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THE REPRESENTATION OF HISTORICAL TRAUMA IN THE EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION: A SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

ЖОГОРКУ МЕКТЕПТИН ТАРБИЯЛЫК ДИСКУРСУНДА ТАРЫХЫЙ ТРАВМАНЫН БӨЛӨЛНҮШҮ: СОЦИАЛДЫК-ФИЛОСОФИЯЛЫК АНАЛИЗ

РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ ИСТОРИЧЕСКОЙ ТРАВМЫ В ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОМ ДИСКУРСЕ ВЫСШЕЙ ШКОЛЫ: СОЦИАЛЬНО-ФИЛОСОФСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ

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THE REPRESENTATION OF HISTORICAL TRAUMA IN THE EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION: A SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

Abstract

The paper examines the problems of constructing and representing historical trauma in the educational discourse of the Belarusian higher school in the context of constructing a historical picture of national statehood. The theoretical and methodological basis of this study is the theory of historical trauma, which allows us to identify the specifics of the formation of historical consciousness and civil and political identity of students. The study revealed that the representation of trauma in educational discourse not only provides legitimization of modern Belarusian political institutions and the political system as a whole, but also sets a teleological focus for consideration and evaluation of political genesis.

Keywords: politogenesis, historical trauma, educational discourse, higher education, the genesis of the Belarusian statehood, socio-philosophical analysis.

ЖОГОРКУ МЕКТЕПТИН ТАРБИЯЛЫК ДИСКУРСУНДА ТАРЫХЫЙ ТРАВМАНЫН БӨЛӨЛНҮШҮ: СОЦИАЛДЫК-ФИЛОСОФИЯЛЫК АНАЛИЗ

РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ ИСТОРИЧЕСКОЙ ТРАВМЫ В ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОМ ДИСКУРСЕ ВЫСШЕЙ ШКОЛЫ: СОЦИАЛЬНО-ФИЛОСОФСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ

Аннотация

Макалада улуттук мамлекеттүүлүктүн тарыхый картинасын түзүү контекстинде беларус жогорку окуу жайынын билим берүү дискурсуна тарыхый травманы түзүү жана чагылдыруу көйгөйлөрү каралат. Бул изилдөөнүн теориялык жана методологиялык негизи болуп студент жаштардын тарыхый аң-сезиминин жана жарандык-саясий инсандыгынын калыптануу өзгөчөлүктөрүн аныктоого мүмкүндүк берген тарыхый травма теориясы саналат. Изилдөө көрсөткөндөй, травманын билим берүү дискурсуна чагылдырылышы азыркы Беларустун саясий институттарын жана бүтүндөй саясий тутумун мыйзамдаштырууну гана камсыз кылбастан, ошондой эле политогенезди кароо жана баалоо үчүн телеологиялык багытты белгилейт.

Аннотация

В работе рассматривается проблематика конструирования и репрезентации исторической травмы в образовательном дискурсе белорусской высшей школы в контексте конструирования исторической картины национальной государственности. В качестве теоретико-методологического основания данного исследования выступает теория исторической травмы, позволяющая выявить специфику формирования исторического сознания и гражданско-политической идентичности студенческой молодежи. В ходе исследования было выявлено, что репрезентация травмы в образовательном дискурсе обеспечивает легитимацию современных белорусских политических институтов и политической системы в целом, а также задает телеологический фокус рассмотрения и оценки политогенеза.

Ачык сөздөр: политогенез, тарыхый травма, тарбиялык баяндама, жогорку билим, Беларус мамлекеттүүлүгүнүн генезиси, социалдык-философиялык талдоо.

Ключевые слова: политогенез, историческая травма, образовательный дискурс, высшая школа, генезис белорусской государственности, социально-философский анализ.

