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**SOCIAL GROUP "FORMER PEOPLE" OF SOVIET SOCIETY IN THE 1920s:
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The article deals with the social crisis of Ukrainian historical period after 1917. The crisis resulted in the lack of clear understanding of the definition criteria for friends and enemies in Soviet society. On the base of archival sources and literature the article analyses the boundaries of social scope of "former people". The criteria of social differentiation by the Soviet power into friends and enemies in post-revolutionary period are studied.

Keywords: «former people», «the former», «strangers», exploiters, socially dangerous, «bourgeois», non-voters.

The events of the Revolution in 1917, and as a result, the establishment of Soviet power in Ukraine had significant impact on all aspects of Ukrainian society. The elimination of the exploiting classes, the proclamation of the proletariat's dictatorship, the class struggle were the main tasks of the new government and this led to the society division into two parts: insiders and outsiders. The study of various aspects of social change is one of the priorities in our history. That is why it is very actual to use new approaches to the investigation of social transformations in Soviet period.

Representatives of different social groups, who were not able to emigrate abroad in time, had to adapt to completely new life conditions. They were called "remains of the cursed past" and artificially combined in the category under the symbolic name "former people" or "formers". The collapse of the mentioned period was accompanied by social cataclysms. Determining a new scale of social hierarchy as "who was privileged lost everything", the proletariat dictated special tasks: to suppress the resistance of overthrown classes and to rehabilitate them.

The aim of author is to find out the social spectrum of "former people" as post-revolutionary government stated it and as it was presented in everyday communication.

"Former people" is a unique social group, which never existed in the official social structure of the Soviet society, but which always took place in the minds of the Bolshevik government members and in their political activity. To understand the social nature of this phenomenon is possible only when studying general historical context of the post-revolutionary period.

The experts investigating Soviet history avoided such topics in their studies and publications describing such phenomenon were prohibited. However, some issues of socialization of "outsiders" were mentioned in the researches concerning the elimination of "exploiting classes" in the USSR, changes in social structure and the formation of "classless" society [1–3]. Some aspects were studied in the works devoted to the formation of the Soviet intelligentsia, history of national culture, cultural revolution and the preservation of cultural heritage [4–5]. The adaptation of former officials, employees from a number of departments to the new conditions was presented in the works devoted to the creation of the state apparatus and its departments [6].

The investigation of different social groups' place and role in the society becomes relevant at the beginning of the 21st century. At this time within social history, history of everyday life and microhistory the attempts were made to reconstruct Soviet post-revolutionary society, to describe various social strata including "former people" [7–8].

However, despite significant progress in the study of post-revolutionary history, the topic is still relevant and one of the most controversial. Everyday activities of different social groups of "former people", criteria for their social identification, the issue of correlation between declared policy and political practice against them were partially explored. But present domestic and foreign history has no common interpretation of the concept "former people".

In the official discourse so-called "exploiting classes" of pre-revolutionary society were a part of "former people". According to Marks and Lenin's interpretation, exploiters were "social classes who appropriated someone else's work having private property" [9, P. 414]. But in practice, the category of "exploiters" included various social strata of Ukrainian population, significantly different in origin, attitude to power, level of income, political beliefs and cultural traditions. Soon the term "exploiter" was not used but replaced by such as "hostile classes", "remains of cursed past", "socially dangerous", "socially alien elements", "outsiders", "former people" or "formers".

The first step towards social discrimination of privileged strata was Article 65 in Constitution of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic adopted by the 5th Congress of Soviets in July 1918. The right for election was not a human right any more but became "social function of voters". Some people were deprived of voting rights. They were those who used hired labour for profit (exploiters); persons who lived using unearned income (moneylenders and rentiers); private traders; religious officials; criminals and madmen. Such discriminatory voting rights were preserved till the Constitution of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics was adopted in 1936. At the same time, a new social category of Soviet society "pozavlentsi" (nonvoters) [10, P. 22–24].

The term "nonvoter" had widely been known since the middle of 1920s. Nonvoters were people who were deprived of voting and other rights. According to the Criminal Code (versions of 1922 and 1927) deprivation of voting and other rights was a form of additional punishment that could be resulted in dismissal, expulsion from trade unions, evictions from apartments, etc. [11, P. 63]. Among the nonvoters there were many members of the former privileged classes. Such two terms as "nonvoters" and "formers" are often identified in scientific literature. For example, the researcher Vasyl Ivanov stated that "formers" and "nonvoters" were connected in the realities of Soviet life [12, P.71]. We can agree with the statement to some extent as for ordinary citizens these two terms were synonymous. However, in legal and political practice they did not coincide but were partly connected.

The Constitution adopted in 1918 proclaimed new class, proletarian democracy, democracy for workers. It did not recognize the formal equality of rights. In Caesarism period all lieges were divided into five statutory strata which had certain legal status. They were the clergy, the nobles, merchants, tradesmen and farmers.

The Bolsheviks had no clear understanding of "former people". In the 1917–1920 "outsiders" were representatives of oppositional political parties or all strata regardless of their social origin who were dissatisfied with new government. [13, P. 25]. The member of Political Bureau in Central Committee of All-Ukrainian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) Mykola Bukharin argued that some strata could oppose proletarian government. They were "1) commercial capitalists, speculators, stockbrokers, bankers; 2) unproductive administrative aristocracy; 3) bourgeois entrepreneurs, engineers, inventors who collaborated with the capitalist countries; 4) qualified bureaucracy; 5) technical intelligentsia - engineers, technicians, agronomists, livestock specialists, doctors, professors, lawyers, journalists, teachers and others; 6) officers; 7) rich peasants; 8) the urban petty bourgeoisie, the clergy" [14, P. 163].

