

POLITICAL AND LEGAL FORMS OF THE REGIONAL ELITE'S INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Svitlana Holovko, Viktoria Cherevatyuk, Viktoria Zuleva

Annotation

This article studies the regional political elite that today defines the regional political process. Given the above, the authors try, within the modern legal science, to focus on how to identify the characteristics of modern political and legal institutionalization of regional elites. Investigation of these problems will help to find and to identify the ways of state-legal and social impact on these complex processes.

Key words: elite, the political elite, the regional political elite, institutionalization, political and legal institutionalization of regional elites.

The topicality of the problem is predetermined by the specific transformations of the modern state of Ukraine associated with the changes in the composition of the ruling elite, the evolution of values, the institutional forms and modes of interaction in the domestic political and legal space. Transformations of the ruling elite, which have been observed in the last few years, demonstrate the phenomena that affect the mixed system of the state and the municipal authorities. In the recent years, the changes are accompanied by the processes that enhance the government institutions de-legitimization, stimulate the alienation of the human interest, society and the state.

The destruction of the national legal system by the post-Soviet political elites allowed implementing the oligarchic privatization project, which not only put the majority of population on the brink of survival, but also led to the significant strain in the state and municipal authorities. It determined the new value orientations and behavioral motivation of the representatives of the higher government branches whose corporate interests are significantly different from the public interest and the tasks of democratic state development.

Problem statement

Taking into consideration the abovementioned issues, within the framework of the current legal science, some efforts should be made in order to identify the characteristics of

the modern political and legal institutionalization of regional elites. The abovementioned issues will help to find out the ways for the state and legal as well as the social impact on these complex processes.

Main body

Outlining the range of social subjects the activity of which predetermines the foundation of the new institutional forms and the formation of a certain institutional environment of the region, it is necessary to pay some special attention to the determination of the field of regional policy and its executors. It is the regional political elite, a special socio-political group, which consists of leaders and groups that are connected by the different types of relationships and direct the local political process at the same time.

For the better understanding and delineation of the issues that is considered to be regional elite, it is necessary to refer to the definition of a region. In the works of many scholars, the term *region* is understood as a unique combination of political characteristics that are aimed at the formation of a single social body. In this link, a concept *political region* that marks the area which possesses the integrity of the *political unity* of the system features may be introduced. In terms of the subject of the political process, a *region* can be considered from two perspectives. The first one is a region as an object of state administration, which possesses the integral territorial space that is characterized by certain (geographical, economic, historical, ethnic, etc.) features and the one as an administrative unit. In Ukraine, this term denotes all administrative units of the first order called oblasts. Secondly, a region is defined as a spatially organized subject of local administration and an independent factor of political pressure¹. An example of such region is Crimea, a territory that was different from the other political subdivisions (had a status of autonomy), which had its own political interests, made its independent decisions, influenced the state power and owned the self-government elements².

To any extent, most regions of Ukraine combine the elements of both positions. Therefore, we can determine that a political region is a political space area which is different in its political organization and the presence of the special political interest. It means that the

¹ Кучеренко Т. В. Регіональний фактор у політичному процесі України. Автореферат дисертації на здобуття наукового ступеня кандидата політичних наук. Львів, 2002. С. 12.
² Татаренко Т. М. Регіоналізм і його інтеграційний потенціал. Незавершена. Альманах науковиків праць. Вип. 25. Запоріжжя, 2002. С. 75.

political nature of the region is an institutional and a political self-organization in space. Political regional structure of society is the result of some purposeful activity in changing the boundaries of the political space and the process of this space self-organization.

Nowadays the Ukrainian legal thought finds regional elite as the one that represents a particular region. Therefore, it is necessary to include the Head, the mayor, the heads of local party branches and the head of the regional center in the elite. However, this definition causes some risk of the limit of a purely formal approach which will prevent any opportunity to clarify the problem. In the Ukrainian society, a situation where there is a significant discrepancy between the issues which are determined by using some formal criteria and those which are actually political situation is obvious quite often. In other words, firstly, not every oblast of Ukraine can be considered as a region because of a substantially dependence on the center or other regions. Secondly, not all representatives of the regional or the local authorities should be considered as the regional elite representatives.

Therefore, a region could be seen as a regional socio-political system, the main component of the state territorial structure defined only by the regional policy of the state that includes organizational isolation, integrity, demographic and economic self-sufficiency, cultural identity, a system of state bodies which are elements (subsystems) of the state power structure and governance.

Defining a region, few scholars pay attention to its characteristics such as cultural identity, realization of it by the elites and the people themselves as the bearers of a particular political interest due to the fact that the knowledge about their native region as a political space, which is different in the special features of political organization, its unity and the specificity of their interests, local officials and heads of party cells make a regional political elite, which is able not only to implement the decision of the center, but also manages to negotiate with it about meeting the specific interests of their region and perceives itself as the vote of the regional community.

