

Smart reality of a contemporary leader

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Abstract The article is dedicated to the philosophical and cultural experience of reflexive observation and interpretation of current trends in global development defining strategies of leaders who carry out their life projects in new organizational and communicative modes. As the theoretical premise of the study the approach of U. Eco disclosed in the book "Turning back the clock" is adopted; further on, the authors elaborate on M. Castells' ideas about "real virtuality"; Anderson's "imagined community" analysis; and "smart crowd" concept of G. Reinhold. Contemporary problems of organizational and communicative processes are defined by the authors as cluster "projects" since they are carried out according to the principles of self-organization, have network decentralized structure, and their participants identify themselves from personalistic positions of "we-identity". Conducted study of the modes of cluster community's interaction, problems of unifying the sociocultural reality, and achievements of the information-cum-digital economy indicates the formation of smart reality. It is characterized by the continuity of communication, strengthening of urbanization processes, and formation of the close world of personal practices immersed into group habitat which is commonly perceived by representatives of various groups. The article considers the function of information technologies in maintaining a balance between archaic and contemporary global forms of social practice organization as a central point of discussion.

1 Introduction

The object of research in this article is the analysis of the reflexive aspect of information and communication reality located within the boundaries of philosophical and cultural discursiveness. For the modern glocal era, this approach is deliberately assumed as a priority since it eliminates a gap in perception of the complex organization of the real, once characterized by M. Castells as "real virtuality" (Castells 2000). In such an interpretation, the existence of reality appears as a related communicative mode where the "greed" of imagination prevails: mankind anxiously keeps the old forms while continually producing new ones including "recycled" chef d'oeuvres, that is, rethinking and actively re-introducing previously arisen variants of cultural practices or types of interaction. In relation to that, U. Eco spoke about the path "back to the future" (Eco 2007). Castells also wrote about perceiving the modern era basics as of historically new communication system organized around electronic integration of all types of communication, from printing to the multi-sensorial; it is not the formation of virtual reality but the construction of real virtuality. He continues that the reality as it is experienced has always been virtual; it was experienced through symbols which always endow the practice with a certain meaning that deviates from their strict semantic definition. (Castells 2000).

Anderson (2001) also notes the similar specificity of this actual existence on a completely different material saying that all communities are fictitious; he pays the special attention to the young national states that emerged in the second half of the 20th century (Anderson 2001). This sociologist identifies three, essentially virtual, positions: "map, census, museum" which form the basis of the identification process of nations in question. There are other authors who define the foundations for the existence of contemporary socio-cultural space close to those

presented. What is important here for us is that the fundamental ideas about reality a contemporary leader sets in a personal mode, i.e. with focus only on the "close circle".

It is the second problem we face in this field of study. The "close circle" for our contemporaries focusing on the success achievement implies an indefinite number of communities both related and unrelated to each other. These groups may interact both online and offline. They can be described as of cluster character since they are focused on the "nodal" implementation of a "project", have "flexible" boundaries, and the participants identify themselves from the personalistic positions of "We-Identity". Reinhold was one of the first scholars to write about sociocultural clustering pinpointing the interaction of "all as one" which forms a communicative "node" (Reinhold 2006). Cluster groups can communicate with each other, interpenetrate, transform, determine the internal specificity of norms, etc. But in general, they act as communicative groups defined by sequences and quality of interactions. Moreover, they represent the "smart crowd" so that it is possible to talk about smart reality as a specific characteristic of contemporary sociocultural reality formed by exclusively different dynamics of its "nodes".

Smart reality has some peculiar characteristics. It is interrelated by the continuity of cluster communication which also contributes to the strengthening of urbanization processes; it is focused on the formation of personal practices of collective daily life as it is perceived by representatives of various groups; it is supported by the development of new information technologies; it preserves the balance of "archaic" (for example, of a state) and global forms of organization of social practice.

