the given
89 circumstances, it will not be "affirmative", i.e. capable of hatred beyond the reasons given to it. Only man is
90 capable of a passionately organized, gratuitous hatred, for a period of time coextensive with his own life -at least
91 that's what one can conclude from Glucksman's overall discourse. If Bergson had defined man via laughter ??4
92 and Huizinga via his ludic behavior ??5 Glucksman's ad-hoc conducted analysis on the Medea tragedy , then we
93 could have stated that, in the case of Glucksman, man is defined as an animal that can hate without a reason or
94 beyond the reasons themselves. phenomenology of hatred, a certain processuality of this terrible feeling's origin,
95 by going through three main stages: (a) the pain, (b) the anger and (c) revenge. In this case, the pain (dolor)
96 stands for self-mourning.

97 Rejected and abusively stripped, Medea stopped being just a hateful woman in Seneca's tragedy, personifying
98 hatred manifested as a woman. In these circumstances, Medea recalls all her unhappiness, all the beatings
99 she endured, all the injustices that happened to her. Her husband, Jason, banished her, took her children
100 and remarried. She had to leave empty-handed, abandoning everything, her home, her family, the city. She
101 continuously thinks of the betrayal she was subjected to, fueling her suffering. It doesn't occur to her, not even
102 for an instant, to leave after having negotiated certain monetary compensations, but keeps on gratuitously fueling
103 her anguish. She transforms the injustices suffered by her, at the hands of others, into selfviolence. Pain and

104 sorrow are taken to the ultimate threshold, until the loss of her social and individual identity by the heroine.
105 Medea kills herself, symbolically, so she may be reborn under a different aspect, a vengeful one coming from
106 beyond death.

107 The second element, Anger, is relentless, devastating and impersonal, "like a telluric catastrophe or the madness
108 of a god" 17 . The anger which the one overcome by pain turns against himself is now directed against someone
109 else, as blind rage. The angry person imposes on the world his inner emptiness. Medea has committed crimes
110 before -she betrayed, poisoned and committed fratricide -but all these were not driven by hate, but by the love she
111 bore for Jason. Now, it's something different, hatred replaces love; now she doesn't wish to do something good
112 for Jason, at the cost of removing others; now she only wants to do harm, because she wishes harm on others and
113 nothing else. The hatred of the angry person reveals in fact the secret of their strength. The person who hates has
114 no moral limits or prohibitions, but, at the same time, they speculate their opponents who continue exhibiting
115 moral compunction. Appealing to Creon's compassion, Medea requests and obtains from him a one day respite
116 before leaving the city, exactly the amount of time she uses to burn and murder. Thus, "the hatred driven person
117 obtains an edge compared to the love driven persons, who can never spot pure hatred" 18 Finally, revenge itself
118 is made disproportionate by hatred, in relation to the pain caused by the initial . Hatred is more powerful than
119 love. Love is not the prisoner of its object; the one who loves, loves something or someone, a woman, a child,
120 fame or fortune. Instead, hatred is completely free of all ties, it is completely independent; it cares for nothing
121 and nothing can hold it back when it means to do harm. injustice, by Jason's betrayal for example, in the case
122 of Medea. In ancient times, revenge was called nefas, when it was taken to paroxysm. The term nefas implied
123 a lot more than a mere murder committed out of vengeance; it meant, on all levels -religious, moral, juridical
124 -a crime accompanied by such an unusual, infamous profanation, that it exceeded the competences of the courts
125 and the penalties provided by the codes. All taboos are suspended, all ties to the city and family are abolished;
126 there is no turning back. Mentally insane Roman emperors such as Caligula or Nero, have committed or at
127 least mediated such infamous acts, of such a gratuitous cruelty, that they cannot be explained in a way other
128 than having stemmed from pure hatred. Medea kills her own sons. Atreus kills the sons of his brother and then
129 serves them to him, for dinner. Achilles defeats Troy in a war fought according to military combat rules, but
130 after Achilles' death, Agamemnon wipes out all of Troy's inhabitants, in an act of unwarranted cruelty, stemmed
131 solely from hatred.

