

Інтерпретація понять «Трансформація», «Соціальна трансформація», «Політична трансформація» у сучасному науковому дискурсі

Проаналізовано зміст використання поняття «трансформація» у сучасній суспільствознавчій літературі. Подана інтерпретація термінів «трансформація», «соціальна трансформація», «політична трансформація», запропонованих науковцями різних політологічних шкіл. Виокремлено найважливіші ознаки політичної трансформації, як складової процесу змін, що відбуваються у суспільстві. Встановлено, що політична трансформація є сутнісною ознакою розвитку будь-якої політичної системи.

Ключові слова: трансформація, соціальна, політична трансформація, політичний режим, політична система, пострадянські країни.

Interpretation of the concepts of “Transformation”, “Social transformation”, “Political transformation” in modern scientific discourse

The content of the concept of “transformation” in modern social science literature has been analyzed. The interpretation of the terms “transformation”, “social transformation”, “political transformation” proposed by the scientists from various political science schools has been presented. The most important features of political transformation as a part of the process of changes that take part in the society have been singled out. Political transformation has been defined as an essential characteristic of evolution of any political system.

Key words: transformation, social transformation, political transformation, political regime, political system, post-Soviet countries.

One of the main methodological problems of the current political science is the absence of the clearly defined term “transformation” (from Latin “modification”, “change of the form”). Usually, one can encounter its synonyms, namely such terms as “metamorphosis”, “conversion”, “modernization” etc. Correspondingly, the essence of this synonymic row is reduced to any kinds of changes (social, political, economic, authoritative etc.). At the same time, to carry

out a valuable and an objective research it is necessary to possess clear categorical definitions of notions, which describe the processes of changes and transformations that occur.

Afterwards, before defining the concept of "transformation" in the sense of political science, it is necessary to define the essence of this term and analyze main approaches to its interpretation that exist in other branches of sciences, especially in the social sciences.

The concept of "transformation" has become widely used in the social sciences in the 2nd half of the 20th century. The transformation was interpreted as the process of overcoming the essential elements of the previous order and achieving new quality of a certain system. The notion of social transformation has been particularly actively investigated in the scientific community in recent years. Among the scientists who have investigated the concept of "transformation", it is necessary to draw attention to the works by V. Shamrai, V. Stepin, V. Tolstykh, M. Lapin, L. Beliaeva¹. Moreover, these scientific problems have been rather actively researched by Ukrainian scientists, especially V. Volovyk and V. Kremen².

The analysis shows that among scientists there is no unity as to the essence of the process of the social systems' transformation. In the most general interpretation this process is defined as a change, transformation of a type, form and vital characteristics of one or another object, modification of social institutions and structures, which can be accompanied by their fundamental renewal³. Philosophical dictionary defines transformation as mutually stimulating changes of models of social action on the one hand, and functioning of social institutions, related to the deliberate, intentional influence of nominal directions (formal norms, procedures or rules) on the other hand⁴.

An important methodological problem is the identification of the concepts of "social transformation" and "modernization". Many scientists do not see any difference between these concepts and use them as synonyms. Modernization paradigm, which is now very popular in the West, closely connects these concepts. From the point of view of this paradigm the transformation is understood as the development of the conventional society into the modern one. For instance, the well-known adherent of modernization paradigm W. Zapf⁵ believes transformation to be one of the modernization types, i.e. diversified overtaking processes in the undeveloped societies.

In sociological sense modernization is understood as a process, in which social structure gets the elements which have not been inherent to it before and loses those items which

¹ Shamrai V.V. Transformation of a Society: the Limits of the Possible / V.V. Shamrai. – K.: Nauk. Dumka, 1994. – 176 p.; Lapin N.I., Beliaeva L.A. Crisis Society: Our Community in Three Dimensions. – M.: Philosophical Institute of RAS, 1994; Stepin V.S., Tolstykh V.I. Democracy and Society's Destiny // Philosophic matters. – 1996. – № 10. – Pp. 3-18.

