

The Logic of Withstanding between Civilizational Poles



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Abstract. The article proposes a conceptual scheme of historical development as a sequence of breaking points that are associated with the change of sense, ideological structure and determine the dominant attitudes of the subjects of historical activity. The time intervals between successive breaking points are epochs of relative stability of the system of ideological attitudes. The modern epoch began with a historical breaking point that came at the end of the 19th – early 20th century, replacing the epoch of classical capitalism of the 15th – 19th century. The dominant sense structure of the modern epoch is determined by the civilizational confrontation between Western countries and a group of leading non-Western countries. In the 20th century, the main ideological contradiction of this multidimensional confrontation was the struggle of socialism and capitalism. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, the confrontation between Western and non-Western countries transformed into a struggle between supporters of a unipolar world and supporters of a multipolar world. From time to time, the civilizational confrontation experiences periods of extreme aggravation (for example, the First and Second world wars), which is then followed by “détente”. The most important factor in historical dynamics is the processes that occur in the Western power elite and that are associated with the need to maintain the dominant ideology of superiority in this part of the world. The article describes the features of economic and political processes that can lead to the emergence and acceleration of exacerbations in international relations. They include the tendency of the West losing its leadership and an uncompromising struggle with contenders for new leadership; large-scale and, in many ways, successful attempts to manipulate public consciousness through the media and

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the education system; emergence of powers behind the throne in Western countries; revival of neo-Nazi organizations.

Key words: historical breaking point, epoch of stability, historical development, withstanding, confrontation, West, non-Western countries, ideology.

Driving forces of history. Historical breaking points

Let us classify driving forces of historical development by arranging them into four groups: 1) spiritual and ideological (semantic); 2) information and technological; 3) socio-economic; 4) institutional. Factors in the first group can be considered the most inertial ones. Major features of the worldview prevailing in society and the structure of semantic attitudes persist for long historical periods (centuries or even millennia) and to some extent help to stabilize factors in other groups. Relatively small changes in the factors in all the groups (including the first group) are gradually accumulating and lead to a radical change in the fundamental spiritual and ideological structure. This triggers more radical changes in other groups of factors and is generally perceived by descendants as a historical *breaking point*.

The breaking points in Western Europe were the spread of Christianity and the transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Times and capitalism. The adoption of Christianity meant substituting the urge to conform as much as possible to the traditional, objectively set norms of behavior and limitations of morality with the pursuit of endless improvement of man in his desire to get closer to God.

The time interval between breaking points is characterized by a relatively stable system of spiritual and ideological attitudes of the subjects of history. Let us call such intervals *epochs of stability* of semantic attitudes. This stability does not mean the absence of extreme and even shattering events, such as wars, throughout the epoch. It is only about preserving, in spite of these difficult events, the semantic structure that defines an epoch.

Why do we need a new model for structuring history? It urges us to pay more attention to established or rapidly changing spiritual and semantic factors. Their role is often underestimated, but in the modern world they become increasingly important when it comes to understanding historical events.

The following question is currently relevant. Is it really possible, as some Western ideologists say, that the current socio-political aggravation of the situation when Russia and China are opposing the Collective West can be contained, and ultimately end only if one of the parties is destroyed? According to the concept proposed in the article, it is more likely that there will be a transition (in one or another political and ideological form) to the phase of “peaceful coexistence” of regimes (most likely, with the continuation of ideological struggle and, possibly, local “hot” wars).

The following “methodological hypothesis” can be formulated. The moment or period of historical breaking point is characterized by the fact that the line of historical development that follows is not uniquely determined by the preceding historical movement. Even later historians often notice that there were quite probable alternative results of conflicts and ways of development. During such periods, elite ruling groups (as well as individual members of society) usually face several alternative opportunities from which they can choose. Groups that foresee a breaking point prepare the conditions in advance for the implementation of their alternative.

In the epoch of stability, there is an actual choice only with regard to secondary issues or those where the effects of one or another choice will be evident only in the long run. Finding solutions to major

issues (even such as waging a war) turns out to be almost unambiguously predetermined by objective processes and the established structure of spiritual and institutional factors. The “mistakes” made by the ruling group of one of the countries in choosing “the only reasonable” policy course “predetermined for a given epoch” may worsen the situation for a given country; but they will not change the overall configuration of the main factors determining the image of the epoch. This is the logic of history. For Russia, the main “mistake” in 1991 was its actual loss of sovereignty. Can it be so that there is no strong personality that can alter the course of history? There may be such an individual, but they are very unlikely to emerge in the epoch of stabilization. In the following sections, these provisions will be illustrated when analyzing trends of the modern epoch.

The breaking point of European history in the 15th – 17th century is characterized by the transition from focusing on the inner, spiritual life of an individual and from focusing on contemplation in the semantic sphere to the dramatic intensification of pragmatic action and increase in its value. Higher meanings are pushed to the sidelines. The most important result of a breaking point in the goal-setting area was the dominance of the capitalist drive toward personal, individual enrichment and victory in financial and economic competition. The reason for this historical breaking point lies in a combination of factors such as the emergence of ultra-high return on investment (hundreds or even thousands of percent) in “special sectors” due to economic and technological development, and the awareness of the possibilities for obtaining this return; the possibilities of obtaining highly efficient technology through scientific and intellectual activity¹, as well as great geographical discoveries (Balatsky, 2021).

¹ Such fantastic profitability exists in certain sectors at the present time as well. Examples are given in (Balatsky, Ekimova, 2020)

Geographical discoveries resulted in European civilization meeting the peoples of the civilizations of America and Africa who were at lower stages of development. And this allowed the Europeans not only to gain enormous wealth from the natural resources and exploitation of the labor force of these territories, but to believe in their undoubted superiority. This influenced the development of culture and the entire mentality of Western European peoples, similar to the impact of **imprinting** on the psyche of animals (fixation in memory of some distinctive features of objects and acts of behavior). A less convincing, but similar situation arose when the people and the army of the ancient Roman Empire clashed with the barbarian peoples who came from Asia. This socio-psychological phenomenon may explain the wide spread of racist ideologies in Western European countries, and at times their serious influence on socio-political processes².

The establishment of the capitalist system in Western Europe and then in North America served as a powerful impetus to the historical development of these countries and humanity as a whole. A system of colonial and semi-colonial dependence and exploitation of the peoples of non-Western countries was created. As a result, Western civilization became long-term world leader and even hegemon; this status supported and strengthened its dominant ideology of global leadership (“superiority imprinting”).

