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| **Oleg N. Yanitsky** | **Critical Situations and Civil Activism in the Digital Era** |

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Abstract. Nowadays, a civil society and its volunteers are the active participants of a global political process, especially when it's going on about current critical situations (natural disasters, technological accidents and so on). Such civil activism is defined by a lack of vital resources, poverty and illnesses, an atmospheric and water pollutions as well as by various forms of social inequality. The essence of current critical situation is produced by the fact that a man is simultaneously became a powerful instrument of catastrophic changes on the planet and a pigmy fully dependent on the informational impulses from the outside and on the growing process of accumulation of the industrial and household wastes. Due to an existence of global information networks a process of shaping of a certain 'hybrid' named as a "science-education-practice" is rapidly going on. A multitude of metabolic processes emerging as a result of interaction of qualitatively different essences is its integrating force. The interactions of theses essences are shaping a capability of the individuals to the ecological and other forms of a systemic risk-reflection. For a rapid and relatively painless resolving of any critical situation three preconditions are absolutely necessary: the mutual understanding among the three of the above institutions, an existence of a common platform for a permanent exchange by new ideas and knowledges, and for accumulation of a new experience is necessary.

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Яницкий О.Н.	Критические ситуации и гражданский активизм в «цифровую эпоху»

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Аннотация. Сегодня гражданское общество и его волонтеры являются непременными участниками глобального социально-политического процесса, особенно когда речь идет о современных критических ситуациях (природных, техногенных и других катастрофах). Этот активизм обусловлен, в том числе, недостатком ресурсов жизнеобеспечения, бедностью, болезнями и другими формами социального неравенства населения. Характер современных критических ситуаций объясняется тем, что современный человек одновременно стал как источником критических ситуаций, так и стал зависимым от информационного потока извне и накопления промышленных и бытовых отходов. Одновременно вследствие глобальных информационных процессов идет формирования некоего гибрида «наука-образование-практика». Их интегрирующей силой являются многосторонние метаболические процессы (качественные трансформации), которые формируют у индивидов способность к системной экологической и другой риск-рефлексии. Для относительно быстрого и безболезненного разрешения критических ситуаций необходимы, минимум, три условия: взаимопонимание между названными тремя институциями, наличие общей платформы для постоянного обмена идеями и знаниями и накопление нового опыта.

Ключевые слова: волонтеры; глобализация; критическая ситуация; метаболизм; риск-рефлексия; сетевое общество; триада «наука-образование-практика»; Россия.

Introduction. Ordinary people have always been the participants of public life but in every particular case in a specific manner. Looking historically these people have been an inexhaustible resource of a slave-holding society, then – the Guild society, after then – a resource again but already for the Industrial society, and later on as an important part of the emerging civil society, an inseparable social institution of a transition period toward the Information society or, in Castell's terms, towards the 'Internet Galaxy' (Castells, 2004).

It means that the epoch of a society division on the 'creators' of a technological progress and the mass consumers of its inventions and goods has come.

Recently, we have recognized a historical fact: in any societal and natural ecosystems the process of a process of selection has been going on. Ch. Darwin and other great evolutionists have called this process within

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and interspecies struggle while K. Marx and many other social theorists called the social processes as a class struggle or a struggle all with all as well as an opposition of socio-economic, ethno-confessional or as economic or social conflicts between various states or political forces.

Actually, in any natural or social system there is and will always be a struggle for an access to resources, ideological and geopolitical domination. As for Russia, we are now experiencing not only lack of financial resources, in particular due to the escape of capital abroad. We are at the margin of the deficit of some natural resources, such as water, for many reasons, as the water pollution, the shallowing of some our great rivers like the Volga River, and an intensive transformation of the water of Baikal Lake in the marketable goods.

