The experience of state and especially military construction in the Civil war in Eastern Siberia territory

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Abstract The experience of especially military construction accumulated by the sides in the conditions of the Civil war can not be ignored. These actions only in modern Russian historiography were objectively evaluated. Author reconstructs the combat performance of military units and stressed the attention on the chronology and geography. During the June - August, 1918 struggle anti-Bolshevik force occupied East Siberia territory. The mobilisation of the population in the region was carried out on the same principles, as in other territories controlled by the Provisional Siberian government. As the territory was occupied, all officers and military officials were called up, and the volunteers were also enlisted. Since the end of August, 1918 the mobilisation of persons, born in 1898-1899, began. A nucleus of the Whites was the officers, the studying youth and a part of bureaucrats and administrators, whose example carried away the representatives of other social groups. They were defeated, partly killed, partly driven out of Russia, but did not change their beliefs and once made choice.
1 Introduction

Today, probably, there are no people in Russia, who do not consider the Civil war to be a fratricidal bloodshed and a great national tragedy. The research of the internecine struggle in 1917-1921 is especially urgent, because it is devoted to the study of events which determined the destiny of our country forever. Considering the current social tension, the research of the given problem has a large importance for the Russian.

2 Problem Statement

Having defeated organized and armed opponents in the Civil war, the Bolsheviks could freely use terror to establish a control in all spheres of life in the country and begin to realise their experiments [1, 2, 3, 4]. The open armed struggle was an expression of the formation of the Bolsheviks’ authority and initial resistance of various forces to this process [5, 6, 7]. The civil war cannot be studied without connection with a consequence of the Bolsheviks’ victory – the establishment of totalitarian system in our country [8, 9, 10].

While considering the civil struggle of the end of the first quarter of the XX century, the major task is to research the methods and ideology, staff and structure of both Bolshevik, and anti-Bolshevik forces. The experience of state and especially military construction accumulated by the sides in the conditions of the Civil war can not be ignored [11, 12]. The reference to it is important for understanding the features of Russian historical development and forecasting its future.

3 Research Questions

Objectives By 1917 184 386 people had lived in the cities of Irkutsk province; 561 778 people - in the villages; in Transbaikal region accordingly 99 000 and 847 600. There were only 12 000 Irkutsk province Cossacks. Because of this small number, Irkutsk Cossacks had no the status of a military force, putting forward two hundred battalion. The Transbaikal Cossack force totalled 265 000 persons and sent 14 000 people to the front of the First World War.

The community of social groups, the Reds and Whites were based on in
their armed struggle in the region, underwent evolution. The specifics of forming the armies of the sides contained in the character of the community changes. The interests of groups of the population were continuously transformed, resulting to the fast change of military-political situation.

The nucleus of the Red forces was the Bolsheviks and their political allies on the left political spectrum: the Mensheviks, the Left Esers, the Anarchists. All of them had been preparing an overthrow of autocracy for many years and working for the revolution. They had an enormous experience of political struggle. The Lefts had the perfected fundraising techniques and established informal links both within the country and abroad,

At the end of 1917 the left block was based on two basic groups: workers and soldiers of the rear military troops. Among the latter group there was an essential part of the former political exiled people, the Provisional Government mobilised into the army before the July 1917 advance. The slogans of the Bolsheviks about the termination of the war found the favourable ground among the soldiers of the rear garrisons, mostly peasants. They were the main ally of the Bolsheviks at the end of 1917, but this ally was, however, unreliable and poorly efficient. The soldiers, as the main support of the Bolsheviks, were supplemented by the workers forming the Red Guard.

The Lefts were confronted by the conglomerate of the right parties: the Right Esers, Cadet and a small number of the Monarchists. However, in this block, as the Civil war events showed, there was no uniting core. Therefore the place of the Right party confronting the Bolsheviks was taken by the officer circles, sympathising with conservative ideology. Their active anti-Bolshevik self-determination should be related to spring - summer of 1917, when the officers of Russian army were subject to punishments or humiliations from the side of the soldiers having absorbed defeatist propaganda of the Bolsheviks.

