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CIVIL WAR AS A SOCIO-POLITICAL PHENOMENON: PSYCHOSOCIAL INTERPRETATION

Civil war as a social and political phenomenon and its psychosocial interpretation, influence of extreme conditions of internal armed conflict on people perception and behavior, on moral and psychological climate of society are analyzed in the article. Attention is focused not only on general processes, but also on separated people groups, individuals. It is noted that the conflict during the civil war can be traced not only between the warring parties, who are carriers of the idea of "old" or "new world" of state, but also in psychological condition of people. Factors that lead to chain reaction: terror-violence-cruelty were discovered. This researching approach allows to see new borders of such a complicated phenomenon as civil war.

Key words: civil war, social and political phenomenon, psychosocial interpretation.

A special place in social development of humanity and socio-political history is occupied by civil wars, which by their nature differ from the other extreme conditions of development with special cruelty, deep psychological changes in people's minds and society in general. Internal wars are not stochastic phenomena in the state life, they are based on desire to compete in the power struggle, which is a natural human aspiration. The destruction of traditional forms of power, which are based on the sacredness and the uniqueness of power, had led to disputes and polemic in society. It is beginning of power struggle, which brought to an extreme condition spilling over into a civil war.

Civil war has an effect on all areas of society life, leads to consequences that can be traced during life of several generations. The war, which divides society into irreconcilable parts, deeply sinks in the consciousness of the next generations, reflects on the fate of future generations, moreover continues to influence on moral and psychological environment in society for a long time. Civil war divides united nation into the different sides of the barricades, separates families, and, not less terrible, a personality, its inner world and attitude to others. Internal war has global character and causes hard mental traumas, which effect on society life for a long time.

By definition, civil war is cruel because leads to changes of power and society, division of society into irreconcilable and dissenting camps, and major social, economic and psychological consequences. An internal war has no clearly defined start time (it does not matter who made the first shot) and end time (no establishment of truce, no signing a peace) develops spontaneously, attracting more people, regardless of age, sex, social status.

Moreover, alternative to just war, civil war has no heroes, here are not used such terms as "patriotism", "motherland", "love of country". Civil war as a political, rather than armed, confrontation between compatriots cannot be, essentially, clearly estimated by its participants as the fact that the end of war does not mean a formation of agreement in society regarding the problem and its estimating. Various evaluations of the civil war in future during the formation of mass historical nation consciousness can be diverse: positive perception of a civil war as a great social experiment; apologetic and interpretation of a war as the highest form of class struggle, tendentious assessment of forces; romanticization and glorification, when term the "fratricidal war" is pushed aside; multipolar estimating of an internal war. However, it should be noted, that evolution of civil war estimation quite often happens in mass historical consciousness of nations and states, which have passed through war. Moreover, in general, estimation changes from the apologetic of the last to acceptance as one of the most tragic event in nation life.

Psychologically, this is understandable, because such a change/evolution of evaluation is caused by rethinking the essence of civil war tragedy. Such tragedy is not that one party was bad and the other was good, but that all parties, paradoxically, were right in their own way, and each participant of internal war has defended its rightness using weapons, unwilling to back out or accept a compromise. Moreover, as a result, there is a situation when all parties have fought for the benefit of people, state (understanding in their own, according to their own vision of the future development), but people, society, state have been getting worse.

Civil wars differ by radical conflict forms inside the society. The last confirms that such wars relate

to internal policy. If compare civil war with interstate wars, the interstate wars have clear subjects of conflict, participants, their interests and target. The civil war differs by not clearly defined the members of warring parties, blurred lines between them that make difficult to determine interests. As a result, fundamentally different social, political and psychological principles act in internal war, than in interstate or external wars

As it is known, civil war –is an element of formation the new world and order or protection the old one. In both cases, the last means the confrontation to destruction as such: either by means of protection of existing or creation of new one. The point at issue is, principally, about the different motives, different values, and, accordingly, different political cultures. Who is engaged in civil war, is the image of the world, which he sees. In any case, citizens, who wage war against each other, are representatives of the "participation culture", because carry their own targets and ideals but contrasting them against each other. Therefore, they are struggling for a certain order, for valuable to the world ideals, which are so valuable for them that they are ready to give life for this, the highest price. Thus, people have ideals that are more valuable for their biological existence.