2 The clustering of communicative practices

Communication became a key concept throughout the twentieth century. By this notion, not only the order of interactions is meant but also the very integrity of perception of the world. If we recall the first metaphors accompanying the very concept of "globalization", then M. McLuhan's point of reference for the beginning of globalization process is the "launch of the first artificial satellite of the Earth" which turns it into a small touching planet where we live "under the sounds of tribal drums" (McLuhan 2003). The holistic view of the planet gives rise to the idea of humanity. But spaceflight becomes the ultimate symbolic point of the "path" since the planet itself is completing the process of "routing" its surface: in the future, it is bound to be improved but to endure. At the previous stage, the cartographic process came to an end. In addition, the spatial discipline was established cast in the traffic regulations. Changes in it will occur further but the principles, including those inherent to the structure of human consciousness, will be necessarily implemented in these rules. This fact drew the attention of H. U. Gumbrecht when he spoke about the influence of the blinker on M. Heidegger's writing of the text "Being and Time" (Gumbrecht 2005).

The routing process led, in fact, to the clustering since it was guided by the nodal points of the routes. Here, the communicative tension reached its ultimate expression, and those nodes were the cities. The process of urbanization fundamentally changed the structure of socio-cultural relations, but its implementation had various forms and consequences. It could be the growth of comfortable suburbs, the fusion of agglomerations, business-oriented cleaning out downtowns. In the course of clustering processes, some cities grew to dominate while others ran deserted; large-scale urban crises broke out. According to R. Florida, "although the new urban crisis has many manifestations, it arises because of the fundamental contradiction associated with clustering. Clustering has two sides and creates not only positive changes but also serious problems." (Florida 2018). What is meant here, is the emergence of super-cities where life turns out to be so expensive that it leaves no place for cultural activities; residents become dispersed beyond city limits or jammed into slums; it leads to the decline of the suburbs, and for cities of the second order is fraught with stagnation. When cities are growing without development, it causes the formation of defective infrastructure.

Castells wrote that during the information age all systems are flexible, including the organization of life accompanied by personal construction of infrastructure positions. For certain types of activities, this is exactly the situation. But usually, we do deal with the ideal situation when the system of socio-cultural interactions operates in a limited mode. Here one can reveal many factors from political and economic (restrictions to use the information resources) to personal. Castells described the potential of the information society, but conflicts of modern global processes have significantly limited them.

If, for example, an individual has supposedly a free possibility of participating in qualification and retraining courses in order to gain a leading position within economic activity, in reality, s/he may face substantial problems in realizing one's opportunities. Limitations are determined by the lack of material resources, of information about possibilities that allow retraining in priority areas, by psychological and personal characteristics of the individual, by difficult life circumstances affecting most of the world population. A relatively small part of people can entertain the "digital life", and it may not last for long. At the same time, the regimes of the global economy reduce the level of social backing up which brings the situation in a vicious circle.

In this relation, the outdated models of sociocultural organization are in demand to a much greater degree than one might have surmised. Thus, the "national state" which is ineffective in contemporary political and

economic space, is psychologically prioritized among the population because it symbolizes the guarantees “for a stable future.” Basing on such stands, national identification strategies are in demand, and the result is that most of the population unprotected from state propaganda, avoid using any cluster strategies, both economic and socio-cultural. It represents the stratum of the *consumers*, including that of television information resources, as opposed to the *users* as the active medium of “flexible global agents”.

3 Modes of interaction between cluster communities

The existence of a potential leader in whatever mode it happens in any case is focused on “close surrounding circles” or orders of everyday life. In this regard, cluster interactions that dominate in the modern sociocultural space are also reflected at the everyday life level, changing the structure of the individual's views on reality. Even the orientation on “archaic” models cannot prevent this process but slows it down. The global process, in which the idea of the integrity of mankind develops, in the reverse perspective led the individual to the feeling of insignificance of oneself within the world along with the increase of one's own world for oneself value. A “cozy little world” is the value one strives for with no regards for one's ambitions. One admits “beloved ones” closer but avoids publicity and differentiates ideas and values. Such a “little world” strives for the autonomy offered by cluster strategies. In this perspective, the creative abilities of the person “equipping” one's own space are activated. But the process of securing an autonomous habitat is accompanied by reduction of creativity's declarative character: the individual creates not in order to “change the world”, but in order to “beautify” one's own existence. It implies the formation of hand-made strategies in the framework of which one's own reality is “shaped”; it allows the individual to consciously introduce into it specially personalized connotative elements. To put it simply, these are the signs for insider friends who make up the cluster.

