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Socio-philosophical analysis of terrorism as a manifestation of war

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Abstract

The research objective is to investigate terrorism as a contemporary phenomenon, to identify the main generic features and distinctive characteristics of war and terrorism as a social destructive phenomenon. The methodology included the systemic and activity approaches, and the comparative analysis of generic concepts of war and terrorism. The concepts of foreign and Russian theoreticians are presented, who studied terrorist war in three directions: civilizational, military-political and informational. The author formulates the definition of modern terrorism and comes to the conclusion that terrorism is a form of warfare, yet these two phenomena have substantial differences.

Keywords: Terrorism, Social-Destructive, War, Content.

Análisis socio-filosófico del terrorismo como manifestación de guerra

Resumen

El objetivo de la investigación es investigar el terrorismo como un fenómeno contemporáneo, identificar las principales características genéricas y las características distintivas de la guerra y el terrorismo como un fenómeno social destructivo. La metodología incluía los enfoques sistémicos y de actividad, y el análisis comparativo de conceptos genéricos de guerra y terrorismo. Se presentan los conceptos de teóricos extranjeros y rusos, que estudiaron la guerra terrorista en tres direcciones: civilizacional, militar-política e informativa. El autor formula la definición de terrorismo moderno y llega a la conclusión de que el terrorismo es una forma de guerra, aunque estos dos fenómenos tienen diferencias sustanciales.

Palabras clave: terrorismo, destructivo social, guerra, contenido.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of global and large-scale changes of geopolitical and geostrategic importance, the philosophical interpretation of terrorism as a socially destructive phenomenon is actualized. Globalization raises the problem of terrorism to a supranational level and requires drawing the attention of the world community to its resolution (Yushina, 2010).

Terrorist crimes, changing their appearance, both one-by-one and simultaneously seized various countries and regions. In general,

the epicenter of terrorist activity shifted from Latin America to Japan, Germany, Turkey, Spain, Italy; simultaneously, terrorist actions of different intensity were carried out by organizations such as the IRA in England and Northern Ireland and ETA in Spain. Palestinian, Israeli, African and Asian terrorists, terrorists in the USA, pro-Iranian groups Hamas and Hezbollah and Sikh, Algerian and other terrorist organizations have increased their activity. Until 1980-1990s this was referred to as a local phenomenon, and now it is of a universal scale. New regions appeared where the terrorist threat became particularly significant, among them the South of the CIS and the Russian Federation (Yushina, 2010).

Since 1991, terrorism has been actively progressing in Russia. In many respects, it is a consequence of imperfect state policy, criminalization of the economy, corruption of state authorities. The collapse of old ideological and socio-political structures, drastic impoverishment of large sections of the population, the polarization of society, rising unemployment, legal nihilism and insecurity served as a detonator of social upheaval in Russia. The ideology of terrorism is a radical view of the problem of changing reality (Yushina, 2010). Terrorism becomes a detonator of civil and interethnic wars that can spread widely and turn into major military conflicts. In addition, terrorism generates distrust and sometimes hatred between representatives of different nationalities, which cannot be overcome during the life of a generation. Terrorism uses violence to influence the individual, social communities, peoples, states and groups of states,

generating fear for the purpose of obtaining political, economic, spiritual benefits and advantages (Yushina, 2010).

The availability of extensive research literature on the problems of terrorism as of a threat to national security, discussions on various concepts and developments on counter-terrorism issues among scientists, public figures and politicians testify, on the one hand, to the relevance of this scientific problem, and, on the other hand, to a diverse scatter of opinions and the absence of a completed methodological basis (Yushina, 2010).

2. METHODOLOGY

In modern scientific literature, there are studies on terrorism as a form of war, but so far, the theory of terrorism is not developed. The correlation between war and terrorism was studied by the Russian and foreign scholars and by theorists of violence and ideologists of terrorism. Literature analysis revealed there are no single signs characterizing terrorism as a manifestation of war. The research established that fear is the unity of war and terrorism. The problem of fear was studied in philosophy and psychology.

Yushina (2010) note certain similarities between terrorism and war and thus conclude that modern terrorism is a new form of war. Foreign and Russian military theoreticians considering various aspects of terrorist war pay special attention to studying its essence, as well as

to identify similarities and differences between terrorism and classical war.

