

СОЦІОЛОГІЧНІ НАУКИ

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THE CAUSAL DETERMINANTS OF SOCIAL TENSION IN THE CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LABOR MARKETS: CONCEPTUAL APPROACH TO IDENTIFICATION AND MEASUREMENT

The article presents conceptual sociological approach that is oriented to the identification and empirical measurement of the causal determinants of social tension in the contemporary global and regional labor markets. The current global situations of the “crisis and destruction of the labor societies” and of the “destandardization of employment” are investigated by the author. It is underlined that the contemporary labor processes are based on the traditional social mechanism of exploitation. Necessity of further scientific researchers of the identification and empirical measurement of the individualized employment that reproduce the different forms of social tensions in the new inclusive and exclusive models of employment is proved.

Key words: social tension, social exclusion, labor, global and regional labor markets, employment, employability, unemployment.

В статті запропонована розробка концептуального соціологічного підходу, спрямованого на ідентифікацію та емпіричний вимір каузальних детермінант соціальної напруженості на сучасних глобальному та регіональних ринках праці.

Ключові слова: соціальна напруженість, соціальна ексклюзія, праця, глобальний та регіональний ринки праці, зайнятість, працездатність, безробіття.

В статье предложена разработка концептуального социологического подхода, направленного на идентификацию и эмпирические измерения каузальных детерминант социальной напряженности на современных глобальном и региональных рынках труда.

Ключевые слова: социальная напряженность, социальная эксклюзия, труд, глобальный и региональный рынки труда, занятость, трудоспособность, безработица,

Inroduction. It is known that the contemporary period of historical development of the global human civilization is characterized by scientists, politicians and leaders of public opinion as the period of radical transformations of the resource foundations of the global and regional social orders. Evidently, that these transformations are the important ontological factors which determine the scientific need to research and find the optimal ways of humanizing social relations in different regions of the planet. Implemented in the contemporary Ukraine market reforms, liberalization, democratization of social life, and practical realization of the national strategy of European integration became the decisive imperatives of the structural transformation of the Ukrainian society. At the same time, the main results of the scientific analysis of the transformational tendencies showed a significant strengthening of the process of social differentiation, especially in the tendencies of growing polarization of the social structure of society, in the growth of poverty, corruption and social inequalities in the labor market.

The specific feature of the present day is the tendency of increasing social tensions, whose social drama clearly manifested itself in protest forms of mass behavior of Ukrainian citizens in 2004 and 2013-2014. This tendency, as I believe, reflects not only the specific national context of social relations but also the global controversial realities of the new social division of human civilization into post-industrial center, industrial semi-periphery and agrarian periphery. Obviously, this division is the main source of dehumanization of social life, actually leads : 1) to lower quality of the living standards of the working population, 2) to increasing unemployment and 3) to mass international migration. These trends constitute a serious problem for scholars who study current crisis in the global labor market and the new contemporary models of employment. In recent decade scientists have paid much attention to these problems. The situations of the “crisis and destruction of the labor societies” and the “destandardization of employment.” were investigated by M. Archer, T. Atkinson, J. Baudrillard, Z. Bauman, U. Beck, D. Bigot, Ph. Brown, R. Dahrendorf, A. Heskeith, A. Giddens, D. North, J. G. Ritzer, L. Sklair, J. Stiglitz, Ch. Tilly, M. York. It will be reasonable to evaluate these investigations as the positive cognitive foundation for further scientific researches that oriented to identification and empirical measurement of the different causal factors of social tensions in the labor processes.

Taking into account these circumstances the ***purpose*** of this article is to elaborate conceptual sociological approach that is oriented to the identification and empirical measurement of the causal determinants of social tensions in the contemporary global and regional labor markets.

First of all, I'd like to underline that in theoretical sociology of the 20th and 21st centuries, different paradigmatic trends in the study of social tensions. Among were formed of these the most influential are: 1) functionalist paradigm, 2) paradigm of social conflict 3) interactionist paradigm. All these paradigms have common conceptual and methodological orientation txxo the explanation and interpretation of the different causal determinants, ontological manifestations, functional and dysfunctional effects of social tensions. However, the specialized methodological strategy for explication of the certain paradigmatic conceptual differences, taking into account the research priority to study the structural and dynamic characteristics of social tension in the different types of society, has not yet been proposed by scholars. Therefore the meaning of the cognitive status of the term "social tension" is unclear. The formal research convention that this term is useful for investigations of the pre-conflict phase of social interrelations is not quite correct. In various studies this term is related to the basic concepts of social stratification - "class. "status", "power" [1, p. 91] and also "social exclusion", "poverty", "unemployment" [2, p. 1-7]. But very often "social tension" presents as the synonymous with concepts such as "desire", "protest", "conflict", "aggression", "war" [3, p. 2-3]. I believe that sociologists are now fully aware of the relevance of the scientific study of the ontological specificity of social tension as an attributive phenomenon and the process of social life. At the same time, it is important to note that the problem of scientific development of theoretical and methodological foundations of specialized sociological research of phenomenal and dynamic features of social tension still requires a constructive solution. Such is the cognitive situation of the real difficulty in researching the specific ontological determinants of social tension as contradictory functional factors of the global transformational dynamics.

