National self-consciousness of members of society in the context of the social dynamics of a transforming society

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to understanding prognostic functions and possible trends in developing the national self-consciousness of members of societies in a state of socio-historical transformations. Today, there is an urgent need to analyze specific social phenomena and processes in the sociocultural space of social systems, which determine the potential vectors of their social transformations. The national self-consciousness of members of society is one of such phenomena and is considered by the authors as a component of the socio-cultural transformation of modern society. The conceptualization of national self-consciousness in the context of the scientific discourse of self-consciousness in the social sciences allowed not only to create a holistic characterization of this concept, to highlight the most significant aspects of this phenomenon, but also to determine and analyze the differences in the formation of national self-consciousness depending on the phasal position of society. The main idea of the article is based on the concept that addressing national self-consciousness during dynamic social changes is not only expedient but also necessary both for the sake of historical and retrospective explanation and reasoned, probabilistic prediction of the development of ethnonational processes during the period of social transformations, as well as for identifying opportunities to influence the formation of national self-consciousness in a multi-ethnic society. The authors draw attention to the fact that during the period of social transformations, the process of changing national self-consciousness has certain problematic points (parallel existence of "old" and "new" self-consciousness; unsettled replacement of "old" social values and social norms with "new" ones; the existence of opposite tendencies and ways of formation of national self-consciousness, etc.). The solution to these problems depends on the understanding of the essence of the values and development trends of a certain social environment in which the society will function in the future, the real possibilities of the influence of national self-consciousness on the spiritual and ethical priorities of individuals, on the cultural space of society. The article defines potential vectors of change in national self-consciousness under various circumstances of the development of social transformations. Each of those has a fundamentally different effect on the general state of society as a social system, which creates methodological foundations for the empirical recording of trends in the development of national self-consciousness in the context of the social dynamics of transformational processes through the definition of formation indicators of national self-consciousness levels.

Introduction

Over recent years, the development of global scientific thought has been focused on aspects related to the individual. In particular, attention to the valuable components of human consciousness has been increasing. The increase of the role of individual self-consciousness becomes especially significant in transformative societies when there is an opportunity for citizens to choose in which way the society will develop, to clarify worldview orientations, ideological sympathies, and lifestyle. From a significant array of scientific research on national self-consciousness, the studies of a number of German scientists M. Sheler (*2020*); E. Jünger (*2000*), O. Dann (*2003*) etc. stand out. Using the example of Germany, they reveal the process of formation and transformation of national self-consciousness and its implementation in certain specific socio-political conditions (*Scheler, 2020; Junger, 2000; Dann, 2003*). We agree with M. Scheler's

point of view that for the consolidation of the nation, which consists of different social communities (classes, status, professional groups, estates), each of which has its own worldview, it is necessary to form national self-consciousness at levels that will encompass social-class interests that separate people, and will be perceived by society as the "spirit" of the nation (*Scheler, 2020*). Also interesting is the point of view of E. Junger, who notes that without national self-consciousness, the life of a nation turns into an "imagination", where people no longer live, but only execute their roles (*Junger, 2000: 77-79*).

