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Abstract

The author discusses a sociological understanding of the social institution notion. Analysis of corresponding ideas by E. Durkheim, M. Weber, G. Mead, and T. Parsons reveals various meanings that were considered to be scientific milestones. According to classical traditions, institutions are regarded as complex mechanisms for regulation of not uniform inner social orders. Modern institutional approach to social research deals with existing institutional complexes, transforming institutional conditions and institutional actions by individuals and groups.

Selection of topics becoming an actual for a discussion in scientific communities is determined by some rules though has a spontaneous character. However, in case of social institutions it is rather determined than spontaneous.

Inevitable Actualization

According to classical scientists, work on concepts is uninterrupted in principle. M. Weber compared sociology with a temple being built, scaffold around which is going constructed, amended but never taken away. The current paradigm (or one of paradigms) offers another metaphor. A temple of science is constructed of a number of units that being included in new compositions not only may change temple's outer form and reconstruct its inner space but also be transformed as they own. Self-transformed units and their new compositions being regularly in-

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vented by rational minds and accidental whims ensure this innovation a character of construction. Although both metaphors are different, they are similar in the very significant feature: both accept that connections between sociological concepts and their specific meanings are relatively fixed.

The inner direction to work on concepts is supported by outer reasons. Total attack on dichotomies that were basic for the previous social order — "outer–inner", "national–international", "local–societal", "center–periphery", "private–public", "far–near", "my–strange" (the list is open to be completed) — and now are naturally related to globalization leads to the situation when such dichotomies' substantiation and significance become rather washed away. As a result, the ideas on social order constituted by social institutions require re-comprehension and re-interpretation.

One of the functions of social institutions is to determine and maintain essential differences implanted in unambiguous identifications. Stability of these differences inherent in institutions, various resources that are used to ascertain such differences supported reproduction of social order. However, the "new reality" of the new millennium already accepted by social sciences proves that replication of the mentioned dichotomies rapidly loses any practical sense.

We can still talk about their reality but they lost their role of dominant regulators (or dominant context) of individual or group's actions. Moreover, to accept or ascertain importance of former institutional differences means if not to initiate a reverse historical social reflection then to conserve sociological imagination on habitual patterns of institutional structure of society developed and implanted by industrial age. That is why behavior of those who do not take these differences into account gains the more mass character: anachronistic institutional structures though have not been deconstructed but significantly discredited by voluntary actions imbibing new impulses — as it predicted by Parson. It happens (partly) due to the fact that subjects of action know that institutions are limited in execution of their traditional functions. For example, state as a social institution is limited (and not temporary) in control over processes of national economy. Weakening in power of government institutions (national governments, regional power bodies) is happening without will or desire of the corresponding bodies or professional and status groups.

Apart from the mentioned, institutional topics are pushed by conditions developed inside communities. Social, economic, and political type

of order cannot be transformed without changes in the base of society that is institutional transformations. The summary effect of global and local tendencies challenges the theoretical and concept readiness of researchers for adequate reaction to future tasks and uncertainty. There are doubts on vitality of sociological classics as to research on modern problems, but some authoritative scholars think that classics is invulnerable. As to J. Alexander, uninterrupted dialogue with classics proves its inescapable centrality [1]; it leads to fruitful specification of theoretical ideas about reproduction sources and conditions for socially integrated and united society.

An institutional topic became attractive to representatives of social sciences. Those who observe the situation in sociology and related sciences noted a significant rise in interest to the notion "institution" in economy [2] and political sciences [3]. Neo-institutionalism in economy became opposite not to sociological institutionalism but to traditionally institutional economy. Ideas on institution are reduced to a list of rules and norms regulating transactions between subjects directed to earn a profit. Now in the USA, Europe and Russia, the "point of growth" is attached to the "new economic sociology" pretending to be an "institutional economic sociology" of capitalist societies of the 21st century [4].

