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METHODS OF ASYMMETRIC WAR IN POLITICAL REGIME CHANGE: THE LIBYAN CASE

The analysis of experience of military operations under the command of the USA and NATO in the 21st century clearly demonstrates that a political regime change, as a rule, is carried out during the asymmetric conflict. A pretext for a military operation can be a proved or an unproven fact of violation of international human law or human rights by political leaders of a country which political regime other actors, for instance, external ones want to change. Events of the "Arab spring", and, in particular, the NATO campaign in Libya in 2011 help to understand the strategy and tactics of the Western countries during this asymmetric conflict. Moreover, the military operation in Libya in 2011, by some estimates, can be possibly considered as a certain pattern of a political regime change in the 21st century.

Aggression against Libya – a new approach to the organization and implementation of a military intervention

The operation of coalition forces in Libya in 2011 is an example of implementation of the new military concept of NATO. Being guided by the resolution of the UN Security Council № 1973 adopted on March 17, 2011, and also by the principle of "responsibility to protect" actively promoted in the West,

the coalition of NATO member states and the EU carried out in the "humanitarian" purposes the military operation to stabilize the situation in this African state. The result of this operation: the change of a political regime in Libya and the full breakdown of its statehood. The UN Security Council (taking into account countries like Brazil, Germany, India, China and Russia which refrained from vote) approved the operation within accurately defined mandate: military actions aimed at protecting the Libyan population because of the inability of the official government to execute this function. The mandate presupposed conducting the joint military and air actions by the coalition on closing the Libyan air space and imposing a ban on the direct military intervention[1]. However, NATO member states deliberately interpreted this document to a great extent, and thus roughly broken all existing norms of the international law.

The world community reacted to this operation differently. Against flatter reviews praising success of the military operation[2] a number of experts criticized and continue to criticize actions of the coalition for the free interpretation of provisions of the resolution, and often for an open violation of the principles of the international law[3]. Moreover, critical remarks were expressed concerning the role of the UN, the international status and influence of which after the Libyan events strongly shook. Experts claimed that the operation in Libya clearly demonstrates a tendency to washing out the concept of the state sovereignty that eventually it will lead to a condition of chaos in the system of the international relations[4].

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[1] Voronin E. Libyan operation of NATO: strategy, "hard" and "soft" powers, results. *MGIMO University of the Russian Federation, Center of Euro-Atlantic security*, Vol. 1 (February, 2012, 31). - 27 P.

[2] Biden calls Libya a job well done (*PolitiFact*, October, 2011): http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2011/nov/03/joe-biden/biden-calls-libya-job-well-done/ (accessed 10.05.2014)

[3] Galitsky V.P. International law of NATO sees it. *The Observer* (2012). P. 68-75; Ponomareva E.G. *The Strategy of Libya destruction*. URL: http://www.fondsk.ru/news/2011/03/20/strategija-unichtozhenija-livii-2424.html (accessed: 18.07.2014).

[4] Kuznechevsky V. The Libya case and the problem of sovereignty. *International life* (May, 2011), pp. 53-60.

As a rule, Russian authors consider the situation in Libya from the legal, political and economic points of view, while not enough attention is paid to the analysis of military aspects of the Libyan civil war and actions of the Western coalition. At the same time, it should be mentioned that the military operation in Libya illustrates an example of an absolutely new approach of the West towards the resolution of armed conflicts. Taking into account mistakes made by the USA in Iraq and by the international coalition in Afghanistan, this time the Western states acted much more effectively at significantly smaller financial expenses. Seven months or 222 days later since the beginning of the operation, Libya was officially declared "released"[5]. On October 31 the operation "Unified Defender" was officially declared "completed"[6]. According to different data the cost of the whole operation is estimated at some billion dollars. Each of the participants in the Libyan operation spent approximately one billion dollars, many participants of the operation spent much less. Financial expenses of the main actor - the USA - were about 1,2 billion dollars[7]. For a comparison: one month of war in Afghanistan costs the USA more than 300 million dollars[8].

