Politikos filosofija

THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL MODEL OF THE POLITICAL WORLD: A PHILOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATION

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Abstract. *The article is devoted to a philosophical analysis of the fundamental ontological principles of the political world. The author pays attention to the three main manifestations of the political: (i) antagonistic, which is presented through relations between friend and enemy; (ii) agonistic, which demonstrates politics as a competition between different ideologies and positions; and (iii) imaginary and symbolic, which appears as strong connection between politics and socio-cultural situation. These manifestations of the political are often intertwined and realized as a network of relationships and political actions that create a three-dimensional model of the political world.*

Keywords: *the political, political world, antagonism, agonism, imaginary, symbol*

The political world around us seems to be something obvious and natural for humans. Therefore, political philosophy tries to understand its dimensions and development. The most significant problem of such investigations deals with the phenomenon of *the political*. Facing this phenomenon, the task for the political philosopher is not merely to understand the political process, but also make an attempt to point out a meaningful manifestation of *the political*, which does not involve exploitation of the human being and provides for authentic (self-)realization in its existence as *bios politicos*, which is directly corresponding to human nature. Moreover, the philosophy is not only studying politics, but it is also able to reach the foundations of the political world, changing them. In other words, the philosopher should not just to describe the political world, but critically look at it, trying to understand the meaning that is generated by political activity and identify the consequences of its departure from good. Almost from the very beginning of philosophy the socio-cultural development of humanity shows how philosophical ideas have significant effects on the political world, which stems from the critical intervention of reason in this area.

The present paper addresses the theme of a basic structure in the political world. In the phenomenological way the political world can be defined as a horizon which makes possible the manifestation of any kind of *the political*. The concept of a

"political world" is the most appropriate for analysis of political ontology because it doesn't involve the ideological structures (as it can be in case of such concepts like "state"). Moreover, the political world is the general subject of political philosophy. Klaus Held writes:

> it is easy to assume that such expressions as 'political event' or 'political contribution' derive their sense from the fact that what makes them likewise (and yet not simply in the same sense) political is their belonging to a 'political world'. If the unity of the 'political' consists in the fact that everything that we denote with this term belongs in respectively different ways to a political world, we have with this found an answer to our question of what the character of the *Sache* or subject matter of political philosophy might be. The term for this *Sache* is the 'political world' (Held 2012: 446).

In contemporary philosophical discourse one often hears complaints about a large number of phenomena that tend to seem political, but they are not such in essence. We can add to this a diagnosis of the establishment of the postpolitical paradigm that eliminates the possibility of manifestation a genuine meaning of *the political*, because marketing technologies, formalized mechanisms of governance and big data analysis dominate in modern politics. The postpolitical paradigm can be defined as total usage of technologies to realize the political activity (for example, the collection and analysis of big data for political purposes) and disappearance of parties with a strong ideological position. In such way, the politics stays virtual because the political ideas and programs adapt to the establishment of "private conservatism" of voters, which means the identification of

the candidate by populistic ideas, not by rational analysis and reflections of his or her political propositions. The postpolitical paradigm is also strengthening the feeling that politics turns into a *pastiche*. The crisis of politics is shown by the calls for implementation of a new intensity into the political world, to radicalize political activity and re-define *the political* itself. What does it mean? What kind of intensification, radicalization, and re-definition do we need? We also should answer the questions: what does it mean today to be a political subject, which clearly identifies its political position as different from other positions if any clear distinction has been blurred because of an anti-demarcative feature of modern culture? Diagnosis of the crisis in the political world is the search for a method of analysis given extraordinary dynamics of processes in modern politics. Therefore, description of such crisis, in fact, reveals the prerequisites for understanding transformations of *the political* that aims to show us the authentic dimensions of political being.

The phenomenon of *the political* reaches the ontological level of the political world. Determining its essence is the basis for understanding the particular political phenomena (for example, political relations, communication, functioning the political institutions) and defining the criteria for their evaluation. Political philosophy, as opposed to political theory with its positivist setting, is not merely studying political phenomena, but also can present the value judgments about politics.

Interpretive analysis of the ontological dimensions of the political world, which is used in the present philosophical investigation as a methodological approach, demands to understand the essence of *the*

political itself. Such demand arises from the fact that *the political* is a phenomenon which "permeates" human nature. As Leo Strauss writes, "the political is thus not only possible but also real; and not only real but also necessary. It is necessary because it is given in human nature" (Strauss 1996: 95).