The social and philosophical analysis of terrorism as a manifestation of war is based on a set of methodological principles of dialectics, conflictology. In the study of the material, the system, activity and structural-functional approaches were applied, using the historical method, as well as the dialectical method of cognition which reveals the possibilities of studying social phenomena in their development. During the analysis, the author relied on the views and principles set forth in the scientific works of representatives of the philosophical school of existentialism, Freudianism and neo-Freudianism.

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the research, its theoretical and methodological basis is formed of Russian and foreign works on political science, sociology, psychology, jurisprudence, as well as recommendations of scientific and practical conferences and seminars, international normative legal acts and legislation of federal and regional government bodies of Russian Federation.

3. RESULTS

Based on theoretical approaches to defining the notions of terrorism and war, terrorism is conceptualized as a socially destructive phenomenon, and signs characterizing terrorism as a form of war are

revealed. Common features and characteristics of war and terrorism and the problems of its scientific analysis are identified.

4. DISCUSSION

Scientific views, common traits, and private perceptions of terrorism are extremely diverse; its concept is frequently identified with other related social phenomena. In order to single out the notion of terrorism, it is necessary to identify its content by means of social and philosophical analysis and to determine its generic concept based on the received data, its properties and private representations, and to formulate the definition of modern terrorism. The diversity of the concept predetermines the diversity of its interpretations, which demands to systematize scientific views on the problem and conceptualizing the very notion of terrorism (Yushina, 2010).

The etymology of the concept comes from the Latin word *terror* – fear, horror. Maintaining a principal meaning, terrorism is characterized by the creation of an atmosphere of universal fear in society. At the same time, in the understanding of terrorism, it is necessary to single out and explore various aspects of this concept: etymological, socio-historical, normative-legal and psychological.

At present, there are about two hundred definitions of terrorism, none of which is universally accepted. Yet, in spite of sufficiently broad studies of the essence of terrorism as a phenomenon, the concept

remains difficult for an accurate definition. The definition of terrorism is not only a theoretical but a practical issue – the problem of definition has become the main obstacle in coordinating the actions of the international community in combating terrorism. For a more accurate understanding of the essence of terrorism, one needs to turn to the generalized knowledge of dictionaries.

In Russian dictionaries, the word terrorism means mainly intimidation, violent action, violence or threat of violence. The explanatory dictionary by V.I. Dal gives the semantic meaning of the word terrorism – intimidation by death, execution or violence (Dal', 1980). S.I. Ozhegov in the dictionary of the Russian language defines terrorism as physical violence, up to physical destruction, in relation to political opponents (Ozhegov, 1968). At the same time, a number of dictionaries either ignore or simply give definitions related to terrorism. For example, in the Soviet encyclopedic dictionary, the definition of terrorizing is given: - to terrorize means to pursue, to threaten with violence or killings, to keep in a state of the fear Soviet encyclopedic dictionary.

The term terrorism lies in the categorical field of philosophy, psychology, sociology, political science and jurisprudence. One of the first philosophical substantiations was given to terrorism by the German philosopher Karl Heinzen in his article Murder in 1849. He pointed out that the question of the morality of violence is irrelevant, since the main thing in politics is whether the goal is reached, and the means used are of little importance. In the author's opinion, morality is a conventional concept, because people still need to kill. Even if we were to destroy half of the continent or shed a sea of blood to kill a party of

barbarians, we would not be tormented by conscience, Heinzen wrote (Ustinov, 2002). The modern terrorist ideology is largely eclectic, rooted in social-anarchism, messianic ideas and historical voluntarism. It should be considered that different political could use terrorism forces to camouflage their true interests, that the ideological statements of terrorists are unreliable, and their self-evaluation is not to be trusted (Dubko, 2000).

In sociology, terrorism is defined as a form of politically motivated activity combining psychological (intimidation) and physical (violent acts) components carried out by individuals or small groups in order to induce a society or state to fulfill their demands. Terrorist acts do not always pursue political goals but can be carried out by criminals, psychopaths or imitators. Political scientists define terrorism as the totality of particularly harsh forms and means of political violence that terrorists use to achieve their anti-human goals (Basenko et al., 2001).