The military operation "Odyssey Dawn", carried out in Libya in 2011 by the USA, and then the military operation the "Unified Protector" under the leadership of NATO can be viewed in the context of a paradigm change in conducting modern military operations. Still experts and military analysts have not reached a consensus on the question of how effective was the operation in Libya in 2011. Nevertheless, combat actions on the territory of Libya provided the alliance with a

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[5] Woodward M. H. The Libya Test Case. *Joint Force Quarterly* 4th Quarter (2013 , Issue 71), pp. 20-24

[6] Dadlder I., Stavridis H., James G. NATO'S Victory in Libya. *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 91 (Mar/Apr, 2001, Issue 2), 6.

[7] Libya mission cost U.S. more than 1 $ billion. *CBS News*: http://www.cbsnews.com/news/libya-mission-cost-us-more-than-1-billion/(accessed 10.05.2014)

[8] Cost of war in Afghanistan since 2001. URL: http://nationalpriorities.org/cost-of-war-in-afghanistan/ (accessed 10.05.2014)

number of valuable lessons, having revealed both strong and weak sides of the operation.

The armed conflict in Libya of 2011 is an asymmetric it its character. The Libyan events of 2011 confirm the tendency noted by S.S. Veselovsky, who in his article "Wars of the Future" expressed the opinion that as the number of interstate armed conflicts in the last decades is gradually reducing[9], the asymmetric confrontation between nation states and various non-state actors of international interaction will become the main model of a conflict of the 21st century[10]. Modern conflicts continue to become more and more complicated and their development becomes more and more nonlinear. In Libya, besides two warring parties (Libyan government forces and insurgents), non-state actors also participated in the conflict. Extremist groups, mercenaries from Africa, the Middle East and Europe, Special Forces of the Western countries and private military companies played an important role in Libyan civil war.

R2P Concept

Any asymmetric conflict, in which the purpose of one of the warring parties is to change a political regime of the opponent, raises the problem of non-compliance by the adversaries of the humanitarian law, a question of legitimacy regarding the use of force, adequacy of a retaliation act and etc.

According to M. Woodward[11], the operation "Unified Protector", carried out on the territory of Libya, became the real revolution in the international relations and secured the dominating role of the UN in the international arena. In fact this operation created the precedent according to which citizens of any state of the world can appeal to the international community for protection. A humanitarian intervention should be considered only as a last resort in the future, however, in

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[9]Themner L, Wallensteen P. Armed Conflicts, 1946-2011. *The Journal of Peace Research* (2012, 49), 4.

[10] Veselovsky S. Wars of future. *The Russian Council of International Affairs* (January, 2013): http://russiancouncil.ru/inner/?id_4=1314#top (accessed: 03.05.2014)

[11]Major-general M. Woodward, the commander of the seventeenth air army of the USA, was appointed the Commander of the combined Air Force during the operation "Odyssey Dawn".

case of a threat to life of a significant number of people, it is impossible to refuse such an opportunity.

In 2001 the government of Canada established the International Commission on Interventions and the State Sovereignty (ICISS). The Canadian commission prepared the report under the name «Responsibility to Protect» (R2P) which was submitted further to the United Nations General Assembly.

The report of the commission became a starting point for development of a legal framework within which the international community can assume a duty to protect citizens of any country in case the state itself threatens lives of the citizens or can't ensure their safety. The very Idea of the «R2P» is based on the conviction that sovereignty means the possibility of a state to govern the people independently, thus carrying out a number of obligations including protection of the people against terror, hunger, etc. The international community takes the "responsibility to protect" when a state cannot or refuses to fulfill its obligations to citizens. This concept implies three basic elements: "responsibility to prevent", "responsibility to react" and "responsibility to rebuild".

In 2005 the General Assembly unanimously ratified parts of the report of the Commission on Interventions and State Sovereignty. The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon approved the idea of introducing the principle of "responsibility to protect" into practice, having developed this concept in his report published in 2009. The special attention in the report is paid to determination and timeliness of actions on protection of citizens which should be taken by the international community in case of need[12]. So the demonstrations of the Libyan citizens didn't draw attention of the international community. The UN had to react to the measures taken by Gaddafi's regime on suppression of protest actions.

In new historical realities the principle of "R2P" turned into the instrument of legalization of humanitarian interventions[13]. Western countries managed to carry

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[12] Ban Ki-moon. *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect: Assembly Report*. (New York UN, 2009).