The Political as Antagonistic

The first dimension of the political world represents *the political* as antagonistic. The antagonistic dimension reaches ontology of the political world and represents the fundamental distinction between genuine and non-genuine forms of political existence.

The modern political world is defined as a space of the disappearance of antagonisms, the reason of which is the consensual politics and postmodern condition. Antagonisms (in the form of political interests' opposition, arising from the realization the political projects, and social and political movements that come together in the ideological struggle) are removed from the political world, making impossible the manifestation of the true essence of *the political*, which becomes mere simulation. As a result of simulations, the automatic identification of *the political* is generated. This new form of identification happens today through the use of technological management and organization. Automatism while using identification is destroying the "internal" dimension of political consciousness, which is the basis of opposition to the *status quo* and makes critical thinking of political issues possible. It causes the disappearance of any kind of antagonism and generates repressive political world because the mind is not able to withstand these tendencies. As

Herbert Marcuse wrote in his famous book *One-dimensional Man*: "The immediate, automatic identification (which may have been characteristic of primitive forms of association) reappears in high industrial civilization […]. The impact of progress turns Reason into submission to the facts of life and to the dynamic of capability of producing more and bigger facts of the same sort of life" (Marcuse 2007: 12-13). We suggest that the disappearance of antagonisms is an effect of the postmodern condition in the political sphere. However, it is not exactly true because the postmodern itself contains contradictions and antagonisms. It is particularly so in the case of the post-communist political world that can be described as a kind of postmodernity. Post-communism is characterized by antagonisms and conflicts in politics, manifested, for example, in the revival of nationalism, the growth of ethnic tension in multinational political communities or social tension as a result of economic and political crises. Therefore, the crucial stage of interpretive analysis of the political world is recognition of *the political* as antagonistic that pre-determines its nature and the sense of human being as *bios politicos* and defines the limits of any politics, which are now becoming increasingly blurred.

Antagonism of *the political* could be clarified through an appeal to the concept of social conflict. The general definition of conflict presents it as structurally generated relationships of controversy between the norms and expectations, institutions and groups. The modern social theory (for example, Ralf Dahrendorf) notes the social fact that societies are constantly generating antagonisms that are arising purposefully and not accidentally. In other words, the

conflict is presented as a universal social phenomenon. Moreover, theorists detect the positive effects, such as implementing potential changes into social order. According to Dahrendorf, conflicts are generating the creative force of societies. He writes:

> I would suggest, in any case, that all that is creativity, innovation, and development in the life of the individual, his group, and his society is due, to no small extent, to the operation of conflicts between group and group, individual and individual, emotion and emotion within one individual. This fundamental fact alone seems to me to justify the value judgment that conflict is essentially 'good' and 'desirable' (Dahrendorf 1959: 208).

Conflicts reach beyond existing social situations; they act as vital elements of society because the conflict is a part of any life. Direction and projection of the changes caused by the conflicts have political meaning that some actors often seek to actualize and use for implementation of their political plans to reformat or destroy (as in the case of revolutions) existing political order. However, this kind of "antagonistic optimism" as a theoretical position in social science should not be accepted as a universal approach. There is another possible point of view when conflicts in society are perceived as something that creates an unwanted complication for social or political order. This interpretation of antagonisms can be found in the conception of legitimacy that comes from a culture of consensus.

The philosophical understanding of *the political* can provide conceptual and axiological antagonisms. In other words, conflicts, contradictions, and "gaps" can arise at the level of concepts that we use to describe the political world and the values by which politics is constituted and regulated. These conceptual and axiological antagonisms create a conflict of interpretations of phenomena in the political world. For example, the basic concepts of political philosophy, such as justice, equality, freedom, democracy, are perceived as distinct positive values in the paradigm of Enlightenment's thinking. Nevertheless, they are often not consistent, and even conflicting within certain conceptions of political order.

The most important and influential philosophical conception of *the political* as antagonistic was presented in the Carl Schmitt's work *The Concept of the Political*. He intended to determine the specific political terms, categories, and criteria. Thus, a common feature of modern philosophy appears in such intention. It deals with the desire to separate the political sphere from other areas of human activity, particularly economy. It is an expression of strong phenomenological approach, which aims to grip essence of *the political* through clear delineation of the horizon in political action and thinking. Schmitt writes: "*The political* must therefore rest on its own ultimate distinctions, to which all action with a specifically political meaning can be traced" (Schmitt 1996: 26). According to Schmitt, a distinction that exactly expresses the essence of *the political* is the opposition between friend and enemy. It makes possible the creation of the highest form of solidarity of the people and thus provides a ground of the existence of the political world. Schmitt's conception is not very much new as well as the political philosophy of 17th-18th century which argues that antagonisms are preconditions for a political state. The most famous example is Thomas Hobbes and his idea "war of all

