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## Features of Social and Economic Transformations in the Globalization Era

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**Abstract:**

*The article looks into some of the features of social and economic transformations in the globalization era. Due to a number of economic and political processes encompassing all countries, it becomes obvious that the humankind faces the beginning of the drastic historical changes and the world new integrity. The main idea of the article is the idea of principal impossibility of social and economic processes of absolute unification, averaging and simplification of the social systems in the globalization era. The authors' conviction is based on understanding the fact that in the globalization era the social relations system is being formed, where due to essential processes the different forms of social times and socio-spatial formations interact. Even a cursory glance reveals the whole specter of social organisms represented by both present and past history: ranging from the primitive forms to the semi-feudal one, from the quite traditional relations to the industrial and post-industrial ones.*

*Despite great difference all existing countries while interacting with each other create social context of globalization. In the frame of this process the new integrity of the modern state of the society as the universum is happening. In terms of the social philosophy this universum is understood as active non-line environment where various social spheres emerge and evolve: modern integrative production, information flows including high technology industry, business and other components where the culture is to play the leading role as the way of life of a human being and society. The authors insist, the genesis of modern social systems is extremely interesting scientific issue, its consideration may be not only significant for the science itself, but can be applied in particular for the social relations management.*

**Key Words:** *Globalization, social transformations, social unification, co-evolution (principle of conjugate, interdependent changes of systems or a part of the system inside the whole one), global social context.*

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## **1. Introduction**

The notion of transformation (from Latin) means conversion, modification. One should take into account that transformation can introduce both rather positive and negative, crisis features of destructive type into social changes. It has been known that changes are integral attribute of any normally developing society. At the same time social transformation represents a wide spectrum of social phenomena, starting from insignificant changes (in the organization, management, force balance inside production sphere, reforms in some social systems), finishing full-scale fundamental changes in the social sphere itself. Fundamental transformations in the social systems result from the processes of modern globalization, which are basis for colossal changes actually in all systems of the social relations in the nearest and distant future of the mankind.

In modern scientific literature there are three main approaches in the discourse of Global Studies: revolutionary, developed by K. Ohmae, R. Keohane, J. Nye and others. These authors welcome the processes of economy's denationalization, development of trade and production nets among countries as well as transnational financial links. These authors insist on very positive consequences of globalization. But there are others (E. Giddens, J. Rosenau), who develop so called evolutionary approach in which different countries will adapt to global processes gradually, difficultly, but in the whole positive for the world social integrity. It is necessary to mention the skeptics who see mainly negative consequences.

Ch. Kegley, E. Vittkopf are among those. (Hopefully they are minority). But all the authors agree that the inevitable globalization will expose the society to the complex transformations and simultaneously will create the conditions for new social systems. Obviously when speaking about transformations of the systemic type as a rule an extremely complex set of factors transforming the whole spectrum of social conditions is usually meant. This article is concentrated on only some features of social and economic transformations, which, in our opinion, are fundamental.

## **2. Theoretical, Informational and Empirical, and Methodological Grounds of the Research**

First of all it should be mentioned that modern planetary society is not just a conglomerate of different social organisms. Modern society most probably is the result of historical formation of very complex in their interaction and intersection of social systems. On this background transformation may differ greatly depending on the type of society where they occur. The Western social systems, which underwent modernist changes, are the result of long-lasting co-evolution, i.e. the process of interaction and mutual influence of different social changes on each other which resulted in comparatively moderate pace of social development (Thalassinos *et al.*, 2015).

This temporary regime allowed introducing the processes of social transformations gradually for four-five centuries (the period of capitalistic system formation). In the course of these transformations economic and political innovations “were growing into” life, that made this process necessary for every next generation and fixed it on the mental level as well.

In other words according to V. Kollontay, the model of evolutionary social transformations was realized in the Western countries. In the course of its development it was becoming more open, perceptive to efforts to regulate it and manage as well as more predictable for prospective transformations.

Currently the relations of the EU countries obey to the new processes of co-evolution. It is clear that this process is far from being completed as it has deep contradictions connected with the necessity of integration as one of the manifestations of globalization, on the one hand, and rather complex process of adaptation of the countries to each other, on the other.

The referendum on British withdrawal from the European Union is an example of the latter. The referendum results showed almost equal number of votes for and against. It suggests rather ambiguous assessment of the European Community. And it proves that the Europeans will have to make a lot of efforts to form really developed and suitable for many the systematic union of the countries. But even today it is clear that the idea of the EU is not just a temporary phenomenon.