Obviously, understanding this circumstance the famous Western sociologists have proposed the new scientific conceptualizations of the theme of social tension under the context of certain innovative ideas as cognitive stimulus for the development of theoretical sociology. In this connection, it is reasonable to underline the content of the three such important ideas.

First, it is the idea of the epistemological development of "sociology beyond societies" (J. Urry, U. Beck, A. Giddens). The conceptual expression of this idea lies in the argumentation of the research position that under the influence of the globalization process all contemporary societies as nation-states lose their "organic" nature, and the features of functional autonomy and self-sufficiency. That is why the sociological analysis, which is limited to the study of separate societies, is becoming obsole. It is easy to understand that according of this research position, *social tensions are the attributive consequences of the contemporary globalization process and of the "new mobilities"*.

Secondly, it is the idea of "reassembling the social" (B. Latour). This idea reflects the need of radical rethinking of the ontological characteristics of sociality under the context of the intensive development of social networks, which form the new interactive models of social interactions and communications. In this connection, it is also important to take into account the fact that the processes of virtualization of public life positively stimulate the potential of the agency of

individual and collective social actors and expand the possibilities of their involvement (inclusion) into the existing field of global, regional and local social practices. However, such involvement is often simulative and really transforms into the forms of social alienation and social exclusion. So the desire and actions of the migrant refugee, who are aimed at achieving the goal of becoming a member of an advanced society and being involved in the resource processes of life of a given society, are really faced with the mechanisms of social exclusion as a functional system of economic, political, legal, and sociocultural constraints. The controversial combination of these desires and actions and functional mechanisms of social exclusion, as I consider, are the important source of social tensions. From the standpoint of such conceptual understanding, *social tension is an ontological manifestation of contradictions between inclusive and exclusive types of identity of individual and collective actors.*

Thirdly, it is also important to point out the conceptual significance of the idea of radical strengthening of the tendency of individualization of social life. It should be noted that the essence of this idea is interpreted differently in the well-known concepts of "changing balance between I and We" (N. Elias), "individualized society" (Z. Bauman), "social trauma" (J. Alexander, P. Sztompka,). These concepts, in spite of the differences in their thematic orientation, generally target the contemporary sociological scientific search: 1) to the study of the dominant influence of personal (individualized) social practices in the processes of organizing the social order in the contemporary societies and 2) to the research of the establishment of a meritocratic profile of social structure. It is important to take into account that the increase of the influence of personified social practices actually leads to the violation and destruction of the existing traditional modes of social integration due to the formation of the new individualized channels of social mobility. Obviously, a certain system of such "violations and destructions" is also a specific source of social tensions, which can turn into different latent and explicit forms of social conflicts and protest behavior. Thus, *social tension is the specific consequence of the radical strengthening of the tendency of individualization of social life.*

The general conclusion of the presented analysis reflects the statement that the further conceptualization of the scientific theme of social tension under the context of the newest cognitive approaches, from my point of view, is directly connected to the correction of existing scientific definitions of the concept of "social tension". Essential characteristics of this concept should reflect a certain system of the typical causal ontological factors as sources of actualization: 1) violence, 2) social exclusion, 3) social inequalities, 4) protest behavior, 5) social conflicts, 6) global and local risk situations as the specific ontological modifications of the individual and collective activity.

Taking into account the specifics of these characteristics, the concept of "social tension" should be defined as follows: **social tension** is the integral ontological characteristic of society as the globalized social system that reflects certain relative level of its stability and functionally manifests itself in aggravating social relations between different social actors caused by non-satisfaction of their real resource opportunities to satisfy their own needs, interests and goals.

The proposed definition contributes to the formation of theoretical and methodological foundations for constructing the innovative systemic conceptual model of social tension. The basic components of this model should be some interdependent empirical indicators that characterize: 1) the social contexts of events that lead to the growth of social tension; 2) the symptoms of social tensions (emotional, social, mental, behavioral); 3) the processes of interactions and communications that reflect the objective and subjective adaptive resource of tolerant coexistence and of protest actions by social actors who organize own activity in the global and regional labor markets.