against all," of course. However, also we can mention Immanuel Kant, who wrote in *The Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmopolitical Plan* that antagonisms in society are tools for the development of human abilities. These tools were elaborated by nature, which encourages people to seek unity with those whom they cannot tolerate absolutely. Search for unity through antagonism provides a transition to the cultural life. However, the modern political conflicts and experience of 20th-century totalitarian states give a reason to supplement Schmitt's understanding of "enemy" and "hostility" by pointing not only to its manifestation outside the community but also within.

The conception of *the political*, which is based on the opposition "friend-enemy", represents the antagonisms of the time it had been created (Schmitt's work *The Concept of the Political* was first printed in 1927). However, it can be used for an explanation of nowadays politics. Some social theorists pay attention to this fact, for example, Paul Hirst, who writes: "Friend-enemy relations have not disappeared, even if consequences of the superpowers pursuing them to the full are self-defeating" (Hirst 1999: 17). In Schmitt's case, the instrument for realization *the political* as antagonistic is a decision. Therefore this conception is opposed to the liberal concept of *the political*, which is based on deliberative procedures and compromises: "Dominated as it is by the friend-or-enemy alternative, the political requires not discussion but decision. No amount of reflection can change an issue which is so existentially primitive that it precludes it" (Hirst 1999: 9).

Also, I'd like to pay attention to the fact that Schmitt's conception involves the individualization of political will. Undoubtedly, this is related to Schmitt's critical attitude to parliamentarianism and his commitment to representation of the Sovereign as one person (dictator). However, such attitude invites criticism because the political world needs rather a social dimension of will. One person may make a decision as a result of individual will, but it relates to the will of others of necessity. In other words, political decisions are woven into a network of political relations. After all, the political manifestation is made possible as a result of this will which has a social character and is aimed at unity (even if the unity concerns the definition of "friend" and "enemy").

Based on the concept of *the political*, which focuses on the "friend-enemy" opposition, we can define the political world as the world of co-existence with a friend. This co-existence provides ontological premise of creating a political community. However, we are facing the need to explain the phenomenon of friendship in terms of its socio-political aspect. For the philosophical concept of the political world, it is important to define a friend, taking into account how it correlates with the general comprehension of Others?

Friendship in its social dimension is closely linked to the expression of solidarity. It is the ontological precondition for other types of community bonds. However, the political friendship can create not only closeness between people as members of political society. What is important for the political world, it can create a common place (public sphere). We can state that political topography is formed by the intertwining common places based on friendship.

The Political as Agonistic

The second dimension of the modern political world is based on the representation of *the political* as agonistic. It seems that modernity is characterized by a focus on overcoming the fundamental political conflicts and antagonistic relations "friend-enemy." We can recall some well-known contemporary social theorists such as Anthony Giddens or Ulrich Beck, pointing out that modern society is more adjusted to a compromise implementation of the political and social projects, leading to overcoming the antagonistic forms of politics. Postpolitical paradigm that expresses the lack of antagonism (or failure to maintain real political antagonism) was established as a result of the impact on the organization of social life, not parliamentary debate or sovereign decisions of public authorities, but the development of technologies (particularly those directed at the social constructivism or transformation of human nature). Political institutions are neutralized, and political activity takes other non-traditional forms, including those related to the struggle of parties and different ideologies for the power. As a result, there is no difference between the political programs that present an alternative vision of social development.

Thus, we cannot limit ourselves to a reflection of *the political* as antagonistic. It must be supplemented by *the political* that identifies a softer form of confrontation in the political world – *agonism*.

The political as agonistic provides a struggle, which is not aimed at the destruction of an opponent (as in the case of antagonism, when the Other perceived as the enemy). This struggle seeks to establish the superiority of constructive principle, turning confrontation into a form of competition and game. For example, this type of struggle we find at the very beginning of the European socio-cultural system. Ancient society shows us a spread the agonistic principle to all spheres of social and cultural life. Politics was no exception, as the competitive struggle in the political world appeared an instrument of creation and reformatting of political order governed by the desire to achieve the common good.

