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RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR IN THE CONTEXT OF THE THEORY OF HUMAN SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract. While Russia's war against Ukraine is analyzed in global, historical, political, moral planes, it also has a philosophical aspect. This war has introduced the need to reconsider philosophical views regarding the personality issue. This is the war between two types of people: depersonalized (totalitarian) ones and individuals. This conclusion provides ground for the theory of the degrees of personal spiritual development, proving that in the process of spiritual formation a person can go through the following several stages of development. The first one is a shrewd, wild person whose predominant interests in life are their immediate needs. The second stage is a mediocre person, while they may be educated, they are usually immoral being driven forward mostly by their prospective benefits. The third stage is a mature personality, whose activity and choices are formed by the interests of society and the state. The fourth stage is about geniuses whose motives reach the scale of all humanity. This theory proves there is a battle between the impersonal and the personal in public life. In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war the conflict between the impersonal and the personal reached its climax. A Russian person serves as an embodiment of the depersonalized principle, while Ukrainian soldiers, volunteers, civil society represent the personal principle. Military victory is not enough to secure the victory of the personal over the impersonal; it should go hand in hand with informational component concerning the philosophical essence of this war. The article provides the list of requirements contributing to the spiritual cleansing of the Ukrainian nation from impersonal values: the first step is to recognize the objectivity of the degrees of spiritual development of a person; it is mandatory to clearly formulate the Ukrainian national idea, to have a critical mass of individuals in the society, to complement the Constitution of Ukraine with an article on the national interest; to revise the ideological foundations of the humanities; to establish objective requirements for state officials and deputies, testing their levels of professionalism, intellectual development (IQ) and moral qualities.

Keywords: Russian-Ukrainian war, theory of degrees of spiritual development of a person, priority of spiritual, personality, dependent person, mediocre person, Ukrainian national idea, national ideology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Political scientists, experts, analysts, and journalists point out that the essence of the current Russian-Ukrainian war is Ukrainians fighting for their independence, Ukraine protecting European values and principles of democracy: there goes on the battle between good and evil. And

such approach makes sense. Researchers emphasize the positive essence of Ukrainian nationalism, which correlates with the positions of liberal nationalism taking into account ethnic, religious, and ideological differences. M. Boychenko comes up with the following questions: “What is the cause of the war, and what is the place of a philosopher in it?” and goes to provide the answer. The war is caused by the Russian pride that is based on imperial ideas (Boichenko, 2022, pp. 6–7). However, this war also has its philosophical meaning that is connected with the issue of human essence. The crimes committed by the Russian political-military “elite” and regular army forces make us reconsider our perception of human nature. Modern philosophy and psychology argue that every person is a personality. Following such a statement, Putin and his accomplices as well as Ukrainian volunteers and military representatives are also personalities. Consequently, both the villain and the hero are personalities. That is an obvious contradiction. The war has raised serious questions: “Who is who?” and “What is what?” in the context of these global events. Any theory relies on a general methodological requirement: a theory must be free from internal contradictions. According to Putnam's rule, a theory stays intact as long as it does not contradict the facts. G. Putnam proves that in science it is necessary to distinguish between a fact and an agreement, a fact and value (Putnam, 1998, pp. 493–494). Therefore, if the essence of a concept does not correspond to the facts, the theory needs revision. Those contradictions revealed by the war urge us to reconsider philosophical approaches to the issue of personality.

The aim of this research is to study the philosophical foundations of the Russian-Ukrainian war, and that includes the following tasks: first, to seek for a different approach concerning ontological views on the human essence; secondly, to prove the inability of a dominant type of a person to behave constructively under modern circumstances; thirdly, to prove that Russia is an embodiment of the qualities of a mediocre person; fourthly, to outline measures contributing to further ideological and moral purification of the Ukrainian nation.

