

УДК: 141.7:316.342.2–058.232.2/5

**Olena ALEKSANDROVA**

## **GENESIS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS IN MODERN UKRAINIAN SOCIETY**



*The genesis of the Ukrainian middle class takes place in the social systems of closed type, to which the Russian Empire, the USSR and Ukraine, as its part, belonged. This model is connected with unnatural modernization, lack of succession in the introduction of capitalism phases, saltatory transformational changes and “non-communal” environment. In this case, the middle class is not numerous, anemic, weak, with conflict-triggering potential, whose power is enough only for initiating modernization reforms and then it chokes with them and dissolves in the social environment.*

*The article proposes a philosophical idea of the middle class development in Ukraine that is based on competition and partnership interactions. It has been theoretically worked out that the mechanism of the middle class formation is social harmony as a result of bringing positive potential of attributes of the optimal competition and partnership interaction as a condition for solving social contradictions. These attributes include tolerance, dialogue, compromise, and consensus. Interaction of the vertical of the power (state) and the horizontal of communications (civil society in the system of social coordinates) enables practical realization of the mechanism of social harmony.*

**Keywords:** *the middle class, civil society, competition, partnership, social policy, local government.*

The modern Ukrainian society is undergoing a transition period and is characterized by reforms, almost unprecedented in world practice, going in the following directions: from the “Socialist” formation to the post-industrial civilization; from communal, material-technological environment to non-communal; from the closed economic system (distribution and authoritarian political power) to the open one (free market in economy and democracy in politics). All this in its turn led to the dominance of a dual institutional system, including existence of a binary system of values, that is when the values of the

Soviet period are no longer viable and new market values have not developed yet.

The situation in the country is unstable and contradictory. Under these circumstances, it is very difficult to define the priorities and perspectives for further development, as well as to find such key social groups that can ensure stability in the society and guarantee constancy of its development. One of these groups which was identified by the representatives of Western social sciences is the middle class.

Making a retrospective analysis of the understanding of the middle class phenomenon in the history of philosophy and social sciences, it should be noted that the first mentions of the class division of society is found in the works of ancient philosophers (Plato, Aristotle). Since antiquity the definition "middle class" has been used for a set of social groups that took an intermediate position between the classes of society. The Triad, existed in ancient states, the division of society into the upper classes, lower classes and the middle part still persists and does not lose its functional essence even now.

Strengthening of the middle sections of the population in the West is obliged to their industrial society where mass production created mass consumption, thereby ensuring the improving of living standards of wide strata of the population. Nowadays, the actual content of the "middle class" as a complex social formation has undergone significant changes. In today's societies of the Western type the middle class consists of both the "old" traditional strata and the "new strata". The "old" cover small and medium private proprietors, the bigger part of peasants and farmers, craftsmen and merchants; the "new" in the middle class are made up of representatives of mass intelligentsia, including engineers and technicians, people of liberal professions, skilled workers and others. The "new" middle class arises due to the information revolution in the middle and late 20th century. Among the contemporary foreign scientist who comprehensively analyze the problem of the middle class it should be mentioned studies by T. Butler (1995), N. Chomsky (1996), L. Corey (1994), R. Darendorf (1959), K. Davis and W. Moore (2001), K. Eder (1995), R. Erikson (1992), J. Goldtorpe (1992), G. Esping-Andersen (1993), J.K. Galbraith (1967), M. Gordon (1951), M. Hout, C. Brooks, J. Manza (1993), P. Hutber (1996), I. Kraus (1976), D. Lockwood (1995), G. Marshall (1988), C. Mills (1951), D. Rose (1988), H. Newby (1988), K. Moody (1997), J. Pakulski (1996), J. Sachs (2005), M. Savage (2000), T. Veblen (1971), E. Wright (1996). An important achievement in understanding the middle class in Western society was the development of the concept of the "service class". This term is used to denote a distinction between the most influential representatives of the middle class and less influential non-manual workers. In this sense, a significant role of the intelligentsia as part of the middle class is stressed (see for example the

work by M. Savage, 2000), which is specified in the definition of “black-coated worker” of D. Lockwood (D. Lockwood 1989).

