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Hegemonic masculinity and the mechanisms of domination relations in intergroup communication as social-psychological determinants of the terrorism phenomenon in Russia

In the article there are considered gender and social-psychological determinants providing steady support and development of terrorist activity in the Russian Federation territory; involving of new social groups into extremist practices.

Key words: *political conflict, hegemonic masculinity, domination mechanisms, intergroup relations, social-psychological determinants of terrorism.*

Terrorism as the extreme form of extremism is an ideology of political violence and practice of power pressure upon state power bodies and local governments, and also upon institutes of civil societies with a view to change the bases of constitutional system and to break the country's integrity. In comparison with other forms of extremist activity, a distinctive feature of terrorism is frightening of various strata of society which do not have direct relation to political opposition. This frightening is reached by actions leading to death or cruel traumas, or causing other considerable damage and grave consequences of material or psychological trend [4].

Acting as means of political violence, terrorism carries out the function of resolution of conflicts in an intergroup relations' system where there is a specific configuration of power, without which change elimination of terrorist activity is apparently impossible. According to the concept of Ralf Darendorf, the intergroup conflict arises in such a system of relations in which one group totally dominates over another [1]. As a rule, the conflict concept is used in case of infringement of the established order only on the part of the subordinated (rebelled) group. Meanwhile the conflict situation expresses a certain configuration of power in intergroup relations of essentially unequal partners. Hence, in the conflict there are always two, instead of one key agents, two, instead of one "responsible" parties. In R. Darendorf's theory any obvious conflict is only an iceberg top in a long history of domination and subordination relations. Meanwhile, from the dominating group's point of view this revolt always seems "unusual" in relations with the subordinated group, as mechanisms of vertical power in relations always hide true reasons of indignation.

Many factors influence the choice of terrorism as means of political problems' decision. There are many examples of involving of people from socially safe environment, including Russian, into terrorist activity (for example, the well-known terrorist Said Buryat). Another example is a situation of radicalization of Islamic community in the Tatarstan Republic. As Kazan theologian F. Salman (in recent times a mufti of Tatarstan) has noted in his report, among Tatarstan salafits not all are lumpens; they are children of well-being parents [2]. This circumstance forces to pay attention not on economic, but on social-psychological underlying reason of the extremist move-



ment. Among social-psychological factors of terrorist activity, in our opinion, the key are two: hegemonic masculinity construct and mechanisms providing domination/subordination during intergroup communication.

An important element falls out the analysis of the problem of terrorism for its understanding – the contents of the hegemonic masculinity construct extended in Russian society, in which violence is legitimate means of protection of honor and dignity, adequate answer on humiliation feeling. In the hegemonic masculinity construct violence realization is connected with access to the political power. Both terrorists and fighters against them (people representing Russian government) follow this construct.

Attempts to coordinate terrorist activity and occurrence of terrorist intentions with terrorist propagation only hide that circumstance that such propagation falls on the soil prepared long before its occurrence. Propagation simply uses that for a long time functions in minds of very different people adhering to cardinally opposite political views. They don't notice that the hegemonic masculinity construct is exactly that general basis which mutually supports their struggle with each other and provides a positive response in social groups which interests express both terrorists, and fighters against them. This is the hegemonic masculinity construct what starts a circular power antagonism: the more we increase "muscles" in fight against terrorism and the more we satiate social space with elements of power opposition to extremism, the higher and stronger becomes conscious attitude of people (including terrorists) that power decision of very different problems connected with infringement of someone's rights and dignity is the most optimum and worthy one.

When it is a question of Islamic terrorism (in narrower sense – the Caucasian terrorism), as an explanation lying on a surface there acts the thought on special Caucasian mentality in which violence is "normal" phenomenon combined with a high level of poverty. From this follows disposition to power redistribution of riches to which certain emissaries give a necessary political coloring, transforming usual gangsterism into armed ideological opposition. So to say, use a convenient occasion.

However, if to pay attention to social hierarchy in the country, to standard ideology, to character of interaction of the power and the population, and also to a contents of gender identity (masculinity and femininity) of terrorists and fighters against them, and to gender ideology (system of views, ideas of society construction and character of relations of men and women, their interests) there is a sensation that terrorism is not in a small degree supported by actions of Russian authorities. Patriarchal masculine character of the Russian political power is shown in various discursive forms ("to wet in a closet", "to cut to the eggs", "stick on a noddle", etc.). The hegemony of such masculinity is shown, first of all, in giving to violence of a function of the imperious man's attribute as legitimate means of achievement of political aims through total submission of others. Both heads of the country, and terrorists, operating the man-defender image (motherland, group interests, etc.) under influence of hegemonic patriarchal masculinity constantly have to prove to themselves and the others that they are worthy the power as "real" men, are capable to depress and destroy the opponent.



Patriarchal masculine attitudes in the “power vertical” authoritative system are reproduced at all social levels. In aspects of social hierarchy and character of interaction of the power with the people, as an essential element, supporting terrorism on the territory of Russia there acts the vertical of political power providing unconditional domination (hegemony) of certain social groups. For social groups this vertical creates unequal conditions in a decision-making process concerning their social future and mentioning key values and norms. A sensation of indestructible asymmetry between groups acts as key motive of violent overthrow of the totally dominating power.

