

Perception of Czechoslovak Corps by Warring Parties in the Volga Region in 1918

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Abstract

The relevance of the problem under study is explained by the fact that the history of the Civil war in Russia still causes disputes and discussions among historians. In the present article a new interpretation of the "old sources" is suggested. In the center of attention are the documents (official and office work documentation, contracts, newspaper reporting) of two parties countervailing in the Civil war on the territory of the Volga region in 1918, in which their attitude to the Czechoslovak corps is expressed. The time and chronological frames are explained by the fact that 1918 had become the time of the most intensive involvement of Czechoslovak legionaries into the events of the Civil war in Russia, and the Volga region appeared to be one of the most important epicenters of their actions. This approach is interdisciplinary as during the research both special and historical methods, as well as philological methods were applied. The application of this method allowed to reveal the main semantic designs characterizing the Czechoslovak corps both in Soviet and in anti-Bolshevist documents; to reveal the general and special in the representation of the Czechoslovak corps by various contradictory forces in the Volga region in 1918. The materials of article can be useful, first of all, to the historians studying the Civil war in Russia, World War I and also to the researchers considering national relations, the system of propaganda and promotion, and also the mechanisms of formation of public opinion.

Keywords: Czechoslovak corps in Russia, Czechoslovak legionaries, Civil war in Russia, Komuch (Committee of members of Constituent Assembly), "white Czechs", "the meeting of two revolutions"

1. Introduction

One of the most important factors of development of historical science is existence and expansion of the source base.

The Czechoslovak corps was considered in the context of the history of the Civil war in Russia, therefore the documents and the materials on its history were published in the corresponding collections. The most massive publication of documents on the history of the Civil war and foreign intervention was undertaken in the USSR at the end of the 1950s – the 1970s. Besides, the published documents reflected not so much the history of the Czechoslovak corps, but the history of fighting against it.

The first collection of documents which contained the documents proceeding from the Czechoslovak corps was published in 1918 (Karzhansky, 1918). It comprised the documents related to the corps history in 1914-1918 (approximately until the march-off). In the 1920s-1930s the documents proceeding from the Czechoslovak corps were published: the order of P. Gaida about the introduction of court-martials (Maksakov, Turunov, 1926), the order of the commandant of Samara Rebenda (Popov, 1932). However, these were singular examples. They were intended to emphasize the fact of intervention of interventionists in the internal affairs of Russia.

Two largest documentary publications on the subject appeared in the USSR with a interval of almost 20 years (Documents on Masarik and Benesh's antipopular and antinational policy, 1954; Documents and materials on the history of the Soviet-Czechoslovak relations, 1973). "Documents on antipopular and antinational policy of Masarik" contained a tendentious selection of documents whose purpose was "to discredit false bourgeois legends about Masarik as "the liberator of the nation" (Documents on Masarik and Benesh's antipopular and antinational policy, 1954). As for the "Documents and materials on the history of the Soviet-Czechoslovak relations" they contained, besides the documents proceeding from the Czechoslovak corps, the resolution of

bodies of the Soviet power, and also the resolution of Czechoslovak internationalists. It seemed as if "the voice of Czechoslovak legionaries" drowned in a huge mass of the Soviet documents. The Soviet historians faced such a situation.

In the latest domestic historiography these lacunas gradually began to be filled. In 2013 in Moscow the first volume of the fundamental edition "The Czech-Slovak (Czechoslovak) corps. 1914-1920. Documents and materials" was published, which is entitled as "The Czech-Slovak military formations in Russia. 1914-1917" (Czech-Slovak (Czechoslovak) corps, 2013). One more important publication on the subject can be considered the collection of documents and materials published in Saratov in 2014 – "The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region. 1918-1920" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

In the present article an attempt of a new interpretation of the "old sources" has been made. In the center of attention are the documents (official and office work documentation, contracts, newspaper reporting) of the two parties confronting in the Civil war on the territory of the Volga region in 1918, in which the attitude to the Czechoslovak corps is expressed.