According to some researchers (Z. Golenkova, E. Igithanyan 2002), in the society of a transition period there appears a new class of “hired workers”, the main parameters of which coincide with the ones of the “service class” in modern Western society.

The researchers in the post-Soviet space have two basic approaches to the problems of the middle class. Representatives of the first approach, using different ways of reasoning, argue that this class does not exist in the society of a transition period (A. Avtonomov 2000, G. Diligenskyi 2002, V. Radayev 2000 and others). Supporters of the second approach acknowledge its existence, but note the initial stage of its formation or its incomplete formation. Meaning its amorphous and unstable community, instead of the term “middle class” it is used the term “middle strata” — it is the same diverse groups that fill the social space between the elites, “the rich”, on the one hand, and the poor underclass, “social bottom” — on the other (A. Zdravomyslov 1999, T. Zaslavskaya 2005, O. Shkaratan 2006 and others).

On the whole, over the past two decades, the middle-class phenomenon has been studied in many works of scientists of our country. The processes of stratification and social relations in contemporary Ukrainian society are considered (V. Bakirov, S. Brodska, V. Vorona, E. Golovakha, N. Kovalisko, A. Kutsenko, M. Makeiev, S. Oksamytna, A. Ruchka, A. Khyzhniak, Y. Yakovenko and others). The social problems of the middle class establishment in Ukraine are highlighted (V. Burega, L. Byzov, V. Hrytsaniuk, V. Kozma, I. Kiianka, V. Riabika, H. Svita, O. Symonchuk and others). Economic factors of social class stratification in modern Ukraine are analyzed (V. Bobyl, N. Boretska, V. Vasilchenko, N. Karpachova, E. Libanova, N. Lysiuk, T. Luchko, N. Navrotska, V. Paniotto, A. Popova, L. Shchetynina and others). The current trends of the middle class development in the economic sphere of the Ukrainian society are studied (A. Baranovskyi, I. Bondar, E. Bugaienko, V. Bidak, A. Halchynskyi, V. Geiets, M. Huts, T. Kirian, N. Kovaleva, V. Lych, V. Mandybura, G. Mieshchaninova, N. Sitnikova, A. Savchenko, A. Savvov, O. Sologub, M. Shapoval, G. Yaroshenko, A. Yaremenko and others). A characteristic feature of these studies is their limitation to purely sociological and / or economic spheres without socio-philosophical analysis of the middle class in the society of a transition period, including modern Ukraine. It is the issue that this study is focused on.

In western society a general model of the middle class genesis is as follows. The formation of the quintessential middle class goes simultaneously with the emergence of commodity production and develops in the industrial society on

the basis of the labor private property (T. Butler 1995; L. Corey 1994; P. Hutber 1996; D. Lockwood 1995; C. Mills 1951).

The genesis of the information society generates qualitative transformations of the middle class and preconditions for changes of the genetic basis of its transformation are science, knowledge and information which are the key factors of the social production system.

The “new” middle class in the society grounds on the intellectual capital which is an integral part of the human capital, and as a result, inalienable property.

It should be emphasized that changes of the fundamentals of the world order favor such general contradictory world tendencies as transition from technocratic civilization to the information one. As a result that leads to globalization and fragmentation of the social world structure and the structure of the population (manufactures) and, at the same time, it leads to the formation of the information unity of the social world and appearing of new subjects as knowledge bearers.

Globalization, genesis of information society and formation of the global civil society, and transnational capitalist class create a few processes peculiar for modern Europe. Firstly, it is transition of the European community from technocratic society and trade oriented economy to the knowledge society and informational economy, which requires European identity (in accordance with the Lisbon Treaty (2000)). Secondly, it is formation of a new main section of the population on the basis of the bearers of intellectual property and movers of the intellectual production.

