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A MODEL FOR ANALYSIS OF IDEOLOGY IN FOREIGN POLICY

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Abstract. The article presents a theoretical model of how ideological concepts may impact the foreign political strategies of states. The author thinks that the necessity to build a more concrete understanding of the strategic goal setting process is more relevant these days due to the increasing ochlocratic influence on the governmental behavior in the international arena. The model is based on three logically intertwined pillars. The first of them analyzes the socio-psychological mechanism of the transformation of ideas into specific actions on the part of an individual or a collective body. Special attention is paid to the phenomenon of ideologemes as compact expressions of normative attitude towards the surrounding events. The article also takes into consideration psychological predispositions that made the conversion of some ideas into actions more probable. The second pillar accounts for the decision-making process. It analyses the most significant elements of the mechanism, that determine how long-term national interests and specific goals are formulated within the political establishment, the expert and governmental officials' community. The author also presents a vision in which an overall national might, presence or absence of political will define the spectrum of potentially made decisions. This approach can give a more detailed and concrete understanding of the nature of subjectivity in world affairs. The third pillar is based on the analysis of how a governmental actor perceives through its ideological lens its own interaction with the surrounding international environment. This pillar considers the actors' self-positioning in the world, the foreign policy instruments this actor uses to affect external objects in order to fortify its place on the global stage. The model may be useful for research of the long-term foreign policy strategic planning, establishing specific criteria of effectiveness of its implementation, and forecasting the decision-making process.

Keywords: political science, international relations theory, foreign policy, ideology, political space, ideologue, identity.

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МОДЕЛЬ АНАЛИЗА ИДЕОЛОГИИ ВО ВНЕШНЕЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ

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Аннотация. В статье предлагается теоретическая модель воздействия идеологических концепций на практику проведения государствами внешней политики. Модель представлена в трех составляющих. Первая из них анализирует социально-психологический механизм конвертации идей в конкретные действия субъекта. Вторая рассматривает механизм принятия решений с учетом пределов потенциала воли самого субъекта (его возможностей и намерений). Третья представляет основы анализа восприятия субъектом окружающей его среды, особенностей воздействия на нее. Модель может служить исходной при исследовании и прогнозировании внешнеполитических стратегий государств.

Ключевые слова: политология, теория международных отношений, внешняя политика, идеология, политическое пространство, идеологема, идентичность.

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The significance of the events of February 2022 for the history of world development can hardly be overestimated. After 30 years of volatile relations Russia and the West returned to a level of confrontation that could certainly be considered as a starting point of a new stage of not only European, but also world history. The reason why these events might have such scale is because the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict influenced literally all forms of social interaction: from interpersonal communication between individuals and their cultural interconnectedness to the future of what have remained of the system of strategic stability, the global financial architecture, and the structure of interstate relations.

The scale of these events raises the attention to several fundamental problems of theoretical comprehension of international relations in the widest spectrum of studies. This paper focuses on one of such problems by formulating an approach of how to analyze and assess the impact of ideology on states' foreign policy. Nowadays, for an entire generation of people, the events of the Ukrainian crisis will prove to be the main psycho-emotional upheaval of their lives, a constitutive part of their self-identification. The formation of new identities, the strengthening or the weakening of the old ones are intensified due to technological progress. Globalization in a fundamentally new environment of information exchange has increasingly amplified the influence of public opinion as a factor of international life. The erosion of public institutions under growing influence of the “mob rule” raises fundamentally different questions regarding the decision-making process of the governments, its changing rationale and their criteria for effectiveness.

The article presents a research model, that offers answers to these questions through a step-by-step analysis of the relationship between the ideas and their hosts (individual or collective), between its decision-making process and the potential for its implementation into life, and between the idea-carrier and its external environment, the outside world. The model is based primarily on researches of Russian scientist, who studied various aspects of how the ideologies impact social-psychological processes and the mechanisms of public decision-making, primarily the publications by Kosolapov [1], Semenenko [2],

Klushina [3], Pushkareva [4], Prokhorenko [5], Istomin [6], and Voitolovskii [7].

THE IDEA AND ITS HOST

This study concentrates primarily on how ideology influences the strategic goal-setting process of the state, oh how this affects its behavior on the international arena, and its foreign policy “thinking” as a special type of such. Thus, the initial question would be about the impact of an idea on the behavior of its host.