Sociology is not ahead but not behind economy and political sciences. In the end of 1990s, in the USA, there was a discussion on correlation of classic and "new" institutionalism, depicted in the article by Yu. Chernetsky [5]. In the scientific space of Russia and Ukraine, there are also examples of the generalization of theoretical statements on social institutions as well as their institutional analysis. However, these aspects (theoretical and methodological) practically were absent at the international symposium of 1999 conducted in Moscow and aimed to discuss crisis of institutional systems in political, economic, and sociological prospects [6]. But there are some attempts to widen institutional imagination [7] and even to base on it a new positive sociology [8]. In Ukraine, our colleagues Ye. Golovakha and N. Panina offered concepts able to direct understanding and empirical studies on establishment, functioning and change of social institutions [9]. Institutionalization of environmental interests were discussed in the study by O. Stehniy [10], institutional macro-structure peculiarities of Ukrainian society were revealed by V. Khmelko [11], and review of new tendencies in economic sociology related to the institutional approach presented by O. Ivashchenko [12].

Opposition of the "new" and "old" institutionalism going along with all interpretations of associate attractions or dissociate directions in modern societies, like all strong oppositions, deals with important topics that are missed and simplifications that are not evidently relevant. Without appeals to classics and communication with it, representatives that seem to be self-sufficient hold conversations about institutional crisis. Uncritical radicalism undoubtedly considers a social institution to be a conceptual construction being out of date and methodological use. However, it is absolutely true that a concept dates back to classics of sociology and is very important in construction of sociological imagination. Unfortunately, it is practically absent in research practice. But we can find it in sociological books lacking vitally heuristic atmosphere. At the same time, the ideas about institutions reduced to rules and norms that control social actions realized by economists and spread by proponents of economic sociology look like a way that gives freedom from the essential sociological sense.

Unclear cognitive opportunities of institutional analysis and growing ideas on social institutions simplified for propaedeutic purposes by a system of corresponding education should be contrasted with something. A selective list (of course incomplete) of alternatives could be the following.

On Reconstruction of Classical Heritage

Classics planed and used sociology as a very ambitious discipline. Conditions of social order stability and sustainability were the matters in which the new science was interested in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th one. Its adepts decided to reveal the rules that differentiated a space of people's coexistence but did not make this space to collapse into enclaves closed, inwardly directed, ignoring any calls for interaction in any circumstances.

E. Durkheim was sure, and it seems reasonable, that even if these rules are not similar then at least close to the rules of sociological methods. Sociology does not reconstruct the reality. It constructs a special sociological reality with strong connections between the reality and the concept means due to which it becomes open for perception and discussion. There are not verbal essences but things mainly (as to E. Durkheim, they are collective ideas existing separately from any individual). With no radical amendments to the classic's statement, we can say that a sociologist does not assume the reality to exist — he claims it to be.

To believe classics, this reality mainly means reality of institutions, like an institutional reality. Institutionalism was the first (developed in sociology) perspective of comprehension, description and explanation of reality. Founders of science believed that it was a science about establishment and functioning of social macro-structures, i.e. social institutions. It is a very helpful statement because is there any other way to support the idea (empirically undoubted) that a variety of individual's action kinds is not infinite, interaction combinations though diverse but can be calculated. Results of interactions cannot be reduced to individual intentions or drawn from them, the results are determined by collective ways of actions and ideas but this fact does not deprive them of predictability. Introduction to the second edition of E. Durkheim's "Sociological Method" includes the following: "…there is a word that, if we widen its usual meaning, conveys this specific way of existence rather well; this word is 'institution'. And really, without changing the meaning of this statement, we can call all beliefs, all ways of behavior established by a group an institution. Then sociology can be defined as a science about institutions, their genesis and functioning" [13]. As to separate individuals, institutions have almost full power; they order patterns and standards of behavior — obligatory ways of action as he calls them. But their powerful presence, depersonalized in fact, is a virtual. In other words, power of institutions is anonymous. In our calm everyday life, it represents only itself. In E. Durkheim's opinion, sociologist's prerogative is to recognize a power of prestige in it. However, individual's attitudes to institutions are not reduced to obedience because institutions are imposed on people, but people value them, institutions set limits, but people approve these limits and think that institutions' functioning is positive [13, p. 403]. To know the nature and rules of functioning of social institutions is helpful for researchers, because it enables to change institutions and gain freedom from their illusive or actual power over individuals.

