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WORLD-SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND REGIONAL CONFLICTS

The article deals with some key problems of relations between the world centers of power and the periphery, to which as African history and today situation show the political centers of successful civilizations transfer their own problems and difficulties: from harmful industries to unequal exchange of goods. Attempts by the "outsiders of progress" to oppose the expansion cause a tough reaction from the civilization nuclei.

According to the authors, I. Wallerstein's world-system analysis has a significant research potential to study and block the conflictogenic factors of the regional projection.

Key words: *Africa, AFRICOM, global problems, denuclearization, world centers of power, world system analysis, periphery, systemic crisis, disputed territories, regional conflicts.*

A sure sign of scientific activity is the numerous attempts to classify the whole range of the current century conflicts. But the description of common signs of violence seems to be just the key to the database of emergencies with more or less victims... It seems that in the study of the extreme it is important not only to see the intermediate stage (with a certain set of quantitative indicators) but to find the end result: justification for the mechanism of blocking, "neutralization" of destructive forces, opponents of peace and stability, and for the conceptual algorithm of actions for the persons responsible for the political decision-making. The scientific community, as they say, continues to work over these problems, giving from time to time sketches of the scientific picture of a troubled world.

There are two directions of research in the cognitive process of the evolution of armed conflicts: a) the search for a universal formula for conflict prevention and b) a systematic analysis of potential challenges and threats and options for their de-escalation, including the study of the resource potential of regional actors; the cooperation of state and non-governmental organizations; the possibilities of a new technological structure and so on.

An abundance of empirical material for the generalizations and analysis is comes to the expert community from the post-Soviet space and from the Middle East hotbeds of tension, from Asian armed conflicts, Latin America and Africa. Just recently, there was a report of another coup d'état in Sudan with the participation of the armed forces of this East African country. The lack of operational data on the genesis, driving forces and participants of the rebellion narrows the window of opportunities for the expert assessment of its prospects and classification [3].

By whose authoritative opinion shall we be guided in this case? Shall we reconstruct the last version of events on the troubled continent according to Kosukhin [16. P. 48-58, 17-27], Savin [19], Medvedev [17], Sushchentsov [24. P. 78-103], Bogaturov [5], Arefiev [2], Ivashov [13] or Efremova, who is originally interpreting the "new world order" within the framework of classical paradigms [10. P. 5-13]. Or shall we rely on our own research in the justification of some forecasts? [8. P. 31-45].

In this context, we can only agree with the opinion by the researcher K. A. Efremova, who insists that considering the diversity and often the mutual antagonism of ideas that are difficult to fit into the elastic framework of the transcendent approach to the problems of world order and security, it is impossible to give up anything in the collective scientific search [10. P. 11]. Moreover, we cannot ignore the fundamental positions of the representatives of the classical school of system analysis, such as Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein and his "world-system analysis" [25]. He is a well-known sociologist and Africanist, for whom the modern world is an extensive integrated system, extremely contradictory and unstable, equally dependent on both the stability/instability of peripheral subsystems and the managerial consistency of the nuclei of civilizations (Atlantic, Eurasian, Chinese, Arab and others).

In the interpretation of I. Wallerstein "The world system is a kind of a territorial-temporal space, which covers many political and cultural units, but at the same time is a single organism, all activities of which are subject to the same system rules" [7. P. 85].

The world system analysis is grounded by three basic principles: unit of measurement (analysis) of processes [28. P. 190] is not a national state, but a world system; long-term study of core-periphery/semi-periphery relations (a century or more); a single-disciplinary approach to the subject field of the study.

Historically, only the modern world system has survived and exists for a long period of time in the form of the world economy and a self-regulating capitalist system. The conjugation of these interdependent worlds supports the effective division of labor [27. P. 100-101] and large common markets. By the way, the ability to be updated, resistance, adaptability of the conductors of the idea of “infinite accumulation” to the socio-political and technological challenges of the new economic structures pushes back the death of the capitalist system predicted by Marxism-Leninism for an indefinite period.