The system of semantic attitudes and institutions of capitalism became the core of the ideological and institutional system of the Modern Times. Transpersonal meanings and values that are not related to the accumulation of capital or that hinder the development of free market competition (religious teachings, the value of the state and

² It can be suggested that the peoples of Western Europe are more ready to accept *dividing ideologies* than, for example, the peoples of Russia, who are inclined to accept *unifying ideologies* (see the next section).

national traditions) were relegated to secondary roles. On the contrary, the values of antistate liberalism, individualistic, personal meanings of being were given paramount importance. The right of private property became “sacred”; the rights and freedoms of a person (an individual, rather than an organization or a social stratum) became the basis of ideology in society. Economics turned out to be more important than politics and ideology. The period of emergence and development of capitalist forms of social life in the 15th – 19th century is naturally called the epoch of capitalism.

The historical breaking point of the early 20th century. Prior to the epoch of capitalism, permanent ties and interactions (economic and cultural) between different civilizations were very weak or insignificant by the standards of historical time. They mainly arose in the course of wars between countries or resettlement of peoples.

In the epoch of capitalism, the main processes determining the development of humankind took place within a group of countries of Western civilization. Major contradictions defining historical development in this period were interactions (cooperation and confrontation) between classes. The rest of the countries had little impact on these processes. Some did not participate in this development at all; others played a subordinate role of colonies or semi-colonies dependent on Western countries.

However, it is now becoming increasingly clear that the semantic and institutional structure of capitalism has ceased to be completely dominant in the system of the driving forces of history. Geopolitical factors – political, ideological and economic factors in the confrontation between Western and non-Western countries – are coming to the fore. Can these changes be considered another historical breaking point, which opens an epoch with a new, more or less stable, structure of dominant values and meanings?

Under capitalism, an individual’s goals and movement were determined by the framework of a given social structure, the “environment” that cannot be controlled by an individual. The behavior of most people was determined by their *personal* semantic mindset: for capitalists – to accumulate capital, for workers and peasants – to increase their standard of living. *Transpersonal* life meanings were determined by religion. In a certain sense, it served as an “environment” in the spiritual space. After the period of Modernity and Enlightenment, religious life meanings began to be actively replaced by cultural and socio-political values and meanings. The necessity and possibility of changing the foundations of this “environment” in the sphere of the structure of society and the essence of man himself, his nature, were revealed. At the end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th century, changes in the spiritual and ideological sphere reached the intensity of a breaking point. Examples include futurism in the visual arts, and Nietzscheanism in philosophy.

The October Revolution of 1917 in Russia showed and made it possible to realize the political direction of these changes as the main direction, as well as the need to replace *personal* semantic attitudes, dominating the spiritual and ideological hierarchy, with *transpersonal* attitudes that unite huge communities (the country, the whole world). Of course, this applies more to the elites rather than the masses that are involved in heroic and tragic events and wars of the elites for relatively short periods of time³.

As a result of enormous progress in technology and production capabilities under capitalism, changes have taken place in the system of human and social needs. Along with physiological needs,

³ Giovanni Arrighi (Arrighi, 2006), when defining the layer of socio-economic life to which his construction of capital accumulation cycles belongs, writes that this is “the study of capital ‘at home’, on the top floor of the house of commerce”.

the need for comfortable living conditions, the need for security and identification with a large and stable community come to the fore. According to Abraham Maslow (Maslow, 2002), these are deficiency needs. Political factors become even more significant driving forces of history than economic ones.

Already in the period of imperialism, the values of identifying oneself and one's company with those from major Western countries and with their government structure rose to the highest level in the system of meanings along with the personal drive toward capital accumulation. More and more representatives of the working class and the intelligentsia identified themselves with the builders of communism. This happened in Western and non-Western countries. However, in Russia, with the formation of a powerful socialist state, transpersonal meanings reigned supreme without alternative.

Western historiography contains a very popular concept, according to which the main events that turned the course of history were the unleashing of the First World War by Germany (the catastrophe of the 20th century) and the country's subsequent defeat⁴. Most German historians agree with the statement about the continuity of Germany's expansionist policy before the First and Second world wars (and the statement about the unity of foreign and domestic policy). It is postulated that there exist causal links between the outbreak of the First World War and the defeat of Germany, the November revolution of 1918, the instability of the Weimar Republic, the rise to power of the Nazis and the outbreak of the Second World War. In addition, the First World War helped the Bolsheviks come to power in Russia. Consequently, to some extent, it caused the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR (Zalessky, 2022, pp. 323–324).

We should note that the goals of the German elite in the preparation of the First World War, and its ideas about the structure of Europe in the post-

war epoch were realized in a certain way in the second half of the 20th century. These ideas were being developing for a long time in the concept of *Mitteleuropa*. Their essence was set out in a secret note submitted by the Chancellor to the government on September 9, 1914 (a month after the outbreak of the war). It envisaged the creation of a mid-European economic union, similar in composition and content to the modern European Union, with the following cynical addition: "This association will not have a supreme constitution; outwardly all its members will be equal, but in fact Germany will have a leading role" (Zalessky, 2022, pp. 8–9).

At the end of the 20th century, the elite of the British Empire was also aware of the necessity and inevitability of "breaking point" events. In its spiritual and intellectual space, events took place that were perhaps more important than Germany's preparation for a European war; the events included the formation of the ideology of a global empire. In 1891, a closed society was established in London; its most famous founder was Cecil Rhodes. He considered himself and the British ruling class in general to be the heirs of the mighty empires of Alexander the Great, the Persian tsars, and Napoleon; his goal was the dissemination of British rule throughout the world, "colonization by the British of all lands where livelihood can be acquired by energy, labor and enterprise" (Fursov, 2022).

Social inequality is the most important element of the British cultural code. At the same time, inequality is the main source of class struggle under capitalism. To Rhodes, it was necessary to protect the empire from class civil war, first of all in its core, in Britain. The solution to the problem is provided by colonialism: it leads to the ideological, semantic and institutional "substitution" of socio-economic inequality for ethnic, civilizational, racial inequality.

Ordinary English people from the lower classes may feel like aristocrats in relation to the lower races. The idea of electability, legitimate domination is introduced into the liberal ideology of the West

⁴ Detailed description is given in (Zalesskii, 2022).

(by proclaiming the German people as a race of masters, Hitler in many ways turned out to be a disciple of the British).

The fateful events of the turning period that defined the epoch after the breaking point were the socialist revolution and the establishment of the USSR. In the leading community of the countries of Western civilization, there emerged a need for response to this challenge of the non-Western world. Such an answer was the assertion of fascism in Italy and National Socialism (*Nazism*) in Germany. Despite some similarities between the political and ideological structures of Nazism and *early socialism* – *Stalinism* (mainly in the system of institutions)⁵, these political and ideological systems radically differ both in goals and means of implementation. In the second half of the 20th century, the confrontation between Western countries and countries building socialism continued in the form of the Cold War. The ideological confrontation on the part of non-Western countries was under the slogan of the struggle for socialism against capitalism, and on the part of the West – for liberalism and democracy against dictatorship and totalitarianism.