Group interactions in cluster communities suggest their own pleasures. For example, how the enjoyment is commensurate with group “impressions.” Certain autonomy of cluster life forms its own depth of images. For the contemporary media space, the reality is built through the range of stereotypes readable by any of our contemporaries. The stereotype as a concept was introduced into scholarly use by W. Lippmann who saw it simply as “pictures in heads” yet his interpretation is rather complicated: “They are structured into the more or less ordered picture of the world [...]. The stereotypical picture of the world may not be complete, but it is a picture of a possible world, the world we got used to. In this world, people and objects occupy their destined places and act in an expected way” (Lippmann 2004). If practically all individuals perceive such “pictures in their heads,” then the group inner interpretations and deciphered images are original or have unique connotations that extend the boundaries of values, i.e. the “apparent” for all turns out to be “visible” only for insiders. Therefore, the orders of interpersonal interactions are arranged in different ways. They are pretty complex and diverse. “Own” world assumes an individual as a node in which various cluster interactions, more or less significant and intensive, are intertwined. A vast expanse of relations forms the “cold” communication allowing the public to be aware of event-triggering the Other. A certain number of “circles” of interaction are in a “hot” state, assuming the presence of active communicators whose life events are not only experienced but also jointly formed. Taking into account the development of information technologies, such multiple orders of interaction both in the “cold” and in the “hot” modes significantly multiply thus building cluster communicative orders beyond borders - national, territorial, or temporal. The global world is filled with permeating each other “cozy little worlds”, their existential basis being constituted by interpersonal communication.

4 Unification of the sociocultural reality interface

The main locomotives of modern sociocultural dynamics are digital information technologies. For a contemporary leader, they provide economic growth, changes in human habitat, and transformation of consciousness. The functioning of these technologies is possible only in the new environment of the Internet, originally created as a global system, built on the standard of interaction, packet data transfer, and interface. This unified environment of the contemporary world is no longer an additional reality but a full-fledged, increasingly expanding milieu of human habitation where the formation of a new universal and global dimension unfolds having common “language” of interaction, transmission, storage and consumption of information. This new environment claims to play an increasingly dominant role; its parameters in the common life of man possess the status that the materiality, “real interactions”, and national-cultural values formerly had. Within this universal media-virtual environment, there are different modes and models for constituting and breaking down the reality that cannot be reduced to the previous models of building the world-of-life.

This new universal and technologically formed cultural environment in terms of its characteristics is not able to maintain national and regional “voices”; it functions in the mode of “disassembling” any national, religious, or linguistic entities. Multiculturalist ideals such as a harmonious combination of national priorities in a single multicultural space are usually broadcasted at the level of void rhetoric. In the situation of rigid and uncontested

domination of globalization values, a sole system of “interaction logic” built according to the parameters of artificial languages and protocols of information data exchange remains virtually a rhetorical figure that has long been unable to obscure the total disassembly of national values and national ritual spaces. The “national” is capable to become the part of common space only partially, to the extent it is able to lose its national color and symbolism. It happens due to the fact that the digital media environment cannot “hold” neither symbolism nor national peculiarities but only the dominant values of the global space, retaining these values only in the format of an “exotic invariant.” The type of consciousness formed in the situation of globalized formation and domination of the medial environment of the Internet is the cluster consciousness deprived of the previous hierarchical models of functioning and goal setting. For this type of consciousness that exists simultaneously in the cluster segmentation modes and within the globalized constituting of reality, everything is passed through the Internet virtual world environment: a window to the world is a mobile phone. The problem of interaction outside the classical segments of - state, nation, place of work or study localized in space — does not exist as such: the modern cluster consciousness of younger generation gradually occupying commanding positions in political, economic, and other spheres lives and builds its life as a global and unified project.