2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The idea of the stages of spiritual development of a man comes a long way from the studies of Confucius and Plato through medieval Arabic and Christian philosophy, up to the philosophy of German mystics and romantics ending up in the classical German philosophy. This idea tries to explain the human essence taking into account the four stages of human spiritual development: different philosophical systems defined with different terms, but their content was similar. The first stage is a shrewd, wild person whose predominant interests in life are their immediate needs; therefore they never go beyond their needs. The second stage is a mediocre person, while they may be educated, they are usually immoral being driven forward mostly by their prospective economic, political, moral, or psychological benefits. Christianity would call a mediocre person a boor, a devil, a nothing, as this very type of a person would be a vessel of evil; and F. Nietzsche would call them parasites, because they would live off somebody's love but never give it back to others (Nietzsche, 1993, p. 192–193). The third stage is a personality, whose activity and choices are formed by the interests of other people, society, and the state. It is worth emphasizing that it was Christian philosophy that introduced the concept of “personality” and it was used to describe a person who would seek spiritual development for themselves and for others. The fourth stage is about geniuses whose motives reach the scale of all humanity. This approach has got the name the elitist concept of personality (Sabadukha, 2019, p. 317).

This approach recognizes the primary role of a spiritually developed person, a personality, in society. Christian thinker John Chrysostom pointed out the differences between the lower (first and second) and higher (third and fourth) stages of development of a person: a human being that was a personality with a higher level of spiritual development would always act in accordance

with moral norms (Zolotoustyi, 2007, p. 97, 335), however, the so-called "reasonable person" (read, mediocre) would never forget about material benefits and other of the kind.

The philosophers of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment periods discarded the hierarchical views on the human essence and came up with a humanistic understanding of a person, and that turned into the statement "every person is a personality", the one that the latest philosophical concepts took for absolute truth without any back-up. Therefore, everyone became a personality without any effort on their part, and a mediocre person received a legitimate right for power. However, we should emphasize that there are no existing works on the topic or a philosopher who worked it out, and proved that every person is a personality. It's a philosophical fake. This statement has a valuable character and has nothing in common with the human essence as it concerns the socio-political life of a person. The statement "every person is a personality" has reduced the human essence to a socio-political existence. Over time, existentialism has proclaimed existence to be an entity. Consequently, modern and postmodern philosophers have become entangled in two different concepts: essence and existence. Humanistic views on a person corresponded to the egalitarian understanding of human nature. The majority of European philosophers perceived this ontological concept, and under the influence of simplified humanism, a modern man has lost the ability to evaluate themselves critically at himself and to understand others. This created the philosophical basis for the Hitlers, Mussolinis, Putins, Lukashenkos, Yanukovychs and other mediocrities to claim the legitimate right to power.

The analysis of elitist and egalitarian theories has given way to define a metaphysical theory of personality: using the principle of complementarity, it has synthesized the elitist and egalitarian concepts of personality. Thus, the humanistic approach "every person is a personality" operates in the context of human and social communications (existential), however, in the context of the essence (essential), the hierarchical approach comes to the front. The dynamic component of the metaphysical theory of personality states that potentially a person has a personality core, but in reality they can still be at the level of a dependent or mediocre person (Sabadukha, 2019, pp. 316-317).

At the beginning of the XX century, humanity has met a challenge the scope of which is hardly grasped even today. Partially it has been addressed by J. Ortega y Gasset and has gotten the name of a "revolution of the masses" (Ortega y Gasset, 1994). Naturally, some of its aspects were fully comprehended, causes revealed and there were proposed certain mechanisms to overcome them. For instance, in 1884 French psychologist H. Joly tried to prove that human community lacked geniuses. In 1968, A. Peccei specified this conclusion, arguing that the amount and complexity of problems were growing, while human community was lacking intellectual potential to solve them. These generalizations indicate that the process of spiritual degradation of humanity has reached a dangerous limit.

Studying the reasons of degradation of human societies, American researcher J. Diamond comes up with the question: "Why were human communities, or rather their elites, mere witnesses of the processes of degradation, but they did not find a way out of the critical situation?". Looking for the answer, he identified the following reasons: the elite of societies were unable to foresee problems; they failed to see problems even when they stared them back in the face; having realized the problem, there were unable to solve it; they failed the process of solving the problem. However, there are fundamental differences between the current crisis and the previous ones: the current one has a global character. A. J. Toynbee has analyzed the causes leading to different civilizations destruction and came up with the following law: civilizations perished when the elite found their rebirth in the inner proletariat (Toynbee, 1995, pp. 368-395). We believe that besides socio-political meaning this law has also a philosophical and anthropological one: the human community degrades if a mediocre person becomes a priority.

It has been not a single country, but the whole human community that faced this challenge. Thus, the global scale of the challenge requires a global response. A general decrease in the intellectual and spiritual potential of mankind has been caused by the shift of the priority of the material things and to a mediocre person. The mediocre person has been interested only in the scientific and technological achievements of humanity while disregarding all the negative trends in the field of intellectual and spiritual development of a person.

