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The “Third Generation” Constructivism: Framing and Communication

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Abstract. The research is devoted to the consideration of some new methodological trends in the constructivism of the “third generation” of scientists. Its representatives, while remaining committed to the basic postulates of constructivism, at the same time turned their main attention to issues related to the theory of communication to framing as one of the ways of constructing reality and saturating it with certain meanings. Based on Martin Buber’s theory of dialogue, constructivists draw attention to the dangers of universalism in the study of politics as a prerequisite and even a manifestation of the ideological fixation of certain concepts, positions, and theses. Meanwhile, the formation of a community as “we” presupposes a pluralism of approaches and recognition of different points of view, and at the same time “cleaning” the information space of many frames that allow, through the manipulation of “fakes,” stereotypes and false stories, to form an idea of reality that significantly distorts it and even modifying.

Keywords: constructivism, communication theory, framing, dialogue theory, interactive constructivism, universalism, pluralism

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Конструктивизм «третьего поколения»: фрейминг и коммуникация

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Аннотация. Исследование посвящено рассмотрению некоторых новых методологических тенденций в конструктивизме «третьего поколения» ученых. Его представители, сохраняя приверженность базовым постулатам конструктивизма, в то же время обратили свое основное внимание на вопросы, связанные с теорией коммуникации, в частности к фреймингу как одному из способов конструирования реальности и насыщения ее определенными смыслами. Опираясь на теорию диалога Мартина Бубера, конструктивисты обращают внимание на опасности универсализма в исследовании политики как предпосылки и даже манифестации идеологизированной фиксации некоторых понятий, положений и тезисов. Между тем формирование сообщества как «мы» предполагает плюрализм подходов и признание разных точек зрения и одновременно «очищение» информационного пространства от множества фреймов, позволяющих через манипулирование «фейками», стереотипами и ложными историями формировать представление о реальности, существенно ее искажающей и даже видоизменяющей.

Ключевые слова: конструктивизм, теория коммуникации, фрейминг, теория диалога, интерактивный конструктивизм, универсализм, плюрализм

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As is known, in 1989, the book of American International Relations scientist Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, “The World of Our Creation: Rules and Rules in Social Theory and in International Relations”, was published [Onuf 1989]. In this work, Onuf, for the first time, in relation to the theory of international relations, used the concept of “constructivism”, which gave its name to the current of international political thought. Since the late 1980s and early 1990s, this trend has occupied one of the most important places in today’s international theoretical discourse. Onuf’s very ambitious plan was to “reconstruct” the whole theory of international relations without losing the political nature of the discipline, while at the same

time incorporating it into social theory. At the center of his project, he placed the theory of structuration of the English sociologist Anthony Giddens, according to which society is reproduced as a system of interaction between individuals—subjects of actions who create structures, which, in turn, serve as objective conditions—means (provide opportunities) and restrictions (set framework) for subsequent actions. Thus, in the words of Onuf, “people and society construct or constitute one another” [Onuf 1989]. The construction of reality, whether domestic or international, occurs through the actions of people, including speech acts, which, through repetition, are institutionalized into rules, which, in turn, format the behavior of citizens.

This seemingly simple idea played the role of a trigger in changes in the worldview of international affairs. Relatively quickly, constructivism gained many supporters. According to a 2017 survey by the Cambridge TRIP Research Group, more than 50 % of scientists outside the United States admitted to identifying as constructivists or using constructivist methods [Zarakol 2017]. At the same time, in the United States, due to many historical circumstances, including the long-standing emphasis on pragmatism, the number of constructivists is significantly lower than, for example, in Europe. However, the very fact of such a rapid growth in the popularity of constructivism among international relations scholars all over the world is quite remarkable.

In its most general form, constructivism is defined as the philosophical belief that people do not so much study the world as construct their own understanding of reality—the meanings of phenomena, events, and processes based on interaction with the environment—which provides evidence and opportunities for mental experimentation, or, otherwise, constructing reality. This approach was historically formed in the scientific community as one of the directions that presupposes a set of ideals and regulatory principles of cognition; therefore, for thousands of years, it has already been present in one form or another in the history of political thought.

The motto of the constructivist approach can be reduced to the following: objective reality is not accessible to human knowledge, as is the understanding of truth—we “know only what we have in one way or another constructed, created, or produced ourselves” [Rockmore 2005]. In essence, it is an epistemology that suggests that cognition is perceived as the active participation of the subject in the construction (building) and interpretation of a world, rather than simply as its study, reflection, or description.