We especially want to emphasize O. Dann's monograph "Nations and Nationalism in Germany (1770-1990)", in which a thorough analysis of events that can lead to a change in the national self-consciousness of members of society is carried out. However, we cannot agree with some of the points made in the study. Thus, O. Dann considers the development of national self-consciousness as a natural-historical process in which the evolution and changes in human self-consciousness are determined by certain circumstances and the distribution of political forces. national self-consciousness, according to O. Dann, is like a "mirror" that simply reflects reality (*Dann, 2003: 437*). We believe that national self-consciousness is not just a neutral reflector of reality. Rather it acts as a more complex mechanism that determines the image of what we see during social transformations; a form that profiles social phenomena and events. The change in national self-consciousness is not simply reduced to a change in content under the influence of new circumstances. Therefore, changes in national self-consciousness should be explained not by historical events, but, on the contrary, in such events, the manifestation of some a priori structures of national self-consciousness is possible. In the process of its development, national self-consciousness matures into deep national interests, which are focused on the form of a national idea, which should justify the formation of any statehood as a process. In our opinion, this approach substantiates the conclusion that it is impossible to prioritize economic and political transformations, hoping that human consciousness will also change. First, there must be changes in the nature of people – their consciousness, values, and character, and only after that a new society can be built. A "turn" is needed, a person's appeal to themselves, which contributes to the creation of a new spiritual atmosphere in society. In that atmosphere, a person would be able to look at themselves in a new way, at the nature of their connections with the social environment. In the works of the above-mentioned authors, attention is focused on the fact that the needs of society and the needs of the individual should become inseparable, and together they should begin to influence the main directions of the institutionalization of society. At the same time, the main emphasis is placed on the individual, on the declaration of one's sovereign right to discover the "self", the right to be aware of the processes taking place in the social environment, one's own meaning of life, because when defining the concept of "person", the concept of "self-consciousness" should be taken into account. This was noted in the works by I. Wallerstein (*2001*), S. Priest (*1991*), J.-F. Revel (*2004*), T. Eriksen (*2001*), F. Fukuyama (*2006*) and ect.

Analyzing the array of scientific sources, we saw that the term "national self-consciousness" is quite ambiguous. Among the multitude of definitions of national self-consciousness, the following statements can be found:

(1) it is a feature of mental life characteristic of a specific culture, which is revealed through a system of views, assessments, norms, and attitudes, which are based on the knowledge and beliefs available in a given society; (2) these are implicit instructions, opinions, and value orientations in a certain national environment; (3) it is, first of all, the people's perception of themselves as a nation with an awareness of the interests, values, and orientations of representatives of other nationalities; (4) it is the historical knowledge of the majority of community members about their people, developed under the influence of state ideology and leading social groups; (5) it is awareness of the interests of one's nation, one's people. Having analyzed the above-mentioned definitions of national self-consciousness, we noticed that they lack an understanding of national self-consciousness as a social phenomenon that can influence the course of social and political processes in the period of social transformations.

We believe that the interpretation of national self-consciousness as a social phenomenon will significantly affect the methodology and methods of studying national self-consciousness both at the level of society as a whole and at the level of each member of this society. However, the difficulty of studying and researching changes in national self-consciousness during the period of social transformations is present due to the existence of certain features that should be taken into account, namely: the transitional nature of national self-consciousness, in which there is a parallel existence of the so-called "old" and "new" self-consciousness; technologies (unregulated and undefined at the social level) for replacing old social values and social norms with new ones; a combination of opposite trends, different forms, and methods of formation of national self-consciousness, when, on the one hand, a certain strengthening of the influence of the state becomes inevitable, and on the other hand, the role of civil society and individual freedom grows in the process of democratization.

Considering the fact that the change in the national self-consciousness of members of society cannot be attributed to an unmanaged process since it is one of the main components of the process of building a political nation, an appropriate understanding of the prognostic functions and possibilities of national self-consciousness is necessary. Without this, it is difficult to count on a full justification of state strategy and policy processes of nation-building during social transformations. That is why our research is focused on identifying possible versions of the change of national self-consciousness during the period of social transformations in order to theoretically determine and substantiate the indicators of the formation of national self-consciousness.

Research methods

In the process of scientific research, we used a set of general scientific methods: analysis and synthesis (to characterize the theoretical foundations of research on the process of changing national self-consciousness); the genetic method (to establish stage differences in the development of national self-consciousness), the method of systemic and structural analysis (to determine the vectors of the formation of national self-consciousness during the period of social transformation). The approach proposed in the article is developed within the framework of the theory of transforming societies. The theoretical foundations of the study of transforming societies are laid in the works of H. Arendt, S. Huntington, R. Herbut, E. Durk-

