

### An argument in favor of changing the paradigm of the phenomenon' study of territorial organization of public power in the post-Soviet states

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**AN ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF CHANGING THE PARADIGM OF THE PHENOMENON»  
STUDY OF TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC POWER IN THE POST-SOVIET STATES**

The paradigm is a theoretical construction that provides a useful research tool for solving existing problems. The paradigm is a dominant scientific achievement over a certain historical period of time in a particular scientific community. It is a model for formulating problems, research methods and identifying solutions [2, p. 58]. The paradigm» elaboration means the creation of a theoretical and methodological framework that allows researchers to advance research hypotheses and to prove them experimentally.

In the post-soviet states, the paradigm of the *administrative-territorial structure of the state* continues to be used, which is based on the approach to the distribution of state power in relation to the territory from top to bottom inherent in non-democratic societies. This model, built on the principles of authoritarian regimes, is sufficiently stable, but excludes local initiative and the mobilization of own resources for development. It is obvious that this model of territorial organization of public power requires a radical reform, and in order to successfully carry out the reform it is necessary to change the research paradigm of the phenomenon.

The paradigm of *territorial organization of public power*, proposed by us, is based on the ascending approach of the phenomenon that has, as a starting point, the recognition of the plurality of public territorial collectivities in the contemporary democratic societies. In such an approach, the distribution of public power in relation to the territory does not consist only in the delimitation of the territory of the state, but is an ample process of identifying the optimal territorial dimensions for the local and intermediate communities. The search for a territorial optimum meets two basic tasks: a) the self-sufficiency of local communities and b) ensuring the conditions for the functioning of the local democracy.

The paradigm of the territorial organization of public power is based on the following statements:

in contemporary states, the people» power is realized at different levels, having various forms (the collectivist-volitional vision of public power) [3, p. 13];

at each level of existence of the subnational collectivities, their population, as a component part of the people, directly or through the authorities, created by these collectivities, achieves, within its territorial limits, the public power, according to the legal provisions;

the power of each subnational community represents a component part of the public power, which together with the state power, forms a unitary system of public power;

the legal foundation of this public power is constituted by the Constitution and the laws of the state, which attribute to the elective authorities of the local collectivities the necessary competence in order to realize their power.

The territorial dimensions of local power influence the ways of action of the local power and the efficiency of its activity.

The paradigm of the territorial organization of the public power includes the following component parts:

territorial organization of state power;

territorial organization of local power;

judicious distribution of responsibilities between state power authorities and local power authorities;

collaboration of public power levels in achieving the general interest.

The basic idea of the paradigm is that the phenomenon of public power in the contemporary democratic state must be approached not only in relation to the state, but much more broadly, in terms of the existence both of the public power of the people, and of the existence and functioning of the public power of the local collectivities, as a power of the same social nature, but being different in form and content from the state one. These communities have their own public power, based on two essential elements: the local population and the local elections through which its representative bodies (decision-making and executive) are elected.

The paradigm of the territorial organization of the public power offers the possibility to treat the problem of the territorial organization of the public power from the perspective of the democratization processes, characteristic of the contemporary world. The multilevel character of the public power, determined by the territorial limits, in which it is applied, implies the study of the given phenomenon in all its forms of manifestation and the elaboration of the unitary criteria for the analysis of the organization of the public power structures. In such an approach, it is important to analyze the efficiency of the organization of public power in accordance with the territorial principle, of the resources it has and will use in order to legitimize or strengthen its position.

Being coherent and sufficiently accessible for perception and application, the paradigm of the territorial organization of public power is a useful research tool for researching the phenomenon of public power in contemporary

societies. In the context of the modernization processes that are taking place in the post-soviet states, the development and adoption of a unitary paradigm of state power and its territorial organization, is very relevant. On the basis of this paradigm, a unitary and proportional system of rational territorial organization of public power can be achieved, without which its effective functioning is impossible.

The positive implications of applying the paradigm of the territorial organization of public power in both research and practice are based on the following reasoning:

In democratic societies, due to the eligibility principle applied to the establishment of public authorities, there is a permanent movement of people that participate in local political life and accede to civil service positions in the system of local public authority. These very officials and local elected officials, who in most cases have very vague knowledge about forms of manifestation and realization of public power, would require a theoretical support based on a unitary scientific view of public power that would serve as a useful tool in the process of making decisions and exercising powers;

Under the new conditions of social development, marked by the process of reevaluating concepts and values, especially those anchored in the past, there is a need to develop a modern vision on the territorial organization of public power that would reflect and correspond to new realities, without ideological constraints and propagandistic dogma. Considering that over the past three decades, various views on the territorial organization of public power have been developed and promoted, an objective need arose to systematize the approaches, ideas and knowledge obtained within the paradigm on the territorial organization of public power.

The realities of contemporary society (political, economic, social) also require the identification of new mechanisms and methods for developing public power both at central and local levels and the institutionalization of civilized, very clearly defined and legally regulated mechanisms that would establish collaboration between levels of public power.

Promoting scientific research on the territorial organization of local power by providing a unified theoretical framework for the analysis of this phenomenon.

Analysis of the experience of the territorial organization of the public power, accumulated by other states, with the preference of those, who are in similar or comparable conditions with those in the post-soviet states, from the point of view of building their own system. It is necessary to rationally use foreign experience, taking into account national peculiarities, history and mentality of the population of post-soviet states. Institutional borrowing and uninspired copying of practices used in other states can have negative consequences for national systems of territorial organization of public power.

Framing theoretical and practical issues related to the territorial dimension of public power within the paradigm of the territorial organization of public power will allow officials, who are working in public authorities, local elected officials, as well as all interested and involved persons, to understand the processes, that are taking place in society, thereby stimulating their civic participation [1, p. 39-40].

### **References**

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