It is clear that the officers - veterans, living prior to the beginning of the First World War in East Siberia, could not participate in the struggle of the region before their demobilisation. The officers, serving in the rear troops, considered the take-over of authority by the Bolsheviks, mostly, indifferent. Therefore in the region the forces supporting the left parties, were resisted by the cadets of military - educational institutions, bureaucracy, the students of the senior classes of gymnasiums, seminaries and schools.

Among the masses of peasants and Cossacks it is possible to define two types of behaviour. The participants of the First World War received wounds, awards and unter-officer (lieutenant) ranks, were hostile to the demagogy. Partially the military-educational institutions were completed by such people. The most part of the peasants and Cossacks were indifferent
about politics, being engaged in daily work.

The first display of a split of Transbaikal Cossacks into the White and Red became the first regional Cossack Congress which assembled at the end of April 1917 in Chita. Its participants decided to liquidate Cossack estate while agreeing to keep the existing order of service only up to the end of war. The reasons were the deep stratification of the Cossacks and difficulties of the poor Cossacks to provide a horse, uniform and arms for service. The Cossacks hoped for the division of former land of the Tsar family, expecting to participate in it after the equation of rights with the peasants. The Transbaikal Cossacks were unique in Russia, who voluntarily expressed for the liquidation of the Cossack estate.

By the end of 1917 in East Siberia the number of the people supporting the Bolsheviks, had significantly exceeded the number of those who were ready to resist them. Despite it, the Bolsheviks could establish their authority in Irkutsk only two months after from the take-over in the capital, by suppressing the armed resistance of the cadets, some part of the officers and Irkutsk Cossacks, some gymnasium students.

During the armed struggle, the Bolsheviks actively used political naivety of the rebels, and also a transfer of the forces from other cities of Siberia. The fact, that the Bolsheviks were based on the groups less involved in action before, predetermined simultaneously both their strong and weak sides. The soldiers of the rear garrisons and workers converted into the Red Guard, was superiority of less people tired of war. However, from the point of view of military experience and discipline, the military forces of the Bolsheviks conceded to the officers, Cossacks and studying youth volunteers. In the events the first display of the Right Esers duality is visible. They tried to use the struggle of the youth in separate political goals. As a result it made senseless their victims.

During the December 1917 battles something appeared in Irkutsk which was repeated with the large scope in all East Siberia. Despite wide use of terror and demagogy, the Bolsheviks, having overwhelming numerical superiority in the street battles in Irkutsk from December 21 till December 30, 1917, suffered a military defeat. While describing these events one can see a Soviet necessity to keep silent and skip certain "details": the surrender of the White house, the captivity of the outstanding figures of the Red side, the role of the Esers, and, what really matters, an infringement by the Bolsheviks of their signed peace agreement. The numbers of the lost and wounded made more than 1000 people. It made the battles for the establishment of the Soviet authority in Irkutsk the second city in Russia in bloodshed after Moscow.

Compelled to flee to Manchuria, the White participants of the December
battles in Irkutsk poured into the forces of an “esaul” G. M. Semyonov. G.M. Semyonov became one of the leaders of the White movement, which on the basis of the Russian army troops with discipline, local resources and the Entente aid began the struggle with the Bolsheviks. For the Bolsheviks of Siberia G.M. Semyonov was their main opponent during the first half of 1918.

On December 11, 1917 at the station Dauria G.M. Semyonov began the creation "Special Manchurian detachment" (SMD). At the end of December according to his order a member of Harbin Soviet (Council) Bolshevik Arkus and 1500 soldiers of Manchuria station garrison had been disarmed by January 1, 1918.