[13] Barry B. Libya's Lessons. International Institute for Strategic Studies, Survival. *Global Politics and Strategy* 53, (October–November, 2011, 5), 11.

out the operation in Libya under this pretext as the Libyan government had no essential support from the third parties, did not possess significant military forces and capabilities. Moreover, the desert landscape was more favorable for airstrikes. Vladimir Putin, the prime minister of the Russian Federation that time, stated that the principle of "responsibility for ensuring protection" became only a cover for the USA, Great Britain and France which pursued the political and economic interests in the region. Today with a certain degree of confidence it is possible to claim that any coalition and any state will not begin a military operation under the pretext of "responsibility to protect" if it implies and may lead to considerable losses of its armed forces.

Characteristics of the parties of the Libyan conflict

The participants of the Libyan conflict can be divided into two groups according to their aims. The first group fought for the preservation of the colonel Gaddafi's regime (Libyan government forces, mercenaries, tribes which supported Gaddafi etc.). The overthrow of the current Libyan regime was the purpose of the second group (which included insurgents, the coalition of Western countries). The short characteristic of these groups.

The Gaddafi's armed forces at the beginning of the conflict comprised three combat arms: the Army, the air force and the Navy. Libya held the third place on military expenses in the region of North and Northeast Africa (up to 5% of GDP). According to different estimates the strength of the Army varied from 50 to 73 thousands[14]. Besides, it is necessary to remember that the armed forces of the country were not the main support of the regime. In the 1970s Gaddafi started to conduct the major reform with the aim to change the political function of the army. Over time this military structure turned into training center for citizens as, according to the Gaddafi's idea of "the armed people", it was the population that had to form the core of the state defense.

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[14] The strength and the weapon of the Libyan army. *RIA Novosti* (March, 2011): http://ria.ru/arab_mm/20110323/356741432.html (accessed: 03.04.2014)

In the process of implementing this reform the colonel created the Corps of Revolutionary Guards (in equivalent to the Islamic Revolutionary Guards in Iran) – the separate mechanized infantry brigade of three thousand in strength. The Corps consisted of representatives of the Qadhadhfa (one of the branches of the tribe Houara) and therefore was actually colonel's personal guard. Later this unit was completely separated from the rest of the army. The personal guard of Muammar Gaddafi was repeatedly used for suppression of armed rebellions and other opposition actions of the Libyan people.

Nevertheless, the issue of creating a professional army was also on the agenda. To achieve this aim the Pan-African (Islamic) legion was reshaped[15]. Being the analog of the French foreign legion, it consisted of foreign professional mercenaries and performed the functions of the full-fledged combat unit. As follows from the name, mercenaries of the legion were generally natives from the African continent, from such countries as Chad, Mali, Sudan and Nigeria. It should be noted that soldiers of the Pan-African legion didn't carry out a function of military instructors of Libyan soldiers, and independently participated in operations, applying the corresponding asymmetric methods of warfare.

Reliance on professional mercenaries and soldiers devoted personally to Gaddafi led to the actual elimination of the army as the independent unit in the structure of Libyan society. Being afraid of possible attempts upon his life, Gaddafi continued to fragment armed forces, creating semi-military groups to maintain the order within the country. As a result, in the 1980s on the territory of Libya simultaneously operated up to ten different in their structure, but performing often similar functions militarized groups and units. Among them there were: the Corps of Revolutionary Guards, the Pan-African legion, the remnants of the regular army, national militia, the task force, militarized squads of the Islamic youth, the armed

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[15] *Review of Julie Flint and Alex de Waal Darfur*: A Short History of a Long War Zed Books (2005): http://understandingsudan.org/Resources/Review%20of%20Flint%20and%20DeWaal.pdf (accessed 03.04.2014)

groups of the intelligence, etc.[16] By the beginning of the 1990s the Libyan army disappeared as independent political force.

