

Ukrainian 2014/2015-Events: Practical Proof of Social Theorems*

Social theorems are offered, which describe fully enough the events taking place in Ukraine in 2014-2015 and allow justified forecasting and building up realistic strategies of overcoming crisis tendencies.

Political imitation theorem. Political struggle carried out mainly through imitation, mythologization of the electorate's consciousness always leads to social conflicts. The strength of social conflicts during political myths destruction is directly proportional to the duration of their use and intensity of their formation.

Theorem on subjective-objective transformation. In the world of globalized social and political processes, the absence or substantial limitation of efficient civil society institutes creates danger for a community's subjective-objective transformation. In such a case, a community becomes only a nominal subject of certain rights, while in reality turning into an object of relations between other participants of the political process.

Applying these theorems for analyzing the present-day state of affairs allows making the following conclusion: extensive use of political imitation together with insufficient institutionalization of the national civil society creates danger of a social conflict, which, in the conditions of the present globalization challenges may lead to subjective-objective transformation of the Ukrainian society.

Minimizing the mentioned danger assumes two main directions of activity: firstly, reducing the use of imitation in all spheres of social life; secondly, creating and expanding the sphere of use of efficient communication between the society and government through a system of civil society institutes.

I. Problem definition

The years 2014-2015 became the most difficult for the whole history of *Ukraine's* independence. The democratic gains recognized by skeptical analysts are almost lost today. Even the non-aligned status which must have protected the *Ukrainians*, did not work. One can accuse the external enemy of everything, however this would not help stabilize *Ukraine's* political system or give our country extra possibilities of getting out of the crisis. The events taking place in our country raise higher requirements to scientific reflection. Formulation of justified forecasts is in demand, as it is based on them that realistic strategies of crisis overcoming are possible.

In the present work, we will try to formulate provisions explaining fully enough the events taking place and allowing justified forecasting. We will call such provisions *social theorems*. It is generally known, that in mathematics, a theorem is a statement having a proof in the theory under consideration. Such a proof is based on axioms taken

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as truth without proof or justification. Strict use of such an approach in social and humanitarian sciences is limited due to multiple paradigms of the scientific discourse. At the same time, it is methodologically allowed to formulate provisions based on sufficiently proven and practically generally recognized results of scientific development.

Thus, in our opinion, the following are the key social theorems allowing to describe the current state of affairs:

1. Political imitation theorem. Political struggle carried out mainly through imitation, mythologization of the electorate's consciousness always leads to social conflicts. The strength of social conflicts during destruction of political myths is directly proportionate to the duration of their use and intensity of their formation.
2. Theorem on subjective-objective transformation. In the conditions of globalization of the world social and political processes, the absence or substantial limitation of efficient civil society institutes creates danger for the community subjective-objective transformation. In such a case, the community becomes only a nominal subject of certain rights, in fact turning into an object of relations of other political process participants.

II. Analysis of the latest research and publications

It is worth saying that the issue of political process imitation components as well as the problems of civil society and globalization processes are studied rather well. The so-called "quasi-democracies" were studied by *Larry Diamond* [5], *Philippe C. Schmitter* [14], *Fareed Zakaria* [6], *Guillermo O'Donnell* [9], *Thomas Carothers* [1]. Important scientific results were obtained, classifications of "quasi-democracies" were offered, the conditions and reasons for their formation were established etc. In general, researchers state that in many countries, political regimes were created reproducing the institutional design of the western democracies, but filling it with a principally different meaning, "... *formal democratic procedures can act as a façade concealing authoritarian practices*" [12, p. 105].

Civil society was subject of research by a number of scientists. At present, *G. Alexander, A. Arato, J. Habermas, E. Hellner, E. Giddens, R. Darendorf, J. Keene, J. Cohen* etc. are paying attention to the civil society concept research. A considerable contribution into the development of the civil society institutionalization concept within the framework of the present-day approach was made by *Ukrainian* scientists. The general theoretic problems of civil society development, determining its essence, structure, classification and functions are reflected in the works by *M. Mykhalchenko, F. Rudych, I. Kresina, F. Kyryliuk, V. Gorbatenko, V. Barkov, G. Shchedrova, S. Kyrychenko, A. Kolodiy, V. Bebyk, V. Tsvykh, M. Riabchuk, G. Zelenko, O. Chuvardynskyy, O. Tupytsia* and others. Thorough study of separate aspects of the 'civil society' phenomenon, research on the problems and prospects of development of its institutes is contained in the works by *S. Naumkina, V. Pashchenko, O. Babkina, M. Holovatyy, L. Kochubey, O. Novakova, V. Sukachov, O. Polishkarova, I. Gorokhovskyy, M. Prymush, T. Tatarenko, Y. Shveda, V. Shynkaruk*, and others.