Since the first days of the Soviet regime the Bolshevik leaders treated the representatives of former intelligentsia as "socially dangerous elements" as they were said to discredit themselves by participation in the revolution. The professed intellectuals accepted general democratic principles; sought freedom of speech, freely expressed their convictions and thoughts. The vast majority of Communist Party members negatively treated former intelligentsia as it was not associated with high humanistic ideals. It was a part of hostile classes like the bourgeoisie and the nobility that had to be annihilated. Grygoriy Kasyanov remarked that "the stereotypes of mass consciousness which defined former intelligentsia as alien and often hostile force was a kind of virus that every moment could cause epidemics of social bitterness, hatred, lead to searching enemies among former and then among their own people" [15, P. 29].

The division of people into "outsiders" and "insiders" according to their financial status was most acceptable and understandable. However, there were no common criteria for division into "the poor" and "the rich". In particular, the farms in the most fertile regions were considered as those of average income, and in poorer regions similar ones were generally regarded as rich. Such different approaches to determining the social status of citizens allowed to create a wide circle of "bourgeois elements", "exploiters" and "outsiders."

Till the middle of 1920s such terms as "counter-revolutionary", "deserter", "bourgeois", "traitor", "landlord" had practically the same meaning. Everybody who was not satisfied with the new government could be an enemy. The term "outsider" had political meaning for members of the Party and government, but for ordinary citizens it had emotionally negative connotation. A good example is the article in the newspaper "Pravda" dated by 1919 where it was said that the citizen Ivan Uhnin was a bourgeois who had shops and houses and who was "a parasite", "a villain", a member of former people and of those who previously lived well [16, P. 4]. These are key words for understanding the position of representatives from the lower classes of society.

In his work "Intelligentsia and Tips" Yuriy Larin noted that after the events in October, 1917 the workers had negative attitude towards intelligentsia. "Every bourgeois engineer or even a student or an official is treated by workers and peasants as a representative of the rich class. There is a social gap between masters and common people" [17, P. 4]. Therefore, in everyday life for a poor peasant, worker or soldier anyone who lived in better

conditions and spoke other, often incomprehensible language was a bourgeois, landowner, exploiter, or simply “a parasite”.

The term “former” is found in the letter of the public prosecutor, who appeals to the Presidium of All-Ukrainian Central Committee of Bolsheviks Party and reports about the former landlord, who together with his son “unites rich peasants and other former people who are not pleased that their lands were confiscated and who can be dangerous for Soviet power” [18, P. 221]. This letter dated by 1926 shows once again that every stratum of Ukrainian society understood this notion in its own way.

In everyday communication there was a tradition to identify a person’s belonging to a certain class by his/her appearance. The Bolsheviks used it skilfully and generated new conflicts in society between lower social strata and landlords. In his works Volodymyr Lenin said to “... drive landowners out and grab their lands” creating the situation of the entire demolition or removal of “... all local authorities so as to replace them with new, national authorities” [19, P. 300]. Peasants enthusiastically performed the instructions of the government and immediately started controlling landowners’ estates and making lists of their property. Destruction actions and violence were used to liquidate landownership. Landowners were forced to leave native villages or migrate abroad. Sometimes peasants punished landlords by themselves. Thus, in a village of Kamyanets region the peasants killed the landlord who did not leave the village in time and did not fulfill all the requirements of the Soviet regime [20, P. 72].

The endless list of delations were sent from the first days of new government functioning and they show negative attitude of population to “formers”. The letters reported about social origin hiding and substantial capital in the banks, advised to conduct the search, presented the addresses of “royal servants”, warned about the falsification of documents.

Thus, social crisis of the post-revolutionary period was combined with a lack of clear understanding the criteria for dividing people into “outsiders” and “insiders”. The criteria for identification of “former people” as a special society were formed spontaneously. They were uncertain and dependent on specific historical situations and the subjective factors. Instability and ambiguity of citizens’ social status in post-revolutionary Soviet Ukraine was worsened by relationships between various social strata and high social mobility of population.

Absence of established definitions of certain terms and concepts in post-revolutionary Ukraine, their multiple meanings often lead to a distortion of historical reality. Soviet society was formed in the process of constant connection between different social strata in all spheres of life. Thus, the prosecutor deputy of the USSR I. Kondorushkyn in 1920s used to emphasize that all groups of population were combined by “invisible thread” and that every time Soviet and the Party workers were related to bourgeois [22, P. 54].

After establishment of Soviet power in Ukraine such social categories as capitalists, landowners, officials lost their position in the society but were treated as outsiders. On the one hand, the Bolsheviks thought that “former” could be anyone who was dissatisfied with the new government, regardless of his/her social background. However, in everyday communication for the ordinary population the main feature of “an outsider” was his/her arrogant attitude to people, “separation from others”. All these factors indicate that it is impossible to define clearly the social boundaries of the group called “former”.

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СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ ГРУППА «БЫВШИЕ ЛЮДИ» В СОВЕТСКОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ В 1920-е ГОДЫ: ОСНОВНЫЕ ПОНЯТИЯ

А.А. УСТЕНКО

Исследуется социальный кризис периода в истории Украины, наступивший после 1917 г. и сочетавшийся с отсутствием четкого понимания критериев разграничения советского общества на «своих» и «чужих». На основе архивных источников и литературы рассматриваются содержательный аспект понятия «бывшие люди», пределы социального пространства «бывших» и критерии разграничения советской властью общества на «своих» и «чужих» в послереволюционный период.

Ключевые слова: «бывшие люди», «бывшие», «чужие», эксплуататоры, общественно опасные, «буржуазные», неизбиратели.