Introduction

In all post-Soviet countries, one of the key tasks facing the education system is to construct the civil and political identity of students and students based on their own historical picture of national political genesis and the values of patriotism. This picture should reveal the historical and cultural specifics of the formation and development of political institutions at different stages of the genesis of national statehood, and explicate the historical and genetic connection between traditional and modern forms of State structure. Traditionally, the didactic means for solving this socialization task are socio-humanitarian disciplines (primarily history), which ensure the formation of the historical memory of pupils and students. If we consider this situation in a political and cultural aspect, then providing "orientation in historical time and social space, knowledge about the past becomes the basis of cultural continuity of generations and national and civic identity"(Kapitonova, Belokrylova, 2017, p. 129). At the same time, from the point of view of constructing and preserving collective identity, the decisive importance is not the reality of an event in the past, but its fixation in social memory as a historical event, i.e. having a "special meaning and significance for people's life orientation"(Ruzen, 2005, p. 46). As Vasiliev emphasizes, in these conventional ideas about the past, "in the form of certain heroes and events, values, norms and patterns of behavior that are significant for the group are fixed, ensuring its identification and legitimization of the socio-political order established in it"(Vasiliev, 2015, p. 35). However, the specificity of the construction and representation of a historical event lies in the fact that in it "the experience of the past is shaped into a meaningful story through interpretation and representation"(Ruzen, 2005, p. 47), as a result, the constructed historical picture acquires a figurative, metaphorical and mythologized character.

In the Republic of Belarus, in 2022, the academic discipline "History of the Belarusian Statehood" was introduced in the higher education system, aimed at forming a well-founded patriotic position among students based on stable ideas about the historical past and the directions of further development of the Belarusian state. From a didactic point of view, the solution of this goal should be achieved through, firstly, the formation of a stable system of knowledge about the history of the Belarusian statehood, the development of various stages of the Belarusian statehood, taking into account internal factors and global processes. Secondly, the academic discipline should ensure the development of skills to comprehend and evaluate historical phenomena and problems of the history of the Belarusian statehood, events and phenomena of reality in the close relationship of the past, present and future. Thirdly, the result of the educational process should be the formation of a stable understanding of the historical path, goals and directions of further development of the Belarusian state and society.

It should be noted that such academic disciplines with similar educational and socialization goals and objectives, which are implemented in educational practice in a certain socio-cultural context, are taught to students in almost all post-Soviet institutions of higher education, regardless of their state affiliation. In addition, the problem of the interdependence of the historical development of political institutions and national culture is constantly in the focus of research attention of scientists. This is confirmed by the holding of the international scientific and practical conference "Politogenesis and Cultural genesis of medieval Kyrgyzstan and neighboring countries: new views and prospects of study" by the B. Jamgerchinov Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic in Bishkek on November 17, 2022. This conference was dedicated to the memory of the famous Kyrgyz orientalist Omurkul Karaev, who

made a significant contribution to the study of the history, source studies and political genesis of states in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia in the Middle Ages.

All of the above defines the problem field of research, which includes the processes and content of constructing historical trauma and its political, media and educational instrumentalization. The scientific relevance and novelty of the problem of educational instrumentalization of historical trauma in higher education is determined by the need to achieve completeness and objectivity of the historical picture of Belarusian political genesis, which is an element of historical consciousness and a component of the civil and political identity of youth. Accordingly, the purpose of the study is to determine the role of historical trauma in constructing the historical picture of Belarusian politogenesis, which is represented in educational discourse in the context of the formation and development of national statehood.

Materials and Methods

The methodological basis of the research is the paradigm of social trauma, conceptually formed in social and humanitarian knowledge and presented in the works of Jeffrey Alexander, Ron Eyerman, Giuseppe Sciortino, Piotr Sztompka, Jean Toshchenko and other well-known researchers. In this study, the category "historical trauma" explicates the tragic experience of radical social changes characterizing extraordinary parameters of social and political development, which have long-term negative consequences for society. The most relevant concept for the analysis of the representation of historical trauma in the educational discourse of the Belarusian national politogenesis is the concept of cultural trauma by the outstanding Polish researcher Sztompka (2000a, 2000b). He believes that culture, which contains norms, values, symbols and meanings that act as foundations for collective identity, is one of the most sensitive areas of society, which can be traumatized as a result of certain social changes. These are social changes that negatively affect the normative order and value system, problematize the preservation of social ties and reduce their intensity, and cause the degradation of the normative foundations of collective and individual identity.

