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Political causes of the Ukrainian revolution: theoretical aspects of the issue

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Bahtiyar Idrisov *
Victor Hapotii **
Olha Minkova ***
Yuliia Makieshyna ****
Oleksandr Melnyk *****

Abstract

The purpose of the article was to conduct a theoretical analysis of the political causes of the Ukrainian revolution. The methods of analysis, synthesis and correlation used made it possible to study political conditions and factors in relation to psychological, economic and cultural factors. It was determined that the causes of the revolution are a permanent political crisis, a conflict between the government and the opposition, the ineffectiveness of the actions of the institutions of government and the actions of the opposition; together with changes in the socio-economic structure, the *religiosification* of society and the influence of political factors on the development of abnormal social behaviors, among other factors. The research carried out allows us to conclude that a relationship of stable factor «social disorientation - social anomie - social cynicism - social madness» has been formed in the Ukrainian public consciousness. Therefore, the algorithm for the growth of revolutionary feelings under the influence of socio-political factors shows that this relationship has a tendency to repeat itself and is characterized by a narrowing over time.

Keywords: political motives of the revolution; permanent crisis; political phenomenon; society; history.

* Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University, Ukraine. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4747-832X>

** Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University, Ukraine. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2604-8809>

*** Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University, Ukraine. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0367-2016>

**** Prydniprovsk State Academy of Physical Culture and Sport, Ukraine. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2879-2930>

***** Dmytro Motorny Tavra State Agrotechnological University, Ukraine. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4516-0636>

Razones políticas de la revolución ucraniana: Aspecto teórico del estudio del tema

Resumen

El propósito del artículo fue realizar un análisis teórico de las causas políticas de la revolución ucraniana. Los métodos de análisis, síntesis y correlación utilizados permitieron estudiar las condiciones y factores políticos en relación con factores psicológicos, económicos y culturales. Se determinó que las causas de la revolución son una crisis política permanente, un conflicto entre el gobierno y la oposición, la ineficacia de las acciones de las instituciones de gobierno y las acciones de la oposición; junto a cambios en la estructura socioeconómica, la religiosificación de la sociedad y la influencia de factores políticos en el desarrollo de comportamientos sociales anormales, entre otros factores. La investigación realizada nos permite concluir que una relación de factor estable “desorientación social - anomia social - cinismo social - locura social” se ha formado en la conciencia pública ucraniana. Por lo tanto, el algoritmo para el crecimiento de sentimientos revolucionarios bajo la influencia de factores sociopolíticos muestra que esta relación tiene una tendencia a repetirse y se caracteriza por un estrechamiento en el tiempo.

Palabras clave: motivos políticos de la revolución; crisis permanente; fenómeno político; sociedad; historia.

Introduction

The scientific appeal of studying various aspects of revolution is explained by the fact that there are no other phenomena in human history where the interconnection of political and social processes and their change mechanisms would appear on such a large scale and in a short period of time.

The necessity to study the issues of radical changes in the state and society is determined by the fact that “revolutions have become an inherent fact of our existence and to understand them is to understand the future” (Arendt, 1997: 24). Accordingly, the importance of analyzing the causes of revolution is determined by their role in socio-political change and occupies one of the main places in research.

Scientific interest in the study of the causes of cardinal action dates back to the ancient period. Thus, in Book V of “The Politics” the philosopher Aristotle comes to the conclusion that the cause of public discontent is the misunderstanding of citizens about equality and justice; accordingly, “since they do not get their share in public administration, they rise up in revolt” (Aristotle, 1983: 526).

Since the middle of the nineteenth century, when a wave of revolutionary demonstrations swept across Europe, the study of the causes of revolution became systematic. In this period, when political and social structure fractures became most prominent, theories that would later become the basis for practical revolutionary action began to take shape.

The need for research in the twentieth century after the revolution in Russia and China, and then in other regions of the world, gave new impetus to the study of revolutionary processes. According to the scientific demand, the interest in the study of revolution was reflected in the works of C. Brinton, R. Darendorff, T. Garr, T. Parsons, P. Sorokin and many other foreign specialists. The content analysis of contemporary Ukrainian studies shows that the works of A. Kolodia and S. Salnikova are devoted to the issues of the revolution.