In our everyday experience, tenacity of institutions reveals only if individual or group faces a conflict with the established standards or tries to avoid them. In these cases, the virtual power becomes an actual with the help of violence (negative sanctions). Social control is one of the necessary elements of institutional code. Behavioral standards and control produce the social order (interaction, directed to expediency and values of various subjects) and the corresponding kinds of subjectivity, like ability to feel, understand and explain actions of your own and others. Institutions order not only the way to act but to feel and think — this is

the idea of sociology by the French classic that insists on principal correlation between the "inner" and "outer".

Moreover, as to E. Durkheim, sociological cognition of society begins only when a researcher regards social phenomena as things with a clear distance of observation. To regard a phenomenon as a thing means understand it as a social institution. Methodology for cognition of social institutions obeys the general rule: "…the idea about collective traditions, what they are or what they should be, produced by us is a factor of their development. But this idea is a fact that has to be studied from outside in order to be properly defined. What is important is not to know the idea about an institution by a scientist but to know how a group understands this institution; only this understanding is effective" [13, p. 397].

As we know, all E. Durkheim's life was characterized by his passion to collective representations. It relates not only to the mutual correlation of traditions and systematic ideas about them (like the one mentioned in the above quotation), their resounding feature impressed him greatly. In his "Primitive Classifications" written with M. Moss, we find an interesting statement: "Methods of thinking are the real social institutions" [14]. So, sociology looking at itself accepts the rules of sociological methods presented by E. Durkheim in his "Sociological Method" as real sociological institutions. Our contemporary, E. Giddens, followed the authoritative tradition in his "New Rules of Sociological Method" [15].

In the most known work, M. Weber retraced in details the establishment of capitalism as one of the most important institutional measures of modern society. Explication of preconditions for successful institutionalization is a task remained to the future. Now we will only say that institutionalization would never take place without legitimization in four dimensions. Firstly, legitimization of the most generalized values and senses: in the case of "capitalist spirit", they are ideas about the mission of person in their earthy life. Secondly, legitimization related to habitualization, that is to follow unconditionally undoubted values in the most unfavorable circumstances: Weber repeats that the real bearers of "capitalist spirit" continued to accumulate savings even facing a real threat of confiscation, it was irrational behavior as to the dominant conditions. Thirdly, legitimization related to legal norms specifying the generalized values. Fourthly, legitimization related to the popularity of practices involved in establishment of community institutions.

So, a variety of legitimization kinds: transcendental (value-ideological in civilian life), individual-behavioral, legal and social-group — may be if not sufficient but obviously necessary for construction of capital-

ism. There are no obstacles preventing from application of this idea to development of institutional orders as a whole. Irrespective of our interpretation, social development and progress require institutionalization and are finally realized in established institutionalization. This institution acts without dependence on results of its activity, totally indifferent to them. That is why its resistance to outer influence and effects of its own actions becomes one of the most noticeable features of social institutions.

G. Mead begins his thoughts about society with the notion "institution" too [16]. In his opinion, institutions are, first of all, typical reactions of individuals to typical situations — three decades later this topic will be successfully discussed by P. Berger and T. Lookman in the work "Social Construction of Reality". In their practical activity, individuals minimize the expenses of rational and emotional resources with the help of typization procedure, the main idea of which is to lower uncertainty of possible options and to raise predictability of possible outcomes for various kinds of action.

The way that helps individuals to acquire existing sets of types and to learn how they can do this on their own is socialization. So, institutions are also instances of socialization, the goal of which is to produce individuals adequate to requirements of the society. Society "assumes" individuals only due to the fact that institutions provide it with hierarchically organized statuses as well as corresponding roles (rules and norms of behavior), and individuals internalize them (later this process will be called habitualization). Socializing function of institutions ensures existence of rules and norms in their morphologic structure.

The assuming is provided by different methods: threats of violation and direct violation, various sanctions, involvement in a game, training and others. As a result, there were produced patterns of socially responsible, desirable or simply acceptable mass behavior, that is a stable social order. Here, conformist is a modal personality, which accepts the existing order. Moreover, as to prospects of action, the order is no more than expectations coming true with high probability: expectations that others consider significant the same values, principles and rules.

