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Political and sociocultural factors of post-Soviet economic regionalisation: from economic anthropology to identity economics

Abstract

Introduction. The author analyses the prospects of studies in economic regionalisation in the context of economic anthropological approach. Economic anthropology develops as a set of interdisciplinary post-modern and post-institutionalism methods which are widely and actively used for the analysis of economic processes in traditional and transitional societies. *The purpose of this article* is to analyse the characteristics, trends and systemic features of processes of regionalisation and territorial differentiations of the post-Soviet landscapes of Ukraine and Russia in the economic anthropological context. **Results.** The author has analysed the main directions of economic and political regionalisation in Ukraine and the Russian Federation. The author presumes that various forms and local versions of national anthropological economic realities have historically arisen in the post-Soviet countries. Formally, the European choice and the choice of values of a market economy are economic and anthropological markers that form the image of Ukraine. Anthropological roots of the Russian model of economic development are diametrically different, because modern Russia is developing within the framework of the post-Soviet inertia model. The analysis of post-Soviet economic realities of Russia and Ukraine has actualised the roles of informal institutions and depth of criminalisation of economies. *The interpretation of the results is presented in the article.* The analysis of the post-Soviet economies of Russia and Ukraine can significantly broaden the range of interpretations of modern economic processes. Economic anthropology can be accepted as an effective paradigm that provides economists and political scientists with new and wide opportunities for studies in economic processes in comparative perspective. The transition from economic anthropology to identity economics will also assist to conduct more productive theoretical studies of transitional societies. **Conclusions.** Economic anthropology and identity economics are promising directions of interdisciplinary character in modern economics. They provide scientists with a wide range of tools, practices and strategies that can be effective in the analysis of economic fragmentation and regionalisation processes. These interdisciplinary methods actualize the potential of economic anthropology in studies of countries with economies in transition at macro and micro levels.

Keywords: Economic Theory; Economic Anthropology; Identity Economics; Regionalisation

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**Политические и социокультурные факторы постсоветских экономических регионализаций:
от экономической антропологии к экономике идентичности**

Аннотация

Автор анализирует перспективы изучения процессов регионализации в контексте экономической антропологии, которая позволяет выявить и проанализировать системные особенности и характеристики различных моделей экономического развития постсоветских государств. Экономическая антропология актуализирует методы и исследовательские практики экономики идентичностей. Процессы экономических регионализаций в Украине и России имеют антропологические (культурные), социальные и политические основания. Экономический антропологический облик этих стран связан со спецификой развития региональных политических и этнических идентичностей.

Ключевые слова: экономическая теория; экономическая антропология; экономика идентичности; регионализация.

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**Політичні та соціокультурні чинники пострадянських економічних регіоналізацій:
від економічної антропології до економіки ідентичності**

Анотація

Автор аналізує перспективи вивчення процесів регіоналізації в контексті економічної антропології, яка дозволяє виявити й проаналізувати системні особливості та характеристики різних моделей економічного розвитку пострадянських держав. Економічна антропология актуалізує методи й дослідницькі практики економіки ідентичності. Процеси економічної регіоналізації в Україні та Росії мають антропологічні (культурні), соціальні та політичні підстави. Економічний антропологічний вигляд цих країн пов'язаний зі специфікою розвитку регіональних політичних і етнічних ідентичностей.

Ключові слова: Економічна теорія, економічна антропология, економіка ідентичності, регіоналізація.

1. Introduction. The crisis in the financial sector of the United States that began in 2007 was the beginning of the global economic recession. This recession is known in Russian and Ukrainian academic literature as the global economic crisis. The actual crisis has both economic and political dimensions. The economic level of crisis emerged in the recession, decline in economic growth, and social tensions. The political dimensions and levels of the global economic crisis are evident in destabilisation of the international security system, rise of unresolved and non-settled regional, ethnic and religious conflicts. On the one hand, the economic and political components of the actual recession stimulated the revolutionary processes, the cri-

sis and the fall of old political regimes and their radical replacement by new ones. On the other hand, revolutions actualised regional conflicts in the former Soviet states with the emerging markets that in the 1990s and 2010s did not have time to build a developed capitalist economy and propose their own strategies of economic and political development. The international economic crisis also revitalised negative trends in the development of two major Eastern European formal post-Soviet economies. Ukraine and Russia entered into the era of crisis with different economic potentials, political systems and institutions.