The union of the European countries is a historical necessity and Europe is likely to have no alternative. The necessity to create united and strong commodity and services market was not the only reason for the EU formation. The reason seems to be in the necessity to prevent full-scale military threat (Sibirskaya *et al.*, 2016; Stroeva *et al.*, 2016).

Europe having lived through two World Wars in the last century and being fully destroyed cannot allow such a tragedy to happen again. In spite of devastating consequences of military destruction and collapse of united Yugoslavia quite recently, the whole Europe has existed in peace for more than seventy years. In this connection the question of Europe’s interaction with the rest of the world is very important. It is clear that in the context of the increasing globalization socially integrative associations are the most optimal alternative not only for solutions of economic, but political tasks as well. However, the issues of the external functioning and the EU’s successful development as a whole to great extend depend on the processes of the “internal” coevolution, i.e. depend on the way the other European countries interact with each other. And it brings about a paradoxical conclusion.

The fact is that the EU’s integrity might develop only under preserving the particular features of the member countries. The process of averaging and unification of the European countries may be fatal for the union. The European Union, to our mind, can only exist under the singling out extremely common tasks of the “external”

development, and in the same time it is necessary to take into account the interests of each “participant” and respect the interests of every country. In his time W. Churchill expressed the thought that the “cell” of the true democracy must observe the rights and freedoms of the every individual. This requirement should be obligatory for every country which is a part of any union with the main condition that none of the parties can violate the rights of economic and political partnership. It is appropriate to mention J. Naisbitt’s “paradox”, who suggested that in the appropriately formed union of the countries, every participant benefited from it and the weakest most of all, because it is placed in the system of the relations which allow any of the members to solve the fundamental tasks in the course of its existence. In the countries which started their modernization later in comparison with Europe historical time, social transformation took place in the regime "to catch up and to overtake" the developed countries.

This, for example, happened in Russia and then in the USSR as well as in the eastern European countries after the war. It was necessary to intensify the mobilizing, administrative and government intervention in the lives of these countries in particular in the sphere of defense, international policy, economic production. And, it could become a norm under clever, professionally organized management of the state itself whose action are based on social and political sciences. However the possibilities of successful social development turned out to limited due to the number of the circumstances. In the process of the necessary transformations the catching up countries faced with the problems unknown for the leading countries. First of all, such social systems as Russia had to form absolutely new relations among internal and external forces under the revolutionary explosion, but not under co-evolution process. It outlined and deepened the gap between rather rational actions of the authorities and random objective processes ongoing in the society itself. As a result, for example, in Russia we have a whole spectrum of the interconnected systematic contradictions of political, economic and cultural nature.

Besides in the modernization process the catching up countries faced with the widening gap between the obligation to conduct urgent transformations and their historical legacy, rooted deeply in the social and political institutions. Modernization put the catching up countries in the vulnerable position, when even the government’s small mistakes resulted in the duality in actions, and as a rule, in unpredictable results.

The transformation processes due to the transition from administrative economy to the market type of coordination of social and economic activity are known to take place in the republics of the former USSR and in the Eastern European countries starting since the end of the twentieth century Russia’s experience in the implementation of the reforms is associated with huge social and economic costs. It resulted in so-called oligarchic capitalism. Today having poorly developed industrial and post-industrial economy our country performs the role of supplier of raw materials to the developed countries. The mentioned negative tendencies of the

transformations of the national social and political system demand deep rethinking and search of new concepts, mechanisms and ways of innovative breakthrough, transition of raw economy to the economy of the sophisticated innovative technologies. Russia is particularly interesting from the theoretical point of view on the nature of social changes. It is the world's largest country where within the last 150 years of its history at least three periods of deep and vividly expressed social changes have happened (Emelkina, 2016; Fomina, 2016).

It refers to the reforms of the 1860-s (abolition of serfdom), the 1917 events (actually complete change of the whole social organism); perestroika and post-perestroika (since 1985), which brought about new radical transformations and the collapse of the old system. Today's Russian society has not completely overcome the previous legacy, and, consequently, has not transformed into developed social system yet. Each of the named crucial periods in the history of Russia was focused on overcoming of the social and economic backwardness and building of more progressive society with certain goals, however, each of these periods had its own results with colossal losses on the way of social and political changes.