Nevertheless, the new military structure built by Muammar Gaddafi appeared to be ineffective and incapable to perform the main function of the army, such as the protection of the state which was obviously illustrated by the military operation of the USA against Libya in 1986 and the war against Chad in 1987. After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the Libyan state lost one of the most important suppliers of arms and equipment, which somehow compensated low level of personnel preparation. The course towards the creation of the weapon of mass destruction (WMD) became the solution of this problem. It is remarkable that all powers in the field of development of the WMD were transferred not to the army specialists, but to a network of special services.

In the 2000s the new objective of the armed forces of Libya became the training and preparation of various African fighting organizations throughout the whole continent, from separatists to insurgents. At that moment the Pan-African legion which number accounted for more than 10 thousands, was the only rather trained and well-armed organization operating on the territory of Libya[17]. This legion, and also Gaddafi's personal guard comprised the main backbone of the Libyan armed forces. During unrests in February-March 2011 these elements under the command of the son of the country's leader, Khamis Gaddafi, were sent to Benghazi to suppress protests.

After the death of Gaddafi the Corps of Guards and the Pan-African legion were dismissed. Followers of the toppled regime went underground and now are only one of numerous militarized groups struggling for the power in Libya. However, hundreds of perfectly armed and trained soldiers of the Pan-African legion left the territory of the country and dispersed across the African continent.

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[16] *The Libyan Army*. Global Security Organization: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/libya/ (accessed 03.04.2014)

[17] The Black African Soldiers Who Fight for Libya — and the U.S. *New America Media* (March, 2011): http://newamericamedia.org/2011/03/the-black-african-soldiers-who-fight-for-libyaand-the-us.php (accessed 03.04.2014)

In its turn, it increases the risk that new trouble spots in other African states will appear as it has already happened in Mali, Sudan and Kenya.

The analysis of the structure and combat training of rebels allows us to draw a conclusion that NATO member states, which actively supported antigovernment forces, took a step towards a new paradigm of war. After more than 13 years of war against Taliban in Afghanistan the coalition forces and various private military companies learned strengthens and weaknesses of terrorists and worked out effective methods of fight against them.

In a range of articles of Western authors Libyan insurgents are portrayed as a "ragtag army"[18]. Moreover, many sources emphasized the unorganized character of rebel forces, the absence of accurate hierarchy and almost full disrespect for any authorities. According to the correspondent of the World Affairs journal, A. Marlowe, who observed Libyan insurgents for a long time, the rebel army demonstrated a complete absence of the command structure[19]. Besides shortages of trained servicemen (approximately one-two per one hundred fighters), private soldiers refused to obey rules of submission and to execute orders of ranking officers. The correspondent repeatedly noted that the disorganization in this ragtag army reached such an extent that often a brigade commander had to personally explain to a soldier the need of execution of an order.

The absence of a due organizational structure of insurgents made them an easy target for coordinated attacks of the Gaddafi's army. Despite a high fighting spirit of rebels noted by foreign military experts[20], it couldn't make up for the low level of training and insufficient equipment. The lack of centralized command led to a situation when pro-government forces rather effectively surrounded and destroyed insurgent groups one by one as, for example, at battles for city ports of

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[18] Anderson J. Sons of the Revolution. *New Yorker* Vol. 87 (5/9/2011, Issue 12), pp. 40-53.

[19] Marlowe A. Flip Flop War. *World Affairs* Vol. 174 (Nov./Dec. 2011, Issue 4), pp. 7-15.

[20] Hauslohner A. The War Between The Libyas. *Time* Vol. 177 (3/21/2011, Issue 11), pp. 26-31

Ez-Zauiya and Misrata in March, 2011[21]. After that government forces moved to the East in the direction of Benghazi. Thus, the Libyan army strongly weakened in days of the colonel Gaddafi's ruling and leaning on the institute of tribal membership, at the first stages of war inflicted heavy losses on insurgents. Moreover, the superiority in strength was also on the part of Gaddafi: the number of the rebels' army by different estimates was 3-4 times less than the government forces.

In order to solve the problem of army's disorganization the National Transitional Council (NTC) in Benghazi established by rebels actively used the Western military advisers and experts. They played a decisive role in creating national police and troops. New recruits trained under the leadership of the former officers of the Libyan army and foreign experts in Benghazi. At the end of May the «Free Libyan Army» was constituted[22]. It formally included defected military members and civilian volunteers fighting against both remaining members of the Libyan Armed Forces and paramilitia loyal to the rule of Muammar Gaddafi.

