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EXAMPLE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO ISLAM RADICAL ORGANIZATIONS IN MODERN FRANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF MURDER OF SAMUEL PATY

Abstract. In this article the author analyses the incident of schoolteacher Samuel Paty, who was attacked in connection with a material shown in a free speech class. The paper provides a discourse analysis of the remarks made about the incident, and identifies the different parties that were affected by the situation. The author examines the theory of the construction of social problems in a religious context and analyses the murder of Samuel Paty, which has had considerable resonance in France and around the world, as a case study.

Keywords: social problem, radical Islamic organizations, France, Samuel Paty, victim.

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ПРИМЕР КОНСТРУИРОВАНИЯ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ ПРОБЛЕМ, СВЯЗАННЫХ С ИСЛАМСКИМИ РАДИКАЛЬНЫМИ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯМИ В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ФРАНЦИИ В КОНТЕКСТЕ УБИЙСТВА САМУЭЛЯ ПАТИ

Аннотация. В данной статье автор анализирует инцидент, произошедший со школьным учителем Самуэлем Пати, который стал жертвой нападения в связи с продемонстрированным материалом на уроке свободы слова. В статье приводится дискурс анализ высказываний относительно произошедшего инцидента и выявляются различные стороны, пострадавшие в данной ситуации. Автор рассматривает теорию конструирования социальных проблем в религиозном контексте и в качестве кейса анализирует убийство Самуэля Пати, вызвавшее значительный резонанс во Франции и по всему миру.

Ключевые слова: социальная проблема, радикальные Исламские организации, Франция, Самюэль Пати, жертва.

Religious issues have been controversial throughout the history of humankind. They are a result of different positions in matters of faith, religious activities and rules. And the origins of that connected with the distinctions in traditions and culture. Thus, the Gods of the ancient Greeks often fought with each other. According to Weber, "the struggle of the Gods is a metaphor for the" incompatibility of values": choosing one of the worldview positions is a rejection of the others; serving one God, you offend all the other Gods".

Religious strife is often a form of expression of class and ethnic conflicts. Hostility towards other religious groups varies depending on the extent to which religious differences linked to economic, political or national interests. Religious differences can act in such situations as a symbol of hidden differences and interests, performing a purely ideological function. Thus, the conflict between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo perceived as a conflict between Orthodoxy and Islam.

Moreover, disagreements can also occur within one religion, for example, there are branches of Islam that are called "radical" and allow violence and terrorist activities in a religious context. According to radical Islamists, "killing infidels" is consistent with the fulfilment of a sacred duty. However, for other adherents of the Islamic religion, those who commit terrorist acts "in the name of Allah" are extremists, not "true believers". The use of terrorism is not unique to Islam, as it involves radical representatives of all political religions.

Currently, among the threats to security in Europe, radical Islamism is coming out on top. The number of jihadists and radical Islamists grows all European countries every year. The war in the Middle East brought Europe not only millions of refugees but also the radicalization of the Muslim community, which led to the fact that thousands of European citizens went to fight in the ranks of terrorist groups. Representatives of European law enforcement agencies understand the threat from Islamist radicals, but tragic events occur periodically, which are the result of the actions of terrorist organizations [1].

From 1994 to 1996 France has been the victim of a series of attacks by militants of the Algerian armed Islamist group (GIA). In December 1994, GIA militants hijacked a French plane in Algeria, allegedly intending to blow it up over Paris. In 1995 and 1996, the GIA staged a series of bombings in France that killed 16 and injured more than 300 people. One bomb was planted near a Jewish school, injuring 14 people. In recent years, France has experienced several deadly terrorist attacks: the July 2016 attack in Nice, the November 2015 attacks by ISIS activists in Paris, and the January 2015 attack on the editing office of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo and kosher supermarkets.

One of the latest incidents in the context of terrorist actions by representatives of Islamic radical organizations was the murder of Samuel Paty. The murder of Samuel Paty, a French high school teacher was committed on October 16, 2020, and took place in Conflans-Saint-Honorine, a suburb of Paris. Paty was killed and beheaded by an Islamist terrorist. The murder carried out in response to a demonstration of Charlie Hebdo 2012 cartoons depicting the Islamic prophet Muhammad at a free speech class. The incident caused a significant public outcry. Thus, the situation with Samuel Paty is one of many episodes of modern France, which faced with the problem of the presence of radical communities on the territory of the state. This incident represents a new round of the problem that has already arisen earlier, which forced the public to talk about its existence again.

From the perspective of the theory of social construction of problems of Blumer, social problems do not have an independent existence as a set of objective social conditions but are primarily the results of a process of collective determination. This thesis runs counter to the premise that underlies the traditional sociological study of social problems [2]. According to the traditional approach, the social problem exists as an objective condition in the structure of society. It is believed that this objective condition has a harmful nature, the opposite of the nature of normal or socially healthy society.

However, there are negative aspects of this traditional approach. Firstly, social problems can be identified only after their recognition by society, while the modern sociological theory is not able to establish them. Thus, the problem of radical Islamic organizations in France became such only after it was recognized by society from various sides as a problem, that is, when it was "declared" a problem. Secondly, there is an assumption that the social problem exists in society mainly in the form of an identifiable objective condition and it consists of many-objective components into which it can be decomposed and solved. However, the problem exists not as an objective phenomenon but as its perception in society. In France, regarding the Samuel Paty incident, several sides with different positions were involved in public discourse and for each side, that problem came from a different perspective, which indicates that it is impossible to judge the objectivity of the existing conditions. Thirdly, there is an assumption that the data obtained as a result of the study of the objective structure of a social problem endows society with reliable and effective means of solving it. However, this goes against the condition that the sides involved in the social conflict have different interests and goals, and there is no one logic possible way of a solution to that problem.