At first the Bolsheviks decided not to use violent methods in order to take power in Transbaikal region. The Soviet authority was established in Verkhneudinsk (modern Ulan-Ude) on February 5, and in Chita on February 16, 1918. The transition of authority to the Bolsheviks was ensured by those Cossack regiments returning from the front. On their way back they were influenced by the Bolshevik propaganda and deprived of weapon and senior officers.

At the beginning of April G.M. Semyonov’s troops began their offensive on Chita. Until August, 1918 the SMD, totalling up to 1400 soldiers, operated in East Transbaikal region. G.M. Semyonov played a role of a magnet drawing to himself active anti-Bolshevik forces. The Whites emphasised that "the military activities of the SMD were the best moral support for all Siberian military organizations, which could be convinced of the fact they were not lonely in the struggle".

By spring 1918 the armed forces of the Bolsheviks had lost one of their backbones – the soldiers of the rear troops who had been partly demobilised and partly they left the army themselves. On the contrary, the anti-Bolshevik forces gradually increased. The veteran-officers began to come back home. Their position of the rejection of the Soviet power was so certain and evident, that the Central executive committee of the Soviets of Siberia on March 28, 1918 forbade the officers to enter East Siberia without a call of the Soviets "due to the mass participation of the former officers in the counter-revolutionary revolts". Simultaneously the Bolsheviks disbanded all organizations of the former officers, having confiscated their property.

The part of the officers reinforced the anti-Bolshevik underground under the guidance of a colonel A.V. Ellerz-Usov. The number of the underground members had been growing from December 1917 until the beginning of March, 1918 - all the wishing to fight with the Bolsheviks oriented quickly. In Irkutsk province and Western Transbaikal area the underground totalled up to 1000 people. In East Transbaikal area it was not developed, since here
the opponents of the Bolsheviks were involved in the armed struggle under the command of G.M. Semyonov.

To resist the developing White movement, the Bolsheviks involved the former Central powers prisoners of war by offering them the Soviet citizenship and prospects of joining Red army. The international troops became a new backbone of the Bolsheviks. When an alternative to the joining the Red army was a half-hungry life in camps or repatriation to the motherland and further slaughter of the First World War, the paid service for the Bolsheviks seems to be the least dangerous decision for the foreigners. Besides it, among the prisoners of war there were many people who sincerely believed in the Bolsheviks' ideals. Besides the prisoners of war, the international troops were replenished by Chinese workers recruited by the Tsarist government. By the beginning of April, 1918 the former foreigners, basically the Hungarians, had made up to two fifth of the military forces of the Soviets of Siberia. In Eastern Siberia the former foreigners among the Reds had larger numbers, than in other regions of Russia.

The struggle in Irkutsk province in the first half of 1918 adopted a character of underground opposition, and also separate rebellions against the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks, having announced a grain monopoly, appropriated the right to buy the peasants’ bread according to the "firm" prices, which were 6 times below the market ones. The relations of the Bolsheviks and the peasantry became aggravated. Besides it, there were discontent for the economic measures of the Bolsheviks in the countryside rebellions and the protest against their focus on force.

The typical events took place in a village Troitsk of Irkutsk province. Here in January 1918 the Soviet (Council) from the Red Guard was formed, "ignoring the peasants, ranked to the bourgeoisie; having set up obligatory prices... The peasants answered to the reduction in products prices with a refusal to sell and did not bring anything to a Troitsk bazaar, and all this caused a Red Guard’s requisition of the peasants’ bread". The Bolsheviks recognised, that the group of Troitsk Red Guard was formed, with few exceptions, of thief - recidivists... On March 14, 1918 a multithousand crowd of the many administrative districts citizens, including many Buryat, armed with different kinds of weapon, rushed in Troitsk. The rebels began to beat the members of the Soviet (Council) and the Red Guard soldiers; there were 20 people killed in a skirmish. After an arrival of 300 Red Guard soldiers from Cheremkhovo, the conflict was settled, and the Soviet paid more than 30 000 rubles to the peasants for illegally confiscated property. G.H. Eiche writes about the rebellions in 12 administrative districts of Cheremkhovo district.