However, despite the great number of scientific publications, studying the impact of political processes on the growth of radical public sentiment are still quite relevant today. This is caused by specifics of studying the revolution and the diversity of concepts in determining its causes.

The problem solution is also complicated by the unclear concept content, the variability of identifying the factors and development conditions, the course of events, and final results of the revolution. This complexity reflects the rather contradictory development of the post-Soviet countries, the Arab East and Latin America. However, despite the great number of scientific concepts of the revolution, the issues of determining its political causes and factors remain insufficiently studied. That is why this aspect of the problem has become our research object

1. Objectives

The aim of the article is to determine the political reasons for the actualization of revolutionary actions in the modern history of Ukrainian society. The article takes as its starting point that the initial condition of revolution is the imbalance of the socio-political system. The set goal is realized by solving the following tasks: defining the political conditions and factors of revolution; highlighting the relationship “ domestic state policy - change in social consciousness; defining the growth algorithm of revolutionary sentiments under the influence of political factors.

2. Materials and methods.

The article applies a research model that emphasizes the political component as a possible cause of revolution. The methodology and such

methods as analysis, synthesis and correlation applied in this model allow us to consider political conditions and factors in interrelation with psychological, economic, legal, demographic, cultural and other factors. Also, such modeling research allows for a detailed and most accurately define the revolutionary “cause-action” relationship.

3. Results and discussion

The revolutions at the beginning of the 20th century gave impetus to the development of a new interest in the revolutionary phenomenon. American scientists characterize the concept as follows: “Revolution is a broad group of single-order concrete-historical phenomena in a relatively short period of political transformation of society” (Goldstone, 2015: 32). According to S. Huntington, revolution is:

A large-scale, rapid and violent growth of political activity beyond the existing structure of political institutions.... The preconditions for revolution are, first, the inability of political institutions to be channels for new social forces to enter politics and new elites to govern, and, second, the desire of social forces that are excluded from politics to participate in it - this desire usually comes from the inherent feeling of the group that it needs some symbolic or material gains, which can only be achieved by making their own demands in the political sphere (Huntington, 2004: 229).

However, R. Darendorff emphasizes the distinction between social and political revolution:

The word revolution has long been used to denote two different forms of abrupt transformation. ...The first is deep transformations, changes in the core structures of society, which of course take time. The second is rapid transformations, in particular the change in power holders within days or weeks through explicit and often violent action. Therefore, the first can be called a social revolution and the second a political one” (Darendorff, 1998: 26).

Such a polemic in the concept definition is caused not only by the diversity of scientific concepts, but also by the fact that modern scientists apply at least three ambiguous and sometimes contradictory scientific research models, each of which applies its own methodology in the study of the problem.

The first model: “the study of the revolution’s natural conditions” was applied by C. Brinton, T. Garr, H. Eckstein. The second model, in which the cause is defined by T. Skocpol, J. Goldstone, J. Foran as a set of necessary and sufficient conditions and takes into account the role of all, even the

smallest factors. The third model identifies one factor, which is defined as the “cause of the revolution”. The following research approaches are used in this model.

1. The study of various political factors, which have led scientists to develop various theories of revolution. This approach was used in the studies of V. Timasheff, S. Huntington.
2. There are economic factors that determine the impact of economic crises or political and economic modernization of the State on the growth of revolutionary sentiments in society. This research focus is noted in the works of G. White, I. Kramnick, and M. Olson.
3. The socio-psychological approach is characterized by the study of various aspects of individual and social behavior. This approach was used in the studies of C. Johnson, P. Sorokin.

Our article does not divide revolution into social and political, as political crisis and conflict are interconnected with social contradictions. This relationship is described in some detail in the political crisis concepts of J. Goldstone, state collapse and revolution of T. Scotchpol. Also, political conflicts and crises are interconnected phenomena: the conflict may be the beginning of a political crisis, and the crisis may be the basis of the conflict. Protracted conflict can involve several political crises, and a set of socio-political conflicts can be the cause of a crisis.

We have identified a number of political conditions and factors that had the greatest influence on the development of the revolutionary situation in Ukraine.