At the same time, the modern social life trends require investigation of the problems lying at the intersection of political activity imitation component and civil society sta-

bilization potential. The aim of this research is: *to formulate the provisions sufficiently describing the events taking place in Ukraine during the years 2014-2015 and on their basis to offer the national anti-crisis strategy conceptual vision.*

III. Description of the main material

It is clear that the issue of sufficiency of the theorems described above for exhaustive characteristics of the current situation is a matter of discussion. However, the two given provisions appear to capture the key trends and dangers of the national social life. Most other dangerous social trends can be rightfully treated as derivatives from the listed ones. The latter may cover the following: concealing the absence of strategic industry reforms with reform imitation; useless resolution of social conflicts through creation of new myths; reduction of the time from myth creation to social conflict during myth destruction, caused by electronic communications development. To some extent, the danger of the so-called political and legal decisions constitutes the development of the mythologization theorem. The myth here lies in the statement that in certain cases it is permitted or even useful to deviate from the legal norms and to resolve urgent problems this way. Like any myth, under the theorem, the mentioned one would have the expected negative result – a social conflict.

The first theorem is proved within the context of *J. Habermas*' public sphere and of the famous research by *P. Berger* and *T. Luckmann* "*The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*".

Information technologies, namely PR, contributed the public sphere with masquerade used by participants to conceal their actual interests during their discussions about the "*affluent society*" or "*national interests*". The above allows *J. Habermas* to call the modern political discussion a "*fake*" of the real public sphere, to talk on political life turning into a show played before the fooled "*spectators who are immediately ready to join it*" [2, p. 195; 13, p. 223, 225].

Thus, the following is offered as the working definition: political imitation is *formation of the social opinion on socially useful results of activity of certain political actors upon their actual absence (political myths formation).*

The mechanism of formation of political imitation negative consequences can be characterized based on the work by *P. Berger* and *T. Luckmann* "*The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*" [3]. They understand the reality as the "*quality to have being independent of our will or desire, characteristic of phenomena*". Knowledge defines "*confidence in the fact that phenomena are real and have particular characteristics*" [3, p. 9]. Everyday life is a "*reality interpreted by people and having subjective significance for them as the integral world*" [3, p. 38]. It is the world created in their thoughts and actions, experienced by people as the real world. Researchers justify it with the fact that in the modern society, contrary to the traditional one, it is the mass media that "*generate the social memory*" and set the social meaning to events taking place [11]. Let us call the "*everyday life reality*" formed based on the information from the mass media the "*new reality*".

The "*new reality*" as the world created in people's thoughts and actions, experienced by people as the real world, corresponds to the "*new knowledge*". Finally, a person,

surrounded by imitation messages, loses the possibility of objective perception of reality, becoming an object of manipulation. A fundamental prerequisite of democratic transit – ensuring political involvement – ceases to exist. Political imitation manifested in systematic manipulation with the social consciousness, excludes the possibility of democratic transit. The consequences of political imitation lie in social conflicts. When the “*new knowledge*” reaches the critical difference with the objective reflection of the actual processes, a social conflict occurs. The strength of such a conflict depends on the intensity of indoctrination of certain political myths and duration of their use.

Unfortunately, we had an opportunity to not only think of the theoretical justification of this social theorem, but also received its practical proof during the events of the year 2014 in the *Crimea*, *Lugansk*, and *Donetsk*.

Starting from 1991, political struggle in independent *Ukraine* was carried out according to the most primitive technology: the electorate was divided based on a small number of myths, and then each political power received its dividends during the next elections. During every subsequent election campaign, politicians raised the “heat” of the discussion, however during their relevant term of office they did not apply sufficient efforts to resolve the issues raised, which divided the electorate and which were used in the next election campaign for the same purpose. Such myths as “*the Russian language, history rewriting*” and “*Who feeds whom?*” were most actively used.

The former assumed electorate division according to its attitude to the status of Russian as the second state language and various approaches to *Ukrainian* history interpretation being integral parts of it. None of the political parties has offered a solution of the mentioned problems, however they actively used it for electorate mobilization. In its turn, the primitive political discourse was in fact reduced to mutual accusations of limited intellect, facilitated formation of the relevant potential for a social conflict.

The latter was based on manipulating the regional economy statistic figures. The current state of the economy confirms the failure of such ideas. Food prices in the East of *Ukraine* and in the *Crimea* have gone high, while the life span in these regions has substantially decreased. Not the last cause for that was the trade blockade of the mentioned regions. At the same time, national producers lost their considerable sales markets without gaining new ones, while the energy sector is in permanent crisis due to the absence of a predictable market for coal of the relevant quality. The “*Who feeds whom?*” mythologeme appeared to be a shallow hypothesis on the possibility of separate existence of naturally interconnected regions of the same country. At the same time, long-term use of this myth in political struggle led to accumulation of the social conflict potential to a critical level. *Thus, through active and long-term use of political imitations, the national political actors jointly formed the potential for the future social conflict.*

The next social theorem is proved based on generally recognized statements on the meaning of civil society, its place in the political process, as well as the general characteristic of globalization processes. It is worth noting that both civil society and globalization trends are explained differently within various concepts and theories. However, the statements recognized by most researchers would be enough for our goals.

Civil society comprises a horizontal system of relations and self-organized institutes operating according to the principles of will and freedom from government influence. The main goal of civil society is to accumulate and represent the community and citizens’

interests in the social and political discourse. Civil society institutes ensure influence onto the government authorities for realization of the mentioned interests.