Not every unit of information necessarily induces a person, a group of people, or even an entire society to undertake certain actions. Text, images, melodies, symbols, or other cultural manifestations do not automatically trigger a reaction. When information enters one's mind, it goes through a complicated process of “input” perception, that does not necessarily result in a specific “output”. Kosolapov provides a more structuralized view on the inner mechanisms of social consciousness, which helps us better understand it. He underlines its three main structural elements. The first one is the host worldview, the accumulated knowledge, and the ways of acquiring it. The second is its social psychology, the inner world, and life experience of the host. These two components can be characterized as the context in which all information from the outside world is entering the hosts' mind. However, when we are talking about the social consciousness of an actor it is insufficient to analyze only the such contextual background. The totality of views that reflect people's attitudes toward the surrounding reality is also not enough to characterize any idea-carrier as an actor with a specific subjectivity towards the outside world.

In the international relations represent a special kind of social relations in which the object of influence of any community is another community. In their work on the dialectics of subjectivity and objectivity Louboutin and Pivovarov highlight the presence of a specific purpose in the former as its principal distinguishing feature from the latter [8, p. 144]. That is why Kosolapov regards ideology as the third and perhaps the key component of social consciousness, as a function of the will, that ignites the goal setting process, and the mobilization of the subject to do everything to reach its goals [9, pp. 209-210].

It is an inherent feature of any ideology that it has a certain goal, which reflects idealized ideas about the right state of affairs in a particular area of life, would it be family relations, economic principles, interaction with the environment, or relations between individual states. Semigin in his article in the “New Philosophical Encyclopaedia” describes ideology as “a system of conceptualized notions and ideas that expresses interests, worldview and ideals of different subjects of politics – classes, nations, society, political parties, social movements – and acts as a form of sanctioning either the dominance and power existing in society (conservative ideologies) or their radical transformation (ideologies of “left” and “right” movements)” [10]. However, it is important to make an essential clarification. It would be a mistake to primitivize the “form of sanctioning” to a conscious process of justification by the subject of its actions through the creation of ideologemes to meet predetermined needs. Istomin rightfully points out that in such a case, the dialectical relationship between the idealistic and materialistic principles in the actions of the subject are ignored [6, p. 133].

The behavior of the subject within the ideological paradigm can be based on both rational (subjective) and, more importantly, irrational (objective) imperatives. The above-mentioned worldview and the psychological state of the subject determine their attitude toward the surrounding world and their cognitive and evaluative perception of reality. They are the ground for the intellectual and psychological acceptance of certain notions and ideas [11, p. 148]. At the same time, due to the existing limitations of human consciousness in terms of cognitive perception, the registration of knowledge in the course of critical understanding of the received information requires more effort than in the result of its acceptance by faith [12, pp. 54-55]. That is why primitive and easily perceived ideas-images (e.g. stereotypes, archetypes) have the highest speed of dissemination in the collective consciousness. This feature of information underlies the phenomenon of the so-called grapevine radio, the rapidity of transmission of stereotypes between people, and is also actively used in viral marketing.

Klushina, Professor of Lomonosov Moscow State University, describing the principles of pre-scientific world pictures, says that they were based on a coherent system of myths based on universal archetypal antinomies (good and evil, love and hate, native and foreign, etc.) and various archetypes of consciousness (exploit, sacrifice, return to origins, etc.). Myth, in its turn, is based on mythologemes, general structural

schemes that determine the laws of a plot and the inner logic of a myth (for instance, a hero always saves, a villain always betrays). For consciousness (both individual and collective), a mythologeme is a primary element (“brick”) of cognition and structuring of the surrounding reality. Moreover, the construction of mythological worlds is accompanied by the development of consciousness of an emotional assessment of incoming knowledge about this reality. Myth, therefore, does not simply involve the narration of some events or stories. It contains the notion of a norm, an understanding of what particular model of behavior is right or wrong [3, pp. 54-58].

The mythologemes have the ability to construct more complex and holistic pictures of the world, that are based on specific logical rules and archetypes of consciousness. This feature is often used by ideologies to construct ideologemes. Just like mythologemes, they reduce the meaning of an idea as much as possible, appealing to the emotional nature of a person and its uncritical perception of information. However, ideologemes have one qualitative difference – their orientation towards the future. For example, the slogan “Yes we can” used extensively during Barack Obama’s election campaign or the more definite “No taxation without representation” on the eve of the U.S. war for independence have a clear orientation to actions in the future. Klushina defines ideologemes as “a pre-determined idea which forms the basis of nomination and guides the mass consciousness in the right direction” [3, pp. 54–58]. At the same time, mythologemes and ideologemes may be based on scientific ideas and data about reality, but this is not a necessary component that allows them to fulfill their integral functions.

