

component. This energy involves mass social action destroying the old social order with its norms, values and institutional structures. The production of decay energy means the actualization of social risk in the form of uncontrollable actions by atomized or politically constructed social actors. Empirically this energy exists in the form of new risk groups emerging and spreading everywhere: forced migrants, refugees, homeless, jobless, 'wasted people' (Bauman 2004), 'unidentified armed groups' (UAG), persons suffering from Afghan, Chechen and other syndromes; this energy also manifests itself in interethnic conflicts, local wars, shootouts, the disappearance of tens of thousands of persons, contract killing and mass terrorism. It exists, furthermore, in economic forms such as artificial bankruptcy, violent entrepreneurship, corporate raids, driving people out of their homes in order to commercialize the land, etc.

Theoretically, the emission of energy of decay is a process opposite to the mobilization of resources and accumulation of human and social capital. Creative social action requires mobilization of resources (human, financial, and information), while disintegration as a destructive action means the transformation of these resources and their bearers into unsafe 'waste' and their dispersal into the environment. Yet there is another source of decay energy: it is the entire human-made environment, including cultivated nature which either seems redundant or is exploited until its physical disintegration. This is no longer a phenomenon of normal accidents (Perrow 1984), nor is it a modernization of risk. Following Beck I am convinced that our generation is living in the age of side effects (Beck 1992: 19-20, 23-24, 60-62).

5. The role of internet

This role is carefully investigated in many works of European researchers of SMS. What is it specifically to Russia? First of all, we are witnessing a beginning of renewal of democracy inspired by the internet communication. But in contrast to the West, it is going hand by hand with changes in parliamentary democracy itself, especially at the national level. Russian sub-politics initiated by internet, is targeted to the restoration of such underpinnings of democracy as honest electoral process at all levels. We are witnessing then, how the internet communication has become an alternative public sphere, especially in the 'turbulent times'. This process has a set of important consequences. First, it helps to restore the feelings of collectivity (togetherness). Second, it empowers rank-and-file people to become activists. Thirdly, the very possibility to be an attendant of independent public

sphere returns to these people the sense of being a citizen. Fourthly, this independent public sphere which is up to now beyond the state control makes its participants more free and creative in their mental and practical activity. Fifthly, the membership in a SM via internet helps to the newcomers to shape or reshape their identity, which in turn gives an impetus to reshape their primary eco-structures. Sixthly, a political activity in the internet tends to be more *ad hoc*, less dependant on the variety of local situations and conflicts. Internet as a global network facilitates the emergence of the grassroots and other forms of local activism. The diversity of situations requires a variability of local forms of internet activity of a SM or of its branch. In all cases, the internet communication is an instrument of positive selection of various forms of a SM's activity as well as of its leaders. Simultaneously, the ordinary people have become convinced that information is not simply knowledge, but it is a power too. Counter-expertise, counter-information and shaping an alternative public opinion are the main tools of it. It should be noted that if the pressure of adversarial forces (the state, counter-movements inspired by it, or the environment which has overcome its carrying capacity) has become excessive, two interrelated transformations are happened. The activity of SMs shifts to the internet and social movement organizations (SMOs) are converted into the NGOs. In the emergency cases the internet has become an instrument of a first aid. Finally, not only in the EC but in recent Russia as well, 'contemporary social movements and their use of ICT constitute a major element in the landscape of late modern democracy' (Dalgren 2004: XIII). And communication among activists and ordinary citizens via internet I see as a basic prerequisite for their civic and political activity.

6. The carrying capacity of an environment

The term 'carrying capacity' is borrowed by me from the natural sciences. What is new here is that when the social capacity of a particular environment is surpassed (by corruption, law violation, concentration of criminals or drug-takers, etc.) it transforms from the absorber of risks into its producer (Yanitsky 2000). If such transformation infects many human communities and the whole settlements, it calls in question the very possibility of emergence of 'positive' SMs aimed at the bettering of living environment, – natural, social or institutional. In Russia the state and its institutions are the main environment. If this environment is totally alien to a SM, the latter acquires a defensive if not illegal character (Yanitsky 1999).