1. Socio-political crisis as a permanent state of society. An objective condition for the creation and further continuation of the revolutionary situation in Ukraine is the relationship system formed after the collapse of the USSR, due to the change in the political state structure. The changes took place primarily in the political and economic sphere and were accompanied by a significant drop in state revenues.

Ukraine’s GDP in 1994 declined to 54.4% of the 1990 level, and 64% of citizens were below the poverty line (Korablin, 2015). Later on, the situation became more complicated: in 1999 Ukraine’s GDP was 40.8% of the 1990 level (Ukrainian Statistics Committee, 2007). And, despite some improvement in 2004, the situation did not improve much.

2. The conflict between the government and the opposition. In Ukrainian politics this conflict was formed from the beginning and was most acute at the end of L. Kuchma’s presidency in 2004 in the confrontation between the pro-government presidential candidate V. Yanukovich and the opposition V. Yushchenko. The government

proved unable to build relations with the opposition in dealing with foreign policy issues and the ultimate goal of state development. Such a confrontation was earlier characterized by N. Timasheff: "If the knot of contradictions between the government and the opposition within the state has reached such proportions when symptoms of loss of flexibility become apparent, then a revolution will begin (Timasheff, 1966: 370).

3. Inefficiency of governing institutions actions. In 2013, which was relatively stable in the socio-economic aspect, such political factor as inefficiency of governing institutions became the most acute in Ukraine. Its effect was exacerbated by the fact that the presidential power became almost unlimited, and accordingly, the lack of conditions for new social forces to participate in politics. S. Huntington described this factor as follows:

Social groups that rise and fall and and rigid political institutions that are what a revolution is made of. Revolution takes place where political participation is limited and political institutions are fragile. The main cause of revolution is the inability of political institutions to ensure the participation of new social forces in politics." At the same time, the state of the economy is a factor "of insignificant importance both for the revolution and for the revolutionaries" (Huntington, 2004: 279-280, 281).

It should be emphasized that Ukrainian state-building had finally come to a standstill by 2014. The Ukrainian state did not meet the Ukrainians' aspirations, especially those of the younger generation that grew up in the independent era. Ineffective management in the absence of a specific social contract brought Ukraine far behind not only European countries, but also throughout the post-Soviet space.

All political elites of the country, regardless of their political orientation, are responsible for such a state of governance. However, in a number of ways Yanukovich's reign was worse than all previous Ukrainian governments. During his presidency the growth of authoritarianism in interconnection with corruption reached a critical point. This state of the state as a cause of the revolution is reflected in sufficient detail in the studies of P. Calvert, E. Obershall, H. Eckstein and C. Tilly.

4. The actions of revolutionary forces. Analysis of the content of theories and concepts of revolution allows us to conclude that one of the causes of radical change is the actions of revolutionary forces. In 2013-2014 the negative attitude to the police due to its corrupt nature was used by the opposition to violently change the government, and the moral state of law enforcement agencies proved to be a trigger for protests.

However, in order to achieve success, social and material conditions are necessary, the main elements of which are: the goal, the personnel and the necessary means. And the absence of at least one of these factors makes it impossible for a revolution to occur (Calvert, 1970).

The lack of dialogue between the government and the opposition led to an increase in activity in the revolutionary events of the far-right forces. The need for such “mobilization of resources” was pointed out earlier by E. Obershall. According to him:

Mobilization refers to processes through which a group of discontented people unite and invest their own resources to achieve group goals. ...Social control refers to similar processes, but in terms of the power and competing with them opposition parties or their associations. ... Big parties engage in a struggle for the same resources, and each tries to cut off resources from those parties that did not initially participate in this competition (Obershall, 1973: 16-84)

And if at the first stage the actions of the protesters were related to the mass and peaceful nature of the protests, then as the events developed there was a consolidation of the revolutionary forces.

The main and peripheral opposition parties united into a single revolutionary bloc, whose goal was not only to change the ruling elite, but also the foreign policy course of the Ukrainian state. The sources of financing were determined: they were the funds provided by the representatives of business, whose losses were not compensated by any benefits from the authorities, as well as, donations from ordinary citizens. The leaders of the revolutionary parties gained confidence in political support for their actions from external actors.

