

Public practices and public participation: specific of their display in societies that is transformed

It is substantiated, that public practices, as social actions, determine the new ways of thinking of individuals in traditional cultures, form a sense of identity and put in order social relations, defined both configuration of social structure and forms of social institutes. The specific of public practices and public participating is shown in the transformed societies.

Key words: public practices, political participation, power, barriers of power, identity, bankruptcy of power, escalation of conflict, public associations, public consent, opposition.

Громадські практики та громадська участь: специфіка їх прояву у суспільствах, що трансформуються

Обґрунтовується, що громадські практики, як соціальні дії, зумовляють нові способи мислення індивідів у традиційних культурах, формують відчуття ідентичності та упорядковують соціальні відносини, визначають як конфігурацію соціальної структури, так і форми соціальних інститутів. Показана специфіка громадських практик та проявів громадської участі у суспільствах, що трансформуються.

Ключові слова: громадські практики, політична участь, влада, бар'єри влади, ідентичність, банкрутство влади, ескалація конфлікту, громадські об'єднання, суспільна згода, опозиція.

Spółeczne praktyki i społeczne uczestnictwo: specyfika ich przejawu w społeczeństwach, co transformuje się

Uzasadnia się, że społeczne praktyki, jak socjalne działania, determinują nowe sposoby myślenia indywiduumów w tradycyjnych kulturach, formują odczucie identyczności i uporządkowują socjalne stosunki, wyznaczają jak konfigurację socjalnej struktury, tak i formy socjalnych instytucji. Pokazana specyfika społecznych praktyk i przejawów społecznego uczestnictwa w społeczeństwach, co transformuje się.

Kluczowe słowa: społeczne praktyki, polityczne uczestnictwo, władza, bariery władzy, identyczność, bankructwo władzy, eskalacja konfliktu, społeczne zjednoczenia, społeczna zgoda, opozycja.

The concept of “public practice” has become to use widely and successfully in political science and social science recently.

Theoretical and methodological grounds for the use of this concept is based on a fairly well-established research tradition because the existing variety of different interpretations of the term “practice” is delimited only by the vision of producing well-established behavior, but in the scientific community it is traced a general understanding of this category as one of the central problems in the social sciences to describe set of social actions that lead to new ways of thinking of individuals in traditional cultures, form a sense of identity and ordering social relations, defined as the configuration of social structures and forms of social institutions. Usually, all social practices are divided into institutionalize and no institutionalize, while highlighting their legitimate function.

The concept of “public practices” is often used to denote the set of actions, which under the influence of different determinants become stronger and gradually fill no institutionalize space with the ability to transform political structures and social relations.

Well-known Ukrainian sociologist Alexander Reznik grounds heuristic value of the concept of “public practices” which is served by it productively in their studies as one of the main categories, as follows: “For civil practice is revealed the phenomenon of citizenship – the citizen awareness of their rights and responsibilities in the life of the country, creation of conditions for more complete disclosure of the full potential of man, his creative expression. In the process of institutionalization of the public space as an informal network for the exchange of information and points of view, which is reproduced through communicative action, the actors acquire the skills to form and publicize their views, thus producing public practices. On the other hand, the political power gradually has formed the ability to perceive the public opinion. Thus public opinion through public practice takes on control functions. That is why public practice can be considered as systematic, reproducible and constant action of various social actors (individuals and groups) in the public sphere, as a form of realization of their own interests and in conditions of significant aggregate capable of converting social and political institutions”¹.

Thus, the subjects of civic practices can be both individuals and groups, because public activity is structured according to the forms of involvement, depending on which is appropriate individual and collective way of defending their own interests. The sociologist said that we could distinguish three kinds of practices of the nature action and type of the public activity: social and political practices that provide both individual and collective forms of interim action in public-political sphere; the practice of communication between people and agencies and

¹ Резнік О. Громадянські практики в перехідному суспільстві: чинники, суб'єкти, способи реалізації / О. Резнік. – К.: Інститут соціології НАН України, 2011. – С. 287.

organizations that provide treatment in institutions to protect their own interests; cooperative (collective, institutional) practices of citizens who have voluntarily joined in permanent and systematic actions for the association of people for joint realization of their interests.

