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**REGIONAL SOCIAL POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN  
SOUTH OF RUSSIA**

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***Abstract***

Transformation processes in regions of southern Russia during social political changes in the post-Soviet period are analyzed. Challenges of modern globalization against the background of a new world order formation in the context of the emerging problems in the social economic development of individual subjects of the Southern Federal District are considered. Special attention is paid to factors of the political regime stability and threats of the situation destabilization under the influence of external and internal social political transformations in politics and economics. It is emphasized that problems of inter-ethnic relations within the region, ethnic factors that form a significant conflict potential associated with contradictions of a territorial, value and social economic nature play an important role in these processes. As an empirical base, data from an expert survey conducted by the authors in the Krasnodar Territory from May to September 2018, materials from earlier sociological studies are used. Local and regional processes are considered in the context of identifying specifics of human development in various municipalities. Factors of sustainable development and countering threats of destabilization are identified in the problem field of analyzing the specifics of regional social political transformations. The nature of the social political structure and the quality of the social cultural environment are formed in parameters determined by the level of human potential of the regional community. Attention is paid to the choice of the evidence base and scientific and theoretical tools in the justification, measurement and fixation of ongoing changes and transformations.

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## 1. Introduction

The modern world, in the opinion of many Russian and foreign experts, is experiencing an era of dramatic changes, as a result of which a new world order is being formed, which is replacing the classic Westphalian system. Political reality is increasingly determined by global political instability, to which the world is moving as a result of this system erosion. Against the background of its collapse and a certain chaos of international relations, a new world order is formed, which, in our opinion, is based on the principles of multipolarity. The sustainability of the political regimes of nation-states depends mostly on their ability to resist destructive political technologies. Information wars are becoming one of the usual factors of interstate interactions and internal political conflicts. Russia and its regions (including the South of Russia, due to its specific nature) are at the center of geopolitical actors attention and influential political structures. According to (Manoylo, 2018), the standard operation of the information war is a sequence of information stuffing, the main task of which is to divide and polarize society, break its will to resist, subordinate the enemy consciousness to his will and impose his values. In turn, one of the key tasks in the context of ensuring the national and regional security of the Russian state is “strengthening Russian civil identity based on the spiritual, moral and cultural values of the peoples of the Russian Federation”. The President of the Russian Federation D.A. Medvedev formulated ten reasons for the escalation of political tensions in southern Russia, including the low level of industrial production, the critical dependence of the North Caucasus republics on federal budget subsidies, the relative poverty of the population and the lag in the quality of life at a meeting with members of the Security Council in Makhachkala in 2009.

The most significant factors that have a direct impact on the world system include many problems caused by the processes of globalization and neo-globalism. Globalization is an objective process of developing a fundamentally new world relation system between countries and peoples based on interconnection and interdependence in all spheres of public life. But the policy towards Russia from the part of various actors of interstate interaction directly depends on their worldview and ideological positions and interests in the geopolitical space. Perhaps this is due to the succession of many areas of responsibility in Russia, which were assigned to the USSR in the last century. In the post-Soviet period, the question about the permissible extent of the variability of the country essence was the most acute, about the critical measure beyond which this essence disappears, that is, the self-sufficiency of the state disappears too, when it becomes not viable. This threat has passed for Russia, but the importance of this problem is still necessary to be aware of in order to construct and implement the security concept of the country, region and the entire world. An assessment of current processes shows that globalization is manifested primarily as the universalization and replication of the Western model development. At the same time, this pronounced tendency has many specific aspects related to the social cultural characteristics of various states that have embarked on modernization. Thus, statist models of upgrading, state paternalism and mainly authoritarian mechanisms of governance are typical for Russia, for the BRICS countries. The global crisis shows that it is not yet known whether Western values will work effectively in the new conditions of a multipolar world pattern, where regional problems and conflicts come to the fore. On the one hand, globalization processes erode national sovereignty, which is manifested in the increasing role of supranational political and social economic institutions, and on the other hand, contribute to the rise of ethnic self-awareness and manifestations of peoples' ethnocentricity, enhancing their self-preservation instinct. In these