Note that most concepts of revolution define violence as its main feature. Thus, H. Eckstein calls revolution an internal war, the potential of which is determined by the ratio of forces in confrontation with power (Eckstein, 1965). In the process of protest actions, the power bloc of the revolution was formed. And if at the initial stage “Right Sector” performed the functions of paramilitary protection of Maidan, then later it was joined by groups of soccer fans who had experience in clashes with law enforcement agencies and individuals with experience in combat operations.

6. Changes in the socio-economic structure of society. An objective condition for the development of the revolutionary situation in Ukraine is the transformation in the system of relations of the social structure of society associated with the change of socio-economic formation, redistribution of public wealth in favor of the minority and destruction of the established stratification order (Idrisov, 2019b). In previous studies, we noted that:

The established system of survival of the vast majority of the country's impoverished population in the 1990s began to correspond to the characteristic formulated by P. Sorokin in the early 20th century, when a law-abiding citizen becomes a thief and a bandit, a worker becomes a beggar, an aristocrat goes to the market to trade. ...Such disappearance of brakes in people's behavior can lead to the disintegration of society, when people abandon civilized behavior (Idrisov, 2019a: 40).

7. The relegitimization of society as an element of domestic politics. This concept, proposed by R. Blakey, reflects the deformation of previous social and cultural norms. Because of its ambiguity, it refers either to an objective condition or is interpreted as a self-sufficient objective factor that is the cause of revolution.

Thus, R. Blackey calls the myth of a "bright future" ingrained in the public consciousness a revolutionary condition (Blackey, 1976). M. Lasky argues that the main condition of revolution is "people's desire to realize the dream of a better society through political action or violent rebellion" (Lasky, 1977: 417). A. Obershall described the spread of utopianism and mythologizing in society as a factor under the influence of which:

An idea of a better world and a fairer society is created, an unfavorable comparison of the ideal and future opportunities with the current conditions... is made, which undermines legitimacy of the regime, its institutions and weakens the determination of the ruling classes to resist change (Obershall, 1973: 84).

The mechanism of this condition/factor in Ukraine in 2004 is described by V. Burlachuk in "Power, Ritual and the Orange Revolution". Characteristic signs of its manifestation in 2019 were the development in Ukrainian society of the mythologem of "the servant who will faithfully serve his people", and protest voting caused by frustration (Idrisov, 2019: 73).

8. A change in the objective conditions of social interaction. The cardinal and in a short period of time transformation of the socio-political system has led to the emergence of a conflict situation both between the government and society, and in society itself. And its further persistence contributed to the transition of various factors from the state of "possibility of revolution" to the state of "realization", where the "conditions" are the basis for the formation of a revolutionary causal relationship. As research shows, the resulting imbalance between society's previous socio-economic expectations and the new domestic policy of the state, which does not match them, leads to a straightforward degradation of most social groups.

And already in the mid-1990s this imbalance manifested itself in Ukraine

in the development of social disorientation - low sensitivity to social norms and individuals' lack of understanding of their hierarchy. Its result was an abnormal demoralization of the Ukrainian society, noted already in 1992 for 85 % of inhabitants of the country. Such changes in society in times of crisis have been previously described by T. Parsons, P. Sorokin.

Analysis of changes in the social structure of society has shown that the growth of social demoralization is interconnected with the growth of social anomie and the development of aggressive attitudes in society, including extremist ones. At the same time, the indicators of the growth of individual value-normative uncertainty are interconnected with the development of the revolutionary situation (Merton, 1992: 120).

Changes in the objective conditions of social interaction that occurred in Ukraine in the 1990s caused the deformation of social and cultural systems, which led to social disorientation and further - the development of social anomie in all social groups of Ukrainian society. Ukrainian sociologists note that in such a state of society "an amoral majority" is actively formed, and the previously valid norms of human decency and responsibility regulating the behavior and relationships of people begin to be perceived by the majority as norms of behavior of "moral outsiders" (Golovakha, 2002). A real indicator of social anomie becomes the criminalization of society, moving to the legislative and judicial level, deforming the collective understanding of justice (Salnikova, 2013: 24).

