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## PSYCHOSOCIOCULTURAL PRECONDITIONS FOR OVERCOMING OF CONFLICT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECENTRALIZATION POLICY

**Abstract.** The process of Ukrainian society's transformation is associated primarily with the public administration's reforms. They are complicated by information, organizational, economic and regulatory issues. But in addition to these mechanisms, it becomes obvious that the important role is played by factors that lie outside the field of public administration and which aren't taken into account during the reforms of decentralization in previous similar attempts in Ukraine. These phenomena are associated with the real ability and willingness of the Ukrainian society to the reforms of decentralization. The article

deals with the results of the study that the conflict situation in our society develops in the context of public administration's decentralization, and this situation is unique for Ukraine.

**Keywords:** decentralization, public administration reform, psychosociocultural backgrounds, conflict, social conflict, social transformation processes.

### **ПСИХОСОЦІОКУЛЬТУРНІ ПЕРЕДУМОВИ ДОЛАННЯ КОНФЛІКТНОСТІ В КОНТЕКСТІ РЕАЛІЗАЦІЇ ПОЛІТИКИ ДЕЦЕНТРАЛІЗАЦІЇ**

**Анотація.** Процеси трансформації українського суспільства, що пов'язані насамперед з реформами публічного управління, ускладнюються різноманітними проблемами інформаційного, організаційного, економічного, нормативно-правового характеру. Але, крім зазначених механізмів, стає очевидним, що важливу роль відіграють чинники, які лежать ширше площини публічного управління і не бралися до уваги під час проведення реформ децентралізації в попередніх таких спробах в Україні. Ці явища пов'язані з реальною здатністю та готовністю українського суспільства до реформ децентралізації. Результати дослідження, втілені у статті, вказують на те, що в контексті децентралізації публічної влади складається конфліктна ситуація в соціумі, яка є унікальною для України.

**Ключові слова:** децентралізація, реформи публічного управління, психосоціокультурні передумови, конфлікт, соціальний конфлікт, суспільно-трансформаційні процеси.

### **ПСИХОСОЦІОКУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ПРЕДПОСЫЛКИ ПРЕОДОЛЕНИЯ КОНФЛИКТНОСТИ В КОНТЕКСТЕ РЕАЛИЗАЦИИ ПОЛИТИКИ ДЕЦЕНТРАЛИЗАЦИИ**

**Аннотация.** Процессы трансформации украинского общества, связанные в первую очередь с реформами государственного управления, осложняются разнообразными проблемами информационного, организационного, экономического, нормативно-правового характера. Но, кроме указанных механизмов, становится очевидным, что важную роль играют факторы, которые лежат шире плоскости публичного управления и не принимались во внимание во время проведения реформ децентрализации в предыдущих подобных попытках в Украине. Эти явления связаны с реальной способностью и готовностью украинского общества к реформам децентрализации. Результаты исследования, которые нашли свое воплощение в статье, говорят о том, что в контексте децентрализации публичной власти складывается конфликтная ситуация в социуме, которая является уникальной для Украины.

**Ключевые слова:** децентрализация, реформы публичного управления, психосоциокультурные предпосылки, конфликт, социальный конфликт, общественно-трансформационные процессы.

**Target setting.** For Ukraine as a former USSR's country declared democracy's transformations are accompanied by significant contradictions and are characterized as incomplete. If we compare Ukraine's experience of the administrative reforms with other countries, we'll see that different democratic systems have overcome this way nonlinearly and unequally. In Ukraine every attempt of public administration's reforming is accompanied by the constant reversed trends. It could be explained by the unwillingness of the society for the cardinal changes, which are connected with the mental, social and cultural factors, and with the great influence of the political traditions of the past, which are deeply fixed in the mentality of the nation.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Among Ukrainian scientists a great attention to the mental, social and cultural factors during the transformation and modernization of the Ukrainian society is paid in the works of O. Sushiy, the problems of the public administration's transformation are considered by V. Averinyanov, V. Andruschenko, E. Afonin, V. Babkin, O. Babkina, V. Barkov, V. Bebik, V. Zhuravskiy, A. Zaec, Yu. Kalnish, V. Kremin, O. Lazorenko, M. Myhalchenko, S. Naumkina, Yu. Pashomov, O. Puhkal, Yu. Rymarenko, Ph. Rudich, Yu. Surmin, V. Tkachenko, M. Tomenko, V. Hramov and etc. Societal factors of public administration are researched by E. Afonin, E. Donchenko, A. Martynov, O. Sushiy, L. Usachenko.