2. Brief Literature Review. The academic literature on economic anthropology of transitive societies, like the ones

we can see in Ukraine and Russia, can be divided into two groups. The first group of texts is presented by books and articles that form theoretical basis and propose methodological approaches for economic anthropological studies. The second group of texts is presented by actual and topical articles by Pavlo Kasarin [13], Denis Kazanskii [12], Stanislav Kmet [19] and others focused on the current economic anthropological processes of the post-Soviet states. The problems of post-colonial transformations in economic anthropological paradigm were actualised in some texts by the author. The Ukrainian Revolution of 2014, Russia's attempts to radically restore its status of a great power, the annexation of Crimea and the support of radical extremist political movements in eastern Ukraine actualised regional factors in comparative economic studies of emerging markets. The analysis of regional components in modern political and economic processes is extremely diverse in actual literature. Most texts about the current economic crisis belong to regular and predominantly traditional economic historiography. Russian and Ukrainian economic and political analysts prefer to analyse the crisis in the context of recovery, economic growth prospects, development opportunities etc. This approach can be defined as formal. Some scholars, including Aleksandr Auzan [2; 3], Vladislav Inozemtsev [10; 11], Nikolai Petrov [27] and others are inclined to analyze the current crisis in context of transformations and changes in political and ethnic identities. These studies transform the regionalisation factor into central in the regionalisation context. The studies of the crisis in a comparative perspective also actualise the anthropological economic dimension in the actual economic history of the post-Soviet landscape.

Theoretical backgrounds. This article is theoretically and methodologically based on the principles proposed in economic anthropology. The texts written by Chris Hann, Keith Hart [9], Jonathan Parry [26], Marcel Mauss [22], James C. Scott [33], Daromir Rudnyckij [28] and others are focused on various issues of economic anthropology of traditional societies and cultures. Theoretical approaches and methodological backgrounds of identity economics were proposed by Mancur Olson [23; 24; 25], Avner Greif [6; 7; 8], Dawn Chatty [4], and Beryl Crowe [5]. A brief outline of economic anthropology as a method and approach was given by Patrik Aspers, Asaf Darr and Sebastian Kohl [1]. Heiko Schrader [29; 30; 31] proposed an informative review of the main schools and trends in economic anthropology. Historically, anthropology emerged and developed as a science focused on the analysis of traditional and primitive societies. Economic anthropology was an attempt to apply methods and theoretical approaches of classical anthropology in the context of economic theory and studies of economic processes and institutions in developing countries and emerging markets.

Economic anthropology is an interdisciplinary form of scientific knowledge focused on the studies of formal and informal institutions and relations in developing societies, coexistence of archaic and modern elements in different economic systems. These institutions and relations in economic and political spheres are characteristic predominantly of post-colonial societies. The classical studies in economic anthropology are focused on ritual and symbolic components of different economic activities, the role of the game and various symbolic statuses of economic actors. The gifts and bribes are seen in economic anthropology as symbolic and formal institutionalised forms of exchange in societies and cultures where economic values and principles of free capitalist market are not developed. Russia and Ukraine cannot be defined as classic post-colonial societies because they were not victims of foreign colonisation, but they played a role of colonisers and external factors for forced modernisation and radical social and economic changes of undeveloped societies. The lack of a colonial past in the classical sense allows us to analyse regional social and economic disparities of contemporary post-Soviet societies with regard to methodological and theoretical principles of economic anthropology.

3. Purpose. This article is focused on the actual crisis analysis in the economic anthropological perspective. The author tries to analyse identity as one of the dimensions in times of

crisis in the context of regional economic and political imbalances and contradictions between regional political and market actors. On the one hand, trends toward economic fragmentation are actualised by radical and extreme forces in the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. On the other hand, regional disparities between centre and periphery with regard to Russia's development are analysed in the economic and anthropological context.