In the legal field, there is the notion of terrorism as a concrete act – criminal super-violence or the threat of its use against individuals or organizations, as well as the destruction of property and other material objects, which creates the danger of death, causing significant harm or the onset of other socially dangerous consequences that fall under the criminal code (Salimov, 1999; Petrishchev, 2001). In modern Russian legal literature, terrorism is understood as the use of violence or the threat of its use against individuals, groups of individuals or various objects with the aim of achieving political, economic, ideological and other benefits to terrorists (Serdyuk, 2002).

Philosophical and religious grounds in the interpretation of the concept of terrorism deserve special consideration.

In the opinion of the philosopher Trebin terrorism is a destructive mode of being, an antinomic vision of the world – we-they. The nature of man includes the evil and the good beginning, and in modern times there is an explosion of evil origin in people to the extent in which it never before manifested itself and this ultimately leads people to the path of terrorism (Trebin, 2003). According to Rybakov, terrorism is the war between the forces of Good and Evil, the war for human souls. Teachers of Good, preaching the unification of the progressive forces of mankind, tolerance, high morality, expansion of human consciousness to the planetary level are opposed to Teachers of Hatred calling for violence, for the exclusiveness and absolutization of man's base instincts, for the cult of force (Rybakov, 2003). The Turkish philosopher Harun Yahya saw the cult signs in terrorism: Terrorism is nothing but a satanic ritual of bloodletting (Rybakov, 2003).

At present, even though the number of the definitions of terrorism (that is, of the totality of its essential properties) is approaching 200, and despite a large number of scientific works devoted to this problem, there is still no integral theory of terrorism. In the opinion of the American scientist Levitt (1988), it is impossible to create such theory, because the phenomenon has too many causes and manifestations which depend on cultural and national traditions, on social structure and many other factors. British terrorism researcher Levitt (1988) notes that in formulating the concept of terrorism, two

approaches are possible: the first is deductive, aimed at covering all its possible manifestations with a brief definition; an example of such definition is the following: Terrorism is the deliberate systematic killing of innocent people for achieving political goals. However, such formulations are not sufficiently clear and precise, they are vague and contradictory, and therefore their practical utility is very low.

The second approach to the notion of terrorism, according to Levitt (1988), is inductive, helping determine the manifestations of terrorism in various spheres of society to create an open list of possible terrorist threats. This method made it possible to recognize in international treaties such forms of terrorism as aircraft hijacking, hostage-taking and others. However, due to the variety of manifestations of terrorism, it is not always possible to cover all the types of terrorist manifestations with this approach. Another author, Efirov (1984), believes it is more fruitful not to look for a universal definition of terrorism, but its essence should be understood as a set of original characteristic features inherent in it as in a socio-political category, and its internal content (Efirov, 1984). Trying to give a general characteristic to the views of scientists, social, religious and cultural figures and other researchers on the definition of terrorism, these can be divided into the following categories:

1. Terrorism is a socio-political phenomenon based on a spectrum of social contradictions expressed by extremist ideology allowing them to be resolved by radical extremist actions.

2. Terrorism is not an ordinary criminal offense, but a kind of super-crime that deliberately ignores any norms of law and morality adopted in society; in particular, it does not recognize the humanitarian limitations of warfare and the differences between combatants and non-combatants.

3. Terrorism is not merely a phenomenon of a new era, but a form of war, that is, the continuation or waging of war by other methods (different from classical ones) characterized by the use of all the available means to achieve the goal (Ermakov, 2003).

Let us dwell in detail on the idea that terrorism is a modern kind of war. Lenin himself defined terrorism as "one of the military actions that can be quite suitable and even necessary at a certain moment under certain conditions" (Lenin, 1959:7).

Presenting terrorism as a special modern form of warfare, it is possible to distinguish three areas:

1. Civilizational;
2. Military-political;
3. Informational.

The first area includes the concepts that define terrorism as a confrontation of various forces, civilizations and cultures acting explicitly or secretly.

Gogolitsyn (2003) consider the influence of the secret organizations (having hidden knowledge about the ways of the development of humanity) on the society a form of terrorism. These have been planning and carrying out political murders since ancient times, and their shadows stand behind numerous wars and revolutions. According to the conspirators, the modern world is mired in materialism, vices and evil. Religious institutions degenerated, lost their sacredness, yet soon the golden age of mankind will replace this era. Some secret societies pursuing this goal directly and control the activities of governments, others confront the military and political circles of different countries, initiate a confrontation, and therefore stimulate military technologies, whole branches of the economy and advanced science.