Despite an absolute air supremacy, American weapons and ammunition delivered to Benghazi by sea, Libyan insurgents could not gain the initiative completely. During the period from June to August the rebels' army suffered a number of major defeats (near Misrata, Marsa al-Brega, Zliten). As a result, during the summer the Libyan armed conflict started to look like a semi-guerrilla asymmetric war in which superiority was on the part of pro-Gaddafi militants. What is more, even insurgents doubted that they could win expressing at the beginning of August an opinion that "Tripoli seizure can take months if not years"[23].

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[21] The blocked cities of Ez-Zauiya and Misrata have fallen. *Military Observer* (March, 2011): http://warsonline.info/liviya/pali-blokirovannie-liviyskimi-voyskami-goroda-ez-zauiya-i-misrata.html (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[22] Libyan rebels called their units "the army". *Military Observer* (May, 2011): http://warsonline.info/liviya/liviyskie-myatezhniki-nazvali-svoi-otryadi-armiey.html (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[23] Battle for Tripoli. *Military Observation* (August, 2011): http://topwar.ru/6334-srazhenie-za-tripoli.html (accessed: 08.04.2011)

Nevertheless on August 21 Libyan rebels launched an attack on Tripoli accompanied by a revolt which began in the city. From different sources of information it follows that unrests in the capital were caused by the Islamists who played a role of "the fifth column"[24]. Armed forces of insurgents attacked Tripoli from three directions: from the West and the South (separatists) and on the North, in the city port, the amphibious operation was conducted. According to military analysts, the USA and NATO in fact carried out the undeclared land operation. During the whole conflict and especially in August the number of rebels grew greatly. In relation to civilian population their quantity remained insignificant, but by August, well-trained in camps of Zintan and Nalut fighting groups accounted for already a major part of all forces of the opposition. Only so-called the "Tripoli brigade" comprised more than three thousand people. Besides, mass of people: "foreign" Libyans, Egyptians, Tunisians and mercenaries from different countries – quickly got training and equipment and went to fight against the colonel's forces[25].

Besides participation of African fighters and mercenaries, in decisive fights for Tripoli in the last days of August the active role was played by special troops of the European countries, and also by European and Arab soldiers of fortune. It is known also that the part of rebels was under the command of the British and French military experts who coordinated actions between separate units. Seizure of Tripoli was carried out quarterly and occurred according to the following scheme: raiding and sabotage groups of the British Special Assault Squads (SAS) moved first, behind them were mercenaries and then Libyan rebels[26]. The British divisions of SAS punched "corridors" from the western direction to a government complex

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[24] War in Libya – battle for Tripoli. *Army bulletin* (August, 2011): http://army-news.ru/2011/08/vojna-v-livii-srazhenie-za-tripoli/ (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[25] Libya: the war continues. *Military Observer* (August, 2011): http://warsonline.info/liviya/liviya-voyna-prodolzhaetsya.html (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[26] Libya: an up-to-date news on August 23. *Military Observer* (August, 2011): http://warsonline.info/liviya/liviya-operativnaya-svodka-za-23-avgusta.html (accessed: 08.04.2011)

of buildings and Gaddafi's residence of Bab al-Azizia[27]. After that insurgents sought to fix on captured positions and then moved further.

The interesting fact is that the civil anti-Gaddafi movement to a significant extent consisted of Islamists. One should note that the mentioned uprisings began on the east of Libya where people traditionally practice Islam of conservative and anti-Western nature and where separatist sentiments are very strong. The dominating political force in eastern Libya is the Harabi tribe. It is also linked to the "Libyan Islamic fighting group" (LIFG) which was created in Afghanistan in the early 1990s. According to CIA, the "Libyan Islamic fighting group" for a long time and quite actively interacted with "al-Qaeda". The same fact was mentioned by Gaddafi himself in the interview to the al-Hayat newspaper in 1999. Moreover, in 2007 LIFG itself declared the merging with "al-Qaeda". As a result, in 2010 according to CIA, the east of Libya was "an inexhaustible source of Shakhids for world jihad"[28].