I'd like to underline that the most evident consequences of current crisis of the global labor market are: new social inequalities, social conflicts and increasing social tensions. Obviously, under the current context of globalization the technological programs of social policy, which were introduced within particular countries, acquire transnational character. It should be noted that this process, as I believe, really causes different institutional contradictions which lead to a significant deterioration in the quality of national programs of social policy and inefficiency of administrative regulative measures.

Firstly, global economic competition between countries can encourage them to reduce the total cash budget for social protection in order to increase the competitiveness of national economies.

Secondly, the migration of the economically active population objectively creates precedents of the global redistribution of incomes among national states that restricts economic opportunities for particular countries to implement effective policies of forced paternalism and social policies to stimulate processes of self-employment.

Thirdly, the global labor market and financial markets create the possibility of supranational authorities (for example the European Union), whose activities may create difficulties for full implementation of elaborated programs protecting social rights at the national level.

From my point of view, these reasons are important causal factors in strengthening transnational social conflicts that is quite clearly manifested in the recent trends in the global transformation of the labor practices and employment. So I agree with D. North who writes that the main task of social sciences "is to explain the performance characteristics of societies through time, including the radical gap in human well-being between rich countries and poor as well as contrasting forms of political organization, beliefs and social structures that produce these variations in performance"[4, p. 1].

In this connection it is important to take into account the fact that in today's global network of resource distribution the public role of labor significantly change: labor fulfills its role not only as a means of overcoming the traditional resource deficit but becomes as a fundamental social resource for development of industrial and post-industrial societies. J.Stiglitz in his book "Making Globalization Work" points to the emerging conflict interactions between skilled and unskilled labor in the global labor market which constitutes "the asymmetry in liberalization of capital and labor flows" [5, p. 90].

The scientific and technological revolution also stimulates the process a radical change in the social role of labor. This process manifests itself in contradictory tendencies: 1) intensive intellectualization of the labor activity, 2) reduction of employees in industrial systems, 3) emerging development of new models and subcultures of employment.

These new tendencies, as I consider, in the specific way reflect the basic traditional contradictions of the employment archetype.

It is important to emphasize that understanding the phenomenon of labor employment is really the reproductive social process of the functional inequality between master and worker. Therefore the labor itself in its social dimension, as argues American sociologist T.Lasswell, incorporates some conflicts and tensions of "various forms of institutional behavior". So managers must organize the search for optimal organizational interaction in the workplace, which would reflect a reasonable balance of interests in order to solve tasks of specific work faster, better and better [6, p.267-295].

The specific "conflict" aspect of this problem was investigated by the western sociologists. It is well-known, that R.Dahrendorf underlined that the labor process in industrial society traditionally existed as the conflict interaction between the dominate and the subordinate groups which had different volume of authority. Authority is inherent in the social positions themselves, and is not result of behavioral characteristics of the individuals who occupy them. Subordinate groups have an interest in shifting the distribution of authority to their own advantage. Dahrendorf tried to present the process of historical evolution of this "shifting" as the main source of the new social conflicts. These new conflicts produce different risks that enable to destroy the institutional system of employment. In the contemporary societies a large number of categories of workers fall into a situation of "out of work" because there are no more traditional appropriate forms and quantity of available work in order to determine the structure of society [7, p 141-165].

Ch.Tilly in the monograph research "Democracy"[8] proposed the innovative research strategy which was primarily aimed at the identification and description of the main kinds of resources as sources of inequality in the workplaces. This strategy, I regard as promising for further development, despite of some discussion problems. Ch. Tilly argues that the simple attempt to organize professional work always provides different forms of control concerning certain scarce socially significant material and financial resources. On the basis of such forms of control appear and assert themselves two mechanisms for social reproduction of "categorical inequalities" between two "closed groups" controllers and employees: 1) the mechanism of exploitation and 2) mechanism of usurpation. "The mechanism that generates inequality, we call exploitation. It takes effect when those who control the resource: a) employs others to create value means the use of the resource, but b) does not allow these to others use the full amount of the costs, which increased due to their work. The second mechanism of generating inequality would be called usurpation, accumulation opportunities. It is that resource - a source of wealth - manage members of a single closed group" [8, p.138]. Thus, according to the analyzed position the

availability of some scarce resource situation creates competition for control over it. This control reproduces the organization conditions for teamwork by institutionalized mechanisms of exploitation and usurpation.