The current trends highlighted by the political scientists from the turbulence of the “new world order,” reflecting the aggravated contradictions of the current century, are waiting for, including, the world system analysis. These are the following issues:

1) regionalization of the world economy. Formation of regional or trans-regional spaces that are in competitive relations with each other. De-globalization of the real sector of the world economy. Economic crisis of “world factories” and “global assembly shops”;

2) deepening social stratification and atomization. Asymmetry of consumption and social standard. Pauperization and final design of the precariat (1). Separation of social status from property ownership and management;

3) the collapse of the global political mainstream, the restoration and regionalization of ideological multi-vector. Europe will gravitate to the “new right.” Eurasian space is on the threshold of a left turn. Syncretic ideological constructs are being formed in the Middle East;

4) medium-term deinstitutionalization of the global political and economic space. Collapse of the international law. The era of ad hoc coalitions. The period of local and regional wars;

5) the multi-vector technology. The critical lag of the technological revolution. The renewal of the technological competition. Transition to a full division of labor and to a more balanced relationship in the collection of technological rent.

Without going into a lengthy comment, we note that these trends are United not only by the authors’ intention [11. P. 35], but by the presence in each of them of systemic contradictions, preludes of future conflicts. Duration, scale, and statistics of losses will depend on the strategic culture and tactical thinking of the ruling political elites whose managerial competence recently causes concern of many Russian researchers [14. P. 7].

That is why the analysis of the above-mentioned 4th trend of “local wars” is so important. Indeed, the rise of violence is the dominant feature of the modern era. Among the characteristics of “projections of violence” was the transfer of military confrontation from the center (core) of the world system to the periphery/semi-periphery. In the same way, as the environmentally “dirty” production was usually moved from Europe or the United States to the “third world countries.” Africa, for example, that without its consent was included in the Atlantic,

Arab, Asia or Latin American world systems, has experienced the full range of costs of slave, colonial, capitalist presence of the world centers of power.

According to experts, only in the second half of the XX century, there were about 100 military coups and more than 50 wars of different kinds in Africa. During the conflicts, about 10 million people were killed and 90% of the victims of armed violence were civilians [15. P. 96]. As our co-authors rightly believe, the main reason of instability in the African continent is the external factor [22. P. 40-49]. There are disputed territories in 23 African countries, for the possession of which hostilities renew from time to time [29. P. 50-52]. There are not enough efforts and ability of the authorities of the nucleus and partners within the periphery in order to definitively end the violence. It leads to pessimistic conclusions about the sustainability of the “world order”. Without waiting for the correction of the world system, Africans are forced to migrate to the centers of their universe, to the places from where the stability of the Black continent is undermined [7. P. 184-191].

I. Wallerstein matched the growth of contradictions in the system of core-periphery relations with another component of the subjective factor, with the lag of the research corps in the scientific understanding of the problems of the transition period (from the unipolar world to the multipolar, from the triumph of the ruling minority to the struggling and asserting their rights to the majority). With the retreat of the world system of socialism, the problem of self-interest of monopolies “when they faced the problem of compression of profits”, became particularly clear. At the same time, according to experts, European and American liberals for the past three decades have actually reversed the achievements of social models. As a result, there is populism and left protest in the core of the world system and a series of armed conflicts on the periphery [1. P. 50-55].

Their reaction to the legitimate activities of competitors is also indicative. Economic sanctions as a “humane” (without bloodshed) tool of struggle, which is increasingly resorted to by the bureaucrats in Brussels and Washington. The orthodox of the “soft power”, similar to the sanctions in this case, consider it almost a universal means of regulating relations with intractable partners. Issuers of the dollar and the Euro are not at all embarrassed by foreign economic initiatives that look extremely egocentric and undermine their own business reputation. For example, the Treaty on the North American Free Trade Zone (NAFTA), which came into force on 1.01.1994, dictated from Washington, caused an armed uprising of the Zapatistan National Liberation Army (SANO) in the Mexican state of Chiapas [23. C. 41]. It was the reaction of Mexicans to the sharp fall of the peso, the ruin of small producers and the increasing dependence on the US market. After the armed uprising, the currency crisis was overcome with the help of an emergency loan from the IMF, actually imposed on Mexico under the US pressure [30].

Americans do not absolutize “soft power” and willingly resort to traditional violence, or combine both technologies of direct and indirect impact on compet-

itors [21]. When they deal with equal opponents or opponents with a comparable military potential, they attack in a coalition and when they deal with weak rivals they act on their own. The USA demonstrates a textbook example of unfair competition in the development of the European hydrocarbon market. Under the false pretext of protecting Ukraine's geopolitical interests in the Azov-Black Sea region (?!), the United States invaded the Eurasian world system, encroaching on the historical role of Russia as an integration center. At the same time, they declare Moscow an illegitimate partner of the EU and instead of its Arctic oil and gas impose its own energy carriers to consumers in the Old World (with prices 30% higher than Russian)! The long military-energy campaign is accompanied by a powerful information expansion, parliamentary demarches of the global hegemon's clients, economic sanctions, provocative actions of the armed forces of the Kiev regime, its allied fleets and the air force from the North Atlantic Alliance near the Russian borders.