Conceptual scheme of entanglement of civil practices was formulated by A. Reznik that, according to him, it is materialized by the embodiment of social relations through institutionalize or no institutionalize forms of expression. From the point of view of A. Reznik, this realization is possible in the presence of relevant structural, resource and socio-psychological factors. The analysis of the empirical research of various forms of civic engagement has identified the most effective models of their determination, which include: 1) the model of public voluntarism, which covers both the subjective socio-psychological and objective socio-economic factors; 2) the model of structural splits explains conditionality practices public forms of solidarity and identification with different social groups, which were formed in the social development of a particular society; 3) the model of social capital explains the activity of public organizations, as the accumulation of trust in the people, a sense of community, neighborhood cohesion, public competence constitute appropriate social life ².

Public participation is investigated by public practice and provided a systematic combination of all three of the above mentioned models, demonstrates the clear relation with the existing social structure of a particular society. This connexion motivates civil activity to appropriate the particular social ideals, interests and needs and the system of social values in general.

The interaction between the various forms and manifestations of civic participation can more clearly see the interaction between the actors, which is disclosed as a system of interactions at various levels. A. Reznik said, that "Social stratification on various grounds leads to contradictions between the interests of social groups due to many circumstances. Problems of social interests will inevitably encourage the identification and solidarity of individuals. For this reason, social differentiation has become a factor of the public practices because the social disruptions are essentially social and political nature, that cause the group identification. At the same time, social relations appear as a specific relationship between humans and institutions, this area includes relationship status and distribution of social status in society, creates structural separation, which affects the realization of human needs. These needs can be situational, individual character and not necessarily involve identification with a group" ³.

But not always understanding social interests caused by social division, encourages civic revitalization. After all, if the activist values grow, there will be an ideological basis for social needs and interests and political identification. This increases awareness of their own subjective political competence and civic duty, and faith in their own strength and faith in the

² See: Резнік О. Громадянські практики в перехідному суспільстві: чинники, суб'єкти, способи реалізації / О. Резнік. – К.: Інститут соціології НАН України, 2011.

³ Резнік О. Громадянські практики в перехідному суспільстві: чинники, суб'єкти, способи реалізації / О. Резнік. – К.: Інститут соціології НАН України, 2011. – С. 289.

opportunity to realize their claims become decisive factors in order for people to take effect. Thus, when the importance of civic duty outweighs own selfish view of life, there are prerequisites for identification and solidarity with the reference group, it has reduced interpersonal distrust, which is an emotional saturation personal relationships.

The intensity of the civil practices are also influenced by personal factors of self-actualization of the person in social life, namely self-esteem, control over the situation, the tendency to domination, ease in social interactions and others. It is important that the degree of freedom action is an indicator of citizenship practices and it is determined by the degree of economic independence of individuals, otherwise these actions will not show themselves as those from whom they currently received resource. Completely proved that individual is decisive through an independent socio-economic status. This is caused by the accumulation of activist resources - the availability of substantial practical experience, skills, which is an important source of recurrence action.

Support individual political system is based on interiors norms and values produced by this political system – this is happening by sending their individual expressive (identification), moral (legitimacy) and instrumental (satisfaction) installations on system objects. However, during the transformation, as A. Reznik said, under the influence of social anomie is “exposed” the regulatory framework of the political system, public practice become an important regulator of political life like repeatable and reproducible actions⁴.

Because political institutions and social relations in society are the object of public practices, double institutionalization affects the social relations in transformed societies. So, it has been repeatedly cited researcher A. Reznik, tracks sufficiently clear causal relation between such social transformations (inherent in particular and the society): “Due to the fact that people’s trust applies only to the institution of the family in a transitional society, it is dominated by fragmented tribal morality, social relations are based mainly on “family”, which becomes a decisive factor in the economic, household and other areas of life. Certainly it hampers the effective implementation of reforms. However, the forced transformation are forced political elites to liberalize legal space. Under these conditions, the traditional strategy of behavior of the population are ineffective because the new rules encourage active social actors expand their list of claims. The most effective behavioral strategies distinguish that may be crucial in the creation of social institutions. The importance of public practices in the process of political institutionalization is determined by their functional ability to affect public opinion in the rest of the population and to actively oppose or contribute to the political decision of the authorities”⁵.

⁴ Резнік О. Громадянські практики в перехідному суспільстві : чинники, суб’єкти, способи реалізації / О. Резнік. – К. : Інститут соціології НАН України, 2011. – С. 290–291.

⁵ Резнік О. Громадянські практики в перехідному суспільстві : чинники, суб’єкти, способи реалізації / О. Резнік. – К. : Інститут соціології НАН України, 2011. – С. 291.