Among foreign authors the problems of the mental, social, cultural and societal factors, transformations of

the West societies and social conflicts are analyzed in the works of D. Bell, J. Galtung, E. Durchein, R. Dahrendorf, L. Coser, M. Crozier, M. Maffesoli, T. Parsons, N. Smelser, A. Touraine and etc.

The theoretical and methodological basis of public administration's reforms is connected with the scientific researches which show different sides of reforming and transformation of Ukrainian society (informational, economical, organizational, legislative, complex). But at the same time an inefficiency to implement the administrative reform in practice determines to research this problem from various positions including the mental, social, cultural and societal factors. These new system building factors are researched not enough. They aren't considered as an ability to solve modern tasks of the public administration's reforms.

**The purpose of the article** is to analyze the nature of social conflict that appears in the context of the transformation of Ukrainian society and decentralization of public administration, to set the mental, social, cultural and societal factors for overcoming conflict for the purpose of improving of the public administration's reform in Ukraine.

**The statement of basic materials.** Conflict is always the struggle and opposition, confrontation between individuals or groups because of different important for them reasons, purposes, interests, values and attitudes and it is also conscious practical activity of the overcome these contradictions. Social conflict is born in the some social environment, society. It is kind of the opposition when the main actors try to possess or to capture a territory, recourses,

power and they endanger to opposite groups, individuals, their rights and property, culture and so this struggle has got form of the attack or defense.

E. Durchein, T. Parsons, N. Smelser have considered that conflict wasn't nature and was dangerous for society [6; 12; 13]. They described a conflict as an abuse of the structural and functional balance in the social process, so the main tasks — to reveal it early and to take the necessary measures to overcome it. A conflict was considered as the social process, which had own history, phases and stages [6; 12; 13].

One of the researchers of social conflict L. Coser has concluded negative and positive its functions and he has noted that from the one hand the conflict expresses some social purpose, which has social consequences. But from the other hand it reflects dependence which is taking place between the conflict and other components of the social life. So the orientation of the conflict plays very important role [8, p. 191].

Among important functions of the conflict he marks group-forming and group-keeping functions because due to conflict some détente between antagonistic participants takes place [8, p. 214]. Communicative-informational and connective functions play very important role in the conflict, due to them identifying of relevant information and establishment of communication take place. That makes the next partnership possible and connects two participants in the way on the partnership.

According L. Coser opinions, conflict appears because of various interests of groups in their struggle for the own status, power and part of reward.

It performs some positive functions, encourages détente and leads to the social changes, making social units which assist cohesion of the social group, a development of the communicative relations.

Another researcher of the conflict and social conflicts R. Dahrendorf the main position gives to the interests which are in the basis of the conflict [4, p. 142]. For determining of the conflict's nature should understand what interests aren't the same and their degree of divergence, depth, vision and awareness of participants of the conflict. Contrary interests determine an essence of the conflict and are looked as explicit or implicit, obvious, latent. The interests aren't always aware by the participants of the conflict so very important element of the resolve of the social conflicts is necessity of the awareness of the interests by both participants. R. Dahrendorf notes, that latent interests belong to the social field and they needn't to be aware and recognized by the participants [4, p. 142].