132 Hatred is omnipresent and omnipotent. We can detect it everywhere, spanning over centuries and millennia, in
133 other areas and civilizations. Lenin's example is conclusive. In 1981, there was a great famine in Russia, resulting
134 in hundreds of thousands of deaths from among the peasants. The Church, representatives of the intellectuals,
135 writers, priests, poets, students, representatives of the tsar, all of them initiate an impressive humanitarian
136 campaign to help those affected by the famine. In the city of Samara, the young Lenin, who was not much
137 older than 20 years of age, was the only one to vehemently condemn, in newspaper articles, this humanitarian
138 initiative. Even since then, Lenin's purpose was aimed at producing an immense amount of hatred within the
139 people, which would eventually lead to a generalized outbreak of violence. "To hell with this mercy! It would
140 be better for those muzhiks to lose their illusions, to forsake all hope in God and the Tsar; it would be better
141 for them to see their families starving to death" 19 At first glance, André Glucksman's writings have two
142 obvious features. First of all, aside from his debut book, *Le Discours de la guerre*, published in 1967, all his
143 other books are written in an essayistic , because this would pave the way for the outbreak of a revolution.
144 For a better understanding of things, hatred, as a universal human feature, should be particularized. We must
145 obtain the explanation how the transition from hatred in general to specific cases of hatred is made, from hatred
146 against people in general to hatred against someone in particular, from hatred against humans in general to
147 hatred against Jews, to anti-Semitism. This is Glucksman's view on hatred, in a summarized presentation, by
148 following Glucksman's endeavor from literary analyses to historical facts. literary quality and the use of irony, a
149 vigorous, ubiquitous, sharp and corrosive irony, following a Socratic-Hegelian line. Undoubtedly, irony is a virtue
150 of writing and a superior form of the manifestation of philosophical intelligence. But the texts of an ironic nature
151 no longer fully showcase the argumentative apparatus of the idea; oftentimes their arguments are not explicit,
152 but implicit, like wings grown on the interior, and the adverse argumentation is no longer entirely reiterated and
153 disputed counter-argumentatively, in the open, but is cut down from the root, by irony turned into ridicule.

154 Irony, which, for the author, is precisely virtue and strength, represents a significant obstacle for person
155 researching his work. Exemplifying with cases where irony was successfully employed is not sufficient for the
156 research. According to its own rules, the scientific research implies an applied examination of the text and a
157 rational understanding of the ideas and arguments in it, a critical evaluation of the ideas and the prediction of
158 some consequences for the future cognition of the field; such demands are rendered unattainable because of the
159 irony. The research requires the reiteration of certain narrative parts of the text which is the study subject,
160 possibly the reproduction of some quotes, the possibility of in-depth, insightful and non-equivocal analyses. But
161 irony cannot be narrated, cannot be didactically presented and then analyzed, without dulling out its wit. Irony
162 has something ineffable and unique about it, like poetry. Therefore, the research of an ironic text should follow
163 the mental reconstruction of the researched author's endeavor, in order to reach un-equivocal meanings, to emit
164 ideas pertaining to the author; only then can the researcher divine these ideas and reformulate them in his
165 own terminology, with inherent approximations and a less than accurate fidelity compared to the original. In

166 short, researching ironic texts is much more difficult than researching the usual scientific texts, without the ironic
167 quality.

168 Secondly, André Glucksmann also argues his political philosophy ideas with facts from the immediate reality,
169 with examples of wars or terrorist acts, but, most of all, he argues his ideas with characters from classical literature.
170 Thus, the mechanisms by which the frenzied hatred operates are illustrated through a detailed analysis of Seneca's
171 ancient tragedy, Medea. War characterized by battle to the death is illustrated by Sophocle's Antigone and the
172 nihilistic terrorism by Dostoievsky's Demons.