The historical experience of centuries (or even millennia) in the West has prepared the ground for the formation of “*dividing*” theories and ideologies, *ideologies of superiority* that raise the value and role of their community (country, people) to a priority level and require submission or suppression of others. Methods of violence are not excluded. In Russia and China, the priority theories and ideologies are the “*unifying*” ones. It is considered necessary to understand the culture of the people with whom there is interaction, to take into account their interests. The goal is cooperation and mutual assistance in the name of common interests (Volkonsky, 2017). The creator of futurism, Italian

poet Filippo Tomaso Marinetti, in the Manifesto of Futurism (printed on the first page of *Le Figaro*, February 20, 1909) praises the war: “We will glorify war – the world’s only hygiene – militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom-bringers”. None of the Russian poets praised the war as an independent value.

Capitalism, which forces all actors (from individuals to states) to participate in market competition, is a typical dividing semantic complex. The ideology of socialism, which requires a policy of cooperation, equality and justice in social and economic relations, is a typical unifying ideology.

The semantic core of the new historical epoch is the *confrontation between Western and non-Western civilizations*, or between supporters of a unipolar world (UPW) and supporters of a multipolar world (MPW). The confrontation between the universal semantic complexes based on the Western dividing ideology of capitalism and the “Eastern” ideology of socialism (each with its own institutional system) in the 20th century was a form of confrontation between Western and non-Western civilizations.

In the 1990s, two books appeared that are very informative and important for our research: *The Long Twentieth Century* by Giovanni Arrighi (Arrighi, 2006) and *The Clash of Civilizations* by Samuel Huntington (Huntington, 2019). Arrighi structures the historical process of the capitalist epoch as a sequential change of capital accumulation cycles, accompanied by a change of geo-economic and geopolitical centers (nation-states or empires). Why is capital accumulation the main factor in structuring? Under capitalism, it was the concentration of capital in the leading countries of Western Europe and America, and its subsequent expansion that were the main driving forces and sources of great achievements of humankind.

Arrighi considers the creation and preservation of the capitalist system to be the main condition for the current and future successes of historical

⁵ Later, Western ideologists used this similarity to discredit Soviet socialism.

development. The attempts undertaken by Russia, China, and Vietnam to create a socio-economic system different from capitalism are of little interest to him. In the last pages of the book, while considering “three possible ways out of the crisis of the American accumulation regime”, each time he draws the same conclusion about the inevitability of the “end of capitalist history”. At the very least, capitalist history will continue, but there will no longer be a modern socio-economic system that ensures “expanded reproduction of the capitalist stratum” in society. Development will have to start over. Given the growing number of signs of weakening in Europe and the United States, the lack of optimism is quite natural.

However, Huntington’s book, published in 1995 almost simultaneously with Arrighi’s work, is based on a much broader view of the driving forces of history. According to Arrighi’s concept, the world capital accumulation center unconditionally protects (has to ensure) its dominant position from other contenders for the position of leader (or hegemon). The hegemon is interested in the economic growth of its satellites. But one of them may become a threat to the hegemon’s leading position (which provides advantages in terms of capital accumulation). Then the hegemon uses a wide range of means to limit the development of a successful satellite. Arrighi discusses in detail what economic and political means (including military ones) the United States could use in the 1980s to slow down the development of Japan and other Southeast Asian countries.

Consideration of modern world problems from the standpoint of the theory of civilizations is immeasurably more fruitful than Arrighi’s ideas concerning the inevitable concentration of world economic and political power in a single center. Arrighi’s concept is still relevant due to the fact that now the Collective West and its center, the United States, retain real power and the dominance of their ideology in a large part of the world. We should

note that according to Huntington it is Western civilization that has inherent strive to establish world domination for a single center (Huntington, 2019).

After the destruction of the USSR and the socialist camp, only a few non-Western countries officially declared the orientation of their political system toward socialism. Historical significance of the ideology of socialism also declined noticeably after the collapse of the USSR and now requires updating. The universal world ideology of socialism becomes effective when it is combined with the traditional values of national culture. Socialism has evolved into a variety of ideologies with various national specifics. It is necessary to modify the original idea of socialism in order to combine it with the mechanisms of the market and other elements of capitalism, i.e. it is necessary to implement the ideas of convergence. At present, capitalist values and semantic attitudes also cease to be dominant in the space of meanings (Volkonsky, 2022).

With the collapse of the Soviet Union it seemed that the intensified confrontation between the West and the socialist camp ended with the victory of the West and the world became unipolar (UPW). The dominant ideology of liberalism in the West was transformed into an American-style ideology of globalism. But already at the beginning of the 21st century it became obvious that the confrontation between Western and non-Western civilizations acquired a new meaning and escalated into a confrontation between supporters of a unipolar world (UPW) and supporters of a multipolar world (MPW).

The confrontation of capitalism vs socialism, being the main ideological contradiction in the 20th century, can be considered as the first stage of confrontation between Western civilization and a number of non-Western civilizational poles. However, the values and meanings of socialism are included as an important part in the “civilizational codes” of most non-Western countries seeking to free themselves from the

dictates of the Western center (Volkonsky, 2021). Therefore, the civilizational confrontation “UPW vs MPW” in a certain sense is a continuation of the confrontation “capitalism vs socialism”. In the article we will consider the 20th century as the first stage of a longer epoch, whose ideological, or more broadly, mental core is the confrontation between civilizations.

Is it legitimate to talk about a new historical breaking point at the beginning of the 21st century?

Granted, the collapse of the Soviet Union changed the structure of relations between civilizations. But the opposition “UPW vs MPW” remained the main one in the semantic and ideological space. It is just that there began a period of détente. For the West, the open escalation of new tensions in relations with Russia or new attempts to split the ruling elite of China were fraught with an obvious risk. A significant part of the ruling strata in Russia and China at that moment was pro-Western, but open external pressure could make it hostile to the West (which happened a little later). It was necessary to establish a period of “UPW construction” by weakening secondary centers of resistance, such as Middle East countries and Yugoslavia.

However, already in 2007, at the Munich Security Conference, Vladimir Putin said that a unipolar world order with the unconditional hegemony of the West had “outlived itself”, an MPW was coming in which Russia was equal to the West. With a coup d’état in Ukraine in 2014, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Democrats coming to power in the United States in 2020, the political and ideological pressure of the West (primarily the United States) on Russia and China began to increase dramatically, which led to a rapid escalation of the confrontation.

The current situation, of course, differs from the situation in the 20th century, at least in that the political structure of the previous century was in fact binary. Now Western countries are actually governed from one center, the Collective West. The non-Western countries do not have a single control

center. But the common goal of opposing the West leads to the rapid strengthening of economic relations and interstate coalitions, which brings the situation closer to a binary structure. The work (Balatsky, 2022) notes an important fact: after the introduction of unprecedented international sanctions against Russia in 2022 by the Collective West, a non-Western alliance of Islamic Iran, Sinic China and Orthodox Russia was formed. As for deep spiritual and ideological differences between these countries, they were not an obstacle at all.