The rebellion of the Czech-Slovak corps, its command consisted of the
Russian officers and generals, allowed the anti-Bolshevik forces of Siberia to come out of the underground. In the chapter the number, command structure and location of the Czech echelons are established at the moment of the rebellion; the chronology of events concerning a role of the Czechs in the struggle is built. The decisive stage of antagonism began on May 26, 1918, when the Bolsheviks in Irkutsk tried to disarm three Czech echelons. In answer to it on May 28 about 1000 Czechs of three other echelons led by a lieutenant-colonel B.F. Ushakov seized Kansk and Nizhneudinsk.

The organization, command structure and strength of the sides in the Nizhneudinsk area, Irkutsk, and Baikal are analysed from the beginning of June until the end of August 1918. The strength of the Bolsheviks at the middle of July is estimated about 7-8 thousand, while the number of the Whites and the Czechs was twice less. The courage of the Red commanders is shown: Z.P. Metelitsa, F.P. Lavrov, Khlebnikov, D.N. Senotrusov and others. The military art of the White commanders (R.I. Gaida, A.N. Pepelyaev, B.F. Ushakov, I.N. Krasilnikov and others) is marked. The battles at the stations Baikal, Slyudyanka, Posolskaya, Murino are described. The rather small number of the local population participated in the 1918 military actions. Most of the inhabitants, whose significant part had just returned from the First World War fronts, stood aside from the civil antagonism, not wishing to get involved in a new war.

During the June - August, 1918 struggle anti-Bolshevik force in the structure of the Middle-Siberian corps under command of a colonel A.N. Pepelyaev and separate parts of the Czechoslovak corps under the common command of a general - major R.I. Gaida occupied East Siberia territory. As a result of crushing defeat of the CentroSibir troops, a connection with the parts of an ataman G.M. Semyonov was achieved [13].

Thus, conceding to the opponent in alive forces and arms, the Whites in the Baikal battles defeated the Reds. Due to skilful planning, the losses of advancing Whites were less, than among the defending Reds. The occupation of East Siberia by the troops of a Provisional Siberian government gave an extensive rear, in which it was possible to form new parts and units.

It is necessary to note, that the Whites underestimated the importance of destruction of alive forces of the opponent. After having defeated the Red basic forces in East Siberia, the most efficient White troops were sent to the Urals, where they continued their struggle with the Red army [14]. It resulted in the situation when some part of the Red troops managed to survive in a number of areas and in a half-year they developed a partisan movement. The Whites, however, practically completely exterminated or captured the internationalists.
The mobilisation of the population in the region was carried out on the same principles, as in other territories controlled by the Provisional Siberian government. As the territory was occupied, all officers and military officials were called up, and the volunteers were also enlisted. Since the end of August, 1918 the mobilisation of persons, born in 1898-1899 (not serving in army before), began. In East Siberia one of the most efficient units of the Whites was formed: the third Irkutsk Siberian rifle division and a separate chasseur brigade named after an esaul Krasilnikov[15].

From September 14 until November 30, 1918 on the Transsiberian railroad the contingents of French and English troops, approximately 1000 people each, were transported through East Siberia westwards. By November, 1918 the divisions of the 3-d Japanese infantry division of a general Oba had been placed in the Transbaikal area. Subsequently it was replaced by the 5-th division of a general Sudzuki. On the Amur railway the 12-th infantry division of a general K. Otani was stationed, in northern Manchuria – the 7-th infantry division of a general Fudzyi. By February 1919 the total number of these divisions had made 25600 people, no less than third of them was in Transbaikal area. The Japanese protected the railway from Vekhneudinsk to Khabarovsk and from Karymskyi to Manchuria. By the beginning of 1920 in Transbaikal area there were up to 5000 Japanese soldiers. Also until March 1920 in Russian East there were up to 8000 Americans led by a general – major U.V. Grevs, including two battalions of the 27-th infantry regiment led by a colonel Morrow on the railroad from Verkhneudinsk to the station Baikal.

