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DEMOCRATIZATION IN UKRAINE: CONDITIONS AND TASKS

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Speaking about democratic choice we are mainly interested in the common features in the motivation of post-colonial, post-totalitarian and post-authoritarian societies, their leaders, elites and people, which determine attractiveness of democracy in the contemporary world. The intention to be democratic today is often connected with the intention to be free, modern, safe, developed state, which is accepted in the circle of developed countries on the conditions of friendly and equal partnership.

Based on the experience in building democracy in the "third wave" countries (S. Huntington) and on the other conceptual assumptions of institutionalists, we can come to the conclusion of necessity to review the traditional approaches to the problem of democratic transit.

These approaches considered democratic transit, firstly, as the issue of the ideological (or value, in a wider sense) choice, and, secondly, as the issue of destruction of non-democratic social institutions with the aim to build institutions of liberal democracy in their place. Therefore, they referred to the following as to the major directions of building democracy: a) understanding by the active part of the society of the liberal paradigm of public consciousness; b) maximal denationalisation of the public sphere; c) harmonisation of the national institutions and standards with the Western samples.

The Western expert community arrived at the conclusion that the so called civil society should become a driving force for democratic changes in the former USSR countries. These approaches considered democratic transit, firstly, as the issue of the ideological (or value, in a wider sense) choice, and, secondly, as the issue of destruction of non-democratic social institutions with the aim to build institutions of liberal democracy in their place. Therefore, they referred to the following as to the major directions of building democracy: a) understanding by the active part of the society of the liberal paradigm of public consciousness; b) maximal denationalisation of the public sphere; c) harmonisation of the national institutions and standards with the Western samples.

However, the modern views enable not to define democracy as just an ideological choice or an institutional model, but as social innovation. This definition opens to us a somewhat different outlook of the study on the problems of building democracy and the problems of practical democratic reforms.

As we speak about innovation, the most important aspects of its study and design in a specific social organism are as follows: a) motivation; b) preconditions; and c) algorithm of its launch.

The issue of a subject of democratic transformations has not lost its topicality, either, though in case of innovation, it would rather mean an initiative core, as well as perceptiveness to novelties and interest towards them by various social groups and political actors.

Returning to the issue of motivation, we should detail the interrelation between democratisation and modernisation. The matter is that intention to modernisation, which is quite understandable to world-system periphery countries, is often understood as readiness for democracy. As a matter of fact, motivation with regard to these two strategies for national development only coincides partially. Modernisation is the shortest way to development and, in certain sense, safety. But often modernisation does not account for motivation of freedom and in certain cases, is conducted much more efficiently and quickly when freedom is restricted.

To Ukraine, motivation of freedom is traditionally one of the leading public values. As for two other aspects of a democratic choice, safety and development motivations, these characteristics of a democratic order were learned and assessed by the Ukrainian society much later. The democratic social innovation in Ukraine is accompanied by processes of national development and the struggle to redistribute the social product. The main trends of Ukraine democracy building include the targeting on state, nation and civil society development.

We can distinguish several key collisions in understanding democracy, which imposed a serious obstacle to building an efficient democracy in Ukraine. The major problem of Ukrainians' democratic self-determination is related to the correlation between freedom and law. Other issues are the correlation between rights and obligations and the correlation between the will of the majority and the right of the minority.

Having defined the democratic development objective in Ukraine as a transition from imitation to essence, we have highlighted the key markers of this transformation. These include negotiation of such widespread phenomena as the sword-law, citizens' passivity, corruption, uncertainty about powers and areas of responsibility of state bodies, political appropriateness, failure to comply with procedures,

informational closeness and politicians' lies, as well as other features of immature public organization, which continue existing under the lee of democratic institutions.

Key words: Democracy, civil society, national development, modernization, democratic values, democratic transit.

The key issue of success while building democracy is the issue of motivation. Why do societies, nations and countries start their road to democracy? What are their real incentives, goals and expectations associated with introduction of democratic principles and standards in politics, state structure and public consciousness?