4. Results. This part of the article attempts to formulate some preliminary general macro-economic and political results of the actual economic and political crisis in the paradigm of economic anthropology. This crisis has stimulated Russian and Ukrainian experts and analysts to develop different visions and viewpoints of it. The concepts and theories of Russian authors can be divided into two groups. The first group of explanations is presented by attempts to prove that Russian Federation is able to independently and effectively recover after the crisis and overcome negative trends. Interpretations and versions of the second group are not so optimistic. Some Russian economists believe that the process of economic relations and institutions which were built in Russia were not complete and the Russian economy is just one of the underdeveloped economies or emerging markets. The research practices and strategies of economic anthropology provides scientists with the ability to analyse the political origins, roots and backgrounds of economical processes in cultural and economic anthropological understanding.

Russian economist Nikolai Petrov, the head of the Centre for Political and Geographical Studies, believes that «in 2014 authorities decided to challenge its legitimacy and replaced democratic legitimacy by military-autocratic one. The trouble is that the new Putin's legitimacy is not transferred and it is not inherited ... the autocratic legitimacy needs constant reinforcement and renewals, especially in a situation of economic crisis ... there are only three ways: the demonstration of new victories; the rhetoric of «the besieged fortress», the indicative repressions» [27]. Vladislav Inozemtsev describes this economic anthropological type as follows: «Putin has his own ideal: a combination of Soviet statehood, an administrative management style and his tenure of the leader. In fact, the Andropov type system of power was restored ... it became clear during the presidency of Dmitrii Medvedev that modernization is in radical confrontation with rental economy that dominates in the country ... The fundamental feature of Vladimir Putin's regime was expressed in the complete relativity of ownership rights ... Russia's political and economic system is based not on some purpose: it has its roots in conditions, but not in the results and processes» [10; 11].

In his attempts of economic analysis, Vladislav Inozemtsev actualises Asian, non-European and non-Western anthropological bases of Russia. Vladimir Putin's ideas were accepted in Russia as *de facto* non recognised foundations and roots of a new type of economic anthropological and social organisation of political identity where the values of conservative stability were imagined as dominant and central. Ukrainian economy in 2014 and 2015 faced similar problems. The 2014 revolution actualized old structural and systemic problems which were previously latent and seemed invisible. The revolution and radical change of elites actualised problems of shadow economy, corruption, regionalisation, archaic economic and political relations in the form of feudalisation. The events of 2014 and 2015 actualized the factors of regional political and economic identity in Ukraine and also triggered the fragmentation of its political landscape. The Ukrainian identity in 2014 and 2015 was fragmented more than in earlier periods. The main trends in the development of Ukrainian identity actualised the values of those segments of political elites which had chosen European values and values of a market economy. This situation actualizes economic anthropological contradictions of the main development vectors of Ukraine.

This European choice is too idealised by pro-European oriented Ukrainian and Russian authors and analysts. The opposite pole is represented by the other economic anthropological landmarks and imagined coordinates. The anti-European, anti-Western and formally pro-Russian alternative was actual-

lised during the rise of political radicals and extremists in the regions Luhansk and Donetsk. The idea of dynamics and development was consciously and deliberately de-legitimised in the context of real economic successes. The shadow of consumer society, actively promoted by official ideologists and theoreticians or the ruling regime became rather sinister. Some Russian economists believe that the dependence of the Russian economy on the world prices for gas and oil weakens the adaptive capacity of the national economy. This trend in contemporary Russia's economic thought can be defined as realistic. The supporters of economic realism believe that the potential of the Russian economy is overstated and the role of the real id problems is specifically and deliberately ignored. Russian economic regionalists emphasise that economy faces systemic and institutional risks and threats. These risks are not well explained and understood in the context of traditional economic theories. The attempts to analyse these processes in economic and regional anthropological paradigm can provide us with the original results.