multidirectional social trends, the phenomenon of incompetent state formations, unrecognized states, as well as the growth of markets for violence and, in some cases, degradation of statehood in unresolved local-regional conflicts arises. In such conditions, the crisis of identity, the crisis of the international security system is aggravated, regional and global instability, the danger of armed conflicts and their uncontrolled escalation sharply increase.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Regional social political transformations in the south of Russia in the context of modern globalization are the most important factors of the sustainability stat, on the one hand, and the threats of the situation destabilization, on the other, which affect the political stability of the state as a whole. Tracking the main trends in the process of regional social political transformations is necessary for the achievement and preservation by the management subjects of such a state of the management object in which it can sustainably function and develop, countering internal and external threats, ensuring the reproduction of a single sovereign statehood.

The threat identification of the region social economic security is of particular importance, which is directly related to the phenomenon of statehood and political stability. Currently, in the regions of southern Russia, the most serious threats include the following: a decline in production and a decrease in the efficiency of the domestic market; significant destruction of scientific and technical potential; the danger of food independence loss; rising unemployment and weakening work motivation; a significant amount of external and internal debt; economy criminalization; an increase in the property differentiation of the population and an increase in the poverty level. The source of these threats is the system of economic relations between market entities. The region in the structure of market relations is an independent economic entity and is forced to ensure economic security itself, and therefore anticipate and prevent the effects of destructive factors.

Furthermore, the problems of interethnic relations within the region play a very important role, which are inevitably built on competition. The ethnic factor forms a significant conflict potential associated with territorial, value and social economic contradictions. High migration activity of the Southern macro-region, particularly the Krasnodar Territory, creates latent tensions, which can provoke open conflicts. One of the most difficult tasks of a polyethnic society is the creation of a streamlined complex mechanism for coordinating interests with the aim of improving the quality of manageability based on the principles of diversification, implementing a development strategy as a medium-term and long-term policy aimed at improving the standard of living and ability to participate in the economic modernization process of the majority of the regional community.

## **3. Research Questions**

The studied subject of the article is the modern political space transformation of the studied region under the influence of globalization processes, as well as under the influence of political management, including information technologies, causing significant changes in the development of regional social communities. Particular importance in the substantive analysis of social political transformations is given to the factors of integration and the human development conflict in southern Russia, which allows focusing

on the sources of innovation processes and substantiate the specifics of regional social political changes in the dialectics context of regionalization – globalization.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the article is to determine the direction of regional social political transformations in the south of Russia in terms of modern globalization challenges.

#### **5. Research Methods**

Data from an empirical study conducted in Krasnodar Territory from May to September 2018 in the framework of the project “Conflict and integration factors of human development in the South of Russia in the context of new geopolitical challenges” are used in the article (with RFPF support, Project No. 17-03-00802):

- expert survey (n=20, the Administration of Krasnodar Territory by way of the experts- 7 people, science representatives - 7 people, management and business representatives - 6 people);

- questionnaire (n=430, men - 47%, women - 53%, age of respondents - 16-35 years, regional coverage: Krasnodar, the Black Sea zone (Anapa, Gelendzhik, Sochi, Novorossiysk, Tuapse, Dzhubga, Nebug , Novomikhailovsky, Anapskaya station), cities of the region (Kurganinsk, Yeisk, Korenovsk, Abinsk, Labinsk, Kropotkin, Armavir, Timashevsk, Temryuk, Krymsk) and rural settlements of Krasnodar Territory (Oktyabrskaya st., Staroshcherbinovskaya st., Gulkevichi, Kuban, Elizavetinskaya st.)).

#### **6. Findings**

In the context of regional deprivation, inequality of opportunities for the theory development of the regional security should be based on conceptual approaches, including macro- and micropolitical levels. Macropolitical processes in the modern world are due to a number of new conditions, the consideration of which will allow us to determine the totality of external factors that create, on the one hand, new dangers, and on the other, new social resources to reflect possible undesirable pressures on Russia. Such a new situation has forced some analysts to announce a new quality of world politics, serious, profound changes in the state of international relations, and even the advent of the new era “Cold War 2.0”.