It should be noted that the role of regional elites in the process of regional institutionalization is always quite significant. Moreover, almost all countries of the so-called "third wave of democratization" (by S. Huntington) produce their institutional framework at an accelerated pace by borrowing existing institutional models and purposeful design. The adequacy of political institutions in the region to the socio-cultural and historical traditions, the compatibility of these institutions and political actors are a guarantee of success / failure of the regional development. To some extent, the specific institutional choice is determined by

the nature of the regional political elite as a tool of political institutions interaction has a significant impact on the access of elite to the political power resource, constructing a new symbolic reality and the possibility of manipulating these areas.

It is evident that the regional elite institution is an integral part of any civilized society. The complex organized social systems have to deal with an ever increasing variety of interaction of groups of individuals, forms of human activity both within the system and outside it. It predetermines the selection of people who are professionally involved in management. Making the most important political decisions, the regional political elite determine the ways for the coordination and the representation of interests of different groups as well as the forms of the public participation in social transformations².

The current stage of the development of Ukraine is characterized by the great potential of social movements and intense circulation of elites. In the process of the latter one, the regional elite is an active supporter of the ideas and the principles of an open society; however, it can also become its enemy because of the fact that the tradition and mentality regarding these principles in the transition society are too weak and, thus, at the stage of stabilization and social movements, elite and other social groups tend to get closed at the stage of stabilization and vertical social transmissions³. Furthermore, if society does not produce any sustainable mechanisms for changing these trends to this point, in case of some attempts to attack its position, the regional elite will not defend its principles whereas in the case of the absence of such attacks, it will continue to maintain these principles without demonstrating their use outside the group.

It should be stated that much of the assertion or denial of any model of society depends on the attitudes of the regional political elite. Depending on the dominance of certain units within these orientations, it may contribute to the fight against the enemies of the open society and either directly or indirectly supports them. This is determined by the goals that are being achieved by the regional political elite in their activities as well as its advantages and other social forces as a result of becoming an open society. There is no doubt that open social system could bring it some significant new prospects for the further development; however, it is necessary to make this position enter into the consciousness of all members of society. As the latest empirical research in the theory and practice of regional elites demonstrates, their importance is growing especially critical in the crucial situations when the escape from the

² Пильнєва М. Давалача еліта. Що думавать про неї в Україні? Бізнес 1997, №8 С 48
³ Ридалка С. В. Ретонаваны еліты: політчыны чынінныкі фармуванні С Рідалка. Політологічны запіскі. 2013, №2 С 117

crisis is possible by means of making quick decisions and focused policy implementation in their life only?

Considering the regional elite as a subject of regional institutionalization it is necessary to pay attention at the regional pressure groups that represent public associations which actively seek meeting their own interests by means of the impact directed on the political power structure. The concept *pressure group* reveals the dynamic transformation of the social group interests that arise in civil society into the political factor. Regional pressure group is a formal association of citizens with clearly defined the organizational structure, the functions that have already been unsettled and the professional staff. Regional pressure groups can influence the political life of the country; the force of this impact often exceeds political parties. The effectiveness of pressure groups depends on the resources which it uses (property, information, expertise and experience, cultural influence, ethnic and religious ties). There are regional variations of such pressure groups such as regional trade unions, business associations, unions of cooperatives, voluntary partnerships, other public associations of regions. The ways of the regional influence of pressure groups on government agencies are the following: support of the personal contacts with the government officials, members of the groups that are participating in the work of the parliamentary committees and the subcommittees in the interagency committees and services; direct nomination of the government members and executive authorities, as well as the functionalities of the administrative apparatus.

The relationship between the center and the regions may be also regarded as the relationship between the central and regional elites. In the state, the "vertical" elite groups with the representatives and the lobbyists are founded in the center and in the regions. Quite often one can observe the formation of the "regional clans" that combine people from one region. These "clans" are specific to the developing countries as well as many former Soviet republics and give reasons for the emergence of the regional lobbying.

While structuring regional elite a personal criterion plays an important role (leaders around whom relatively stable teams, groups, and clans are formed). Therefore, each locality has its own structure of the formed personal relationships that directly affect making the decision on the personnel choice. Institutional criterion determines the structuring of the elite

⁵ Маврин А. Украинский регионализм: массовое сознание и исследование элиты [Электронный ресурс] / Андрей Маврин. Режим доступа: <http://www.archipelag.ru/authors/main/?idbray=18475>.
⁶ Ложкевич О. О. Трудни тиску в політичному процесі України / О. Ложкевич // Панорама політологічних студій. 2013. Вип. 11. С.131.

on the basis of the affiliation to the different authorities, among which there are some contradictions. Besides, the national criterion is especially significant. In many countries, the regional elite are divided into ethnic lines: the competition for power is present between ethnic or confessional groups. Therefore, the trend of power monopolization by one ethnic group and the distribution of positions among various nationalities can be observed whereas such trends often turn to a tradition.