The "Government" of rebels, established in the city of Benghazi, also was not ethnically homogeneous. The Libyan people consist of about 140 different tribes which live on the territory of three former provinces of the Ottoman Empire: Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan. In addition, the Libyan opposition, "an organizational core" which was located in Benghazi, included two organizations. The first is "the National front for the Salvations of Libya", which activity throughout a long time was financed by the American and French intelligences and also by Saudi Arabia. It was this structure that organized the "Day of anger" on February 17 2011[29]. The second organization - the Islamic Emirate of Barqa. Barqa is the historical name of northwestern Libya. According to statements made by leaders of this organization, it consists of Islamic fundamentalists – fighters of "al-

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[27] *Libya: the British SAS assaulted Tripoli* (March, 2011): http://www.qwas.ru/russia/sr/Livija-Tripoli-shturmoval-britanskii-specnaz/ (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[28] Who are the Libyan rebels? *Military Observer* (March, 2011): http://warsonline.info/liviya/kto-takie-liviyskie-povstantsi.html (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[29] *An interesting Libyan opposition* (March, 2011): http://www.warandpeace.ru/ru/exclusive/view/56711/ (accessed: 10.05.2014)

Qaeda" released from the prison[30]. Besides, as Libyan authorities say, well-prepared militant groups of "Hezbollah" were also at war. They participated in street fights and did not hide from the Libyan and Western intelligence agencies. Generally they played a role of snipers, but often engaged in direct firefights with pro-government forces[31].

Foreign mercenaries as a weapon in asymmetric conflicts

In new historical realities the change of a political regime presupposes a considerable, and in some cases (Libya, Syria, Somalia, Iraq) a defining role of foreign mercenaries. During the armed conflict in Libya in 2011 it was repeatedly noted that both parties to the conflict used hired armed groups. Nevertheless, in February 2011 the nongovernmental organization "Human Rights Watch" claimed that after visiting a number of cities in eastern Libya, no proofs of the use of mercenaries in the conflict were revealed[32]. It contradicted messages widespread in the globe mass media concerning that soldiers from many countries of the African continent arrived to Libya to fight against insurgents. According to information sources, soon after the conflict began the Libyan military refused to shoot at protesters, and Gaddafi was compelled to use foreign mercenaries to suppress unrests. The special report of the American nongovernmental research organization "Jamestown Foundation" also confirmed this information[33].

Several factors indicate that Gaddafi started attracting African mercenaries to struggle against rebels already in the first days of the conflict. In February 2011 the authorities of Nigeria reported about advertisements with slogans calling to go

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[30] *Libya: Islamic Emirate of Barqa Seizes Arms, Takes Hostages* (February, 2011): http://twilightoftheamericanempire.blogspot.ru/2011/02/libya-islamic-emirate-of-barqa-seizes.html (accessed 10.05.2014)

[31] Who are the Libyan rebels? *Military Observer* (March, 2011): http://warsonline.info/liviya/kto-takie-liviyskie-povstantsi.html (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[32] *World Report 2012: Libya*: https://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-2012-libya (accessed: 10.04.2014)

[33] *Special Commentary: Can African Mercenaries Save the Libyan Regime?* The Jamestown Foundation (February, 2011): http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=37551&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=f0b3ef8200af7c3a039bc6f593c6ffc6 (accessed 10.04.2014)

to Libya to fight at war for Gaddafi. On February 18 it was known that the armed forces consisting of servicemen from Chad, who were paid 500 dinars, were actively used by the colonel in rebellious Benghazi[34]. On February 21 representatives of the civil committee created by citizens of Benghazi arrested 36 mercenaries from Chad, Niger and Sudan which were supposedly employed by Gaddafi[35]. Gradually more and more messages about mercenaries from Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, Mali, Sudan, Tunisia and Morocco operating on the territory of Libya appeared. On February 22 "The Guardian" reported about the killing of 150 people by mercenaries in the city of Bayda[36]. However, already at the end of February the former chief of a protocol service Nuri al Mishrakhi stated in the interview to Al Jazeera TV channel that fighters from Niger, Mali, Chad and Kenya were also among foreign soldiers who fought against the regime of Gaddafi[37].