Today's Russia is half-modernized industrial society which will have to live through the period of extremely concentrated and deep social transformations. In addition, Russia is an absolutely special country among the states undergoing the process of political and social transformations. Firstly, Russia has been undergoing the process of modernization (with some historical intervals) for quite a long time, if the beginning of this process refers to Peter the Great's reforms. Secondly, social and political reforms in Russia were taking place in contrast to many other countries in the politically independent state. Russia seemed to have natural historical advantages in comparison with other countries. However, the main feature of Russia has always been the fact that political power here, as a rule, due to historically conditioned inertia applied the method of unlimited political compulsion towards the society. In addition, when it was conditioned by the ideological necessity or, due to its own weak political ideology, the state often appealed to religion and church as very traditional and demanded in Russia institution. It should be marked that in spite of the change of the form of power, the state remained the system of the political power for in many aspects traditional society. The latter means the state had always performed the reforms exceptionally "from above" often curbing the initiative "from below". On the one hand, political sphere appeared to be unsettled. On the other hand, due to political totalitarianism or authoritarianism the development of the civil society was held back. When the Western societies had been widely practicing flexible democratic forms of development, Russia was still the country oriented to survive. Moreover, even in the process of modernization the state remained the main and the most important factor of the development. All these factors mean that in the nearest and the following historical periods the Russian society has to overcome the most complex conflict between the necessity its holistic social development and not very adequate to its possibilities the management system. The civil society is to be developed and political democratic institutions are to be perfected within our system

of the social relations. Russia has to cope with one more feature. The fact is that due to traditional power position, the statist attitude of the society towards the state had entrenched since long ago. As a result, all changes happening in the society mostly always and everywhere have been performed “top-down”. And, in spite of all the transformations, most citizens are convinced that initiatives “from below” cannot lead to the real essential changes of the established system including legal.

The most of the population in the imperial Russia or in the Soviet Union considered the legal system as an exceptionally important element of the existing command and administrative structure of the power. As the system itself had never been formed on the principle of supremacy of law, it had never been considered as mechanism providing balance of divergent interests of the state and civil society. Consequently, the population’s attitude towards the legal system was and remained quite contradictory. Generally the laws are to be followed. But the population feels prejudices and anxiety when appealing to any legal structures. Most of the population does not consider the laws as the tools to defend their interests. Thus, orderliness is not the process of analyzed and conscious civil responsibility in our country.

In addition, it should be mentioned there is one more significant feature of the historically latest transformations in Russia; it is the fact that both political and economic institutions were being transformed simultaneously that resulted in unexpectedly complex contradictions which make difficult to reach positive results of the reforms. For example, in the Western European countries the democratic institutions were developing when the market had been quite formed. In Russia both processes happening simultaneously just worsened the crisis and at the same time influenced on mutual slowing of actual development of both the market and democracy. As a result the country gradually transferred to the authoritative management, i.e. revived the previous mechanisms of power and management in most aspects. Today it should be realized that the complexity of the unprecedented economic and political problems, Russia has faced with, can be solved using professionally designed strategy first of all for the economic and structural adjustments.

Analyzing the experience of the recent past, we gradually start to realize that “the strategy developed by the liberal reformers to solve the problems in the post-Soviet society appeared to be very simplified and the results were far from the expected ones”. This strategy was to introduce some the most important market requirements: price liberalization, privatization, restricted monetary policy, etc. The introduction of such institutions was supposed to transform people’s lives and the society in general and to create a sound basis for the market economy development. However, the given strategy ignored the restricted transformation features of the market mechanism as well as the wide spectrum of structural and motivating distortions inherited from the Soviet period.

It was the social situation that suffered from all these adjustments. According to the official statistics about a third of the population lives in poverty, the income of some of them below the cost of living.

Under these conditions it is obvious that the formation of the new type of the social relations in Russia will inevitably take a long time. Its results as well as its success in the whole to the great extend will depend on skills and mastership of those being at power, on their ability to solve the current problems to revive the economy and to redirect the existing strategy towards mixed democratic economy with the efficient market regulation and big number of the problems of development oriented on both domestic and foreign market. Besides contemporary as well as future rulers of our country should know that without rationally analyzed, scientifically based liberalism it is impossible to form civil society in our country, and without it there is no and will be no progressively developed future in Russia. Abrupt, sometimes aggressive refuse from liberalism and attempt to return to the old “collectivism” and “unanimity” in the social environment and in the national mentality will not lead to the positive result.

In addition, the new anthropogenic environment as a basis for the future mega-society is to be formed in Russia and in many the EU’s countries. It is obvious that Russia and Europe are closer on this way rather than different. For centuries the European and Russian regions have had long, but expressed in different degree the dialogue of cultures. We are convinced that the dialogue is the only way to form new strong and fruitful processes of the interaction and integration between Russia and the Western countries. That is why today the task of formation of culture of global thinking to face the challenges of the 21th centuries is important. Today it is necessary to analyze strategy and tactics of the effective means to loosen the existential risks connected with realization of the projects of the forthcoming planetary transformations.