Aleksandr Auzan believes that Russian economic elites culturally and anthropologically are not adequately able to respond to internal and external challenges and threats. He presumes that «in the coming years the government pumped into the Russian economy considerable resources and by the years 2017 and 2018 these investments will have yielded results, but after the year 2018 resources will have exhausted... The scenario for Russia in the next five years is already determined. The «engine» of the economy will stop; we will not have real investments for growth ... In the last five years, Russia has been moving on the path of inertia and using the results of the high oil rent» [2; 3]. The anthropological approach allows us to actualise the systemic problems which the Russian economy is facing. Economic anthropology actualises the obvious fact that economic and political identities in Russia have not been formed and developed. The economic anthropological perception of Donetsk and Luhansk as distinctive social and cultural areas has its roots and grounds that are radically different from economic anthropological preferences of other Ukrainian regions [18; 20; 21]. Economic anthropological characteristics of the rebellious Ukrainian territories are the following. These regions were deliberately and excessively industrialised during the Soviet period. That industrialisation greatly affected and influenced the social structure of the local population. Donetsk and Luhansk were imagined and made up as spatial and geographical constructs of the Soviet period. The regions' population does not have their modern national identity: their local identity is developed primarily as political in a neo-Soviet style. The identities of Donetsk and Luhansk are not based on national values, but they actualise ideological myths and different cliches. Therefore, after the restoration of Ukraine's political independence, Luhansk and Donetsk were not able to integrate into the Ukrainian nationalising society and to adequately perceive a new Ukrainian political identity. Luhansk and Donetsk also failed in their attempts to propose their own national projects of political and ethnic identity. Local identities remained as neo-Soviet and evolved in the post-Soviet inertia which had become the main form and the vector of their existence. The identity of Donetsk and Luhansk developed as a synthesis of the Russian radical nationalism and extremist ideas followed by anti-Ukrainian and anti-European phobias. These identities successfully coexist with the sentiments of social dependency and the belief that all social problems can be solved and will be solved by the Russian Federation. The faith of local adepts genetically has its roots in the traditional belief of «a good tsar».

Economic anthropology allows us to determine system features of the modern model of economic development in Russia. Vladislav Inozemtsev presumes that there are several system features that determine the development of Russia in the context of non-European anthropological strategies. These characteristics are the following: «the post-Crimea Russia is a country that has become an international pariah, which is imagined as a notorious violator of international law; ... the post-Crimea Russia is a country that has deliberately put an end to its economic growth; ... the post-Crimea Rus-

sia is a country that has renounced a real chance to catch a new wave of technological modernization; ... the post-Crimea Russia is a country that has welcomed the glorification of violence in general and violations of the law in particular. The supporting logic of the Crimes secession and the Donbas rebel movement is strongly discordant with the principles of order, security and stability, which were declared during the last decade. The Russia's leadership today actually applauds separatist forces; ... the post-Crimea Russia is a country with exceptional self-confidence and serious complexes of inferiority and vulnerability» [10; 11].

Analysing these problems in the context of economic anthropology, it is logical to assume that principles and values of the free market and economic rationality have been abandoned in the economic and anthropological identity of Russia since 2014 because they were replaced by formally attractive myths of conservative post-Soviet stability. Unfortunately, this newly invented Russian political mythology actualised inertia in contemporary economic developments. Economic anthropology demonstrates that modern Russian economic and political identities develop as conservative and traditional in the model that automatically excludes any changes. Therefore, the identities of Luhansk and Donetsk, on the one hand, are archaic and traditional. They are based on anti-modernity ideas and values. On the other hand, these identities have nothing in common with the Russian identity that imitates capitalist institutions.

Moreover, radical politicians of Donetsk and Luhansk are extremists because the modern Russian state is not their political ideal. It is noteworthy that the majority of apologists in Russia prefer to ignore these specific ideological preferences of Luhansk and Donetsk secession supporters. The methods of economic anthropology and regional studies allow us to analyse economic relations of Russian elites with external partners in the revisionist style. Aleksandr Auzan, the Russian economist and Dean of the Economic Department of Moscow State University, proposes his understanding of economic realities which are far from rosy illusions of Russian patriots about the prospects of Russian-Chinese relations. Aleksandr Auzan presumes that «China has no interest in Russia as a country, but it is interested in it as in space where it is necessary to build a connection with Europe. It is not bad ... just do not assume that we are equal partners» [2]. Aleksandr Auzan actually proposes an original explanation of economic problems of modern Russia and his viewpoint has much in common with economic anthropological and inventionism political paradigms. Aleksandr Auzan has actualised the problem of imagined roles which are prescribed and invented by Russia's political and economic elites by themselves. He presumes that Russian problems are not macroeconomic, but they can be imagined as a consequence of deformation in the development of identity and the extremely active development of ideas and collective narratives about Russia's unique way and its special historical mission. These intellectual constructs are applicable for the analysis of Russia's internal policy, however Russia's external partners refuse to perceive it this way because economic anthropology of the Russian economic landscapes forms a completely different image of the country. These economic anthropological features and characteristics of Ukraine actualise its proximity to Russia because the two countries have their common Soviet historical and economic roots. Economic anthropological features and directions of Ukrainian and Russian developments have been analysed by the Author in the above sections as macroeconomic. Other economic and anthropological characteristics of the post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine have actualised various micro-level problems. Corruption, developed informal networks and institutions, archaic economic forms and relationships define and form economic anthropological characteristics of Russia and Ukraine. These features will be analysed in the following sections of the article.