An American tradition (that seems coming from Ch. Cooley and G. Mead) orders to understand an institution as a systematic interaction between individuals; so, institutes are mentioned as "systematic interactions". It is first of all. Secondly, this interaction is realized according to culturally and socially legitimized (accepted in society and sanctioned) patterns of behavior fixed in traditions, moral rules, myths, leg-

ends, ideology or laws; two latter form an over-individual system capable of autonomous existence and even some evolution without direct participation of creators and authors of such patterns. Thirdly, due to education, training, etc., these patterns turn into habits, spontaneous, instinctive and automatic, without thoughts and doubts, reactions to standard situations; the patterns induce and make individuals behave in the way when important (for co-life) functions are executed properly and expectations of environment on corresponding behavior come true.

In the beginning of 1930s, only starting his sociological career and feeling that he is in a mainstream of science, T. Parsons wrote "Prolegomena to the Theory of Institutions". The work that had not been completed was published only in 1990. Prospects of social actions and conditions for their execution were very attractive to T. Parsons and supported his innovative sociological reversion: not institutions but practices of individuals that produce institutions (that is institutionalizing actions) should be the initial point for systematic thoughts about society.

Later, in 1950s, developing the concept of society as a system, T. Parsons went back to institutions [17]. There are several significant aspects in it. Of course, institutions are over-personal formations; they form a macrostructure of society. The main institutions are involved in certain relations, like coordination that needs consecutive division of powers and responsibilities, furthermore, a system of seniority. Type of society depends on the dominant institution. If the family institution is dominant, the society is tribal, if the church one — feudal, the state one — socialist (totalitarian), market and property — capitalist (democratic). The dominant institution expects, requires and forces others to loyalty. Loyalty becomes a condition for reproduction of the domination order.

Coordination and domination links between institutions through uneven distribution of limited resources lead to differentiation and stratification in social space as well as differentiation and stratification of individuals involved in them. Prestige of position and the reward related to it are determined by the status of corresponding institution. Being an instance for stratification, institutions substantiate legitimate character of socially meaningful differences: between important and insignificant, right and wrong, just and unjust, acceptable and unacceptable, etc.

In their essence, institutions are specially established or spontaneously appeared social mechanisms of social order fragmentation. They are capable of determination and adoption of differences, namely of sustainable reproduction of differentiating practice, dividing a general living space into definite set of vitally important orders. Mechanisms of in-

ner organization for these orders are not to be similar. A variety of these orders should require a variety of institutional mechanisms that establish types of interaction between intentionally disposed actors of these orders. This differentiation is ensured by uneven distribution of limited resources and critical commodities; dependence of actors on ways of distribution creates a special kind of integration. For example, one of the favorite Parsons' analytical dichotomies — allocation & integration — organizes sociality. So, to be a source of legitimacy of differences or even only to assume this right is an integral feature of existing social institutions.

According to T. Parsons, institutions execute one more important function. Social systems acting in reproduction are involved in solution of four fundamental problems: adaptation, achieving goals, integration, support of patterns for behavior and thinking (the famous AGIL scheme). Institutions are means for the solution. Values support patterns, norms ensure integration, collective organizations promote achieving goals, and roles make it possible to adapt [18].

By the way, as to Parsons, actions of institutions do not differ from social actions of individuals or groups: as any action, they suppose goals, means to achieve them, norms and conditions for realization of actions. Conceptualization of the classic has not lost the heuristic character, because any problem of any significance may require new rules or amendments to old ones. That is a creation of new or relatively new institutional condition.

Inertia of Tradition

From classics, we got a strong belief that social institutions can be interpreted as conditions, active complexes or conditions and complexes reproduced by institutionalizing actions by individuals or communities of individuals. The strategy of studies would be determined by the moment stressed. If the moment is static (condition), then the study is focused on construction, composition of institution, ways of legitimization (de-legitimization) of values, norms, rules, patterns of behavior, feeling and thinking, roles, expectations or, using an old-fashioned academic formula, the contents of the "institution" notion. It is not accidental that modern authors consider institutions "no other than mutually compulsory role expectations corresponding to the set standards" [19].