But recently our main deficit is a worsening of quality of life of a great number of ordinary people as a result of insufficient salary and a quality of education and professional experience and for many other reasons. So it's not accidental that the Russian government is now concerned with a quality of the state of a primary link of our medicine especially in small towns and agrarian regions. The matter is that by and large this primary link has been transformed into commercial medicine everywhere.

Besides, up to now we have been accustomed to speculating about the quality of life of ordinary people in the economic terms, i.e. in the terms of macroeconomic figures that is in the terms of the GNP, an input and output, an economic crisis and the like. But under conditions of the 'Internet Galaxy' that is permanently influencing our consciousness, and therefore is capable to transform qualitatively the life of any individual, a lack of well-educated and experienced people create a permanently critical and all-embracing situation in Russia.

As a result, the paradoxical situation has emerged that humanity isn't capable to resolve now. The matter is that nowadays a man is simultaneously has become a powerful instrument of catastrophic changes on the planet

and a pigmy fully dependent on the informational impulses from the outside and on the growing process of accumulation of the industrial and household wastes. This is an example of a dialectics of the global information society. And this is not a metaphor but a distinguishing feature of our everyday life which I call a critical one because we are now living and doing something in a certain hybrid environment composed from the calamities and the goods, promises and unrealized hopes. It is a very difficult matter to escape such hybrid environment. The only one way out is to permanently study the regularities of its shaping, functioning and dynamics. Today, to state that a capitalist mode of living is guilty is possible but already insufficient.

Methodology and methods.

Civil activism as a participant of global geopolitical process.

The formulae 'All is tied with all, the all is going somewhere, and nothing is given for nothing' offered by the US biologist B. Commoner is nowadays fully confirmed because the modern global sociobiotechnical system is tightly interdepended by numerous economic, social and natural processes and networks.

Therefore, the regular practice that initially the rescue forces and other state organizations are mitigating a critical situation and only then the first-aid forces with participation of civil organizations will fulfill all other necessary works seems to me now already insufficient or even wrong.

First, today all societies have to strive not only to mitigation of the after-effects of the emergencies and disasters, but to foresee them in order to take necessary preventive measures. If the negative after-effects are impossible to escape, the Volunteers should be prepared to them.

Second, first of all we have to strive to be prepared in a global scale because the principle 'All is tied with all, the all is going somewhere, and nothing is given for nothing' has today all- embracing character due to already well developed system of global information, resource and human networks.

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Third, recently a public activity of the citizens is becoming more and more important driving force of the global political processes. Slowly but persistently a global civil society is shaping (see, for example, Kaldor et al., 2003; Kaldor, 2012). Anyone may speak ironically in relation of a certain geopolitical project named 'Greta Tunberg', but to avoid a rapidly growing political activity of the schoolchildren and youth is impossible.

Fourth, this growth of is a serious challenge to an existing political structure of modern society. As a practice of the mass political protests during the last several years clearly showed (Germany, France, Catalonia in Spain), the civil society of well economically-developed states of the West quickly and seriously reacts on economic, political and social challenges of the global world than their institutional systems (political parties and their alliances, trade unions) as well as on sudden global political agreements.

Five, more than that, those global institutional structures such as the European Union that yesterday seemed unshakable, recently undergoes serious political and economic crises. And the global issues like environmental ones are uniting the ordinary citizens in their struggle for a survival and existence.

Six, I'm convinced that already started new round of struggle in defense of natural ecosystems will exert much more strong impact on the state environmental politics in a majority of the countries of the world than a permanent oscillations of party structure in a majority of the European Uinon counties and of the US as well.

Seven, a development of the 'Internet Galaxy' is still continued, there is a risk of contradictions between two groups of world population, namely between those who already live and act in the virtual world, and those which use the information networks in order to make harm to their potential adversaries. Thus, the struggle between the poor and reach countries is shifted into an information sphere. It means that a political struggle is transforming from a 'frontal' to a 'spot-like.'

Types and forms of current civil activism in Russia.

