The Concept of Constructing a Stable Middle Class Society in Ukraine

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Abstract:

The article presents an analysis of the archetypical structure of political myths and reveals that for most of them the ideal society is that of the “middle class”, the notion based on the archetypical invariant of “equality”. It is demonstrated that most classical political myths to a different extent exploit this invariant in its different interpretations – from the utopian total equality in communist ideology to the equality of rights and opportunities in liberal democratic ideologies that, unfortunately, everywhere and always eventually transforms into its opposite – “inequality”. The article describes the factors that condition such a transformation at the present historical stage in developed societies.

It is demonstrated that the direction and speed of the change of the middle class quantity and therefore the change of the scope of power and wealth that belong to it are the key factors that determine whether a particular society is approaching or moving away from the social ideal. On these grounds, the conclusion is drawn that so as to transfer from the present state of affairs to the social ideal it is necessary to alter the direction of change of the “middle class” quantity and correspondingly its composition and structure: launch, stabilize and maintain for a long period of time the processes of increase of the “middle class” and normalization of its composition and structure.
The conducted analysis made it possible to determine the Mission of Ukraine in the World. It consists in designing a successful implementation of the concept of evolutionary construction of the social ideal, i.e. a “middle class society”, from the starting point of oligarchy with an extremely high level of concentration of authority and administrative powers and financial resources, stabilization and long-term maintenance of the processes of the “middle class” increase and normalization of its composition and structure. Such a mission may be implemented by a range of transformational political organizations based on a variable organizational structure, i.e. dynamic network that could grant active participation in the production, taking and implementation of all decisions for the representatives of the “middle class” in these organizations and would reliably secure their rightful part of authority and administrative powers for them.

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Political myths [1] that periodically emerge, spread and fade away in the human society in the form of religions, ideologies, national and civilization ideas are to a various extent rooted in archetypical invariants [2] – i.e. our inborn ideas of justice, liberty, equality, honesty, dignity, etc, as well as their opposites. Political myths are always aimed at certain society segments and play a crucial role in molding their identity by outlining the group framework and subdividing the totality into classes, ethnic groups, religious communities, etc. The shaped identity clearly defines the circle of epy “insiders” – i.e. those to whom justice, liberty, equality, etc. are applied, unlike everybody else, that is to say “outsiders”, the attitude to whom is shaped on the basis of notions that are opposite to the above mentioned. Therefore, the proportion of archetypical invariants and their attitude to “insiders” and “outsiders” determines the “shade” or intensity of aggressiveness of this or that political myth. Without a doubt, the fairest myths are the ones where the circle of “insiders” covers all people on earth: “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22:39). At any stage of the human history, leaders who are vested with power have usually chosen the most beneficial for them political myth and used it to accelerate the growth of the circle of “insiders” so as to release as much social energy as possible in the process of struggling against “outsiders” and apply it for implementation of their own objectives, which unfortunately do not always coincide with the objectives of people involved.

However, the social ideal of most popular political myths – apart from the explicitly misanthropic ones – is a well-to-do, just and happy society of the “insiders” where every member indirectly via various political superstructures or directly – by the tools of direct democracy implements the people power: “We will also rule, my brethren, in our own land” [3].
Thus, the ideal society of “insiders” according to the concepts of most political myths is the “middle class” society whose interests are in this or that way represented by the ruling group. Its definition was formulated by Aristotle, who claimed [4] that the larger this social layer is the more stable the society itself will be: “Thus it is manifest that the best political community is formed by citizens of the middle class… for they do not, like the poor, covet their neighbors’ goods; nor do others covet theirs, as the poor covet the goods of the rich”.

Various political myths provide different definitions of the structure and composition of the “middle class” but all of them include its members in the category of “insiders”, those who will become the beneficiaries of the common resource [5], i.e. the benefits received after realization of the aims imposed by the given political myth.

Therefore, most classic political myth to a different extent exploit the archetypical invariant of “equality” in its different interpretations – from the utopist total equality in communist ideology to the equality of rights and opportunities in liberal democratic ideologies that, unfortunately, everywhere and always eventually transforms into its opposite – “inequality”. At the contemporary historical stage in developed societies it comes about due to the combined influence of the following key factors:

1) Synergetic effects in economic systems (when the increase of the scale of economic structures results in non-linear (accelerated) growth of their profitability indicators);

2) Unchecked application of aggressive psychogenic demand generating tools by corporations;

3) Irreversible increase of the cleavage between the starting conditions of children from common families and those of financial and business elite;
4) Concentration of administrative and power resources and enormous capital in the hand of a small number of people who exert influence on legislative processes so as to artificially create monopolies subordinated to them.