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heim, A. Toynbee, as well as concepts developed within the framework of the so-called structure-activity approach in sociology (M. Archer, E. Giddens, P. Shtompka, O. Kutsenko, V. Burega). Research methods are determined by the theoretical tradition of sociology, primarily the development of consciousness and social rationality. Many prominent sociologists (M. Weber, Y. Habermas, G. Simmel, K. Lorenz, T. Parsons) call the development of rationality in human thinking and behavior one of the universal directions of social evolution, believing that this development comes at the expense of abandoning irrational archaic thinking and traditional collective ideas, unable to serve rational social reality. In our understanding of "evolution", we rely on the definition of H.Y.M. Claessen, who proposed to consider evolution "as a process of structural reorganization over time, resulting in a form or structure qualitatively different from the previous form" (*Claessen, 2006*). It was this approach that allowed us to identify some historically proven regularities of the evolution of national self-consciousness in various social systems, thus we managed to obtain arguments indicating the fundamental possibility of changing national self-consciousness in the period of social transformations.

Results and Discussion

In the period of social transformations or in the period when society finds itself at the point of bifurcation, the rhythm and pace of life, and the synchronicity of social processes are disrupted. In a similar period, the values of a certain society can also change. It is natural that in such periods, people have (according to A. Toynbee) "a sick feeling of losing their vital impulse" (*Neilson, 1955*). Awareness of the historicity of events, comparison of national differences, and understanding of the immediate and distant past often strengthen the experience of time. What has been said, of course, does not mean that the alleged emergence of national self-consciousness is connected only to the period of transformation. It is always present, but under different circumstances of social development, the influence of national self-consciousness on the general state of society is fundamentally different – with stable existence and progressive evolutionary development of society, national self-consciousness has little effect on the general course of events; when a society enters a zone of instability (with the fact that this instability itself is often a consequence of the manifestation of the changed national self-consciousness of the members of this society), the importance of national self-consciousness for choosing the further path of society's transformation fundamentally increases.

It should also be emphasized that societies of different types (and in different phases of their historical path) assume the actualization of national self-consciousness in different forms and to various degrees, which creates implications for the future of various socio-cultural systems (*Pavlenko, 2002: 16*). In the case when the formation of national self-consciousness does not take into account the objective possibilities of the dynamics of value changes of the persons themselves, especially during the period of social transformations, it becomes illusory. During this period, the realities of the historical past or ideas about the future are perceived as the ideal of social life in the present, and the limited patterns of life of particular individuals become the practical basis of the general principles of existence. Thus, the desired appears to be true. Approaching the ideas of national self-consciousness to the objective truth is a complex process

in which various principles of their existence are tested for feasibility through the practical life of people (*Rafalskyi, Samchuk, 2018*).

In homogenous social systems (monarchical, authoritarian, totalitarian) ideas of influence on national self-consciousness are very popular. In the conditions of homogeneous formations, rigid subordination of a person to external actions is, in fact, an integral attribute of the system. In this case, a person acts as a means to achieve some higher goal for the benefit of supposedly higher values than themselves – the advanced class and the superior nation (race). While they are proclaimed the vanguard units of humanity, the "reactionary" classes or "inferior" peoples (races) were to be eliminated (*Pavlenko, 2002: 624*). The logical outcome of understanding the homogeneity of society is the ascertaination of the national identity and identity of all members of society (*Durkheim, 1995*).

Let's take a closer look at the social system of the totalitarian type. The use of the above-mentioned ideas in totalitarian social systems is confirmed, for example, by a certain historical experience of the countries of the "socialist camp" (the peoples of the USSR and Eastern Europe), in which it was possible to significantly influence the national self-consciousness of hundreds of millions of people belonging to various national and ethnic groups, classes, estates, stratified by professional, educational and other characteristics of human communities. In Germany during the 1930s, the national self-consciousness of an educated and cultured nation changed in a very short period of time. China went through the same process during the "cultural revolution", etc. A totalitarian state, as a form of a homogeneous society, largely locks the population onto itself (*Pocheptsov, 1993: 52*). Therefore, the adaptation of the individual to existing life circumstances, suppression, and artificial "equalization" of national differences are, in fact, necessary conditions for the sustainability of such a system. This is evidenced by many works, aimed at studying totalitarian systems (*Arendt, 1991; Aron, 1969; Berdyaev, 1990*). A unified understanding of society does not leave room for those spheres, that provided a complete, integral life cycle of a person (family, ethnic group, nation) in the historical process. A person is ideologically programmed with slogans and stamps and manipulated by the bearers of absolute power. As an element of the mass, an individual turns out to be deprived of the possibility of a conscious choice, while external forces, in accordance with their own needs, violate an individual's unconscious nature, using their energy for the purposes of these forces (*Pavlenko, 2002: 625*). In other words, in totalitarian societies, ideology is directed not to logic, but to reflexes (according to H. Arendt), not only the consciousness of an individual but also the unconscious of the people is purposefully formed, activating the mythologized means of explaining reality. National self-consciousness in this case remains a completely rational, expedient form, at the same time, by its essence and the way of constructing explanations, it regresses to primitive, archaic models (*Sykevich, Krokinskaya, Possel, 2005: 22*).