The attention to the language of documents is not coincidental. Language (as means of expression of thoughts, ideas) was one of channels of influence on the public opinion, on the professional historical community. The semantic constructions used by the authors of the documents, expressed their direct attitude to the Czechoslovak corps, their views in general. A certain quantity of these semantic constructions (separate words, phrases) created a particular semantic field, the central uniting element of which was the Czechoslovak corps.

Application of nonconventional research methods to "traditional" sources is capable of opening new facets of the past and promoting its fuller and deeper understanding. The main relevance and novelty of this article consists in this.

2. Methodological Framework

2.1 Research Problems

During the research it was necessary to solve the following problems:

- 1) to characterize the perception of the Czechoslovak corps by Bolsheviks in 1918;
- 2) to analyse the features of perception of the Czechoslovak corps by the representatives of anti-Bolshevist forces (first of all, Komuch members) in 1918.

2.2 Theoretical and Methodological Basis of Research

The article relies on the general scientific principles of knowledge (historicism, scientific objectivity). The methods used are defined by the object of research and depend on the objectives. During the work on the article the system of methods was applied: both general scientific (analysis, synthesis), and special historical, and philological ones.

The historical and comparative method enabled to compare the perception of the Czechoslovak corps in the documents of the warring forces in the Volga region in 1918 and to evaluate how this perception changed over time. The typological method allowed to allocate common features in the perception of Czechoslovak legionaries.

The method of discourse analysis promoted identification, allocation and the analysis in the studied documents of the major concepts which in total form a semantic field (more precisely, two semantic fields depending on the number of countervailing forces: Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevist). The method of the context analysis of the text promoted clarification of the context in which the Czechoslovak corps was inserted in the events of the Civil war in Russia.

3. Results

3.1 Perception of the Czechoslovak Corps by Bolsheviks

The fact that in the Bolshevik documents till May, 1918 the Czechoslovak corps had been called "revolutionary" attracts attention. Thus, in the certificates which were given after March 26, 1918 by the bodies of the Soviet power to the members of the commission on disarmament of Czechoslovak legionaries, "The revolutionary Czechoslovak corps" was mentioned (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). In the certificate which was issued to the echelons of the Czechoslovak corps after turning in the weapons the Czechoslovak units were designated as "Czechoslovak revolutionary troops" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

The system of addressing Czechoslovak legionaries, namely the semantic constructions used in these addresses is of special interest. In the leaflet of the Penza Council of deputies dated the middle of May, 1918 (when both

parties were already on the threshold of an armed conflict) it is possible to see the address "brothers" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). This lexeme is remarkable as it doesn't make an obviously expressed political sense, and has more of an informal character; besides it would be closer and clearer to Czechoslovak legionaries who in the military units addressed each other "brother" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). At the same time, in the same leaflet the word "comrade" was mentioned three times (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014) which, unlike "brother", has a clearly-defined political implication: this was a popular form of address in the young Soviet state. The political leaders of the Czechoslovak corps in their correspondence with the bodies of the Soviet power also actively used the lexeme "comrade". So, the vice-chairman and the commissioner of Czechoslovak National Council of P. Max in the message to the chairman of the Penza provincial council V. Kurayev of March 30, 1918 used the semantic construction "dearest Comrade" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

The lexeme "comrade" was a peculiar password, conductor, a code word which enabled to build rapport, to create a uniform semantic field and to agree with each other. In our opinion, in this sense it was used by the Czechoslovak party.

Using the lexeme "comrade", the representatives of the Soviet party appealed, first of all, to "political", to be more exact, to the "class" side of consciousness of Czechoslovak legionaries. This lexeme was used in the address to Czechoslovak legionaries during the whole year of 1918. We will give an excerpt from the address of the Red Army men of the Iron rifle division of Gai dated the end of 1918: "Comrades Czechoslovaks and Polish legionaries! You are sons of the working people of the Czech Republic and Poland, you are workers and peasants of your Homeland tormented by the bourgeoisie" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

In the same leaflet one more signemic thesis was designated: "If our revolution is lost, with it the release of workers of the whole world will fail irrevocably" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). The Czechoslovak legionaries considered themselves "a revolutionary organization" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014), but they saw this revolution a little differently which is going to be talked about below.