The process of such transformation was described as far back as in the biblical times: “I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away.” (Luke 19:26). A number of nations during their history have even managed to develop mechanisms of diminishing the acuteness of this phenomenon. For instance, in the Middle East there was a popular practice of Schmitat Ksafim [6] (erasure of loans on the 7th year).

The described transformation of “equality” into “inequality” is exacerbated due to “the tragedy of the commons” [7]; since the key instrument for overcoming it in modern Western countries – i.e. representative democracy – in the information society is turning into an imitation, a simulacrum and then transforms into its opposite as a result of the fact that the powers that be via mass media get an opportunity to solidify their dominant position, frame the public opinion and manipulate the electoral masses so as to passivate, de-intellectualize and atomize them.

Aristotle’s “middle class” society is identical to its American ideal. This ideal, as well as the above described dynamics of transformation of “equality” into “inequality” and the corresponding dynamics of the change of number and structure of the US “middle class” are represented in a video [8] and the fact that it has been viewed so many times attests to the relevance of the issue for this country. And the burst of social activity in the USA in 2011 that found expression in the large-scale action “Occupy Wall Street” was directly related to the results of the above described transformation and became an American counterpart of the Orange Revolution of 2004 in Ukraine. We believe that if American elites don’t make the right conclusions, in about 20 years (as a
result of the purposeful slowing down of the corresponding social processes by US
governmental institutions) this country may witness a counterpart of the Ukrainian
events of 2013–2014. And the form of these events is likely to be much more acute due
to legal weapons owned by people and absolutely legal grounds contained in the
Declaration of Independence [9] approved by Congress on July 4, 1776: “We hold
these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by
their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the
pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among
Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any
Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to
alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such
principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to
effect their Safety and Happiness… But when a long train of abuses and usurpations,
pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute
Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to
provide new Guards for their future security.”

Sadly, it has to be admitted that for the 20 years of independence Ukraine has
“caught up and surpassed America” in this respect since it took the latter more than two
centuries to get to the present condition. The rapidness of the transformation may be
attributed to the lack of protective mechanisms and atomization of the Ukrainian
society, methodical e[termination of its leading society stratum during the periods of
Ruin for many centuries, its negative selection and setback in development as a result of
long-term colonization by different empires and the totalitarian Bolsheviks’ state.

To illustrate the ideal image of the society to be constructed in the future with
the prevailing fraction of the “middle class” of “insiders” as declared in the program
documents of most Ukrainian political organizations (indeed no Ukrainian party calls for the construction of an oligarchy!), we will resort to the graphic representation of the distribution of wealth and correspondingly of authority and administrative powers among the citizen of ideal Ukraine (chart 1), bearing in mind that such a distribution is what any existing or new ideology in Ukraine is going to propagate so as to attract as many followers as possible:

**Chart 1.** The social ideal of the Ukrainian society: distribution of wealth and authority and administrative powers among the “insiders”.

Let us modify the static chart by introducing desirable directions of the quantitative change of the “middle class” – i.e. the “insiders” – that illustrate the dynamics of its progress towards the social ideal of most classic ideologies. It should be pointed out that **the direction and pace of the process of the quantitative change of the middle class and the scope of wealth and authority and administrative powers that belong to it are the key factors that determine the progress towards or moving**
away from the social ideal of a certain society. It is apparent that the process of quantitative change of the middle class cannot be viewed separately from the process of change of the gap between the revenues of the rich and the poor in a given society. It is worth mentioning that the scope of assets that may belong to a citizen is determined on the basis of direct or indirect authority and administrative powers that s/he actually has. As it was justly noted by Tetiana Montian [10], everyone owns only the assets they are able to protect. In other words, the reduction of the scope of authority and administrative powers of a citizen or organization results in the loss of their assets, just like the loss of assets results in the loss of authority and administrative powers. It is clear that the ability of people to protect their assets is directly related to the level of independence of the judicial power in the country, which in its turn depends on the actual distribution of authority and administrative powers in the society and the ability of its owners – representatives of the “middle class” – to knowingly apply these powers as designed.