The representation of agonism in the political world is derived from the observation that any political struggle provides the conditions for the manifestation of *the political* in its targeted development. We can speak about the dialectic of regulation and de-regulation, as a result of which the dominant position is established. This position determines the order of *the political* and represents itself as domination (by referring to the experience of the 20th century political philosophy we can recall conception of hegemony that was developed by Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci). Ukrainian philosopher Mykola Zaycev has presented the exact definition of struggle as regulation and de-regulation. He writes: "Struggle as a way of the rules generates the domination of regulative principle over the elements which were created by it. The domination through regulation of an order raises the problem of power of necessity" (Zaycev 2008: 38). However, we should note that agon does not allow total domination because struggle as competition provides a valuable competitive position. Therefore, we can conclude that agonistic manifestation of *the political* has two significant consequences for meaningfulness of the representation of ontological dimensions of the political world: (1) the relationship between the sub-

jects of political action filled with tolerance; (2) political world reveals a plurality of discourses and narratives that determine the possibility of forming a public sphere. The conceptions of *the political* as agonistic in the works of modern political philosophers (for example, Chantal Mouffe or John Gray) has political goals updating the current state of politics and overcome the shortcomings of its reflection in the political philosophy of neoliberalism, which presents itself as a total political ideology.

Understanding *the political* as agonistic in modern political philosophy is closely linked with Mouffe's conception of agonistic democracy. In her works, we find the desire to transform Carl Schmitt's concept of *the political*, so that it has become not antagonistic, but agonistic in character. On the one hand, agonism is opposed to antagonism, but on the other – *the political* as agonistic should establish itself instead of a consensual postpolitical paradigm, and it will allow realizing agonistic democracy as a strategy of vitalization the modern democratic project.

So, in Mouffe's work we get the concept of politics as a constant struggle for hegemony, which should ensure the unity and existence of society. Agonism provides that hegemony of one political force will always be questioned by competing political programs. The society is doomed to constant competition, so hegemony is temporary and limited.

Based on the analysis of the political situation of mid-1980s, in particular, the growth of alternative political movements (feminist, ecological, ethnic, and sexual minorities), which resulted in so-called "democratic revolution", Mouffe's project proposes a radical democratic pluralism.

In this case, we have a radical pluralism because each element of the multiplicity of identities contains the principle of its legitimacy, which cannot be founded on any transcendent or fundamental ground of value hierarchy. Also, this pluralism is democratic because self-constitution of each of its elements is realized in the democratic imagination.

It is evident that conception of agonistic democracy applies to the definition of *the political* and comprehends its true essence. Mouffe is convinced that the future of democracy depends on the discussion of these issues. She argues that proponents of establishing consensus in politics strengthen the postpolitical paradigm, which is unable to conceive of a real essence of *the political*, the consequence of which can be a serious political threat. Inability to conceive the ontological status of the political leads to the crisis of understanding the actual political phenomena: "It is the lack of understanding of 'the political' in its ontological dimension which is at the origin of our current incapacity to think in a political way" (Mouffe 2005: 9). Thus, Mouffe emphasizes the need to distinguish clearly between *the political* and politics as ontological and ontic. In this sense, we should mention the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, hermeneutic phenomenology. In *Being and Time,* Heidegger made a distinction between the ontic and ontological as two different approaches in comprehension of Being. The ontic signifies concrete, physical, real and factual existence of things. The ontological signifies the deeper, existential structures of Being. As Heidegger wrote:

Ontological inquiry is indeed more primordial, as over against the ontical inquiry of the positive sciences. However, it remains

itself naive and opaque if in its researches into the Being of entities it fails to discuss the meaning of Being in general. And even the ontological task of constructing a non-deductive genealogy of the different possible ways of Being requires that we first come to an understanding of "what we really mean by this expression 'Being' (Heidegger 2001: 12).

In the writings of Mouffe, *the political* correlates with *the social*, both of them acquire the status of Heidegger's existentials that are boundary dimensions of social life. Politics reach the ontic level, and it is defined as a set of practices and institutions through which human coexistence in the context of conflict can be created and organized. Such comprehension of *the political* makes an ontological basis for implementation the main principles of agonistic democracy.

Another version of interpretation *the political* as agonistic we can find in the political philosophy of the famous British philosopher John Gray. He presents the conception of agonistic liberalism, which should be an alternative to modern neoliberalism. Gray represents the position of pluralistic philosophy that provides an original version of post-Enlightenment anthropology, allowing different cultural identities. He writes: "The pluralist, post-Enlightenment project defended here is a humbler one, that of diminishing the tragic character of cultural identities that will always be agonistic in their constitution by devising the institutions and practices of a *modus vivendi*" (Gray 1997: 130). This philosophical project has origins in Hobbes' political philosophy, which reflects the possibilities to overcome the situation of "war of all against all," and Machiavellianism, which demonstrates the limited success of any pluralism.