After the march-off of the Czechoslovak legionaries in May, 1918 the attitude towards them sharply changed. In the telegram of the national commissioner on military and sea affairs L. Trotsky, in which he addressed the Saratov Red Army men on June 17, 1918 they were referred to as "counterrevolutionary gangs" and "enemies of the people" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). However, the assessment of the Czechoslovak march-off as "counterrevolutionary" was mentioned in the Soviet documents as early as in May, 1918 (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

Moreover, the Czechoslovak legionaries could be expelled from the "political system of coordinates" ("revolution/counterrevolution") and moved to the "criminal system of coordinates". In different Soviet documents of 1918 (reports at party meetings, protocols of meetings of the party organizations, military orders, reports, etc.) they were called as "Czechoslovak gangs" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

The extreme degree of "interdiction" of the Czechoslovak legionaries from the concept of "revolution / revolutionary" was the lexeme of "white Czechs" which also appeared in 1918. In the editorial article of the "Izvestiya Simbirskogo Gubernskogo Soveta Rabochikh i Krestyanskikh Deputatov" newspaper under the title "Breakdown of Imperialism and Czech Socialist Revolutionaries" (October 12, 1918) it is possible to come across such a semantic construction as "white Czech Socialist Revolutionaries"; "white Czechs" also occurs in the same article (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). Later "white Czech Socialist Revolutionaries" was mentioned in the report of the head of the management department of the Simbirsk governorate executive board on an organizational issue on December 23, 1918 (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

The Soviet party actively used revolutionary rhetoric in the documents. It was quite explainable as in this way the new power as if separated from the former regime (first of all, the czarist one). However, certain facts found by us in the documents, distinctly show that regarding some questions the new power positioned itself as the successor of the former regime. The text of the certificate which was issued to the echelons of the Czechoslovak corps after turning in the weapons, began with the following words: "The Czechoslovak echelon No. ____ at the Penza station returned to the Russian Soviet Federal Republic the weapons according to the contract ..." (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). We will draw attention to the verb which was used by the authors of the text: neither "passed" or "turned in", namely "returned".

For fuller and deeper understanding of this fact it is necessary to remind of some facts from the history of the Czechoslovak corps. The Czech military voluntary formations began to appear in the first months of the World war (The Czech troop, August, 1914). In 1915 the Czechoslovak regiment was formed, in 1916 – the team, and

in 1917 (already during the existence of the Provisional government) – the division, and later the Czechoslovak corps itself. It turns out that the Czechoslovak corps was armed by the czarist regime and the Provisional government. By the time of October revolution the Czechoslovak corps was part of the Russian army (which was actually dismissed by Bolsheviks). Meanwhile the Czechoslovak military units in Russia (as well as in Italy and France) were considered by the leaders of the Czechoslovak national liberation movement as the major tool in the fight for creation of the independent Czechoslovak state. The political leader of the movement professor T. Masarik proclaimed neutrality of the Czechoslovak corps in the events which began developing in Russia since the autumn of 1917. And in January, 1918 the official statement of T. Masarik that "the Czechoslovak army in all parts of the former Russian state is part of autonomous Czechoslovak army in France" followed (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). This statement didn't cause any major objections of the Soviet government.

Thus, by March, 1918 the Czechoslovak corps neither in legal (the corps is a part of the French army), nor in military and quartermaster (the weapons were received in 1917 from the "former" authorities) respect had any obligations to the Soviet power, except one – manifestation of loyalty to authorities in power. The observance of loyalty was declared by the political management of the Czechoslovak national liberation movement. A similar statement, for example, is in the address of the vice-chairman and commissioner of Czechoslovak National Council P. Maksa to the chairman of the Penza provincial council V. Kurayev of April 5, 1918 (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

Only on the eve of the march-off of the Czechoslovak legionaries in May, 1918 (when the conflict seemed already almost inevitable) the representatives of the Soviet power "recalled" that the Czechoslovak corps used to be a part of the former Russian army. The order of the National commissariat on military affairs to the Penza provincial Council of deputies of May 23, 1918 contained the directive to "take urgent measures to detain, disarm and disband all the echelons and parts of the Czechoslovak corps as the remainder of the old regular army" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

In this respect it is interesting to mention that the Czechoslovak legionaries themselves didn't object to the wording "to return the weapon" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). Obviously to them a free advance to Vladivostok, and from there to France for continuation of fight on the Western front for creation of the independent Czechoslovak state was more important than some formalities that occurred in the documents.