² Volovyk V.I. Ideological Activity: Dialectics of Traditions and Innovativeness. – M., 1990; Kremen V. Political Strategy of Ukraine. Comparative Prospects // Viche. – 1994. – № 6.

³ Sociological Encyclopaedic Dictionary. – M.: Publishing House INFRA. – 1998. – P. 374.

⁴ The Newest Philosophic Dictionary. – Mn.: Publishing House V. M. Skakun. – 1998. – P. 726.

⁵ Zapf, W. Modernisierung, Wohlfahrtsentwicklung und Transformation: soziologische Aufsätze 1987 bis 1994 // Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB). Berlin: Edition Sigma, 1994. – 212 S.

previously characterized this social structure. Thereby, one can assume that the reason for the identification of the concepts of “modernization” and “social transformation” is that they are both interpreted as changes which take place in the society.

Ukrainian sociologist S. Kataev⁶ tried to differentiate these concepts logically. The scientist states that both terms are universal, but the term “transformation of society” on the contrary to modernization does not describe the direction vector of changes and is convenient only in those cases, when the content of changes is not clearly defined. In situations when it is difficult to determine the nature of changes, whether they are progressive or regressive, they are evidence of a crisis or overcoming great difficulties.

If social transformation is defined as the purposeful changes carried out from “above” and which have their supervisor or social technologist, in this case the content of the very changes theoretically must be clearly defined, have its aims and a worked out model of the future society. The terms “social transformation” and “modernization” in spite of their content likeness should not be treated as synonyms. Social transformation is the total reorganization of the whole society, whereas modernization is in charge of introduction of new social institutions, which are copied from the western countries and are adapted to the conditions of certain societies.

In the world political science a great number of scientific researches concerning the interpretation of the notion “transformation” have been worked out. The heuristic potential of the term began to be developed in the frames of transitional paradigm in the 70s of the previous century, especially in the form of “states of transition period” and “transformation from capitalism to socialism” theories. Western scientists were more active in the first case. Marxists, who tried not only to justify the regularity of the general world transformation from capitalism to socialism, but also to represent it as a new model of social development, the transition from tribal and feudal (in Asia and Africa) systems to socialism, bypassing the stage of capitalism were more active in the second case.

In particular, one of the founders of transitology D. Rustow analyzes phenomenon of political transformation as the process of transition from dictatorship to democracy. In the paper “Transits to Democracy – Toward a Dynamic Model”⁷ on the basis of comparative analysis of Sweden (1890-1920) and Turkey (1940-1960) the researcher singles out three main phases of the transitional dynamics, namely: 1) the preparatory phase, characterized by a conflict between main social powers, which is becoming imminent; 2) decision phase, when the political

⁶ Kataev S.L. Sociocultural Transformation of Modern Ukrainian Society. Kyiv. – 1998. – 380 p.; Kataev S.L. Valuable Foundations of the Theory Crisis Society Transformation // Problems of Sociological Theory Development. Transformation of Social Institutions and Institutional Structure of a Society: Scientific Reports and Messages of the III All-Ukrainian Sociological Conference / Sociological Association of the Country, Sociological Institute NAS of Ukraine // Ed. M.O. Shulha, V.M. Vorona. – K., 2003. – Pp. 90-93.; Kataev S.L. Transitional Society as a Challenge of Modern Times // Methodology, Theory and Practice of the Sociological Analysis of the Modern Society: Collected Scientific Papers. – Kharkiv: Publishing House of V. N. Karasin Kharkiv, 2001. – Pp. 75-81.

⁷ Rustow D.A. Transits to Democracy – Toward a Dynamic Model // Polis. – 1996. – № 5. – Pp. 5-15.

formula of "great compromise between main political actors" is being worked out and the main political rules of the democratic game are being determined; 3) habituation phase, when new forms of people communication and new democratic institutions are being established"⁸.

