

The nuclear family in modern terrorism

Dimo Ivanov

Land force Chair, Command and Staff Faculty
Rakovski National Defence College
Sofia, Bulgaria
d.ivanov@rncd.bg

Abstract. *The article aims to present the relationship between the nuclear family and its involvement in modern forms of terrorism. It reveals the reasons for the emergence of family terrorism based on the inculcated belief that certain moral qualities play a major role in the upbringing within the nuclear family. It also presents the challenges which affect parenting at the nuclear family level that must find their solution before many families become victims to a particular type of terrorism, be it political, religious, ethnic, or racial. In the dynamics of the studied problem, the achievements of scientific theory and the derivation of good practices face growing demands, the need to balance the used resources, satisfy the norms of international and national law, and at the same time the growing competitiveness of terrorist organizations and networks. This gives reason and gives rise to the need for continuous scientific research despite the indisputable achievements in the field, as well as the respectable publications of several leading authors. In the interest of the research, the methods of analysis and synthesis, and temporal monitoring of open sources, including scientific publications and information media, with a wide territorial scope, were used. To further enrich the analysis, in-depth interviews were conducted with experts in the field of countering radicalization and terrorism from Bulgaria, Israel, and Great Britain. Individual cases were also analyzed using the "case study" method, or the so-called "case studies".*

Key words: *conscious choice, family terrorism, modern terrorism, martyrdom, nuclear family.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The changing security environment is increasingly bringing to the fore the risks of radicalization of large societal groups and related acts of violence motivated by extremism and terrorism. The objectives of terrorist acts are to instill fear among people through civilian casualties, to attract media attention in order to propagate the ideology of extremism and terrorism [1]. In the process of examining the complex causes and aspects of the phenomenon of terrorism worldwide, several major groups of theories have been identified, namely psychological, socio-economic, politico-social and military. Such a

complex phenomenon as terrorism has many types and criteria according to which its inherent objectives, motivation, organizational structure, forces and means used, consequences, and other specific features can be defined.

II. TYPES OF TERRORISM

Scientific classifications are needed for establishing a system of counter-terrorism measures. Some of the typical criteria used to distinguish between the different types of terrorism are based on:

- ideological - political foundations;
- territory, on which terrorist organizations operate;
- the nature of the means employed by terrorist organizations;
- the environment, in which terrorist acts take place;
- the specifics and the 'rank' of the perpetrator;
- other specific features.

When analyzing these different types and preconditions of terrorism, it is necessary to take into account that they refer to or characterize a territory or the setting in which they originate and are implemented, such as Tunnel Terrorism (Israel), Narco Terrorism (Bolivia) or Family Terrorism (Indonesia).

Terrorism is a phenomenon that possesses several specific features that give reason to define it as a global threat to the security of humanity:

- There are opportunities for terrorist acts to be carried out anywhere;
- The methods and forms of influence on the society are presupposed by the democratic values of the same society;
- The threat, generated by terrorism, requires considerable public resources to take measures for its prevention;
- Its extreme manifestations and consequences have such a negative impact on people so as to result in social

Print ISSN 1691-5402

Online ISSN 2256-070X

<https://doi.org/10.17770/etr2024vol4.8220>

© 2024 Dimo Ivanov. Published by Rezekne Academy of Technologies.

This is an open access article under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

tension and fear that make it an effective form of violence [2].

Looking at the architecture of the normative basis for counterterrorism, three main guiding domains emerge: physical, cyber, and ideological, and a review of the different types of theories of its emergence allows one to note that each has solid evidence. In defining terrorism as a complex phenomenon, it must be acknowledged that the reason for this also lies in the factors for its emergence.

Within armed conflicts, terrorist methods are widely used usually by the side which is militarily weaker. The reason is that it is a cheap and effective way of defeating the enemy. However, the term 'enemy' includes not only a state's army and police, but also the entire civilian population.

