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Peculiarities Of Formation Of Mass Consciousness In The Critical Periods Of History

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Abstract: This article considers the formation and development of mass consciousness in the critical periods of social development. Particular attention is paid to the first decades of the formation and development of the Soviet state, known as the totalitarian regime under the leadership of a man who had usurped the power. In such circumstances, the human mind breaks, while the masses become the object of a skilful manipulation by the ruling class

Keywords: History, critical period, the mass consciousness, the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan, national self-consciousness.

Introduction

The man is a social being, which possesses the mass consciousness as a special form of social consciousness. This includes social stereotypes associated with public opinion, people's attitude, national mentality, public mood, everyday consciousness, as well as a number of social and psychological qualities combined in a mass psychology. Soviet researchers studied this problem, however being somewhat limited by the Marxist-Leninist ideas about the world and a man. Today, the mass consciousness is the common term, directly related to the social consciousness, public opinion, stereotypes, human behavior in the crowd and in the case of mass gatherings, etc. [Грушин Б.А. Массовое сознание; Дилигенский Г. Г].

We suggest considering the formation of mass consciousness in the critical periods of history, more specifically, during the twentieth century, within the territory now called post-Soviet. The most tragic period in terms of breaking human lives, using sophisticated physical and psychological violence to influence the human consciousness is associated with the Stalin era. In general, nonconformity is common to the mass consciousness, but it must be uniform in its composition in order to be called the mass consciousness. The titanic work of "brainwashing" was carried out by the order of the Cheka (The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution, Speculation, and Sabotage), and the party committees the representatives of all professions and social classes could be turned into "a public enemy", exiled or killed in a very short time. How did this huge information and propaganda machine work? What methods were used to introduce the "ideas" of socialism and the concepts of life into people's minds? First of all, we should note the circumstances of the formation of the Soviet country, the cult of personality and consequently, a totalitarian state (political upheaval in the conditions of anarchy and the First World War, and then - the civil war, destruction, famine, etc.), and then - personal qualities of "the leader of peoples", which gradually turned into a dictator, the situation in the national republics, their socio-economic and spiritual-cultural level of development, etc.

According to the researchers, Stalin, first of all, put a lot of effort "to distort and adapt the Leninist ideas about the dictatorship of the proletariat to his concept of building socialism." [Зевелев А] Now it is clear that Lenin's ideas were quite immature and historically adventurous. However, his plan on the implementation of the political ambitions worked, and was continued and developed by his loyal and consistent follower Joseph Stalin.

The efforts of the entire education system, social sciences and humanities were directed on promoting the ideas of socialism and the "right" things. This is especially concerns the training and education of the masses. It is believed that the "Short Course of History of the All-Union Communist Party (b)" and the general obligation to study it corresponded to the objective interests of the working class, contributing to the introduction of the Marxist scientific historical approach into the mass consciousness. In addition, "in certain specific historical conditions the communist propaganda cannot but

resort to certain tricks, anyway hiding the objective truth. Of course, a lie is a primitive propaganda tool. Its application for the promotion of scientific knowledge is only a necessary concession to the public ignorance. Only in the case when the propagandist realizes this necessity, the lie used in the communist propaganda serves the progressive goals. The reasonability of choosing such an inappropriate tool as a lie, which doesn't correspond to the scientific content of the communist propaganda, must be required by the exceptional and certain historical conditions. Such conditions developed, for example, in the initial period of the Great Patriotic War, when the Soviet propaganda regularly overstated the amounts of German losses and understated the losses of the Red Army." [Быстров Н.П] This point of view proves the idea that there are still followers of such policy.

The contradictory moral and psychological atmosphere predetermined the content of mass and individual consciousness and the conditions of their formation in the analyzed period. The process of forming the patriotic mass consciousness was primarily aimed at raising patriotism, creating a sense of attachment, tolerance and appreciation of each nation living in the state. When analyzing the peculiarities of the policy performed by the government and party political bodies on strengthening patriotic education we can distinguish such spheres as military-patriotic education and education of historical memory, when every historical fact was presented in a biased manner.

A lot of interest is paid to the forms of national mass consciousness, tools, forms and methods of government-political control and regulation of mass and individual consciousness. The forms of oral folk arts and possibilities of writers were used, for the glory of the nation, in the name of Stalin and his entourage various works of art, literary and musical pieces, as well as works from the sphere of fine arts were created. Different stereotypes were implanted into the consciousness, for example, in multinational Caucasus the communists introduced an idea of the unity of all proletarian classes of workers and peasants, their views of life while the contradictions were related to the schemes of the enemy and people were prompted with the idea of living in peace, following some general principles, etc. As it is known, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and prior to this event the mass consciousness of people in many republics of the country was defined by some centrifugal ideas, to a large extent intensified by the nationalist-patriotic forces, which in some cases were related to the political circles of superpowers and were preachers of their capturing ideas.

A comprehensive systematic study makes it clear that analyzing the problems of mass consciousness it's necessary to explore the spiritual activity and peculiarities of thinking of all social classes, which will help to overcome the one-sidedness in the problem coverage. The study of such aspects of the spiritual face of the Soviet people as education, art, literature, science, religion, life and family testifies that all these spheres were exposed to intensive propaganda. We should consider the limited possibilities for technical support of information transfer. The country was mainly agricultural, only through extreme efforts it became possible to achieve a breakthrough in the development of industry, science, including its practical aspects. Hence the huge importance of oral propaganda and a word of mouth. Every educated person becomes a propagandist, especially if they are also members of the party. The system of knowledge propaganda was developed through the "Knowledge" society, which was operated directly by the party committees. A special system of Party education represented by the various evening universities of Marxism-Leninism was established, where the party and Komsomol staff were specially trained in order to later become propagandists. Brochures and lectures were produced. Propaganda teams and agitation trains traveled shortly before the elections or referendums, their aim was to promote the ideas of the party to the relevant time.

