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THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES FOR STUDYING RELIGIOUS-POLITICAL SPACE AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTE

The article explores current trends in institutional environment of religious-political space of Ukraine. The analysis of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religious-political space as a social institute, made it possible to identify the main trends in the relationship of religion and politics in the period of society transformation: the politicization of the church-religious environment and de-secularisation of cultural-political sphere. There was investigated the interaction between religion and politics as differentiated forms of institutionalization of society in the one socio-cultural space, there were also found evolutionary changes in the interaction of political and religious structures that represent major trends of modern spiritual life. It was proved that the use of such modern versions of institutionalism as normative, historical and approaches based on rational choice theories – are crucial theories for the establishment of attributes and functions of religious-political space as a social institute.

Key words: religion, politics, religious-political interaction, institutional environment, religious-political space.

Formulation of the problem. Implementation of the goals and objectives of different religious and political actors always depends on a combination of many circumstances conditions and factors, early detection and account of which has crucial significance for science and social development. The analysis of factors that have a stabilizing as well and destabilizing effect of an actual scientific problem was conducted. Philosophy and social sciences cannot ignore the challenges of today's need for rethinking the entire field of religious studies focused only on interpreting cultural codes and symbolic models of religion. It is a topical investigation of process component – religious and political space. There is noticeable significant growth of interest of researchers to institutional perspective: theoretical and empirical evaluation of the role of institutions in developing societies, economies, religions, policies; the detection of mechanisms of interaction between formal and informal institutions. Religion, like politics, is one of several types of institutions that play a critical role in democratic societies.

The analysis of researches and publications. There is a significant amount of scientific papers, including interdisciplinary ones, devoted to religion and politics as a social institution. Specifically, the researchers analyse the nature, structure and function of religion and politics as social institutions. Social institute of religion is seen as a stable set of formal and informal rules, principles, norms, attitudes; the specifics of its functioning determined by the need of society in sacred. The scientists also regarded politics as a social institute through which there is won, used and retained power in society, social control is carried out, becomes possible the mobilization and organization of collective action to achieve common goals in the country. However, despite the large amount of literature, a huge variety of perspectives and opinions, theoretical aspects of religious-political space as a social institute has not been studied enough. Therefore, to obtain a deeper knowledge on issues of interference of religion and politics is necessary to involve institutional methodology that will help to overcome the above limitations.

In modern research institutions are defined, such as «collective action on management, liberalization and extension of individual actions» that ordering patterns of interaction (G. O'Donnell), «people installed constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction, informal (prohibitions, taboos, customs, traditions, codes of honor, etc.) and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights, etc.), and the system of sanctions for non-compliance» (D. North); structural constraints (A. Shydler); lasting structures in time and space (E. Hidens) rules and routines (J. March, J. Olsen); rules, structures and procedures (K. Shepsl); decision rules and incentives (A. Stephen); rules, regulations and compatible strategies (S. Crawford, E. Ostrom) formal rules of procedure and consent practices that are standard, structuring the relationship between individuals (P. Hall).

The question of the relationship between politics and religion as differentiated forms of institutionalization of society as a socio-cultural space (sacred space and space of power: the ratio of «politics – religion», «state – the Church») covered in dissertations T. Yevdokimova¹ and N. Levkina².

Despite some of the investigated elaborated issues, methodologically complete concept of religious-political space as a social institution still does not exist.

The aim of the article: Analysis of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religious-political space as a social institute.

The main material. The founder of modern institutionalism is an American scientist D. North. Although his works are mainly related to the economy, his approach was so prolific that it has successfully started to use in the study of the phenomena of social life in general. Thus, according to D. North, social life – is a complex and ambiguous phenomenon. It is a structure that includes various institutions, i.e. laws, regulations, customs and codes of behaviour of certain types of relations and relationships in society. Institutes, according to D. North, are a set of «rules related to mechanisms of implementation (enforcement characteristics) and standards of behaviour that structure and facilitate interaction between people»³.