At the same time, we will take into account the dynamics of modification of the composition of the “middle class” which is directly connected to the change of its number: its increase will inevitably result in the redistribution of its composition fractions to the benefit of entrepreneurs, farmers, managers, scientists, laborers, peasants, etc. Apart from that, we will take into consideration the dynamics of modification of the “middle class” structure as a sum of factors pertaining to the interaction of its components, their organizations and representatives, communication among them, establishment of the field of trust, etc., i.e. everything that provides for its subjectness and ability to effectively defend their interests.
Chart 2. Illustration of the actual distribution of wealth and authority and administrative powers among the citizens of Ukraine.

Chart 2 represents the actual distribution of the national assets in the Ukrainian society, which in relative (not absolute!) terms corresponds to the same distribution in the USA and unfortunately is radically different from the social ideal illustrated by chart 1: less than one percent of the superrich people – mostly oligarchs – own almost half of the national wealth of Ukraine. Meanwhile, the share of the middle class is steadily and irreversibly shrinking due to the increase of the number of the poor, despite its slight increase due to the reduction of the number of the rich as a result of legislative changes introduced due to oligarch lobby that transfer the entire tax load onto the shoulders of the “middle class”. At the same time oligarchs themselves avoid paying taxes by resorting to various legal and illegal mechanisms as well as deliberately created legislative loopholes. This attests to the deliberate rapid diminishment of the “insider” circle and increase of the circle of “outsiders” in the Ukrainian society, which might be
well illustrated with the principle practically openly applied by the Ukrainian government today: “Friends get everything, enemies get laws.”

At the same time, the composition of the “middle class” is radically changing. It includes more and more corrupt officials, law-enforcement officers, criminals and shadow business representatives, that is to say, those who serve the present oligarch clans. The change of the structure is just as dramatic as that of the composition: interrelations are lost, communication stops, and trust among its components is being destroyed.

The concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a small circle of oligarchs is a prerequisite for transformation of oligarchy into a dictatorship [11] which after long-term social degradation and stagnation after getting to the point when “the rulers are unable… and the ruled ones are unwilling”, will rapidly by way of social disruptions transform into a relatively short-term democracy with the restoration of «equality” status quo via forced redistribution of assets, which has always been fraught with bloody wars, revolutions and collapses of states and empires.

However, to shift from the existing condition to the social ideal it is not enough to restore the «equality” status quo, it is also necessary to change the direction of development of the processes of quantitative change of the “middle class” and correspondingly its composition and structure: **launch, stabilize and maintain for a long period of time the processes of increase of the “middle class” and normalization of its composition and structure.**

In the world and in Ukraine, various ideologies offer countless concepts of tackling this issue, but all of them face the problem of overcoming the resistance of oligarchic groups that have concentrated enormous wealth, authority and administrative
powers in their hands. Such concepts fall into two broad categories – violent and non-violent ones.

If the power elites in possession of assets, authority and administrative powers realize that for a society to prosper, retain stability and steadily develop it is necessary to include a certain critical fraction of the “middle class” and competitive environment, social conflicts that stem from the transformation of “equality” into “inequality” are settled in an evolutionary mode, by way of legislatively stipulated redistribution of the national assets to the benefit to the poorer population layers with the consent of the elites. For instance, Switzerland – the most progressive country in this respect – is considering the issue of introducing the monthly «unconditional basic revenue» [12] of 2000 Euros, which will be granted to all citizens regardless of their financial stand and employment, which, without a doubt, is possible only because the power elites of this country have a political will to effect such redistribution. Otherwise, as history have proven, «equality” status quo is usually achieved through social disruptions when the released energy of wide masses literally overthrows the ruling class so as to substitute them with new leaders who generously assure that they will give “factories to workers and land to farmers”.