The number of mercenaries fighting in Libya for Gaddafi was so significant that in August the chairman of the African Union Jean Ping declared that "there is an impression that the army of the NTC confuses black people with mercenaries. However, not all black people are mercenaries. It is necessary to distinguish mercenaries who kill people from the black workers who do not participate in the conflict"[38]. The information from different sources also confirmed that since the beginning of March Libyan protesters together with civil police already found and

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[34] Smith D. Has Gaddafi unleashed a mercenary force on Libya? *The Guardian* (February, 2011): http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/22/gaddafi-mercenary-force-libya (accessed 10.05.2014)

[35] Namunane B. Kenya: 'Dogs of War' Fighting for Gaddafi. *All Africa* (February, 2011): http://allafrica.com/stories/201102250009.html (accessed 10.04.2014)

[36] Smith D. Has Gaddafi unleashed a mercenary force on Libya? *The Guardian* (February, 2011): http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/22/gaddafi-mercenary-force-libya (accessed 10.05.2014)

[37] Namunane B. Kenya: 'Dogs of War' Fighting for Gaddafi. *All Africa* (February, 2011): http://allafrica.com/stories/201102250009.html (accessed 10.04.2014)

[38] AU: Libya rebels killing black workers. *CBS News*: http://www.cbsnews.com/news/au-libya-rebels-killing-black-workers/ (accessed 10.04.2014)

lynched several African mercenaries[39]. Altogether on the part of Gaddafi fought mercenaries mainly from Liberia, Eritrea, Mozambique, Lesotho, Gambia, Sudan, Tanzania, Benin, Togo, Mauritania, Somalia, Cameroon, the CAR, Angola, Chad, Guinea, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire[40]. According to the Greek expert in organized crime M. Kutuzis, Muammar Gaddafi was had to use mercenaries also because in Libyan society there is a taboo on killing people from the same tribe.

A number of analysts believe that thanks to the experience and methods of conducting asymmetric warfare possessed by African mercenaries, the Libyan army started fighting effectively against the rebels using "Chad" tactics popular in times of "Wars of Toyotas"[41]. That time raids of mobile groups on high-speed jeeps equipped with a machinegun, an anti-aircraft or an anti-tank rocket launcher, contained and exsanguinated the Libyan army, which invaded Chad in 1986, and eventually made Gaddafi withdraw the army from the country. Besides African mercenaries on Gaddafi's side fought volunteers from Ukraine, Russia and Belarus: mainly pilots, military instructors and specialists working with complex military equipment[42]. It is known that Russia, Ukraine and Belarus had contracts on supply and maintenance of military equipment in Libya before the beginning of the military conflict. The European mercenaries from Belgium, Britain, France and Greece also took part in the civil war.[43] Their number fluctuated between 300 and 500 people. Basically they were specialists on heavy arms, helicopter technologies, tactics and command.

The National Transitional Council also widely used a patchy contingent of mercenaries from Asian countries, mainly from Afghanistan, Bangladesh,

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[39] Libyan protesters lynched African mercenaries. I*noSMI* (February, 2011): http://inosmi.ru/africa/20110222/166760135.html (accessed: 10.04.2014)

[40] "Nigers-mercenaries" in Libya as the beginning of Pan-African redistribution. *Newsland* (March, 2011): http://newsland.com/news/detail/id/648703/ (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[41] Ibid.

[42] Head of NTC: mercenaries from Russia fight on Gaddafi's side. *Rosbalt* (2011). URL: http://www.rosbalt.ru/main/2011/09/24/893506.html (accessed: 03.05.2014)

[43] European mercenaries fight for Gaddafi. *InoSMI* (April, 2011): http://n1.by/news/2011/04/26/96667.html (accessed: 10.04.2014)

Tajikistan, Iraq, Yemen, Pakistan as well as from Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon and Jordan. Foreign mercenaries, supported by special forces from the Western countries, actively participated in the battle for Tripoli and Sirt at the end of August, 2011. On August 23 Muammar Gaddafi's son Mohammed in a telephone conversation with the president of the FIDE K. Ilyumzhinov told that pro-government forces in Tripoli were attacked not only by insurgents, but mostly by "NATO military units and foreign mercenaries"[44]. On August 31 the influential Pakistan newspaper "The Nation" published the analytical article written by well-known political scientist, doc. Masood Azhar, in which he concluded that "CIA employed more than 1500 men from Mazar-i-Sharif to fight against Gaddafi's regime in Libya and the majority of them were recruited in Central Asia. Generally they are Uzbeks, Persians and Hazaras"[45].

