

THE CASE STUDY OF VALUE SYSTEM IN A POST-WAR SOCIETY

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Abstract

This article presents the results of a case study of the value system in a post-war society. Case study is based on the concept of overcoming post-war anomie. The participants in the study were a group of veterans of the second Nagorno-Karabakh war, as well as people who did not participate in active military operations. The results of the case-study indicate a stronger manifestation of anomie among veterans. According to these results, the structure of the methodological program is formed which is aimed at overcoming the essential psychological features of post-war anomie. The results of this study are of scientific interest for identifying similar problems associated with overcoming anomie in post-conflict and post-war societies, and therefore can be useful for specialists in the fields of psychology, sociology and cultural studies striving to diagnose and solve post-war socio-psychological dilemmas among the population.

The results of a socio-psychological study of the value system emphasize the main trends in the modern sense and perception of post-war anomie. In particular, among the war participants, the availability of work and an adequate level of communication were called as the most important values for overcoming post-war anomie. On the contrary, respondents who did not participate in hostilities noted safety and certainty of social expectations as the most important values for overcoming post-war anomie. Safety and certainty of social expectations, however, are common to all participants in the study in the sense of the main values that affect human activity in a post-war society.

Keywords and phrases: Post-war anomie, value system, safety, social expectations, overcoming anomie

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Համառոտագիր

Այս հոդվածում ներկայացված են հետապտերազմական հասարակության մեջ արժեքային համակարգի քեյզ-վերլուծության արդյունքները: Քեյզ-վերլուծությունը հիմնված է հետապտերազմական անոմիայի հաղթահարման հայեցակարգի վրա: Ուսումնասիրության մասնակիցները Լեռնային Ղարաբաղի երկրորդ պատերազմի մի խումբ վետերաններն են, ինչպես նաև այն մարդիկ, ովքեր չեն մասնակցել ակտիվ ռազմական գործողություններին: Պատերազմի մասնակիցների շրջանում ստացված քեյզ-վերլուծության արդյունքները վկայում են անոմիայի ավելի ուժեղ դրսևորումների մասին: Համաձայն հետազոտության արդյունքների՝ մշակվել և ներկայացվել է մեթոդական ծրագրի կառուցվածքը՝ ուղղված հետապտերազմական անոմիայի առանցքային հոգեբանական հատկանիշների հաղթահարմանը: Այս ուսումնասիրության արդյունքները գիտական հետաքրքրություն են ներկայացնում հետկոնֆլիկտային և հետապտերազմական հասարակություններում անոմիայի դրսևորումների ախտորոշման և հաղթահարման տեսանկյունից, և, հետևաբար, կարող են օգտակար լինել հոգեբանության, սոցիոլոգիայի և մշակութաբանության ոլորտի մասնագետների համար բնակչության շրջանում սոցիալ-հոգեբանական տարաբնույթ խնդիրների ախտորոշման և լուծման նպատակով:

Արժեքային համակարգի սոցիալ-հոգեբանական ուսումնասիրության արդյունքները շեշտում են հետպատերազմական անոմիայի ժամանակակից ընկալումների ձևավորման հիմնական միտումները: Մասնավորապես, պատերազմի մասնակիցների շրջանում աշխատանքի առկայությունը և շրջապատում հաղորդակցության համարժեք մակարդակը գնահատվում են՝ որպես հետպատերազմական անոմիայի հաղթահարման ամենակարևոր արժեքներ: Ընդհակառակը, այն անձինք, ովքեր չեն մասնակցել ռազմական գործողություններին, նշել են անվտանգությունն ու վստահությունը սոցիալական սպասումների նկատմամբ՝ որպես հետպատերազմական անոմիան հաղթահարելու ամենակարևոր արժեքները: Այնուամենայնիվ, սոցիալական սպասումների նկատմամբ վստահությունն ու անվտանգությունը ուսումնասիրության բոլոր մասնակիցների կողմից գնահատվել են հետպատերազմական հասարակության մեջ՝ որպես անձի գործունեության վրա ազդող հիմնական արժեքներ:

Բանալի բառեր և բառակապակցություններ. հետպատերազմական անոմիա, արժեքային համակարգ, անվտանգություն, սոցիալական սպասումներ, անոմիայի հաղթահարում:

КЕЙС-ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ СИСТЕМЫ ЦЕННОСТЕЙ В ПОСТВОЕННОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ

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Аннотация

В статье представлены результаты кейс-исследования системы ценностей в поствоенном обществе. Кейс-исследование основано на концепции преодоления поствоенной аномии. Участниками исследования стала группа ветеранов второй нагорно-карабахской войны, а также люди, которые не участвовали в активных военных действиях. Результаты кейс-исследования указывают на более сильное проявление аномии среди ветеранов. Согласно этим результатам, сформирована структура методической программы, направленной на преодоление основных психологических признаков поствоенной аномии. Результаты этого исследования представляют научный интерес для выявления аналогичных проблем, связанных с преодолением аномии в постконфликтных и поствоенных обществах, и поэтому могут быть полезны для специалистов в области психологии, социологии и культурологии, стремящихся к диагностике и решению поствоенных социально-психологических дилемм среди населения.

Результаты социально-психологического исследования системы ценностей подчеркивают основные тенденции в современном понимании и восприятии поствоенной аномии. В частности, среди участников войны в качестве наиболее важных ценностей для преодоления пост-военной аномии были названы доступность работы и адекватный уровень общения. Напротив, респонденты, не участвовавшие в военных действиях, отметили безопасность и уверенность в социальных ожиданиях в качестве наиболее важных ценностей для преодоления поствоенной аномии. Безопасность и уверенность в социальных ожиданиях, однако, являются общими для всех участников исследования в смысле основных ценностей, влияющих на деятельность человека в поствоенном обществе.

Ключевые слова и словосочетания: поствоенная аномия, система ценностей, безопасность, социальные ожидания, преодоление аномии

Introduction

The anomie problem is one of the most discussed by modern scientific knowledge, including socio-philosophical and sociological ones [5; 7]. The need to study anomie is associated with the risks caused by it, which make modern societies less stable and the processes that occur in them increasingly chaotic [1]. The processes of destabilization of societies, transformation of social norms and values, are clearly found in post-war societies where development and deepening of chaotic phenomena can be best studied through certain cases. The phenomenon of anomie as the conceptual framework of the case study is revealed among Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) war veterans who lived through the difficulties of post-war destabilization processes.

The Nagorno-Karabakh war is one of the realities of the modern history of Caucasian nations. This conflict has been underway since the end of the 1980s, with episodes of both heated battles and ceasefires. One of the stages of resumption of hostilities in this region took place in 2020. The situation in the region is one of neither lasting peace, nor lasting conflict. After the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war the Armenian population found itself in a marginal situation, when the risk of impending large-scale military operations has been weakened, but peace among the conflicting sides is still volatile.

Under the conditions of neither lasting peace, nor lasting conflict, the imbalance between the external and internal syndromes of consolidation deepens, and socio-cultural and psychological indicators of societal and mental health are changed or transformed and may lead to a situation of either war or peace. In such intermediate conditions of society, there are some psychological and cultural factors that may lead to the overcoming of anomie and to the reconstruction of societal values, contributing towards resolving the situation. These factors are:

- Development of forms of concluding or transforming the inter-ethnic conflict,
- The change in perception of the “enemy” image,
- Formation of civil society and democratic principles.

The examination of the above-mentioned psycho-cultural factors makes for a significant future area of inquiry, and may provide further insight into innovative means of preserving normal societal activity.

Moreover, in the military context the concept of anomie may be conditioned not only by sociological and cultural features, but also by psychological ones, such as:

- Modernization of “enemy” image,
- The uncertainty of long-term expectation of possible danger,
- Non-satisfaction with the growing social needs in the conditions of socio-economic isolation,
- The growth of the syndrome of internal national consolidation and, in parallel, non-satisfaction or weakening of the external national consolidation factor.

