

THE PREFACE

Dear reader!

This book is devoted to one of the most urgent problems of modernity: aggression and violence. During the 20th century mankind has gone through two World wars and innumerable interstate wars and conflicts, revolutions and cataclysms. Mankind protests and vainly tries to find ways to counteract disastrous displays of state violence, street violence, religious violence, domestic violence, interpersonal violence. Humanity met the 21st century with hope for peace. But, the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 on the USA, and terrorist (as a matter of fact) war against mankind have shown, that a new turn of violence began with methods even more refined and severe, connected with cool mass murders of peaceful citizens, women, children and elderly men.

People devise terrorist acts and make them happen. That is why terrorist personalities intentionally attract special attention to themselves. What makes him act out such violence? Experts believe, that social, economic, pedagogical, as well as genetic factors lay in the foundation of terrorism. They connect the occurrence of killing and suicidal tendencies in the terrorist with his inadequate education, the impact of an aggressive environment, and psychological trauma received by an individual in childhood. All this is correct. But, today, science has opened new aspects, which give additional understanding of the terrorist threat.

During last third of the 20th century, a new interdisciplinary science – Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine dedicatedly began to develop. It has united psychologists, psychotherapists, psychoanalysts, and other specialists, who have discovered that, quite often, psychological trauma is programmed into people even before birth. Stress which mother is experiencing during pregnancy and labor, as well as her personal attitude towards the child (love or rejection, wanted or unwanted) remain in his memory, and then, after birth, her diminishing patterns define his thinking and style of behavior. In combination with genetic memory, the prenatal experience becomes a background template, on which, after birth, the personality is formed. That is why when we are speaking about the role of environment and education in the formation of aggressive and violent character, it is necessary not to miss the important role of the prenatal background and whatever it forms. Experts give special attention to the problem of stressed, injured and unwanted children.

The common portrait of the unwanted children includes such features as: uncertainty in themselves; massive dependency; difficulties of adaptation in a social environment; bad feelings of attachment and responsiveness; emotional ‘deafness’; neurosis; mental disorders (Matejcek e.a., David e.a., Zakharov, and others). These ‘unwants’ can be ambitious; vindictive; have pointed requirements for recognition with criminal ways of the realization of this need, and at any costs. Not being wanted, even from the moment mother realizes she is pregnant, can initiate criminal tendencies, etc. The reader will find detailed characteristics of unwanted children in many papers of this book.

These psychological features of unwanted children, in many respects, coincide with an integrated psychological portrait of the terrorist, which J. Antonyan described: a high level of aggression and readiness to use any means for achievement of their purpose; feelings of unconscious anxiety; constant readiness to think that he is threatened with danger; constant readiness for protection from attack; infantilism plays a great role in it; the unconscious threat to remain one on one with the world strengthens their aggression, etc. This pathology in children who kill children and adults is called Reactive Attachment Disorder.

All these diminishing, even destructive perceptions induce us to reflect on the role of ‘undesirability’ as the background for the increased level of aggression in the world. The value of this factor is difficult to overestimate when we take into account that a third of children in the world were born unwanted (the United States Department of Health, 1990). There is evidence that the figure could have substantially increased if not in numbers at least in pathological consequences. In this group of the of terrorists, individuals are identified whose feelings of self-value are lost; there is an aspiration to death; with an indifference not only for their own lives, but also for lives of other people. Such individuals appear in the group of the destructively inclined people, who aspire to satisfy their excessive ambition by the global violent change of the world. They can appear in the roles of ideologists and/or executors through killing and/or suicidal actions on very large scales.

Increasing research and publications of scientists, analysts, state and public figures are devoted to aggression and violence. In this book, the assembled materials consider aggression and violence from a position of prenatal and perinatal psychology and medicine. The authors of the book are known experts in their areas of expertise. Analysing numerous examples of violence, the authors come to coinciding conclusions: violence invoked on the unborn, and subsequently, to the born child can transform him into an aggressor and criminal violator. The consequences of that behavior depend on the level of his intelligence, education and the place he occupies in a community. The conclusions made by the authors from many countries, having great vital and professional experience, working independently from each other, allows us to take them with definite authority.

Some papers were published in other editions, and with the sanction of the authors and publishers are included in this book. The sense of the publication of these works in one book, located under one cover is that the authors add, develop and support one another's urgent message. All together, they hope to evidence to the reader, that, alongside already known causes, there is one more important factor – prenatal - supporting violence on a high level. We hope, that the contents of this book will allow the reader to recognize the importance of prenatal sources of violence. And, once acknowledged, to direct their resources to a way of prevention and reduction of the level of violent aggression. Actually, we want to underline that the prenatal period is '...unique time in preventing later illness or disturbances' (Fedor-Freybergh P.).

This book is addressed, first of all, to a wide public, but professionals also will find it of substantive interest. For example, parents, teachers, tutors and psychologists will find help explaining abhorrent behavior of children. Lawyers can better understand the mentality and violent style of behavior of criminals: correctly form accusation, to strengthen protection, and to plan parameters for punishment of the defendants. Psychotherapists will find in this book an explanation of the failures as well as substantiation for other (non-verbal) methods of psychotherapy. Obstetricians will receive data about the perinatal trauma and the basis to change harmful and unnecessary technology in birth care. State and public servants will find in this book useful information that will help them with a choice of priorities deciding policies for beneficial improvement of society.

Grigori Brekhman, Peter Fedor-Freybergh