Economic anthropology of post-Soviet peripheries. Formally, the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk were the regions with local Soviet Ukrainian laws in particular, and Soviet laws in general [37]. The collapse of the Soviet Union and restoration of Ukraine's independence changed the situation. We can assume that Soviet and Soviet Ukrainian laws were replaced

by the new Ukrainian legislation. In the 1990s and 2010s the territory of eastern Ukraine, including Donetsk and Luhansk regions were only formally part of the Ukrainian political, social, cultural and legal landscapes. In fact, these regions only formally belonged to the Ukrainian political space. An analysis of the features and the main directions of the development of these regions actualises the paradigm of economic anthropology as a method that can propose possible explanation why the Ukrainian political experiment of a nation-state building and attempts to establish market and capitalist relations in the region were impossible, and all the initiatives of the Ukrainian authorities to formally improve the situation ended by random and collapsed. The concepts of «adat» and «aliran» [14; 15; 16; 32] are known by scholars involved in economic anthropology.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to provide the reader of this article with a brief definition of what «adat» and «aliran» mean. Adat is a term that is used to analyse legal traditions in Muslim countries [17]. Adat is a totality of traditional legal norms that Muslim states formally inherited from their pre-Islamic histories. Ukraine, unlike Russia which can partially be imagined as a Muslim country, develops as a predominantly Christian state, but the definition of «adat» is also applicable for an analysis of economic characteristics of Ukraine. Aliran has a more complex and controversial definition that actualises formal and informal relations of interdependence between different social groups. The concepts of adat and aliran in cultural, social, political and economic reality of Eastern Ukraine are known as «poniatii». Ukrainian analyst and journalist Denis Kazanskiy commenting on the specifics of adat in Ukraine believes that «In general the Ukrainian statehood has not been valid in the mining towns of Donbas from the very moment of its announcement. The edges live by the unwritten rules of criminals and coal mafia ... and develop as a virtually independent state, a kind of enclave within Ukraine. The concept of «adat» can be applied to Donbas as a set of customs and the people's legal practices... Donetsk adat is called «poniatii», but this word is widely understood in too narrow a sense referred to only in the criminal world. In fact, not only criminals but also the vast majority of the so-called «ordinary people» lived by those rules in the former Soviet Union... it sounds paradoxical, but «poniatii» and not the fear of law kept people from committing certain crimes. The most common example of the Donetsk adat was theft» [12].

The history of Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the period of independent Ukraine have not become a history of social and economic progresses and achievements, political processes in the region developed in the context of a gradual and inevitable criminalisation. Ukrainian analysts Pavlo Kasarin presumes that the post-Soviet countries elites in the early 1990s formally chose a capitalist model of development: «During the two post-Soviet decades Russia itself tried to live in the Western canon ... it, along with all its neighbours, stood in line to the window of the global McDonald's. It joined the WTO, invited investors to globalize their own business, served as a raw materials appendage» [13]. Russian and Ukrainian regions, the Northern Caucasus, Donetsk and Luhansk in the post-Soviet period developed in the context of actual simultaneous coexistence of two mutually exclusive anthropological economy models. Criminalisation contributed to the actualisation of peripheral status of these edge regions. In the 1990s and the 2000s, similar trends evolved in the territories of the formally Russian Northern Caucasus where formal that modern and democratic Russian state was very weak and unable to successfully and effectively compete with local political groups and clans. The Russian version of Northern Caucasian economic anthropology is expressed in a social and cultural situation when these regions with dominating Muslim population ignore Russian laws and prefer traditional Islamic law to formally Europeanised Russian legal norms. Peripherality became one of the central and system characteristics in the economic anthropological character of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Ukrainian columnist Stanislav Vasin [38] believes that criminalisation has become the determining factor in the development of the image of Donetsk for the rest of Ukraine and

formed its economic anthropological collective image in general.