With sufficiently long violent influence (several generations long), deformations of the national self-consciousness of the individual are possible (communist, homogeneous ideology in the USSR, which led to the actual change of national self-consciousness to international self-consciousness). A distinctive example of this,

as confirmed in many sociological studies of domestic scientists, is the fact that the greatest resistance to democratic social transformations is made by the older generation, which has experienced severe pressure on its self-consciousness for the longest time (*Popova, 1995, 2006; Golovakha, Bekeshkina, Nebozhenko, 1992; Golovakha, Panina, 2006; Zlobina, Reznik, 2006*). At the same time, with a relatively short-term effect of violent factors, a person's national self-consciousness recovers relatively quickly, returning to its natural, pre-violent state. An example can be the relatively short-lived dominance of the "Soviet" ideology in the countries of Eastern Europe and even in the Baltics, followed by a fairly quick and relatively painless return to former ideals and values.

When homogeneous social formations are transformed into heterogeneous ones through democratic transformations, the foundations of totalitarian society become imperiled, and it begins to crumble. On the one hand, the previously united mass quickly atomizes, and its members no longer have any common goals, being aware only of their own (selfish) ones. The Hobbesian "war of all against all" begins, and as a result, people do not trust anyone (at the social level). The totalitarian system, which suppressed any normal activity of civil society for several decades, leaves behind a community of people who are trying to find some common principle on which to build a new harmonious life for society as a whole. On the other hand, in a society of free enterprise and a market economy, the individual differences of people are so natural, and success in life is linked to the personal characteristics and abilities of a person (although not guaranteed only by them) that the problem of the evolution of national self-consciousness recedes into the background (the examples are countries Western Europe and the USA).

During the period of social transformations, the evolution of national self-consciousness can be achieved in two ways: either by force, totalitarian suppression of attitudes and behaviors incompatible with general ideals; or by the gradual change of social ideals and values so as to achieve their free and conscious acceptance by the majority of society members. The first method is demonstrated today by Russia. Its external integration and internationality were preserved only and exclusively due to the totalitarian mechanisms of power. The second is embodied in democratic countries and, above all, in the experience that reflects the possibilities of civil society functioning.

Considering all of the abovementioned, showing the development of a person's national self-consciousness depending on the phasal position of society and a certain path of social development, we can search for patterns of change in the national self-consciousness of members of modern societies as social subjects under the conditions of social transformations.

Based on the fact that the transforming society is unstable, there is a possibility of different options (paths) for its development, which, subsequently, affect the change in social reality. Taking into account the fact that during social transformations, a person's self-consciousness reflects certain social shifts, we consider it appropriate to point out the possible versions of social development in this period and to determine the manifestations of national self-consciousness caused by them.

Version 1: transition to an openly nationalistic regime, inter-national wars, isolationism from the whole world in its extreme manifestations. We believe that this path in its "pure" form can hardly be observed in modern societies.

However, Russia shows certain signs, as certain ideas characteristic of this trend have mass support among the Russian population. This is quite serious in its outcomes, a turn in the transformational development of society. This version of social transformation determines the manifestation of national self-consciousness in its extreme forms (racism, chauvinism, antisemitism, etc.). In the case of heterogeneous societies with regional national differences, it is difficult to talk about the integration of society with such manifestations of national self-consciousness.