The institutions – developed by people formal (laws) and informal (agreements and voluntarily adopted codes of behaviour) restrictions and coercion factors that determine their behaviour. The current institutional lexicon includes the concept of «institutional environment», «institutional agreement», «institutional practice». The first definition means institutions in the sense of «establishment» – collectively, the «game rules», i.e. rules, norms and sanctions that form the economic, political, social and legal landmark interaction between people through positive and negative incentives driving behaviour in a certain way. The second concept refers to entities (states, economies, political parties, churches, etc.) arising from the agreement (contract) between separate individuals for additional «internal» constraints, which are added to conventional «game rules» that they have to follow. Finally, institutional practice describes the implementation of institutional agreements in a particular institutional environment. We note that at every moment institutional environment of religious and political space does not depend on the actions of specific religious-political subjects, and therefore static institutional agreement exists insofar as it corresponds to the institutional practice, that this dynamic environment, can be changed insofar as the practice is changed. If the practice does not comply with the agreement, it has no effect, meaningless.

The main limitation of the institutional approach to the problem of religious and political space – the refusal of descriptiveness in favour of the theory, the study of public policy outcomes, not processes within the organization or structure of religious and political organizations. Otherwise speaking, the essence of this approach is not so much the «return» of the state and other economic, political, religious and social institutions in the study of religion, as well as a desire to «remember everything» – historical, philosophical, theological, socio-cultural and political tradition, values of human actions, value content of policies for non-conflict interfaith relations and human measure of scientific analysis.

We are interested in all national, religious, political and social institutes that form the ways of expression by religious and political actors structuring their interests and power relations over the other groups. Particular attention is paid to social and cultural symbols and values, attitudes and regulations that affect the structuring of religious-political space of Ukraine. The specificity of institutional approach lies in the fact that social and legal institutes of religious-political space considered as forms of relationship of formal rules and informal game rules which are formed by complex of organizational relations, interactions and cooperative forms of human activity, supporting stability and reproducing the order in society.

We'll use the same version of modern institutionalism to establish the characteristics and functions of religious-political space as a social institute that are combined key theories: public choice, agency (agency theory) and regulatory agencies (governance structure), i.e. mechanisms of evaluation of the behaviour of institutional agreement, dispute settlement and adaptation to unexpected changes, sanctions against violators, institutional theory of the evolution of religious-political space of Ukraine. Different branches of institutionalism are not mutually exclusive, but complement each other theoretical approaches. The most important options for new institutional theories about the justification of religious and political

¹ Євдокимова, Т. В. (2002) *Взаємовідносини політики і релігії в соціокультурному просторі (соціально-філософський аналіз)*: дис. канд. філос. наук: 09.00.03. Київ.

² Левкіна, Н. В. (2012). *Государство и церковь как субъекты институционального взаимодействия (социологический анализ)*: автореф. дис. канд. социолог. наук. : 22.00.04. Новочеркасск.

³ Норт, Д. (1993). *Институты и экономический рост: историческое введение*. Т. 1. № 2. Москва: «Thesis», 71.

space as a social institute are: normative institutionalism; approaches based on rational choice; historical institutionalism and social, structural and empirical institutionalism. We consider some of the new options of institutional theory.

1. Normative institutionalism. Institutes of religious and political space are defined through norms and values (thus emphasizes their importance, not just formal structure or procedure), and this is a coherent framework of norms and values, rather than a random selection of them. Styles of interaction of religion and politics vary in these institutions. Aggregate style belongs to the inner interfaith and political interactions, the judgment arising from a specific process (egalitarian, utilitarian, individualistic). Integration style suggests some order (hierarchical, normative, collectivist, non-market), based on history and commitment to the cause. Institutes of religious and political space interact through the process of socialization, because in case of changing of the conditions of operation of religious and political organizations, the institutes reinforce and maintain the old values. Legal analysis, in our opinion, should be carried out comparing the perspectives of institutional religious-political space, not with existing structures, but with alternatives carried out in practice.