Unfortunately Ukrainian power elites today do nothing to increase the share of the “middle class” in the society. On the contrary, they keep on destroying the competitive environment by lobbying corresponding legislation and influencing decisions of government bodies so as to establish their subordinate artificial monopolies in different spheres, which results in general deprivation and correspondingly in the diminishment of the “middle class”. **By so doing, they doom the country to the violent restoration of the «equality” status quo.** This is why a successful concept of settling the set task in Ukraine is the one that can provide an evolutionary and non-
violent way of achieving the «equality” status quo in the conditions of reinforcement of the policy of Ukrainian oligarchic clans aimed at their boundless enrichment via legalized unfair redistribution of the national assets. Apart from that, unfortunately, history also provides evidence that re-launch of the transformation of “equality” into “inequality” is a systemic irreversibility right from the start of establishment of the new power system that arises after social disruptions. This is why along with launching the process of quantitative increase of the “middle class” and normalization of its composition and structure, a key issue of the set task is stabilization of this process and its long-term maintenance, ideally until the aim – i.e. the described social ideal – is attained.

Thus, the MISSION of Ukraine in the World may consist in designing and successful implementation of a concept of evolutionary construction of the social ideal, i.e. a “middle class society”, from the starting point of oligarchy with an extremely high level of concentration of authority and administrative powers and financial resources by way of launching, stabilization and long-term maintenance of the processes of “middle class” increase and normalization of its composition and structure. Such a mission provides a simple and clear answer to the question put by Ukrainian philosopher Serhiy Datsiuk [13]: “What can Ukraine give to the world?” At the same time, the designed concept that may bring success will have all characteristics of a civilization idea [14] according to the philosopher’s definition, i.e. idea that in the process of its unfolding and implementation may generate new senses and give the humankind an answer to such questions as “Why live?”, “Why create?” and “Why give birth?”

The key issue is – who has to create such a concept and who can implement it? We believe that if one or even a couple of authors generate an ideal concept, in the
information society their work it is very likely to be lost in the avalanche-like information flow. People will not read it; if they do, they won’t understand it; if they do, they won’t believe it. Only separate individuals may believe it, unable to act together as an influential political power so as to implement it. An emasculated form of this concept may also be employed by old or new powers that be to achieve their own aims, which will bring the opposite results to the ones expected by people. The above described lets us claim that in the information society only large groups united in a subject organization may become collective creators of new conceptual ideas of the necessary complexity level since they can handle a significant scope of information, knowledge of various fields and multifaceted understanding, which is a physical impossibility for one individual, even if s/he is a genius. And the most important thing is that these ideas as a result of collective work will be clear and their “own” for the participants of such groups, they will bear the maximum legitimacy for each of them and will have the potential of equally motivating all of them to work in an effective and harmonized way so as to implement the jointly produced aims.

Based on the ideas of subject and organization in different spheres of science, we will formulate an interdisciplinary definition of the organization-subject. Thus, the organization-subject is an active, multi-intelligent social organism endued with senses, consciousness and will, capable of self-reproduction for a long term that can cognize and change the world:

- adequately perceive information from the outside and the inside environments;
- rationally process and analyze it;
- realize its own interests;
- carry out cyclic regulative planning for their implementation, which consists in the open choice of means, tasks, objectives and ideals; and

- deliberately act in correspondence with the produced and accepted plans.

Therefore, in our opinion, to implement the MISSION of Ukraine in the World it is first of all necessary to design and construct subject organizations of the “middle class”, which after their rise in the process of development and self-teaching will generate and implement a concept of evolutionary construction of the social ideal, i.e. the “middle class” society.

Such an approach is radically different compared to the traditional approaches to the construction of socio-political organizations created as an instrument for implementation of the aims of ready-made political myths; its advantage lies in the participatory democracy characteristic of the information society, which makes it possible to make the ideology “alive”. According to the definition of renowned Ukrainian scholar Georgiy Pocheptsov [15], a “living” ideology gives real, rather than ritual answers to the questions faced by the society. Obviously subject socio-political organization of the “middle class” should provide for the equal distribution of authority and administrative powers among most of its members, i.e. its “middle class” in the circumstances where it is increasing (as shown in Chart 1). This is the only way to achieve the social ideal and build the “middle class” society, since under the Hermetic principle of Correspondence “As above, so below; as below, so above to accomplish the miracle of the One Thing.” In other words, using expressions of different disciplines as metaphors we can claim that such an organization will become:

a) a “crystallization center” that will provide a sample for “crystallization” of the entire society;

b) the micro-civilization that will give birth to a new civilization;
c) the new order for arranging the whole social system after transition into a corresponding attractor;

d) one of a number of organizations that together will change the context of the political environment in the society, which will open opportunities for global changes, such as launch of the processes of quantitative increase of the “middle class” and normalization of its composition and structure;

e) a factor that will guarantee the establishment of stable loops of positive feedback, which will result in the non-linear increase of the speed of quantitative increase of the “middle class” and normalization of its composition and structure;

f) a new system that being more efficient and successful will dislodge and substitute for the existing system.