The period of the COVID-19 pandemic and then the aggravation associated with Russia’s special military operation are considered by many Western political scientists as a kind of threshold, the beginning of a movement toward a new world. Indeed, this aggravation has revealed the phenomena in relations between countries and peoples that were not observed for many decades. Such phenomena include unification and even consolidation of the elite strata of Western countries and those oriented toward the Western center – an association based on universal Russophobia; and an almost complete absence of protests in Western Europe against neo-Nazism in the government and society in Ukraine. And it is happening in Europe, which lived through the period of Hitler’s Nazism that had essentially become a catastrophe for Europe’s great humanistic development. Not only ordinary political scientists, but also political figures and ideologists who shape the agenda of the Western community, began to make forecasts and appeals predicting the arrival of a New World Order in the coming years. Klaus Schwab, permanent curator of the Davos Forum, writes about this, for example, in (Schwab, Malleret, 2020). The World Economic Forum in Davos changed this year’s theme from neutral-friendly to alarmist: “History at a Breaking Point: Government Policy and Business Strategies”. In the West and in Russia there emerge publications describing the future that will arise as a result of the “final” victory of one of the parties in the clash of civilizations.

The current situation is similar to that in which a historical breaking point is taking place. However, at the same time, not a single semantic, political and ideological principle or phenomenon has emerged that would not have had a prototype in the previous century. The current aggravation of the political, economic, informational and ideological confrontation between Western and non-Western countries should not necessarily be considered a new historical breaking point. All ideological and institutional aspects of the modern confrontation are the revival or escalation of ideas and institutions that emerged in the 20th century. This is not the formation of a new semantic structure, but a return to the usual one. It is advisable to consider such a historical development when the current aggravation in one way or another will evolve into a cold war, for example. It is necessary to be prepared for a situation when prerequisites for such a transition have been created. We need a model, a conceptual scheme of the epoch of civilizational confrontation, which is an alternation of periods similar to the current aggravation on the verge of a “big war” and the periods of relatively peaceful coexistence of the West and non-Western civilizational poles, similar to the “détente” of the 1970s (with the continuation of the cold, information and ideological warfare and episodically emerging local hot wars).

The major source of transitions from periods of “détente” to geopolitical aggravation and again to “peaceful coexistence” is found in the processes taking place in the ruling elites of the West. Let us point out the simplest logic underlying these processes.

An ideological, semantic complex is the main factor ensuring the unity and coordinated actions of the Western community as a whole, given a relatively weak role of its governments. This complex is based on the ideology of superiority: both the elite and the majority of citizens are sure that Western countries play a leading role in the historical development and their citizens

enjoy a privileged position in terms of quality of life as compared to non-Western countries (at the beginning of the article we mentioned socio-psychological “imprinting” as a result of a capitalist breakthrough).

The beginning of the 21st century has clearly shown that major non-Western civilizational poles are gaining economic and political strength and the West is weakening and losing its leading positions in many aspects. Regaining and maintaining its leadership becomes for the Western community not just a natural desire to win the intercivilizational competition, but a matter of preserving its capacity as a whole and overcoming the spiritual crisis.

The above-mentioned Arrighi, when describing capital accumulation cycles, considers the concentration of both economic and political power in the hands of one state leader inevitable. After the Second World War, the United States became such a leader among Western countries. The inevitable uniqueness of the leader is also supported by Huntington (“core state”) (Huntington, 2019). However, what he means is leadership within a single civilization. Nevertheless, the relationship between leaders of different civilizations does not necessarily boil down to a “game of exclusion”. Currently, this is relevant, because many non-Western countries opposing the Collective West have an urgent need for ideological and political unity, but at the same time they do not aspire to become a single leader, much less a hegemon. For example, the concept of cooperation between Russia and China on designing a common strategy for the community of supporters of a MPW and its implementation does not contradict anything. In the framework of this cooperation China plays a decisive role in addressing economic issues, and Russia plays a decisive role in addressing geopolitical and military issues.

The split within the U.S. elite is not about their world leadership. The difference between the two parts of the elite (close in number and influence)

concerns the question of how to understand leadership. One part considers the restoration of the country's stable primacy in terms of economic, technological, and scientific development as priority targets (with internal issues topping the agenda). The other part argues that major goals are to maintain geopolitical hegemony and exercise control over the power structures and key decisions of all other countries (superglobalism). The first of the goals is associated with Donald Trump's course, the second – with that pursued by Barack Obama and with a more aggressive course implemented by Joseph Biden. The transition from the period of “détente” to the current escalation of the confrontation “UPW vs MPW” is mainly due to the fact that the Western elite is now painfully aware of its having lost civilizational leadership. When and how this period of aggravation ends will largely be determined by political and ideological processes in Western countries.

Major non-Western countries remain catching up in many aspects. The state plays a big role here. Its goals and those of the patriotic part of the elite are primarily associated with raising the economic, technological, cultural and educational level and the standard of living. These countries are forced to participate in hybrid wars to ensure their security. But they, as well as their patriotic elites, are interested in ending the period of aggravation and establishing mutually beneficial relations between all countries and their coalitions. The following sections of the article are devoted to a more detailed description of the problems that determine the interaction of civilizational poles.

The West's tendency toward losing leadership. An important factor that has a serious impact on the political and ideological situation in the world is the weakening of the West, which is clearly manifested during both decades of the 21st century. The United States is losing leadership in one aspect of public life, then in another. A steady trend is the reduction of the share of the West both in the world's

population and in the global economy. China has overtaken the U.S. in terms of GDP; catching-up Third World countries have long shown higher rates of economic growth. More and more non-Western countries are joining the coalition of states where Russia and China are leaders. After the end of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States lost much of its influence in the Middle East. To weaken their opponents, the U.S. and the EU use large-scale sanctions as an economic and political weapon. However, this undermines the authority of the ideology of liberalism and especially globalism. And in 2022, it became obvious that sanctions are causing more damage to Western countries themselves.

Associations of Western countries no longer have the political unity that forced most of them to obey the dictates of the United States. A political and ideological split has clearly manifested itself in the elites of the U.S. and other Western countries. The peak of the authority and leadership of the West and the belief in the American-style UPW seem to become a thing of the past. We should note that, despite this, the confrontation is likely to persist for a long period. And not only because huge amounts of material, informational and human capital have been accumulated in Western countries, but also because their active social stratum is “charged” with a stable semantic mindset aimed at preserving (or achieving) world leadership (possibly as a result of the “imprinting” noted above).