Professor Huntington (2003) of the United States argues that humanity approached its stage of development when the sources of wars and terrorist manifestations are the differences between civilizations not in the economic and political systems of society, but primarily in the spiritual sphere, in culture and religion. Economic modernization of society erodes spiritual values and traditions, weakens the role of the state in the life of society, and thus, the formed gap is filled by religious fundamentalist movements. The main enemies in the coming war of civilizations will be the Western world and the

Islamic-Confucian (eastern) world. The fronts of future terrorist wars are cuts between civilizations – the traditional boundaries of the influence of world religions.

Terrorism is a new type of challenge and a new absolutely dehumanized method of power war, since fantastic military power makes any other attempts at force confrontation senseless, the victim for the terrorist is not even the addressee of their demands, but simply an object, as Narochitskaya believes. The urban civilization surrenders not when the army is defeated, but when the water supply and sewerage systems stop in cities with million populations, and the authorities' blackmail with both humanitarian intervention and terrorist acts succeeds when the liberal consciousness of citizens of the world who are not part of the fate of their Motherland does not identify itself with the nation, its history and its army.

In the military-political area, the ideas of foreign and Russian military theorists examining different aspects of the terrorist war are highlighted. Military scientists from Germany Freiherr, von der Heydt and Liebig see in terrorism a small war – surrogate military actions used to destabilize the enemy state without passing the threshold of open hostility (Liebig, 2010). The Russian military scientist Slipchenko calls the tragedy of September 11, 2011 the beginning of a new asymmetric war as a response of international terrorism to a revolution in military affairs, implemented in non-contact wars (wars with the use of precise weapons based on new physical and psychological principles, the concept of which is developed by the

most advanced states of the West), a protest towards developing globalism. The essence of such war is the application of coordinated non-military strikes with a sudden staggering result and unacceptable damage to the victim; hiding specific political goals; the use of new unexpected means and forms of violence, the absence of an exact culprit (Slipchenko, 2002).

A British scientist Jenkins points out that terrorism is:

Violence against the system conducted outside the system. This is a war without rules, without armies, in the form in which they are known, to take place around the world, without neutral sides and with a very small number of civilian innocent observers or without them at all (1974:21).

Hans Enzensberger defined modern terrorism as a molecular civil war. The violence completely freed itself from ideological motivation and became a collective madness, that area of life where politics is powerless: In a world where living bombs are rushing, society manifests an inability to organize itself in conditions of increasing anomie, to develop solidarity and structures that could replace which became a state hierarchical order permeable to network structures. A British scholar Clutterbuck defines terrorism as a modern civil war in which civil servants, diplomats, businessmen and other officials who are frontline fighters representing civilization confront terrorists seeking to destroy this civilization.

The informational direction contains concepts that represent terrorism as an information confrontation. Russian psychologists Lisichkin and Shelepin (2003) insist that terrorism is a tactic of misleading own people and the global public, used by the United States in the information and psychological war against the countries of the Muslim world to seize natural resources. An American scholar Robert Jordann believes terrorist wars are subversive wars. The diversionary-terrorist war is cheaper, but, as well as full-scale war, can disable the economic mechanism of the state of any size. On the other hand, such war is part of the information war; the act of terrorism should be seen as an absurd form of an advertising company. The terrorist gets fame only because they severely destroyed many people (Jordann, 2001).

An orientalist Medvedko expressed the idea that terrorism is a prototype of the seventh generation war, which will be conducted by a special kind of system-forming and system-destroying weapons of psychological or nano-technological (genetic) war. Such war is far from all kinds of classical wars – world, civil, local; it has no front, no rear, no clearly designated allies and coalitions, but only exposed flanks, defenseless against the threat of terrorists using weapons of mass destruction. Science mixed with religion turns terrorists-kamikazes into carriers of the belief of mass destruction (Medvedko, 2003).

The closeness of war and terrorism allowed some scholars to assert that there is a special military terrorism (Lyakhov and Popov, 1999). Indeed, terrorism has many common features with war;

moreover, terrorist attacks were often used as a formal occasion for aggression. Wars and terrorist manifestations constitute a violent way of resolving acute social contradictions, and since terrorism nowadays, in effect, declared war on the world community, the fight against terrorism becomes a global problem. The undeniable fact is that war and terrorism are united by the phenomenon of fear. A person experiences fear, as well as the fear of terrorism, but at the heart of both lies the fear of death.

