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DEVELOPMENT AND STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN UKRAINIAN SOCIETY

The development of complex and contradictory processes taking place in the economic, political, social, and other spheres of life in modern Ukrainian society is deeply transforming socio-structural relations and affecting the interests of various social groups. In the social sciences, the concepts of “social structure” and “social stratification” are widely used to describe the system of inequality between groups (communities) of people.

Researchers view social structure in two aspects: theoretical and empirical. In the theoretical aspect, social structure represents the totality of interrelated parts, elements, and spheres of social life such as politics, economy, law, and so on. In the empirical aspect, social structure refers to the aggregate of classes, groups, strata, and professional communities united by integrative characteristics.

Key words: social stratification, ukrainian society, social structure, inequality, social transformation, social groups

Analysis of Recent Studies and Publications Theoretical and applied aspects of the study of state social policy are reflected in the works of many scholars, in particular [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6].

Purpose of the Article is to analyze the development and structure of social stratification in Ukrainian society.

Article main body. The scope and depth of the transformation of social structure in modern Ukraine are determined by a number of factors that can be grouped into four broad categories.

First of all, these are economic factors. Structural changes in the economy influence the stratification system of society, which is manifested in the following. New social communities emerge on the basis of the pluralization of forms of ownership: specific strata of wage workers and engineering-technical employees engaged in the semi-state and private sectors of the economy under labor contracts or permanently employed in them, employees of joint enterprises and organizations with foreign capital participation, and the like. Next, we observe the transformation of state ownership and changes in the position of traditional class-group communities—their boundaries, quantitative and qualitative characteristics—leading to the emergence of borderline and marginal strata. Finally, new strata and layers appear on the basis of the interaction of different forms of ownership: managers—the new managerial stratum, a new elite, middle strata, the unemployed, and so on.

Political factors are associated with the redistribution of power, changes in the composition of the nomenclature and political elite, and the transformation of mechanisms for the exercise of power. A distinctive feature of the transitional period was the cardinal change in the role of the state in the social sphere, as it ceased to perform its stabilizing function in society. The decline in production, GDP, and national income had an enormous impact on the state's budgetary capacity to provide social guarantees, which led to a significant decline in the standard of living of the overwhelming majority of the population, an increase in poverty, and, naturally, sharp stratification and polarization of society [4].

A political factor that could have restrained the negative processes in the dynamics of the social structure of the transforming society of the 1990s was civil society. However, “civil relations encompassed only the private sphere of life for

the overwhelming majority of the population. When it came to addressing socio-political and state-level issues, Ukrainians were most often not prepared to demonstrate independence.”

Analyzing the characteristics of the changing political system, one can note that it combined elements of democratic procedures (elections, multiparty system, etc.) with the preserved forms of elite rule. Political life by the mid-1990s had acquired parliamentary forms, but the parliament itself continued to play a relatively marginal, undefined role in the functioning of the political system.

Social factors include, first and foremost, profound changes in the employment system (the system of planned labor utilization was replaced by a virtually unregulated labor market) and a decline in the standard of living of the vast majority of the population.

Spiritual and value-related factors include social anomie (the destruction of one value-normative system and the lack of formation of another) and social deprivation. Deprivation should be understood as any condition that generates or may generate in an individual or group a sense of their own disadvantage compared to other individuals (or groups), or compared to an internalized set of standards. The sense of deprivation may be conscious, when individuals and groups experiencing deprivation understand the causes of their situation. But it is also possible that deprivation is experienced as something different, that is, individuals and groups perceive their condition in a distorted form, without realizing its true causes. In both cases, however, deprivation is accompanied by a strong desire to overcome it [1].

Thus, we see that changes in social stratification occur under the influence, first, of transformations of all social institutions — economic, political, cultural, educational, and above all, the institutions of property and power — and second, of changes in the very social nature of the main components of the social structure — groups and strata, with their re-establishment as subjects of property and power.

As for contemporary Ukrainian society, its current dynamics and the specific features of social stratification are determined by all of the aforementioned groups of factors. Particularly noteworthy among the factors of stratification in modern Ukrainian society are the crisis phenomena in the economy (decline in all key indicators across most sectors in the 1990s); structural changes associated with the conversion of military production; the growth of the private sector in the course of privatization, the development of market structures and infrastructures; changes in employment caused by the above-mentioned factors; unemployment; property differentiation and the decline of the incomes of the majority of the population; migration processes; unfavorable demographic trends, such as declining birth rates; the deterioration of the criminogenic situation; and so on [2].