Within the framework of the concept of cultural trauma, Sztompka (2000a, p. 8) proposes to consider trauma as a dynamic process, the main components and determinants of which are: "structural and cultural past; traumatic events or situation; special interpretation of events; traumatic symptoms; post-traumatic adaptation; overcoming trauma". Attention should be paid to the fact that overcoming trauma is considered in the manual mainly in an institutional context, as a result of which the national state is a priori both a means and a condition for this. The time period within which the above-described stages of cultural trauma occur is considered by Sztompka (2000a, 2000b) as a variable value mediated by the conditions and circumstances of the course of trauma.

Social change of a traumatic nature at the macrosocial level, from the point of view of Sztompka (2000a, 2000b), affects the dominant culture in society at two levels: institutional (disorganization) and individual (disorientation). Disorganization and disorientation are products of traumatic social changes, they can have varying degrees of influence on society, based on the scale and dynamics of destructive processes within certain social groups. This is due to the following socio-cultural circumstances: the homogeneity and rootedness of the former culture; the degree of differences between the previous and the new cultures; the degree of isolation or openness towards the new culture; the presence of enclaves of a new culture in society, which over time will replace the former.

The impact of trauma on society depends on the depth of the split between the old and new cultures or the expectation of maintaining a dominant position in a transitive society of the former. It is the split between cultures that can contribute to the appearance of traumatic symptoms, which can be defined as certain patterns of behavior of individuals. Sztompka (2000a, 2000b) identifies the following traumatic symptoms that can affect community members:

- lack of trust syndrome, which manifests itself at the institutional, group and interpersonal levels;
- passivity (apathy), a marker of which is a decrease in the socio-political activity of community representatives;
- orientation towards a short-term time perspective (both in relation to the past and the future);
- nostalgia for the past, its idealization as a standard of norm of individual and collective life activity;
- a state of anxiety, expressed as a feeling of physical security risks and instability of existential security;
- a social crisis caused by a complex of institutional and societal causes;
- artificial isolation and severance of social ties.

In the socio-psychological aspect, traumatic symptoms can be considered as long-term determinants of social behavior, which causes low adaptability of individuals to external challenges and threats. That is why Caruth emphasizes the prolonged impact of trauma on social life: «The story of trauma, then, as the narrative of a belated experience, far from telling of an escape from reality – the escape from a death, or from its referential force – rather attests to its endless impact on a life» (Caruth, 1996, p. 7);

The results of the study

The theoretical and methodological basis of the academic discipline "History of the Belarusian statehood", which claims to be a complete and systematic presentation of the history of the formation and development of various stages of the Belarusian statehood, are the principles and theoretical guidelines of the problem-chronological approach. They should orientate students to the most significant historical phenomena and problems of the history of the Belarusian statehood in the context of world history, provide a methodologically correct analysis and assessment of the processes of state-building in different historical periods, determine their role in the formation and development of modern Belarusian statehood. The scientific substantiation of this discipline is provided by the works of modern Belarusian historians, mainly presented in the format of collective monographs, which examine various aspects of the genesis of national statehood:

– historical prerequisites, patterns and mechanisms of the process of national self-determination of the Belarusian people, presented from the origin and conceptualization of the idea of statehood, the formation of the movement for political self-determination to the practical implementation of various projects of the national state in the period of modern times (Kastsjuk et al., 2008; Kavalenya et al., 2011; Smehovich et al., 2012);

– the origins, factors and features of the development of Belarusian statehood from antiquity to the end of modern times, the main characteristics of the cultural and civilizational development of

Belarus, the main stages and features of the formation of the Belarusian nation, the historical forms of Belarusian statehood and their interrelation (Polotsk and Turov Principalities, Kievan Rus, Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), the activities of Belarusian political parties and organizations in the ideological context and political struggle for the realization of the idea of national statehood (Kavalenya et al., 2018; Smehovich et al., 2019; Vishnevskaya, 2008);

– socio-economic, political and ideological prerequisites for the formation and development of the Soviet version of Belarusian statehood, the specifics of national state building in 1917-1941, social and political transformations in the interwar period, the reunification of Western Belarus with the BSSR and its historical consequences for national political genesis, the fate of Belarusian society during the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War, achievements, contradictions and the main results of the Soviet era, the development of national statehood in the post-Soviet period (Kavalenya et al., 2019a, 2019b, 2020; Stashkevich, 2012).