Relying on the theory of stages of spiritual development, in the modern world the priority belongs to a mediocre person (Sabadukha, 2019, pp. 381-382). Taking the teachings of the German-Swiss philosopher R. Avenarius (1843–1896) on the fundamental coordination between the “I” and the environment as a basis, we may argue that a mediocre person has changed society to suit their qualities and values. Moreover, the statement “every person is a personality” has become the philosophical basis of the modern, impersonal paradigm of being, while it has been hiding its impersonal essence behind the ideological basis. In the conditions put forward by this this paradigm, human existence per se has become an end in itself. A person has turned into a slave to their own needs, while life resembles aimless and senseless bustle and hustle. Existing within the realm of the impersonal paradigm of being, a person does not have a chance to fulfill their working potential and right for the kindred occupation, the spiritual basis of life has been violated: societies often lack moral and spiritual authorities, the lower ones judges those ones above them, and that turns into a norm, while deception prevails over truth. The fundamental drawback of the impersonal paradigm of being is the battle between reason and common sense; different philosophers provided different interpretations of it: the clash between contemplation and action, reason and calculating thinking (Guénon, 2020, p. 71). Our history is developing within an impersonal paradigm even now despite the fact that it has seriously exhausted itself. The transition to the personal paradigm of the existence of man and society is very much timely.

Signs of the overwhelming exhaustion of human and social existence are pretty evident and they found their way into the studies and conclusions of famous philosophers: the awakening of instincts (T. Adorno, G. Marcuse, J. Ellul); the existential vacuum as the absence of the meaning of existence (V. Frankl); the prevalence of technology over a man (M. Heidegger, J. Ellul); the domination of instrumental mind (M. Horkheimer); the lack of ethical principles of existence and life fragmentation (C. Taylor); the cult of hedonism (G. Lipovetsky); the cult of the material and the domination of the masses (J. Baudrillard); the domination of mass culture and the eclecticism of cultural life (A. Dahniy).

On the one hand, the impersonal paradigm of human existence is the result of the imperfection of the core basis of social existence (to have and to possess), the one a mediocre person relies on, yet, on the other hand it comes from the imperfection of a person themselves. The impersonal paradigm of human existence is the logical result of the mediocre human activity and the artificial solution of the contradictions between essence and existence, between the human desire for improvement and the socio-economical conditions of life (Sabadukha, 2019, pp. 381-382).

Thus, the rule of a mediocre person relies on making material things a priority, and that is exactly what the mediocre person does. Their rule results in permanent conflicts and wars. A current situation of the world being on the verge of a third world war is also the result of the “activity” of the mediocre person. Both the theory of stages of spiritual development and real life prove that a mediocre person should not be given a chance to dominate society and to have power in the state.

Moscow's aggression against Ukraine makes us draw the following conclusions. Firstly: Russia is an embodiment of an impersonal person who has always lived at the expense of other peoples and nations resources. A post-totalitarian person led forward by Putin can be diagnosed with necrophilia; and this explains why Putin is so prone to nuclear blackmail. Secondly: this war

clearly illustrates the conclusion proposed by J. Ortega-y-Gasset according to which a personality is an enemy of a mediocre person. Thirdly, the war makes us reconsider the philosophical concepts concerning humanity and go back to the ideas of ancient and medieval philosophers. If human society had clear criteria regarding what makes us humans, it would be impossible for politicians such as Putin, Yanukovich, Lukashenko, and other mediocrities to come to power. Human race has got into crisis because philosophers of modernity have failed to comprehend human essence and share their knowledge with the public.

Unlike Russia, Ukraine has had a long history of a personality idea; certain principles root from the time of Kyevean Rus. The idea of spiritual development stages found its reflection in the philosophical views of prominent Ukrainian thinkers including I. Vyshensky, H Skovoroda, T. Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, I. Franko etc (Sabadukha, 2019, pp. 260-297). Even under the communist rule Ukrainians preserved the idea of personal existence, and it blossomed in the activity and principles of the People's Movement of Ukraine and the following revolutions including the Revolution on Granite, the Orange Revolution, and the Revolution of Dignity. Naturally a liberal person and the Ukrainians as such struggle with going beyond the egalitarian-humanitarian approach. Europeans also find it difficult as they have been viewing us as an underdeveloped, not-yet-formed nation; they used to look at us through the Russian perspective that had only seen state-building efforts of Ukrainians as "sharovarschyna". Both Stalin and Putin found the personality idea of the Ukrainian nation annoying. This basically forms the ontological reason for the pathological hatred of Russian tsars and dictators towards Ukrainians. This hatred would destroy any rational beginning of the Russian intellectual elite, as they would lose control over their emotions, becoming their slaves.