2. Approaches based on rational choice. The prospect of rational choice can be defined as the analysis of the choice made in conditions of interdependence, which is the study of strategic action religious and political actors that use institutional instruments and tools. It is assumed that the subjects of religious-political space – rational actors and institutions – tools perform the functions of religion and politics in society. Thus, this theory makes changes easily, while the normative version – hard. Rational choice theory recognizes the importance of exogenous structural restrictions on religious and political subjects. The rules imposed by institutions restrict individual behaviour and the possibility of their stable, balanced and anticipated interaction.

Considering interconfessional relations, we pay attention to the fact that a large part of this theory focuses on the implications of C. Arrow's impossibility theorem. Rational choice confessional cannot be compromise – so you can interpret the results. Therefore mechanisms by which achieved a stable balance in the selection and interconfessional and political relations are strictly important. Based on the ideas of legitimacy and compliance the creators of institutional version of the theory of organization P. DiMaggio and V. Powell suggested a complex structure – the concept of organizational isomorphism. They distinguish between two types of isomorphism – institutional and competitive ones. Religious and political organizations compete not only, respectively, for voters and believers, but also for resources (competitive isomorphism) as well as power, legitimacy and social conformity. The mechanisms of institutional isomorphism are: firstly forced isomorphism associated with religious and political influence and challenge of legitimacy, pressure of other organizations and finally with the standards, procedures and laws; secondly, imitative isomorphism predetermined by standard responses to uncertainty, the desire to adopt the model of other organizations and technologies that are not entirely clear, ambiguously formulated objectives fragile institutional environment of religious-political space.

Bureaucracy and other forms of organizational changes bring together different religious and political organizations, stabilize interconfessional relations in the religious and political space of the state, but not necessarily increase their effectiveness. P. DiMaggio and W. Powell are confident that the effectiveness is closely linked to the legality and legitimacy of compliance «general» rules and regulations. This explains the organizational isomorphism and homogeneity of organizational structures. The authors introduce the concept of organizational field that means organizations that constitute the recognized scope of institutional life religious and political space. Within this field (space) structuring leads to bureaucracy if increased the interaction between organizations and if there are patterns of domination and coalition increases the information load between them. So C. Perrow stressed that organization theory deals with methods in which the effects of organizational form mechanisms of domination.

3. Historical institutionalism. The institutions are formed historically and it is difficult to change them. This theory examines institutes as structures. Emphasis is placed on programs, content of beliefs and political ideologies, as it is believed that the structures carrying out ideas. Formation of new ideas is crucial, but changes are made rather difficult. Organization Theory is intertwined with sociological tradition. Religious and political institutes, government agencies, the existence of groups of interests, networks of religion and politics – all these ones structure the religious-political space of the state.

Within this approach we try to put historical perspectives in the centre of research. Particularly important are three topics that go from the theoretical heritage of M. Weber. This are: alternative rationality, contextual nature of causality as complex configuration factors, historical accident. The break with

the «performance history» makes it possible to consider the past as a source of alternative future. With the concept of institutional evolution it is possible to substantiate the general laws of religious-political space of society. In the context of institutes D. North, D. Wallace, D. Vaynhast identify three main components: a) informal constraints (traditions, customs and social conventions), composed spontaneously, without any conscious intention as a side result of the interaction of many people, pursuing their own interests and alter only gradually; b) formal rules (constitution, laws, judicial precedents and administrative acts), installed and maintained deliberately, often – the power of the state, and allow one-off sharp break (during the revolution); c) enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with the rules (courts, police, etc.)¹

Institutional changes in religious-political space can occur spontaneously due to spontaneous interaction of individual religious and political entities (while changing the informal rules of the game) and obviously under the influence of the state, which changes the formal rules of interconfessional and political interaction. A state may have an interest in preserving inefficient institutions, if it helps to maximize the sustainable of conflict-free development. The evolution of religious and political space of society depends on the chosen institutional trajectory (path dependence): new and more effective «rules» may remain unutilized because their introduction requires considerable initial costs, which do not have traditional institutions. All this stabilizes the institutional system established regardless of its degree of effectiveness. Institutes like «push» religious-political space of society in a certain way, which then is difficult to get out. It consists of «mixture» of effective and ineffective institutes. The ratio between them determines the trajectory of the religious-political space.