According to Erica Apfelbaum, domination is shown in the following characteristics: a) all rights and privileges concentrate on one party and are defined only by the dominating group; b) only the dominating group has the right to establish borders, to define the nature of laws, duties and privileges; c) other groups don't participate in definition of rights and privileges taking into account their interests and, in a sense, are deprived of them [3]. Thus, the dominating power has no contractual basis that induces the infringed groups to use the force. After all they are politically “invisible”, ignored, deprived of existence independent from the dominating group. But here there is one more important circumstance: at such relations any of groups can't exist independently from each other as domination always assumes those who will submit. Domination relations forcedly make subordinated groups for which account there establishes a misbalance of preferences and rights, providing advantage to the dominating group. After all it apprehends itself as the higher by the group status only under condition of comparison with those who are of lower status.

The dominating group is apprehended as a defender of universal norms and values which don't exist in such a universal quality. And norms and values which political opponents adhere, in conditions of the dominating power appear original and unacceptable for a whole social system. Domination is always built by a principle “We” – “They” that assumes stigmatization or hanging a label on an oppositional group representative. Such mechanism of marking of an oppositional force representative allows to exclude him from the process of interaction of the equals and to establish, as sole true, only values and rules reflecting the dominating group interests. Thus, in conditions of domination relations, rigid division on the ours and the others acts not simply as a social differentiation mechanism, but also as a mechanism of exception of subordinated oppositional groups, setting an identical destiny of invisible marginals to all of them.

The second mechanism of establishment of domination relations, parallel with stigmatization, is ungrouping (regrouping) of subordinated oppositional groups. Any group having independent, autonomous existence is a threat for the dominating group. Therefore the dominating group is compelled to organize the process of control of opposition, so that to provoke an internal split in it. This is a structure destruction what makes the oppositional group completely subordinated to the dominating one.



The dominating group creates illusion of homogeneous social structure with interests common for all and forms ideology according to which anyone can and should aspire to the uniform standard of life, irrespective of whether the person belongs to the dominating or subordinated group. In parallels there is created and supported a social structure, not allowing depressed groups to have space and means for realization of their interests.

Domination is also shown in a form of illusory social mobility and equality imitation through symbolical granting of equal rights and purely formal bringing to life of a desegregation principle. Creation of formal equality is an obligatory condition for maintenance of visibility of social mobility and concealment of practices of representatives' of the depressed groups exception of the social system. Visibility of equality only strengthens the status of the dominating group as it supposes equality exclusively within the limits of a process of satisfaction of own interests, but doesn't suppose equality of different interests of suppressed groups. Therefore declaring of equality in conditions of the ideology of monolithic social structure is also directed on maintenance of total inequality though everything looks outwardly quite "democratically".

Maintenance of the illusion of equality of the dominating and subordinated group in power vertical conditions is also ensured through inclusion of some symbolical figures from the opposition into power structures and key social institutes, and also through creation of pro-imperious nonstate structures. However, these people and these organizations are limited in their actions on protection of the subordinated group's interests by obligations to the dominating group, the power on which basis they have been included "into the power". Also they assign them a part of "supernumeraries" in social reservations, called to show "representation" of interests of the not dominating group, whereas in these reservations the power doesn't create real mechanisms of realization of specific interests (distinct from interests of dominating groups). These "supernumeraries" can cooperate as the equals only with representatives of the dominating group whereas with representatives of the "own" group they can behave only from a position of the group dominating (actually, as "strangers" for it). Thus, they always are under the threat of "displacement" by the dominating group representatives, if they would start to express not its interests.

For maintenance of visibility of social mobility for the subordinated group, the dominating group uses a number of mechanisms of social control: under the guise of help, it chooses from representatives of the subordinated group those its members who can win from cooperation with it, from granting of possibility of social mobility.

As the next mechanism of maintenance of the dominating group status there acts a dissociation of the subordinated group members and blocking of possibility of communication between them concerning satisfaction of interests which are not entered into interests of the dominating group.

Maintenance of the dominating order is also promoted by a practice of breaking of cultural definiteness of the group: blocking of specific ways of self-expression of group identity (replacement of the specific group language, dialect, on periphery, and



its negative marks), negation of possibility of history of the group as a special generality able to have a way of development independent from the dominating group, underlining of dependent status in the group history, inability to steady and effective self-organizing, marginality of the group in its history of interaction with the dominating one.

The last mechanism of domination is regulation of channels and ways of expression of interests of the subordinated group. The dominating group monopolizes certain channels and legitimate ways of expression of interests (creates discrimination institutes and laws), translating satisfaction of any interests not entered into ideas of the dominating group into a category of illegal ones. Thereby, to the subordinated group it leaves a possibility to satisfy interests only by illegal means and transforms it into deviants' community, in relation to which the marginalization practice is only possible.

In result of action of these mechanisms of domination in intergroup political communication which is based as well on the patriarchal hegemonic masculinity construct, the vicious circle of relations in which terrorism is an inalienable structural component is started. Without rupture of this circle, refusal of hegemonic masculinity and power verticals, it is improbable to reduce influence of these social-psychological factors on terrorist activity.

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