All these and some other mega tendencies of the modern world development raise the problem of an increasing competitiveness of the countries which are experiencing social transformations and/or escalation of social contradictions, problems and obstacles. One of these obstacles for further development of the Ukrainian society is, on the one hand, lack of the well-established and nationally-responsible ruling elite and shifting of some of its part from the national to the globalistic position, on the other hand — massive impoverishment of the population that leads to the proliferation of the lower class burdened with the problems of satisfying their vital needs.

Between these two poles, with the lack of the Government support, quite a specific Ukrainian middle class is formed. Its contradictory constituent parts are not only bearers of the traditional commodity production and owners of material resources, but emerging elements of the intellectual origins as well.

The formation of the modern Ukrainian middle class has been influenced by the whole accumulated history of the transformation breakthroughs in Ukraine (Aleksandrova, 2008).

They are:

1. Specific features of capitalism. Western capitalism was established due to five necessary factors combined in one historical spot: the cult of the inviolability of private property, the independence of the upper bourgeoisie, maturity of the urban middle strata, secularized science and a special type of religion. Ukraine never had anything of this kind. Moreover, market relations in Ukraine were always introduced by the bureaucracy.

2. Unnatural modernization, that is initiated “from the top” (economy, politics) but not “from the lower part” (culture). The principles of “modernity” cannot be comprehended by the overwhelming majority of the population, that is why they do not receive an adequate social support.

3. The dominance of the public sector of the economy over the private one.

4. Lack of free wage-labor.

5. Over-exploitation of workers as the basic feature of the economy up to the 90s of the 20th century.

6. “Non-market” way of thinking of the majority of the population.

7. Peculiar features of the candidates that can be considered the subjects of the middle class (nobility was the first to be proposed).

8. The undulating nature of the civil society formation and the development of the middle class throughout the Ukrainian history, beginning with the period of Kyivan Rus’ and up to the present day.

This model of the middle class genesis, unlike the Western classic middle class, can be found in the social systems of a closed type, to which the Russian Empire, the USSR and Ukraine, as its part, belonged. This model is connected with unnatural modernization, lack of succession in the introduction of capitalism phases, saltatory transformational changes and “non-communal” environment in general. In this case, the middle class is not numerous, anemic, weak, with conflict-triggering potential, whose power is enough only for initiating modernization reforms, and then it chokes with them and dissolves in the social environment. Just this very model of the middle class formation is typical for modern Ukraine.

The factors influencing the middle class formation in the Ukrainian transitional society are:

1) resource pre-condition that contains potential sources of recruiting into the middle class and consists of: existing in the social structure of the soviet society mass social strata, that had a number of significant professional-qualification and value features of the middle class; mass social strata that appeared in the reformation process and may be related to the middle class according to certain features connected with their occupations;

2) motivation pre-condition which represents social groups that pretend to a certain social — economic status and have motivation to get it; social groups that lack relevant motivation at a definite moment, having a number of resources though;

3) ideological pre-condition that covers a number of sociocultural factors that make an integrating ideological frame. Exactly these pre-conditions determine the sources and relevant factors of the middle class formation.

Thus, determining the status and prospects for the development of the middle class in the modern Ukrainian society, we will outline the factors that impede its genesis. These factors cause certain problems in the middle class formation and, at the time, are its constituent parts (Aleksandrova, 2008).

— Theoretical and methodological factors: neglecting and oblivion of Marxism statement about the unity and conformity of the productive forces and productive relations affected the views of the modern economic science, which was the theoretical and methodological basis for the certain market reforms.

— Social and economic factors: the action of big foreign capital; concentration of the domestic (within the country) substantial financial capital genetically linked to the government; preserving a significant governmental regulation in the economy (with non-limited big capital); increase in the share of the government social expenditures to support the quantitatively growing lower strata, lacking economic policies directed to the formation and support of the middle strata of the population; migration processes (Ukrainians going abroad); low labor (and social) mobility on the labor market; peculiarities of the land reform policies; reduction of the rural working population; wide-spread poverty of the population; informal economy and informal relationships.