The information about the use of American and European snipers in the Libyan armed conflict is also worth mentioning. It is thought that these small professional groups of shooters played a role of a "critical element" in a new NATO strategy. The facts showed that during mass demonstrations these groups fired both at "us" and "them" thus provoking distemper among crowds and as a result prompting them for active and aggressive actions. According to experts, this "critical element" is enough to spark a chain reaction which leads to a "nuclear explosion", able to throw a country into the complete chaos[46]. We believe that the bloody scenario used in Kiev in winter when a particular "attack of snipers" generated so-called "heavenly one hundred" which in its turn was a decisive factor determined the fate of the Yanukovych's regime, was developed and tested in Libya in 2011.

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[44] Gaddafi's elder son claims that NATO military units and foreign mercenaries fight in Tripoli. *Interfax: inform. Source* (2011). URL: http://www.interfax.ru/world/204759 (accessed: 10.05.2014)

[45] Masood A. CIA recruits 1,500 from Mazar-e-Sharif to fight in Libya. *The Nation* (August, 2011): http://www.nation.com.pk/politics/31-Aug-2011/CIA-recruits-1500-from-MazareSharif-to-fight-in-Libya (accessed 10.05.2014)

[46] Sologubosky N. A critical element – NATO snipers. *MaxPark* (July, 2013): http://maxpark.com/community/politic/content/2075278 (accessed: 15.05.2014)

Even though the approximate number of mercenaries from African, Asian and European countries participating in the war in Libya both on Gaddafi's and insurgents' sides still remains unknown, the very fact of a completely new approach towards the use of scenarios of a political destabilization is important to mention. In such scenarios mercenaries, foreign support and sabotage groups are used as key tools for achieving specific objectives, the most vital among which for external players and "third parties" is the overthrow of an existing regime including a physical elimination of the leader or the head of state.

Some results

The Libyan conflict of 2011 can be viewed as one of the most striking examples of the deliberate and violent regime change of the 21st century. Success of the rebels' army is impossible to image without the support of the Western coalition, which conducted the military operation on the territory of Libya under the pretext of "responsibility to protect". During the conflict Western countries used a list of relatively new methods of asymmetrical combat actions. The coalition actively supported, trained, financed and armored insurgents (despite the embargo on weapons supply). It was the West which organized military camps to train and equip militants. The role of "the critical element" was performed by professional snipers, who shot both at government and rebel forces.

Regardless of numerous internal problems the Libyan political system as well as the Quaddafi's socio-economic model could effectively function for many years. As fairly mentioned by E. Ponomareva, before February events of 2011, GDP per capita in Libya was about $13800 – twice as much as in Egypt and Algeria, and half as much as in Tunisia. There were 10 universities and 14 research centers, child care centers, schools and hospitals of international standards. Libya held the 1st place in Africa on human development level and on life expectancy – about 77 years… The most important point is that the human rights, if understood as the right to life in good living conditions, were exercised in Libya much better than in some so called "democracies". In other words, it was not the desire to protect the people of Libya and their human rights that made Western states set a

course for the Qaddafi's overthrow but the concrete geopolitical and geoeconomic interests.

Such a brutal civil and such results – loss of the statehood, mass poverty and chaos – could only be achieved through the direct interference (in information, economic, military, political aspects) of the external forces which were interested in destroying Libya as the independent and relatively successful state.

For Russia, which was involved in the Ukrainian crisis inspired by Western countries and, first of all, by the USA and which like a mirror reflects many features of the Libyan scenario, the analysis of the events of 2011 is of major importance. We should thoroughly examine the Libyan and now the Ukrainian "models" of political regime change in order to work out the necessary antidotes and not to let these models be used against our state and our allies in the future. As one knows – "threatened men live long".