The Revolution of Dignity crystalized the conflict between the impersonal and the personal. In the modern Russian-Ukrainian war, the conflict of the impersonal and personal reaches its peak, but it also involves the third party– a liberal person. Being influenced by materialistic motives and values, possessing no knowledge about the human essence, a liberal person is not able to understand Putin's far-sighted plans; therefore, they have fallen for the economic benefit offered in the form of gas and oil contracts. The beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war has shown that a liberal person would lose to a totalitarian one. Liberal values are the values of a mediocre person. If Europe had relied on personal principles, Putin would have not dared to employ open aggression. The philosophical and psychological weakness of a liberal person is twofold: on the one hand, they are similar to totalitarian people being guided by materialistic values, and on the other hand, they are not able to call a spade a spade.

Another drawback of the liberal person is their indecisiveness: J. Biden has announced "Putin is a murderer", yet none of the European politicians has dared to follow the suit. The memoirs of Boris Johnson, the former British Prime Minister, include description of the leaders of Italy, Germany, and France ambiguous reaction to the beginning of the war only confirm these conclusions. This shows more than just political, intellectual, and psychological weakness of the European elite. They have not protested against the capitulation of Ukraine for the sake of preservation of economic benefits, and that alone signals about the absence of holistic thinking and leads to the conclusion that philosophical and ideological foundations of liberalism are exhausted, or rather that the mediocre person lacks intellectual and spiritual potential; that in its turn serves as evidence of the impersonal paradigm of human existence being exhausted. It seems that liberal politicians as embodiments of materialistic values are incapable of an adequate analysis of events due to their low spiritual potential.

In the current situation, Ukrainian soldiers, volunteers, territorial defense fighters, ordinary citizens, all of them personalities, show the world their spiritual superiority compared to a totalitarian person and a liberal one. Ukrainian personalities are fighting not only with totalitarian

Moscow, but also with mediocrity within Ukraine. Yet, one must admit that the mediocrities ruling Ukraine could have also fuelled the start of the war.

Battles of the impersonal and personal takes place not only in Ukraine, but also in the United States of America both at the level of the political elite (competition between Republicans and Democrats) and at the level of the electorate. European countries also witness similar processes. The impersonal versus personal struggle is global. The priority of a mediocre person threatens not only Ukraine, but also the world. Certainly, it was Putin who waged the war. However, Ukrainian and European mediocrities contributed to its beginning. Thus, we come up with an argument that depersonalized mass creates impersonal leaders such as Stalin, Hitler, Putin, Yanukovych, or Lukashenko, who in their turn diligently corrupt people relying on manipulative technologies. The regular people's contribution to the prospective victory in Ukraine, however, proves that a mediocre person is capable of spiritual insight and they can act as personalities would.

Some analysts argue that the military victory will be followed by a moral cleansing of Ukrainian society. We believe that the battle of the impersonal and personal will continue after the victory of Ukraine, yet in different forms. The dismissal of Russia as the leader of a totalitarian depersonalized world does not equal to the victory of a liberal person. Subsequent events will depend on the speed with which the theory of human spiritual development takes hold of the elite and civil society consciousness. This situation increases value of the philosophical science. On the one hand, a philosopher is in charge of proving the impersonal nature of a Russian man and their state, and on the other hand they have find evidence of a personal principle as an integral part of in the Ukrainian nation.

Military victory must come hand in hand with the internal front victory, yet for that a revolution in human consciousness should take place. For this to happen, the social consciousness needs to accept new ideas about the human essence, namely, about spiritual development. Society will gain knowledge about the essence of human existence (Guénon, 2020, pp. 87-107). The theory will help to significantly reduce the amount of misunderstandings in society and teach people to think critically. The problem of a comprehensive transition to the Ukrainian language of communication is a clear illustration of the human conservatism level. We cannot but take into account that a significant percentage of citizens remain incapable of critical thinking. Previous maidans (social revolutions) prove that party populists will seek to take the official electoral revenge. Yet, recognition of truth about human essence can stand in their way.