— Social and political factors: domination of the bureaucracy as society's counteragent; social irresponsibility of the ruling elite; lack of a social structure that forms the integrity of the society; government's targeting the interests of the upper strata of the society and entrepreneurship; an extremely low level of the demand for legal and legitimate channels for defending private interests; the specifics of the civil identity in the modern Ukrainian society; limited vertical mobility; a peculiar feature of the social capital as a condition for the middle class formation; lack of consensus within the ruling elite and the majority of the population as regards national interests of the country.

— Cultural factors: there are no explicit signs of the formation of the middle class group identity and their values; mutual inadequacy in expectations of the behavior of entrepreneurs and wage workers; lack of competition and partnership culture in the transitional society; moral anomie of some parts of the government structures and representatives of the business.

There is no doubt that the task of getting out of the system crisis, which the country is experiencing now, cannot have ready solutions, either taken from her past or from foreign countries' experience, and cannot be transferred to the future since the social system is at the bifurcation point.

On the whole, we should note the following fact. Since the economic development in the Ukrainian society is based on the benefits of the industrial

society and social stratification is going according to the welfare standards only, the middle class formation must go in accordance with the classic criteria, features and principles. At the same time, it is necessary to take into consideration peculiarities of the nature and typical features of the middle class in the process of its originating, and also prospective functions and tasks of the middle class implied by the strategic aims of the transformation.

Besides, taking into consideration the genetic-historical level of the Ukrainian society development, it should be noted Ukrainian's disposition towards consensus interaction while solving social contradictions, which is the substratum for making the mechanism of the middle class formation on the basis of social harmony (Aleksandrova, 2009).

At the same time, engaging of the western countries' experience allows to determine the steps of practical implementation of the abovementioned mechanism through cooperation of the state with the civil society and gradual transition to realisation of the principles and methods of the local government in social processes.

So, we can offer a philosophical idea of the middle class development that is based on competition and partnership interactions. The mechanism of optimization of the middle class formation is social harmony as a result of bringing positive potential of attributes of the optimal interaction of competition and partnership as a condition of solving social contradictions. These attributes include tolerance, dialogue and compromise (Aleksandrova, 2011).

Interaction of the vertical of the power (state) and the horizontal of communications (civil society in the system of social coordinates) enables practical realization of the mechanism of social harmony.

Implementation of effective social policies by the state vertical with the aim of providing niches for further development of the middle class through the local governmental institutions allows us to consider the middle class not only as a theoretical model, but as empirical reality as well, since it is extremely difficult to ensure the constancy and stability of the Ukrainian society without it.

#### **References:**

1. Butler, T. and Savage, M. (eds.) (1995) *Social Change and the Middle Classes*. London : UCL Press, 388 pp.
2. Chomsky, N. (1996) *World Orders. Old and New*. New York : Columbia University Press, 311 pp.
3. Corey, L. (1994) *The Crisis of the Middle Class*. New York : Columbia University Press, 379 pp.
4. Darendorf, R. (1959) *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*. Stanford, CA : Stanford University Press, 336 pp.
5. Eder, K. (1995) *Does Social Class Matter in the Study of Social Movements? A Theory of Middle-Class Radicalism*. *Social movements and social classes: The Future of Collective Action*. London : Sage Publications, P. 21-54.