The role of the interventionists was primary dual and changing [16, 17]. Until the capitulation of Germany in the First World War the countries of the Entente needed the help of Russian army. On the one hand, foreign troops, having arrived in Siberia, used poor local resources, especially the railway transportation and barracks, which were necessary for the Whites’ military construction. Besides it, among the interventionists there were contradictions, which did not contribute to the rendering of effective help to the Whites. On the other hand, the Japanese in Transbaikal area with their rather large number, liking for consecutive fighters with Bolshevism and aspiration to turn it in practical businesses were a stabilising factor for the Whites [18].

The reason of the most active participation of the Japanese in the intervention is considered by the majority of the researchers to be their aspiration to use maximally the weakening period of Russia in order to strengthen their positions in the Far East, including the annexation of separate Russian territories [19, 20]. Another reason was a danger of spreading the ideas of the Bolsheviks to the Japanese held Korea and
Northeast China. Certainly, it is impossible to exclude the Japanese plans of the annexation of the Russian Far East, but it is a question of military force of Russia, whether it was under the authority of V.I. Lenin or A.V. Kolchak. In the author’s opinion, in 1918 such plans hardly determined the policy of Japan, as, it is obvious, that in this period the Japanese considered the defeated Bolsheviks to be the side suffering a defeat. Then the help of Japan to the Whites could result in the strengthening of Russia; non-participation of the USA in military actions dragged on the civil conflict. By April, 1920 all interventionists, except for the Japanese, had been evacuated out of Russia. After that and already obvious defeat of the Whites, Japan made correction of its plans in the direction of attempts to annex northern Sakhalin and create the White buffer in Primorye.

Carrying out military construction, the White authorities encountered significant difficulties. On the one hand they met a sharp shortage of resources necessary for the maintenance of the troops: arms, ammunition, barracks and etc. There was practically no local military manufacture in Siberia, and an initial source of military resources was the heritage of the Tsarist army. However, it was spent at the beginning of 1918 during spontaneous demobilisation. In their turn, and the Bolsheviks, retreating eastwards in summer 1918, naturally aspired not to leave anything to the enemy. On the other hand, a lack of any sort of subjects caused quite justified discontent mobilised in White troops. The recruits had to answer a question about purposefulness of their presence in not repaired barracks without maintenance in weapon and uniform. Such moods created a favourable ground for deserting.

Having gone to the underground, the Bolsheviks were preparing a number of armed rebellions in the cities of Siberia, including a revolt in Bodaibo on January 26, 1919 and a September, 13 attack on Alexandrovsk Central (Prison) in Irkutsk. All of them were rapidly suppressed by the White troops, but involved new people in the struggle on the side of the Bolsheviks. The feature of Irkutsk province was the least rigid retaliatory regime in all Kolchak’s Siberia connected with Esers’ management of the province.

The activities of the Bolsheviks in the development of partisan movement in the rural areas of East Siberia were more successful than in the cities. By spring 1919 the initial centres in the region had become western areas of Nizhneudinsk district (uezd) of Irkutsk province with their significant share of the peasants - colonists and a frontier remote southeast corner of Transbaikal area. The intense struggle of the White authority and the Red partisans began in spring 1919.

The partisan movement was a consequence of the Red detachments
presence, hiding since 1918, the Bolshevik propaganda, and in the Nizhneudinsk district there was also the colonists’ discontent for the White authority and partisan influence of Yenisei province. There was a heavy burden on the colonists who had not established well economically. They had to pay high taxes and give recruits to the White army. The evading from mobilisation were the basic cadre of the partisans.