On June 17, 1918 the national commissioner on military and sea affairs L. Trotsky, addressing the Saratov Red Army men, declared the following: "In the Urals the agents of foreign capitalists resorting to bribery, lie and slander encouraged our Czechoslovak prisoners of war to revolt against Russians, workers and peasants" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). It should be noted that the majority of Czechoslovak legionaries really were prisoners of war of Russia, but they were taken prisoner (and the Czechoslovak corps was created) before the Bolsheviks' rise to power.

The aspiration to emphasize the dependent character of the Czechoslovak legionaries approved itself in further actions. The Soviet side actively used the passive voice in relation to them: "befuddled", "made a fool of" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). Characteristically a similar assessment was in the appeal of Council of People's Commissars to all workers of Russia of June 13, 1918; this document was signed by V. Lenin and L. Trotsky.

The Soviet documents contained the lexemes which presented the Czechoslovak corps as an object of manipulations. In the editorial article of the "Izvestiya Saratovskogo Soveta Deputatov" newspaper under the title "Marching-off of Czechoslovaks" (on May 31, 1918) the Czech soldiers were called "a toy in the hands of different reactionaries" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). In the report on the present situation delivered at the provincial meeting of the Simbirsk organization of Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks on June 1, 1918 the Czechoslovak units were called "a blunt weapon in bourgeoisie's hands" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). At the meeting of the Kazan city council of deputies on October 2, 1918 the Czechoslovak military units were called "mercenaries of the Anglo-American-French capital" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

We will draw attention to one more interesting, and somewhat paradoxical fact. The Soviet power, after the march-off of the Czechoslovak legionaries, obviously, recognizing the importance and force of the "Czechoslovak factor" in anti-Bolshevist fight, officially called the East front in 1918 Czechoslovak (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). However, at the same time, the Czechoslovak legionaries' march-off and their subsequent combat activity were regarded as "mutiny" which would "be suppressed". In the east of Russia emergency governing bodies and military units were created, whose purpose was proclaimed as

"elimination of the Czechoslovaks' march-off" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). In the editorial article of the "Izvestiya Saratovskogo Soveta Rabochikh, Soldatskikh i Krestyanskikh Deputatov" newspaper of June 9, 1918 the march-off of the Czechoslovak legionaries was called "a criminal adventure" which "will be liquidated soon" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

3.2 Perception of the Czechoslovak corps by Komuch Members

In the system of assessment of the Czechoslovak corps which developed in the ideology of the Committee of members of the Constituent Assembly, it is possible to come across basically different semantic constructions characterizing the Czechoslovak corps.

In the appeal of the Committee of members of the Constituent Assembly of June 8, 1918 the Czechoslovak troops were called "valorous" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). The actions of Czechoslovak legionaries during the march-off are characterized rather as self-defense, protection; thus their valor is noted: "Local councils immediately started fulfilling this order [L. Trotsky's order on disarmament of Czechoslovak legionaries] and in several places traitorously attacked the Czechoslovak echelons. But their criminal business failed. The Czechoslovak soldiers as lions protected the integrity of their army" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

In the notice of the Committee of members of the Constituent Assembly on the capture of Kazan of August 6, 1918 it was said that the city was taken "by valorous units of the National Army, by our brothers Czechoslovaks and the Serbian unit" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). In this case, the emphasis on strong fighting qualities of the legionaries was placed and it was presented not as a negative fact (that was typical and explainable, for example, for the Soviet press), and also as a certainly positive fact.