Peripherality encouraged criminalisation of Eastern Ukraine in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Representatives of local underworld figures are known as «gopniki» (group muggers, street toughs and socially delinquent people). They have become a symbol and personification of synthetic Donetsk identity in economic anthropological perspective. A typical resident of Donbas can be imagined as a marginal figure without developed social, ethnic and cultural identities. Ukrainian sociologist Gennadii Korzhov presumes that the inhabitant of Donetsk region has «an image of worker, a person who does not have his/her own history and traditions, sustainable human values ... this person creates a marginal culture around himself/herself ... it is a border territory with a very strong territorial culture component, with regional identity ... and this identity, if compared with other identities, is more significant for those people, while the awareness of location is seen as the main criterion for them, which determines their relationships with others» [20]. The peripheral status of the Russian Northern Caucasus also contributed to the criminalisation of the region. The peripherality is expressed in different forms and dimensions ranging from a formally significant economic role to an intellectual and cultural desert, virtual invisibility in the Ukrainian intellectual context. On the one hand, extremist supporters of self-determination and independence, are very pleased that the region was allegedly the economic leader, playing an active role in the formation of state budget earnings. On the other hand, none of them can explain why, despite such a significant financial role of these regions, local universities, where they were located, were not so popular among Ukrainian students and were intellectually weaker than the universities of Kyiv, Kharkiv or those located in Western Ukraine. In general, the economy of Luhansk and Donetsk was focused exclusively on local and regional needs and a generally high level of criminalisation contributed to the progressive marginalisation of these regions and actualized their peripheral status.

The peripherality of the Northern Caucasus in the Russian context was combined with an actual lack of economic successes in the region and a full dependence from investments by the federal government in local and regional economies where investments from the federal budget were stolen by corrupted local officials. Ukrainian analyst Stanislav Kmet presumes that the history of Eastern Ukraine in the 20th and the early 21st centuries becomes a history of gradual social and economic degradation: «In the past century, the most industrialized and innovative region evolved from the Russian America, as it was called by Dmitrii Mendeleev, in the most reactionary, anti-Western region inhabited by extremely conservative population that live by the ideas of the past» [19]. This social, cultural and economic degradation of Donetsk and Luhansk regions was the result of a significant level of Sovietisation. The Soviet identity in these regions was stronger than Ukrainian or Russian national identities. The Sovietisation of the regions radically changed the local population, its social preferences, political and cultural needs. The identity developed as archaic and mythological, values of modern societies such as freedom, democracy and capitalism were in fact not available for the local population which was not ready to accept and understand them. Therefore, the idea of the European integration and the political choice of the West by the rest of Ukraine were radically rejected because they did not correspond to anthropological economic preferences of the local people.

Such anti-European and anti-Western sentiments were formed during the Soviet period and Sovietisation became the impetus for the rise of sentiments of social dependency and parasitism [17]. The development of the Russian Northern Caucasus [34; 35; 36], unlike Eastern Ukraine, was not burdened with collective political myths that actualised a special role of the regional economy. Historically, the Northern Caucasus developed as a peripheral region, and the local population effectively used all political and social benefits that were guaranteed and submitted by central authorities. Economically anthropologised peripheral regionalisation in Ukraine and the Russian Federation institutionalised political principles based

on dependence and archaicism. Analyzing the main vectors and characteristics of economic transformations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions in Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus in Russia, it is logical to assume that the local economies develop and exist in a matrix of feudalisation. The republics of the Russian Northern Caucasus have never been the engines of economic growth and development. The Northern Caucasus in the collective representation of Russia has become a symbol of archaism and a topos of backwardness where local economic relations and institutions actualised numerous contexts of shadow economy. The criminalisation of economy as a consequence of the Soviet Union collapse had led to the formation of new elites who were predominantly feudal and hereditary. The representatives of these groups controlled local economies of illegal coal mining in Donetsk region. They did not submit to Ukrainian authorities and preferred to ignore Ukrainian law. They were the main sponsors and inspirers (if we recognise that organised crime has its own ideas and political preferences) of the secession of Donetsk and Luhansk.