In the philosophy of John Gray, who is a liberal, we meet self-reflection and self-criticism of liberalism to define new tasks for liberal theory and outline prospects for its further development. Critique of the liberal project concerns the principles and values that lie at its core. One aspect of this criticism implies the need to reorient liberalism out its universalist aspirations. In this way, the new liberal project arises, and it is called agonistic liberalism: "Agonistic liberalism is that species of liberalism that is grounded, not in rational choice, but in the limits of rational choice – limits imposed by the radical choices we are often constrained to make among goods that are both inherently rivalrous, and often constitutively uncombinable, and sometimes incommensurable, or rationally incomparable" (Gray 1997: 69). Agonistic liberalism is presented as an attempt to apply the moral theory of pluralism of values to solving the problems of the modern political world. In other words, agonistic liberalism uses the comprehension of *the political* as agonistic, because it tries to explain the current situation of growth of various movements that are based on different traditions and identity.

Agonism in politics involves searching for an opponent who is equal to me. Thus the political world that surrounds us requires looking for the possibilities and limits of tolerance. Quite often in the writings of political philosophers, there is a common opinion that tolerance is a virtue of the modern state. The relation to the Other, characterized by the tolerant attitude to his Otherness, can overcome inauthentic manifestations of *the political* which distort the ontological foundations of the political world.

In the context of philosophical analysis of the agonistic dimensions of the political

world, tolerance can be seen as a regulator (in particular, moral) of competitions between actors of politics. True agonism can occur only by the existing political pluralism of values, ideas, and attitudes. This pluralism becomes real only if the Other is recognized.

On the one hand, the agonistic is contrary to antagonistic, but on the other hand, the agonistic *political* is opposite to consensual kind of politics. Therefore, democracy in its agonistic form could be seen as an alternative to deliberative democracy. From my point of view, it is not completely right because it is possible to find connections between agonistic and deliberative models of democracy.

The conception of deliberative democracy (Jürgen Habermas, Seyla Benhabib) is based on the idea of discursive politics. The distinction between agonal and discursive politics was derived from Hannah Arendt's *Human Condition* (1958: 41-42). There are different points of view on these two models of politics presented in Arendt's work (cf. Benhabib 1990, d´Entrèves 1994, Kattago 2012). For example, Maurizio d´Entrèves states that Arendt's theory demonstrates the fundamental tension between an *expressive* (correlates with the agonal politics) and a *communicative* (correlates with the discursive politics) models of action (d´Entrèves 1994: 84). I suggest that this tension is not destructive and radical, but it is rather useful for realization of Habermas' project of deliberative democracy.

Within the modern communicative philosophy (Karl-Otto Apel, Habermas) *the political* as agonistic is represented in the context of developing the discursive ethics. The discursive ethics, as ethics of responsibility, is based on the argumentative discourse, which plays the role of the ultimate institution (or meta-institution). The responsibility for human actions and their consequences are authorized through meta-institution. The implementation of discursive ethics into the sphere of politics has the aim to overcome the experience of antagonistic politics of 20th century. It also predicts the creation of an argumentative community, which uses the deliberative style of politics. Habermas' conception of deliberative politics demonstrates reflections on this style of politics (Habermas 1998: 239-244). He compares two types of democracy – liberal and republican, which are often seen as opposite by two different visions of citizens, law and political will. On the basis on this description Habermas is developing the procedural conception of *the political*. Moreover, Habermas overcomes the opposition between republican and liberal models, and states that deliberation and procedure of the political discussion and decision lie at the very core of any democratic project. I want to add that deliberation involves *agon* in the form of exchange of ideas and rational argumentation of the political position. This is the manifestation of *the political* as agonistic, which has no contradiction to the deliberation and political consensus.

In general, a comprehension of *the political* as agonistic could be found in different versions of modern political philosophy and different intellectual traditions (especially, the post-Marxism and liberalism). These conceptions demonstrate the desire of political philosophers to "revive" the philosophical interpretation of politics and make the political life more active. Within conceptions of *the political* as agonistic, we can find awareness that the "revival" does

not mean the dominance of a particular paradigm or discourse of political issues, but aims to preserve the identity, political interests and goals of each participant. Therefore, political agon creates a unique space of publicity, which establishes preconditions for realizing principles and support of civil society.