It is obvious that each specific case includes unique historical experiences and the set of reasons and circumstances to precede the democratic choice of the nation. However, we are mainly interested in the common features determining the motivation of post-colonial, posttotalitarian and post-authoritarian societies, their leaders, elites, and people that designate attractiveness of democracy in the contemporary world.

In a number of cases, we can consider the so called *'constrained democracy'.* As a rule, it is preceded by a military defeat or another event resulting in a national catastrophe that leads to the loss of viability of the former, non-democratic method for self-organisation of the nation.

There is also another impetus to be external to self-consciousness of the specific nation which makes its social order democratic. The matter is that to be democratic nowadays means, in a certain sense, *to be modern.* Non-democratic regimes and their lieges face serious obstacles to full-fledged involvement into many global processes having humanitarian, political and economic nature. Such countries experience restrictions in cultural exchanges and intellectual cooperation; they are deprived of the possibility to enter influential coalitions, and their position on the international arena is always considered in view of their 'nondemocratic' status. This is the fate of the majority of 'non-democracies' and 'immature democracies' (and, especially, those of them that can claim to occupy leading positions in the world by virtue of their economic, demographic or military potentials) to always compensate the disadvantages of their status by using other leverages.

Therefore, the intention to be democratic today is often connected with the intention to be accepted by the developed countries under the conditions of friendly and equal partnership. As a matter of fact, demands related to democratic transformations play the key role in the process of integration into such international communities as NATO or the EU. However, along with such external impetuses to democratic transformations, one can explore another side of democratic motivation. It is ***t****he attractiveness of democracy* that exists as the fairest and most advanced social system which the authorities, the politicum, and the society are equally interested in.

Attractiveness of democracy involves, first of all, its specific values deemed by the democratic society as the basis for public life. *Freedom* is the main value. Under present conditions, any society that appreciates freedom would certainly arrive at a decision to build democracy. The reverse statement is fair, too: any nation that does not appreciate freedom would never want to build real democracy.

The principle of equality is a distinctive feature to understand the freedom; it was established within liberal projects of the 19th and 20th centuries. This principle represents the link between the liberal worldview and the notion of democracy which the European social idea borrowed from the ancient world. The idea of equality was engaged into democratic projects by its numerous adherents representing social, demographic and cultural groups that had previously became victims of discrimination under certain circumstances.

Another important principle related to the value of freedom is the principle of determination of rights and obligations. The idea that every individual (as well as a group and a nation as a whole) has integral rights whose observance is guaranteed by the entire social order and the state does not

only attract those who seek freedom, but also those who seek protection. In particular, they seek for protection from injustice, violence, and despotism that can be guaranteed by democracy.

Thus, attractiveness of democracy appears because the latter is connected with the idea of *security* to be generally expressed through the concept of a law-based state. A modern lawbased state is built on the ground of democracy because this type of social structure has the fullest and most well-balanced set of standards, practices, and procedures which can ensure the protection of rights and legal interests of any subject of the social life.

The third important aspect making the democracy attractive is the opportunity for *development* given to an individual and the society as a whole. In the contemporary world, the majority of democratic countries are the most developed ones. The interrelation between development and democracy is not incidental, as the principles of freedom and equality are mainly implemented by the instruments of free competition. The peculiarity of a competitive democratic society is represented by the availability of choice stimulating every individual to improve their skills and competencies. This concerns all the spheres of public life starting from the production of commodities and delivery of services and ending with the politics, culture, and ideology. Owing to the emergence of more and more attractive and comprehensive social offers, a democratic society dynamically develops innovations and acts as the leader of this segment.

The experience in building democracies in various parts of the world and the tragic consequences of refusals from a democratic liberal model in favour of authoritarian and totalitarian projects during the first half of the 20th century gave an impetus to the social idea reflecting fundamental principles of the democratic order. In the forefront of large-scale political transformations taking place in the end of the 20th century, the development of these approaches subsequently resulted in the establishment of the entirely separate scientific field called as the theory of democratic transit.