Positive value have certain democratic traditions civic participation that have developed over the years of Ukraine's independence for successful learning and the active use by citizens and their associations about the benefits of the transition to the information society, and the establishment of such use in the form of appropriate public practices. However, the sociological studies show the underdevelopment and insufficient level of institutionalization the certain forms of civic participation as a manifestation of national specificity.

Features of social transformations in the Ukrainian society have showed the possibility for major social groups realize their interests and needs, which have contributed to the relative stabilization and conflict-free. In addition, the de-monopolization of power and the possibility of political revenge in the 2000s, the existence of a balance between power and opposition factions have caused the loyalty of elite groups to the existing political regime. The dominance of the ambiguous attitudes is prevented the formation of a clear structural distinction on political and ideological grounds of the population regarding the economic, political and geopolitical development of Ukraine. Low public support for the idea of federalization of Ukraine is excluded the formation of separatist identities in the Ukrainian regions and contributed to the dominance of the national identity of the population. The lack of social stratification on ethnical and cultural characteristics prevents the critical processes of regionalization, as equality in this plane of life chances and opportunities meet the needs of is a factor of stability.

The differences, that existence between the considerable potential of civil activity and its actual manifestations in the transforming societies, are justified by the fact that the formation of activist installations to occur in subjective, emotional experience of the person, but a rational and balanced assessments of important aspects of life haven't had significant influence on the formation of dissent, and in the mass consciousness of the most effective methods of general public influence on decision-making bodies of the government are considered conventional forms.

However, that was shown by recent developments in Ukrainian politics, Ukrainian society is largely set to nonviolent forms of protest as a means of defending their interests, but it has been Maidan and anti-Maidan in Kiev and then in other cities of the country, by the people's initiative (and not just the actions of opposition politicians) in the end of 2013 – the beginning of 2014. It hasn't assessed the goal of these events and their possible consequences, it is shown that the vast majority of states lack the ability to control power through political institutions and NGOs (non-governmental organizations), so these events were the basis for the emergence and deployment this actions.

When we are analyzing the notion of political practices in their practical implementation, especially in modern Ukraine, unfortunately, we should apply to such concepts as "bankruptcy power" and "barriers of power." So, the first term refers to the inability of the government (certain entities, structures, high officials, politicians) to fulfill their promises, declarations. Usually the power's bankruptcy is ending with the resignation or removal of the government,

Parliament, political leader (or all together). For the second term – the barriers of power, they are characterized by, the first, certain obstacles that the authorities have to overcome in the process of their existence, activities, and secondly, the obstacles are posed by the government itself as a result of its activities⁶.

Although there was the possibility of creating a reference not power, then at least close to it, that is well developed, organized government in the independent Ukraine, which would be attractive to subordinates, subordinates (implementers) and would have a legal character, it failed to do what again evidenced by recent negative developments in society.

Early parliamentary and presidential election's requirements are evidenced of the bankruptcy of the government and the escalation of political conflict, that of his depth, vertically, increasing the intensity and hostility. It should be noted that, despite some decrease in activity in the last years of Ukrainian society compared with European countries, voter's turnout is always quite high in Ukraine. Motivation of electoral activity increases in referendums and presidential elections, which is associated with a clearer personification of political races. Recently the number of voters, who did not support any candidate, has increased. This form of electoral activity is quite symptomatic, because the people who do not see the worthy subjects of the political process, ignore the elections. Instead of coming to the polling station and conscious disapproval of any candidate demonstrates a special civil "gesture" rejection of existing political life that can be considered one of the main causes of bankruptcy in power now.

The analysis of the attitudes of civil practices had showed us that active citizens are more customized for a variety of forms of ownership and the combination of market and state mechanisms of regulation of the economy than passive citizens in the Ukrainian society⁷. At the same time most of them believe that democracy is the most desired state device. Especially, those different respondents are involved in sociological and political practices. Among those involved in public-political practice prevails support for Western path of development, and they are more open to processes of integration and globalization.

⁶ Політологічний словник: Навч. посіб. для студ. вищих навчальних закладів / За редакцією М. Ф. Головатого та О. В. Антонюка. – К.: МАУП, 2005. – 792 с. (С. 59).

⁷ Перспективи модернізації в Україні і тенденції змін суспільної свідомості / Інститут соціології НАН України: Матеріали круглого столу, м. Київ, 11 лютого 2013 року // [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: http://www.i-soc.com.ua/institute/press_relis.pdf