The Political as Imaginary and Symbolic

The third important dimension of the political world presents *the political* as imaginary and symbolic. It gives a possibility to show the deep connections between politics and culture that influence the creating social and political order. Paying attention to the imaginary and symbolic is not the only way to represent *the political* or method of cognition the political phenomena in their sociocultural aspect. This dimension also reaches the ontological level of the political world.

Understanding *the political* as imaginary and symbolic is deduced from the general observation that almost all spheres of human life are imbued with symbolic representations. In his famous book *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, Cornelius Castoriadis writes that "relations between individuals and groups, behavior, motivations are not simply *incomprehensible* for us, they are *impossible in themselves* outside of this imaginary" (Castoriadis 1987: 161). Thus, the political world appears the result of social imagination and symbolic exchange. It is due to the fact that political reality is projected onto the consciousness of the individual and then "simulated" as the act of imagination. *The political* as symbolic and imaginary gives an internal cohesion for society and provides reasons

for the difference with the Others. Therefore, it helps to create the political identity. In theoretical aspect, philosophical analysis of the system of symbols found in the political sphere, and the genesis of social imagination (including its elements that are formed in the times of modernity and lay the foundations of modern understanding of political phenomena) make possible a better explanation of the existing specificity of the phenomena associated with establishing a new imaginary and symbolic order, which destabilizes the classic political world order. Also, understanding *the political* as imaginary and symbolic involves the correlation of political phenomena with cultural systems that often precede them and determine their appearance. For example, ideology and utopia could be seen as such cultural systems.

The role of symbols for existence of the social and political world was investigated by Eric Voegelin and Paul Ricoeur. Their conceptions of symbol have some similarity, which was noticed by social scholars. For instance, Eugene Webb writes:

> for both Ricoeur and Voegelin, there is a gradual process, a continuum of symbolization, by which one renders increasingly articulate and explicit a meaning already compactly present as a whole on the earliest, most compactly suggestive level of symbolism. It is precisely for this reason that both consider it possible and important to trace back through the layers of symbolization to the basic experience that engender the whole series of layers (Webb 1981: 100).

The most important similarity between Voegelin and Ricoeur concerns the case of comprehension. The significance of symbols and myth for establishing the meaning of social order and political activity.

Voegelin used the term "symbolization" to demonstrate the important human mechanism of creation and the order in history (including the social and political order). As Voegelin stated, the history of symbolization is a progression from compact to differentiated experiences and symbols. He distinguished two basic forms of symbolization that characterize great periods of history: "one is the symbolization of society and its order as an analogue of the cosmos and its order; the other is the symbolization of social order by analogy with the order of a human existence that is well attuned to being" (Voegelin 1987: 43).

Within the hermeneutic approach, Ricoeur presented his own conception of symbol. In *The Conflict of Interpretations*, he defined a symbol "as any structure of signification in which a direct, primary, literal meaning designates, in addition, another meaning which is indirect, secondary, and figurative and which can be apprehended only through the first" (Ricoeur 1974: 13). His comprehension of a symbol gives a possibility to explain some fundamental aspects of *the political* as symbolic because it has strong connection with hermeneutic of action and the conception of the foundations of social sciences. I mean the development of Ricoeur's ideas in the way of social symbolic interaction. Symbolic interaction means that interactive structures of social reality are created by interpretations of the communicative symbols. Therefore, the political world can be represented as a social construction, which is built by symbols and interpretation of their meaning through the social experience of political agents.

The political world (its order and manifestations of phenomena in its space) is determined largely by the way people imagine their political and social existence. It gives rise to the system of social imaginaries. The social imaginary, as, for example, Charles Taylor defines it, is something wider and deeper than intellectual schemes to which people refer when they are thinking of social reality. He writes: "I am thinking, rather, of the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations" (Taylor 2004: 23). In Taylor's book *The Modern Social Imaginaries*, three most important aspects of the social imaginary are distinguished. They are as follows: (1) the way ordinary people "imagine" their social surroundings, that is often not expressed in theoretical terms, but is carried about in images and different narratives (stories, and legends); (2) a set of imaginaries is shared by a large group of people or even entire society; and (3) the possibility of common understanding that makes common practices and shared sense of legitimacy possible. Therefore, I'd like to conclude that social representations can be interpreted as a kind of internal map or description of the political world that promotes our orientation in public sphere and indicates how we can and should act in certain social and political contexts. However, one should note that the description of the political order is not only a theoretical understanding of the social sphere. Such description is significantly related to the social and political practice: "The understanding implicit in practice stands to social theory in the same relation that my ability to get around a familiar environment stands to a (literal) map of this area. I am very well able to orient myself without ever having

adopted the standpoint of overview the map offers me" (Taylor 2004: 26). In general, we have to understand the social imaginary as a complex phenomenon that involves at least two levels – the level of social and political facts and the level of standards.