Version 2: a return to the past with certain negative "layers", generated by the totalitarian system, namely: "equalization"; sacrifice for the sake of a "bright future"; further degradation of national values; increasing aggressiveness towards the outside world; intolerance to another way of life. The probability of the implementation of this version of social transformation in Ukraine by 2014 was quite high since it meant a return to the usual way of life for certain social groups. National self-consciousness, conditioned by this version of social transformations, can turn into an "international" one. This form of self-consciousness can usually contribute to the consolidation of society (the example of Russia), however, with international self-consciousness, the national characteristics of a person and society are leveled, and national values are lost.

Version 3: low social activity and anomie of the transforming society, the greater orientation of people towards individual interests. In this case, the disintegration of national self-consciousness in relation to other forms of social consciousness, instability, and uncertainty of the processes of replacing old social values and social norms with new ones is possible. Certain signs of similar transformations were observed in Ukraine from 2016 to 2022. This version determines the emergence of national self-consciousness of a transitional nature, that is, the parallel coexistence in the society of the so-called "old" and "new" self-consciousness. Such an evolution of national self-consciousness is undesirable for the social dynamics of the development of societies because the combination of the opposite, multidirectional tendencies, various forms, and methods of formation of national self-consciousness will contribute, on the one hand, to a certain strengthening of the influence of the state, and on the other hand, to the growth of the role of civil society ensured by the processes of democratization, human freedom. In our opinion, this leads to an increase in confrontational phenomena (which was observed in Ukraine after the 2019 Presidential elections).

Version 4: democratic direction of social transformations, based on the priorities of civil society. This trend contributes to the formation of national self-consciousness, adequate to the process of democratic transformations. With this trend, one can expect a significant expansion of the scope of national self-consciousness into the ethnonational sphere. With this tendency, the best features of the nations are included in the content of the universally human (*Claessen, 2006: 69*), meaning - national self-consciousness reflects both the most essential features of national consciousness, which was formed historically, and universal ideals and values. We believe that in periods of social transformations, the evolution of national self-consciousness in this direction acquires special importance. In this case, national self-consciousness will be able to unite individual representatives and groups of the population, which until then were almost not connected with each other, due to

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their existence in different regional, ethnic, religious, or social contexts. Such national self-consciousness forms their motivation for common actions, generates the perception of oneself as a collective "we", and creates an emotional connection between members of society. It is during the period of social transformations that this form of national self-consciousness, which is not reduced to either ideology or the mentality of the people and is a necessary attribute of civil society. We are currently observing these processes in Ukraine against the background of Russia's open-armed aggression.

Conclusions

The process of reflecting social reality in people's minds is quite complex and contradictory. Although the formation of national self-consciousness occurs through the assimilation of individual culture and activity in accordance with the nature and quality of the achievements of social transformations, the correction of spiritual orientations of the individual (principles, norms, responsibility, etc.), it does not change automatically right after transformations in social reality. We believe it is appropriate to consider national self-consciousness as a social phenomenon that can exist independently, in isolation from public consciousness. By changing, national self-consciousness can actively influence social reality, but this happens only when the corresponding views become the beliefs of individuals who are united in large social groups. The possible trends in the direction of social transformations, that we have identified, determine various options for changing the national self-consciousness of members of society during the period of social transformations. Based on the abovementioned, with sufficient confidence, we see three possible vectors of these changes, which should be taken into account by societies as social systems during socio-historical transformations:

(1) a return to the restriction of civil rights and individual freedoms, the desire for self-isolation from the rest of the world, and self-sufficiency both in a state and in the socio-cultural sphere. National self-consciousness in this case is given a pure service function of establishing any priorities, slogans, and values.

(2) inclination towards an increasingly nationalist direction. In this case, national self-consciousness establishes a sense of national ambition, belief in one's own exclusivity, the inevitable search for enemies, and the struggle against discord among the members of society. In fact, following such an evolution of national self-consciousness, society may be thrown back to archaic ideas of the exclusivity of the Slavic ethnic group, which in the conditions of a multinational and ethnically heterogeneous state, not to mention relations with the rest of the world, is fraught with harmful consequences.