These and many other contemporary surveys show the essential role of national consolidation aimed at the preservation of national and cultural identity in post-war conditions. On the post-Soviet territory, particularly in Armenia, the process of national consolidation was observed through some cultural indicators affecting the dynamics of the development of national self-consciousness. Taking into account the fact that the manifestations of national consolidation in various societies are quite diverse, we should recognize that the study of this problem is multifaceted. One example of this is the information in posters used in the post-war period of 2020 and the war period of the 90s, hereafter referred to as the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War and the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, respectively. These posters described the social expectations in Armenia and attempted to guide the national movement. We can note the increase in the number of Armenian-language posters in the post-war period of the Second War, compared to the number of foreign language posters at the beginning of the national movement in the early 90s during the First War. Ter Minassian provides an example of the study of national consolidation in the Armenian environment in the 90s, which is very important for understanding the features of anomie within this particular context. His research suggests that the posters at the beginning of the First War were addressed mainly to the outside world. However, we can observe that the information in the posters after the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War becomes Armenian to be generally aimed at the population of Armenia [6].

After observing this, it also becomes clear that society often develops needs for some kinds of national consolidation. The demand for national consolidation can be two-sided. The external side is the need to present oneself to the outside world and to incorporate elements of foreign communication and behavior. Conversely, the internal side of the demand for national consolidation is the need to be perceived and understood within one's own environment, and to utilize strictly native forms of communication, behavior and expression. These needs can be identified, for example, by the language used in public discourse. We refer to these as external and internal syndromes of national consolidation. It should also be noted that the phenomenon of the syndrome of national consolidation in Armenia is still maintaining its cultural and socio-psychological impact, receiving new forms and expression. Taking into account that the post-war situation in Armenia is in a state of neither lasting peace, nor lasting conflict, we can suppose that in the condition of an extended post-war period the necessity and perceived need of internal forms of national consolidation increases.

In terms of anomie, when the need for one of these sides of national consolidation is greater than the other, i.e. the need for internal consolidation prevails over the need for external consolidation (or vice versa), a deterioration of values, or anomie, occurs. This means that, ideally, a balance between internal and external syndromes of national consolidation can lead to diminishing levels of anomie. The same applies to the means of overcoming the post-war period of time: the balanced development of national consolidation makes it possible to get out of the state of value

uncertainty and abnormality. The lack of balanced national consolidation leads, respectively, to certain forms of anomie.

In this context, we have conducted an empirical study among the veterans of the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War, which aims to reveal social, psychological and cultural features of the concept of anomie in a post-war society.

Methods

As the Nagorno-Karabakh war is distinguished by certain longevity of military operations, it is clear that the consequences of the post-war situation are affecting both the war veterans and the people who did not participate in the war. However, between the discussed groups of war participants and non-participants, there are some differences in value evaluations and social expectations of the future.

There were 500 people involved in the socio-psychological survey. All of them suffered the impact of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war by either being active participants, or living through the tumult of the period, albeit without actually being involved in the active fighting. These respondents were thus recruited from two groups: war veterans (n=250) and people who did not participate in the military operations (n = 250).

The empirical survey was conducted at the Psychological Observatory of the International Scientific-Educational Center (ISEC) at the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia. All respondents participated on a strictly voluntary basis. Before the start of the survey all participants gave their informed consent for participation in accordance with the ethical norms and standards of scientific research accepted at the Psychological Observatory.

In the study, we have used a number of methods, excluding experiment with human participants, through which we examined certain manifestations of the features of post-war anomie.

Observation Method

The observation method was conducted during a conversation with the participants of the empirical study. The personality traits of agreeableness, neuroticism, extraversion and open mindedness have been considered. Each of the listed indicators has been divided into components, the manifestation of which was registered. Thus, the following components examined through the method of observation are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Observation Method Composition*

Features	Meanings
Agreeableness	Friendly attitude Lack of contempt Willingness to cooperate
Neuroticism	Movements characterization Voice tones

	Logo-neurosis manifestations
Extraversion	Cheerfulness Shyness Communication
Open mindedness	Analytical abilities Emotional saturated speech Imaginary thinking

It is prudent to note that during this observation we opted to examine only the traits that are directly relevant to this case study.