Such a foreign policy of the United States deprives the world economy of the main stabilizing element of the system (according to Wallerstein) – the optimism of the oppressed [27. P. 226]... Despite the fact that it is the deprived “majority” that remains the sponsor of the Golden Billion. For example, more than 80 percent of the non-parity trade turnover of the total African economy falls on the West [31]. As a result, it undermines the competitiveness of the continent, affects the level and quality of life of the indigenous population of the African Union and provokes its migration to the developed countries. An indirect sign of unequal exchange is the integral criterion of development, such as the average life expectancy of the Africans that lags behind European indicators by 18-20 years. Nobody considers seriously indirect losses of the Black continent from the unequal exchange, as well as the failure of the world relations of a kernel and periphery.

By all appearances, the world-system has entered a transitional period, and the EU right and left, the neocons and the US liberals decided to exploit the situation of *increasing chaos* (the italics are ours) to ensure the dominance of their values in the new coordinate system, which probably will finally take shape after the resolution of the current systemic crisis.

I. Wallerstein, exploring the relations of the periphery with the centers of the world systems of capitalism, focused mainly on market relations with the leading wingmen, leaving aside the derivative – the conflict of unequal exchange and cooperation... His ideological inspirer and forerunner, the French researcher Fernand Braudel very quickly responded to it. The leader of the historical school “Annals” said: “If we forget about the role of war (we note: the investigation of any conflict of irreconcilable interests), we immediately erase the entire social, political and cultural (religious) landscape” [6]. Consequently, wars are not only the quintessence of imperfect international politics, which has collided in the antagonistic struggle of the state or alliances of countries, but at the same time a systematic indicator of the missed advantages of the peaceful coexistence of civilizations.

In this regard, it is impossible not to recall the Soviet military theorist, doctor of philosophy Lieutenant General V.V. Serebryannikov who, knowing about wars and conflicts firsthand, preferred in international relations not military, but diplomatic, bloodless arsenal [20]. The dialogue is a promising form of extreme (in the context of conflictology) communications. The dialogue is a constructive component of the coexistence of multidirectional interests of subjects of international law that makes it possible to find compromise, alternative options for cooperation, thereby removing the threat of a new world war.

Statistics of conflict in Africa overshadows the fact that the periphery (according to I. Wallerstein) free from the dictates of external factors is able to demonstrate good will in the sphere of demilitarization of international politics. Suffice it to recall the initiatives of 1996 on the denuclearization of the African continent [9]. Voluntary renunciation by South Africa of the status of the nuclear power causes legitimate respect around the world. That, of course, reduces the threshold of military threats in the vast region. True, the nuclear powers are present in Africa to some extent, considering it as a strategic reserve space, some as consumers of natural resources for the needs of their own defense industry, others as tenants on the territories of military bases and service points of fleets and long-range aviation, tools of global control and management.

An eloquent detail. Essayist J. Hasse wrote: "In the prewar years, America exported to the Old World only ragtime, a finished musical product, the forerunner of jazz" [12. P. 29-32, 80-83]. Yes, but to the rest of the world periphery Uncle Sam, acting from the reclaimed Indian lands, directed the energy of expansion and aggression... It will require a separate classification of conflicts of different intensity and geography of military expeditions involving the United States in the global projection of force [4].

The US activities in the least protected areas and territories of the Black Continent deserve special attention of conflict analysts. From the point of view of the Pentagon strategists, it is terra nullius, no man's land. America is the only country that allowed itself (contrary to international law!) to establish AFROCOM, a strategic command aimed at operations in Africa with headquarters in Germany (3) under the false pretext of the struggle against the Beijing hegemony and the growing influence of Moscow (4).