The principal feature of a society which is not democratic in its form but contains democratic elements in its content is its *transparency.* This concept, developed by Karl Popper, determines the ability of a particular society to accept almost any information or innovation. In this case, not only external, but also internal transparency is understood as the readiness for changes. The majority of traditional societies are closed; their natural self-maintenance system stipulates existence of restrictions placed on external contacts and prevention of internal transformations which could concern mental, psychological, cultural and institutional mechanisms.

A transparent society possesses a means of processing new information and developing new models of behaviour based on these data. New information does not harm a transparent society but facilitates its improvement. The major features of this means, which enables a transparent society to reproduce itself while facing the external and internal challenges, are described by dint of Max Weber's concept of *goal-oriented activity* and Roland Barthes' notion of *structuralist activity.*

In the context of the problems of building democracy, it is important to understand that transparency (i.e. absence of restrictions on exchange of information and institutional changes) leads to the desirable result only when the society is a collective subject to be able to rationally assess the reality, produce innovation models of behaviour and act in accordance with them.

It is clear that this ability cannot emerge and cover all members of the society simultaneously. Mastering specific thinking and communication skills is a long historical process to envisage gradual involvement of new social groups and categories of citizens.

In this case, it is important to explore the preconditions for the formation of the collective subject and implementation of mastering methods for the goal-oriented activity. M. Weber's 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' is a well-known example of works studying such preconditions. But the accelerated transit to democracy in the post-Soviet countries requires fast-acting methods and the respective recipes.

The Western expert community arrived at the conclusion that the so called *civil society* should become a driving force of democratic changes in the former USSR countries. Up to now, the notion of the civil society had gained significant popularity among the Western politicians and had become the key component of their ideological transition from the modern to postmodern views in the social and political sphere.

However, in the context of democratization of the post-communist space, the latter started to be understood as a certain hypothetical collective subject which includes liberally oriented and socially active citizens organised in non-governmental organisations (NGO). In order to maintain these structures, Western foundations began allocating certain resources and, as a result, opening various social lifts to their active members.

Ralf Dahrendorf, a German researcher and one of the authors of this strategy for building democracy, recognises that there was no precedent of conscious "building of civil societies" in the world history, as they emerge and develop independently relying on the internal preconditions and motives. But as far as "transitional democracies have neither time nor resources to wait that everything will happen by itself", "it is necessary to build independent organisations and institutions being an intermediate link between the government and an individual" [1].

One cannot claim that the strategy for development of non-governmental organisations as an instrument of democratization has not justified itself completely; but its realization caused difficulties related to both viability of the 'third sector' itself and its influence on the evolution of social and political institutions that facilitate the search for other factors and instruments to accelerate the democratic transit.

That was the way to evolution of the Western political idea which certain landmarks are important for the purpose of our study. For example, Robert D. Putnam drew attention to institutional and political and cultural preconditions for building democracy and proved the dependence of efficiency of liberal political institutions on the forms of social selforganisation which had been immanent to the previous periods [2].

At the same time, the institutional approach was efficiently applied in the studies on economic transformations (D. North and others) which offered an opportunity to examine preconditions for success of political democratization and economic liberalisation in the comprehensive civilizational context. A peculiar synthesis of the achievements of institutional and value and ideological scientific schools gave rise to the concept of 'open access'. This concept characterises the method for functioning of the unique mode of public self-organisation that evolutionally succeeds the 'natural state' and corresponds to democracy in the political sphere [3].

Based on the experience in building democracy in the 'third wave' countries (S. Huntington) and on the other conceptual assumptions of institutionalists, we can arrive at the conclusion on the necessity to review the traditional approaches to the problem of democratic transit.

These approaches considered democratic transit, firstly, as the matter of ideological (or value, in broader sense) choice, and, secondly, as the matter of destruction of non-democratic social institutions with the aim to replace them by the institutions of liberal democracy. Therefore, they adverted to the following major directions of building democracy: a) understanding of the liberal paradigm of public consciousness by the active part of the society; b) full-fledged denationalisation of the public sphere; c) harmonisation of the national institutional standards with the Western samples.

However, the modern views enable us not to define democracy as an ideological choice or an institutional model only, but to examine it as *social innovation.* This definition allows us to have a slightly different outlook on the study regarding the problems of building democracy and practically implementing the democratic reforms.

