

Transformation of Power Relations in the "Generated Risk" Society

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ABSTRACT

The analysis of contradictory trends in the development of the modern world is presented in two aspects: "generated risk" as a result of high-tech, goal-oriented actions and democratic methods of influence, leading to the ubiquity of power relations. The presentation of the effectiveness of actions as a basis for strengthening the "uncertainty" and "flexibility" of the world allows us to conclude that it is necessary to move to value-oriented human actions.

The contradictory nature of power relations is manifested in the fact that the desire of people for individual values, a high degree of autonomy, turns into the fact that even the issues of life and death become political concepts. It is proved that the government's striving for efficiency leads to depersonalization and ubiquity of power relations.

Keywords: "generated risk"; security; purposeful-rational action; individualism; biopower, responsibility; solidarity.

1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamism and scale of changes in modern societies lead to the need of rethinking the concepts on which the life of societies and individuals is based. The problems of security and social protection in the conditions of post-industrial development of societies not only preserve their relevance, but also acquire new - global dimensions.

It is important to note that the high speed of social changes requires a rapid transformation of the social sciences. Environmental problems, the scale and speed of the spread of infections, the uncertainty of further development caused by economic crises create conditions under which new approaches should be developed to determine the effectiveness of rational actions of people, to determine the essence of power relations, to the ideals of political development.

The need to transform social knowledge is due to a number of significant contradictions, the formulation and analysis of which will become the research goal of this article.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

To identify the logic of changes in the essential properties of power under conditions of "generated risk", a structural-functional method was used,

which made it possible to represent power as a way of organizing social relations, defining social guidelines, forming a "vision" of the world and value attitudes. The use of the contextual method made it possible to point out that the ubiquity of power relations, "soft", but at the same time total forms of control do not guarantee stability and predictability of the development of societies.

The method of social constructivism made it possible to reveal the essential connections and relations of power in the conditions of "generated risk". Application of such ideal constructions as "risk", "generated risk"; the effectiveness of power "became the basis for typologizing the rapidly changing realities of modern societies.

Thus the concept of risk started to be used to characterize social changes, in the context of the effective development of science and technology.

The progress of science and technology formed the basis for the emergence of new forms of uncertainty, contributed not only to overcoming dangers, but also to the emergence of risks. "The accumulation of risks - nuclear, environmental, financial, military, terrorist, biochemical, informational - has become a prevailing factor today" [3].

It is paradoxical that the perfect high-tech means that made it possible for a person to realize his goals and implement the most daring plans, at the same time, did not lead humanity to stability and safety. On the contrary, the high degree of knowledge of the world, and the high-tech actions based on it, caused the emergence of global dangers that previous societies did not encounter. "... In the theory of global risk, the place of the central unity determined by the purpose of action is taken by the category of undesirable side effects. As a result, it is the global risks (their social and political structure) ... that give rise to previously unknown world unrest and disturbance"[3]. Situations are formed in which it is necessary to change, rethink the criteria for the success of human actions.

Modern people are faced with "new dimensions of risk", "... namely, the" risk produced "in the course of civilizational and technological changes" [9]. Thus, the results of successful actions acted as a condition for the emergence of threats to the existence of mankind.

Along with security problems, people have always been worried about the problem of freedom. And the sequential realization of the ideals of liberalism, focus on individual freedom have led to the formation of a new type of personality - a "sliding on the surface", a person who does not want to take responsibility. At the same time, such a person does not feel secure; his "... being breaks up into fragments, and his life - into episodes" [2]

Meanwhile, overcoming the dangers and threats that modern societies face becomes possible as a result of collective / mass efforts of people, and requires a greater degree of integration and expanded responsibility.

Thus, another contradiction is being formed in the modern world - this is the changing essence of power relations. On the one hand, the processes of democratization are significant, at the same time, the expansion of individual freedom can be the reason why the authorities cannot fulfill their main purpose - to protect the life and health of citizens. This contradiction especially manifests itself, in our opinion, during the Covid-19 pandemic. Self-isolation periods, the need to comply with security measures, a responsible attitude not only to one's own health, but to the lives of other people are perceived by some part of society as ways of violation of the ideals of democracy.