Currently, the media are discussing the fact that a large number of politicians who lack experience in political work and have an insufficient level of education obtain positions in the governing bodies of Western countries. The “scale of personality” of modern leaders of European countries is compared with those of the past: Boris Johnson vs Margaret Thatcher, Emanuel Macron vs Charles de Gaulle, Olaf Scholz vs Ludwig Erhard. Publicists explain the obvious signs of the West's loss of geopolitical leadership by the “mistakes” its politicians make in

the conditions of the much needed policy change. However, as usually happens in history, the low level of leading figures is only one of many factors characterizing the overall long-term historical trend, which is determined by a number of objective factors. “Human logic” demands the rejection of politically conditioned anti-Russian sanctions to prevent an energy and food crisis, to guarantee against a world war. But the “logic of history” turns out to be stronger.

Each stable community, in order to ensure its unity and revitalization, strives to strengthen and develop its dominant ideology, its dominant semantic complex. In the West, it is the ideology of globalism – the idea of superiority of the West, its culture and institutional systems, as well as the necessity and beneficence of their spread worldwide. In order to maintain the ability of this ideology to perform unifying and activating functions in conditions of actual weakening, society complies with its increasingly aggressive variants.

Donald Trump became president of the United States with the political mindset of “making America great again”, which meant addressing primarily internal problems to ensure the country’s leadership in the economic, technological, social, information and cognitive fields (temporarily putting aside the task of imperious governance of the whole world). Such a policy could give the world a period of “détente”. Biden came on the wave of activation of the most aggressive part of the American elite that is “obsessed” with the messianic superglobalist craving for world hegemony *at any cost*.

In response to the West’s desire for political and economic subordination of non-Western countries, coalitions and alliances are formed in many of these countries, the civilization of a multipolar world and its ideology are beginning to form (Volkonsky, 2021).

The field of financial and economic development is also experiencing a process associated

with the weakening of the West – the *fragmentation* of the network of financial and economic flows that contribute to the formation and strengthening of non-Western poles in a multipolar world (opponents of Western hegemony). Naturally, this process pushes Western elites to escalate the struggle with their main geopolitical opponents – Russia and China. During the period of “peaceful coexistence”, the readiness to aggravate this struggle is increasing.

One of the trends, which can be called *economic deglobalization*, is the weakening of global interconnectedness and “intertwining” of economic and production processes. It was addressed by Jacques Sapir in his report “World Trade: Between Fragmentation and Restructuring” delivered at a Russian-French seminar in June 2022⁶. An important parameter that reflects this trend (and is its measure) is the ratio of world trade volume to world GDP. After the 2008–2010 crisis, an increasing share of manufactured products switched from international trade to the domestic market.

The reason is the transition of the West (mainly the United States) from a general ideological orientation toward maximizing the expansion of free market relations to a policy of mass use of sanctions in order to limit and suppress the development of countries with “authoritarian” regimes. Economic ties within groups of countries with similar political and ideological orientations are being strengthened. Similar processes characterize the network of financial and investment flows. The number of *sovereign funds* and their size are growing, which corresponds to a growing desire of countries for economic and political sovereignty, independence, and self-sufficiency. The process of *fragmentation* of the network of financial and economic ties is underway, the process of deglobalization. And along with

⁶ Sapir J. (2022). World trade: Between fragmentation and restructuring. A report at the Russian-French Symposium on June 29, 2022. Available at: <https://ecfor.ru/publication/mirovaya-torgovlya-mezhdu-fragmentatsiej-i-restrukturizatsiej/> (accessed: October 14, 2022).

the restructuring of the network, we see that the connections within groups of countries with similar political and ideological orientations are increasing and strengthening; as a rule, this corresponds to the formation of civilizational poles and the increase in their strength and stability. A characteristic feature of this process can be found in the fact that Republicans in Texas are once again pushing for a referendum to decide whether the state should secede from the United States. It proves that the processes of cultural, ideological, and political integration of Latin American peoples and the formation of the Latin American civilizational pole are continuing.

All this indicates a general increase in the significance of political and ideological factors: economic factors are more often used as tools.

From the standpoint of liberal socio-political theories, the described processes of fragmentation in the trade and financial network deserve only a negative assessment. However, we can provide arguments that question such a judgment. For example, as the complexity of technologies increases and the interests of manufacturers from different countries “interweave”, the production chains of creation and market sale of many types of products become excessively long and subject to high risks (risks are not only natural and economic, but also political!). It can be expected that the restructuring of such production chains will lead to their replacement with shorter and, most importantly, more reliable ones.

Thus, we can point out the following long-term trends that indicate a weakening of the global dominance of Western civilization:

- decrease in the share of Western countries in world GDP;
- expansion of country coalitions such as BRICS and the SCO, in which Russia and China are leaders;
- fragmentation of the global network of trade and financial ties between countries (degloba-

lization), and strengthening such ties within groups of countries close in political and ideological mindsets.

The state agenda in the West and in the East. *The Narrow Corridor*, a book by Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson (Acemoglu, Robinson, 2021) uses the broadest historical material to analyze the interaction and confrontation between the state (and other power groups) and society. According to the authors, the main value that peoples (not all, but the most successful ones) manage to achieve as a result of difficult and contradictory development is freedom – social, political, economic. This state of society – freedom – serves as the main factor ensuring its long-term scientific and technological, economic, cultural development, welfare growth, etc. Freedom is not only the absence of violence and threats of violence. It is the absence of any dominance: the one who is dominated is not able to make a free choice. A free society requires law and order.

In accordance with Thomas Hobbes’ teachings, in a society without a state there is a “war of all against all”. Maintain freedom and order requires a strong state – a mighty and terrible Leviathan. But Leviathan can restrict the freedom of members of society itself – in this case it is a Despot Leviathan. According to the authors, a positive result is achieved only if society is active and “mobilized”, if it is constantly fighting (up to bloody uprisings) against the Despot Leviathan (in order to curb its insatiable desire for power) and against the dominance of any elite groups. As a result of such a struggle, a more or less stable balance is established between the power and authority of the state on the one hand, and the opposing force and activity of society on the other. A positive result is achieved if this equilibrium is located in a certain “narrow corridor” between the zones of the Absent Leviathan and the Despot Leviathan. The corridor is a zone of the Shackled Leviathan.

The book convincingly substantiates the necessity to have freedom so as to achieve long and diverse development of the country in the economic, technological and social spheres. Criticizing the modern model of social structure in China under the leadership of the Communist Party, the authors write that high rates of economic growth and technological advances were “the result of the concentration of [intellectual and other resources] on well-posed problems in narrow areas ... Diverse and ongoing innovation in a range of fields ... depends not on solving existing problems but on dreaming up new ones”. This requires out-of-the-box thinking, a large number of individual experiments with possible violations of the rules, frequent failures and rare successes – that is, what characterized the Italian city-states of the late Middle Ages and entrepreneurs of the Industrial Revolution. “You can order individuals to work hard, but you cannot order them to be creative” (Acemoglu, Robinson, 2021, pp. 328–329).