The educational and methodological support of the discipline "History of Belarusian Statehood" is implemented by the textbook of the same name (Marzalyuk et al., 2022), which explicitly declares the constructive role of the state as an institutional basis for internal consolidation of society and neutralization of social conflicts, as well as protection from external threats. In this manual, the state is considered as a universal and virtually beyond historical political institution, as a necessary element of the development of society, without which, in the conditions of the Middle Ages and modern times, the existence and development of the Belarusian ethnic community would actually be impossible. As Nemensky(2022, p. 148) emphasizes, as a result of such a methodological approach, "not a national history is constructed, but a state one, with reference to the territory of the modern Republic of Belarus and simply an axiomatically declared connection with the local East Slavic ethnicity". Accordingly, such a conceptual justification determines the logic of the presentation and the structure of the textbook, which consistently examines the main stages of the historical development of the Belarusian statehood, the foundations of the state structure of the Republic of Belarus, ethnogenesis, cultural, civilizational and religious-confessional development of the Belarusian society.

However, the content of the textbook "History of the Belarusian Statehood", which actually represents a conventional picture of the Belarusian national political genesis, shows the presence of other theoretical and methodological principles, in addition to the problem-chronological approach used by its authors in the creation of this discipline and its educational and methodological justification. In this case, it is legitimate to talk about the implicit use of the paradigm of historical trauma. The purpose of this is a retrospective modernization of the historical process, which allows us to actually identify the institutions and structures of traditional and modern society in order to create a consistent picture of national politogenesis, as well as postulate the patterns of modern Belarusian political and institutional design. At the same time, the status of trauma is implicitly "given to real or imaginary phenomena not due to their actual harmfulness or objective sharpness, but due to the fact that these phenomena are believed to have sharply and adversely affected collective identity"(Alexander et al., 2012, p. 17). The experience of "trauma, i.e. the experience of loss and rupture, recorded and preserved by social memory, turns into a narrative matrix that gives the logic of a coherent plot to the fragmented facts of an individual or collective biography"(Ushakin, 2009, p. 9). Such a state of affairs provokes the deepening of trauma and traumatic symptoms, which activates abnormal processes in society. This, as Sztompka (2000a, p. 107) defines, "increases cultural

incompetence, paralysis of social activity, apathy, pessimism, disappointment occur, and as a result, individual and collective identity is lost".

In the theory of cultural trauma, P. Sztompka (2000b, pp. 13-15) identifies three levels of social trauma, which are presented in one form or another in the material of the textbook.

The first level is individual trauma, which is a product of "stressful" events that radically change the life of an individual and his loved ones. For example, the political and economic crisis of the first years of independence of post-Soviet Belarus, interpreted in the textbook as the main source of individual frustrations and deviations.

The second level is collective trauma, when social changes transformatively affect a group of people, changing the system of norms and values, as well as the beliefs and worldview of the individual. All this can ultimately affect the decline in importance or the loss of group identity. The textbook articulates Polonization, interpreted as a long-term process of cultural assimilation and destruction of the ethno-cultural foundations of collective identity, as a rather original example of collective trauma affecting mainly the elite of Belarusian society.

The third level is historical trauma, when national or ethnic communities, regions or civilizations are subject to radical changes. Of course, the Nazi occupation regime in the USSR and the genocide of the Belarusian people, which are discussed in the textbook, are the most vivid example of historical trauma.