In the Komuch press the image of "the armed and well trained Czechoslovak legionaries" (which later would appear on pages of the Soviet historical works) was a priori opposed to the image of "empty-handed, they [Czechoslovak legionaries] took railway stations by storm and armed only with stones went against machine guns" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

Komuch in its appeals used not only political, but also national rhetoric. Thus, in the editorial article of the "Vozrozhdeniye" newspaper (the publication of Komuch) of July 27, 1918, the characteristic of policy of the Soviet power on disarmament of Czechoslovak military units was given and it was stated that "overreacting was beaten by the national and democratic feeling of the freedom-loving people" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

It should be noted that the national rhetoric occurred in the Soviet documents as well. In the editorial article "March-off of Czechoslovaks" printed in the "Izvestiya Saratovskogo Soveta Rabochikh, Soldatskikh i Krestyanskikh Deputatov" newspaper issued on May 31, 1918 a short history of creation of Czechoslovak military formations was given: "Czechoslovak units started being organized at the time of autocracy from prisoners of war. Fight against Germans for freedom of the southern Slavs was their particular next aim" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). However, in the same article it was said that "under the national flag bourgeois tendencies are very often concealed" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

On September 8, 1918 a big editorial article "The Czech-Slovak army" was published in the "Vozrozhdeniye" newspaper (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). The history of Czechoslovak military units abroad since their formation up to the present situation was covered in this article. And the history of Czechoslovak army abroad was considered in the context of World War I, in the context of fight of the Czechoslovak people for creation of an independent state. The authors of article put national nature of Czechoslovak liberation movement on the first place, noting, in particular, that from the beginning of the World War the Czechoslovak people "entered the fight against Austro-Hungarian tyranny and Habsburg reaction for the national, political and economic release" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). They characterize these actions as certainly revolutionary: "The modern revolt is only a different form of their [the Czechoslovak people] continuous revolution against Austro-Hungary; the parliament fight was replaced by the armed revolution" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). One fact, which wasn't duplicated in the Soviet historiography, is mentioned in the article: during the withdrawal of the units of the Czechoslovak corps from the territory of the Ukraine in the spring of 1918, the commander of the Soviet troops V. Antonov-Ovseenko issued the order in which "he thanks Czechoslovaks for their assistance in fights against the attacking Austro-Germans and for the weapons which they presented to the Soviet troops" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). Special attention is attracted by the fact that the authors of the article used a semantic construction "presented the weapons", but not "returned the weapons" as in the Soviet documents. Further, when the disarmament was mentioned, the lexeme "transfer of arms" but not "return" was used (The Czechoslovak corps

in the Volga region, 2014).

The manifestation of national rhetoric was shown also in use of such semantic construction as "Slavic brothers" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014). However, "the Slavic rhetoric" was also observed in Bolsheviks' speech: "In the Soviet press materials in which Czechs and Slovaks were presented as slav brothers, affined in terms of spirit, ultimate goals and tasks began to appear. Fight for freedom, creation of the independent Czechoslovak state was called revolutionary, the corps of legionaries wasn't equated to the corps of counterrevolutionary forces" yet (Rybkov, Demidova, 2014). Some concrete examples are given: in Penza "a joint meeting during which the agenda again included a question of conflict settlement took place on May 27, 1918. The speakers (V. V. Kurayev, N. G. Liberson) talked about brotherly friendship of the Slavic peoples, joint fight against world imperialism, urged not to shed Russian blood for the sake of alien interests of the Entente" (Rybkov, Demidova, 2012).

It is interesting that the lexeme "gangs" also occurs in the article "Vozrozhdeniye" in which "German-Magyar gangs" were mentioned (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

While in the Soviet documents the Czechoslovak corps "captured" trains, stations, cities and territories (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014), in the Komuch press – "it liberated the whole Siberia and the steppe areas adjoining to it, as well as the most part of the Urals and the Volga region" (The Czechoslovak corps in the Volga region, 2014).

4. Discussions

It is possible to note that the problem stated in the title of the article hasn't been considered in historiography on the whole. However, some separate sides of this problem were an object of research of both Russian and foreign historians.

In Russian historiography genesis and evolution of such semantic constructions as "white Czech", "Czech white Guards", "Czeco-white" have been studied (Valiakmetov, 2012); problems of relationship of the Soviet power and Czechoslovak National Council in the spring of 1918 have been considered (Vasilchenko, 2013).