According to Rustow, the process of transition from authoritarianism to democracy is launched with the help of continuous and ineffective struggle, the participants of which represent interests of various social groups, and controversial issues are of top priority for all. During the second phase, some of the country's political leaders adopt an intentional decision to accept the diversity in unity and with this aim institutionalize some of the fundamental mechanisms of democracy (general electoral rights, free elections etc.). This is the achievement of some consensus as to the rules of the game. Rustow observes that the first fundamental compromise, which is achieved at this phase of transition, becomes a key aspect of democratization, as it is the proof for the effectiveness of reconciliation and agreement principle, opening the prospect of solving current and future challenges with the help of democratic methods. Finally, during the habituation phase there is an assimilation of new democratic rules, procedures and values by various political forces and society.

Modern theories of political transitology focus main attention on social transformations that take place in the post-Soviet countries. It is stipulated by the peculiarities of the course of transformational processes in the post-Soviet region, and here belongs the fact that they are aimed at the change of the whole political system, accompanied by intensive structural transformations, which include reorganization of political power, main mechanisms of its formation and principles of its functioning, and the appearance of various models of intermediate and short-term agreements concerning the principles of competitiveness between political elites and ways, which would help to include people in the political processes.

Despite the specificity of the post-Soviet transformations, theoreticians of political transitology acknowledge the existence of mutual algorithms and similarity of its dynamics even in the countries with different levels of social development. Thus, D. Easton considers new political system to be established as a result of cumulative changes, which occur at the hierarchical levels of decision making (including political organization of a society, political relations, political processes, political actors etc.). Decisions regarding fundamental values ("who are we?") are taken at the first level, i.e. civilizational, cultural, national and territorial identities which draw the boundaries of the national state are defined here. Decisions regarding political rules, procedures, constitutional and institutional formation of the system are taken at the second level. D. Easton believes that only at the third (the highest) level, which is based on the results of the decisions taken at the former levels, the current policy is realized: "Who gets, when and how much"⁹. At the very level occurs reproduction of the former ones – the current

⁸ Ibid. – P. 5.

⁹ Easton D. An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems. – Excess mode: <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/burn0277/pa5012/readings/Easton%201965%20%20An%20Approach%20to%20the%20Analysis%20of%20Political%20Systems.pdf>

distribution of economic, social and political resources and all the things which constitute the strategic potential of any society, allow it to develop dynamically and ensure the legitimacy of the current political regime. This legitimacy is a sign of consolidation and stability of the society and a result of its political transformation.

According to the assertion made by American scientist A. Przeworski, in his work “Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America”¹⁰, the compulsory stipulation for transformation is a struggle between various political forces. The scientist analyzes the problem of political transformation, using the theory of games. Phases of a process of democratization are represented as a game between four political groups: die-hard conservatives, reformers, moderate groups, radical opposition. In the analysis provided by A. Przeworski it is necessary to single out the moment of weak predictability of the final result of the transformation; it can be either “authoritarian restoration” or “guaranteed democracy”¹¹.

In his fundamental work “The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century”¹² American political analyst S. Huntington explains the fact of transitional processes, including political transformation, by the general tendency of the global political changes, the so-called “waves of democratization”. He understands these waves as the group of transitions from non-democratic regimes to democratic ones, which occur in a specified period of time, and the number of which exceeds the number of transitions in the opposite direction during the given period¹³.

In his paper “Transformation of the Institution of Federalism under the Conditions of Political and Administrative Reforms in Modern Russia”¹⁴ Russian political analyst V. Haiduk “defines political transformation as a qualitative and complex change of a structure and functioning of the political system in the society”. Its dynamics and effectiveness depends upon the ability of the political institutions, political actors to respond to various internal and external impacts. At the same time political transformation can be considered as a phasic process, but not a perpetual one. It incorporates three interrelated directions: innovational (associated with the creation of more effective elements of the system), inertial (stabilizing, which limits radical changes) and dysfunctional (resulting in the destruction of the old system’s elements, and as a result, in disorganization of vital activities in the society). The scientist concludes that political transformation represents the ability of the political system to adapt to absolutely

¹⁰ Przeworski A. Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America. – M., 2000. – P. 28.