The most important factor determining the political context of international relations in the modern world was the US National Security Strategy, adopted in 2002, which provides for the possibility of launching preventive strikes against terrorist bases and countries trying to build an atomic bomb or other weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, the United States reserve the right to act alone and by their own initiative.

With the participation of scientists, politicians and public figures, the main problem areas and promising lines of the country's development are determined to “give a new impetus to the creative process of building new Russia on the basis of modern scientific knowledge and broad public consensus, create an image of Russian future and begin to consciously and purposefully create this future” (Polyakov, 2007; Tishkov, 2013). A multi-level system of federal and local-regional effective management should be built to solve the problems of the country innovative development and ensure the safety of its population. Model

schemes for assessing the effectiveness of the authorities at various levels are able to determine whether they provide conditions for safe living or create additional problems.

Macropolitical factors that ensure the implementation of the strategy for accelerated regional development are: the integration of heterogeneous social and ethnic components of communities; adapting to multilateral interaction with industrialized countries, including those on the Asian continent, in the context of globalization. Economic growth is focused on improving the living standards of the population, on mitigating the emerged conflicts; political setting - on the implementation of social justice; institutionalization – on political democracy in the social system, where the status, including clan and estate, hierarchy is deeply rooted. Historical experience shows that the process of regionalization, intensifying in connection with globalization, is a constant conflict factor. At the same time, the configuration and dynamics of conflicts change: they become more and more typical, regardless of local flow conditions. Nevertheless, at the regional level, a specific strategy is needed to manage regional and local conflicts, taking into account the specifics of human development under the influence of new conflict-based and integration factors in the context of globalization. Regional security, defined as the protection of the vital interests of the regional social community and the state local institutions from external and internal threats, requires the predicted occurrence of hazards and threats. In our opinion, today such a regional system could exist on the basis of centers for situational and strategic analysis of regional development on the basis of leading universities and scientific organizations. In an aggravation situation of geopolitical tensions, the desire of ethnic or other regional counterelite to come to power through the use of potential discontent can have serious consequences for the stability not only in the region but also for the real social and political balance preservation of the country as a whole, that in terms of social and political transformations does not contradict the development, but, on the contrary, will ensure the strengthening of the rule of law and the stability of the political system as a whole. In the security aspect, it is important to speak not only about economic, but also about the social political reproduction of the political system dysfunctions. In the political context, “reproduction” is the self-sufficiency preservation of the society development, as a sovereign state, a political organism fully developing on the basis of citizens abilities’ awareness in using their own political will in the process of rational disposal of the country's intellectual and natural resources, in order to strengthen positions in the world community and renew political opportunities to protect the interests of every citizen and a single political community - the state (Ilyin, 2006; Kozer, 2000). The system of measures eliminating or mitigating the impact of factors that adversely affect the sustainability of the country and region development includes the selection of the optimal management decision to ensure social economic security while maintaining a balance with national interests and its implementation. At the same time, it is necessary to comprehensively take into account that local-regional political processes directly interact with global ones, depend on them and influence multidirectional and heterogeneous social cultural subprocesses.

Speaking about the local regional political processes, the situation should be noted in the Krasnodar region as the most important geostrategic zones of Russia, strengthening of socio-economic and ethno-political conflicts of which may have an impact on the destabilization in Russia as a whole. A significant conflict-causing factor influencing the situation in this subject of the Russian Federation is a strong ethnic and social economic differentiation of the region. For example, according to the 2010 census, the ethnic

structure of Krasnodar Territory consists of more than 150 ethnic groups and diasporas. The most numerous groups are: Russians - 86.5%, Armenians - 5.4%, Ukrainians - 1.6%, Tatars - 0.48%, Greeks - 0.43%, Belarusians - 0.32%, Georgians – 0,34%, Adygeis - 0.26%. The Russian population partially compensated for the demographic decline due to migration, the Ukrainian and Belarusian ethnic groups compared to the 2002 census decreased by 36 and 13 percent, respectively. The number of Greeks, Adygeis and Germans living in the province has decreased. At the same time, the Armenian ethnic group is growing. Compared to the 2002 census, the number of Armenians increased by 2.5%, and compared to the 1989 census, by 64%. The ethnic composition of the region population is changing as a result of: differences in the reproduction regimes of the cities inhabiting it, external migration, and a change in ethnic identity. A significant proportion of those arriving in Krasnodar Territory are residents of the northern and eastern regions of Russia, who not only complete their work and are seeking to move to a territory with a more favorable climate, but also people of working age who are interested in finding a good job. For the region, this leads to an increase in both demographic and infrastructure load.