An internal war that is essentially extreme situation reveals the ultra-sides of the human essence. In this case, it should be appreciated that traditional relations, which have been forming for centuries, still amplify the psychopathology of mass consciousness. This diversified process of changes in society and the state, that is closely related with the historical context of the era in which the state and society exist that are passing through civil war. Moreover, the presentation of human in the war, with his worries occurs in the interaction of "fear culture", "shame culture" and "guilt culture". Aggressive demonstrations are related to such human qualities as ambition, orientation to active action, success orientation primarily motivates destructive, not creative human actions.

The civil war – is a situation of civil peace break, destructive force, that is the cause of "social disorder", violence, permissiveness and aggression.[1]. Talking about moral and psychological element of actions of any civil war, terror should be emphasized as a phenomenon that has direct impact on the moral and psychological climate in society. Meanwhile, the terror it is a violence, which is controlled by old government, or government, which is established by supporters of "new world". The aim, which is pursued by encouragers of terror, as a physical violence against people, extermination some part of political opponents are not a goal in itself, but the means of achieving the other, more important aim – to make other political opponents and other citizens be obedient.

The violence takes different forms, but with the same aim for each warring party – oppression of opposing side, establishing some kind of totalitarian legitimacy[2]. Moreover, the violence idea begins to dominate over the programs and actions aimed at establishing legitimacy and public order The violence in the form of terror becomes an alternative to legal tendentious of society development during solving social contradictions. The violence in conditions of civil war has chain character regarding the political opponents, is considered absolutely justified from a legal point of view. Attention focuses on special (dictatorial) management character as the only possible during the civil war, because all this is happening in conditions of failing of the traditional legal culture of society, maximum devaluation of the laws and criminalization of all layers of society. If compare political regimes of warring parties during internal war, can be seen that political opponents use particularly the same cruel management measures.

The base of legitimacy of regimes, which are established during the civil war, warring parties are more often motivated by fear, orientation on conquest during the performance of established rules. During the military confrontation, the dominant trend is open expropriation of political power and concentrating all political means in the hands of a single higher instance, mostly dictator.

Transformations, which are taking place in the public consciousness during the civil war, always accompanied by great human and material losses. In such case, transformations are taking the form of a long process, during which in national consciousness are observed temporary evocation of traditional values, mixing them with new ideas and principles, and their further breaking up, moral degradation. There is taking place crisis of the traditional consciousness that reflects the relationship of elements such as the "world view" and "tradition", defines the system of values. Exactly breaking up of norms, which are based on religion, ethical, moral values, total moral, and ethical disorientation of consciousness, causes the spread of anarchic behavior.

[1] Почешхов, Н.А., Шхачемуков, Р.М. (1995). Гражданская война в Росии (1927-1922 гг.): психологические аспекты. *Вопросы теории и методологии истории, 1,* 112–118.

[2] Arendt, H. (1958). *The Origins of Totalitarianism.* New York.

In conditions of the civil war, the consciousness of the main mass people is characterized by such traits as: extreme instability, frequent changes from the fear to aggression, attempting to enrich at the others expense, redistribution of property, the ability to localization of negative psychological complexes at "enemy image", insecurity of the future, at the same time readiness to die for an idea, "new"/"old" world, formation the military consciousness. The civil war as social perturbation is always accompanied by moral degradation of society; there is arising "baring" a human from the mask of culture behavior[1].

A special place in every civil war, in the establishment of an appropriate psychological climate of society, places the activity of a particular person or a particular small group, their direct involvement and active influence on the events that have taken place. In such manner, there is resuming of the atmosphere of the era more detailed, and developing the latent layers of perception of historical and political reality. The civil wars, that cover mostly full state territory, but anyway have regional features, which can be related to geographical specifications of the region, which is, for example, outpost of one of the warring parties, focusing on ambition plans or illusions, forming regular voluntary military units and state entities.

During the civil war, front lines of delimitation and human psychological composition are extremely contradictory. Taking into account the non-homogeneous (multinational, social-layered, multi religious) composition of state citizens who passing through the civil war, existence of deep, historical contradictions, psychological tension is increasing by the principle "friend-or-foe". It is considered that representatives of one state, one nation fight one against another in a civil war. However, the reasons of irreconcilable confrontation are more complicated. There are domestic religious differences, traits of national character and even contradictions between members of one family.