In the epoch of capitalism, the state was quite successfully opposed by the class of entrepreneurs. This class restrained Leviathan. During the period of late capitalism, major banks and financial and industrial corporations used it to their advantage as a powerful chain dog. According to the concept of the authors of the book, this is not a situation of a Despotic Leviathan and not a situation of an Absent Leviathan. This means that Western countries are in the zone of a “narrow corridor”. However, they bear little resemblance to a society of freedom, where there is no dominance. If Marxists wanted to use the terminology of this book, they would say that Leviathan is not the state, but the stratum of the largest capitalists exercising imperious control over society.

In Russia and China, the relations between society and the state have always been and still are dramatically different from those in Western countries. Many historians emphasize that the unity of state power and the people is a typical feature of

Russia’s social structure. The dominant worldview contains a stable normative image of the state as a representative of the people, responsible for the fate of the people as a whole and each member of society (Sergeitsev et al., 2020). Naturally, the balance between the power of the state and the possibilities of control by society (narrow corridor) turn out to be different from those in Western countries: in Russia, the state has greater functions and greater power. In China, the role of the state in the social structure is also much greater than in the West. In modern conditions, this is an advantage (Volkonsky, 2022).

The ideological concept presented in the book by T.N. Sergeitsev and co-authors is undoubtedly a valuable and fruitful contribution to the theory of the state and its role in historical development. Unfortunately, the book says virtually nothing on how the state and the balance of power between the state and society are influenced by intercountry and intercivilizational interactions and confrontations that have become the most important contradictions and engines of history in the 20th –21st century.

The emergence of the Soviet Union, a strong state, “charged” with an uncontrollably spreading communist ideology aimed at restructuring the “old world” in a revolutionary way, transformed the semantic system of the Western ruling elites. The crucial factor is geopolitical and ideological confrontation, which require the rapid strengthening of centralized political power, i.e. increasing the value and role of the state. The need for strong and effective centralized management was also due to the growing complexity of industrial and social relations and an increasing pace of social processes.

This was not an easy task in the context of a dominating, mostly antistate, liberal ideology. We can point out several ways in which the Western governance system could address this task. The first way is to discredit the ideology and institutional system of the enemy, the Soviet Union and the

entire socialist camp. The main thing that has been achieved is a stable perception among a large part of the population of Western countries that Russia has been and remains a very dangerous *enemy* capable of destroying the foundations of the Western social order and establishing a system that deprives an individual of their freedom. This idea is not always necessary, but it can be easily activated with any aggravation, like the current instantaneous spread of Russophobia in all the media and political elites.

The presence of a permanent enemy has helped the ruling elite of Western countries and their governing structures to create over the past 50–70 years the following two factors or institutions that largely solve the problem of operational centralized management:

1) monopoly control over key information flows (in the mass media and social media) and dominant political and ideological attitudes (the system of think tanks, which provides a real opportunity to manipulate public consciousness;

2) establishing another, invisible, “covert” power center besides official governmental structures; this turned out to be easier and more effective than strengthening the control and power functions of the state itself in conditions when society is “mobilized” against the strengthening of Leviathan. The monopolistic structure of control over the main information flows makes it possible to protect the “covert” center from excessive public attention and investigations (Volkonsky, 2022). Such a center is commonly called a deep state. Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz in his book *The Price of Inequality* (Stiglitz, 2015) regularly uses the term “top”, which in many cases corresponds to the term “covert” center of power.

Manipulating public consciousness. An individual’s behavior is formed on the basis of that virtual world, the world of ideas about facts and their interrelations, which has developed in their head and which they consider a reflection (bad or good) of the real world. Different political and ideological

communities build their ideological complexes and political attitudes on the basis of the same set of facts and their interrelations (or ideas about them), using its different subsets. Consciously substituting an adequate representation of a fact with an inadequate one that does not correspond to reality is called a lie. Accusing a political center or a politician of using lies has always led to a loss of trust in them. Such situations were rare: politicians were wary of using lies.

Another situation arose when, as a result of the monopolistic management of institutions whose purpose was to create and disseminate information, it became possible to effectively restrict and direct the creation and dissemination of specific types of information. Western politicians accuse the “authoritarian” regimes of Russia and China of centralized control and restrictions on the creation and dissemination of information, arguing that Western countries have freedom and competition as their typical features. However, even if this situation were true, it was such only during the Cold War in the 20th century. Currently, a number of studies prove that key information flows in Western countries are now subordinated to monopoly management and centralized control (Volkonsky, 2022). We can point out the 2020 U.S. election campaign as an illustrative example. Then the mainstream mass media and social media responded with enviable unanimity and almost simultaneously to all the events of this campaign – against Trump and in favor of Biden. The invisible center demonstrated its control capabilities in the information space. The truth, as a statement purified of any lies, has ceased to be valuable even in information intended for the society of one’s own country.

An important consequence of the monopoly control of the Western top over the information space was its conviction of complete irresponsibility in relations with non-Western countries, especially with opponents. Social psychologists use the term

“the feeling of permissiveness and impunity”. The invisible center feels free from any value and moral restrictions. Terrorist and neo-Nazi forces are regularly used in the struggle for global hegemony. Covert networks of special forces carry out operations to eliminate recalcitrant individuals, overthrow unwanted governments and train foreign military.

Perhaps the most surprising consequence has been an increasingly widespread use of lies by politicians and political organizations, who do not really bother to conceal that it is a lie. It is also surprising that there are almost no protests against this in European countries, the countries of an old and high culture. Staged events are used to create fakes, to replace the ideas inside a Western individual’s head about real facts with such ideas that are needed to support an ideological attitude. In Kramatorsk, Ukrainian nationalists hit the train station with a missile to “prove” that it is the Russian military that is hitting civilians. On the same day, their accusations were picked up by many leading Western politicians. And although it is difficult to distinguish the truth from a lie in the world of fake news, in this case it promptly became clear that the strike was carried out by the *Tochka-U* missile, which is used by Ukraine and has long been decommissioned in Russia⁷. As a result, the campaign to accuse Russia of this mass murder was almost immediately curtailed, but Western countries did not bring charges against Ukraine and tried to silence this story.

In Ukraine, the fabrication of such fakes has become massive. However, the very use of terrorist acts by Western special services “under a false flag” has a long history. For example, in the 1960s and 1970s in Western Europe, there was a secret

unit created by national intelligence services and operating under the control of the CIA – the Gladio sabotage network, whose activities have now been studied quite well. Then left-wing governments in European countries were gaining popularity, there was a danger of the collapse of NATO. The Gladio network carried out terrorist operations as part of a “strategy to increase tension”; left-wing radicals were made responsible for the acts, thus compromising local left-wing parties and Moscow. According to one of the main experts on this topic, Swiss researcher Daniele Ganser, from 1969 to 1987, more than 14,500 “terrorist attacks under a false flag” were committed in Italy alone. About 500 people were killed and almost 1,200 were injured (Ganser, 2017).