Combining of individual behaviour of religious and political subjects and institutes of religious and political space must be filled by a transition mechanism of so-called «institutional design», i.e. a special instrument for «micro-macro transition.» This leads to the formation of religious institutes and political space of the state where the substance authorities, churches, policy issued as a complex hierarchy of systems based on the principles of self-organization and self-regulation, and non-governmental institutions that act as active agents of religious and political life.

Substantiation of religious and political space as a social institute would not be complete without its sociological description. Numerous social institutes are generated by social needs. Since ancient times, people had special needs of settling disputes, conflicts and other social relations, including in the religious and political spheres.

If empirical research of institutes (and institutional changes) that occur in the religious and political space, seeks to solve research problems of completeness, it inevitably affect their social aspects or consequences. It should be noted that in modern sociological theory different paradigms are almost equal «neighbours». According to V. Yadov, the main competing approaches today are structural and phenomenological. Structuralism offers ideas about how society is structured the entire organism. This sociological paradigm focuses on social structures and deviations from these structures, social norms that are regarded as «abnormal» state. Another view of society – phenomenological, where people focus on their interests, needs etc².

One of the modern approaches, which allows to combine structuralism and phenomenological views on social dynamics is active approach. Its foundations are laid in the works of A. Giddens, who emphasized on the nature of social reality that is constantly changing, the base of which is contained in the actions and interactions of actors – people. A. Giddens proposed to convert a static notion of «structure» in the dynamic category of «structuration». According to the approach proposed by A. Giddens, «study structuration of social systems means to study the ways in which this system – within the application of general rules and resources in the context of unintended outcomes – conducted and played in cooperation.»

Thus, the activity approach to understanding the religious-political space as a social institute consider as a synthesis of two classical paradigms – structuralism and phenomenologism.

Signs and functions of religious and political space as a social institute create social conditions that determine the behaviour of religious and political subjects. Religious and political space is inherent the system development that occurs as a spontaneous qualitative changes. As a result, there are formed unique to specific religious-political space properties. In addition, religious and political space as a system of self-organizing inherent structural development (it is due to the development external resources) and functional

¹ Норт, Д., Уоллис, Д., Вайнгас, Б. (2011). *Насилие и социальные порядки. Концептуальные рамки для интерпретации письменной истории человечества*. Москва: Изд-во ин-та Гайдара, 241-242.

² Ядов, В. А. (2009) *Современная теоретическая социология как концептуальная база исследования российских трансформаций*. Санкт-Петербург: Интосоцис, 313.

development (optimization). Each of these species dominates at a certain stage of development. Therefore it is important to understand that religious and political space as a social institute is the product of a specific – a subsystem of the social system, which itself, in turn, contributes to the system of social development, its structural and functional development. Like other social institutions, religious and political space has several features that require detailed consideration.

Conclusions. The theoretical basis, concerning the nature, objectives and components of the institutional environment of formation of religious and political space of Ukraine was scientifically substantiated. From the analysis of the scientific and regulatory literature on the nature and content of category of «religious and political space as a basic social institute» it can be concluded that the scope of its understanding by scientists of our country compared to previous developments in this field has expanded considerably. Religious cooperation as a factor of aggravation of religious issues in many areas of public life is a complex, multi-phenomenon that is constantly transformed. It can be seen as a social phenomenon, as a social institution, as the theory and process, as an indicator of Ukraine in the world community.

It is proved that one of the main problems is the theoretical maximum mobilization of methodological tools of modern institutionalism in order to develop the best understanding of the religious-political space as a social institute in religious studies in other social sciences, political and legal documents.

Thus, the analysis of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religious and political space as a social institution allowed us to mark important moments of institutionalism in the search and study of basic provisions that can fulfil the role of a unifying principle study a wide range of issues and basic characteristics, defining features as the basis for the development of the institutional structure of the matrix of religious and political motivation in the formation of a political nation.

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