6. Erikson, R. and Goldtorpe, J. (1992) *The Constant Flux: A Study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies*. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 393 pp.
7. Esping-Andersen, G. (1993) *Trends in Contemporary Class Structuration: A Six-Nation Comparison. Changing Classes. Stratification and Mobility in Post-Industrial Societies*. London : Sage Publications, P. 32-55.
8. Galbraith, J. K. (1967) *The New Industrial State*. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 427 pp.
9. Gordon, M. *Social Class in American Sociology (1951)*. *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 55. № 3, P. 248-268.
10. Hout, M., Brooks, C., Manza, J. (1993) *The Persistence of Classes in Post-Industrial Societies*. *International Sociology*. Vol. 8., P. 259-277.
11. Hutber, P. (1996) *Dekline and Fall of Middle Class and How it Can Fight Back*. London : University of London, Institute of Education, 209 pp.
12. Kingsley Davis, Wilbert E. Moore (2001) *Forms of Stratification. The Functions of Stratification. Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective* [ed. by David B. Grusku]. Boulder : Westview Press, P. 39-47.
13. Kraus, I. (1976) *Stratification, Class and Conflict*. New York : Free Press, 212 pp.
14. Lockwood, D. (1995) *Marking out the Middle Class(es)*. *Social Change and the Middle Classes*. eds. T. Butler, M. Savage. London : UCL Press, P. 1-12.
15. Lockwood, D. (1989) *The Blackcoated Worker. A Study in Class Consciousness*. New York : Oxford University Press, 278 pp.
16. Marshall, G., Rose, D., Newby, H. (1988) *Social Class in Modern Britain*. London : Unwin Hyman, 343 pp.
17. Mills, C. W. (1951) *White Collar. The American Middle Classes*. New York : Oxford University Press, 1951, 286 pp.
18. Moody, K. (1997) *Workers in a Lean World. Unions in the International Economy*. New York : Verso Publishing, 342 pp.
19. Pakulski, J. (1996) *The Death of Class*. London : Sage, 246 pp.
20. Sachs, J. D. (2005) *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. N.Y. : Penguin Press, 396 pp.
21. Savage, M. (2000) *Social Analysis and Social Transformation*. Buckingham : Open University Press, 240 pp.
22. Veblen, T. (1971) *The Engineers and the Price System*. New York : Gramma Publications, 184 pp. (Reprinted by, Harcourt Brace, New York (1971).
23. Wright, E. O. (1996). *Class counts. Comparative studies in Class Analysis*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 576 p.
24. Автономов, А. С. (2000) *Средний класс и центризм*. *Полития*, № 1, С. 109-120 // Avtonomov, A. S. (2000) *Middle Class and Centrism*. *Politia*, № 1, P. 109-120. (printed on the Russian language)
25. Александрова, Е.С. (2011) *Местное самоуправление как условие становления гражданского общества*. И.И. Кальной, А.В. Горбань (науч. ред.) *Гражданское общество в эпоху тотальной глобализации*. Симферополь: ИТ «АРИАЛ», С. 528-545. // Aleksandrova, O.S. (2011) *The local self-administration as a condition of the civil society's genesis*. In: I.I. Kalnoy and A.V. Gorban (eds.) *The Civil Society in the Period of Total Globalization*. Simferopol: Edition IT "Arial", pp. 528-545. (printed on the Ukrainian language)



26. Александрова, О.С. (2008) Специфіка становлення та розвитку середнього класу в умовах перехідного періоду сучасного українського суспільства. Суми: Університетська книга, 336 с. // Aleksandrova, O.S. (2008) Peculiarities of Genesis and Development of the Middle Class in the Period of Social Transformations in Modern Ukrainian Society. Sumy: Edition University Book, 336 pp. (printed on the Ukrainian language)
27. Александрова, О.С. (2009) Взаємодія конкуренції та партнерства як фактор розвитку середнього класу в Україні: філософський аналіз. Київ: Вид. ПАРАПАН, 252 с. // Aleksandrova, O.S. (2009) Interaction of Competition and a Partnership as a Factor of Middle Class Development in Ukraine: Philosophical Analysis. Kiev: Publisher PARAPAN, 252 pp. (printed on the Ukrainian language)
28. Голенкова З. Т., Игитханян Е. Д. (2002) Наемные работники. Некоторые черты формирующегося класса. Социологические исследования, № 9, С. 41-50. // Golenkova, Z. T. and Igithanyan, E. D. Salaried Employees. Some Features of the Emerging class. Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya, № 9, P. 41-50. (printed on the Russian language)
29. Дилигенский, Г. Г. (2002) Люди среднего класса. Москва : Институт Фонда «Общественное мнение», 285 с. // Diligenskiy, G. G. Middle Class People. Moscow : Institute of the Fund "Public Opinion", 285 pp. (printed on the Russian language)
30. Заславская, Т. И. (2005) Человеческий потенциал в современном трансформационном процессе. Общественные науки и современность, № 3, С. 5-17. // Zaslavskaya, T. I. (2005) Human Potential in Today's Transformation Process. Obshchestvennie nauki I sovremennost', № 3, P. 5-17. (printed on the Russian language)
31. Здравомыслов, А. Г. (1999) Несколько замечаний по поводу дискуссии о среднем классе. Средний класс в современном российском обществе. М. : РОССПЭН, РНИСиНП, С. 34-35. // Zdravomislov, A. G. A few notes about the discussion about the middle class. The middle class in contemporary Russian society. Moscow : ROSSPEN, RNISiNP, P. 34-35. (printed on the Russian language)
32. Радаев, В. В. (2000) Работающие бедные: велик ли запас прочности. Социологические исследования, № 8, С. 28-37. // Radayev, V. V. Working poor: whether a large margin of safety. Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya, № 8, P. 28-37. (printed on the Russian language)
33. Шкаратан, О. И. (2006) Социальная политика. Ориентир – новый средний класс. Общественные науки и современность, № 4, С. 39-53. // Shkaratan, O. I. (2006) Social Policy. Landmark – a New Middle Class. Obshchestvennie nauki I sovremennost', № 4, P. 39-53.