173 Why does Glucksmann resort to classical literature? Why would the analysis of a tragedy written two
174 thousand and five hundred years ago be more conclusive than the contemporary historical event? This option is
175 explained by Glucksmann himself in an extensive interview with French magazine "Le Point" ??0 That is why
176 Glucksmann mainly resorts to classical literature, because it emphasizes human typologies, fictional characters
177 more relevant than real people. Because -as Glucksmann himself states -"literature is a science of evil". Referring
178 to contemporary facts might be more misleading than referring to classical literature. For example, when it comes
179 to hatred, it is known that there are sociologists and political analysts that claim the terrorists' hatred is caused
180 by external factors, by poverty, oppression, humiliation. But experience has shown us that not all poor people,
181 not all those suffering give in to hatred. In this manner, we can take one particular case of violence, based on
182 which we can claim, in a lawyerly fashion, one idea or its opposite, and by doing so we generate endless and
183 fruitless disputes that have no conclusion. On the contrary, we can notice that, in most cases, modern terrorism
184 is not represented by a single, poor, ignorant and frustrated person, but rather an individual coming from Muslim
185 countries but educated in the West; therefore, we're talking about a person whose family has considerable financial
186 resources, who can afford to pay the high tuition fees of Western or American universities, as well as leading an
187 expensive occidental lifestyle. Despite all this, these people still become terrorists, risking their own lives. Thus,
188 the cause of social evil is not misery, but intrinsic human hatred. The modern terrorist is not a puppet whose
189 will is bent by precarious pecuniary circumstance; he is an acknowledged criminal who enjoys killing.

190 4 21

191 . Literature reveals the evil in man and exorcises him via the catharsis effect, which was observed even by Aristotle.
192 By highlighting evil, literature is a doorway to knowing the evil in man, that evil which is not accidental but
193 rather constitutive and perennial to man; therefore, literature is a "science of evil". Thus, in André Glucksmann's
194 political philosophy books we will see characters from Sophocles, Euripides, Seneca, Montaigne, Shakespeare,
195 Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Beckett, Ionesco revived. These great writers are not only poets, but prophets of evil as
196 well. They reveal what goes wrong in the human drama, what is painful, they see "the flowers of evil" better
197 than others; they can decipher more easily than others the ill omens of fate. And the fate from ancient times
198 has been replaced with politics (as Napoleon stated) in the modern era, followed by hedonism and manipulation
199 in the postmodern age. Writers are a permanent reminder of the danger that lurks about, the living memory of
200 the inhumane. Let's take two other examples, alongside the one of Medea, that we have previously presented, in
201 Glucksmann's reading.

202 The second example would be Sophocles' Antigone-one of the most valuable literary works of Finally, the third
203 example, Dostoevsky's Demons, or better said the demonized, possessed by the devil, characters largely revived
204 by Glucksmann, especially in Dostoievski à Manhattan and in La troisiè mort de Dieu. Dostoyevsky's novel is
205 one of spiritual darkness, of anger and despair Oedipus, king of Thebes, born of Oedip's incestuous love with
206 his mother, Jocasta. She witnesses the fight between her two brothers, Eteocles and Polynices, who fight with
207 all the bitterness and hatred they can muster, until they kill one another. Since both brothers died in battle,
208 the city's throne is occupied by Creon, Jocasta's brother. The new king was, in fact, a hypocritical and brutal
209 tyrant. He commands that a grand funeral be organized for Eteocles, a funeral fit for a defender of the city; as
210 for Polynices, who marched with a foreign army against the city, he dictated that not even a simple funeral be
211 held and that his body remain unburied which, according to Greek tradition, was a great crime. Antigone, on
212 behalf of the moral conscience and of the blood bond with his brother, symbolically returns Polynice's body to
213 the ground. When learning that she had disobeyed him, Creon goes mad with anger and condemns Antigone to
214 death. Beyond the impressive moral complexity and beauty of the tragedy, we are left, for posterity, with two
215 literary paradigms of hatred and limitless cruelty, inherent to man as such -the fratricidal paradigm of fight to
216 the death and that of the cruelty with which a tyrant sentences to death a character who is the exponent of love
217 and moral conscience. These paradigms are mainly exploited by Glucksmann in Le Discours de la guerre.