In order to analyse the contradictory trends that have arisen in modern societies, let us turn to the

classification of social actions proposed by M. Weber. In our opinion, the basis for the contradictory development of the modern world is the transition from "value-rational" to purposeful-rational actions. M. Weber gives the following definition of purposeful-rational action: "That individual acts in a purposeful-rational mode whose behaviour is focused on the goals, means and side results of his actions, who rationally considers the relationship of various possible goals to each other, that is, does not act, at least, effectively (first of all, emotionally) or traditionally "[6]. The transition from the value-oriented motivation of actions to the target-motivated one, requiring calculation, strictly planned, excluding subjective preferences, formed the conditions for the emergence of a "risk society". U. Beck, who was the first to introduce the concept of "risk society", noted: "In the 19th century, modernization took place against the background of its opposite: the traditional inherited world and nature, which needed to be cognized and conquered. Today, at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries, modernization has absorbed its opposite, destroyed it and began to destroy itself in its industrial-social premises and functional principles "[3].

Concentration on the knowledge of the laws of the natural and social worlds determined the direction of the formation and development of civilizations. Obtaining objective knowledge about the world contributed to an increase in the degree of predictability and, accordingly, the organization and planning of further social development.

The domination of purposeful-rational action is based on the way of thinking in which focus on rationalizing nature and society is viewed as a universal means for achieving progress. Scientific and technological development contributed to the establishment of an instrumental type of rationality, in which the objectivity of knowledge and the success of practical application were considered as the most significant resources for achieving security, predictability of further social development.

A high degree of rationality of actions is associated with the possibility of strict management and control of factors influencing the actions of people. "The more "independently" the acting individual makes a decision, that is, the more it depends on his own considerations, not clouded by any "external" constraint or insuperable affects, the more, given side equal conditions, motivation is subject to the categories of ends and means, the more completely, therefore, it is possible to analyse it rationally and, if necessary, to include it in the scheme of rational action "[6].

Meanwhile, the logic of the implementation of instrumental actions presupposes the presence of a by-product, unintended consequences, which sometimes have a decisive effect on further processes of goal-

setting and goal-realization. An autonomous logic of the development of instrumental actions is being formed, the sequential implementation of which presupposes the levelling of the subjects' influence.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Thus, having created a perfect means for achieving goals, a person loses control not only over his actions, but also over goals and desires. "The benefits from technical and economic 'progress' are increasingly being pushed into the background by the production of risks. They can only be legitimized at an early stage - as "hidden side effects" [3].

The degree of predictability and further social development decreases. The processes of self-development and self-regulation are becoming an important feature of the system of social activity that underpins the formation of complex societies. Social activity, which is a complexly organized system, the elements of which are strictly differentiable special types of actions, is self-developing without a need for a subject. At the same time, the self-development of an activity is not limited by anything, while all the elements included in its structure are strictly determined, enclosed in a rigid framework.

We emphasize once again that one of the significant features of the development of social activity in the modern world is that the side results of human actions are the basis for the emergence of a logic of development that is not subject to human control.

The autonomy of the modern system of activity is manifested in the emergence of global problems that threaten the existence of mankind. By-products, unintended results of activity, have acquired such importance in the conditions of a modern, rapidly developing world that they have become a real threat to the existence of all types of societies.

The uniqueness of this situation lies in the fact that the real threat to the existence of mankind is created not by external, powerful, still unknown forces, but by the results of the activities of the people themselves. However, it should be noted that the "generated risk" is not only a threat to the existence and quality of life of people, but contributes to further development, prompting the search for new types of activity, other criteria for the success of actions.

It should be emphasized that unintentional by-products are customary components of the activity. However, with the development of civilization, with an increase in the effectiveness of actions, the role and significance of unintended results increases, becoming decisive for all further social development.

E. Giddens notes that "... the impact of some factors, designed, as expected, to make our life more definite

and predictable, including scientific and technological progress, often leads to the opposite result" [7].

Risk, uncertainty, lack of security are becoming features of modern life. Consideration of the future prospects for the development of societies, the study of the forms of instability that prevail in the modern world, lead to the conclusion that "... only greater flexibility, greater risk and greater vulnerability await us" [7]. There is a "... deep uncertainty and softness" of the world: in it anything can happen and everything can be done, but nothing can be done once and for all.

Uncertainty, flexibility, unpredictability of the world become the basis for rethinking power relations. The existence of problems which in order to be determined and solved requires the conclusion of international agreements, becomes the basis for rethinking the essence of power relations. It is important to note that the study of the role of power relations in the context of "generated risk" is becoming interdisciplinary. At the same time, the definition of the essence and functions of power also makes it possible to reveal the inconsistency of modern development.

First of all, let us point out that the very "nature" of power is changing under conditions of a low level of prediction, an increase in threats and risks of further development of the modern world. Despite the fact that the processes of democratization and humanization play a decisive role in the modern world, power relations are becoming ubiquitous. By means of "soft forms", power produces "obedient bodies", ceasing to be only a factor of external influence, it (power) itself determines not only the goals, but also the needs of a person.