Military victory does not equal to automatic liberation of human consciousness from false ideas, but it creates necessary prerequisites. The consciousness of Ukrainians, as well as humanity in general, is still influenced by the humanistic concept of "every person is a personality". The fight for consciousness is the fight for the priority of the spiritual principle, and therefore for the priority of the personality in society. A mediocre person has a fantastic ability to adapt in order to preserve the priority. Therefore, the Ukrainian nation and its elite should prevent mediocre people from taking advantage of the victory, as is often happens in history.

Firstly, it is necessary to recognize the objectivity of human spiritual development. In the context of communications each person should be seen as a personality: all people come from the same core, but in reality not all of them are capable of actually reaching a sufficient stage of personality. It is only personalities who are able to provide not only decent socio-economic conditions of life, but also the possibility of spiritual self-development. One should accept the objective human essence, not shy away from it.

Secondly, there is a need to finally formulate the Ukrainian national idea and national ideology. A mediocre person is not interested in having a national idea and state ideology. The Ukrainian national idea and ideology should rely on: the priority of the spiritual and the idea of the personality. The process of formation and education of personality should be brought up to the

level of national ideology. Citizen consciousness should be able to get a truly humanistic basis of the theory of spiritual development from the national (personality) ideology. The lack of a national idea is the reason why a significant number of citizens lack critical thinking. The national idea and ideology contribute to the consolidation of the nation.

Thirdly, it is imperative to engage in the formation of a critical mass of personalities, as without them society loses its prospects for development.

Fourthly, a lot current troubles can be blamed on the lack of a clearly formulated concept of "national interest" that would find its rightful place in the Constitution of Ukraine. The absence of an article on the national interest may give rise to political speculation.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The measures taken for human self-improvement can strengthen our military victory mentally and lead to the moral and spiritual development of the nation. Ukrainians have to serve as an example for the personal existence idea revival and make Europeans consciously return to the core spiritual values: all spheres of public life should prioritize an individual, otherwise mediocrity prevails. We must move into the era that prioritizes spiritual over material, personal over impersonal. "Everything will be fine" only after we understand the role of the individual in the life of society and overcome the priority of the mediocre person.

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Сабадуха Володимир. Російсько-українська війна в контексті теорії духовного розвитку людини. *Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника*, 9 (2) (2022), 87–94.

Війну Росії проти України аналізують в глобальному, історичному, політичному, моральному аспектах, але вона має прихований філософський зміст. Війна наочно продемонструвала необхідність переосмислення філософських поглядів на проблему особистості. Це війна двох типів людини: знеособленої (тоталітарної) й особистості. Подібний висновок дозволяє зробити теорія духовного розвитку людини. Перший ступінь розвитку – ница, тілесна, природна людина, яка у своєму житті спонукається безпосередніми потребами і не виходить за їх межі. Другий – посередня людина, яка може бути освіченою, але, яка на перше місце ставить власну економічну, політичну, моральну, психологічну, світоглядну вигоду. Саме у християнській філософії з'являється поняття «особистість», і позначає воно людину, яка прагне духовного вдосконалення як для себе, так і для Іншого. Третій – зріла особистість, яка у своїй діяльності керується інтересами іншої людини, суспільства й держави. Четвертий – генії, спонукання яких сягають рівня масштабів людства. Цей підхід отримав назву елітарна концепція особистості. Теорія духовного розвитку доводить, що як у суспільному житті відбувається боротьба між знеособленим і особистісним, так і у внутрішньому світі людини відбувається ця боротьба. Конфлікт знеособленого й особистісного у російсько-українській війні досяг міждержавного рівня. Для перемоги особистісного над знеособленим військової перемоги недостатньо. Військова перемога має бути доповнена висвітленням філософсько-антропологічної сутності цієї війни. Втіленням знеособленого начала є російська людина на чолі з Путіним, а взірцем особистісного начала постають українські воїни, волонтери, громадянське суспільство. Сформульовано вимоги, які сприятимуть духовному очищенню української нації від знеособлених цінностей. Має бути сформульована українська національна ідея та національна ідеологія; держава має піклуватися про формування критичної маси особистостей.

Ключові слова: російсько-українська війна, духовний розвиток людини, пріоритет духовного, особистість, залежна людина, посередня людина, українська національна ідея, національна ідеологія.