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### **TRACE PATTERN AS AN ELEMENT OF THE CRIMINAL CHARACTERISTICS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMITTED IN ARMED CONFLICT**

Traces remain after the commission of any act, and in this regard, the commission of human trafficking in armed conflicts is no exception. As A. A. Matsola rightly notes, «...since the event of any crime occurs in a certain space and under the indispensable condition of multiple contact interaction of different objects with each other, numerous traces-reflections remain at the places of the crime or in the immediate vicinity of it on other objects, which in forensic science are called trace patterns, which are an integral part of the forensic characterization of the crime» [2, p. 117]. In turn, M. A. Pogoretsky states that «...the direct source of traces of a crime in the general sense is the socially dangerous influence of the person who committed the crime, whose behavior is manifested in the form of action or inaction, on objective reality, the interaction of objects and states, that is, the event of the crime itself» [3, p. 20]. As we can see, scientists point to a specific mechanism of trace formation – the influence of the offender's person on a specific object.

We consider the statement of V. V. Pyaskovskiy to be quite correct, who stated that «...preparation for committing human trafficking, its commission and concealment lead to the formation of various material changes, which in criminology are called traces of a crime, which, together with other sources of information, allow not only to correctly qualify the committed act, but also to choose the means and methods for revealing and investigating these crimes. Trace data and the information obtained in this connection are a necessary condition for ensuring a comprehensive, complete and objective investigation of the circumstances of human trafficking» [5, p. 74]. For his part, O. V. Tkach provides the following formulation «...the essence of the trace picture as an element of the forensic characterization of a violation of privacy is important for its investigation, since it is a source of evidentiary information that has important organizational and tactical significance in the investigation process» [6, p. 20]. That is, forensic scientists indicate that the trace picture is important for the investigation of criminal offenses.

And already O. G. Kryvopusk emphasizes that «...the trace picture of a crime is one of the key elements of the forensic characteristic and is in correlation with the method of committing a crime, the situation and conditions, the identity of the criminal and the victim. Since any criminal act is characterized by changes in the environment, which are the result of the actions of preparation, direct commission and concealment of traces of criminal activity by the guilty person, the trace picture

carries an array of information about past events, and one of the main tasks of law enforcement officials is to identify such traces, study them, research and conduct analysis based on the information received, which will subsequently allow to put forward versions, establish the method and mechanism of committing a crime, the instrument of its commission, initiate the necessary examinations and investigative (search) actions» [1, p. 20]. We also consider the statement of V. V. Pyaskovskiy, who indicated that this category «...is a set of abstracted information about typical material and ideal traces, that is, signs, conditions for the commission of a given crime, which are characteristic of certain methods of committing human trafficking and are in correlation interdependence with the identity of the criminal and the victim. It is more expedient to study typical “trace patterns” of human trafficking, dividing them by methods of recruiting victims and methods of moving them across the state border of Ukraine. A generalization of forensic practice shows that the methods of recruiting victims and methods of moving them across the state border determine the most diverse connections with the activities of traffickers and reflect traces of contact with the objects surrounding them. Understanding the regular connections between the system of traces and other elements of the forensic characteristics of human trafficking makes it possible to correctly determine the methodological scheme of the investigation» [4, p. 8-9].

Based on the above positions of scientists, we will provide the author's definition of the trace picture as a system of information about characteristic material and personal data that are specific to individual methods of committing human trafficking in armed conflicts and are in a stable correlation relationship with other elements of the forensic characteristic, and also have a clear investigative direction.

Summing up, we note that the trace picture is of great importance for the investigation of human trafficking committed in armed conflicts. The author's definition of this forensic category is provided.

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