The dichotomous nature of power relations in a society of "generated risk".

Oriented to the ideals of individual freedom, democratic forms of government become the basis for the "ubiquity", "omnipresence" of power relations. The need to analyse such a contradictory nature of power presupposes consideration of the origin and development of power relations, the most important resource of which is rational knowledge.

In the era of modern times, new approaches emerge that define power as the cumulative result of the conscious actions of people. This understanding of the essence of power relations has led to the need for the emergence of special knowledge that regulates the interaction of people, develops mechanisms for maintaining order, social justice, etc.

Significant for the study of the peculiarities and diverse forms of manifestation of modern types of power ("power-knowledge", biopower) is the appeal to the teachings of the theorists of the New about the "natural state" of people. The recognition that all people are equal in nature has led to the emergence of new

levels of interaction between the natural and social states of the individual. Regardless of the different meanings invested in the concept of the natural state, whether it is "the war of all against all" (T. Hobbes) or "life according to the laws of reason" (J. Locke), further development is associated with the subordination of the natural state to the public. The necessity of the transition to conscious actions under the leadership of the state, which is the result of a social contract, is substantiated. In the process of determining the conditions for the transition to a civil society and the rule of law, the theorists of the modern era formed the ideals of individualistic ethics. At that time, a new type of person emerged whose traits are activity, independence and striving for a goal.

At the same time, self-focusing, a variety of practices aimed at caring for their own body, led to total and impersonal forms of enslavement - the power of consumerism, hedonism. The rapid development of science and technology, the emergence of new types of knowledge about the world and human being paradoxically made the natural desires of a human the subject of his main concerns and interests. However, the natural aspirations of a person - the birth of children, health care, the quality of life of the elderly are in the field of care / control of the state and society. It should be noted that an unprecedented level of penetration of power into the individual / natural life of the individual has been achieved.

Thus, overcoming the natural state and the transition to a social / conscious life became the beginning of the penetration of power relations into the intimate aspects of life. Power relations are becoming ubiquitous, since they form both cognitive discourses and types of communication, and even determine the fact of the existence / non-existence of a person as a biological organism.

Highly skilled actions, the level of development of medicine have changed existential boundaries. Determinations of viability and death verification are based not only on objective biological indicators, but also become the result of the adopted, agreed decision of lawyers, politicians, religious leaders, etc.

J. Agamben notes that: "... today life and death are not actually scientific concepts, but political concepts, which, due to their political nature, acquire a precise meaning only as a result of a special decision" [1].

4. CONCLUSIONS

One of the conclusions of our study is the substantiation of the position that the instrumentalist orientation of actions becomes the basis for the emergence of contradictory trends in the modern world. Highly effective actions aimed at ensuring the safety of people introduce new risks.

Thus, the search for new criteria for the success of actions becomes existentially significant. Following the classification of actions proposed by M. Weber, one can indicate the need for a transition to value-based rational actions. The accuracy of calculations in the formulation of goals, the creation of powerful, perfect means made it possible to qualitatively transform the life of entire societies and people, but did not allow to overcome the uncertainty in social development. On the contrary, the effectiveness of instrumental actions led to low levels of predictability, to new scales of risks. The search for and focus on value attitudes, the adherence to which allows you to abandon the achievement of goals, is acquiring vital significance today.

Accordingly, the criteria that determine the effectiveness of modern power relations should also change. The ubiquity and depersonalization, as a manifestation of a high degree of productivity of power lead to situations in which the high organization of societies not only fails to guarantee development stability, but also increases uncertainty. And an individual who is under thorough control does not feel that he is "lost" and lonely. Thus, power relations should be based on the forms of universal human solidarity. Since overcoming global problems that threaten all of humanity requires joint, coordinated actions, the problem of solidarity acquires existential significance. That is, solidarity should not be based on adherence to collective, universal human values, but be developed in the process of individual responsibility of each person "... the main thing is the need to redefine the subject, focusing not so much on his ability to dominate the world and transform it, but taking into account the distance, which he occupies in relation to this ability itself and to the apparatuses and discourses that put it into action" [8].

A complexly organized society with a large number of interconnections, levels and types of interaction is difficult to predict. Inconsistency of the degree of impact with the result, manifested, for example, in the fact that thoughtlessness, a low level of caution in the actions of one person can lead to serious problems, negatively affect the lives of many people and societies. Thus, in the conditions of the existence of an unpredictable, "flexible", complexly organized society, the basis for solidarity actions is the responsible actions of individuals.

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