During the observation of the agreeableness trait, it was revealed that the willingness to cooperate is limited to a narrow friendly environment. People are self-aware of their problems and find it difficult to express their thoughts and problems to others.

Observation of the neuroticism trait presented a tense background of logo-neurosis, which needs to be further investigated also through quantitative methods.

We also noticed the sensitivity of the participants' speech, the somewhat weak development of imaginary thinking, especially among the veterans.

Conversation Method

Through the conversation method, the participants have shown:

- General assessment of post-war period
- Ranking of unresolved issues in the post-war period
- Ranking of resolved issues in the post-war period
- Ranking the values that are the basis for a person's activity in the post-war period.

The participants were asked to evaluate the post-war period in general during the conversation. Then they listed and grouped all the important phenomena as resolved or unresolved in the post-war period. And, finally, the respondents ranked all listed phenomena.

Results

Ranking Results

The results of the research revealed certain features of anomie, which are specific to the post-war period.

The respondents who participated in the war (veterans) showed a relatively calmer position on uncertain social, psychological, economic and security realities in the post-war period. The total uncertainty of the post-war lifestyle itself was assessed as normal. The attitude towards death has also been transformed. In particular, the ideas about death and life were often manifested with the same features. For example, the war veterans often described both death and life with the same or similar adjectives,

such as “significant,” “fearless,” “something about me,” “uncertain,” “normal,” etc. In the assessments of those who did not participate in the war, the uncertain expectations of future were distinguished by skepticism and certain restrictions on future needs. In this group, security and health requirements were prioritized. At the same time, the ideas about death and life were also different where the attitude towards death was presented as a far-ended future and was characterized by highly negative adjectives. Additionally, the participants of the research highlighted the needs of independence and communication in the post-war stage.

The following ranking of unrealized or unresolved values has been registered through the method of conversation (in descending order, presented in Table 2).

Table 2. *Ranking of Unresolved Issues*

War participants	War non-participants
1. Availability of work	1. Safety
2. Adequate level of communication	2. Certainty of social expectations
3. Certainty of social expectations	3. Death as a far-ended future
4. Safety	4. Availability of work
5. Personal life	5. Personal life
6. Death as a far-ended future	6. Adequate level of communication

The participants also singled out such values which were evaluated as realized or resolved in the post-war period. The ranking of the problems resolved in the post-war phase (in descending order, presented in Table 3) is also presented by two research groups.

Table 3. *Ranking of Resolved Issues*

War participants	War non-participants
1. Independence	1. Adequate level of communication
2. Death as a far-ended future	2. Personal life
3. Personal life	3. Availability of work
4. Health	4. Death as a far-ended future
5. Adequate level of communication	5. Health
6. Availability of work	6. Independence

As a result of ranking the values that are the basis for a person’s activity in the post-war phase, the evaluations of the research participants are presented below:

Ranking the values that are the basis for a person's activity (the group of war participants):

- Death as a far-ended future
- Certainty of social expectations
- Safety
- Adequate level of communication
- Availability of work
- Personal life

Ranking the values that are the basis for a person's activity (the group of war non-participants):

- Death as a far-ended future
- Safety
- Certainty of social expectations
- Availability of work
- Adequate level of communication
- Personal life

Methodological Program Structure

The aim of the methodological program is to limit the psychological manifestations of anomie and to develop personality adaptive mechanisms.

Within the framework of the program, the respondents are asked to first classify the list of terminal and instrumental values according to their priority. Then they are offered to do some methodological exercises, the complex use of which allows formulating the results as a methodological model of psychological protection of the population during the post-war period. For that purpose, there are the following stages:

- **Stage 1** - After the classification of the terminal and instrumental values, the respondent forms a classification that, according to the respondent, can be found among happy and prosperous people. At the end of this stage it is possible to identify the most important values for the respondent.
- **Stage 2** – The respondent specifies the values that, according to him, have already been implemented during their own lifetime.
- **Stage 3** – The respondent identifies the values that he would want to implement first.
- **Stage 4** – The respondent does the same for his relatives. During this stage, it becomes possible to strengthen the positive standpoints that, in this way, become conscious and even more significant by the person.
- **Stage 5** - A check-in question is carried out to identify the functional positive changes in the respondents' psychological adaptive mechanisms and value system.

