

Definition of Terrorism and Its Typology

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The word terrorism was first used in France to describe a new system de government adopted during the French Revolution (1789-1799). The 'regime ri la terreur' (Region of Terror) was intended to promote democracy and popular rule by ridding the revolution of its enemies and thereby purifying it. However, the oppression and violent excesses of the terrerur transformed it into a feared instrument of the state. From that time on, terrorism has had a decidedly negative connotation. The word, however, did not gain wider popularity until the late 19th century when it was adopted by a group of Russian revolutionaries to describe their violent struggle against Tsarist rule. Terrorism then assumed the more familiar antigovernment associations it has today.