### **3. Results**

Thus, we have found out that at present the modern world is experiencing the process of complex social and economic transformations. Firstly, the brightly expressed scientific and technical advance, which the developed countries are experiencing, demands changes in the production sphere, and consequently, in the whole system of the economic relations. Secondly, colossal extension and the development of the economic sphere of the society with necessity are involving more and more countries in the world economy and in the united process of their economic interaction. It results in a new type of relations – the type of global interaction. At the same time this interaction itself is experiencing the process of complex, contradictory establishing, where simplification and uniformity of all participants should not be expected.

The complex processes of modern transformations have different historical genesis.

And, if we speak about Europe and Russia the transformations happening under the globalization influence, possess their own features.

For example, the Western social systems while being modernized in the period of the capitalistic production development, first of all, had to change the whole structure interaction and mutual influence of economy, policy, culture in the whole. Thus, in the result of internal historically gradual co-evolution the European countries were appearing and developing.

Nowadays, under globalization Europe faces the necessity to choose the formation and development of the new integrative system, namely: the Union of the European countries. It demands new huge transformations. But this time the external co-evolution is the very process of the European countries' interaction. The development of each EU country depends on how the EU countries will interact in their unity and integrity. Moreover, these very processes of the European co-evolution will become the most important for Europe's relations with the rest of the world.

As for Russia, it has its own features of social and political transformations. Firstly, historically Russia started modernization later than Europe. Russia had to form absolutely new relations between internal and external forces under conditions the revolutionary explosions, but not under the conditions of the evolutionary processes. It outlined and deepened the gap between the government's rather rational actions and random objective process, ongoing in the society itself. In Russia we observe the whole spectrum of interconnected systemic contradictions of political, economic and cultural nature. On the one hand, it was necessary to overcome rapidly the historic legacy of the economic backwardness, and the authorities often using the principle of least resistance, managed to get the highly developed national industry with not free people and society, that eventually brought about the necessity of new transformations.

Since the end of the 20th century the transformation processes aimed at transition from the administrative to market type of coordination of social and economic activity are known to be taking place in the republics of the former USSR and in the Eastern European countries.

And again the experience of market reforms in Russia is connected with huge social and economic costs. It resulted in the so-called oligarchic capitalism with poorly developed industrial and postindustrial economy. And today our country plays the role the raw materials supplier to the developed countries rather than economically equal partner in the system of the world economy. The mentioned negative aspects of the national social and economic system transformation require deep analysis and search of new concepts, mechanisms and ways of innovative breakthrough, transition from raw economy to the economy of sophisticated innovative technologies. To achieve this, the Russian society is to overcome the most complex

contradictions between the necessity its social development and inadequate to its possibilities the management system in nearest and the following historic periods. Civil society is to be developed and political democratic institutions are to be perfected in the Russian system of social relations. Without these reforms Russia will be able to conduct a dialogue neither with Europe nor with the rest of the world. In highly-developed countries during the long historical period the activity of the governmental power has acquired legal forms, but the main principles of legislation and human rights gradually became the basic principles of it. By and large this process came to the end only in the 20th century when the society created mechanisms of control of the state's activity. These mechanisms became a guarantee of existence of these principles. The universal nature of human rights corresponds to the market relations, the relations of purchase and sale, and the labor market relations. They are based on the principle of an unconditional protection of ownership rights, on the principles of legal equality and freedom, and also individualism.

Another feature of Russia is also that the state throughout the long historical period not just controlled the social sphere, but also created the new structures, required by life from above. Hence, the certain social groups appeared, being connected with the state, took that place in the relations with the state which must be occupied by civil society, so to speak, instead of civil society. Instead of normal natural relations, established in the West between the state and civil society, a peculiar interstate system of the relations has been created without leaving free space to independent structures. That is why in our country the real power is possessed by the officials, an unreasonably expanded bureaucratic system.

The process of modification and transformation of these structures, and also their replacement for actual civil society, although is not a fast process, however, it can be successful in case of observance of the rights of private ownership and development of the economic relations of the market. The existence of property is a basic, fundamental condition of personal freedom in civil society.

The most important condition of a civil society's activity is a constantly developing level of social, intellectual and psychological development of a personality, their freedom and amateur performance.

