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COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF RADICAL AND "DESTRUCTIVE" ORGANIZATIONS

Batyr KHALMURADOV,* Pavel NEČAS**

* National Aviation University, Kiev, Ukraine

** Armed Forces Academy of General M. R. Štefánik, Liptovský Mikuláš, Slovak Republic

Abstract: *The paper describes a set of common character traits typical for members of radical and "destructive" organizations, optimal age limits for involving into such kind of organizations and cults.*

Key words: *radical organization, terrorist group, psychology.*

1. INTRODUCTION

People involved in radical groups or "destructive organization"¹ are originates from different social groups and classes. There is a set of character traits which are common for members of radical groups. These character traits are mostly similar to that ones, which distinguish adherents of religious cults. When involving a person into a religious cult and his adoption of a cult normative system, the person itself is changes significantly. Similar considerable changes, so-called "sudden change", happen when involving into terrorist organization due to person's renunciation of belonging to a certain social group, person severs relations with society and is obliged to live in secret.

Analysis of different social groups and special academic and scientific literature

¹ «**Destructive organization**» — is a group, which activity is seen by society as destructive as respects to: a person of such society, mental and/or physical health, guaranteed rights and liberty of people, society itself, its traditional structure, culture, norms of public peace, social values and life-style.

allows us to reach a generalization: there are the following social and character traits of individuals, who are inclined to indoctrination² — individuals, inclined to hysteria; persons with paranoia mood; loony individuals; dependent type of personality; persons from families with hyper guardianship; persons from incomplete or antisocial families; invalids; people, suffered of painful psychic traumas; with developed eidetic sense; inclined to confabulation; children and relatives of members of cult or terrorists.

2. AGE LIMITS FOR INVOLVING

Than the person is younger, the more the person is subject to indoctrinic influence, because of perception surrounding as educational environment.

The adulthood is characterized by active orientation on adaptation to communication patterns in a small group, in other words –

² **Indoctrination** — irrational belief (persuasion), which condition is the trust, and result — faith.

adoption of rules of play in a group. This age is the most vulnerable due to its higher receptivity to suggested stereotyped behavioural reactions in a group. Moreover, especially at this age importance of symbolic parental figures, which are protectively chosen outside, is extremely increased.

The second age of higher apprehensibility is youth from 17 up to 19 years old, when real craving for self-affirmation in a society rises. But there are not enough power for it and, therefore, moral support of patron, who is a fortiori more powerful and well-educated in comparison to a young person.

It is enough to demonstrate efficiency of proper behavior in critical situations to become a cult figure for a young person. Teenage is characterized by strong motivation to formation of personal character and image, "the I", through denial of discard patterns of behavior. Self-determination and self-affirmation are reached by contrasting and keen differentiation of personal identity against observed examples of fates and styles of life. Just so the psychic politics of indoctrination is developed, orienting on offering a teenager role models wittingly different from generally accepted role models. Personal maturity becomes apparent in adequate perception of such kind of life-style, which is seen by immature individual as formal, banal, dull and grey, used up, unpromising and insipid.

3. SEXUAL ASSIGNMENT

According to statistics, the most of adult members of cults are women, but the most of cult leaders are men. Terrorist organizations show inverse situation. About 75 % of members are men. During last years the radical organizations start to involve women into terrorist activity as suicide bombers. Earlier, their activity was more planning and preparing of terrorist acts, but not performing.

4. COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

Terrorists also as cult members do not form specific psychiatric group. Different scientific papers present their definite series

(from normal persons up to psychopath). Most of investigations did not prove occurrence of evident psychic pathology. Results of judicial and psychiatric examination showed that 88% of defendants as terrorists had typical aggression as reaction on probable threat from environment [2, p. 95]. In terrorist organizations also as in cults there is a large-scale percentage of aggressive paranoiac persons. They are disposed to externalization, to impose responsibility to failure on circumstances and to find external factors for explanation of their inadequacy.

Similar characteristics of religious cults are given in monographic work "The orthodox" by Eric Hoffer. It was shown that for the most of religious cults are characterized by finding a common enemy, who is accused of all internal problems of religious organization. As such enemy they can have Satan, government, other confessions. It is no wonder that Islamic terrorists keep up morale of soldiers, pointing on threat from "Creation of Satan" — United States of America.

John Mack developed term "egoism of a victim pursuer". This term means lack of compassion of a pursuer to his victim, even if a victim suffering is much higher than the level of anguish experienced by a pursuer himself (Mack, 1979; Olson, 1988). Egoism of a pursuer perhaps explains why terrible terrorist acts are done in cold blood, premeditated and sparingly (Miller, 1988). Violence requires from a person self-justification. The aims of terror and cult are so elevated, that the goal justifies any methods of reaching it. Sometimes performers are so unscrupulous, that they are ready to realize any task, not paying attention to the methods. Lyfthon developing his conception, presented in his work "Reform of thinking and psychology of totalitarianism", enlarged it with the model of "reduplication of personality". He also presented the process of "self-justification" in his work "Nazi doctors: medical murder and psychology of genocide". He tried to explain psychological mechanisms that allowed professional doctors become unreceptive to that reality that they become the most effective production line of murders



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known of all history of human civilization — Nazi prisoner-of-war camps. This research concludes to a more exact understanding how people in good psychic and physical sense, educated and intelligent quite fast become fanatic of cults which ideology is completely inverse to their primary views on life. This sharp and deep resocialization of personality is a result of adaptive reaction under extreme pressure and manipulation with basic human wants. Lyfthon named it "reduplication".