¹¹ Przeworski A. Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America / A. Przeworski. – M., 1999. – Pp. 295 -297.

¹² Huntington S. The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century / S. Huntington [Text] / Translation from English. – M.: «Russian Political Encyclopaedia» (ROSSPEN), 2003. – 368 p.

¹³ Ibid. – P. 26.

¹⁴ Haiduk VV. Transformation of the Institution of Federalism under the Conditions of Political and Administrative Reforms in Modern Russia // Authority and Politics. – 2011. – Issue. № 3 (16). – P. 7-12.

new social requirements, maintain rational conventional structures, and create new institutions, which will ensure optimization of the "feedback" mechanisms between the statutory authority and society.

Famous Russian scientist and political analyst A. Duhin considers, that "within the study of political institutions and political processes, the term "transformation" may have different interpretations, since it is used in the consideration of various types of significant changes in the basic structures and systems, which constitute the political foundation of any society"¹⁵.

A number of scientific approaches to understanding the meaning of the concept of "political transformation" have been proposed in the Ukrainian political science. Such national scientists as O. Dolzhenkov, S. Krymskyi, M. Mykhalchenko, Yu. Shaihorodskyi and others have paid much attention in their works to investigate the specificity of this phenomenon. Particularly, M. Mykhalchenko in his paper "Search for Leaders: Honest, Talented, Fair ..."¹⁶, defines political transformation as "changes in: political institutions and structures (political system); political consciousness and political actions of various strata, elites, an individual (personality and their activity in social structures); political culture of the society (are there any valuable signs of combination between the modern Ukrainian society and traditional and new national political culture)". He remarks that the problem lies not only in the transformational processes of the political system of the society, but also in the fact whether these processes are interrelated, if there is complementarity between them and to what extent they are multidirectional and why their development occurs without any aims and mechanisms predetermined by the society. The researcher also singles out "external" (parliamentary elections on the multi-party basis, referendums, constitution) and "internal" (individual freedom, freedom of political parties, public institutions, democracy, a lawful state) markers of political transformation of the society. Parliamentary elections on the multi-party basis, referendums, constitution can be "external" markers of political transformation of the society, where one totalitarian system succeeds another one. "Internal" marker of political transformation is an individual freedom, freedom of political parties and public institutions, democracy and a lawful state and cannot always conform to the external markers.

Ukrainian political analyst O. Dolzhenkov on the basis of comparative analysis of political systems of Ukraine and Belarus comes to the conclusion that transformational processes in the society occur at the moment when the current political system loses its stability and consistency, enters a period of uneven interactions, starts feeling the internal and external changes, pressure and when the extent of tension can exceed its allowable maximum¹⁷. The researcher considers the very content of the concept of "political transformation" from two perspectives:

¹⁵ Duhin A.H. Transformation of Political Institutions and Structures in the Process of Conventional Societies' Modernization // Author's abstract of dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Political Sciences. – Rostov-na-Donu, 2004. – 34 p.

¹⁶ Mykhalchenko M. Search for Leaders: Honest, Talented, Fair ... / M. Mykhalchenko [Electronic resource]. – Excess mode: <http://www.politik.org.ua/vid/magcontent.php3?m=1&n=61&c=1329>

¹⁷ Dolzhenkov O. Ukraine – Belarus: Political Transformation Experience: Monography / O. Dolzhenkov. – Odesa, 2003. – P. 228.

firstly as a symptom of successful course of transformational processes in other spheres of people's life (social, economic, cultural and spiritual); secondly as an effective instrument to ensure transformations in these spheres¹⁸. Analyzing modern political transformations, the scientist supposes that due to their inorganic nature, they do not always end with the transition to the modern society, but on the contrary, in most cases they are doomed to fail. According to the researcher it is predetermined by the fact that just a mechanical borrowing of external markers of the modern society and dismantling of traditional values, norms and institutions results in a state of permanent anomie. The latter is associated with inadequate ensuring of the functioning of main subsystems, which can be found in the structure of the political system of any society, including: institutional, regulating, communicative, political and ideological.