The dynamic aspect in studies on institutions makes it possible to reinterpret characteristics of actions, means for description of which was offered by M. Weber and T. Parsons. They both are sure that the neces-

sary condition for actions is realization of collective ideas in material objects — organizations, like a state autonomous from individuals' communities that is realized in state machine. Institutions can apply sanctions (for instance) only due to existence of organizations (structured positions filled with individuals). That is why we can agree with Ye. Golovakha and N. Panina who think that existence of organization is an integral feature of social institution [19, pp. 5, 8].

And at last, we should differ two aspects in institutionalizing actions of individuals and groups.

The first one deals with simple reproduction of existing institutions. With the help of actions repeated, not necessary coordinated but compulsory directed to unreservedly accepted standards, individuals reproduce institutions adopting them as a firm basis of the whole social construction. Conservative effects of practical deeds and choices of individuals and groups ensure not only continuity of social systems but make any reverse historical movement impossible. It is not the far past when only few could boast of their literacy. And now the total literacy is a taken root institution. An appeal to define a social institution as a taken root condition leads to the statement confirming its existence in any point of social space, namely about its availability to individuals. Any reduction of its existence area would be a sign to question about its taken root character.

By the way, the non-reverse feature of social systems seems to be fundamental. It prohibits both intention toward an "initiate", non-differentiated condition and real reverse movement toward the past. However, some movements or processes can be perceived or interpreted by observers as a "reverse" mobility of societies. There could be other interpretations too. Basic institutions of society (family, church, state, market, property) are being formed in different historical periods, speeds of their modification are also different, so, a social system looks like the "compressed" history in the system of institutions coordinated and organized by seniority. Configuration and correlation between institutions determine the place of society on the imaginary historical axis.

In other words, various domains and relatively autonomous segments of society as well as representing them institutions — being a generally accepted and rather exact interpretation of order — represent different calendar and social times. Separate studies should be conducted about the time to which institutions and institutional complexes of Ukrainian society belong, but if we regard economy (some of its branches especially) as a social institution then it is not obviously of the 21st cen-

tury. At the same time involution tendencies, convincingly described by V. Khmelko while he was talking about changes in the social labor macrostructure, are not evidences of the reverse mobility, they simply reveal shifts in correlation between the basic institutions bringing an archaic character to the institutional structure. The social consequences of the latter are far from being evident [11, p. 5–9].

The second aspect of individuals' actions relates to reproduction of history. K. Kastoriadis noted, if institutions had produced individuals and individuals produced institutions according to strict technologies, it would have been a triumph of social replication — invariable copying. As it does not happen, we think that the action has a modernizing potential. This supposition was turn by T. Parsons into the "voluntary action" concept. However, in the "Structure of Social Action", he did not pay much attention to spontaneous behavior of people that could help them to overcome the obligatory and forcing character of normative-symbolic order or to get free of it. It happened later in the "Social System" published in the beginning of 1950s.

Thinking about a person as relatively autonomous subsystem of society, T. Parsons marks two features of "human nature": "plasticity" and "sensitivity". Plasticity means that a human being can assimilate numerous alternative patterns of behavior, hold to the relevant to specific situations or individual believes; it means that plasticity is an absence of genetic pre-determination of a finite set of behavioral kinds. As to Parsons, sensitivity means that individuals are able to behave while taking into account reactions, opinions and assessments of the environment, openness and disposition to respond to the influence of other subjects of interactions.

Any human activity is always an application of energy and emotions, so, it is an energetic process. Achieving an aim requires from individual some "work" and efforts. Otherwise the aim does not approach and the future does not come. So, an action as a process becomes conversion of means, conditions and norms carried out by individuals with the help of principally measured "costs and expenses" into aims, that is into the future, one of the time modi. Individual and collective actions do not allow stopping history.