Proposing hypotheses. Analysing the basic problems of economic processes with regard to regionalisation of the former Soviet Union in the context of economic anthropology, the author presumes that it is necessary to formulate and propose the following hypotheses. The assumptions and the main moments of this hypothesis are the following:

1) the author has doubts concerning one of the central ideas of institutionalism which suggests that informal economic institutions are very stable and their transformations and changes are possible only in the form of evolution;

2) the author has doubts that social and economic institutions have real value;

3) the author does not agree that economic institutions can be successfully and effectively analysed in the context of standard tools, methods and approaches of economic theory;

4) the author presumes that economic anthropology can provide scholars with new method and wide horizons of social and economic processes studies related to the post-Soviet regionalisation in the context of inventionism paradigm;

5) the author does not agree with the theory of institutional isomorphism in the context of similarity and proximity of ethnic institutions of different nations and differences in their economic institutions.

In general, the author does not believe that economic anthropology is focused only on investigations of people's interactions in the context of goods and services. The economic anthropology can be more effective while analysing of the imagined, invented, symbolic statuses and roles in economic processes and in the context of relationships.

Developing hypotheses. Those who support the institutional approach in economic theory suggest that informal economic institutions are very stable and their transformations and changes are possible only in the form of evolution. The author insists that the informal institutions are not stable; they are fragile and not sustainable because they are not able to change in an evolutionary way. However, they can be radically transformed in the course of their economic, social and political modernisation. The ruling political elite can be among inspirers and initiators of modernisation. These strategies, on the one hand, can be analysed as a form of radical political, social and economic changes. On the other hand, modernisation is a process which implies new economic meanings, values, symbolic roles and statuses production. Modernization promotes a revision of symbolic roles, statuses and values of economic institutions which can be destroyed during social and political transformations. The archaic economic institutions can lose their roles after political and economic modernization. It deprives economists of the ability to analyse economic institutions by using standard tools, methods and approaches of economic theory because modernization generates and determines new values for economic institutions.

These values can be either symbolic or real. Therefore, the analysis of these new economic meanings and values is not possible in the context of traditional economic theories, but other post-post-modern approaches and theories, such as the economy of imagination, the economy of senses, the theory

of invented traditions and the economy of meanings production and reproduction, can be more effective and successful. Economic anthropology and related areas may become the paradigm for further studies in economic transformations of post-Soviet landscapes and territories. The problems which we prefer to analyse in the context of economic anthropology can be understood more effectively using the inventionism approach. The inventionism methodological paradigm significantly expands the horizons and opportunities of economic anthropology. This method provides economists with the abilities to analyse formal and informal institutions, regional imbalances and contradictions of imagined and invented traditions and identities. The author believes that economic institutions of both post-Soviet Ukraine and post-Soviet Russia have much in common, but their forms of national political collective body organizations are absolutely different. Both Ukraine and Russia have post-Soviet economies. This factor brings them together in the imagined type defining them as post-socialist transition states and societies. Both Ukraine and Russia as nation-states are too different in the context of their development and institutionalisation. In its post-Soviet development, Ukraine has been able to achieve significant progress, whereas Russia cannot build a modern nation-state because its ruling political and pseudo-social elites have neo-Soviet imperial identities and reject the concepts of the nation-state in general.