For comparison, according to the Public Opinion Foundation, immediately after the events of September 11, 2001, 21% of Russians experienced a strong set of negative emotions (fear, horror, anxiety), and another 9% were close to this complex of feelings (shock). Even more severe were the long-term consequences: by the end of September 2001, 70% of Russians personally were afraid of becoming a victim of a terrorist attack (Presnyakova, 2001). In 2010, at Lomonosov Moscow State University, a sociological study was conducted, revealing the following trends: 47% of respondents claimed they felt completely unprotected from terrorist attacks. Thus, based on the data of public opinion polls, it can be concluded that negative emotions (fear, anxiety, insecurity) in relation to terrorist manifestations persist in the territory of the Russian state. A man terrified by fear can easily be influenced and obeys the authorities; fear largely determines human behavior, is a means of control, manipulation of consciousness, and terrorism is a means of psychological influence since its main object is not those who became

victims, but those who survived; its goal is not murder but intimidation of the living.

However, there are quite pronounced differences between war and terrorism:

- Incomparability of the nature of the destruction and death of people, the space-time parameters, the composition of the opposing sides and the scale of the violent means used;
- Inapplicability of classical military tactics and strategy to terrorism, the absence of a clearly defined front, flanks and rear;
- The unpredictability of points of attack - the battlefield is public opinion, and the humane assault itself is only a means;
- Using purely criminal methods to achieve goals (hijackings, abductions, thefts);
- Using not only conventional weapons or explosives, but also threats and attempts to use weapons of mass destruction, as well as the search for non-military equipment that can serve as a tool for destruction;
- Sources of financing of terrorism are surplus from the drug trade, voluntary donations of sympathizers, etc.;

- The target of terrorists is basically not servicemen, but absolutely uninvolved people, those who are beyond the confines of the conflict.

Studying the scientific literature on this topic, the author of the present study, in contrast to R. Clutterbuck, Robert Jordann and Medvedko, concludes that modern terrorism is precisely a form of war, its social destructive component, expressed by a high degree of social danger. Modern terrorism should not be explained by any complex constructs – in order to understand the phenomenon one does not need to invent new concepts. Everything is not so detached from reality as it seems at first glance since modern terrorism is a product of those socio-political and socio-economic contradictions that exist in the modern world. Its socio-destructive component is indisputable, as a person and the society primarily suffer from any terrorist acts.

5. CONCLUSION

Humankind has a centuries-old history; man acts simultaneously as an object and subject of historical transformations. By nature, man always strives for security and maximum comfort in building the future. On the other hand, a human being is always in a world of risks. Modern historians Mikhailova (2007) surveyed five and a half thousand years of the life of mankind and found out that during this time 14538 large and small wars were registered in which 3.5

billion people were killed. Peace and tranquility reigned on our planet for only 292 years.

Problems of national security are becoming more and more pronounced and global. Terrorism as a manifestation of war is the most dangerous modern threat to the comfortable existence of man and for national security in general. Rethinking the philosophy of the security of countries and peoples in modern conditions should begin with an accurate definition of the sources of terrorism and the correct correlation of the causes and consequences of the global increase in terrorist activity.

As a result of the conducted social and philosophical analysis, it was possible to identify the rank-and-file of war and terrorism, to find out their common features, which in turn made it possible to define terrorism as a form of war and to give it the following author's definition: Terrorism is a socially destructive phenomenon defined as motivated, purposeful actions of some people against others with the aim of achieving political, economic, ideological and other benefits for the actor and/or initiator, leading to qualitative changes in all the spheres of society influencing an individual, group and (or) social level, and therefore characterized as a form war.

Terrorism resulted from the interaction of many factors (the confrontation of superpowers in the years of the Cold War, the radicalization of political movements, the counteraction to the processes of global globalization, the fundamentalist renaissance, etc.)

and, having developed into a system, brought to life a completely different, integrative characteristic: catastrophes for the society, which has a serious impact on the general direction of its modern development. Terrorism today is a special form of war, that is, the conduct of large-scale violent actions by other methods (different from classical ones) and characterized by the use of all the available means to achieve the goal.

The materials of the article are of scientific and practical value and can be used in methodological work and teaching academic subjects and courses in philosophy, political science, globalization and social security, conflictology, the theory of terrorism, and military sociology.

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