However, classic heritage is unequivocal as to institutions. They are anonymous over-personal formations appropriating intentions of which make individuals unable to resist. Those who enter the life do not face the question: to be or not to be a person of this culture — institutions methodically do their work leaving few room for manifestation of individual

freedom. This is the unavoidable, powerful and forcing context of individual existence. That is why a task of sociologist seems not to understand how individuals reproduce institutions or avoid from it but exclusively to reveal how institutions differentiate and stratify the space of coexistence of individuals, ensure their distribution in the space and their involvement into mutual interactions.

De-Institutionalizing Tendencies

Ideas about institutions brought up by classical heritage is open for additions and development but cannot be radically and substantially revised. Besides, classical asymmetry of "institution-individual" relation will always find room in contemporary approaches to institutional structures. However, something changed radically: the world, ways of its feeling, understanding and explanation. As to the world, its constitutive feature is recognized now as uncertainty. In the beginning of 1990s, U. Beck deeply analyzed this topic and continued this critical tradition in his analysis of modern liberal democracies with market economy [20]. And trivializing of what was impossible to imagine goes on noiselessly as usual but impetuously as never before. This happened to progressing individualization of private life. As a result, differences between the public and private expected to be erased not far ago are not expected anymore, at least in Z. Bauman's opinion [21].

Uncertainty seems to be a consequence of over-dealing with so-called totalities: highly generalized values, norms and patterns of behavior. In individual experience, they are discredited because they are not confirmed by everyday life in short periods of time. Uncertainty, changing conditions, permanent transformation of structures, links and relations of interaction between social agents show their incomplete algorithm, many of ordered or legitimate patterns of behavior are inefficient. As Z. Bauman concludes, "Our time is not benevolent to trust and far going aims and intentions as a whole because of evident transient and vulnerable nature of all (or most of all) meaningful in the earthy life" [21, p. 195].

Individualization can be connected to a certain phenomena. The domain in which people are predisposed to value the things valued by everyone has narrowed. Contemporary horizon approached as close as possible, people decisively prefer the present to the future. The happened, or even simply too far got to, "diving into *myself*, individual "*me*", means to reject directing to generalized "*others*". There are more cases

when people do not see "others" as a source of self-appraisal, legitimization, and identity. Appeals to "*others*" are weakened, it means that selection of appeals and those whom they call became more intensified. Significance of "*others*" is situational and relative now, it gives way for self-representation and self-interpretation, for senses that were not ordered by macro-structural instances but constructed individually. As a result, new balance of relations is being formed between a person and society.

Society is still deeply structured but changes of the past decade made it impossible to persist in absolute and complete power of the collective over the individual. Forcing and overriding potency of institutions are still powerful but in the modern differentiated world, when sources of power and domination are decentralized, individuals prefer to follow personally meaningful preferences and claims. It is easier for individuals to avoid power of institutions; such avoidance becomes a kind of a new social game.

Innovations of various kinds come to everyday life and sociality more often; this speed exceeds the settle and rather stable rhythms of institutions' life. Progressive emancipation of individuals is partly supported by these differences. At the same time, volumes of idle, stratifying, differentiating, integrating, socializing work of institutions decrease very slowly. Thinking about integration, for example, the government cannot find means, objects or makes fatal mistakes in choice of both. As a result, in new conditions, institutions not mainly solve problems of individuals and their communities but produce these problems (P. Bourdieu) as well as register or only articulate them (U. Beck persist in stating that many current social problems have been solved mostly biographically, that is individually). Individual and collective security that aimed to be provided by institutions is no more can be taken for granted.

Space of imitative practices of social institutions has been widened. Being unable to cope with appearing problems just in time, institutions produce decisions that not always lead to aims declared. But harmlessness of "idle" practices is not illusive. Forcing potential of institutions has been realizing anyway, experience with selection of social categories and groups involved in imitative practices has been gaining. For these categories and groups, the practices are of direct or latent forcing to loyalty (pretending loyalty), participation (pretending participation), etc., which constitute these categories and groups as objects of manipulation.