A proof of the existence of military reasons for the emergence of terrorism is the fact that the longest existing and most active terrorist organizations are from the regions of wars and military conflicts - from the Middle East and North Caucasus. A key component and motivational tool of terrorism is the process of radicalization. The basis of any radicalization process, at personal and group level, is the sense of injustice [3].

Despite the lack of consensus on understanding the phenomenon of radicalization, this phenomenon is emerging as a consequence and result of the increasingly complex social processes in modern and postmodern societies. Similarly to any phenomenon with transnational character, it has its universal features, but also its unique and local distinctive traits [4].

III. FAMILY TERRORISM

The proliferation of radical ideologies and the trend towards increased use of unlawful force increase the security risks in any country. Family is the smallest social unit, which is impacted in situations of uncertainty and injustice. These situations result in certain social behavior. In modern conditions, under the influence of different motives and related rules and norms, each nuclear family develops behavior consistent with their sense of belonging. Considering the nuclear family as a social unit of two parents and their children [14], we can state that they live together and develop as a unit on the basis of a common understanding of the purpose of coexistence and certain moral values. We will disclose some basic moral values that are inherent in a family.

IV. BASIC MORAL VALUES

Patriotism, being one of the main moral pillars of a society, is becoming a leading moral value. For this reason, some researchers consider patriotism to be equal to the moral and to justify it as a form of consciousness. At the same time, there is a legitimate concern about the rising ideology and politics that preach superiority of one nation over another and stir up national enmity and hatred. It should be underlined that in the contemporary society there is frightening failure to distinguish between patriotism and chauvinism. Chauvinism is defined as extreme aggressive nationalism based on racism [6].

Soldierly duty, considered as another moral value, is not less important than patriotism. From the most ancient times, one of the most important social functions of a man

has been the protection of the family, the clan, and later - the state, from aggression. This fact makes all the more difficult to understand the persistent effort to liquidate this important quality in some form. What is the essence of this value? It is the willingness and ability to subordinate personal interests and needs to the security - personal, regional, national, or global.

Another moral significant value is **industriousness**, because it is essential for establishing a functioning organization, for discipline, clear purpose, and fairness, all of which build the team cohesion, and the nuclear family is exactly such a team. Only in conditions of elevated social significance of the organizational unit, it becomes possible the existence of this moral quality. Industriousness, takes us to the moral value of collectivism.

Collectivism reveals the type of human's relationship with society. It means strengthening of the community and defending its interests, and aims to develop the ability to act collectively for achieving a particular goal. This value is associated with strength, resistance, action and comprehensiveness.

Humanism as a moral value sounds absurd in the context of an armed conflict, because in war the participants are prepared to kill, to destroy, and to inflict physical pain, to inflict certain material damage. What kind of humanitarianism can we be talking about? Yet, humanism is measured by the ability to cooperate with other people; it is associated with compassion, recognition of the rights of others, and respect for their freedoms and dignity. It also manifests itself through intolerance to acts of violence, to rudeness or to degradation of human dignity.

V. NUCLEAR FAMILY AND THE BASIC MORAL VALUES

All the moral values discussed above become part of the process of upbringing in the nuclear family. This process aims at the formation of personal qualities and values, attitudes towards the world, norms and forms of behavior. In addition, this process in the development of adolescents in a family is inseparable from constant change and development of attitudes in adolescents. This process undergoes three stages that take place simultaneously. The initial stage is raising awareness. Knowledge in different fields is acquired and an attitude towards knowledge is formed. The next stage is assessment-orientation stage. Knowledge from the initial stage is assessed and attitudes towards what has been learnt are formed alongside with views and beliefs. Routine behavior is formed in the third stage when the individual performs conscious actions automatically [6]. During the three stages of the process of upbringing and education, parents deprive children of their right to choose actions and push them into a world of manipulation and lies. The nuclear family is a manipulated environment in which there is only one "right" opinion and one way of "right" thinking. Thus, the opportunity for personal development and critical thinking is lost. Children need to develop in a family environment where they grow and socialize with peers. However, in terrorist organizations, the average age at which children are incited, or taken away from their families for terrorist activities, or turned

into fighters by their own parents, is 8-9 years. The young age, at which children begin to be manipulated and brought up to hatred and cruelty by their parents, is legally and morally unacceptable. The stereotypical thinking of terrorists that the status of martyr, achieved as a result of suicide bombings and the murder of innocent people, has the highest moral value, is the most serious problem that must be addressed before many more children become victims of terrorism.