Considering the innovation in a specific social organism, one should take into account the next important aspects of its study and design: a) motivation; b) preconditions; c) algorithm of its launch.

The issue on democratic transformations has not lost its topicality. Though, in the case of innovation, it would mostly mean an initiative core, as well as perceptiveness to novelties and interest in them shown by various social groups and political actors.

While returning to the issue on motivation, one should detail t*he interrelation between democratization and modernization.*

The matter is that intention of modernization, which is quite understandable to worldsystem periphery countries (I. Wallerstein), is often understood as readiness for democracy. In fact, motivation can only partially concern these two strategies for national development. Modernization is the shortest way to development and, in a certain sense, the safest one. But often modernization does not account for motivation of freedom and, in some cases, is conducted much more efficiently and quickly when freedom is restricted (for instance, during the totalitarian rule in the USSR and Nazi Germany or the authoritarian governance in Chile and Singapore).

Therefore, while assessing the opportunities for building democracy in one or another society, it is necessary to take into consideration the rate of intention to freedom and its correlation with the motivation to modernization. The situation in the post-Soviet countries is especially difficult, as, after the collapse of the communist system and the period of decay of the 1990-s-2000-s, the majority of them experienced repeated modernization which created additional risks for democratic projects: an unsuccessful experience in using a democratic façade may make the society decide to return to the authoritarian modernization to have been observed in the 20th century.

In Ukraine, the motivation to freedom is traditionally one of the leading public values. The intention to personal freedom and establishment of public equality are the prior goal of all large-scale social and political movements in this country starting from the liberation war led by Bohdan Khmelnytskyi (1648-1654) and ending with Ukrainians' involvement into the dissident movement in the former Soviet Union where they dominated in number and represented the most radical part to resist totalitarianism.

Two other aspects of the democratic choice, i.e. security and development motivations, were learnt and assessed by the Ukrainian society much later. The relation between development and democracy became obvious after confrontation between the Soviet and the Western models that resulted in the decisive break with the communist ideology and the state monopoly in the early 1990-s. Additionally, understanding of the relation between democracy and internal and external security by most of the citizens is still underway: it is quite comprehensive for them, since it suggests etatistic positions and psychological closeness.

Thus, after having taken the idea of democracy as the landmark of national development, Ukrainians faced more complicated challenge. By that time, the Western liberal democracy had made a long way of development and represented a comprehensive system of public organisation which suggests simultaneous functioning of democratic *government institutions,* a developed *civil society,* the respective forms of *political culture* based on the prevalent liberal *values* and ideological *principles.* The accelerated development of such a system in the post-totalitarian society which, along with the democratic transit, is going through the major stages of national self-determination and, at the same time, has to solve problems related to the economic decay and sharp decline in living standards of the majority of the population, has become a serious challenge for Ukraine, as well as for other countries of the former USSR.

The introduction of democratic (in their form) institutes and procedures turned out to be rather easy. As early as in 1990, Ukraine was a part of the Soviet Union and had the one-party political system but managed to hold its first free election and, as a result, to form a quite representative

Parliament. After proclamation of the independence of Ukraine, the remaining components of the democratic political system, including the Constitution of 1996, were established without any particular problems. The country's political life was initially built on the competitive basis, beliefs, and observance of other civil rights and freedoms.

The introduction of democratic principles and values, which could provide for adequate consideration of public problems, boost motivation of state officials and elites to overcome them and assure efficient functioning of democratic institutions, was much more difficult objective.

We can distinguish several collisions of understanding democracy that imposed a serious obstacle while building an efficient democracy in Ukraine during the 25-year period and even gave rise to doubts in justification of its democratic choice by representatives of certain public and political circles.

