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**CLASSIFICATION AND PERIODIZATION OF CONFLICTS CONTINUING IN  
2019 IN AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, LIBYA, SYRIA AND UKRAINE FROM THE POINT  
OF VIEW OF THE THEORY OF CIVIL WARS**

*Annotation.* The basis for the analysis is the theory of civil wars, in the framework of which the current military conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Ukraine were analyzed from the beginning of hostilities in these countries. It is revealed that the battles in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria in different periods of time were different in essence of the war, and the essence of the war in Ukraine has not changed from its beginning to the present time.

*Keywords:* Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Ukraine, war, conflict, civil war

*Introduction.* In general, the conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Ukraine have not yet been completed, therefore it is impossible to specify exactly which foreign countries and to what extent are involved in these confrontations - time must pass, additional eyewitness accounts must appear, a certain amount must be declassified government documents - and only then will it be possible to describe everything that happened accurately enough.

This article was written in order to reveal the true essence of the above conflicts, that is, to classify them in different periods of time, and not to find out who is right and who is wrong; who is acting legally and who is illegal, and so on.

*Definitions.* In accordance with the theory of civil wars developed by me [10, p. 893-940] there are four types of conflicts in which the citizens of one country with arms in their hands fight against each other - these are: armed rebellion, territory of struggle, controlled civil war, ordinary civil war.

An armed rebellion is a conflict in which no more than 10% of the country's population revolts against the central government [10, p. 894].

A territory of struggle is a conflict in which the citizens of a given state are actively and massively fighting each other because their country turned out to be a territory of struggle between two powerful foreign forces. Also, the territory of struggle can be called the land of battles [10, p. 912].

A controlled civil war is a war between the citizens of one country, in which over 10% of the country's population is fighting against the central government, and a single powerful foreign force has a decisive influence on the course of hostilities and the result of the confrontation [10, p. 914].

A civil war is a war between citizens of one country in which over 10% of the country's population is fighting against the central government, and external forces do not have a decisive influence on the course and outcome of the confrontation [10, p. 916].

The following conflicts of the 19th-20th centuries can be cited as historical examples: The Civil War in Russia is an example of an ordinary civil war accompanied by mass terror and

famine, the Civil War in the United States is an example of an ordinary civil war without mass terror and famine, The Civil War in Greece Is an example of a controlled civil war, and the Vietnam War is an example of a territory of struggle.

***Fighting in Afghanistan*** [12]. The fighting in Afghanistan, which began in 1979 and continues to this day, is a series of separate wars that are different in nature.

The war in Afghanistan, which took place in this country from December 25, 1979 (the invasion of the USSR) and until February 15, 1989 (the completion of the withdrawal of Soviet troops), was a territory of struggle in which the USSR and its allies fought against a coalition consisting of the United States and other countries.

After the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, from February 16, 1989, the conflict in this country turned into a controlled civil war, in which the alliance of countries led by the United States acted as a powerful foreign force. This union ended the war with a victory in April 1992 (the fall of the current government and the capture of Kabul by opposition forces).

After that, an ordinary civil war began in the country, which lasted until October 6, 2001.

On October 7, 2001, the military forces of the US coalition and their allies invaded. The result of this operation was the transition of hostilities in Afghanistan in an ordinary civil war to a controlled civil war, which continues in Afghanistan to this day.

The United States and its allies in this conflict are a powerful foreign force that, with limited success, controls the course of this war.

***Fighting in Iraq*** [13]. The fighting in the country began on March 20, 2003, when a coalition of countries led by the United States successfully invaded Iraq, capturing it. After the departure of the allies in December 2011, a civil war broke out in Iraq, which lasted until August 7, 2014.

From August 8, 2014 (bombings from an American aircraft carrier), the civil war in Iraq turned into a controlled civil war, in which the US-led coalition forces (acting as a powerful foreign force) began to actively influence military operations in the country, mainly with the help of combat aircraft to help one of the parties to the conflict.

By the beginning of 2018, the main hostilities, in general, were completed, so can be considered that by this time a controlled civil war had ended in the country. Iraq is currently in the process of eliminating residual anti-government armed groups.

***Fighting in Libya*** [14]. The conflict in Libya began on February 17, 2011 (massive anti-government demonstrations). Gradually, more and more intense fighting began to flare up between the government and the opposition forces. In March 2011, the armed forces of foreign states began to take an active part on the side of the anti-government forces - therefore, the war that began in 2011 is a controlled civil war. In this conflict, NATO countries, many Arab states and their allies acted as a powerful foreign force. This war ended in October 20, 2011 (assassination of the Libyan head) with the victory of anti-government forces.

After that, from the end of 2011 to the beginning of 2014, there was a peace in Libya, disturbed by armed insurgencies.

On May 16, 2014 (uprising in Benghazi), a civil war broke out in the country, which lasted until October 09, 2015 (the Government of National Accord (Unity) of Libya was formed). Foreign troops practically did not take part in this conflict.

From October 10, 2015 to April 3, 2019, there were battles in the country by the residual elimination of armed groups not under the control of the authorities.

On April 4, 2019 (the offensive of the army in Tripoli), a civil war resumed in Libya, which continues to this day. The current war in Libya is waged primarily by local forces for

control of the central authority in the country. Both sides of the conflict have limited support among some foreign states. [15]

**War in Syria** [1, 16, 17]. The conflict in Syria began on March 15 in 2011 (anti-government demonstrations in Damascus and Aleppo). It was a civil war: it involved two local forces was struggling for power in the country: the central government in Damascus against the armed opposition; at the same time, Damascus supported Iran [5], and Western countries the opponents by Damascus. In the course of hostilities, it became clear that the opposition had more forces than the central government, therefore, until 2015, the actions of anti-government forces were successful.

