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MODERN COUNTERTERRORISM APPROACHES: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS

The «War on Terror» seems to have opened up the very political spectrum of the millennium for the United States and the West, triggering a number of political developments worldwide, although historically not being the first reaction on terrorism activity of its kind. Notably, though, the key peculiarity of the abovementioned political wave was in its focus mainly on the so-called Islamic terrorism.

It is thus crucial hereby to determine the nature and actualize the importance of psychological and religious dimensions of the long-lasting struggle against the so-called Islamic terrorism and draw up certain perspectives for its effective development.

After almost 16 years of a titanic struggle, engaging almost all the aspects of political, military and economic life spheres, the question as for tackling the malaise of the Islamic terrorism threat for the U.S. and their allies, nevertheless, is still there. Which brings about doubts regarding the fullness of the methodological complex to be implied to solve the problem, returning us to the approach issue. Attention, in this regard, should be paid to the consideration by Jack Miles, who articulated the significant misleading in the Western understanding and wrote that, «The sweet dream of American political thought – reborn in each generation, it seems – is that cultural factors like religion will shrink into insignificance as blessed pragmatism finally comes into its own» [1, P. 25].

However, first, we are to reach a clear understanding of the terms in question, for those are the fundament of the research. Accordingly, any counterterrorism approach should be regarded as a manifestation of political activity. While politics itself is considered to belong to «activities that relate to influencing the actions and policies of a government or getting and keeping power in a government» [2]. Besides, in terms of power we are to give a due respect to the multidimensional interconnection as between politics and religion [3], because the power can manifest itself in social functions of those two, in

particular while regulating behavior of large groups of people and the very societies. For instance, religion may «transmit» some political decisions of acting power, thus legitimizing them, or condemn them instead as well.

A vivid illustration thereto can be seen in Al-Qaeda itself as one of the main sources of terroristic threat. For it is considered to be «a Muslim power but not a nation», while «its key support comes not from Arab governments, which fear it for good reason, but from a widespread, albeit thin, stratum of Muslim society.» [1, P.24] Therefore, it is argued that the lack of right approach or will to understand the nature of actors and phenomena being faced leads to both wrong assumptions and conclusions and, consequently, ineffective and even potentially destructive actions. Which is why in conducting a conceptual framework for counterterrorism actions religion factor is to be taken into account thoroughly.

Such a shift in the problem perception is more than necessary today. J. Miles underlines the mistake of the existing American approach that divides politics from religion. He states that «the Western powers projected their own ever more secular nationalism upon the rest of the world» and «assumed that if a counter-attack were ever to come from defeated Turks, Arabs or Punjabis, it would come in the name of a nation rather than of a religion. But this is not what has happened» [1, P. 24].

The objective truth of the abovementioned conclusion gets even more obvious, when recalling the point made by Carl von Clausewitz in his influential writing *On war* that «All military action is intertwined with psychological forces and effects.» In addition, this very statement drives us to the next crucial aspect in question, namely, psychological dimension of counterterrorism.

In order to highlight the importance of the issue it is worth recalling the provision of the *Doctrine for joint psychological operations* by the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the US, which implies the following: «Because execution of policy routinely contains an informational element and desires behavior favorable to its intent, there is an inherent psychological dimension» [4, P. 10]. Moreover, taking into account, the findings of communication theory, providing that between a sender of a message and its recipient there is always a certain semantic barrier, it is possible to assume that the latter builds upon one's system of archetypes. Accordingly, archetypes are «the basic concepts, setting coordinates, through which one perceives and reasons about the world while performing his life activity» [5, P. 290].