Preliminary hypothesis. The economic anthropology of post-Soviet territories was invented as an inter-disciplinary approach focused on studies in economies, such as formal and informal institutions, relations of production, reproduction, distribution and redistribution of symbolic statuses and roles. Russia's and Ukraine's newly imagined communities and invented economic, political, social and cultural traditions are forming and developing in a wider anthropological context. These factors determine economic anthropological appearance of the post-Soviet landscape. The economic anthropology of post-socialist countries has different backgrounds, origins and roots. The Ukrainian economic anthropology is based on the modern nation concept, the adoption of Western institutions in post-Soviet Ukrainian context and attempts to develop a market economy. The Russian economic anthropological situation has a post-Soviet character and develops in the form of inertia. Neo-Soviet inertia contributes to the restoration of Soviet methods and forms of management. Therefore, different political identities form different vectors and trajectories of economic anthropology.

From economic anthropology to identity economics.

Developing and extending the principles of economic anthropology of post-socialist societies, we will inevitably actualise economic problems of identity as a possible theoretical and methodological approach for post-Soviet societies and the analysis of post-socialist economies. Political, social, economic and religious identities are extremely important for the analysis of the history of post-socialist economies. Identity motivates agents and economic actors to undertake various economic activities. Development, imagination and invention of identities inspire economic actors to be economically and politically active. The development of an identity is dependent on the character of institutions and institutional processes that determine motives and actualise rational motives for economic transactions. Economic identities can be an effective tool in economic anthropology in the context of analysis of the tragedy of commons and social dilemmas. The tragedy of the commons in Donetsk economic anthropology lies in the criminalisation and illegal coal-mining business. Local residents in the early Soviet period and in the 2000s were involved in illegal coal mining. The attempts of political recession in Donetsk and Luhansk regions have led to redistribution of legal and illegal businesses that contributed to the dismissal of local marginal miners which were formally independent economic actors, but in fact they depended on local criminal groups. Similar tragedies of the commons were typical of economic and social dynamics of the Russian Northern Caucasus where changes in the status of the regions and local political elites inevitably were implemented in the form of forced redistribution of economic re-

sources and the reduction of access to resources for previous political and economic actors.

5. Conclusions. Modern normative practices, strategies and approaches in economic theory cannot fully explain political and economic consequences of the actual crisis in general and its regional dimension of the post-Soviet landscape in particular. The analysis of the formal economy is insufficient for the understanding of current processes within the territories of the post-Soviet countries. The author believes that economic anthropology can be an effective strategy for studying the problems, which modern Russian and Ukrainian economies are facing. The potential of economic anthropology is not actualised in the context of analysis of regional disparities in development of national economies and the history of formation of modern national and regional political and economic identities. Analysing economic and political processes of regionalisation in Ukraine and Russia, it is rational to assume that Russian and Ukrainian economic identities and behaviour have different roots and backgrounds. The anthropological model of the Russian economy is based on the attempts of the ruling elites to restore neo-Soviet mechanisms and strategies and connect them with political values of the Russian nationalism and state orthodoxy.

The Ukrainian economic anthropological model is actualised in values and principles of the nation-state, and attempts to integrate the Ukrainian economy into a capitalist model of development. The Ukrainian and Russian economies are not ready to adequately perceive capitalism and integrate their economies into institutions that are normal and function effective-

ly in the western states. The non-market and anti-market elements which exclude capitalism are universal in modern Ukrainian and Russian economies. The non-market trends were actualized in refeudalisation of economic and political relations. Russian and Ukrainian formal regionalisations are imitations which transformed regional differences into new ways of feudalisation and restoration of archaic and traditional relations. The analysis of Ukrainian and Russian economic processes also actualises the inventionism paradigm in economic studies. Economic anthropologists unlike their more orthodox and traditional colleagues are too active in the studies of identity, imagination and invention of different prescribed or recognized statuses, symbolic rituals and games in formally modern capitalist market economies. Analysing the economy of contemporary Russian in economic anthropological context, the author presumes that elites of Russia and Ukraine are inclined to ascription of roles which are symbolic because these elites are not able to implement and realize their political and economic ambitions. The symbolic and imagined identities gradually replace previous identities generated and formed by real political and economic potentials of the post-Soviet countries. The economic anthropology can become the basis for the integration of the fragmented economic studies. The author presumes that it will be rational to focus on institutions and processes, formal and informal, traditions and innovations, modernization and archaisation, regionalisation and centralisation. Further economic studies of actual post-Soviet economical processes can generate new horizons in the development of economic thought and institutionalise new approaches in economic theory.

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