Classic methodological directions are also transformed. Now, sociologists are mostly interested in institutionalizing actions of individuals: how they "format" or "reformat" autonomous institutional orders. Institutions are effective in reproduction of orders because it was used to think that institutions always know how to act as they have the reaction schemes that were worked through. But this replicating competence of institutions may be not necessary any more, now, in most cases, the initiative of order construction belongs to acting agents: individuals and their associations. However, quite often nobody "knows" exactly how it will be appropriate to act tomorrow. To keep and pass on knowledge makes sense only in certain spheres, orders are formed not by the past knowledge but by the current one just invented by individuals. According to genesis features, the latter is light, vaporizing, not fit for long storage. That is why the ability to construct new orders (constructive competence) is not institutionalized, and so, the time is coming when non-institutionalized agents will determine coordination and subordination as well as emancipation and autonomy of important life practices.

In his last interview K. Kastoriadis stressed that history is a transition from heteronomous society denying human origin of rules and norms which it calls individuals to follow to autonomous society where individuals create patterns, norms and rules during their lives. Heteronomous societies that have been dominated for the whole previous history incorporated in their institutions an idea accepted by all their members: the idea is that institutions are not a result of human efforts; they were not created by people, at least by those alive. These institutions stemmed from spiritual sources, they were created by ancestors, heroes, God; people have nothing to do with that [22]. To free institutions from almost sacral immunity is the methodological turn of the present.

However, the space of interaction is still not uniform. In some segments, changes are slow, institutions work in their classical manner, conceptual heritage of classics is still applicable and works practically without any limitations. There is domination of *institutional complexes*: total generalization presented by values, symbols, patterns, norms; organizations with resources conducting institutional control; algorithms and codes of legitimization for norms and authorities of organizations.

In other segment, institutional reforms are prolonged, so, we can see numerous *transitional institutional states*. It is obvious that changes in dominant values cannot be immediate. Inertia of institutional complexes as well as their resistance to innovations, is undoubted. There are also other reasons of the above-mentioned aspects, but they are sub-

jects of institutional analysis. Here traditional and approved standards are in neighborhood or combinations (almost unpredictable) with hastily created or lightly accepted and denied conventions.

Besides, there is a segment in which the basic way to get used to abundance of opportunities, uncertainty and risks of coexistence is to produce new norms and rules. This segment forms a space for development of *institutionalizing actions* of individuals or communities of individuals. Typical circumstances requiring typical reactions are rare in it. It is rather full of combinations (have not met before in individuals' experience) between preconditions and conditions of individual and collective actions. Success and efficiency of such interactions are determined by abilities of agents to offer atypical answers to atypical challenges. What norms, rules, conventions are determined by agents with institutional imagination, what prospects for them to be adopted as sustainable institutional complexes — all this should be discussed in a special empirical study.

At last, a mega-level of institutional analysis has been revealed. The most prominent sociologists do not avoid the question about unity of sociology. Over 150 years of its scientific development have neither crystallized its subject no drawn exact boundaries between it and related social disciplines. There still exist ideas that creation of the single theory of society will confirm the unity of sociology (latent so far). N. Luhmann was one of the latest that dared to create such a theory of society despite firm objections by colleagues [23].

Whereas twenty years ago E. Giddens published his work on theory of society construction in which suggested that there had to be studied closeness of societies to an institutional model of modern society. In his opinion, societies have got mega-structures that he called "institutional measures". If these measures are assessed according to their development and maturity, then it is possible to conclude about closeness of the society to the "modern" one or the "society of modern". Comparing the society of modern to the traditional one, E. Giddens speaks about the following interrelated measurements inherent in it: a) *capitalism* — system of competitive relations between capitals as well as capital and formally free labor in a form of expansionist market economy with classes being the basic elements of social structure of society; b) *industrialism* — employment of various sources of energy, mechanisms and technologies for production of welfare; c) *observation on individuals' behavior* in political and public spheres, direct and indirect control over people and

spreading of information; d) *centralized control over violation means* (arms and military equipment) [24].

Dictionaries fully describing and convincingly explaining each of segments, of course, differ in the four mentioned cases. But classical tradition, its modern interpretations and modifications will make it possible the common origin to appear in all of these dictionaries. Contraposition of "old" and "new" institutionalizm does not mean denial of continuity in evolution of sociological imagination.

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