The nature of partisan movement in Transbaikal area was different. Since autumn 1918 the Bolsheviks, the Soviet (Council) members and leaders of the struggle with an ataman G.V. Semyonov hid in the forest communes. In spring 1919 they caused the struggle of village inhabitants of the remote southeast area, a former (until 1917) place of exile and also a territory of the poor part of Transbaikal Cossacks residence. By April, 1919 there had been approximately 2000 partisans acting near Taishet and in Priarguniye, by the end of the year the partisan movement had also taken the neighbouring areas.

The common factor, characterising most of the territories taken by partisan movement, was a presence of significant share of the peasants-colonists. The land contradictions between the colonists and other groups of the population of Siberia pushed a dominant group to apply violent measures against the existing power order. The behaviour of the colonists of some areas was also determined by their ethnic affiliation, for example the Latvians in Nevon political unit (volost’) of Nizhneudinsk district (uezd) of Irkutsk province.

The Whites repeatedly undertook regular troops operations against the partisans, however, the latter ones, skillfully using landscape: taiga to the north from Taishet, the mountains of Transbaikal area or territory of China, evaded these attacks. The partisan movement sped up the fall of the Whites, taking resources from the front to their rear and depriving human resources from a number of areas held by the partisans. The partisans contributed a lot to the victory of the Bolsheviks over the Whites which was connected with the successes of the Red army, and assisted by the activities of the Siberian Esers.

The Siberian Esers, no less than the partisans sped up the fall of the authority of A.V. Kolchak in Siberia. It is necessary to consider the socialist-revolutionaries, aspiring for the political management of the anti-Bolshevik movement, to be not an alternative democratic force but a force working in the White camp for the Bolsheviks. The evidence to that was the activities of outstanding Esers: P.Y. Derber, A.A. Krakovetskyi, P.D. Yakovlev and others. It is not a coincidence, that A.A. Krakovetskyi from a military minister of the Provisional government of autonomous Siberia in 1918 became an employee of OGPU after the Civil war.

It is especially necessary to emphasise, that the undermining activities of
the Esers were not a simple answer to the November 18, 1918 proclamation of A.V. Kolchar as a Supreme governor (ruler). On the contrary, it was the establishment of A.V. Kolchak’s dictatorship which was a reaction of the White officers of Siberia to the character of the Esers’ activities, definitely shown in the battles in Irkutsk in December 1917, in the events around the National Soviet (Council) in Chita in early 1918 and etc. The intrigues and provocations of the Esers against the commanders of the 4-th and 5-th corps of the Siberian army - colonels A.V. Ellerz-Usov and G.M. Semyonov, making White troops weaker, date to August 1918.

During the Civil war the Bolsheviks completely used conspirator experience of the struggle with the Tsarist autocracy, all accumulated mechanisms, many of which, probably, forever would be a secret. It allowed the Bolsheviks there, where they had no own forces, to work through the Esers. For example, a chief of the civil authority of the Whites in the Irkutsk province P.D. Yakovlev released or softened punishments for the arrested Bolsheviks. According to his words, he "rescued life of not one hundred of them", "Irkutsk turned in the city - refuge for all socialists". "To the Business (rebellion against A.V. Kolchak) I did help in every possible way. Covered illegal "zemstvo" (local authorities) figures, constrained the work of police and military counter-intelligence".

The role of the Esers is perfectly characterised with N.V. Savich’s words, one of the civil leaders of the Whites: "An open enemy - Bolshevik - worked hand in hand with a hidden enemy – Eser, demoralising the army... The spiteful and ruthless enemy, nothing better than the Bolsheviks, it was especially dangerous because of secretly conducting the struggle inside the White camp". The largest centre of Siberian Esers in 1919 was Irkutsk. The Esers arrived here in order escape observance of the authorities in Omsk and under the threat of the military who had not got used to the half-measures in dealing with the "democratic" opponents. To go further eastwards was dangerous since an ataman G.M. Semyonov was more radical.