218 5 23

219 , of crimes committed in the name of political ideas, the author anticipating the 20 th century, with its domination
220 via the political ideology and via the lie regarding the religious faith and culture. Who are these "demons"? Well,
221 up to a point, they are almost ordinary people: Verhovenski, Stavroghin, Kirillov or ?atov, people who seriously
222 question their faith in God or the lack thereof, people who have socialist, anarchist and nihilist discussions.
223 Afterwards we discover their fanatical atheism and fierce anarchism. They seem to be emanating what will be
224 known as "terrorist nihilism", a century and a half later. They oppose aristocracy, art and religion, the Holy
225 Trinity which these worship being: atheism, science and revolution. Their leader, Piotr Stepanovici Verhovenski,

226 "a killer by trait and a clow by vocation" 24 Therefore, alongside the true paradigms of hatred from some of
227 the ancient Greek tragedies, Medea or Creon, the tyrant from Antigone -we have Dostoyevsky's Stavroghin, in
228 modern literature, a scary and nihilistic genius. He knows what freedom is, but he either denies or abuses it , is
229 the prototype of the ideologist that will haunt the next century. Nikolai Stavroghin, a man of a high intelligence,
230 like Ivan Karamazov, is an unfathomable abyss. He has, at one point, opportunities to repent and return to 25
231 However, on the other hand, in the approximately two millennia that have elapsed since the . He can distinguish
232 between good and evil, but refuses to implement it. Stavroghin feels a certain satisfaction, a real one, a certain
233 delight in committing a sin; he draws pleasure from being blasphemous and from self-pride. They will be his
234 downfall, eventually. At first, Kirilov does not care whether he lives or dies. Then, he wishes to do the atheist
235 demonstration: whoever shall overcome suffering and pain, will become God themselves -and then there will be
236 no other God. This is the reasoning behind his suicide: to prove that God does not exist!

237 In conclusion, we believe it is true that, on the one hand, literature emphasizes the evil in man and exorcizes
238 him via the "catharsis" effect, a fact noticed since Aristotle. For Aristotle (in Poetics, 1449b) katharsis ton
239 pathematon -which literally meant "cleansing of sins" -meant that if we witness the theatrical enactment of a
240 tragedy or if we read a literary work with a tragic topic in general, it will stir up in our soul two feelings, also
241 called passions: mercy and fear, so that in this homeopathic way the soul may "cleanse" itself of these "sins".
242 Why mercy and fear and not something else? Aristotle explains this in detail. In the tragic situation, the hero
243 (the character) is punished by Destiny and dies without guilt. The hero is not killed because he, as a hero,
244 would be evil; he is killed because Destiny is evil and unfair to him. So, the hero is categorically not evil, but
245 it is intended for him to be at least like us, as sometimes he can be better than us. Therefore, in the face of
246 tragedy, we will feel pity for the hero who is just like us, as we will feel fear of the hero who is better than us.
247 Naturally, we feel pity for the one such as us, who dies without a fault and with no possibility of escaping. Fear
248 is explained in another way. If someone who is better than us, deserved to die tragically, then what could we
249 expect to deserve, we who are lesser than him?

250 Volume XV Issue V Version I The Psychological Resources of Terrorism According to French Philosopher
251 André Glucksmann normal, but these roads are closed behind him because, as he states, he has already passed
252 a certain "threshold of evil" from which there is no turning back.

253 Greek tragedy to the modern novel, there have been some significant changes. Meanwhile, the place of
254 antiquity's Destiny has been taken by Politics, in modern times, as Napoleon stated. In the theater of ancient
255 times, the hero's destiny was a tragic, every time; in the modern novel, the tragic is just a particular case of
256 the dramatic. The attribute of evil also shifts significantly from Destiny to the individual, to the human, to the
257 character of the novel. We no longer have destiny's ancient times 22 . The heroin was the daughter of impersonal
258 and necessary evil, but the personal and contingent evil of a novel's hero. In literature, we no longer have only a
259 cathartic function, but also an authentic "science of evil". We share Glucksmann's view, according to which, in
260 some literary works, we have an authentic and useful cognition of evil and hatred, of the contemporary terrorist's
261 profile.

262 **6 Bibliography**

263 1 2 3 4

¹t may seem unusual that the feeling of hatred lay at the basis of all human relationships, from the simplest relations between individuals -interpersonal relations -to the more complex ones -relations between ethnic groups and international relations at a global scale.

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