A peculiar reaction to anomie is social cynicism. E. Golovakha gives it the following characteristic: The destruction of social capital..., where citizens openly agree with judgments characterizing most people as dishonest, dishonest and untrustworthy. The majority's assessment of the majority essentially means a social self-assessment that is independent of educational level and occupation" (Golovakha, 2014: 53).

The formed "immoral majority" elects a similar governing elite to the government. And the new political elite, which has already come to power, in order to strengthen its position in access to resources, builds an "amoral order", including through various models of electoral choice, increasingly splitting society.

The transformation of social behavior continues in the manifestation of the next factor: the development of social insanity. Its content and characteristics are considered in sufficient detail in the studies of M. Foucault. T. Garr characterizes it as a factor reflecting the beginning of a fierce struggle of certain social subjects for status, power and resources, where the goal of the parties is the neutralization or complete destruction of the opponent, occupying a position incompatible with the interests of the other party (Garr, 2005: 422-423).

Such a condition, where the emotional prevails over the rational, may remain a local phenomenon. However, it can also lead to sociopaths, incomparable in their scale of impact on the public consciousness: to armed conflicts within the country on political or ethnic grounds (Idrisov, 2019).

9. The influence of political factors on subjective conditions and factors. The mechanism of transformation of the ways of individual interaction as a consequence of changes in the objective conditions of functioning of the social system is shown in sufficient detail in the works of C. Brinton, P. Sorokin. In Robert Merton's study of the structural mechanisms of development of non-normative social behavior it is proved that:

The indicators of growth of anomic demoralization are interconnected with the growth of aggressive moods in society, including those focused on extremist actions. A similar correlation can be traced between the unpredictability of the development of the revolutionary situation and the growth of indicators of individual value-normative uncertainty (Merton, 1992: 121-122).

Let us note that our chosen research model allows us to highlight the "cause-action" interconnection, where the "action" factor includes the revolutionary cause and the revolution trigger mechanism. Without a revolutionary cause, it is impossible to activate a revolutionary situation, so it is an independent phenomenon with the external characteristics of a cause. The trigger mechanism of the revolution, or trigger, is a provocation by the current government for such forceful actions that will discredit it and cause sympathy in society for revolutionary actions.

Thus, the belief in injustice embedded in the social consciousness of Ukrainians that the actions of the current government are unfair and the desire to embody the formed utopia about a better society (to live like in Europe) became a reflection of the revolutionary situation that developed at the end of 2013.

Accordingly, the president's failure to sign the association agreement with the EU was a revolutionary reason. In this case, the occasion became a condition triggering the revolution mechanism as a causal mediator, and its trigger was the student beating on the Maidan on November 30. In 2004, the opposition's version of rigged presidential election results was adopted as a revolutionary reason, and the trigger for the revolution was the accusation of the current authorities of poisoning one of the candidates for the Head of State (Idrisov, 2019a).

Conclusions

The analysis of the theoretical discourse about the political causes of revolution, presented in our article, allows us to formulate conclusions regarding the objective and subjective conditioning of revolutionary processes. The main cause of the Ukrainian revolution is the political conditions and factors that manifested themselves in a sociopolitical crisis. The conflict between the government and the opposition, caused by ineffective actions of the state governance institutions, the lack of conditions for the participation of social forces in politics and the inability of new elites to enter the government, has become permanent for the state.

Ineffective domestic policy of the state and the transformation in the social structure relations system led to a change in social consciousness. The influence of political factors on subjective conditions and factors led to the transformation of structural mechanisms in the individual interaction ways and to the development of non-normative social behavior. The growth of anomic indicators of individual demoralization is directly correlated with the growth of aggressive attitudes in society.

Under the influence of objective conditions having a relative inertia and objective political factors changing with each electoral cycle, a stable factor interrelation “social disorientation - social anomie - social cynicism - social madness” has formed in the Ukrainian public consciousness. The growth algorithm of revolutionary sentiments under the influence of sociopolitical factors shows that this interrelation has a tendency to recur and is characterized by a contraction in time.

Since this article presents the theoretical aspect of the study of our chosen problem, in our future publications we plan to verify the presented findings by conducting empirical research.

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