The formation of civil society represents a civilized process where both a citizen and civil relations between the members of the society, and society as a collective beginning of civic consciousness, and also the state and the relations between them civilize at the same time. In this process the policy is formed, therefore, responding to the purposes of civil society. The main condition of such development is a mutual equality of rights, freedom and duties of all three components of civil society - person, society and state. Civil society at a normal development does not stand against the state, having one simple reason, because the state in this case acts only as an integral and necessary part of society. All probable and real conflicts between

civil society and the state are regulated not by a discipline of fear and domination, but by legal and political means, the power of the state which is subordinated itself by the laws created by it. This means, in fact, a participatory state, speaking about the future of Russia.

When it comes to the formation of a legal system in modern Russia, one should take into account the most important condition of the development and the consolidation of such system, such as the presence or absence of legal and political consciousness of citizens.

The sense of justice is traditionally defined as a set of ideas, feelings, conceptions of the right prevailing and wished, about agency and persons' actions in the sphere of a legal regulation.

The public consciousness becomes legal only after having some ideas about a legal standardization as a basis of an activity and order, resisting to chaos and arbitrariness, about formal equality and justice, and the protection of a personality.

If legal norms are deprived of a strong basis in public consciousness, without growing from it, but only imposed from the outside by the state, they are very easily torn away by this consciousness.

The legal consciousness arises in the course of the formation of individualized culture when a person begins to realize himself, his uniqueness, his egoism and his essence. That is why personal consciousness, personal dignity, is absolutely necessary prerequisites of the formation of legal consciousness and political culture in general.

The problem of existence and development of civil society is almost a root one of all our today's life. The solution of this problem is directly connected with the one of existence of political consciousness of our citizens.

In the conditions of the formation of civil society, the establishment of new state systems, the transition to democratic values, norms of a social and political life is not allowed the appearance of ideologies as the perverted forms of consciousness, absurd in their sense. V. Havel wrote about an aloof form of ideology when it hides a gap between the purposes of a political system and the main, natural aims of the life. Such ideology creates a view, as if the requirements of a political system follow from vital needs of people. Ideological aims to democratize a political life in our country obviously have passed ahead of real processes of spiritual and political liberation of people, organizations, movements, parties, and these arising ideologies are still very vague, having no accurate, specifically expressed values and purposes. There was a peculiar deficiency of ideologies. Therefore, the present period can be defined as the period of the formation, the establishment of new ideologies. The creation of a true civilized ideological field is only beginning which will be able

both to reflect the reality of democratic political relations and to influence minds of people, developing their political consciousness, taking into account their political interests.

The formation of any social system is impossible without a united national uniform idea. As V. Shpak believes that the idea of sovereignty of a personality, which would be an initial value for any person, could become it, as it is connected with understanding of worthiness, importance, freedom. It is necessary only to add that the idea of sovereignty of a personality must have real conditions to achieve sovereignty, and it stands against legislatively issued rights of a personality for private ownership, freedom of enterprise, economic and political freedom of citizens. Therefore, the process of the development of real personal freedom, observance of its rights is dialectically connected with the process of the formation of civil society, with a supporting legal system and the formation of a participative state in our country.

#### **4. Conclusions and recommendations**

It should not be thought that the global processes bring only possible and inevitable destructions. Globalization in many aspects is predetermined by the human history due to the development of different communication processes, and first of all, processes in the frame of culture, historically having tendencies of growth, extension and development. On the other hand, more and more revealing gap between the culture itself and civilization itself, being a destructive gap between content and form of the social existence is apparently strengthening the danger that the global processes can be a threat for the whole mankind. At the same time, it is obvious, that in this century globalization is turning into the most influential economic, technological, informational and cultural reality of the modern planetary society. The formation of new multicultural values, which strengthen planetary interactions, is taking place in this reality.

Global social context even today is an active, very complicated nonlinear environment, forming its own social and cultural space. It means the nature of the mentioned interactions cannot be adequately described by means of static linear schemes of the type “cause – consequence”. In the universal nature of nonlinear interactions the global context can simultaneously play both the role of “consequence” and the role of “cause”. Here it does not only affects and actively deform emerging social processes, but it experiences reverse impact from these processes as well. Consequently, global social context does not play the role of the changing constant towards, for example, national states.

Being integrated in the global context for any national state means to interact actively and multivectorally with the almost all social realia. The fact is that in the 20th century no national economy, culture, policy can develop successfully without using modern global infrastructure, i.e. all components of global nets (economic,

banking, informational and communicative, etc.). That is why the serious analysts name the emerging of the global context as the most important event in the history of the planetary civilization. That is why the solution of one the fundamental tasks to learn how to “be inserted” into the world global context of links and relations with all is inevitable for both Russia and Europe and eventually for the whole mankind.

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