Analyzing the phenomenon of system transformation, Ukrainian political analyst S. Krymskii determines the combination of various old and new elements of the system in the processes that take place right now. In his interpretation, transformation is a development of social and political processes, which do not exclude the possibility of reverse movement. However, the opposite movement should not be necessarily negative. Transformations can be progressive or reversed, systematic or unsystematic. And the concept of "ordered transformation", which means "reformation of the post-Soviet society towards the Western European paradigm of development"¹⁹, is very close to the notion of modernization.

Treatment of political transformation by focusing on the leading role of legal principles in the process of modern politics implementation and the necessity for democratization of social and political life has been proposed by famous Ukrainian political analyst Yu. Shaihorodskiy in the paper "The Concept of "Transformation" as an Instrument for the Analysis of Social Changes"²⁰. The scientist reckons that transformational processes in the political sphere are carried out in the directions of forming the system of government on legal basis; ensuring legislative and constitutional development of the country; improving the electoral system; creating the institution of parliamentarism; reforming the judicial system; creating the institution of local self-government; forming party system and establishing political pluralism; functioning the independent mass media; establishing new political elite etc. These transformations represent modern political strategy of the society and its desire for democracy. In spite of the multidimensional processes of democratic transformations, they must be considered, according to the researcher, as the links of a single global process of democratization, since they are combined with the help of efforts of transition from non-democratic forms of government to democratic ones and by some other general factors. Democratic transformation,

¹⁸ Ibid. – P. 20.

¹⁹ Krymskii S. The Prospect of the New Millennium and the Change of Social Intelligence Strategies // *Mahisterium. Historical and Philosophical Studies / National University of "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy"*. – Kyiv: Stylos, 2008. – Issue. 1. – P. 66.

²⁰ Shaihorodskiy Yu. The Concept of "Transformation" as an Instrument for the Analysis of Social Changes / Yu. Shaihorodskiy // *Ukrainian academic periodical «Education of a Region: Political Science and Psychology of Communication»*. – 2010. – № 4. – Pp. 51-53.

in its essence, is the process towards an open society with its inherent pluralism in political life, economics, culture, developed structures of the civil society and a lawful state.

Therefore, having summarized various scientific approaches towards the understanding of the meaning of "transformation" in modern political science, philosophical, and social science literature, one can make a conclusion that this term represents the process of transition from the accumulation of new features to the destruction of the old foundation and establishing of a relatively new state of the object. Transformation is not always characterized by straightforwardness, its development can be carried out in any direction, as towards the progress, so the regress. It should be mentioned, that in the modern social science there is no definite theory of transformation. Transformation is very often identified with modernization, though there is a significant difference between them. Modernization can be probably compared with the gradual evolution, whereas transformation includes both the elements of evolution, and revolution and reform. The thesis that the process of transformation is inherent to every society is more or less certain and defined.

In social sciences, transformation is considered to be the process of inner changes of the society, as a result of which it is possible to overcome the loss of balance, to achieve new and more differentiated and higher level of order and organization within all main spheres of life. Social transformation is stipulated by social commotion, revolutions, reformative actions carried out by some historical figures and activity level of various societies. Political transformation is a constituent of social processes of transformation and includes their main features. It can be defined as a transformation of political institutions and political structures which calls forth changes (in some cases fundamental ones) of the whole political system of a specific society and is accompanied by the process of acquiring new characteristics. Political transformation is an essential feature of any political system development. And the direction of changes, their effectiveness and structural and substantial content of the system completely depend on the factors which stipulate this process of development.