A. G. Rybkov and E.I. Demidova, considering propaganda, "the object and subject of which was the Czechoslovak corps", note that "in character and contents it varied: at the end of 1917 – the beginning of 1918 the propaganda was reduced to holding the military corps of Czechs and Slovaks on the position of observance of neutrality (on March 15, 1918 the Bolshevik government adopted the resolution that the Czechoslovak corps leave the borders of the Soviet Russia); since the end of May – the beginning of June, 1918 the nature of propaganda became different: The Czechoslovak corps was presented as a hostile force menacing the revolution".

The American historian D. Raleigh in the article "Languages of the Power: How the Saratov Bolsheviks Imagined Their Enemies" comes to an interesting conclusion that the Czechoslovak legionaries were one of the elements of a generalized image of the enemy which was propagandized from the pages of Bolshevik periodicals (Raleigh, 1998).

The Czechoslovak legionaries who after homecoming began to describe the history of the Czechoslovak army in Russia, initially considered it not as political, but as national and political movement. The legionary Ya. Papoushek wrote about "two revolutionary currents" which differed "not only in their program and tactics, but also final interests. The Czechoslovak movement aimed for national revolution, the Soviet power - for the world, social revolution [...] Such condition in itself together with irreconcilability and eagerness to fight of both revolutionary movements led to a lot of points of collision" (Papoushek, 1928). A similar explanation of distinctions was given in the work of another legionary Y.Kudel: "Between our army and the Russian Bolsheviks there was an irreconcilable ideological contradiction: our revolutionary movement and army fought for release of the people, they – for release of the class; we called for participation in the fight for a better peace arrangement on the basis of self-determination of the people, they proclaimed a Civil war to the class of oppressors ..." (Kudela, 1928). In 1989 these ideas were formulated by the Czechoslovak historian K. Richter in the concept of "the meeting of two revolutions" (Richter, 1989).

5. Conclusion

As a result of the conducted research it is possible to draw the following conclusions.

1. In the Soviet documents of 1918 the perception of the Czechoslovak corps changed gradually. If till May, 1918 the corps was considered as revolutionary army, after the march-off it began to be positioned as unambiguously counterrevolutionary force. After May 25, 1918 the semantic construction "Czechoslovak gangs"

entered the lexicon of the Soviet documents: in this way the Czechoslovak legionaries were withdrawn from "the political field" and transferred to "the criminal field". The leveling of the Czechoslovak legionaries' own political reasons of actions and their transformation into actual "criminals" was an important ideological method.

Throughout the considered period the Soviet authorities appealed to class consciousness of Czechoslovak legionaries: the address "comrade", in particular, was intended for it. Czechoslovak legionaries, understanding themselves as revolutionary army, understood this revolutionism not in class, but in national sense. This distinction was noticed and formulated later as the concept of "the meeting of two revolutions".

After the march-off of Czechoslovak legionaries, in the Soviet documents passive voice began to be used in relation to them ("are befuddled", "made a fool of"), and they were presented as the object of manipulation ("toy", "weapon", etc.).

The Soviet power, separating itself from the former regime, in certain cases designated itself as its actual successor (L. Trotsky's reference to the legionaries as "our prisoners of war", the thesis about "the return of the weapon").

2. In the documents of representatives of anti-Bolshevist forces there was an absolutely different image of the Czechoslovak legionaries. For example, in the Komuch press the valor of legionaries during the capture of the cities and during "self-defense from the attack of local Soviet units" was presented as unambiguously positive fact.

In anti-Bolshevist documents national motives in the activity of Czechoslovak legionaries were emphasized more clearly, and revolutionism of the Czechoslovak corps was understood in the same sense, as by the Czechoslovak legionaries themselves. The corps in general was considered not as the object of manipulations, but as an independent subject of action, with its own motives, purposes, interests and the program.

There are factors which are bringing together both revealed semantic fields: the use of national rhetoric ("Slavic brothers"), the concept "revolution / revolutionary" (insertion one's own sense into it), semantic constructions with a negative meaning in relation to the opponents and the opponents of the allies ("Czechoslovak gangs" / "German-Magyar gangs").

All this testifies that each of the parties in those conditions solved, first of all, its own political problems and the language of the documents adopted by them was an important means in it.

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