Talking about the changes of psychological climate, cannot be emphasized that level of cruelty is increasing in society, which is discernible mostly among the direct participants of armed violence - military forces of the opposing sides. Primarily, civil wars are characterized by the high level of cruelty to opponent during the military operations. This is due to several factors: first of all, military rage, secondly – perseverance of warring party (as usual, the most combat effective units are fighting to the last and are subject to destruction, even if their participants are yield themselves prisoner), thirdly, despair feeling (especially it is appearing when one of the warring parties is surrounded or trying to breakout from the encirclement), fourthly, revenge for the brutality of the enemy (maltreatment of live people, derision of dead bodies, mass executions of prisoners, beating of those who sympathizes with enemy).

The main source of cruelty during the civil war is feeling of hate to the enemy and the intransigence of warring positions. Thus, hate arises not only from qualities which are integral of combat action psychology, but also consciously cultivated in human with information tools (for example, songs with relevant content, posters or newspaper campaign), orders of military command, advice of experienced soldiers[2]. As an example, during the civil war in Russia, enemy image in poster agitation was consciously diabolized, it was consciously provided with bestial traits. The Image of Wrangel in the form of a monster with claws, contrasted with gibbet or the image of Trotsky, who creeps out like a snake from the bloody Kremlin wall. Such things, certainly, have become elements of agitation that caused the hate not only in the warring people, but also in ordinary citizens.

Representatives of the warring parties of social, political and ideological conflict relentlessly and uncompromisingly split the world view in society on positive and negative forces, glorifying and heroizing own political force and diabolize the opponent. All warring parties declare themselves as the sole representative of the all nation, who can realize political power. Conflicting parties perceive each other as a danger to their society, institutions, culture values and self-consciousness. This feeling of existential danger leads to increasing of aggression, creating, accordingly, vicious cycle of violence.

It is known that civil wars arise as not only class or political, but also civilizational conflict, where warring parties defend different systems of values[3]. On this level, civil wars are wars between different sides in social and culture split between supporters of "new world" values and supporters of preservation old, usual, common, ritual and the traditional features of "old world. The last causes a high level of agreement configuration between participants in certain camps regarding the aims and ideals of struggle. Moreover, between opponents is observed significantly the degree of agreement, especially regarding the methods of solving their differences (weapons, terror, physical extermination of the enemy, display of

[1] Сорокин, П. (1994). *Общедоступный учебник по социологии. Статьи разных лет.* Москва: Знание.

[2] Разиньков, М.Е. (2011). Причины, формы, психологические последствия проявлений «боевой жестокости» в гражданской войне. *Издательство «Грамота», 5 (11), часть 2,* 155–157.

[3] Сорокин, П.А. (1993). Причины войны и условия мира. *СОЦИС, 12,* 111–119.

brutality).

It is caused by the artificial stirring up hatred, clashing of social opinion on those who is "enemy image". Essential means in this stirring up the atmosphere are not evidenced, but violent language, stereotypes, corresponding myths, misinformation and falsification of facts. There is not applicable dissemination of ideas of tolerance, compromise, which in certain conditions can make a contribution to softening the situation, vice versa, everything is done to split public opinion. Finding the enemy during the civil war is moving into the middle of the country, the concept of "friend" loses former clearness, and then the "enemy" can be every person, and the criteria of "foe" are constantly changing and expanding[1].

Should be noted, that forming of the enemy image during the civil war, impacts on the further policy of winner party, when this party crates the internal policy. Thus, "enemy image" transforms in "internal enemy image" and exciting until this state is exciting state as a political entity determines the concept of "internal enemy", usually based on stereotypes, which were formed during internal war. In conditions of military conflict, an evolution of enemy image is taking place, the main tendency during development is passing from dominant in the past propagandistic stereotypes to individual, common, emotional-specific images that are formed as a result of own experience, and natural, that even after ending of the civil war ideological cliché "enemy of the people" is arising , which can be concretized and personified depending on tasks and stages of internal policy, which are created during the civil war. Namely, such cliché helps to new political elite during establishment of own political power. Thus, in Soviet Union image of "enemy of the people" (by definition "image of internal enemy") was used by the Stalin's regime for consolidation of society in peacetime, especially under the conditions of radical transformations of the end of 1920-1930.

