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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PHILOSOPHY



**MODERN EDUCATIONAL SPACE:  
THE TRANSFORMATION  
OF NATIONAL MODELS  
IN TERMS OF INTEGRATION**

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### **TRANSFORMATION OF THE UKRAINIAN MILITARY PRIORITIES IN THE YEARS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR**

The First World War of 1914-1918 was a terrible disaster and a great tragedy for its witnesses. Millions of Ukrainians fought on both sides of the warring parties – the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance. As the current bishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Boris Gudziak, points out, the war for them became «a watershed between a more modern and rational world, which they understood and wrongly believed that they knew, which they were building more and more separately from God, and the world that came after the military failure and the Armistice of 11 November 1918 ... Each war is represented in black and white, but it is full of paradoxes. From God's point of view, it is a complete paradox» [3].

A significant factor in the impact of the World War on Ukrainian soldiers was a major change in their psychology. It can be argued that this global conflict was not only a war of «cannon» but also a war where the mood in the army and society was no less important than, for example, the supply of ammunition or the provision of military equipment. The person who received the weapon, changes completely: worldview, self-esteem, attitude to others. Weapons are a power that gives confidence and dictates a style of behavior, creates the illusion of self-importance. War forms a special type of personality, which can be defined as the psychology of the warrior [11, p. 160.]. Such changes in consciousness were common characteristics of the psychological state of the soldiers. Their perceptions, emotions, moods and feelings were beyond what we used to call the «norm» [7. p. 170-178].

This is evidenced by some extracts from the soldiers' letters of the time: «The German strengthened his position and sits in the trenches; the deeds of our unattractive, even the very bad, the horror of being so sick and suffering

in the world; we live on earth too badly, there are no strips of earth on the soul, and landlords have more land than we can see, like God created the land only for them, and our brother – a peasant, a soldier is hurt. We don't have to believe in victory, we all know that we have no unity and we do not need to think inside Russia, that German has nothing, and we, the defenders of the country, cook 3 pounds of mushrooms for 250 people» [9. P. 96].

If, at the beginning of the war, soldiers believed that their death on the battlefield would not be in vain and will make victory real, the idea of the absurdity of the death of an individual soldier began to spread at the end of 1914. According to officers of the Russian Imperial Army, «the war had lost its poetry completely» [6, p. 122], and one of the soldiers wrote to his relatives: «When I lived at home before, I did not miss anything, beer, vodka, and smoking. And now I am at war and it is bad for me...» [5]. Another participant in the war, an artillery officer, later well-known Russian-German philosopher Friedrich Stepun (1884-1965), wrote that in the war such familiar things as «candle, shadow, ink, quill, table are perceived as flowers in a peaceful atmosphere, poems and music as heralds of another world» [13, p. 23]. So, if at first, the military had a decisive attitude and were ready to wage war to a victorious end, then over time huge losses on the fronts gradually changed their attitude to the war. This testified to the importance of the moral factor in the behavior of the military in war [8, p. 109].

When the autocracy in Russia was overthrown in February, 1917, national liberation movement spilled over into the army, where a powerful revolutionary movement began. Such phenomenon as the fraternization of soldiers fighting each other as a form of protest against the continuation of the war has become widespread at the fronts. The most common fraternity was at the Russian-German front. The Ukrainians took an active part in these processes [4].

The evolution of the image of war was especially reflected in the minds, of those soldiers, most of whom were peasants. This was influenced by the accumulation of real experience of their participation in the war, largely reflecting the change in the socio-political and moral-psychological situation in the country [10, p. 49.]. As noted by the modern Russian military historian Alexander Astashov [1, p. 271], no less than 80% of the army consisted of peasants with their peculiar mentality, which not only didn't correspond to military difficulties, but also the realities of war. The war was fundamentally destroying the principles that underlied their mentality. The peasant soldier was not simply detached from his peasant labor. The very rhythm of military affairs strongly influenced his psyche, accustomed to cyclicity, the dimension of his entire work and personal life together with the concepts of usefulness, objectivity, certainty. The divergence of the new rhythm of his life in the war with a settled and familiar pre-war state was an important factor in changing his psychology. In fact, the war became a

psychosocial imbalance for him, a cultural shock of such power, that few examples could be found in history. The war in the minds of the soldiers became a turning point in life, after which they became different [12, p. 50].

Emphasizing the low educational level of soldiers and rural people, the modern Ukrainian scientist Yaroslav Hrytsak points out that they, mostly, could not understand the full depth of the processes that took place in the country. Their massive mobilization into the army and further participation in the war significantly changed and influenced the hierarchy of values of these servicemen, their outlook, attitude to their homeland. Most of the peasants who were mobilized to the front did not clearly imagine what was the homeland for which they had to sacrifice their lives. Most often, they identified themselves not with a particular nation, but with the region in which they lived before mobilization (Poltava, Chernihiv, Ekaterinoslav, etc.). He rightly points out that the war has «nationalized» them by mobilizing them into multinational and political armies. A daily meeting in the trenches and home front with representatives of other nationalities helped the Ukrainian soldiers to realize their ethnic identity. This was caused by direct contacts between Ukrainians on both sides of the front, who brought them closer together, accelerating the crystallization of the national idea in them [2, p. 259].

The rise of the national consciousness of the warriors was the result of the important processes caused by war. Participation in the hostilities of millions of Ukrainian peasants, mobilized into the Russian and Austro-Hungarian armies, significantly changed them. Many Ukrainian peasants, especially the Dnieper peoples, fighting under the calls of «For Faith, Tsar, and Fatherland!», could hardly imagine that they were that fatherland for which they would have to shed blood, and might die. To the question «who are you?», they answered «Orthodox», «Poltava», «Chernihiv» (or otherwise, depending on the region where they lived before mobilization). Very rarely they said «Ukrainians», never «Poles» or «Russians». However, when they reached multinational military units, communicating daily with representatives of other nationalities, they quickly became aware of their ethnicity [14].

We should point out that Ukrainians who fought on both sides of the front in opposing armies spoke the same language, sang the same songs and had similar traditions. In particular, there is evidence that for the «Sich shooters after the fight for Makivka, it was a great shock to find Taras Shevchenko's «Kobzar» in the bags of some killed «Russian» soldiers [3]. Revealing this fact was of great importance to the national awareness of many servicemen. So, after graduation from the Odessa Praporshchik School, a young officer, later a famous Ukrainian playwright, a representative of the Executed Renaissance, Mykola Kulish (1892-1937) goes to the front. He later confessed that he had become a conscious Ukrainian, staying in the Austrian front in Galicia in 1915-1917.

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