First, the subsequent classification of conflicts on the African continent is not possible without taking into account the impact of external actors. Second, their scale is predominantly regional. Third, the ethno-religious component of the conflicts is really significant and gives the armed conflict the colorful markings. We are talking about significant historical periods in the development of Africa. Namely:

- 1) conflicts of the slave trade period (XV-XIX centuries);
- 2) conflicts of the period of colonialism (XIX-XX centuries);
- 3) conflicts of the period of the national liberation struggle (the end of XIX-mid 70-ies of XX centuries):

- (a) armed confrontation between colonies and metropolises;
- b) intra-African (with explicit and implicit participation of a “third party”) border, ethno-political and religious clashes;
- (4) conflicts of the “cold war” period (1945-1991 гг.);
- 5) regional anti-terrorist (anti-piracy) campaigns with the participation of the joint armed units of the African Union (1991– present time);
- 6) hybrid conflicts [19. P. 107-117] of the new technological structure (2000 – present time).

Some coincidence in the dating we found in I. Wallerstein. The scientist begins the countdown of the expansion of capitalist world economy (CWE) on the peripheral areas since the turn of the years 1450-1520, indicating to the peak periods in 1620-1660; 1750-1815; 1880-1900. The core and the periphery emerged between the first and the last date, “the essence of links of the vertical integration of the commodity chain” [26. P. 50]. The struggle of TNCs and national economies for the ownership of this chain continues with the most sophisticated new technologies of “direct” and “indirect” actions both within the civilizational cores and on the periphery of their cross-border interests.

To restore the full picture of events in Africa and assess the prospects of the long-term struggle with the consequences of the enslavement of the continent, the researchers should look into the secret files of the headquarters of Western expansion. The Africanists should study this specific body of information not for purely academic interest. Knowledge of the technology of subversive activities against the African state will contribute, firstly, to the explanation of the self-interests of external actors present on the continent; secondly, it will encourage the development of countermeasures against the psychological and ideological sabotage conducted by TNC structures, representatives of special services seconded to the diplomatic missions of foreign states, illegal emissaries embedded in non-governmental and international organizations, agents working under the guise of research grants and educational projects in African universities [18. P. 152-163]. And thirdly, it will protect the national and interstate integration projects of the African Union and the creative process as a whole.

However, even without the FBI and the CIA archives, the Africanists, using the non-classified world-system analysis of I. Wallerstein, should formulate the research questions and the problem of protection, the revival of the periphery. More precisely, the original civilization, the development of which has long been hampered and declared an outsider of progress.

NOTES:

(1) The precariat (from Eng. precarious – unreliable) is a social layer, which, according to the British researcher G. Standing, is steadily growing numerically and includes more and more countries and forms of social life (temporary migrant workers, interns, freelancers, workers of cultural industries). Precariat is a

product of neoliberalism, coexisting with a flexible labor market, which allows you to quickly change the size of wages (especially downward) and data on the level of employment.

(2) For the first time in Europe, the African slave market was opened by the Portuguese in 1441. According to some reports, as back as 800 A.D. there were three routes of slave trade from Africa to the rest of the world: through the Sahara, through the Red Sea and across the Indian ocean. The most dense flow of human cargo was formed by the Europeans starting from the XV century, they exported slaves across the Atlantic ocean to their colonies in the New World. During the XV-XVIII centuries about 12 million African slaves were delivered from the continent to America and Europe. In total, Africa was forcibly deprived of 18 million people. See: *Natural experiments in history / Translation from English edited by D. Diamond and D. Robinson. M.: ACT Publishing House, 2018. P. 187.*

(3) AFRICOM is the inter-service command of the Pentagon, created on October 1, 2008. The area of responsibility covers (excluding Egypt) the African continent and the adjacent islands. The permanent headquarters is located in Stuttgart (Germany). According to the open press, Africa has an extensive intelligence, technical and intelligence network. There are air bases in Burkina Faso, Uganda, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and Seychelles. Aircrafts equipped with video cameras, infrared sensors and radio interception devices are used for tracking. The Pentagon intends to deploy a mechanized brigade of more than 3 thousand people. Currently present on the continent commandos (more than 1,700 people) allow the United States to conduct up to 100 missions at the same time, including, for example, the protection of rare earth material developments in Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. See: <https://fishki.net/2328000-mirovaja-bitva-za-redkozemelynye-metally.html>

(4) According to the press, seven countries, including African are ready to place military bases of Russia, skilled in deterring “color revolutions” and coups d'état and restoration of historical justice in the near and far abroad countries. See: https://zen.yandex.ru/media/crimea_pro/7-stran-mira-gotovye-razmestit-u-sebia-voennye-bazy-rossii-v-liuboe-vremia-c262e8bd67b3300aacbeac0.

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