In the run of the last 10-15 years the number of civil organizations organized and sponsored by the Russian state of Big Business is permanently growing. These pro-state civil organization have been created with two aims, the one is to have one more basement for the state's politics, and the other for the maintenance of public order during large international events like the Olympic Games and many other. Besides, the state authorities consider these civic organizations as the cadre reserve for the states' bodies.

Under such conditions of long-term prevalence of the pro-state civil organizations some readers (mainly abroad) begin to forget that there is a lot of civil organizations in Russia supported and sponsored by many charity and philanthropic organizations in Russia and abroad.

I'd remind that the political parties irrespectively of their ideology as well as labor unions are the true civil organizations as well. That is why in Western sociology the term non-governmental organizations (the NGOs) are commonly accepted. But it doesn't mean that in the Western countries the NGOs cannot get grants from the municipal bodies that I consider the civil organizations as well.

On the emergence and development of the civil organizations in Russia/SSSR/RF there is a lot of literature on Russian and English, therefore there is no sense to repeat it again (see, for example, Stepansky, 1980; Yanitsky, 1991, 2013), and many other sources. поэтому повторяться не буду. I'd like only to mention that some nature protection and other civil organizations and movements have been based on the network structures by means of mailing, seminars, conferences, etc.

In sum, recently there are two clear-cut types of civil organizations: pro-state and true civil ones i.e. the self-organized and self-regulated (Yanitsky, 2014). The former, as a rule, are structurally-functionally stable as, for example, All-Russian Peoples' Front and its regional divisions, while the latter are period-

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ically or even permanently restructured due to changing external situations and internal necessities. That is, *the latter maintain their sustainability by means of permanent changes.* This rule is true if critical are destroying their structural unity. The matter is that even in such critical case they protect their ideological and value unity.

The former are obliged to collaborate with the law enforcement agencies while the latter being obliged to collaborate with them, first of all are concerned with affected nature and ordinary people. The former are usually supported by these state bodies while the latter are usually act independently according to circumstances and their own attitudes and resources at hands. That is why the formers' activity is restricted by numerous norms, instructions and commands while the latter prefer to act immediately.

The difference of activity of the two above types of civil organizations is clearly seen under critical conditions. Let's take an example of flooding in Irkutsk administrative region and total destruction of small city Tulun, the center of the municipal region, happened in autumn of the 2019 year. What has been done by the regional pro-state civic organizations? To my mind, nothing had been done because all local bodies waited a certain 'command' from above.

I foresee the objections because the given situation has been too serious. I agree but only partly. *First,* local activists, irrespectively pro-state or true civil ones should to send signals of emergency everywhere. *Second,* they have enough time to mobilize a part of local population in order to take some preventive measures. *Third,* these people have an experience of previous flooding, forest fires and other critical situations. *Four*, these people should take the measures for a resettling the children and old people to another, more safe place. These people clearly knew that their town is situated in the low-lying land, and therefore this town is the first at risk to be flooded.

Fifth, in modern rapidly changing natural and geopolitical conditions such political structures as the state organizations and political parties are too large and stable and thus they cannot quickly and systemic react to permanent changing of their situation.

Sixth, the more general conclusion is that recently, under conditions of already existed all-embracing information network and permanently renewed arm forces the global political stakeholders are predominantly acting by a set of possible and actual threats from sanctions and switching off from global currency or economic networks till the treat of making the massive strike by means of the release of billions of refugees living in the camps on the territory of Turkey or other countries. That is, a set of strategies to make harm on a possible adversary are simultaneously used. In all the above actions the information networks ate playing the key role.

An individual and group behavior in a critical situation.

Many Russian and foreign sociologists and politicians are continuing to work in so-called arithmetical paradigm i.e. to evaluate a particular situation in the terms like the 'better or worse', the faster or slower', the 'closer or farer', etc. Such researchers are usually didn't take into account that simultaneously with quantitative changes are simultaneously going the qualitative ones.