(3) purposeful orientation to democratic values, which is accompanied not only by declarative but also by real steps on the way to ever wider democratization of public life, to legal, civil society, integration with other social systems, peoples, and states. The role of national self-consciousness, in this case, increases significantly. The issue of truly democratic values of society, and their adequate interpretation by each member of this society, is of particular importance.

Based on the mentioned trends, we can articulate that the dynamics of national self-consciousness depend on quite certain social trends in society at various stages of its development, regardless of whether they are caused by the action of socio-economic factors or the types of development of the division of labor and related processes. As a result, there is a certain change in self-consciousness, in particular the national one, which is reflected in the dynamics of the development of the socio-political system of the country. And the determination of possible vectors of change in national self-consciousness allows us to predict the direction of its changing state, which can be empirically measured under the condition of developing the proper sociological methodology and determining the appropriate indicators. Using the main characteristics of the theoretical construct "national self-consciousness", with the help of sociological research, it is possible to determine the place of national self-consciousness in the process of social transformations more accurately. Sociological studies of national self-consciousness make it possible to specify the characteristics of the mechanism of practical and transformative human activity. This concerns, first of all, the increase in the role of endogenous factors in transformation processes, and the creation of a mechanism for their conscious management at the current stage of the development of the social system. That is why our further scientific explorations will be aimed at determining empirical indicators of the formation of national stability, which will help to reveal new aspects of the study of social consciousness, personality development, the course of socialization, attitude to the authorities, the establishment of social distances, socio-cultural state of social subjects.

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Стаття присвячена осмисленню прогностичних функцій та можливих трендів розвитку національної самосвідомості членів суспільств, які знаходяться у стані соціально-історичних трансформацій. Сьогодні існує нагальна потреба проаналізувати конкретні соціальні явища і процеси в соціокультурному просторі соціальних систем, які визначають потенційні вектори їх суспільних трансформацій. Національна самосвідомість членів соціуму виступає саме таким явищем і розглядається авторами як складова соціокультурної трансформації сучасного суспільства. Концептуалізація національної самосвідомості у контексті наукового дискурсу самосвідомості у соціальних науках, дозволила не лише створити цілісну характеристику цього поняття, виділити найбільш істотні аспекти цього явища, а й визначити та проаналізувати відмінності формування національної самосвідомості залежно від стадіальної позиції суспільства. Основна ідея статті ґрунтується на думці про те, що звертання до національної самосвідомості під час динамічних соціальних змін є не лише доцільним, а й конче необхідним як задля історико-ретроспективного пояснення та аргументованого, імовірнісного передбачення розвитку етнонаціональних процесів в період суспільних трансформацій, так і виявлення можливостей впливу на формування національної самосвідомості у поліетнічному соціумі. Автори звертають увагу на те, що у період суспільних трансформацій процес зміни національної самосвідомості має певні проблемні моменти (паралельне існування «старої» та «нової» самосвідомості; не урегульованість заміщення «старих» соціальних цінностей і соціальних норм «новими»; існування протилежних тенденцій та форм формування національної самосвідомості тощо). Від вирішення цих проблем залежить розуміння суті цінностей і тенденцій розвитку певного соціального середовища, в якому належить функціонувати суспільству в майбутньому, реальних можливостей впливу національної самосвідомості на духовні, етичні пріоритети індивідів, на культурний простір соціуму. У статті визначені потенційні вектори зміни національної самосвідомості при різних обставинах розвитку соціальних трансформацій, кожний з яких має принципово різний вплив на загальний стан суспільства, як соціальної системи, що створює методологічні підвалини для емпіричної фіксації тенденцій розвитку національної самосвідомості у контексті соціальної динаміки трансформаційних процесів через визначення індикаторів рівнів сформованості національної самосвідомості.

Ключові слова: стадіальна позиція соціуму, гомогенні та гетерогенні суспільні утворення, вектори національної самосвідомості, індикатори національної свідомості.