The modern system of social imaginary appeared as the result of social and cultural processes taking place in the political world in times of modernity. At that point, the new moral order had been established and had entered into the imaginary order, transforming the fundamental principles of the political world.

In summary, *the political* as imaginary is associated with social imagination, which should be understood as the system of ideas that are unique to members of certain community presenting their attitude to the phenomena and processes taking place in the political world around them, their relations to others, and their expectations and assessments causing these expectations.

Also, the social imaginary is the foundation for building consensus in the political community. Thus, it does not lose its representation as a complex system that implicitly contains the common expectation and conventional understanding of things that are related to collective practices.

A special political importance belongs to fantasy, which may be defined as the imagination that produces images of spontaneous manner. Such definition is based on the Kantian comprehension of fantasy, which was presented in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*. According to Kant, the definition of fantasy as a special kind of imagination can be based on the distinction between two kinds of imagination – the productive and reproductive. The reproductive imagination can acquire

the political value as a means of preserving the order of the political world, its actual factuality. It helps legitimize meaning that it causes. The productive imagination appears as a tool for the emancipation of the individual. Such emancipation can be provided by the socio-political function of aesthetics and art, for example. It is evident that aesthetics and art can establish a new principle of reality. This principle is the basis for special kind of politics, which oppose the politics of ratio. A kind of politics, we detect in this case could be called the politics of sensuality. The establishment of the politics of sensuality aims at the liberation of feelings from the pressure of civilization (it can be interpreted as an aspect of liberation of the human nature from the domination of civilization, which has an instrumental character). This liberation is not realized by using the repressive means but through creativity and gaming activity. In other words, we meet with imaginary manifestations of political agonism here.

The political world can be represented as a world of symbolic action. The capacity for symbolization is one of the basic human capabilities. Symbol, as Ricoeur defines it, is "any structure of signification in which a direct, primary, literal meaning designates, in addition, another meaning which is indirect, secondary and figurative and which can be apprehended only through the first" (Ricoeur 1974: 12-13). When we pay attention to the symbolic dimension of the political world, the sphere of politics becomes a hermeneutic field. The political action in this world is mediated by symbols because the remarkable ability of political actor concerns the linguistic activity. Symbols are closely associated with language, which controls the expression of ideas and

interpretation (and as a result, understanding) of events in the world.

Reference to symbols saturates self-interpretation of the political community. It makes the possibility of such interpretations and identities that are created by them to be more meaningful and regular. In his book *The New Science of Politics*, Voegelin states: "The self-illumination of society through symbols is an integral part of social reality, and one may even say its essential part, for through such symbolization the members of a society experience it as more than an accident or a convenience; they experience it as of their human essence" (Voegelin 1987: 27). The presence of symbolic structures in the interpretation of the phenomena of the political world gives them their essential dimension caused by the human capacity for transcendence. Moreover, the essence of *the political* is more intuitively perceived if there is a reference to symbolic structures.

Human world is full of symbolic structures that cause emotional perception of the political phenomena. By such "political" emotions, the social consensus concerning the most ticklish political questions can be created without radical conflicts. In the Pierre Bourdieu's work *Language and Symbolic Power*, we can find the definition of symbol and its social meaning which is appropriate to this thesis. He writes: "Symbols are the instruments *par excellence* of 'social integration': as instruments of knowledge and communication […], they make it possible for there to be a *consensus* on the meaning of the social world, a consensus which contributes fundamentally to the reproduction of the social order" (Bourdieu 1991: 166). The system of symbols creates a particular type of power – the symbolic

power, which has an ability to construct a reality that ensures the establishment of "direct worldview". This type of worldview provides something that could be called "logical conformism" (a term used in Durkheim's sociology). It makes an agreement between the members of the community possible, based on the homogeneous perception of socio-political context.

The functioning of *the political* as symbolic provides special institutions established by cultural mechanisms. The social theory describes these institutions as anonymous and virtually presented in the mass consciousness.