In the context of the latter point, I wonder if the opposition leaders, who actively declare their intentions to substitute for the present regime, realize that if the system of authority powers distribution within their political organizations doesn’t change, if these powers are not delegated to local bottom members, all their good intentions will boil down to cosmetic modifications.

The rise of such subject organizations will be impeded by “the tragedy of the commons” as a system-generating civilization problem” [16] which consists in the fact that a large group of people, unlike a small one, cannot attain its interests. According to “The Logic of Collective Action” by Mancur Olson [17], it inevitably results in the formation of a managing nucleus in a political organization and to concentration of all authority and administrative powers in its hands in accordance with the “iron law of oligarchy” by Michels [18] along with the simultaneous passivation of rank-and-file members. The described principle of power distribution in elite group organizations will
be immediately reflected in the society; it will launch and maintain its transformation process from the condition represented in Chart 1 to that described in Chart 2.

It is possible to overcome “the tragedy of the commons” in socio-political organizations only by introducing free-of-conflict algorithms of collective production, taking and implementation of decisions within large groups of people that would reliably guarantee their “middle class” the rightful share of the authority and administrative powers for its every representative and eliminate the major flaw of traditional hierarchic organizations, i.e. irreversible directive or informational outside management of their leaders on the part of existing more powerful organization structures, such as corporations, special services or criminal world. A sample of a combination of such algorithms is a dynamic network [19] – a variable structure of socio-political organizations. At the same time, any democratic society implies existence of a number of socio-political organizations that unite bearers of different political myths. Apparently, in the process of attaining the social ideal by way of launching, stabilization and long-term maintenance of the processes of increase of the “middle class” and normalization of its composition and structure, the number of socio-political organizations that represent interests of various groups and associations will keep on growing and they will keep on competing for votes. Competition as a cultural archetype is unstable – under regular conditions it tends to transform into confrontation, which always results in the moral and social degradation of the society [20]. We believe that the key condition [21] for choosing cooperation strategies by organized elite groups as opposed to confrontation strategies in the process of their competitive interaction within the national elite consists in the systemic elimination of possibilities for direct personal and intergroup conflicts so as to keep the interaction of elite circles members in the framework of social and political organizations on the equal-to-equal position for a
long term. It can be implemented only by substituting classic group dynamics [22] in the primary units of socio-political organizations, for instance by way of organizing the cooperation of its members at each stage as that of representatives of different groups that are cyclically established and dismissed in accordance with the algorithm of work of a dynamic network.

Therefore, to create subject socio-political organizations aimed primarily at the construction of the social ideal, i.e. the “middle class” society within the framework of a certain ideology, it is necessary to choose and apply the organization structures that would provide for the active participation of the “middle class” members of these organizations in producing, approval and implementation of all decisions and could reliably secure their share of authority and administrative powers for them. To attain this aim, it is necessary to stipulate in the statutory documents the new organizational structure, master its corresponding organization culture and apply it in the daily activity of the organization. Without a doubt, it may be implemented only by the consent of leaders of such organizations, who have to realize that it is necessary to voluntarily reject the concentration of power in their hands by introducing the suggested organization changes.

In conclusion it may be noted: British philosopher of Scottish origin Thomas Carlyle claimed that “All revolutions are conceived by idealists, implemented by fanatics, and its fruits are stolen by scoundrels”. The same applies to the transformation of “equality” into “inequality”. A simple way to change such systemic regularities was suggested by American magician Robert Orben, who said that if you want to have something you have never had, you have to learn to do something you have never done. Therefore, only successful long-term training in the sphere of new organization culture and systemic new-type collective activity will give a chance to Ukrainian public
activists and politicians to qualitatively alter themselves and their organizations. This, in its turn, will slow down the process of transformation of “equality” into “inequality” in the Ukrainian society, open means of social mobility for active citizens, lead to peaceful and comprehensive harmonization of all social disagreements, which, as a consequence, will make it possible to nip potential social conflicts in the bud.

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