At the secret base of the 10th U.S. Special Forces Regiment in Germany, where the Gladio network terrorists were trained, Ukrainian special forces are now being trained and a headquarters for coordinating military assistance to Ukraine has been established; it includes 20 countries⁸.

The development of private initiative in a free market is impossible without a general atmosphere of **trust**, which is only rarely violated – trust between unfamiliar partners, trust in government structures. The use of lies as a weapon mainly concerns the political and ideological sphere, and it is directed, as a rule, against civilizational opponents or, at least, non-Western partners. The United States violates any international agreements and generally accepted rules, if necessary. In the economic and financial sphere, trust remains to a certain extent. However, the facts of expropriation of state property of the Russian Federation (“freezing” of Russia’s foreign exchange reserves), accounts and real estate of Russian oligarchs in Western countries show that even such universal values as the “sacred” right of ownership are no longer preserved. As a result, the general atmosphere of trust is degrading.

⁷ Lavrov B., Stepovoy B. “Information on the Tochka-U attack: Who actually struck at peaceful people at the Kramatorsk railway station? Available at: <https://iz.ru/1317765/anton-lavrov-bogdan-stepovoi/u-tocheknye-dannye-kto-nanes-udar-po-mirnym-liudiam-na-vokzale-kramatorska> (accessed: October 14, 2022).

⁸ Krashennnikova V. (2022). The USA is preparing for a big war with Russia. *Pyataya gazeta*, issue 30.

Russia and China are interested in developing domestic business, attracting investments and active business people from abroad (more precisely, Russia needs to eliminate all the motives for their outflow). The state policy here is to strengthen the general atmosphere of trust. The ideological weapon is the truth and the disclosure of opponents' lies. It is generally accepted to consider the United States and Western countries as heirs of capitalism, and Russia and China as heirs of an alternative ideology of communism and socialism. The general atmosphere of trust highlight the emergence in recent years (at least, the possibility of emergence) of a new factor that is very important in the conditions of a "hybrid war for life and death" between Russia and the West.

The question is whose side the entrepreneur class will be on in this fight. And the significance of this choice is much more serious than the growth or decline of the Russian economy. The opponents in the civilizational confrontation are the West and the emerging civilization of a MPW. The code of the new civilization will be based on mutual understanding and cooperation⁹ (Volkonsky, 2021). The West, using large-scale politically conditioned sanctions and dividing peoples into "us" and "them" on national and cultural grounds (Russophobia, like racial division under the Nazis), quickly destroys the atmosphere of trust necessary for entrepreneurs to work effectively. On the contrary, the activity of entrepreneurs and business people who establish trade, financial and personal ties, serves as one of the main drivers in the formation and development of a MPW civilization.

⁹ S.Yu. Glazyev describes this new emerging civilization in the language of changing world economic paradigms (WEPs): this will be an "integral WEP" (Glazyev, 2016; Glazyev, 2017).

Similar ideas are contained in an article by Russian billionaire Ruben Vardanyan¹⁰. This is what he writes about the West: "Western civilization seems to have done everything to undermine trust both in itself and within itself at all levels – system, institutions, communities, people". He considers the elimination of spiritual, ideological and political hostility between civilizations to be the crucial task (the author uses the word polarization) and calls on business people to solve it. It is necessary to note that, according to Vardanyan, the small peoples who are "at the crossroads of civilizations" and who possess extensive historical experience of mediation between unfriendly civilizations (even under sanctions) can play an important part in addressing the task. They can be "at the forefront of the search for ways to reduce polarization". It is easy to understand that he is talking about such peoples as Armenians and Jews.

The clash of civilizations and the danger of fascism. The West has a powerful weapon – revival of fascist movements – which is used by the most aggressive parts of the Western elite as an *ultima ratio* in the confrontation between civilizations. Western intelligence agencies have gained considerable experience in creating destructive extremist movements and providing them with the necessary direction of development. For the last half century, the ideology of Nazism was looked upon as a kind of marginal, dying semantic complex that exists only in the minds of a few surviving figures of Hitler's regime. The seizure of power in Ukraine after 2014 by ultra-right nationalists, who openly use ideas and symbols of German Nazism, and, more importantly, the fact that the ruling elites of the United States and other Western countries support this regime, indicate that the above perception of Nazism is flawed.

¹⁰ A new world: What should we be like to get into it. Available at: https://www.rbc.ru/opinions/economics/16/06/2022/62a9dc149a794748eee0119e?from=column_1

Fascism, neo-Nazism¹¹ can be called the most dangerous ideological threats to humanity. Nazism is based on the cultural and ideological foundations of the most powerful Western civilization, claiming global hegemony. And Nazism itself once in history has already demonstrated the ability to mobilize almost the entire Western Europe under its destructive ideology.

After the defeat in World War II, Nazism did not disappear. Socio-political movements using the ideological developments and practical experience of German Nazism arise and operate in almost all Western European countries (and not only European ones). A fascist organization is not only a political party. This is a community charged with fanatical faith in its own teaching (close to the faith of cultists in occult myths) and purpose. Its members are bound by conscious discipline and are ready to make sacrifices for the sake of the future they believe in. This belief is based not only on a concrete image of a social structure achievable in the foreseeable future, but also ideas protected from rational analysis and doubt, referring to pagan myths and Nietzsche's idea of the *Übermensch*.

The classic of psychological science Carl Gustav Jung was one of the first to try and explain the massive change in the psychological condition of a

large community under Nazism through the psychology of the individual. In a 1946 paper (see Jung, 1997), he explains the phenomenon of fascism by a kind of universal archetype associated with primitive instinct, violence and cruelty. It is an archetype that "sleeps" in the unconscious of each individual. The difficult situation in which society found itself after the defeat in the war, the general atmosphere of moral decline led to the awakening of this "primitive instinct". Later, Erich Fromm (Fromm, 1977) gave a more detailed explanation of the role of psychological mechanisms based on the postulates of psychoanalysis.

The difference between fascists and an occult sect is that the ideology that underlies the faith of the former does not contradict a significant part of modern scientific knowledge, allowing them to use a huge arsenal of modern technology. In Hitler's Germany, a lot of engineers and scientists were members of the NSDAP and worked effectively "for the glory of the Third Reich". It is the combination of a fanatical quasi-religious goal setting and modern scientific and technological tools to achieve the goals that makes fascism especially dangerous.