Considering the role of the Esers, a problem of Siberian "atamanshina", simplifyingly exposed by the Soviet, foreign and most emigrant historiography as an inability of A.V. Kolchak to stop anarchy of the military chiefs in places. Whereas the peasants, who had lived in Siberia for all their lives, and the Cossacks through "the created by the population, the strongest in anti-Bolshevik relation" detachments of atamans overcame the consequences of an internal duality of the White camp: "common laxity and an absence of organized care ". It is necessary to agree with an opinion of N.N. Golovin, that "a means to quieten “atamanshina” was the only one: the state authority (White) should take in their hands the protection of the peasants - Siberians and Cossacks".


The important aspect is also that one of the reasons of peasants’ discontent for the authority of A.V. Kolchak there was a growth of taxes connected with a necessity to financing “zemstvo” establishments. The growth of “zemstvo” taxes resulted in rebellions on March 18, 1919 in Ikeiskaya political unit “volost’” of the Nizhneudinsk district (uezd) in the Irkutsk province. In turn, the manager of Troitskosavskyi district (uezd) in Transbaikal area wrote on December 15, 1919: ”the population is still negative about the realisation a “zemstvo” reform. The reasons of unwillingness of this reform – an increase of the salaries of “zemstvo” duties, and also a preference for the former order of management”. So indirectly, in addition to other reasons, contributing to the development of partisan movements, the elected “zemstvo” became the centres of anti-Kolchak opposition, in which at the end of 1919 the revolts, including PolitCenter in Irkutsk were prepared.

The PolitCenter Revolt overthrew the authority of the Whites in the Irkutsk province, which resulted in the restoration of the Bolshevik regime on January 23, 1920. Thus the Bolsheviks managed to use the Esers for the overthrow of A.V. Kolchak’s authority, as a transitive stage to the direct restoration of the Soviets (Councils). This is where one can see a general superiority of the Bolshevik tactics and their allies which brought them a victory in the Civil war. The mastering, for a long prospect, of internecine struggle experience considerably strengthened the state qualification of the Bolsheviks.

Having occupied Western Transbaikal area, on April 6, 1920 the Reds announced the creation of the Far East Republic (DVR in Russian). The troops of this formally independent from Soviet Russia, but actually Bolshevik state, carried out military actions against the Whites under the command of G.M. Semyonov in East Transbaikal area. The flexible policy of the Bolsheviks to use the Esers, and then a screen of a "buffer state" allowed to use the contradictions of the interventionists, especially between the USA and Japan. With the help of it, the Bolsheviks, as a whole, neutralised the interventionists, and in separate episodes, received assistance of the Czechs and Americans. Especially essential was the help rendered to the Bolsheviks by the USA and China. At the same time, the help of Japan to G.M. Semyonov allowed the Bolsheviks to play a patriotic card.

The presence of the Japanese allowed the Whites to beat off the attacks of DVR troops on Chita in spring 1920. Therefore the DVR authorities refused temporarily from any attempts to take East Transbaikal area. Simultaneously the Reds undertook measures to strengthen the power of East-Transbaikal partisans. It was achieved through the deliveries of arms from Western Transbaikal area, and a transfer of forces from the Amur area. In its turn, the...
transformation of partisans into the high-grade second front forced the
Japanese to start negotiations, and then to make a decision to evacuate from
the Transbaikal. G.M. Semyonov operatively reacted to the change of the
situation by intensifying the creation of representative bodies and
negotiations on the association with Primorye. At external futility these
measures deferred a retreat of the Whites in China and Primorye until the
end of November, 1920.

The events of the armed struggle of the end 1920-1921 in Mongolia and
the Western Transbaikal area are inseparable from a picturesque figure of a
general-lieutenant baron R.F. Ungern. His unordinary strategy and tactics
gave a high dynamism to military operations. The episodes of the Russian
civil antagonism coincided with the events of nationalist liberation
movement in Mongolia. From here, the attempts of R.F. Ungern, and the
Bolsheviks to use an aspiration of the Mongols to gain independence from
China. Besides it, the military-political situation in Siberia, characterised by
the mass countryside revolts was directly reflected in the events in
Mongolia. The separate groups of the rebels, compelled to abandon the
territory of Russia, were the factor of the situation in Northwest China and
Mongolia in 1920-1921. The final phase of large-scale collisions in East
Siberia was an offensive of the white troops led by R.F. Ungern in summer
1921 from Mongolia to the Western Transbaikal area.