Reduplication³ consists of dividing system of personal "the I" on two independently functioning integrities. This division takes places because at certain moment a member of cult or terrorist group faces a fact that his new behavior is incompatible with his "the I" before involving in a cult or terrorist group. Behavior required and rewarded by totalitarian group is so different from the previous "the I", that ordinary psychological protection (rationalization, ousting and other) is not enough to continue living. All thoughts, belief, actions and roles, related to destructive cult, are arranged in independent system, so-called partial "the I" that entirely complies with requirements of the group. Though it is not a result of personal choice, but a self-preserved instinct in the nearly insufferable psychological conditions. The new partial "the I" acts as entire one, eliminating internal conflicts.

In general, young people because of their intellectual and moral immaturity are involved due to "lofty ideals". Young people easy accept radical nationalistic, social and religious ideas. Youth is involved usually through totalitarian (means completely overpowering personal will and liberty, governable only by power of "leader" or

"teacher" and "Guru"). There are some examples of such groups named as "Aum Synryke" or "Red Brigades". Becoming a member of organization means to overcome estrangement, to start feeling as a part of the whole, to finish with severity of life, to pass on to a real life. Perhaps, reasoning from such logic, such kind of self-actualization for a terrorist is changing for a real life – the terrorist activity.

Long-term being as a member of terrorist or cult group at illegality also under intensive terrorist (religious) training including special technologies of psychological adaptation transforms them in a specific environment. As it is similar to criminal environment, we can call it terrorist environment distinct by specific type of consciousness of people that form it.

Genesis of forming and dynamic of behavior of an "involved" person depends exactly on such factors as education, training, perspectives of self-actualization in the present life and society. Mechanism of terror is situated deeply, masked with layers of moral substantiation. The most common motivation for terrorist action is a sense of despair, psychological discomfort that causes estimation of self-position as dramatic. So, recruiting into cults takes place with emotionally unbalanced persons. In general, such disbalance is due to stress related to grim impressions after tragic accident, divorce, death of near relation, and loss of work and other. Even very different terrorist and cult organizations have identical characteristic – blind devotion of their members to goals and ideals of the organization. One can consider that these goals and ideals motivate people to be involved in the organization, but it is not optional. Goals and ideals serve as rational explanation of membership. But the real reason of involvement is a strong need of

³ **Reduplication** is different from the traditional conceptions of "splintered" consciousness and "splintered" psychological personality systems.

belongings to a group and a sense of self-identity.

In general, people from incomplete families, people severed in frames of social conditions, people lost or never had job become members of radical (destructive and terrorist) organization. The feel of estrangement in such situations forces a person to join to a group that seems to be as well as him. Consequently, strong need of belongings to a group of similar people related to problems of self-identity is a general characteristic of terrorists and cultists (Miller, 1988).

It is obvious that one can not become a member of radical and cult group at once. Before becoming involved a person comes through apathy and other forms of social disadaptation. Self-identification with asocial (radical and destructive) group gives such people social role, even negative. To break relations with such group for "involved" person is almost impossible. It means losing self-identity. "Involved" person has so low self-appraisal that can not dismiss this self-identity. Those people not at all authoritarian therefore become members of stringently authoritarian groups. Being involved in such a group, they gain protection from their fear of authoritarianism. At that any aggression against this group is interpreted by them as attack against themselves. Essentially, any internal action increases group solidarity. This should be taken into account when organizing informational struggle against terrorist or cult organizations. In proportion as "involved" person is inspired by group ideology, one adopts absolutist rhetoric and newspeak.

This situation (process) provokes "involved" persons to attack society and opponents accepted as enemies, whoever they are. The enemy is defined by an organization leader-Guru. They define targets and methods of attack to be realized. At the same time specific groups of population (opposition or government) are insinuated to support terrorist or cult groups therefore obligations of such a group. This causes so called mutual protection that allows leaders to expect for finance, provision, concealment, supplying with recruits and other. This indirectly involves

larger groups of population, creating for a terrorist or cult group its social basement and making difficulties for opposition against violence.

It should be mentioned that cultists prefer not asking for support from social groups, but using of technologies of consciousness control to occupy and overpower them. Important feature of this situation is that "involved" member of a cult must have no private property and a cult helps him to get rid of it. Cult organizations as opposed to radical groups generally control large enterprises and top-managers. Radical organizations prefer to destroy aiming intimidation and destabilization of situation in society. Cult groups prefer to add and use to strengthen their ascendancy.

Such forcible radical and cult environment consisting of ideological centre, special units and social basement is quite effective instrument for those people who control it.

SUMMARY

Concluding aforesaid:

- "destructive" groups use the same techniques transforming intellection (consciousness controlling) as radical terrorist organizations;
- "destructive" groups as opposed to radical terrorist organizations prefers occupation of social groups (or large enterprises) for further reallocation of resources converting resources to their benefits, but not for terrorist acts aiming destroying enterprises or social leaders;
- "destructive" groups as opposed to radical terrorist organizations prefers to avoid attention of mass media;
- Internal environment of cult and terrorist organizations in mostly similar due to similar characteristics of consciousness of "involved" persons;
- Sources of terrorism and "destructive" organizations are similar, which allows to consider them together as phenomena of consciousness controlling, sociology, criminology, victimology and social psychology.



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