Thus, if the traditional sociological theory is unable to identify social problems, and if sociologists engage in such identification by focusing on public recognition of social problems, then it follows that researchers of social problems should study the process by which society recognizes social problems [3]. Blumer has identified stages of social problems formation:

· Emergence,
· Legitimation,
· Mobilization of action,
· Formation of an official action plan,
· Transformation of the official plan and its empirical implementation.

Later, J. Kitsuse and M. Spector supplemented the theory of social construction of problems. Kitsuse and Spector considered social problems in the context of certain types of activity of members of society. The subject of their particular interest was the methods used by people to define and institutionalize something like a social problem. These methods are essentially the phenomenon of social problems. Thus, they noted the importance of claims-making [4].

Analysing murder of Samuel Paty as a social problem we can identify a lot of victims of that incident.

1.   The obvious victim of this crime is the teacher himself, who showed cartoons of the prophet Muhammad as an example of "freedom of speech" from a satirical magazine, which in 2015 was subjected to a terrorist attack by representatives of radical Islam for publishing similar content [5]. The president of France, Emmanuel Macron claimed that Samuel Paty "embodied the Republic" and that he is "one of these teachers that we do not forget". The President formed Samuel Paty as a symbol of "fight for freedom" and awarded the Légion d'honneur - France's highest honour – posthumously to that teacher.

2.   Besides, the entire teaching community is to some extent the victim of this incident. Teachers across France told reporters of their fear, stunned by the attack on a colleague who was killed "in broad daylight on a quiet Suburban street". According to France's anti-terrorism prosecutor, the teacher had been "assassinated for teaching," and the attack was an assault on the principle of freedom of expression. "Here civil society needs to pull itself together, we need

a united front without demagogy, and it's going to have to go through us, through the National Education, through a better consideration, because we're on the front line with young people", underlined Catherine Prevost-Meyniac, an eco-management teacher who came from Angers.

3.   As the third victim, we can consider the whole French society. French Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer called the killing an "attack on the French nation as a whole". And it found out the respond because thousands of people joined the demonstrations across the country. People felt involved in this incident and associate themselves with that ordinary man Samuel Paty with the right of freedom of speech. We can see that through posters which people take to the demonstrations with words "Je suis Samuel" which is "I am Samuel". Also, there were posters with words such as "Freedom of speech" and others.

4.   The other side is the Muslim community which does not support radical Islam but faces the consequences of that incident. The French Council of the Muslim Faith (CFCM), the main interlocutor of the public authorities on Islam, condemned the assassination. They sent to the Imams of France, a text that they could use as inspiration for their Friday prayers in response to the attack. In it, CFCM noted that "The horrible assassination... reminds us of the scourges that sadly mark our reality: that of the eruption in our country of radicalism, violence and terrorism claiming to be Islam, claiming victims of all ages, all conditions and all convictions. We are sometimes targets of anti-Muslim acts, but others are also victims of hostile acts. In the face of these provocations, we must remain decent, serene and clear-sighted". Thus, actions of radical Islamists offend other Muslims because of claims to be real Islam. Also, French Muslims said, that they were afraid of rising Islamophobia. A couple of days after the killing, Gérald Darmanin, the interior minister, proclaimed "a war against the enemies from within." He then launched a series of police operations and raids against Muslim organizations and individuals who, in his words, "were not linked with the investigation but to whom we are willing to send a message". Darmanin also announced his intention to immediately disband several anti-Islamophobia organizations, labelling one of them an "enemy of the republic".

5.   Other victims of the incident were Muslim believers, whose traditional values were hurt by the display of such images. One of these is the parent of a girl who studied in Samuel Paty's class. He was later prosecuted for participating in a hate campaign on social media, which later led to the murder. The Pantin Grand mosque posted a protest video on its Facebook page a week before the murder, on behalf of which the Imam came to school in solidarity with the protest of the parent of a girl from the Paty class. The official publication can be interpreted as a statement that Samuel Paty insulted the Muslim religion and its representatives by his actions.

Of course, besides, other categories could be found out in this social problem. As professionals, we consider journalists while representatives of the administration are all civil servants involved in the process of solving this problem. Following the words of interior minister, the carriers of the problem are Islamic radical organizations that proclaim themselves to be true Islam, while other Muslims deny this correlation. Besides, the bearers of the problem can be attributed to those individuals who organized a hate campaign against Samuel Paty on social networks. Since this ultimately led to this murder, since this conclusion was made by the court. It is in the case of the murder of Samuel Paty that the children who helped identify the teacher can be considered as dilettantes, without assuming what consequences this may lead to, also brought to court in this case.

Speaking about rhetorical tools and their types, we can note the position of the French President with his civic style, with which he defends the position of freedom of speech, which can be correlated with the category of rhetoric Entitlement. People participating in the demonstrations also expressed their agreement with his statement with the help of various posters. At the same time, Gérald Darmanin, the interior minister declares "fighting the enemy", which is the rhetoric of Endanger in the context of anti-Islamophobia organizations. On the part of the state concerning radical Islamic organizations, we can talk about the rhetoric of Unreason, since the subsequent reaction is to introduce compulsory education for all students.

To conclude, I would like to say that such incidents are horrible nowadays but they show the imperfectness of implemented measures to reduce the gap between different cultures, between minorities and dominant public discourse. As a result of that incident the government of France introduced new proposal related to mandatory educational system with core French values among all youngsters especially representatives of Islam religion. That measure can be considered as acceptance of claims. Also the government reduce the number of organizations which fight against Islamophobia and that is more controversial because of fear of Muslims of rise of the Islamophobia.

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