Let's take as the example well-known in the social psychology phenomenon called as a 'dynamic stereotype' (Abul'khanova-Slavskaya, 1980). Its essence is in a dialectical balance (and repetition) of the stereotype and changing parameters of his/her everyday behavior.

In other words, the stereotypes of the individual and group behavior may vary under the particular circumstances but in a certain limits only. If these limits are surmounted, the actor is forced to change his/her dynamic stereotype, say, changing everyday 'home—work' transportation to a distanced mode of work. But in any case the individual make the efforts to maintain his/her dynamic stereotype, otherwise he may lose a lot of time and his work as such.

Now let's look on what is going on with

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his/her contacts under extreme conditions. Her I'd refer to the works of L.A. Kitaev-Smyk (1983), the well-known Russian specialist in this realm. He offered to divide the issue in three steps: initial, being in extreme conditions as such, and adaptive one.

On the first step, Kitaev-Smyk said, that is in the process of the entering of the individual in a stressful situation, his activity is sharply going down, he is as if standstill, become reserved (1983: 284). But further the object in question should be differentiated. If it's a village or a small town, and more than that – in remote Russia, under a sudden emergence of a critical situation he/she have to rely upon himself or his neighbors only. An individualistic psychology took over. If it's a large city or megalopolis he/she would rely on quick coming of the rescuers or an ambulance.

On the adaptive step, that is after the critical situation the inhabitants of small and large settlements have the common problems. The first one is purely Russian, named as imperfections or incompleteness. The second one is an adaptation on the new place of living.

The second one is especially painful for those who lost who had personal plot and livestock.

In conclusion of this section are some additional notes. The very notion of the 'dynamic stereotype' is applicable not only to individuals and small groups but it's useful for the analysis of critical situations emerging in more broad social and economic contexts.

For example, all international relationships are existed in such dynamic, i.e. dialectical context. This dialectics is produced by permanent oscillations of the global geopolitical situation generated in particular by the flow of the IT-innovations that influences the global distribution of forces.

It means that the farther the more not only the individual and small groups but the states and transnationals will be involved into a permanent process of the structural-functional development of their relationships. It means that for the individuals and their

groups a creation of a relatively sustainable 'dynamic stereotype' will be an everyday issue. It's not an easy task because a time for an individual decision-making will be shrinking every moment.

Research Results and Discussion.

A Critical situation, civil activism and the other social institution.

Let's divide this issue on the yesterday, current and future periods. It seems not surprising that in the Soviet times (the 1960-80s) the situation looks like more calm and 'sustainable' than now.

Let's take for example an issue of nature protection. There has been All-Russian Society for Nature Protection, the Moscow Society of Naturalists, the World-Wide Fund for Nature Protection, The Greenpeace-Russia and many others. I'd especially to mention the Students' nature protection movement which later created the Socio-Ecological Union (later on it became the International Socio-Ecological Union). This movement has been organized by three different but interrelated forces, namely by the scientists, teachers and students themselves. The Baikal movement had been established in mid 1950s by the Siberian scientists, scholars and local people. Besides, there were a lot of local initiative groups who planting of greenery in newly industrially built neighborhoods across the Soviet Union. The emergence of the above movements and organizations didn't exclude the emergence of various local NGOs and initiative groups that tried to cope with local critical situations, for example, the prevent destruction of natural monuments as well as the various types of reserves ranging from very small ones to the biosphere reserves.

With the approach of the perestroika period (the years of 1988-92) the number and diversity of civil initiatives rapidly grew, the process of politicization of social movements. The years of the perestroika has been marked by a sharp politicization of social movement and civil activism. Nevertheless, before, in and after these years a collaboration of Russian and foreign sociologist has been continued. There were at least three international

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research projects on social movements that should be mentioned. One is the project 'Cities of Europe: The Publics' Role in Shaping an Urban Environment' (Deelstra and Yanitsky, 1993), 'New Social Movements in Russia' under the supervision of prof. A. Touraine (1992-94), and the International project 'Where Russia is going?' (1991-2000) guided by acad. RAN T.I. Zaslavskya and prof. Th. Shanin (Intercenter, Moscow). As for me, I practiced a socio-ecological approach for many years basing mainly of the works of the fathers of the Chicago School of Human ecology. Therefore, I've been very glad that their ideas and principles have been developed conformably to the condition of the digital age (Stokols, 2018).