Globalization is one of today's trends. It comprises a world process of economic, political, cultural etc. integration and unification. Globalization is dialectical. Together with obvious opportunities and advantages, it creates new dangers as well. The latter, for instance, includes the problem of substantial reduction of possibilities of the national governments in controlling the society. The issue of preservation by countries of their actual independence under the increasing influence of super-state formations caused by globalization is rather sharp [8].

In such a situation, civil society institutes of a particular country acquire the role of certain protectors. Efficient community interest representation in the social and political discourse of a country prevents the actual loss of independence, helps to avoid the development of negative trends during integration of a particular country into the global community. In globalization conditions, civil society institutes ensure compliance with the community's political and economic interests, preservation of the cultural identity. Accordingly, a country entering the globalization processes with insufficiently developed civil society faces the danger of actual sovereignty loss, the danger of what was called the subjective-objective transformation at the beginning of this work, i.e. transformation of a community from a subject of certain rights into the object of relations between other, more influential subjects with regard to such a community.

Unfortunately, this theorem was also proved in practice during the events of the year 2014 in the *Crimea*, *Lugansk*, and *Donetsk*. The national practice of civil society organizations clearly demonstrated broad abuse of administrative power. This led to creation of quasi-structures unable to efficiently perform the functions of society interest representation. The civil sector had no sufficient potential for ensuring political stability [7]. Because of that, within the 2014 social conflict, *Lugansk*, *Donetsk*, and *Crimean* communities were deprived of actual representation, their interests being ignored. People in no way related to representation of interests of the relevant communities got control over the mentioned regions. Subjectivity was not renewed in the condition of forced internal displacement as well. Nearly 1.5 million internally displaced persons were deprived of the right to vote at the local elections of 2015. Thus, the absence of efficient civil society institutes became one of the reasons for transformation of the *Lugansk*, *Donetsk*, and *Crimean* communities form subjects of social being into objects, with regard to which "deep concern" is being expressed.

The social theorems described above and the proposed proofs allow switching to analysis of the current situation, formulation of forecasts and conclusions regarding the development strategies.

Firstly, like before, the lion's share of political imitation penetrates into the *Ukrainian* political discourse due to the ruling power. Justifying themselves with the complicated social and political situation, the today's mass media are making enormous manipulative influence. The existing situation is not a secret even for foreign researchers. Thus, in his recently published work "*Ukraine: Tangled Ball*" (*Ukraine: l'engrenage*), Jean-Michel Vernochet notes,

"There is no particular freedom in the information sphere. The press substitutes the reality not for pleasure but because of performing an important function for the

existing political order. Faking leads to the Fourth Power's sacred function becoming to say the truth needed for the ruling power" [4].

As the result, we are having an amorphous electoral field, ready to accept new political imitations due to systematic manipulations. It is clear that the feedback of the excessively radicalized *Ukrainian* society to ruining the newest political myths may appear as destructive as in 2014, or even lethal for the country.

Secondly, in spite of certain positive movements in building up a civil society, the national social and political discourse remains without efficient representation of communities' interests. The vast majority of civil actions is outside the legal field. This makes settlement of the relevant conflicts impossible, creates extra social tension, makes the prospects of starting a civilized dialogue between the government and the civil society, so needed today. It is worth agreeing with *O. Panych*:

"Today Ukraine is experiencing the next, a quite sharp crisis of citizens' trust towards the government. One of the most obvious causes is the lack of working means of social communication, multiplied by the amorphousness of the Ukrainian civil society." [10]

Considering the contents of the second social theorem, one needs to admit the increase of the probability of subjective-objective transformation for not only regional, but of the whole *Ukrainian* community.

Thus, extensive use of political imitation together with the insufficient level of institutionalization of the national civil society creates the danger of a social conflict, which, in the conditions of the modern globalization challenges, may cause subjective-objective transformation of the *Ukrainian* community.

Minimization of the mentioned danger assumes two main directions of activity: firstly, reducing the amount of imitation component in all spheres of social life; secondly, creating and expanding the sphere of use of efficient communication between the community and the government via a system of civil society institutes. As seen, it is these provisions that can serve as the basis for building up the national anti-crisis strategy in the social sphere.

IV. Conclusions

Thus, the formulated social theorems allow to characterize the events taking place in the years 2014-2015 in our country fully enough, to analyze the current state of affairs, to offer a justified forecast and formulate the basic provisions of the national anti-crisis strategy in the social sphere:

- Extensive use of imitation in political struggle created considerable potential for a social conflict;
- Insufficient institutionalization of civil society in the course of realization of such conflict potential in the year 2014 led to subjective-objective transformation of the relevant communities (*Lugansk, Donetsk, the Crimea*);
- At present, the level of use of political imitation has not changed, no key quality changes in civil society institutionalization are observed, thus in the context of proved

social theorems such circumstances require ascertaining the increase of the danger of subjective-objective transformation of the Ukrainian community;

- Minimization of the negative consequences of political imitation as well as development of a constructive dialogue between the government and the civil society have to form the basis of the anti-crisis strategy in the social sphere.

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