There are two main peculiarities which characterize the regional political elites: focus on the center (centripetal tendency) and focus on the region (centrifugal tendency). The centripetal tendency features the old nomenclature system, which has kept ties and regions at the center of personal and clan ties that have formed the old party system. For this part of the elite, the solution of regional problems is sometimes seen as a means to the further career in the center. It adjoins the part of the neo-bourgeois that is directly linked to the central commercial entities: it is also more interested in the political struggle in the center than in solving regional problems.

Regional political elites that really represent the interests of regions are usually based on the national movements and parties in terms of the objective process of the state regionalization, when the center is not able to resolve many regional problems directly and is mainly focused on the Ukrainian state traditions in the areas with Ukrainian population predominantly as well as the traditions of local cultures. In the process of its formation, the elite are exposed to various factors and social institutions. The differences in socialization, educational systems, and conditions of party systems functioning led to the differences in elite cultures. Consequently, the quality of regional elite is largely determined by the nature of the political and cultural environment of different societies. Specific impact forces that socialize (family, education system, political system, etc.). Together with the abilities of individuals, all these factors determine the regional elite culture.

It is necessary to notify that regional political elites is a quite new phenomenon for Ukraine as their formation started with the adoption of independence, due to the fact that the theoretical base of the research is still quite weak. An essential condition for the inherent understanding of the regional political elites is a comprehensive approach to the study taking into consideration the historical conditions of its formation and characteristics of the system they belong to⁷. In order to define it there is a need to use functional approach, mainly, according to which the main criterion of belonging to the regional political elite is the ability

to influence strategic policy decisions, while other criteria include the personal qualities, support of the masses, a high official position, etc. It should be regarded only as a means of influencing the political decision-making, or as a result of belonging to an elite group⁸. It means that the regional political elite should be defined as a group of people who participate in the development and policy decisions and have an influence on the implementation of political decisions at both the regional and the national levels.

Conclusions

The abovementioned issues make it possible to allocate the following characteristics inherent in modern regional political elite: 1) presence of the nomenclature leaks; 2) strengthening the role of the executive branch; 3) reliance on the informal channels of lobbying, as the most influential ones in political decision-making; 4) the elite which is closed for its new members, it self-closes; 5) a rather high degree of renewal (or update illusion) "at the top" and the relatively low one is at the lower regional level, which leads to the greater conservatism and continuity of elites in the region than it is in the center; 6) for the purpose of expansion, the regional political elite uses the informal channels of recruitment, mainly; it means that in the majority of cases, its update is carried out by the elite reserve; 7) uniting economic and political elites in the region, with some differences due to local circumstances.

Bibliographic sources

1. КУЧЕРЕНКО, Т.В. *Регіональний фактор у політичному процесі України* / Автореферат дисертації на здобуття наукового ступеня кандидата політичних наук. Харків, 2001. 20с.
2. ТАТАРЕНКО, Т.М. *Регіоналізм і його інтеграційний потенціал* / Т.Тарпенко // Нова парадигма. Альманах наукових праць. Вип. 25. Запоріжжя, 2002. С.73-80.
3. ШУЛЬГА, М. *Правляча еліта. Що думають про неї в Україні?* / М.Шульга // Вісн. 1997. №8 С.46-57.
4. РИВАЛКА, С.В. *Регіональні еліти: політичні чинники формування* / С. Ривалка // Політологічні записки. - 2013. № 2. С. 112-120.
5. МАЛЫГІН, А. *Український регіоналізм: масовоє сознание и идеология элиты* [Електронний ресурс] / Андрей Малыгин. — Режим доступа : <http://www.archipelag.ru/authors/malgin/?tbray=18475>.

⁸ Стемковська О. *Регіональна еліта як фактор ефективного розвитку місцевого самоврядування* / О. Стемковська // Українознавчий альманах. - 2013. Вип. 14. С. 115-118.

Holoiko Svitlana, Candidate of Historical Sciences,
 Associate Professor
 Cherevayuk Viktoriya, Candidate of Historical Sciences,
 Associate Professor
 Zubeva Viktoriya, Candidate of Political Sciences,
 Associate Professor
 The Law Institute of the National Aviation University, Kyiv, Ukraine

6. ДУЛЖЕНКОВ, О. О. *Пути тиску в политическому процесу України* / О. О. Дулженков // Панорама політологічних студій. 2013. Вип. 11. С. 129-136.
7. ГАМАН-ГОЛУТВИНА, О. В. *Определение основных понятий эпistemологии* / О. В. Гаман-Голутвина // Полис. 2000. №3. С. 97.
8. СТЕМКОВСЬКА, О. *Регіональна еліта як фактор ефективного розвитку місцевого самоврядування* / О. Стемковська // Українознавчий альманах. 2013. Вип. 14. С. 115-118.