The consideration of social and political institutions by reference to the symbolic order appears to be an alternative to functionalistic approach in understanding the phenomena of the political world, according to which institutions do not lend themselves to understanding otherwise than by reference to their functions. In Cornelius Castoriadis' work, we can find the conception of social institutions as a symbolic system, which is sanctioned by society and combines two elements – functional and imaginary. Castoriadis writes:

> Institutions cannot be reduced to the symbolic but they can exist only in the symbolic; they are impossible outside of a second-order symbolism; for each institution constitutes a particular symbolic network. A given economic organization, a system of law, an instituted power structure, a religion – all exist socially as sanctioned symbolic systems. These systems consist in relating symbols (signifiers) to signifieds (representations, orders, commands or inducements to do or not to do something, consequences for actions – significations in the loosest sense of the term) and in validating them as such, that is to say in making this relation more or

less obligatory for the society or the group concerned (Castoriadis 1987: 117).

Therefore, the symbolic order allows real actions in the political world. *The political* should not be reduced to symbolic, but the network of symbols causes its more evident appearance.

Conclusions

The three-dimensional model of the political world I am trying to present in the article shows typology of *the political*, which pays attention to the most fundamental manifestations of this phenomenon. It makes possible to achieve a better philosophical comprehension of the politics and meaning which are generated by it.

The idea of a three-dimensional political world model seems to be the response to Marcuse's idea of one-dimensional man criticizing modern industrial society. However, these two conceptions deal with different aspects of the theoretical comprehension of politics. Marcuse's conception represented the critical theory of the society and analysis of the psychological type of human which was created by the modern industrial society. The conception of a three-dimensional model of the political world deals with ontological aspects of *the political* itself. As a result, this conception tends to demonstrate the fundamental mechanisms of political implementation of the anthropological strategies that establish the human being as *bios politicos*. Of course, we should remember that generally, the modern political philosophy is critical in nature when it comes to the analysis of the political world. Thus, the three-dimensional model of the political world as a philosophi-

cal interpretation of the politics has specific motives similar to Marcuse's critical theory. For example, the preconditions to a critique of the politics in this article could be seen in the idea of the political as agonistic based on a critical analysis of the (neo)liberalism, or the idea of the political as symbolic and imaginary criticize the functional vision of the social institutions. But the general purpose of the three-dimensional model of the political world is to cover the diversity of the political and to organize it into a typology.

Although *the political* as antagonistic primarily indicates the conflicting nature of politics, it also allows us to understand the basis of political friendship. Therefore, this type of the political reveals the fundamental principle of creating a political community and avoiding the transformation of a radical extraordinary state of politics into a permanent state. The agonistic dimension of *the political* points to the diversity of political positions, their adversity and the formation of their own systems of values and ideals, which form the basis of various ideologies, concepts, and political anthropology. At the same time, this type of *the political* sets the preconditions for tolerance and the development of political strategies based on deliberation. Finally, the third type of the political points to the deep link between politics and culture with its symbolic structures. Thus, we find mechanisms for the formation and maintenance of political order and its legitimation through the use of imagination and symbolization.

The analysis of the antagonistic, agonistic, imaginary and symbolic types of *the political* displays problems of identity (including the identity of the political actor), the actual state of democracy and possibly

its projects, the foundations of political culture. These problems demonstrate that the presented typology is not an abstraction, which is divorced from political life in its historical and topical forms. The defined types are not separated from each other. For the realization of philosophical interpretation, we have identified them, presenting the kind of ideal types for a better understanding of the diversity of manifestations of the phenomenon of *the political* and determining its essence. However, in fact, the antagonistic, agonistic, imaginary and symbolic manifestations of *the political* are often intertwined and realized as a network of relationships and political actions that create a three-dimensional model of the political world.

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TRIMATIS POLITINIO PASAULIO MODELIS: FILOSOFINĖ INTERPRETACIJA

Dmytro Shevchuk

Santrauka. Straipsnyje pateikiama fundamentalių ontologinių politinio pasaulio principų filosofinė analizė. Autorius susitelkia į tris pagrindinius politiškumo raiškos būdus: (i) antagonistinį, kuris pateikiamas per draugo ir priešo santykius; (ii) agonistinį, kuriuo politika atsiskleidžia kaip varžybos tarp skirtingų ideologijų ir pozicijų; ir (iii) įsivaiduojamą ir simbolinį, kuris pasirodo kaip tvirtas politikos ir socialinių kultūrinių aplinkybių ryšys. Šie politiškumo pasireiškimai dažnai būna susipynę ir įkūnija trimatį politinio pasaulio modelį, grindžiantį santykių ir politinių veiksmų tinklą.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: politiškumas, politinis pasaulis, antagonizmas, agonizmas, įsivaizduojamybė, simbolis