It should be emphasized that the manual articulates such historical events as the First and Second World Wars, the Great Patriotic War and the collapse of the USSR as the most traumatic examples of social changes for the Belarusian society, considered as generated by geopolitical factors and processes external to it. However, there are other historical events that are considered as a historical trauma due to the enormous demographic and economic losses suffered by the Belarusian people: the Cossack-Peasant War of 1649-1651, the wars of Russia with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of 1654-1667, the Northern War of 1700-1721, etc. It seems that in many ways such an assessment of historical events has a voluntaristic-subjective character, since it is actually determined by the ideological principles and ideological attitudes of the authors of the textbook.

It is interesting that in the textbook both personal and collective traumas act as the main symbolic coordinates of the Belarusian national political genesis. On the one hand, the beginning of the Belarusian statehood dates back to the legendary events of the 10th century (980), associated with the unsuccessful matchmaking of Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavich to Rogneda, the daughter of Prince Rogvolod of Polotsk. Rogneda's refusal to marry Vladimir became the reason for his crusade to Polotsk, as a result of which the city was destroyed, Prince Rogvolod and his two young sons were killed, and Rogneda was forcibly married and taken to Kiev. This legend is interpreted as evidence of the existence of an independent royal dynasty in Belarus, based not so much on the Scandinavian squad as on the local Slavic population, and the tragic events of 980 are considered as the first attempt, but far from the last in Belarusian history, to interrupt or forcibly correct the process of development of national statehood. On the other hand, the Great Patriotic War is considered as the existential basis of modern Belarusian statehood, the victory in which means the preservation of the Belarusian people themselves, the completion of the territorial formation of the country and the constitution of the

political and axiological complex of modern Belarusian society. In this case, it is necessary to recall F.R. Ankersmit (2007), who, in the context of preserving collective identity, emphasizes the greater functionality of trauma rather than normative regulations and values: "That is, despite the fact that trauma challenges our identity, it ultimately counts with it, while the sublime forces us to abandon our former identity. Therefore, trauma serves the cause of memory, and the sublime serves oblivion" (Ankersmit, 2007, p. 434).

That is why, in post-Soviet socio-humanitarian knowledge, the problem of historical trauma, actualizing the conjugation of politogenesis and cultural genesis within a single historical picture, is considered mainly in the constitutive aspect. Thus, Kazakh researcher M.B. Keldybekov (2022) believes that with the "independence of Kazakhstan and the former Soviet republics of Central Asia, issues of ethnic history and ethno-political relations in the region have received a new impetus. The Kazakhs and Kyrgyz, being neighboring state entities, were no exception, while many aspects of their relationship required new approaches to studying the problem. In this regard, the relevance is due to the increasing desire of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz people to objectively recreate the picture of historical events of the past in order to understand and explain many historical processes, both of previous eras and modernity» (Keldybekov, 2022, p. 134).

The completion of traumatic social changes can provoke the appearance of traumatic symptoms and reactions in society. However, as P. Sztompka (2000a) notes, traumatic symptoms may not always occur, and their appearance depends on the following factors that mediate the appearance of symptoms: the availability of publicly available schemes for interpreting events and the availability of social resources capable of minimizing or maximizing the feeling of trauma. In this case, we are talking about the presence of common ways for a traumatized society to interpret traumatic events, which can be filled with common meanings from individual, group or social experience. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the fact that usually "trauma leads to an aggravation of memory, strengthens its selective approach to historical realities, sometimes causes hyperbolization or a distorted view of what happened (memory aberration), as well as the rejection of memories" (Shnirelman, 2021, p. 8).

Within the framework of the educational discourse of higher education, if we start from the content of the analyzed textbook (Marzalyuk et al., 2022), it seems that the construction of the political and institutional foundations of modern Belarusian society, their symbolic legitimization by electoral procedures and state symbols are considered as the only possible ways of interpreting traumatic events caused by both the disintegration of the USSR and earlier historical phenomena (world wars, revolutions, religious conflicts, etc.). At the same time, the textbook emphasizes the positive role of the state in the historical process, therefore, both disorganization and disorientation are constantly considered as a product of the crisis of statehood, as a result of the weakening of the regulatory and normative function of the state in public life. At the same time, the role of the religious and confessional factor in the historical process is unjustifiably minimized, and social inequality, violence and exploitation are practically not considered in the context of determining the processes of social disorganization and disorientation.