As various homogeneous ideologemes accumulate in individual or collective consciousness, an ideologically determined worldview is formed based on the construction of analogies and cause-effect connections. The more the living conditions, the level of education, collective and other interests, the experience lived, and the general psychological state correspond to certain ideologemes, the more likely their conversion into specific life attitudes and guidelines for certain action [11, pp. 137-138]. The key condition for the host of ideology to make a step toward the practical implementation of its goals is his absolute moral and psychological confidence in his or her rightness. Only the confidence of the host in the constructed system of coordinates may trigger a particular action from his or her part [9, pp. 235-236]. In this sense, no matter how scientifically grounded an ideologeme may be, its conversion into the material

(external) world depends primarily on the subject's belief in its content. A prime example of this rule is the rise of the COVID-19 anti-vaccination movement or people practicing veganism as a way of combating climate change.

It is essential to add one more category in order to analyze the impact ideologemes on the public consciousness and its worldview. The speed and breadth of dissemination of an ideologeme are influenced not only by its meaning and simplicity. This process is largely affected by the degree of homogeneity and consolidation of the space of public mindset where it moves. Simplifying, this process can be compared with the way oxygen fills the vacuum in an empty space. This is also true for any field of human interaction, be it culture, literature, music, mass communication, marketing, as well as politics, and international relations. However, in order not only to disseminate, but also to convert itself into a specific action, the ideologeme also requires a homogeneous social space that is defined by the social roles of its hosts.

The hosts' motivation to perform certain actions depends to a large extent on his or her self-determination. The multiplicity of different life situations also determines the multidimensional nature of the social roles this host assumes. Therefore, to analyze its behavior patterns in the environment, the category of identity should be taken into account. According to Semenenko, the category of identity solves the problem of conceptual synthesis of individual and collective imperatives of social activity: values, emotions on the one hand, and interests and needs – on the other. Semenenko says: “The identity of “Me” became a kind of mirror that reflects the subjective perception of oneself through the perception of the others..., a form of comprehension of one's own life experience in the context of social relations” [2, p. 21, 25]. Those individuals, who hosts homogeneous identities, form a common social space and become its constituent elements with certain principles of relations between each other [5, pp. 29-31]. These social spaces have the same feature as any individual to contain within themselves multiple identities. Thus, depending on their self-identification a limited set of people located on one geographical territory can comprise an infinite number of social spaces [13, pp. 54-92], that may embrace mutually beneficial, neutral, or even hostile forms of interaction. For example, any identity discourse that politicizes the issue of ethnicity in a heterogeneous society may lead to a rise of social tensions [14, 15].

Among all social spaces, however, there is one that is characterized specifically by a subject-object (or subordinate) type of relationship¹ – political space. The ethnic or cultural identity of any community is not necessarily determined by the existence of any authority, leader, or a governing body. Even if we take into consideration the religions or ideological social spaces, the existence of such hierarchical structures as church automatically defines them as political spaces, since it contains the institution that defined the norms of behavior for the entire community.

Moreover, on the landscape of the same political space there could be one or even more political entities (subjects or actors), that try to play a role of the defining power on the same field of social interaction. Let us give the following example to illustrate this point. In 2016 after the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States more and more European politicians started to express concerns over the possibility of the U.S. withdrawal from NATO. At this moment a great number of leaders and experts from allied countries started to use the argument that the only time when Article 5 of the Charter of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was activated was after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001². Therefore, it was at that moment when the Europeans came to help the United States, not otherwise. This example shows how participants of the same political space use its features to dominate, manipulate and gain political power over each other.

Pushkareva characterizes political space as “an established set of distances that fixes the differences between people in the processes of formation, functioning, and development of politics – a special form of interconnection and interaction system in a society” [4, p. 99]. This system of coordinates on the vertical axis contains stratification and hierarchy, while on the horizontal axis – differentiation of political positions. The stability of this complex of distances is ensured by the institutionalization of the normative order, that is subsequently enforced by being consequently repeated by its participants. If they start to perceive this normative rule as a “common state of things” the overall structure of relations between the governors and the governed becomes stable. A vivid example of such practice is the institution of citizenship, which constitutes the its basic element of political identity – civic identity, that

¹ The existence of a person or group of persons who determine the livelihoods and principles of the entire space.

² Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Charter states that an attack on one member of the organization is considered aggression against the entire organization, which should trigger a collective defense system for all its members.

provides control of the government over its political space [4, pp. 99–113].

The processes of reaffirming norms and disseminating similar perceptions about them among the community depend on the system of communication that exists between the participants of the same political space. It operates with certain symbols-signs exchange protocol, that allow the participants to update information (“synchronize their watches”) about the current status of the distances between them. The control of communication channels enables the hosts of specific identities to operate within the symbolic coordinate system of other participants in this space. Semenenko provides with a very visual example of how such system works: in 2011 the Russian public discourse widely covered the topic of the 50th anniversary of the first manned flight into space, while the discussion on the 150th anniversary of the emancipation reform of 1861 took part only in the circles of the academic community [4, pp. 42–43].

THE HOST

In order to estimate the extent to which ideological concepts influence a state’s foreign policy strategy on the world stage it is necessary to understand the nature of the host of such ideology. The ideas are only one of the imperatives that influence a complex and multi-component mechanism that converts motivations of the host into concrete actions. Thus, the analysis of its internal decision-making process could make the understanding how an idea can impact the behavior of its host clearer.

The decision-making process of any host – individual or collective – could be split into three stages. In the first stage, the subject either willingly or unwillingly is influenced by a spectrum of factors before a specific decision is made. In the case of public policymaking, this spectrum can include a myriad of circumstances of different significance: ranging from the personal prejudices of the actor himself to global trends in international relations.

In the second stage, the individual makes a decision. Depending on the nature of the subject, this process may undergo some kind of a procedure, determined either by purely individual or collective psychological processes or by the formal or informal norms of the governing body. The very nature of a decision determines the speed of its adoption. For example, the approval of the federal state budget goes through a lengthy approval process with many participants, while some presidential speech on some

informal topic related to one of the national holidays can be given ad hoc and improvised.

Finally, during the third stage the attention of the decision-maker is primarily concentrated on the consequences of its decisions, how effectively they are implemented. This effectiveness is determined by that person’s subjective internal worldview, and, therefore, by the extent to which the result of the activity in a particular area corresponds to the original estimations and goals.

All these three stages together create a continuous cyclical process. The consequences of the decision-making process of one actor could be an input for another one that is located in different coordinates of space and time. In complex social structures, this interconnectedness serves as a basis for the construction of a hierarchy between a multitude of elements. Moreover, it can serve to narrow deliberately the range of potentially made decisions to a predetermined and thus predictable one. For example, the range of potential decisions the president may make included an entire range of state actions, whereas the range of his or her subordinated executive official is much limited to a specific sphere of its competence.

The essence of this process is to steer the whole complicity of public policies into a specific direction. Kosolapov similarly described three sets of circumstances of the socio-psychological processes that influenced the United States strategy toward Vietnam.

The first basic set of state’s foreign policy included its military, economic, social, demographic, scientific-technological, and other types of might, that provided its potential capabilities on the world stage. “The basic phenomena, on the one hand, predetermine the main directions and the principle content of the foreign policy of a capitalist state. On the other hand, these phenomena set some objective limits to the practical possibilities and effectiveness of the state’s specific foreign policy courses. At the same time, the basic phenomena... are only objective prerequisites that influence the formation of the foreign policy needs of a state, a society and a ruling class, and that establish the ultimate limits of possible satisfaction of these needs” [16, p. 10].

The basic phenomena described herein characterizes the resource capacities for decision-making. They do have significant weight in predetermining the range of potential behavioral patterns of the state, but they do not fully dictate them. Therefore, the category of inputs in the decision-

making process of the state should include additional determinants of its foreign policy activities, such as its self-positioning and commitments on the world stage, ideology and needs of ruling class, needs of the most significant political, economic, social, and other interest groups, important trends of national and global development.

Kosolapov refers to the second set of circumstances as the superstructural level of materialization of these needs through the formation of specific foreign policy courses of the state and a concrete formulation of its intentions [16, p. 11]. Here, the crucial issue is to clearly define the range of factors and persons that are directly affecting this process. In the broadest sociological interpretation, the course of the country's development is determined by the elite – a group of persons of the ruling class in society, responsible for managing social processes in the interests of this society [17, pp. 109-172]. However, not all parts of the elite, e.g. economic, cultural, military, etc. – are relevant to the designing process of foreign political strategies and practices. The more we go into details the more it becomes apparent the structural diversification of responsibilities between small groups [7, pp. 37-54]. For example, Borisova in her research develops a model that considers individual, collective, and institutional factors while analyzing the impact of socio-psychological circumstances, role distribution, and behavior patterns on the decision-making process [15, pp. 45-76].