As concerned to social activity of the Russian citizens, after the 1993 it began to slow down for several reasons: unemployment, lack of the means of subsistence, a necessity to gain them by means of temporary work, etc. The criminality rapidly grew and some families began to disintegrate. The gap between the rich and the poor widened. As to the relationships between the volunteers, the state rescue forces and the bodies of social protection, as our investigation of the social consequences of the forest fires in the 2012 showed, that such collaboration didn't exist at all. Besides, that research revealed the following regularities.

First, the state rescue forces began their operations in the midst of the critical situation. *Second,* the rescue forces have been concerned with a protection of a given settlement only, if such work has been done, they said that their mission is over (Yanitsky, 2012). *Third,* the affected people have been resettled in new individual houses made by industrial methods. It has been a humanistic act but in hurry the designers and builders set these houses on the land with a very high level of subsoil waters. As it appears next spring, the majority of these houses were needed in a capital repair.

The many appeals of the twice affected people to municipal authorities gave a zero effect, these people were obliged to address to a particular Moscow organization, i.e. to the Moscow planners who in hurry didn't take into account a basic rules and norms of town planning despite the fact that the 'Construction norms and Rules' (CN&R) have existed. Later on, the capitalist economy step by step destroyed the state normative base of town planning in Russia.

It has been not only the case of Russia but a norm of the capitalist's relation to the appeals and requirements of ordinary people, their natural and cultural values. When in the year 2003 the tornado Catherina has destroyed a substantial part of the New Orleans city, the center of the Afro-American culture of the US, the local volunteers began a repairing works. But immediately emerged developers have promised to make all repairing and renovation work but with only one condition: every US dollar input has to bring them 100 US dollars output (Barrios, 2011).

We revealed a quite another model of the affected people and their relations with some other social institutions is shaping in the case when these people are totally isolated from the outside world by military operations or by a certain natural disaster. We've to analyze many such cases (for example, Krymsk, cities in Donbass and Syria, etc.). In such cases the people are usually mobilized and united in order to protect themselves or simply for a survival, and this type of consolidation may be created by very different people and social groups, with the particular ideologies.

Civil activism in the struggle with a consumer ideology.

F. Engels was wright saying that a man lives 'by the nature.' But neither not he, nor other social thinkers had been concerned by the process of diminishing of natural resources, and therefore the struggle for them is sharpening. In the final analysis, it leads to a much more exhausting of natural resources, and to a much more tough struggle for the access to them.

But it's not all. The reverse side of the same coin is a gradual transformation of the biosphere into the sociobiotechnosphere presents a bill to the mankind. I mean a perma-

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nently growing volume of the industrial and domestic wastes that the natural ecosystems are incapable to utilize.

To my mind, a mechanism of market economy, well elaborated in the run of the centuries, is now encountered with a global limit that this mechanism is incapable to overcome. For example, the market economy has no instruments to overcome the coming global warming. A half-a-century attempts of the world community to find a way out end without any radical results. As international researches clearly showed, the only one way out is a certain delay of a world global crisis (Haberl et al., 2016; Von Weizsäcker et al., 2018; *The Global Risk Report,* 2018).

The idea of limits of growth and the re-distribution of its negative results on the poor, their ability of expand of the world population gave very little effect. Because when the growth of humans' consumption is going down, the threat of economic crisis is becoming. Besides, the giant masses of natural resources are growing numb in the process of various arms production, ammunition, etc. and all that without the arms forces cannot exist.