But the study of the socio-psychological processes of the emergence and development of cults (there are more than a thousand of them in the U.S.) made it possible for Western special services to accumulate experience in the selection and direction of the development of destructive groups and organizations of the neo-Nazi type. "Scientific and engineering" methods of socio-psychological research help an individual (of a certain psychological type of personality, or an adolescent) accept the ideological attitudes of fascism as their main life meaning. According to Aleksey Kochetkov, coordinator of the Russian Union Movement, author of the book about the Azov Movement (Kochetkov 2022), the Azov Regiment and then the socio-political Azov Movement were created to a significant extent under the leadership (and funding) of the CIA and other

¹¹ We should note that the name of the movement "Nazism" can be misleading, indicating its obligatory connection with nationalism. Indeed, at the birth of National Socialism in Germany, its main political goal was to establish the dominant position of the great German nation in Europe and the world. National Socialism acquired its most antihuman traits by replacing this attitude with the "theory" of the superiority of the Aryan race and the practice of ensuring its domination. For modern variants of neo-Nazism, the idea of the isolation and superiority of a certain community is the key one. But this community may not necessarily be a nation or a race. An example is the most radical neo-Nazi organization in Ukraine – the Azov Movement. "Russian, Hungarian or Pole, it doesn't matter who you are – if you accept the idea of building ... a "nation of masters", if you want to rule in the space that will remain after the destruction of Russian civilization, then you are one of us" (Inclusive fascism. How specialists from the USA prepared the Azov Regiment. Conversation with the coordinator of the Russian Union Movement Aleksey Kochetkov. *Zavtra*, 2022, issue 29).

Western intelligence services. The secret services and power centers of the West hope that they will always be able not only to create this “weapon”, but also target it in the direction they choose.

The possibility of involving a significant number of people in the Nazi movement is due to its highly appealing (to certain psychological types) ideology, as well as the social status its participants acquire. Being aware of the *uniqueness and superiority* of all members of the fascist “caste” in relation to other people (and within the movement – the prominence of its main spiritual and ideological core – the type of SS organization in Hitler’s Nazism) gives the participants of the organization a sense of life meaning and helps to overcome the “spiritual vacuum” in which the people of the late capitalism epoch found themselves. The role of the idea of supervalue gives fascists freedom from generally accepted legal and moral norms and restrictions in relation to nonfascists (and, if necessary, to their associates), justifying *permissiveness and impunity*. In particular, this applies to the widespread use of *violence* to achieve the goals of the movement. In order to instill fear of fascist organizations in society and “dehumanize” the psyche of the fascists themselves (especially teenagers), extreme cruelty is encouraged, and the use of torture becomes habitual. There is evidence that the Azovites use even more sophisticated cruelty than the Nazis¹².

How could it happen that this antihuman ideology turned out to be attractive to a significant part of the highly cultured stratum of Germans? It can be explained by the following factors. When the National Socialist Party was created in the 1920s, its ideology was dramatically different from the ideology of the party and the German state after Hitler came to power, when ideology was

based on racial theory and anti-Semitism; and the corresponding policy began to be implemented in practice. It is racism and the politics based on it that are primarily responsible for the monstrous crimes associated with Nazism. Most likely, during those 12 years, cultured and educated people joined the NSDAP not because they shared its principles.

Initially, National Socialism is an heir of quite constructive and fruitful ideologies of socialism and nationalism. Many members of the National Socialist Party and most of the citizens who supported it (as well as the fascists of Italy) shared some of the attitudes of socialism and considered the bourgeoisie a hostile class. It was not left-wing anticapitalism, as in Marxism, but right-wing anticapitalism. Right-wing anticapitalism proceeded from the fact that the international nature of capital hinders the realization of the national idea and the sovereignty of the state.

In the 18th – 19th century, Germany was one of the leaders in the field of literature and philosophy. But unlike England and France that were powerful sovereign states with united bourgeois nations, Germany remained a country with feudal fragmentation, consisting of more than three dozen duchies, principalities, and free cities. Aleksandr Dugin describes in detail (Dugin, 2020) how the “united German nation” with a sovereign state was first formed as an ideological concept of romantics and philosophers, saturated with heroic passionarity, and transformed from a purely rational construction of a bourgeois nation into an ideology of “revolutionary nationalism”. This ideology could become the basis of an effective political system. But the defeat of Germany in the First World War, the humiliating Treaty of Versailles, and the Great Depression of the 1930s created the conditions for the Nazis to rise to power and subsequently transform this ideology by saturating it with racism; afterwards they used it for their extremist purposes.

¹² Inclusive fascism. How specialists from the USA prepared the Azov Regiment. Conversation with the coordinator of the Russian Union Movement Aleksey Kochetkov. *Zavtra*, 2022, issue 29.

So far, it seems, there is no sufficiently elaborated answer to the question why Western countries, familiar with Nazism from the time of Hitlerism and subsequent decades, show no protest against its modern revival in Ukraine, its escalation in a number of other countries and its support by government structures in Europe and the United States? The following circumstance can serve as an explanation (of course, it is far from being comprehensive). Those features of Nazism, which were mentioned above as appealing, are an extreme (or mind-boggling) continuation of the key features of the ideology of superiority dominant in Western civilization. The policy of the Western authorities and the media to “turn a blind eye on”, ignore and even support the development of neo-Nazi movements is one of the types of practice of “stepping over” any barriers and rules in the name of preserving one’s own superiority. And the information that fascists are overstepping any “extreme limits” can be prevented from being widely discussed.

It should be recognized that disadvantages of civilization proceed from its advantages. Western politicians consider the main threat posed by “authoritarian” Russia and China to be the excessive strengthening of the state in these countries, which threatens the destruction of liberal freedoms and individual rights. Russian patriots have always considered the most important task to be the improvement of the state, which should not hinder, but stimulate and support the expansion of the free initiative of citizens and civil servants themselves.

Conclusion

At the turn of the 19th – 20th century, several political and ideological forces were fighting for a new future, for the prospect; in particular those were the German elite (it fought for the unification of continental Europe under its leadership), and Britain (it fought for the global role of the British Empire). However, the main result of the breaking point and the period of war and revolutions was the formation of a powerful socialist state – the USSR. In the future, key events mostly occurred in accordance with causal logic. The countries of Western civilization were forced to respond to the challenge of a non-Western Russia (the Soviet Union). Their main weapons (and instruments of unification) are as follows: preservation of their leadership, formation of an ideology of superiority, and constant economic and political expansion to accumulate capital. The West seeks to control and subjugate non-Western countries, and the elites of non-Western countries seek to free themselves from this subjugation. The intercivilizational confrontation between West and Non-West is becoming the main factor determining the spiritual and ideological image of the epoch. The West is gradually losing its leadership and is forced to escalate the geopolitical situation, using information and ideological monopoly, economic and political means, up to the unleashing of hot wars (World War II was the first consequence of such an escalation). After an escalation there come periods of almost “peaceful coexistence”. So far there are no signs foreshadowing a new historical breaking point.

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