One could view the decision-making entity in the foreign policy mechanism through both narrow and broad lenses. The narrow understanding would include only those state institutions who by their functional duties are obliged to develop specific foreign policy strategies and made operational decisions. These institutions produce concrete products as a result of their activities: e.g. state documents and speeches made by officials. But in the broader sense the decision-making entity also includes all those individuals and organizations, who are trying to influence the whole foreign policy decision-making process. This group includes not only federal officials and the professional bureaucracy. It also encompasses broader networks of the political establishment and professional community from corporations, government agencies, universities and think tanks [1, p. 234]. This broad social group of influential individuals takes part in a larger process that formulates the national interests of the country the understanding on foreign political goals and objectives of national development.

The third set of circumstances also belongs to the superstructural level, but it includes the

implementation of the adopted foreign political strategies [16, p. 11]. In order to achieve the desired target state of affairs the government, through the structure of its institutions and agencies, influences the dynamics of national, foreign, or common global trends of social development, areas of people-to-people and interstate interaction. Thus, the actor is primarily concentrated on the key qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the effectiveness of the implementation of its decisions, which would eventually allow to improve the whole decision-making process in the following iterations of the cycle.

THE HOST AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

Finally, it is of key importance to determine what is the role that ideology plays in the overall impact of the state on its external environment – the processes of international development. In order to understand this role, it is not enough to determine and identify the ideologically driven foreign policy decisions. It would be crucially important to see the picture of the world (a system of coordinates) in which a state actor is conducting its policies. That would make it clearer what are the internal criteria for the effectiveness of the foreign policy actors.

The difficulty of determining such criteria is determined primarily by three fundamental circumstances. First, any ideologically driven actions are primarily based on its symbolic meanings. Therefore, any sphere of foreign policy activity could be measured within the criteria of ideological interpretation. Although the government might have a distinct structure of institutions that are supposed to be guided by ideological imperatives (e.g. the Communist International in the Soviet Union, the National Endowment for Democracy in the United States, the Holy Synod in the Russian Empire), virtually all foreign policy bodies could be involved in one way or another in the implementation of these imperatives. For example, sanctions against some countries for human rights violations are imposed by the Ministry of Finance, that originally had no value-promoting function. Similarly, military forces may be sent abroad in the name of ideals of building democracy or socialism. Therefore, in order to determine correctly what value creates the ideology in foreign political practices it is essential to analyze the impact of the entire state apparatus on key processes of international development.

Second, it is essential to answer the chicken and egg question of what came first. To what extent can the state itself be a product of an ideology (for example, as

in the case of the State of Israel in relation to Zionism, the Soviet Union to Communism, and the French Republic to Liberalism)? Or can a certain ideological concept be a short-term trend in the strategic planning of the power authorities? In other words, to what extent would the rejection of ideologically motivated policies fundamentally affect the foundations of social order within the country? Is the pervasiveness of the ideology is determined by its own nature or because of fundamental principles of the state itself? In order to answer these questions it would be accurate to analyze whether certain ideological theses and practices were common throughout the whole history of the state's foreign policy since its founding

Third, the pervasiveness of ideologies in all spheres of life also requires studying the state of affairs and trends in all areas concerned: from identity issues to the entire system of interstate and even international relations. Therefore, in order to determine the functional significance of ideology in the state's policies to impact societal trends in the external environment it is essential to use a specific

system of coordinates that would allow the researcher to "measure" the evolution of international state of affairs from one point in time to another, and see whether ideology had impact on them.

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The author does not claim that the presented model of analyses would be universally sufficient to estimate the influence of the entire spectrum of factors on the foreign policy of a given state. Nevertheless, the identification of the most important components of state ideology and its identity can play a significant role in determining the limits of its potential governmental decisions, and whether they are predetermined by the nature of the state itself. The model in synergy with quantitative methods of analysis of social development phenomena could serve as a kind of groundwork for a qualitative transition to a new level of research of the international relations. Probably such synergy would make it possible to formulate more concrete and precise estimations of whether certain state decisions are more likely to be made.

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