5 Problems of the digitalized information economy

In the process of building the logic of each cultural cluster in the global world, it appears that this logic is identical and uniform for any types of the global world. If any segment of reality "falls out" from this common universal logic, it is either gradually transforming to fit the common standards or eliminated. This process significantly slows down communication exchanges at the interregional and interstate level since it turns out to be determined by social, state-bureaucratic, or confessional institutions that are congenial to previous regimes. By continuing to function and formatting reality according to archaic modes they generate national, religious, language, and cultural barriers of visas regulations, religious values, and language filters thus only raising the price and muddling the global cooperation processes. Inhibiting and complicating the process is connected with not only (although for these reasons) the fact that these structures introduce new data hubs and roundabout structures, requiring additional time- and finance-consuming procedures and equipment for processing though unavoidable points that are added to the routes of communication, but first of all with the fact that existing state-bureaucratic and national-cultural machines responsible for assembling and formatting the reality of life are functioning in a “parallel mode”. In other words, the traditionalist, archaic in their genes, task, and style of functioning authorities are focused on organizing the world and national-state formations according to the traditionalist model, and therefore they act in the situation of the new global world in the contradictory mode. That is why they fall out from the most optimal for current development regimes of the clustered global space: their mode of functioning is destructive and contradicts the regimes of global cluster world and the consciousness that builds it up; it hinders by using populist, nationalistic, confessional rhetoric the normal, from the point of view of new reality, development processes and arrangement of the cluster world, the development of modern information cum digital economy.

Finance flows, tax preferences, state-regulated various startups, cluster research, and production facilities turn out to be ineffective and counterproductive because these new formations are infected by traditionalist, archaic patterns inevitably arising due to the limiting state-bureaucratic control and financing. Clusters emulated by authorities are non-competitive and unpromising compared to those peers formed by the real leaders spontaneously and initiatively without the participation of bureaucracy. In any sphere of modern hybrid reality the contemporary global cluster formations operate effectively in the dimension existing in the parallel to the traditionalist and archaic “life world”: a contemporary schoolchild matches the Internet world without special courses and finds the space to communicate and realize one’s ambitions and life perspectives much without formal guidance and surveillance.

Cross-state, interregional, cultural, and economic ties are developing better in the virtualized hybrid space without regulation of “classical” and “archaic” regimes trying to format the reality. All state-bureaucratic and confessional institutes in their efforts to turn the society backward prove to be effective for development only in case if they are ineffective in their original function. Administrating will impose archaic imperatives of the modern European culture - total visibility, transparency, and control even at the best instances of democratic and liberal media, the private space is of no regard.

It should be acknowledged that the contemporary global cluster world needs to be less warden by state authorities since it already has sufficient human, technological, material and, of course, informational resources. This world already has effective means for implementing global projects such as building a satellite telecommunication pervading coverage or organizing channels for “real” movements of people and goods in the format of modern logistics. Rather, the society requires a reduction in control and constant attempts of “archaic” authorities, unsuccessful and counterproductive, to “help” the development.

6 Conclusions

In the situation of global clustering of sociocultural reality, the leadership acquires new opportunities but faces new obstacles and impediments. Traditionally, the gap between the poor and the rich is thought to be the primary contradiction of the global world. Through the prism of “smart approach,” this problem acquires new paths of cohesion and nodes. One can talk about regional misbalance in profitability, about the destruction of the middle class, about advantages of large cities against the poverty of the periphery, but these are economic indicators. In the sociocultural perspective, these ruptures have a slightly different character.

The smart reality priorities are more focused on free access to information and its sources for TV and Internet consumers, on the accessibility of relocation in space, on the choice of sociocultural dynamics strategies (for example, “slow life” strategies), on education, etc. Certainly, economic indicators influence the choice of sociocultural strategies, but they can be formed within a sufficiently effective and liberal atmosphere of spontaneity and autonomy, or even personalized. It indicates the coexistence of the accompanying, parallel processes of socio-cultural development.

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