Such conflict model of society is dominate and it is the only in all significant social transformations and changes. This model is built on the three topics: every society has different interests including opposite interests and ubiquity of conflicts; every society is based on the violence of some members over others; conflicts are the results of changes and they cause changes. So the essence of the conflict is a struggle of the different groups for the power, and it has a character of the antagonism between the authorities and oppositions. But the main purpose of the power isn't to lead the social conflict to the social shock. According this

scientific position, the conflicts which accompany the administrative reforms are completely natural phenomenon, it is a necessary attribute.

G. Le Bon, M. Crozier, A. Touraine, J. Galtung and others determine positive parts of the conflict [9; 10; 16; 18]. They emphasize the objective value of the conflict due to which the social system is not petrified and so the stimulation of the social development is happen.

The same point of view French researcher M. Maffesoli divides and he considers that the social life isn't someone fixed, but it is dynamic and sometimes is very conflict so social units are temporary, emergent formations. In his conception of Indie-rock sociology it is noted that the modern solidarities frequently are forming and breaking, updating and modifying [11, p. 133–137].

But together it could be selected the conflicts which put back a positive social development. The causes of the social conflicts are in the imperfection of the psychological mechanisms which are in society and its groups, relations between them.

Researching the social integration, E. Afonin, O. Sushiy, L. Usachenko detect that these processes are connected with an ability of the regime of the sustainable social development, with harmonization of relations between its all different groups, with definitions and organic functioning of the normative and socio-cultural regulative mechanisms [1]. One of the criteria of such achievement is sustainability of societal features. The reform of decentralization determines the goal which is the integration of the local community into the one national entity. But in the

context of the reform isn't understood the way of relation's harmonization between different administrative levels of the decentralized society and territorial communities, the conditions of cooperation between communities, purpose of this cooperation and others.

This phenomenon isn't the main in the context of the implementation of reform, but it takes place and due to it the reform's implementation isn't equable, the reform's purposes, the final results, benefits and the basic instruments aren't understood clearly. It could be certified that in practice the process of reform is characterized by non-sustainability of the societal basis of the social development. So non-sustainability is both a cause and motive for the social conflict and sometimes it is identifies with opposite process — disintegration.

But at the same time E. Afonin, O. Sushiy, L. Usachenko, exploring radical social-transformation processes which take place in Ukraine during Independence period, note that post social transformation as a social process has a result of the complications (multidimensionality) of the social cultural area [1]. There is a transition from schematic social structure former modern society to postmodern society what is characterized by the evolution trends lead to complication of the social structure [14]. The integration and disintegration take place continuously.

In modern stage for the decentralization reform in Ukraine the nonlinear, disproportionate, complex and extremely dynamic features of social changes are common. Hypothetically they may transform the social situation on the unpredictable and not controlled

one. So in the context of the psychosocial characteristics this reform doesn't differ from previous attempts of decentralization and adaptation of foreign experience. If we remember the analysis of the monitoring data of the societal changes of Ukrainian society since 1992 which is looked at the works of E. Afonin and A. Martynov, we'll see the wavy (circular) conjuncture of changes of the societal factor and dominant trends in society [2, p. 5–6]. Such type of the social development assists or resists of the state transformations.

Modern reforms take place on the background of the ambivalence that causes of the situational character of behavior, high informational dependence, sometimes disappointment of the government's activities (communal reforms, high communal payments, incomprehensible decentralization reform, retrenchment of the civil servants and etc.)

There is a manipulation of the values heterogeneity in the society — level of the awareness of the value differences between the regions leads to dividing the country on the “bad” and “good”, to recognitions of two polar societies — West and East or two parts of the inhabitants within city, region or district — national or pro-Russian.

But at the same time the transformational processes of our country cover larger fields of the social life, reform becomes more complex. An ability of overcoming the conflict at the regional or local level is connected with these positive changes.