Is the civil activism is potent to lessen an international tension?

Yes, of course, and our history gave us some convincing examples. I mean first of all the movement for the lasting peace and democracy that intensively developed after the WWII. And nowadays, the same goals are pursued by the world movement of the Greens motivated by the other reasons and ultimate goals. The leaders of this movement are well-understand the deadlocks of modern capitalism. I mean first of all a civil-oriented scientists and scholars who well-understand these deadlocks of modern capitalist economy. And the first step on this road is a reduction of redundant consumption. But there are many other ways of doing this.

A digital activity in the 'Internet Galaxy'.

For a sociologist who think and work in an 'arithmetical paradigm', i.e. in terms like more or less, better or worse, faster or slower, etc. the following ideas will seems not very important. But all will be changed if I remind to the reader about the phenomenon of a 'space compression by means of the time' only. Let's go point by point because today the digital activity of the individuals and their groups is a very important prerequisite of human activity of any kind.

First, as human history shows, an individual's activism usually outstripped any collective social activity especially if it is organized into network structures. And now the 'Internet Galaxy' gives them such possibility.

Second, this 'Galaxy' isn't simply a technical mean as sometimes it appears to the technocratically-oriented thinkers. The volunteers' and other social group activities are inseparable from a quality of communication technologies. It is one more confirmation of the abovementioned triad the 'science—communication technologies—social practice.'

Third, the 'Internet Galaxy' is a mean for potential joint efforts of the civil activists concerned with the old and new challenges. It's not only technical mean but a mean for mutual understanding of the planet's population.

Fourth, it follows that this population is becoming not only closer socially but psychologically. Indeed, we are all not symbolically but actually are in the same Noah's Ark. The global information network is a prerequisite for a shaping of global civil society (see Kaldor et al., 2003).

Fifth, the information which is collected in various parts of the world gives to the scientists and scholars an impression about the state and dynamics of the global and space sociobiotechnosphere.

Sixth, while on the first stage of the 'Internet Galaxy' shaping the one-to-one contacts have been preoccupying recently this global network is becoming a platform for the discussions concerning the global issues.

Seventh, the above process follows by the shaping of the triad communities and their counterparts with diverse social, ethno-confessional and geopolitical viewpoints.

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Therefore, an informational chaos gradually is becoming structured.

Eighth, the above processes voluntary and involuntary develop the individuals and group potential to ecological, technical and social reflection (Kyz'mina, 1998; Yanitsky, 1998). In turn, it shapes the language for a mutual understanding.

Ninth, a network analysis embracing the whole world at once promotes to overcome the country analysis based on the principle of division the critical situations on local and global. As Chernobyl accident and then many others across the world, in majority of the cases what happened here sooner or later will have an echo somewhere there.

Tenth, it's obvious that the existence of global information networks is a mean for mobilization of people, resources and efforts as well as for their struggle with a corporative or bureaucratic (departmental) approach to the natural or technological issues.

Eleventh, the global information networks are gradually lowering the barriers between those who have already mastered the digital language, and who still isn't.

Tvelwth, these networks assist in an overcoming of feelings of alienation and of the feeling of fear in front of coming disaster or technological accident.

All said above doesn't mean that all volunteers should become the 'button adults.' It's going on that their activity should use potential of the 'Internet Galaxy' in the highest degree.

The permanent tie between the 'science, teaching, and practice' is a key moment.

I see in their permanent interrelationships the key precondition for a success of the volunteers' activity. In contrast to the epoch of the Enlightenment when the human cognition developed by means of the differentiation of knowledge and institutionalization of particular disciplines and teaching recently we are witnessing of the reverse process, namely of integration of natural, technical and social sciences and the shaping of a certain triad named the 'science-teaching-practice.'

Initially, its shaping is going as sporadic interactions, than by regular interactions, and finally a process of shaping of a new social institution that I've named as a socio-scientific research coupled with a practice is emerging. It's not an accidental but regular process because a complexity and dynamics of our life is needed in a more close collaboration of the science, teaching and practice.