Generally speaking, the major problem of Ukrainians' democratic self-determination is related to the *correlation between freedom and the law*. Being initially oriented to predominantly individualistic approaches and values, the Ukrainian society does not tend to literally and rigorously pursue legal standards when they hinder achieving personal goals. In these cases, an individual, an official or even a political institution more likely acts in an informal (including corruptive) manner, makes use of the imperfectness of legal provisions or tries to contextually change these provisions themselves. This correlation between freedom and the law within the Ukrainian democracy results in the decay of political culture, the lack of balance inside the legal system and the low level of institutional legitimacy.

The correlation between *rights and obligations* derives from the understanding of the principle of freedom. With regard to legal provisions, the relativism is understood to shift the balance of this correlation in favour of rights and, therefore, to assure quite conditional performance of obligations. Everyone avoids performing obligations if he/she has such possibilities and abilities; the performance of obligations is considered as punishment or social defeat in the competition with more successful and competent fellow citizens.

In this view, the society and almost every individual find themselves trammelled by a vicious circle. For example, a businessman who does not perform his tax obligations faces an alike dishonest public official and the latter, in their turn, has to deal with an unfair school teacher of their own child, etc. Such 'forgetfulness' often concerns obligations in the political sphere where the notions of 'political responsibility', election competition and behaviour of members of various representative authorities step over the bounds of human morality. At the subsequent stage, political corruption does not only become inherent to deputies, but also swallows up the electors. As a natural result, the state service, representative democracy and the institute of free elections itself start sweepingly degrading.

The problem of the correlation between the *will of the majority and the right of the minority* turned out to be difficult while being perceived by the Ukrainian society, too. The winner-takesall principle accepted by political actors as the major model of their behaviour has destructive consequences for the domestic political system. A political force or its leader often considers the victory in the political struggle (for instance, in the election campaign) as the right to monopolise the power. On the other hand, the defeated party also tends to act oppressively and often leaves the limits of democratic procedures in order to secure its interests.

Along with increased proneness to conflict, such a style of relations between the majority and the minority results in instability of institutions and procedures: the wining majority consistently attempts to restructure the political system (mutual relations and powers of authorities, election laws, parliamentary procedures) in favour of its interests. Additionally, the minority intends to destroy or block any (even legitimate and constructive) initiatives of the authorities. Such political 'competition' rapidly turns into political war which involves not only professional politicians, but

also sympathetic active citizens. Trust within the political system drops to zero, and crisis risks are almost off the charts.

A certain political phenomenon, which is generally defined as a *façade democracy,* becomes the result of specific consideration of the democracy in the proper country: in this case, the established state institutions are rapidly 'standardized' with more developed norms while as some basic principles remain forgotten. An off-site observer cannot evaluate this process as non-democratic actions, since it is perfectly hidden behind the democratic appearance. But the situation seems to be different from inside. The political reality is perceived as a democracy built according to the certain plan and based on an externally developed model. But, in fact, no one is happy with it.

Having defined the objective of democratic development in Ukraine as a transition from imitation to the essence of this process, we have highlighted the key markers thereof. They include such widespread phenomena as the sword-law, citizens' passivity, corruption, uncertainty about powers and areas of responsibility of state authorities, political appropriateness, failure to comply with democratic procedures, informational closeness and politicians' lies, as well as other structures of immature public organization which continue existing under the lee of democratic institutions.

However, this social diagnostics fails to answer the key question which determines the fate of democracy in Ukraine. The process of democratic transformations in this country includes the following elements: a) introduction of almost all the required standards and institutions; b) experience in using mechanisms of political representation; c) freedom of speech and access to information of political nature; d) support for the development of parties and various non-governmental organizations; and e) involvement of experts from developed countries into the reforming process.

Why is the quality of politics ultimately deteriorating according to all indicators? This is the main issue to be considered. Exploring them more specifically, one can conclude that people's trust in the state institutions has declined; the personnel composition of the Parliament, local self-authoritative bodies and public service has worsened; the legal system has become imbalanced; political dialogue has drawn down both in its form and content; the society has moved away from understanding of the common interests and comprehension of the common values; and political leadership has discredited itself as a phenomenon.

According to all these indicators (as the most important means of assessing the quality of democracy), Ukraine has degraded. It happened during the very period when this country was supposed to actively arrange its democratic bases.