In terms of formation of total society in the state after ending of civil war, it is seen using of the technique of repression mobilization and controlling of society consciousness. "Enemy image" in this system becomes one of the most important elements of organization the repressive regime. Total suspiciousness and fear are established in such society, as well as neglect of human life. Solving of all problems by "cruel means" logically fits in the special mentality, that formed in combatants, who have learned to shed blood, for them the value of human life, according to their gained experience, is quite doubtful. In addition, alternatively to internal wars, interstate wars after the civil war, creation the rehabilitation system of combatants is absent.

Another aspect of cruelty during the civil war should be considered participation in the mass extermination of opponent prisoners or in, as it is called, counterinsurgency operation. Extermination of the enemy in such way becomes reflection/continuance of struggle idea, the desire to go all the way to obliteration of the enemy. In the civil wars of the XIX century, fusillades by warring parties were perceived as necessary "surgical" operation, as rude, but essential measure, fair recompense for the previous humiliations or defeats. The last means that the last becomes the integral trait of the psychology of warring parties. Cruelty of such events made a human being unable to perceive the horror of the military actions, events and the consequences of the last, people have become embittered. Thus, depersonalization of opponent was who was perceived as "object" which must be eliminated. In such case, even the moral of professional military man was deformed, which is condemned the cruelty, even more so the brutality. For a military man during the interstate war, extermination of the enemy – is practical duty, but during the civil war this duty is often way beyond the moral boundaries and begins to dominate sense of the right to endless violence. Thus, armed units from each side begin the war against own nation. The civil wars of the XIX demonstrated that warring parties try to avoid frontal clashes and fights and committed attacks, mainly, on civil people, who are considered as support base of opponent. In addition, as a result, 90 % of the dead and injured in internal wars are not armed combatants, but the civil people. Moreover, such rules of behavior as a prohibition on the unjustified destruction of civil objects and annihilation of culture values and things are constantly broken.

The civil war is always fratricidal war, there are not any winners not losers. No one warring party can shift the fault from oneself from what is happened. Only warriors cannot consider that killing is justified, who conduct the armed actions only against warriors of warring parties, not use weapons against the civilian population.

During the civil war, heroes, "successful personalities" quite often become not strong in creative personality, but deadbeats. The last is also demonstrating of psychological climate changes because of the

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[1] Сенявская, Е.С. Психология войны в ХХ веке как историко-теоретическая проблема. *Электронная библиотека.* <http://www.hist.msu.ru/Departments/HisTheory/Ed2/nhjtr3.htm333> (2015, July, 18).

moral and social deformation. Thus, by the opinion of S. Shchegolihina, the civil war creates three types of deadbeats:

– persons, who can live in a state of protracted war in conditions of isolation from the outside world, they tend to use their "chance Napoleon" in closed public system and take the most favorable place;

– persons, who have not strong character, but desire to get during war anything what can regenerate them. Their adventurism is based on inside imbalance, which is arising from the unproductive life because of their irrelevance for new or old power, presentiment of social degeneration. During the civil war, such persons are trying to change their social layer to ensure good living standards for themselves in future or at least feel necessary for society;

– dark and revengeful persons – the "bottom of society", for whom accidentally created exclusively favorable situation of impunity. For such people, they feel free and easy, having at the same time a good prospect for the future in a favorable environment[1].

Regarding the social and psychological changes of civil people, there are arising specific strategies of surviving and some behavior models among different human categories in conditions of social catastrophe. Firstly, there are avoidance of military and labor mobilization, finding "cushy" job, mass swindles, and thievery of government property, robberies and revolts. The mass of the population psychologically becomes accustomed to the military lifestyle; there is alienation from the labor that makes difficult passing to peace life after the end of civil war. If compare changes of social organization during internal and external wars, that during the last arising opposed terms: increasing the cohesion of family, neighbors, and public relations. This phenomenon is explained that based on the ancient wisdom, people seek rescue in unity. During the civil war, such processes particularly are not observable. Conversely, there are frequent examples when members of one family, community or colony are on different sides of the armed struggle.

Therefore, during the war elements of social psychology, moral principles and worldview, that are based on national traditions in daily life interweave with ideological principles, which are purposefully being created by new and old warring structures of nationhood. Ideological factor not only interweaves with psychological factor, but also directly depends on moral and psychological state of the people and armed units of warring parties.

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