

The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery

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Культура поражения

A few days after the atomic bomb was dropped in 1945, the rumor went around Hiroshima hospitals that Japan had exploded a similar weapon, over one of America's major cities. A doctor who was present noted: "For the first time since Hiroshima everyone became cheerful and bright." Those who were most seriously injured were the happiest. Jokes were made, and some began to sing the victory song." That same summer, a group of Jewish former members of the Polish resistance, under the leadership of [Abba Kovner](#), planned to poison the water supplies of several German cities until six million Germans have been killed. - pg 22

[see also [Nakam](#) - vs]

Revanche, with its overtones of a gentlemanly settling of accounts, has no place in the **total warfare of mass democracy**. In total war, military confrontations are fought no longer between mutually respectful warrior castes and ruling dynasties but between unconstrained popular wills of opposing nations, which see the adversary as the incarnation of evil, an archenemy with whom there can be no common ground or compromise. The only option is to destroy or at least permanently incapacitate the enemy - pg 27 [bold is mine - vs]

...extent of human and material destruction during the Civil War. The nation as a whole suffered 620,000 casualties, or 2 percent of its (white) population... systematic razing of cities, together with the burning of plantations and large stretches of agricultural land (the practice known as 'Shermanizing') ... - pg 37 to 39 [very enlightening - vs]

Shermanizing - amazingly, this word (or *Shermanize* for that matter) is not found in any dictionary except in [Urban Dictionary](#) (*To pour hot water over used coffee grounds to squeeze an extra cup of coffee out of them.*) But in [Home life in America](#) one Katherine Graves Busbey writes:

As a northern guest in a Southern home I heard a northerner urge her small son not to *Shermanize* the garden in his play, and realized that the Northern general's name has standardized wanton destruction in the region of his famed march for which the nation crowned him. [[Hardcover Publisher: The Macmillan Company \(1910\)](#)]

Talk now about history rewriting by the Russian communists.

The tradition of the 'clan gathering about the chief,' accepting his leadership without question in times of stress, is familiar to every student of the history of Scotland. - pg 49

In France, everyone who loses a battle is a traitor. This aperçu, attributed to Bismarck... - pg 118

English mercantilism and Prussian militarism were parallel scourges, both departing from French esprit in their "calculating coldness, heartlessness, methodicalness, lack of grace, fighting spirit and heroism. - pg 122

... Germany had not yet been perceived as the world's most dangerous barbarian, as it would be in 1914. Rather it was seen as a country that, having suffered two centuries of French hegemony and humiliation, had simply achieved a well-deserved *revanche* in the spirit of fair play. ...hadn't imperial France consistently blocked all efforts to achieve German national unity? Was it not true that Germany's fragmentation into multiple states was largely a consequence of French meddling? - pg 124

... intellectual and moral dynamics that transformed the idea of *Vae victoribus* into that of *revanche*. *Vae victoribus* dictated that the victor would be felled by history, with the vanquished merely in the role of passive onlooker, while *revanche* encouraged the losing side to take destiny into its own hands. The relationship of *revanche* to *Vae victoribus* was thus roughly that of Communist class struggle to the Marxist concept of historical inevitability (and as we will see, it led its adherents into a similar cognitive dissonance). -pg 126

Последняя часть про Германию местами интересна просто как история страны и сравнительный анализ с США, но идея Culture of Defeat полностью потерялась.