The greatest problem is the following: the ways of transformation of authoritarian, totalitarian and other regimes into democratic ones are well studied theoretically and have not been critically reviewed by the ideologists of the 'third wave', the theorists of the democratic transit and the authors of other transitional period concepts. But the political science and practice are still unaware of methods to turn this false democracy into a real one [4; 5].

What does it mean to build democracy under these conditions? First of all, it means to alter the landmarks of and priorities in reforming the society and the political system. There are not so many provisions and institutions that should be paid more attention to in the context of their compliance with certain standards and dominate approaches to be the spirit of democratic transformation itself. On the one hand, such reforms should meet the ideas of public welfare and justice by a certain nation. On the other hand, they should facilitate the establishment of the specific democratic principles and values.

In order to transform the existing façade democracy, it is not so much important to understand the essence and features of a democratic regime as to consider the traits which are not inherent to actual democracy.

Thus, democracy does not mean exercise of the *sword-law*. Competition is an integral part of the democratic order. However, the political struggle should be carried out according to certain rules and, that is the most important, should not be realized for the power itself. It should aim for the right to represent common interests of the society and the state. Political struggle is a conflict of opinions and points of view. It does not mean suppression of an enemy by any means.

Therefore, the second important peculiarity of democratic competition envisages that the point of view to be different from the winning one should not be suppressed or persecuted, as the discussion on public welfare would never end and its participants are more interested in finding the truth than in fighting their corner.

A constant search for the truth and better solutions determines maximal transparency and readiness to perceive new information. Democracy is impossible within the *closed society* having no freedom of opinions. A democratic society critically responds to politicians' lies, as such lies prevent citizens from conscientious choices and correct decisions.

Democratic procedures are important as they form the basis for trust. Any violation of rules exposes all the achievements to a risk. Compliance with the required procedures and their continuous improvement represent a mechanism allowing the democratic principles to be maintained and developed by the society, regardless of political trends, behaviour of leaders, and immediate decisions. The *lack of respect to the procedure* is the first marker of an immature society and its lack of readiness for the democratic form of government.

The countries displaying prevalent *political appropriateness* are not democratic, too. The law of procedure is especially important with regard to principal, vital decisions taken by the state's leadership or the nation in general. Democracy cannot be built on the basis of revolutionary appropriateness, since it inevitably gives rise to despotism and destruction of civil accord.

Democracy is based on trust in the collective mind and collective will which could later be invested in state decisions and public institutions. Therefore, as long as t*he trust in the individual dominates over the trust in rules and institutions,* there is no mature democracy. Democracy has no bosses; it has leaders acting within the legal framework and under their people's mandate.

Democratic institutions are instruments of the popular rule which are continuously used by the people. There are two principal components of this mechanism that is the *powers and responsibility. Uncertainty in these issues,* unclear definitions or absence of the respective provisions are the signals alarming that democratic institutions are not used properly.

Democracy is incompatible with *corruption and a conflict of interests.* Enforcement cannot become the basis for democratic government. It can only be grounded on trust in the representatives elected by the people, as they were delegated the power by their voters. Corruption ruins trust, and the society becomes deprived of its political representation in the authorities.

Democracy continuously controls and improves itself. A political machine or a political system is unable to do this by itself. It should have the required impetus and instructions from competent, active and organized citizens. Therefore, democracy is impossible in a *passive society* dominated by paternalistic orientations and expectations, as its members are inclined to implicitly trust the authorities' decisions and actions and are ready to substitute their loyalty in return for certain welfare.

Understanding of markers that are not immanent to democracy creates the required preconditions for determining the objectives of democratic development in a certain country. The exploration of the respective phenomena and trends in the public life may serve as a sufficiently reliable indicator of success of such development.

The democratic social innovation in Ukraine is accompanied with the processes of national development and the struggle to redistribute the social product. This means that Ukraine has to make a long way to democracy, as other nations and countries have made it before. It should be

expected that in the process of building democracy as the best form of public organization the Ukrainian nation would not only adopt the required social innovation, but also make its own innovative contribution to developing civilization by transforming its unique experience into universally important thing.

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