The decentralization reforms which was proclaimed in 2014 is characterized by the inhomogeneous conflict that is when causes, motives, charac-

ter of the social conflict have the similar features in all regions and the state what was taking place during the previous reforms of public administration.

Current reform is characterized by the positive experience of the uniting of the local community not only in the state but in every region or district. Due to these factors the social conflict doesn't escalate but it leads to the search the social interaction with new conditions which are setting by the state and the Government.

The technical and finance assistance of EU which should be sent for the elimination of the social conflict plays very important role. Different trainings, grants for the local communities' development are facilitating their inclusion to the decentralization process. And it makes this process irreversible, when the processes of the transformation become more strength the resistance to changes becomes less according the condition that these changes carry more benefits then failures.

But the main factor of the successful decentralization reform is in that the human consciousness is the most affected. At first interrelations between the economical, political and cultural factors of the social development are shown in the works of R. Inglehart, Ch. Welzel [7, p. 139]. These relations set up level of development of the society, its ability for modernization and changes, interrelation between transformation and tradition, in what way tradition influences on forming and fixing values and how these values could influence further on the policy.

R. Inglehart, Ch. Welzel made conclusions that historical factors are very



difficult to change, they form value orientations, so orientations are the result of the cooperation of modernization and traditions; these processes take place gradually, because they have nonlinear character, each of the stage is directed on some changes in the ideology of people and their willingness for the next step of modernization; as a result, these three components (political, economical and cultural) are changed themselves, in cultural sense the forming of new social values takes place and new units appear.

The same conclusions have been made by S. Huntington in his researches of transformation a lot of countries form totalitarianism to democracy [17, p. 144]. Among the problems of the back transformation processes he noted identity of nation. It is in the nature of society, its economy, culture and history regardless of the form of the government and it is unique for every country. From this position the adaptation of the foreign experience of decentralization reform could be implemented very partly because of the difference of the national traditions (between Ukraine and Poland whose experience is wished to set in the public administration reform).

As O. Sushiy says the changes of transformation are doing more conflict with the old mechanisms of social relations. According new globalization conditions the social and transformational processes are accompanied by change of the system forming factors — socio-material (institutional) and psychosocial. They performed difficult, fluctuation and nonlinear nature of new psychosocial culture of public administration in Ukraine. New system

building factors aren't explored enough and they aren't looked as preconditions of the modern implementations of the reform's tasks [15, p. 5]. Society and state are changed to a certain extent of the human changes. Applying this theory to the decentralization reform we can determine that the important place belongs to the social consciousness transformation beside other factors of the reforms' benefits. Analyzing own social researches about decentralization reform in the Mykolaiv region, the author of the article can confirm that successful are such local community and in such amount where psychosocial features of the local inhabitants, their identity in the context of reform were influenced by their leaders, where the awareness of the reform's benefits higher than in other less successful communities.

The factor of uneven of the reform's implementation is also explained by structure and forms of their transformations where the dominative in some society forms of the adaptive behavior of great groups are reflected. Analysis of possible societal forms of such behavior allows to select five kinds of the adaptive processes: identification, individualization, investment, marginalization and deviation [5, p. 8]. In accordance that societal psychics is introduced as an open system where all structural components are interrelated, all of them has a quality to be changed fast and to respond to the situation [5, p. 8]. So it shows that some territorial community has a possibility and ability to overcome its own social conflicts which are connected with reforms and it could be effective enough and to take all benefits.

**Conclusions.** There aren't clear indicators and answers on the questions why some of the community could to prevent the social conflict of the administrative reforms, why the openness to the modernization and transformation in territorial communities is differ, why some communities are ready to reform and the others isn't. Especially interest aspect that psychosocial factors are different in community of one region or sometimes — of one district (for example in Mykolaiv, Kherson, Odessa regions). So the researches of the psychosocial factors of the communities which are not ready to reform or where there is a social conflict are actual tasks in public administration's transformation for their next including to the public process.

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