***Александрова Олена. Генеза середнього класу в сучасному українському суспільстві***

Генеза українського середнього класу, на відміну від середнього класу класичного західного зразка, відбувається в соціальних системах закритого типу, до яких належала Російська імперія, а потім СРСР, в складі якого перебувала Україна. Він пов'язаний з неорганічною модернізацією, відсутністю наступності у впровадженні фаз капіталізму, стрибкоподібністю трансформаційних змін, «некомунальним» середовищем у цілому. В цьому випадку середній клас нечисленний, анемічний, слабкий, наділений конфліктогенним потенціалом, можливостей якого вистачає

для ініціювання модернізаційних реформ, від дії яких він і захлинається, розчиняючись у соціальному просторі.

Запропонована філософська ідея розвитку середнього класу на основі взаємодії конкуренції і партнерства. Механізмом оптимізації становлення середнього класу є соціальна згода як результат залучення позитивного потенціалу атрибутів оптимальної взаємодії конкуренції і партнерства як умови вирішення суспільних протиріч. До цих атрибутів належать толерантність, діалог, компроміс, консенсус. Взаємодія вертикалі влади (держави) й горизонталі комунікацій (громадянського суспільства в системі суспільних координат) сприяє практичній реалізації механізму суспільної згоди.

***Ключові слова:** середній клас, громадянське суспільство, конкуренція, партнерство, соціальна політика, місцеве самоврядування.*

### **Александрова Елена. Генезис среднего класса в современном украинском обществе**

Генезис украинского среднего класса, в отличие от среднего класса классического западного образца, происходит в социальных системах закрытого типа, к которым принадлежала Российская империя, а затем СССР, в составе которого находилась Украина. Он связан с неорганической модернизацией, отсутствием преемственности в реализации фаз капитализма, скачкообразностью трансформационных изменений, «некоммунальной» средой в целом. В этом случае средний класс немногочисленный, анемичный, слабый, наделенный конфликтогенным потенциалом, возможностей которого достаточно для инициирования модернизационных реформ, от действия которых он и захлебывается, растворяясь в социальном пространстве.

Предложена философская идея развития среднего класса на основе взаимодействия конкуренции и партнерства. Механизмом оптимизации становления среднего класса является социальное согласие как результат привлечения положительного потенциала атрибутов оптимального взаимодействия конкуренции и партнерства как условия решения общественных противоречий. К этим атрибутам относятся толерантность, диалог, компромисс, консенсус. Взаимодействие вертикали власти (государства) и горизонталей коммуникаций (гражданского общества в системе общественных координат) способствует практической реализации механизма общественного согласия.

***Ключевые слова:** средний класс, гражданское общество, конкуренция, партнерство, социальная политика, местное самоуправление.*