The systematic victories of the forces opposing Damascus are a marker that separates the civil war from the controlled civil war: if the support of Iran was significant and determines the entire nature of the conflict, then the opposition forces would not have been successful, and the war in Syria, from the first days of its beginning, should be called controlled civil war.

On September 23, 2014, the United States and its NATO allies entered the war in Syria with limited goals - the alliance's troops began to operate mainly through air strikes. Over time, some Arab countries, as well as Turkey, also began to provide some assistance to the allies. Despite such an abundance of states that entered the Syrian war, the total impact of the allies on the course of the conflict turned out to be small, therefore, as the conflict in Syria was a civil war until mid-2014, it remained so at the end of 2014 - early 2015.

On September 30, 2015, Russia took the side of Damascus, making a significant contribution [6] to the struggle. From that day on, the central government of Syria began to gradually defeat its opponents, thus a controlled civil war began in the country, in which the alliance of Iran and Russia acted as a powerful foreign force.

On August 24, 2016, Turkey began to carry out Operation Euphrates Shield in Syria - from that moment on, the country turned into a territory of struggle.

The main foreign forces that continue to fight in Syria since then until now are Russia, Iran, Turkey and the United States.

**War in Ukraine** [2]. There is no doubt that in this country, since the summer of 2014, citizens have been at war with each other. In accordance with the theory of civil wars, there are four options in total, in the implementation of which this can occur: an armed insurrection, a territory of struggle, a controlled civil war, and a conventional civil war. If we analyze all four options and discard three as false, then the remaining one will be true.

*Assumption № 1.* An armed mutiny took place in Ukraine.

The population of the Crimean Peninsula and the Donbas region, with a total population of about 9.8 million, opposed the central Kiev authorities. out of 48.2 million people for 2001 [9], that is, 20% of the country's population rebelled against the central government.

There were no battles in Crimea in 2014, since the region quickly became part of Russia - the battles unfolded only in the Donbass. The pre-war population of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions was approximately 6.8 million people. [9], therefore, about 14% of the population of the entire country rebelled in the Donbass.

Thus, the events of the spring of 2014 in Ukraine were not a rebellion, since more than 10% of the country's population rose up against the central government.

*Assumption № 2.* A civil war broke out in Ukraine.

Civil war proceeds in accordance with clearly defined stages [1, p. 897-902], the civil war does not stop on several years: since the beginning of 2015 and until today, there has been

no full-scale hostilities in the Donbass (such large-scale battles took place in the summer of 2014 or in the winter of 2014-2015), so there is no civil war in Ukraine.

*Assumption № 3. A controlled civil war began in Ukraine.*

Armistice "Minsk-1" and "Minsk-2" stopped fighting in Ukraine. Both of these truces were signed by Germany, France, Ukraine and Russia. Germany, France and Russia are not a single powerful foreign force that controls the course of the conflict in Ukraine because Germany and France (as well as the United States and other countries) have been waging an economic struggle against Russia with the help of sanctions from 2014 to the present day [3], and Russia, in turn, introduces retaliatory sanctions against these states. In general, sanctions bring multibillion-dollar losses to all parties to the conflict [4], and since economic sanctions are analogous to war [11], this means that there is no single powerful foreign force that controls the course of the conflict in Ukraine, and, consequently, there is no controlled civil war in Ukraine also does not.

So, three of the four possible options were discarded as false, so the remaining option - Ukraine is a territory of struggle - turns out to be true. According to the UN, this conflict is currently considered active [8]. The main states with significant interests in Ukraine are: Russia, USA, Germany, France, Romania, Poland and Turkey [7].

The date of Ukraine's transformation from a peaceful country into a territory of struggle is November 21, 2013, when the first anti-government protests took place in Kiev (Euromaidan began), which ended with the fall of the central government on February 21-22, 2014. Further political processes in the country in the spring of 2014 escalated into an armed confrontation, limited today to the south-east of Ukraine.

*A note on Syria and Ukraine.* The purpose of this article is not to identify the degree of participation or describe the methods of action of each of the countries involved in the conflicts in question by analogy with finished historical conflicts, it should be expected that the entire range of means by which the parties are fighting each other in the territories of Syria and Ukraine will be revealed no earlier than decades after the end of the conflicts.

### **Conclusions.**

Classification and periodization of modern conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Ukraine from the point of view of the theory of civil wars:

1. Afghanistan: territory of struggle from 25.12.1979 to 15.02.1989, controlled civil war from 16.02.1989 to April 1992, conventional civil war from May 1992 to 06.10.2001 and controlled civil war from 07.10.2001 to the present time.

2. Iraq: invasion by the United States and allies from 20.03.2003 to December 2011, conventional civil war from January 2012 to 07.08.2014, controlled civil war from 08.08.2014 to early 2018, liquidation of residual anti-government groups from the beginning of 2018 to the present.

3. Libya: a controlled civil war from 17.02.2011 to 20.10.2011, peace from 21.10.2011 to 18.05.2014, ordinary civil war from 19.05.2014 to 09.10.2015, the process of liquidation of residual anti-government groups from 10.10.2015 to 03.04.2019 and a normal civil war from 04.04.2019 to the present.

4. Syria: an ordinary civil war from 15.03.2011 to 29.09.2015, a controlled civil war from 30.09.2015 to 23.08.2016 and the territory of struggle from 24.08.2016 to the present.

5. Ukraine: territory of struggle from 21.11.2013 to the present.

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