Under the conditions of social and political transformations, the likelihood of inter-regional contradictions arises, which are associated with horizontal mobility and the resulting deprivation under conditions of living standards difference, “administrative jealousy” of regions, international and geopolitical factors that cause all sorts of complaints and contradictions.

The conflict-causing potential creates uneven migration flows in addition to the high ethnic mosaic of the population. “The unevenness of migration processes in the Russian Federation subjects within the SFD remains. The focus of the migration flow mainly to the southern and western regions of Krasnodar Territory and Rostov Region with a high population density creates objective prerequisites for interethnic tensions and local conflicts” (Matishov & Batiev, 2007). The above trends exist at the present time. A significant part of migrants settles in large cities and on the Black Sea coast, while the host community is interested in reorienting the increasing flow of immigrants to the northern and foothill areas, which are considered marginal by regional standards. A very high level of migration is dangerous for Kuban with social and economic problems, and also stimulates political, economic and social tensions. According to the Krasnodarstat data for January - August 2018, the migration increased by 40% compared with the same period of 2017. In the period under review, international migration significantly increased (by 69%), including with the CIS countries (by 76%).

According to the expert survey (n=20), an intensification of migration processes against the background of migration legislation softening will be happening over the next 5-7 years in Krasnodar Territory. However, there is no consensus among experts regarding the strength of this factor influence on the situation in the region as a whole. Thus, on average, the impact of migration, labor in particular, on regional development is estimated at 60% with an opinion range from 20 to 90%. The most significant factors are the level, life quality of the region population (most experts predict deterioration) and the degree of social inequality. According to experts, the level of innovation in the technical development of the region, the introduction of innovative economic activities and relations with neighboring regions plays a significant role. The last factor is primarily due to the close proximity to the Republic of Adygea, relations with which, despite close cooperation, have a latent conflict potential associated with historical memory: the activity of the Adyg national movements is observed that are in favor of preserving the republic status, organize

meetings to support for the repatriation of the Circassian diaspora, raise issues of the Circassians genocide, the enlargement of the region and the merger of Kabardin-Balkaria and Karachay-Cherkessia, etc. It is interesting that according to the questionnaire (n=430) conducted in Krasnodar Territory in May - September 2018, Adygeis who “outstripped” even the Ukrainians are closer for Krasnodar youth among ethnic groups living in the region. Although the occurrence frequency of installations for maximum proximity (readiness to accept as family members) in relation to the Ukrainians is a little more often observed than in relation to the Adygeis. Survey participants demonstrate the greatest distance in relation to natives of Central Asia and Asians (Chinese, Koreans) (Figure 01).



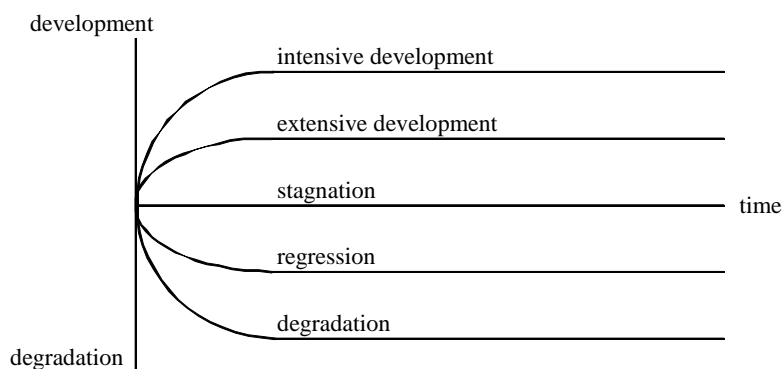
Почасовой стрелке: уроженцы Средней Азии- Central Asia natives, Asians (Chinese, Koreans, North Caucasus natives, Crimean Tatars, Muslims, Armenians, Ukrainians, Adygeis, Christians, Russians.