That uninterrupted process is practically realized, and the scientist is becoming an experimenter (as academician and Noble laureate P. Kapitza), an engineer turned into theoretician constructing the middle-level concepts, and the volunteer an experienced man. It's not a dream but everyday reality. I'd remind you the members of the 'Doctors without borders' team, the astronauts, the members of polar expeditions in the Arctic and Antarctic and many other cases.

In other words, two processes are going hand in hand, namely of merging many disciplines in a united whole and a practical use of such integrated knowledge. And the way round, the ascent of a permanently changing practice toward its theoretical (interdisciplinary) comprehension. In some cases this merging process is going naturally while in many others it is going on under pressure of the CSs. In such cases its 'value' is the life of many ordinary people as it happened in many cities in Donbass and Syria (Yanitsky, 2017). In such cases the mass public surveys are useless because it's impossible to evaluate those qualitative transformations that are occurring with a person in the CS, say, under a time and resources deficit as well as under permanently changing local situation (see, for example, Inglehart, 1991). It is such knowledge-and-mode of action is needed in order to define a degree of urgency and the character of the aid to the affected nature and people.

Actually, this triple tie is permanently shaping. One should keep in mind that recently the way from the decision-making and design till an end-product production isn't linear but multisided and interdisciplinary one. The very process of a construction of anything represents now a very complicated issue. Nowadays, almost all industrial products are

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the hybrid ones. Then, a modern logistics is actually a very complex issue which has to be put in definite space-time frames.

Let's me give a very simple example. Watch on the activity of a child. He is always simultaneously an explorer, constructor and a pupil. Unfortunately, this very important quality of the child's psychology is totally effaced when the child enters in the rigid frames of secondary school's programs, textbooks, timetables, etc. To those who is interested in alternative teaching I'd recommend a small book 'Release of the Schools' written by Ivan Illich (2006) and later translated in Russian.

The key moment in this triad is the notion of the metabolism under which is understood many exchange processes and their qualitative transformations that make many agents the qualitatively new actors. It's essential that the tempo-rhythms and an end-result of their interactions may vary from mutual assistance in the maintenance of their viability (symbiosis or cyclical process), one-sided impact and till mutual annihilation.

The importance of further study of the metabolism phenomenon is first of all necessary for the technologists, sociologists and other humanitarians because in the natural sciences the notion of metabolism is commonly accepted. And in the biological sciences and medicine it's one of the cornerstones.

Maybe all said above is necessary under calm and regular conditions of the universities and research institutes? Not at all! On the contrary, the metabolic processes such dynamic systems as accidents and disasters are urgently needed in the further and more complex investigations. And in such studies the schoolchildren, students and other civil activists both outside and inside the disaster epicenter should take an active part on all phases of its development.

Conclusions. Any critical situation generates a certain critical social order as the antithesis to a 'normal' social order. The critical social order is a set of various natural and socially-constructed orders that differs by their specific metabolic processes.

An impotence or critical delay of the ac-

tivity of existing social institutions, mutual distrust and fear, lack of self-confidence of many people, and transformation of their living environment into a hostile and dangerous are the main characteristics of the CS. Its logical and practical end is a total disorder as a couple of ungoverned elemental processes and particular practices under full absence of control from the side of the state and international organizations.

Some western researchers see the roots of our CS in the 'backwardness' of our country. But as academician N.N. Moiseev stressed, such viewpoint is risky not only for Russia but for the world as a whole (Moiseev, 1996: 16). If the CS stimulates the escape abroad of some, and an encapsulation of the others it is not well.

If the CS stimulates the scientists, teachers and civil activists to reflect, to look for the ways out from a particular CS, it's quite another matter. For this t least two conditions are important: a mutual understanding and an existence of a stage for the exchange by the knowledges and experiences.

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