VI. DEFINITION OF FAMILY TERRORISM

The complexity of modern terrorism also depends on the considerable diversity of views on moral values. Therefore, moral values need to be described in order to analyse their purposeful formation, lest we fall under the hidden force of family terrorism. In the context of the described specifics of contemporary terrorism as well as the nuclear family, a basic definition of family terrorism can be derived. **Family terrorism is a phenomenon within the smallest family unit with a traditional or conventional structure (depending on cultural and social traditions), usually consisting of parents and their children, who become radicalized by a shared cause and use a combination of different tactical, psychological, physical, and technical methods of influence to carry out terrorist activities.**

VII. CONCLUSION

We live in a period of rethinking fundamental views when it becomes necessary to reconsider the moral concepts and the ways in which they are formed in the family and in the society. Do we really know what is moral and what is immoral in modern life? For some this answer is negative, for others every psychological quality is moral. We are trying to answer the question whether in today's hectic life in the society, moral qualities occupy a significant leading place in the education of man, but talking about moral qualities, we cannot help asking ourselves the questions "What is morality?", "What is a moral quality and what is an immoral quality?". Without answering this question, our analysis of moral values and their formation would be incomplete and imprecise. We know that it is moral for certain individuals to serve in their country's army and defend it at all costs, and to do their life's duty honorably. For others - pacifists, saboteurs - it is moral not to touch a weapon. For others, it is moral to "play" the state.

It is difficult to give a clear and definite answer to the questions posed. In the current conditions of instability worldwide, and in the internal political life of any country, only the activity of strengthening the stability of normal coexistence, regardless of gender, religion, race or other differences, and the positive attitude towards this activity can be moral.

In recent years, we have witnessed disturbing symptoms in the expressions of patriotism of people from different societies. There has been an increase in the attitude towards neutrality and reluctance to form moral qualities. Qualities that represent the unity of a stable moral motive and an established form of behavior to satisfy it. In the role of moral motives are manifested the

consciousness of duty to the nation, the consciousness of one's own responsibility to the people, the homeland, national security, the understanding of honor, duty, good, evil, justice, personal and national dignity. On the other hand, the history of warfare, especially World War II, shows that battles to capture a city or organize its defense were common in the past [8]. Today, cities are more populated than ever, and the population is increasingly subjected to shelling and unpredictable defeats by the belligerents all conditions reinforce the process of radicalization at the individual and family level.

The report highlights the importance and role of the family environment in an individual's growth. Apart from contributing to the final shaping of an individual's biological predispositions, it also determines the behavioral patterns in their daily lives. A person's upbringing, morals and way of life, including his preferences and tastes, even his attitude towards those close to him, depend to a considerable extent on his family.

While focusing on the development of moral values in the nuclear family, whose role is important in the fight against family terrorism, we must also stress the responsibility of families towards the community with which they identify. For this reason, the social unit of the nuclear family is a key factor of the contemporary security environment in the fight against terrorism.

It is no coincidence that in all counter-terrorism forums, including the G7 meeting in Taormina, the unified position was underlined with regard to the fight against terrorism and violent extremism that the fight against terrorist acts and violent extremism, which affect all regions of the world, regardless of country, nationality or religion, remains a top priority for all governmental and non-governmental institutions in the world. [9]

VIII. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report is supported by the National Scientific Program "Security and Defense", approved by Decision No. 171/21.10.2021 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria.