Thus, the results of the methodological program, like the example of Somasundaram and Sivayokan [4], are aimed at the development of the personality adaptive mechanisms and positive transformations of the value system, which allow overcoming anomie in a post-war condition.

Discussion

The analysis of the value system and its transformation within the two groups also revealed some features of anomie. If we look at Tables 2 and 3, it is very noteworthy that the perception of death among war veterans is practically a non-issue: they seem to treat death almost within the same parameters as they do life. That is to say, they view death like someone operating within common societal norms would view life: as a perfectly taken-for-granted concept. This is interesting, because this signals a strong case of anomic behavior. Compared to given societal norms, such views on death are very much straying from the normal. The same can be said about the need for clear communication. War non-participants ranked this as the lowest unresolved issue, meaning that they view it as the least necessary. This may tell us that this group of people is adequately socialized, and feels no lack of meaningful communication. Conversely, this also tells us that veterans – who ranked adequate communication as one of the highest priority unresolved issues, second only to the availability of work – are comparatively far less social. Their place within the social norms of a post-war society is remarkably unclear to them, which, again, is a strong indicator of anomie.

It should be noted that the demand for internal national consolidation has been observed in both groups. This was seen through the following answers of the respondents:

- The participants connected the rise of social and psychological problems in the post-war period to the lack of solidarity at the internal social level;
- The ways to solve the socio-psychological problems in the post-war period have been mainly linked by the participants to communication;
- The participants' answers were dominated by the idea that the manifestations of uncertainty of social expectations that emerged in the post-war period should not be "exported" to the outside world;
- In general, it was observed that both veterans and non-participants emphasized, above all, the problem of coordinating life within society, and the need to appear more favorably to the outside world was pushed to the background.

These results show that, as we noted in the theoretical part of the paper, the cultural-psychological understanding of post-war anomie is developed through a lack of balance between internal and external forms of national consolidation. Appearing in a general state of uncertainty, people either do not realize the importance of combining two forms of national solidarity, or they are locked inside themselves and cannot find positive communication mechanisms with the outside world.

The results of this case study also underline certain value system transformations taking place in the post-war period, which are different among war non-participants and veterans. The anomic phenomena of value transformations are linked to the theories of Durkheim and Merton as loss or absence of social norms [2; 3]. However, the psychological characteristics of anomie complement the sociological approaches from the standpoint of the functionality of personality adaptive mechanisms. In other words, the results of the study showed a certain difference between the adaptive mechanisms of veterans in the conditions of anomie compared to war non-participants. The main psychological characteristics of anomie, i.e. unsettled social expectations and the uncertainty towards the future, became decisive in the post-war period of value transformations.

Conclusion

Thus, the sociological understanding of anomie can be replenished with psychological characteristics, which are important for the transformations of the personality psychological adaptive mechanisms and value system. According to the results of the study, a methodological program of the functionality of adaptive mechanisms was developed, which created new perspectives for the study of the methods of overcoming anomie.

We think that the biggest limitation of this case study is that it can only realistically be applied to war zones that are similar in nature to Nagorno-Karabakh. That is to say, regions that have not ultimately achieved lasting peace – even after long-term or large-scale military operations – and are still in a state of constant danger of renewed hostilities.

The main features of post-war anomie reveal themselves through a lack of adaptation or communication, an unresolved need for safety and the uncertainty of social expectations. The transformation of the attitude towards death specifically is a significant feature of anomie.

On the whole, the concept of post-war anomie is characterized by certain transformations of the value system, as well as the distortion of needs for national consolidation.

To identify the basic socio-psychological signs of post-war anomie among war veterans, we investigated certain groups of Armenian veterans who participated in the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war.

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