As I consider, theoreticians of post-modern sociology have proposed additional conceptual explanations of exploitation and usurpation phenomena as the global conflict determinants of the new international inequalities. According to J. Baudrillard's argumentation the trend of the global "symbolic exchange" on labor markets causes the "social deconstruction" of the traditional relations of full-time employment. This process cannot be linked to the relations of exploitation. Therefore labor becomes socially unstable process that is not directly connected to the results of activity on the working-place. Labor is a social gift from capital and at the same time this gift is a kind of compensatory function of the real social power of capital - "labor is not exploitation and presents as a gift from capital" [9, p.104-110]. Baudrillard believes that in advanced societies labor becomes the general code of social reproduction. In its symbolic form of social control, modern labor is the sign of the general social employment. Due to labor processes, people must be fixed whether at schools, at factories, on the beach, in front of the TV, or being retired.

The author of innovative conception "Risk Society" German sociologist U. Beck underlines that the main consequences of the contemporary transformation of the global labor market are increasing poverty and risks. "There is a systematic "attraction" between extreme poverty and extreme risk" [10, p. 41]. In the globalized societies of the "second modernity" the constant reproduction of extreme poverty through communicative risks deforms the channels of social mobility. "Global risks tear down national boundaries and jumble together the native with the foreign The distant other is becoming the inclusive other – not through mobility but through risks" [11, p.331]. The extreme international inequalities are the determining factors of increased conflict interactions under the global conditions of "destandardization of employment"- the process that transforms relations of full time employment in various forms of incomplete employment. This process causes different global threats and risks. "We are becoming members of a "global community of threats". The threats are no longer the internal affairs of particular countries and a country cannot deal with threats alone. A new conflict dynamic of social inequalities is emerging "[12, p.4].

From my point of view it will be reasonable to conclude that for a long time social scientists have not paid due attention to the detailed study of the specific communicative and conventional resource foundations which constitute the professional labor practices. I think that communication and conventional conditions of professional work have structured the standardized employment of various social groups of the working population. Therefore the employment relations as a communicative process involve the creation of a special situation of conventional reconciliations the interests of the employer and employee.

This conventional reconciliation is an evidence of emergence of the new labor subcultures which represent the new standardized forms of individualized employment. Some scholars propose to analyze these labor forms of individualized employment by using the concept of "employability". I agree with

Ph.Braun and A.Hesketh [13] who believe that the essential characteristics of this concept describe the broader perspectives of individual employment beyond the particular circumstances of formal employment as current inclusion to a particular organization. Therefore, the "employability" is the abstract concept that reflects "an opportunity to be busy, but not real time". It is important to conclude that Ph.Braun and A.Hesketh propose to analyze ontological shift from employment to employability as the complicated competitive and conflict process. "The shift in focus from employment to employability reflects the view that many companies are no longer able (or willing) to offer long-term career opportunities to their managers and professionals, Competitive pressures and the drive to increase shareholder values requires numerical flexibility that enables firms to restructure and eliminate "surplus employees" whenever necessary" [13, p. 18].

British sociologist M.Yorke pays attention to the important fact that each human individual has interest to realize his or her own aspirations to be really busy and find appropriate place in the labor market. Therefore this individual must somehow demonstrate and present the real achievements in learning new knowledge, acquired skills, and the ability to interact effectively with others in a certain structure of social relations using available resources as capital. This demonstration of individual achievements, as believes M.Yorke, is an important circumstance for correct interpretation of the «employability» concept: employability - «is a specific relationship of the individual to work in a situation where an individual demonstrates a set of achievements relative to specified task" [14 p.7].

Obviously, the global shift from employment to employability causes rising social tensions and conflict interactions due to the strengthening of international migration and the increasing competition in the national labor markets. I consider that these trends lead to the emergence of the new transnational models of employment that reflect controversial processes of the social inclusion and social exclusion which are the main causal factors of rising social tensions in the global and regional labor markets. Evidently further research of these factors requires new conceptual arguments and empirical surveys.

Conclusions. 1. The processes of the radical transformation of the global and regional labor markets cause different forms of social tensions. The global situations of the "crisis and destruction of the labor societies" and the "destandardization of employment are the objective stimulus for conducting innovative sociological research aimed at the identification and empirical measurement of the causal determinants of social tensions in the contemporary labor processes.

2. The cognitive status of the term "social tension" is unclear. But sociologists use this term for investigations of the pre-conflict phase of social relations. The new sociological definition of the "social tension" concept should include essential characteristics of the global social transformations. So *social tension* is the integral ontological characteristic of society as globalized social system that reflects certain relative level of its stability and functionally manifests itself in aggravating social relations between different social actors caused by non-

satisfaction of their real resource opportunities to satisfy their own needs, interests and goals.

3. The contemporary labor processes are based on the traditional social mechanism of exploitation that determines controversial processes of the social inclusion and social exclusion which are the main causal factors of increasing social tensions. due to the strengthening of international migration and the increasing competition which are the specific consequences between professional actors in the global and regional labor markets.

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