Post-traumatic adaptation is a collective strategy that allows the community to cope with trauma. According to P. Sztompka, they represent joint, "coordinated and organized group responses to traumatic situations" (Sztompka, 2000a, p. 40). In the case of describing post-traumatic adaptation,

he identifies two strategies for social reaction to a traumatic event: active adaptation and passive adaptation. The strategy of active adaptation is a constructive way of "experiencing" a traumatic event, which ultimately helps to overcome cultural trauma. Examples of the implementation of such a strategy are the introduction of innovations and rebellion, as well as a tough fight against identified sources of danger. Thus, the manual, as a successful example of a collective strategy of active adaptation, actually considers the formation of a modern Belarusian model of socio-economic development, the meaning of which is most fully expressed by the slogan: "The state for the people!". Unproductive strategies for coping with cultural trauma come in the form of ritualism and retreatism, as well as a pragmatic attitude towards certain social processes with the conscious suppression of anxiety about the nature of social change. It seems that the manual implicitly describes the socio-political development of Belarusian society in the second half of the last century, considered through narratives of stagnation and social crisis, is a similar example, but without articulating the sources and mechanisms of historical trauma.

For a society, historical trauma in a functional sense can have an ambivalent character, as a result of which constructive and destructive traumas are distinguished. In the case of the constructive nature of the historical trauma, it is she who mediates the formation of a new culture (as, for example, in the case of the baptism of the Belarusian lands in 992 or the spread of Protestantism in modern times). In this case, traumatic events and symptoms, destroying the normative and semantic foundations of the past culture, consolidate the community to find and apply strategies for adapting to a new culture to get out of a crisis situation. In the presence of effective strategies, historical trauma can be considered as a factor stimulating inclusive social activity in order to transform society (for example, in the handbook referendums of 1995, 1996, 2004 are considered not only as plebiscite instruments, but also as an example of politically implemented strategies that effectively ensured the stabilization of the socio-political situation in the country). However, a hypothetical social situation is possible in which society cannot be mobilized due to various circumstances, and the strategies used to overcome trauma in practice will not be successful and effective. For example, due to reasons of a heterogeneous nature: from the Bolsheviks' dispersal of the All-Belarusian Congress on the night of December 17-18, 1917, which, according to the authors of the textbook, interrupted the natural path of movement of Belarusians in the direction of a modern sovereign political nation, to the long-term ambivalent influence of the geopolitical factor on the formation and development of the Belarusian statehood.

However, the retrospective typologization of specific historical events as constructive or destructive trauma is problematic due to the following circumstances. It seems that such an assessment is usually carried out not on a strict historiographical and factual basis, but on the basis of political and historical narratives loosely related to the real historical process. In turn, such narratives are an ideologically biased product and the result of the current domestic political situation. In this case, it means that the national community "constructs an event that did not actually happen, or it happened, but was not the way it was fixed in cultural memory" (Gizatova et al., p. 192). As a result, such an "imaginary trauma", popularized by the media and represented in political and/or educational discourse, becomes problematic in terms of influencing public consciousness by a component of the historical memory of society.

Conclusions

Thus, the construction and representation of historical trauma in the educational discourse of higher education in the context of constructing a historical picture of national statehood performs a number of tasks. Firstly, it promotes the development of historical consciousness and the formation of students' civil and political identity. Secondly, it provides the legitimization of modern Belarusian political institutions and the political system as a whole, which simultaneously sets the teleological focus of consideration and evaluation of political genesis, significantly abstracting from the real historical picture. At the same time, historical trauma both in the educational space and in the media sphere implicitly receives an expanded interpretation. In fact, the status of historical trauma is given to any social process, social institution or historical event that, in retrospect, disorganized the teleologically defined course of national politogenesis. For higher education in post-Soviet states, it is advisable to take into account the ambivalent consequences of such a construction and representation of historical trauma in the educational discourse of higher education in order to ensure the formation of an objective and comprehensive historical picture of the development of national statehood and cultural genesis.

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