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CONCERNING SOME SOURCES OF CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

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One of the factors of the armed conflict in Ukraine has become a destructive role of Russian institutions of civil society.

The fact is that the activities of Russian institutions of civil society (media, religious organizations represented by the Moscow Patriarchate, Mufti, Cossacks, some political parties and so) in relation to Ukraine has become an additional factor in the split of civic identity and the formation of aggressive moods in Ukrainian society. Numerous visits of Russian Patriarch to Ukraine has always included a political component. In Donetsk region alone the experts have counted about 12 Cossack organizations which have been providing in recent years the negative impact on the socio-political processes in Ukraine. The researcher of the Center for East European Studies at the University of Bremen Nikolai Mitrokhin is mostly surprised at the fact that the Ukrainian society in general did not notice it, did not fix it and did not think about it. He is in

disbelief about the fact that intelligence agencies did not pay attention at it. «Since I have been studying Ukrainian issue since the late 90s, I had never heard concern that pro-Russian organizations were active in Donbas and Crimea», - said the scientist [1].

It was interesting to see how after the capture of the Security Council of Ukraine in Lugansk parishioners of the neighboring church all day were kneeling in front of the building with icons in their hands. There is a theory that the church is directly subordinate to Moscow.

The pro-Kremlin political strategist S. Kurginyan in his public speeches passionately convinces the society that not the government but Russian institutions of civil society deliver people, weapons, heavy equipment, and so on to Ukraine [3].

The identity of Russian people in Eastern Ukraine was fueled and continues to be fed by some characters that actualize the Russian state identity: «Holy Russia», «Fatherland» (by which Russia and Ukraine is meant), «Mother Russia» and «Russian world», «the Slavs», «Cossacks», «Novorossia» and «Orthodoxy» that gave rise to such phenomenon as «Russian Orthodox Army». The goal is to unite Russian people and mobilize them for collective actions against all those who are against Russia. Since Ukrainians stand for European values, human rights, democracy, so they are from the standpoint of the Russian state against Russia, the Russian world and Ukrainian citizens who identify themselves with the Russian State.

Here are two examples. At one time in the Ukrainian libraries of Donbas huge rooms of «Russian world» were opened, and in Russia at this time under the pretext of spreading the ideas of Ukrainian nationalism centers of Ukrainian culture were closed. The opening of the temple of the Moscow Patriarchate in Lugansk on the 24th of August 2013 was attended by deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the leadership of the region and the city. At the same time, a month earlier, at the opening of the temple of the Kiev Patriarchate there were

no one from the leadership of the region. nor the city, nor the officials of the rank. At the same time the representatives of the party «Kievan Rus», «Don Cossacks» and parishioners of the Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate protested against the opening, they identified the Kiev Patriarchate with Bandera and promotion of Ukrainian nationalism. «It was banderva who opened the temple» – noticed an old resident of Lugansk, a Ukrainian by nationality. It should be mentioned that in Lugansk, according to the latest census, about 52 percent of Ukrainians live. At the same time, only a few hundred people came out to Lugansk Maidan on the call of heart, indicating the absence of civil position in the vast majority of citizens. Perhaps corrupt Ukrainian reality is to blame for the fact that many citizens did not take the Ukrainian statehood for all the years of independence. Less than a year later, those who have picketed the opening of the temple of Ukrainian Patriarchate will participate in the capture of Ukrainian administrative institutions, and instead of Ukrainian flag and emblem on these buildings they will hang Cossack, Orthodox, communist, Holy Russia, and other flags.

Many people probably forgotten how it all had begun. It all started with the slogan «Russian people are hurt in Crimea». However, we all know that in Crimea more than 90 percent of schools were Russian speaking, that the rights and freedoms of Russians on a national basis in Donbas were not undermined. In addition, today we are witnessing the brutal violence of Russians against Russians, Orthodox against the Orthodox, and not only. We see the whole combination and variations of violence.

Activities of Russian institutions of civil society in the Eastern Ukraine in extreme conditions instantly transformed into a physical, military and spiritual abuse (the inscription «For Holy Russia» is now on the shells of «Grad», eyewitnesses saw a machine with the inscription «Orthodoxy or Death that was moving in Lugansk»).

Indeed, many of Donbas residents were ready to hate the Galician, so the

fertile ground for Ukrainian phobia was already prepared. At the appropriate moment, it was easily apparent. The negative attitude of the older generation to the representatives of Western Ukraine («Bandera») remained ever since the Soviet ideology. Moreover, today, they explained their hatred to them by the fact that Bandera supporters killed their fathers or grandfathers, they say, being in Lvov, their questions in Russian were answered in Ukrainian (one can only imagine that Muscovites or Rostov residents speak the Ukrainian language at meeting with Ukrainians in their hometowns). My friend told me that his elderly neighbor drove home his naughty grandson of five years threatening him with the following words: «Come quickly, Bandera is coming». The result was not long in coming: the grandson immediately flew home. It was the most effective method in relation to the grandson.

There is another aspect of the problem. The fact that in the beginning of the 2000s, with the advent of Putin, the Russian state machine has become heavily engaged with American phobia. In addition, as for the Russians, the Maidan and the new Kiev government is the handiwork of the United States and they have to hate fiercely Ukrainians as well as Americans. At the same time, everything that is connected with Russia is served in positive terms: Holy Russia, according to the Patriarch is the immortal ideal. Patriarch Kirill in favor of the Russian political authorities cannot accept the fact of a fratricidal war and as the President of Russia convinces the international community that «any military threat or other hazards do not come from Russia». And if they are talking about the West or about Ukraine, negative categorization and assessment is used. For example, on the Maidan there were not revolutionaries, but Bandera supporters and fascists.

Russian institutions of civil society and especially the media has become a powerful tool of manipulation of consciousness of Russians and pro-Russian Ukrainians. Television, speeches of politicians and public officials were jaded with such vocabulary as Novorossia, the junta, punitive action, militia, Bandera,

fascists and the like. Near the captured building of the Lugansk Security Council in the hands of the protesters, there were the slogans of anti-Ukrainian, anti-American, anti-European and anti-Semitic meaning.

In this context, it should be mentioned that the modern Russian literature reached unprecedented artistic heights in the genre of «patriotic fiction». The fiction novel released during the armed aggression of Russia against Ukraine was illustrated with the image of Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. He took as prisoners modernized «Bandera» supporters – the current prime minister of Ukraine Yatsenyuk and the head of the NSDC Turchinov (you can remember in this sense the phrase «you should answer for Sevastopol» from the popular Russian film «Brother 2») [2].

Civil society institutions could play a role in the de-escalation of the conflict in Donbas. However, we do not feel it. Moreover, it is a pity that the weak shoots of Russian civil society have softened the Kremlin media, these special «information troops' warm up the aggressive moods in Russia and Ukraine». Together with the pro-Kremlin political strategists, intellectuals, writers the institutions of Russian civil society, led by the media are a serious threat to national security of Ukraine. Therefore, there is something to think about for Ukraine.

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