The retreat of the White troops outside of Russia in 1920, in something,
repeated the situation of 1918, when G.M. Semyonov acted from China.
However, the rebellious groups of the peasants of Siberia did not unite with
the remains of the White armies. The reasons were demoralisation of anti-
Bolshevik forces and a high level of Bolshevik diplomacy, which agreed
with the Chinese about the joint measures to liquidate the Whites in China.

The Soviet historians specify, that the general number of victims of a
two-year Semyonov tyranny, based on not complete calculations, totalled
102 000 people. In the author’s opinion, all direct losses of the population of
the region in the armed struggle 1918-1920 were summed in this figure.
Thus, approximately every eighth inhabitant of the Transbaikal area was
drowned, or had to abandon its territory. According to the data of N.S.
Sibiryakov, 15 % Cossack families living on the rivers Argun and Onon,
emigrated to China, having taken herds and movable property. In China on
the rivers Haul, Derbul and Gan there was an area of compact residence of
more than 20 000 Cossacks, known as the "Trerechye" (The Three Rivers).
The other area, where basically Aginskyi Buryats moved from the
Transbaikal area to, was Northern Mongolia. For example, from the
population of Ogozonskyi “hoshun”, totalling about 3000 people; in the
DVR 600 people remained, others " in a consequence of military robberies
and requisitions "roamed to Mongolia, forming Onon-Aginskyi soimon. In total, there were from 16 000 to 20 000 people who emigrated to Mongolia. Besides them, the Russians moved too. Until the beginning of the 1950-s in the valleys of the rivers Iro and Hara on the territory of Northern Mongolia there were up to 10000.

The article is aimed at summarizing the historical experience of Eastern Siberia’s. An attempt has been made to identify a number of factors affecting the formation of modern configuration. The article is based on the extensive involvement of sources, many of which are introduced into scientific circulation for the first time. The study should close certain gaps in covering the history of the region.

The article deals with both general scientific methods (comparison, description, generalization, deduction, induction, etc.) and methods of historical research (chronological, historical genetic, periodization). The use of statistical, historical and sociological methods is justified for the analysis of a large array of concrete facts. The typological method has allowed us to identify groups of similar phenomena and processes. The whole set of possibilities, as well as the system method, has made it possible to recreate an objective scientific picture of the issue studied.

4 Conclusions

Right at the beginning of the struggle in December, 1917 the Bolsheviks applied direct violence measures, though it was possible to do without any conflict [21]. It testifies that the Bolshevik party initially planned a use of extreme measures, terror and violence. However, the complex conditions of Civil war of 1917-1921 forced the Bolsheviks to change dramatically. They began to act more flexibly, than at the beginning of the struggle, mastered a wide use of temporary coalitions, which allowed them constantly to increase their forces. The large-scale internecine struggle became for the Bolsheviks a real lesson of behaviour and an invaluable school of management.

The reasons of the defeat of the Whites in the Civil war, in the author’s opinion, are the superiority of the Bolshevik methods, their general tactics and strategy, which managed to ensure the growth of forces, supporting them, and an absence of internal unity in the White camp. The experience of the consecutive fighters with the Bolsheviks gained large importance. They were defeated, partly killed, partly driven out of Russia, but did not change their beliefs and once made choice. A nucleus of the Whites was the officers,
the studying youth and a part of bureaucrats and administrators, whose
example carried away the representatives of other social groups.

The common analysis of the facts and cause-consequence links forces the
author to join the point of view of those researchers, who consider the Civil
war to be a national catastrophe, accompanied by the destruction of
population, economical mode of production, compatriots, material assets,
accumulated by many generations.

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