The most destabilizing factor for stratification processes is the expansion of marginal strata: the unemployed, persons without specific occupations or permanent residences, refugees, and also members of criminal groups. The destruction of familiar forms of labor organization, everyday life, as well as cultural norms and values, has led to the emergence of large numbers of people who have lost their former social status and, therefore, have become desperate, rejecting moral principles of behavior.

Concluding the theoretical analysis of social stratification, it should be noted that social stratification is manifested most concretely and visibly in the social dimension, when it is considered within the framework of a specific country or a specific period (relative stabilization of social processes, stagnation, crisis, transitional period, etc.). Therefore, the groups identified in a given country or period of its history should not appear in a frozen, immutable state but in constant motion and transformation. The study of processes of social differentiation and integration is impossible without reference to the specific spaces in which they exist. This concerns the identification of specific regional features of the socio-economic functioning of society. These include the dependence of the life activity of particular

territories on state systems of life support, as well as the peculiarities of infrastructure and market mechanisms [4].

All these factors have led to a profound transformation of the entire social structure of Ukrainian society. These changes are so deep that they affect even the nature and complexity of labor in different social groups. In this regard, it seems appropriate to identify the main trends in the dynamics of social stratification. At the same time, it should be emphasized that ranking them by social significance is either impossible or extremely difficult; moreover, these trends are largely interconnected and interact within a single social system. Therefore, the order of their presentation in no way reflects their degree of importance or significance.

One of the most important trends in the dynamics of social stratification can be described as its extreme instability, both at the level of processes occurring within and between social groups and at the level of the individual's awareness of their place in the system of social hierarchy. There is an active erosion of traditional social groups, the emergence of new forms of intergroup integration based on property forms, income, involvement in power structures, and social self-identification. In a transforming society, there is a process of decomposition of its established structure, as if it were breaking down into several relatively independent dimensions. This means that a change in an individual's material position does not necessarily lead to a change in their niche in the socio-professional structure, and a change in position within the system of governance and power relations is not always linked to a change in status. Moving in one dimension, one can maintain a position in another.

Researchers also note that some groups have clearly defined group positions and fairly well-recognized group interests (employees of commercial enterprises), while others are in a stage of self-definition (the scientific and creative intelligentsia, which is also undergoing serious renewal and restructuring), and in yet others, the process of fermentation has reached a stage where it is still impossible to speak of

an independent group position (engineering and technical workers, whose situation and social role are now undergoing significant changes depending on their specific place in the system of division of labor) [2].

Finally, there are groups that undergo such profound changes during differentiation that they sometimes turn into something “other.” While both may belong to the working class in terms of position and to the category of highly skilled labor in terms of qualification level, differences between them in terms of income and future prospects turn out to be more significant stratifying markers than any others. The same applies to agricultural workers: some, as real farmers, have entered into cooperation with other independent economic actors, forming, for example, marketing cooperatives, while others, in the process of transforming collective farms into new types of associations, also became formally independent owners voluntarily united within various forms of cooperation, although in practice nothing changed in their situation.

Thus, the first trend in the dynamics of social stratification of Ukrainian society is the blurring and ambiguity of social boundaries, the overlapping and fluidity of most social groups and strata, often characterized by mutually incompatible socio-political features.

Social anomie, in our view, extends not only to specific groups of individuals but to the entire population of the country. First, it represents the state of a social system that has lost its previous ideals, norms, and values and has not defined new ones, having lost mechanisms of moral regulation. Second, it is a shift in perceptions of social norms and prescriptions, a loss of orientation, an absence of clear and predictable prospects, and a loss of confidence in the future in the minds of all members of society. Third, it is the emergence in society of a state of discrepancy, rupture, and conflict between officially proclaimed symbols of success, prosperity, and unlimited opportunities supposedly available to all citizens, and the inability of most members of society to legitimately attain these symbols [6].

Conclusions. Thus, anomie represents a mismatch of mutual expectations both between individual social actors (students and the educational system, graduates and the labor market, conscripts and the army, business and the tax system, and so on) and between society and the state as a whole, with each existing in different systems of social coordinates. The specificity of Ukrainian anomie lies in a set of phenomena such as objective discrepancies, dissonance between representations rooted in public consciousness and their real embodiment in the form of social institutions, rights, and freedoms; pseudo-functionality and mimicry of social institutions and organizations; and the modification of deviant behavior into a form of social adaptation. Overall, the conclusion is valid that anomie has become institutionalized in Ukrainian society.

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