When carrying out work on the patriotic and international education a lot of consideration was given to the problems of fighting against remnants of nationalism and cosmopolitanism in the mass consciousness, as well as admiration of foreign things, which is undoubtedly a part of the studied issues of mass consciousness.

The main parts of the patriotic and internationalist consciousness included such things as "education of natural patriotic feelings, strong national pride and struggle against the hypertrophied nationalist ideas" [Бердиев З.П, p.12]. However, it is clear that "the education of these traits was carried out largely by affirmation of patriotic and internationalist stereotypes rather than by opening the universal significance of these concepts, their perversion by Stalinism for its socio-privileged purposes" [Бердиев З.П, p.13]. Particular importance was attached to the promotional writings of Stalin, which in a short slogan manner revealed the problems of history and modernity directly indicating the friends and enemies of socialism.

Even nowadays the events of the critical period and their reflection in the mass consciousness are deeply analyzed, as the collapse of the Soviet Union led to a difficult critical period for each post-Soviet republic. In order to achieve a democratic renewal of the country, formation of new principles of morality

and values of life in modern conditions it's necessary to analyze the historical events of this time, because in some way history is repeating itself. It is known that "the measures to enhance the economic power of the country contributed to the growth of material wealth, and also strengthened the moral aspect of society, a sense of confidence and pride in their country. Despite the many illusions and myths, we should admit that the determined, purposeful actions, firm policy and strong determination to strengthen the country in such a crucial period were an important factor of people's attitude. The assurance in the power of state gives the same power to all of its citizens. The Soviet people of the 30s were characterized by social optimism, and faith that the difficulties are temporary, and their overcoming ensures a happy future. Consequently, the strong spiritual potential, especially apparent during the war, did not appear suddenly or by accident. The core of spiritual power and unity of the people included a lot of factors: economic, social, political, ideological, moral and psychological" [Бердиев З.П, s.21-23].

The interval between the 1920s - 1930s of the last century was the most complicated period in history in terms of social development and the level of ideological confrontation. At the same time, this complexity, which is associated with the negative impact of Stalinism as the ideological and political trend and the manner of controlling people's minds and consciousness, the country's isolation from the global socio-economic and spiritual development, formation, development and strengthening of mass stereotypes in the consciousness significantly contributed to the victory in the Great Patriotic War. The mass consciousness was dominated by such "idols" of consciousness as a boundless faith in the will and wisdom of the Great Leader, indisputable ideas of Marxism-Leninism, hatred towards the class enemy in the face of international capitalism and its representatives in different capitalist countries, striving for solidarity of all nations, which also suffer from the evil schemes of the world capitalism.

The complexity and contradictions of the situation in which the country was developing, the negative effects of the administrative-command system and Stalinism, when any initiative and entrepreneurial spirit were restrained, and the control system, built on the principles of "democratic centralism", finally debunked itself by the end of the 80s and the ideas of a possible break in the consciousness, a new approach to current events, their assessment and reassessment appeared and started to grow stronger in the mass consciousness.

It is clear that the difficult conditions of the critical period require special measures to lift the spirit and the specific management methods. The fact that the idea to continue the class struggle on a world scale was proclaimed at that time was a serious defect of management since people were cultivated with a sense of danger and mistrust to each other, while the desire to seek out the enemy was strongly encouraged. In order to make people immovably believe in the promoted ideas the party used the methods of fighting with dissidents, physical elimination of the enemy and suggesting an idea of having both real and spiritual enemy. People "lived in difficult conditions, starved, had a lack of sleep and worked hard to create the conditions necessary to achieve the success and strengthen their Fatherland. It was a moral and psychological focus on the significant value of the state interests, propensity to sacrifice and patience of the people and not just the fear of administrative or criminal penalties, which deterred manifestations of popular discontent" [Бердиев З.П, p.20]. Such an attitude towards the mass consciousness, which one day grew stronger and another day became weaker, was observed not just during the crucial periods of national history, but during the whole existence of the Soviet country. It means that the propaganda machine worked tirelessly.

Today the problem of the impact on the mass consciousness is no less serious than in the last century. It's not a coincidence that many leading experts in the field of psychology paid attention to the phenomenon of crowd psychology. This is just the manifestation of the phenomenon of mass consciousness. Two centuries ago and at the beginning of the last century such well-known researchers, like Siegel, Tarde, Le Bon claimed that there is a problem of the mass consciousness as well as the crowd, which is a manifestation of general mass consciousness of the people under a particular behavior. Le Bon believed that "hatred and jealousy in the lower classes, indifference, extreme selfishness and exclusive cult of wealth in the ruling classes and the pessimism of philosophers characterize modern society. The society must be unbreakable to resist the destructions, which, of course, are being prepared by the Socialists" [José Ortega y Gasset].

Due to ICT the ability to manipulate mass consciousness has repeatedly increased. Social networks serve as an accelerator for creating people's attitudes, evoking the determination to act. They are most actively used for political purposes. Especially they are involved in the formation of policies in developing countries for geopolitical purposes. For that matter, it is important to constantly study the basic directions of development of the spheres and forms of mass consciousness and identify the conditions of their formation. This should be done not for the purpose of manipulating the consciousness, but in order to find the correct and adequate development, towards humanization of social consciousness.

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