REFERENCES

- [1] L. Milushev, "Specifics in the construction of a security system in sites with mass residence of people", Scientific journal "Security and Defense", Year I, Issue 2, Vasil Levski National Military University, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria, 2022, pp. 166-184.
- [2] L. Milushev, "Security and protection of objects with mass residence of people", Part one, ISBN 9786190112587, Textbook, "Istok-Zapad" Publishing House, Sofia, 2023
- [3] P. Marinov, "Research of the factors influencing the processes of radicalization in Bulgaria", Scientific journal "Security and Defense", Year I, Issue 1, Vasil Levski National Military University, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria, 2022, pp. 148-169.
- [4] Handbook - to contract URI №5785 opm-26 5785mpd-6/ 24.01.2018 - "Conducting a national expert study on the topic: Early recognition of signs of radicalization with a

- view to implementing early prevention", under the project "Expansion of the expert capacity of the employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the prevention of aggressive acts in society, corruption and radicalization", contract No. BG05SFOP001-2.004-0003-C01/27.12.2016, for the provision of grant-in-aid under the Operational Program "Good Governance".
- [5] Dictionary of Key Terms in Bulgarian Science. Vol. VI. Arts, 2019 – 2022 (extended by one year – Protocol No 3 from a meeting of the Science Council from 19.02.2021), corr. member prof. Maria Popova (freelance associate), assoc. prof. Borislav Popov (freelance associate, South-West University "Neofit Rilski"), assist. prof. Ekaterina Petkova PhD, assist. prof. Kristiana Simeonova PhD, assist. Radostina Stoyanova PhD, Adriana Hristova, [Online] Available: <https://ibl.bas.bg/en/retchnik-na-osnovnite-termini-v-balgarskata-nauka-t-vi-izkustvo/>. [Accessed: Feb. 05, 2024].
- [6] V. Drumev, "Society and its Educational Significance", "Spiritual Reading", No. VI, VII, 1881, [Online] Available: <https://posledniqt.wordpress.com/2015/03/16/васил-друмев-по-въпроса-за-обществото/>. [Accessed: Feb. 08, 2024].
- [7] D. Ivanov, "Trends in Radicalization Processes and Terrorist Activities After Covid-19", International conference "KNOWLEDGE – BASED ORGANIZATION", Vol.28, No.1, 2022, pp.66-71, Romania, <https://doi.org/10.2478/kbo-2022-0010>.
- [8] R. Marinov, S. Stoykov, P. Marinov, "Urbanized Territories Non-Existing Part of Crisis Response Operations" presented at 2019 International Conference on Creative Business for Smart and Sustainable Growth (CREBUS), Sandanski, Bulgaria, 2019.
- [9] G7 summit in Taormina, Italy, [Online] Available: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/23559/g7-taormina-leaders-communicue.pdf>. [Accessed: Feb. 20, 2024].
- [10] D. Ivanov, "Using non-verbal communication in counter-terrorism operations", ISSN 2367-7473, Proceedings, Scientific Conference "Current Security Issues", Vasil Levski National University, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria, 2022.
- [11] K. Gradev, P. Marinov, D. Ivanov, Analysis of the Operational Environment for the Land Force Units Participation in Stabilisation Operations, *Voenen Zhurnal* (ISSN 0861-7392) scientific journal is being printed four times per year: Issue 1 (January – March); Issue 2 (April – June); Issue 3 (July – September); Issue 4 (October – December), issue 3-4/2022, volume 129, pp. 234-254.
- [12] P. Marinov, S. Stoykov, D. Ivanov, "Theoretical foundations of terrorism and anti-terrorism", Part one, ISBN 978-619-01-1243-3, Textbook, "Istok-Zapad" Publishing House, Sofia, 2023, pp. 175-206, pp. 284-303
- [13] D. Ivanov, "Family Terrorism or a Conscious choice", ISSN: 2815-388X - Print, ISSN:2815-4584 - Online, page 23-37, Scientific journal "Security and Defense", Year II, Issue 2, Vasil Levski National Military University, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria, 2023
- [14] Cambridge Divtionary - Make your words meaningful, [Online]. Available: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/nuclear-family>, [Accessed: Feb. 21, 2024].