**Figure 01.** The measurement results on the social distance scale of E. Bogardus (the measurement was made on a scale from 1 - maximum proximity to 9 - maximum distance)

As it is known, in the regions of the South of Russia, including Krasnodar Territory, a peculiar territorial identity of the “Cossack border” developed over the centuries., as well as deep religiosity and etatism is characterized by regional communities. The social political transformations of the quarter-century period of the post-Soviet years in a bizarre way combined traditional and modernist tendencies in culture and everyday life. And "boundary" awareness of various interest groups existence was exacerbated, as well as the phenomenon of "double periphery" took place. However, according to the questionnaire survey data (n=430), the region residents feel themselves as Russians (more than 30% of the respondents), that is to say, civil identity predominates in young residents minds of the region (people aged 16–35 took part in the survey). The results of the expert survey also point to the trend towards strengthening civil identity in the coming years. Besides, a significant number of survey participants (about 30%) identify themselves with the inhabitants of the Earth, the representatives of humanity, the people of the world. National identity (they feel that they are people of a certain nationality) is only one tenth of the respondents. This fact indicates a gradual change in identity direction towards global communities. Here the steady influence of the globalization process can be traced, which is now becoming an important factor in regional development. Thus, according to the expert survey, as most experts noted that a tendency towards globalization will be happening in the next 5-7 years, and this process will have a significant impact on

regional development. The described processes point to a transformation of regional identity towards the blurring of ethno-territorial boundaries.

As part of the expert survey, an attempt to predict the development of the human potential of Krasnodar Territory over the next 10 years was made. The scenario prediction technique was used for this. The following possible scenarios were considered: intensive development, extensive, stagnation, regression and degradation (Figure 02). Detailed description data of the given scenarios are represented in the work of (Yurchenko, Dontsova & Yurchenko, 2017).



**Figure 02.** Alternative scenarios of human development in the region

The obtained data indicate that the most likely scenario for the region development can be characterized as *regressive*, which is described by the following features: experts point to a likely decrease in the birth rate, lifespan and working-age population with an average ability to work; the professionalism level of the staff is currently below the required, however, some tendency towards improving the quality of labor resources takes place. The responsibility level in the labor force is estimated as corresponding to the required for stable region development, but this figure will not suffer significant changes in the next few years. An increase in the responsible attitude to work is likely due to the tightening of disciplinary measures. The permanent employment segments of the population will show instability (many experts have indicated the likelihood of reducing their number); some motivation weakening to achieve the goals and the willingness to enter into a cooperative relationship will be observed, but over time the state of these indicators may change for the better; value orientations will be determined to a greater extent by the economic component; the ability to perceive cultural values and reproduce the cultural patterns of their community will decline, which may entail an intensification of the identity crisis; the level of inter-ethnic trust and readiness to enter into cooperative relations with another faith carriers will be improved in some way and at present this indicator is sufficient for the conflict-free development of the region; positive trends are likely to be observed in the field of the ability for self-development, self-education and creative activity, which can give an impetus, including the further development of innovative potential. According to most experts, at present, the region is undergoing a period of intensive innovation and technical development, the introduction of economic activities innovative types, which certainly gives hope for more favorable forecasts, but in the long term.



## 7. Conclusion

Thus, within the framework of the study of social and political transformations issues in the South of Russia in the context of globalization, monitoring local and regional processes in the context of identifying the specifics of human development in each municipality of each Federation subject seems to be significant. At the same time, as part of the study of the socio-political security system, attention should be focused on clarifying the essence of the main reasons that undermine the system of basic principles and functions, as well as the social nature of the emerging political and economic dysfunctions. The effectiveness of the functioning of all elements and components is explored in the process of developing the theory and mechanisms for ensuring national and regional security, which enables to diagnose its level, develop criteria based on objective and well-timed information, and apply specific methods of preventing and resolving the emerging conflicts.

The mechanism for ensuring social economic security at the regional level is carried out through practical actions that include determining the aggregate regional interests of the population, rational use of existing economic potential, implementing an effective, logistically verified regional social economic policy, as well as the need to protect the interests of citizens from various domestic and external threats while maintaining a balance with national interests.

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