Constructivist political scientists, following sociologists Berger and Luhmann [2004], began to assert that international relations are socially constructed. As a social theory, constructivism reflects on the role of knowledge (epistemology) in the constitution of social reality. In the words of famous constructivists Finnemore and Sikkink [2001], it talks about the nature of social

life and social change. It sees its task in understanding and defining the role of intersubjectivity, social context, interaction, and co-construction of agents and structures, as well as the rule-driven nature of society. In this sense, it is a metatheory; otherwise, using the concept of Kuhn, it is a paradigm of paradigms.

Furthermore, the “explosive” success of constructivism was largely due to the fact that it proposed a “third, middle way” to virtually all binary opposition that constituted the “mainstream” in the theory of international relations, which was at the center of the “great debates”, i.e., allowed to move away from the extremes of rationalism/reflectivism, realism/idealism, individualism/holism, etc. Hence the completely natural eclecticism of constructivism, its compromise, unclear outlines, and relative laxity of methodological requirements, which does not at all make it less interesting heuristically or less applicable as “usable knowledge”. Paradigm boundaries are characterized by transparency, fluidity, and overlap with other paradigmatic approaches. Therefore, defining the constructivist paradigm in rigid, unambiguously fixed terms is fundamentally incorrect.

It is not surprising, therefore, that definitions of constructivism often contradict each other, and this also applies to such categories as ideas, norms, rules, identity, and interests. Constructivism is also divided into different directions: “soft” and “hard” constructivism; moderate and radical; critical and conventional; postmodern and neoclassical. The diversity in assessments is largely explained by the fact that constructivism was not initially a homogeneous movement; it was characterized by pluralism. Moreover, in the future, it continued to spread along different approaches and directions, in some cases remaining faithful to the original social orientation, in others moving closer to political psychology, history, or pedagogy, or simply remaining within the framework of political theory (especially critical theory). Matthews [2000] identifies over 20 different forms of constructivism in terms of methodological, radical, didactic, and dialectical considerations.

In any case, constructivism was able to raise a number of new issues that usually either did not touch on traditional theories or gave them a clear interpretation, including the question of identity, norms, causality, and understanding, the role of authority in shaping national interests, institutions, and international governance, the new type of territorial design and composition of transnational regions, as well as problems and aspects of communication. The key concepts in constructivist argumentation were “discourse”, “norms”, “identity”, and “socialization”, which radically changed the very nature of discussion of such problems as security policy, globalization, human rights, and other most pressing theoretical and practical issues of world politics.

One of the most important themes of constructivism was the relationship between agents and structures. Constructivists are most interested not so much

in existing institutions, structures, or systems themselves but in how alternative forms of discourse are chosen, i.e., how concepts and events are given meaning, how researchers formulate substantive questions, and how they adopt certain interpretative methods.

One of the trends in constructivism was so-called interactive constructivism, which makes an important contribution to the consideration of communication problems. This direction was formed largely under the influence of the philosophical discourse of postmodernism. A notable contribution to its development was made by the “school” of the University of Cologne in Germany, and in particular by such authors as Reich, Neubert, and some others [Reich 1998, Neubert 2001]. The attention of interactive constructivists is focused mainly on discourses, which they view, on the one hand, as symbolic forms reflecting current patterns of rules, distribution, and arrangements; in other words, they are connected with the recognition of the fact that every discourse seeks to spread, that is, to become a model for other discourses; on the other hand, they perceive discourses as events, which are movements within such prescriptions, i.e., coincidences, shifts, and displacements that again and again undermine the security of an ordered structure. In other words, according to the theorists of this “school”, even the tension that exists when discussing discourses should be taken into account; they should be perceived and analyzed as mobile, existing temporarily in contexts of social understanding and even at the moment of their formulation in a number of cases already in the process of movement towards other discourses. The discourse is usually in a state of construction, reconstruction, and deconstruction, and its perception by the researcher and other scientists or observers may vary significantly. In this light, the possibility of considering communication from the point of view of the medium and the creator of discourse is of particular importance.

In this case, the actor is never left alone. He is always both a participant and an observer of some action [Reich 1998]. Since discourse is seen as symbolic order and the creator of rules, patterns, distributions, and arrangements, the context of understanding and legitimization is always significant. Even at the linguistic level, it includes the way of application as well as cultural viability, reflecting the agreements that have been reached, even temporarily, in a given society. Therefore, discourse cannot be understood as some kind of integrity or totality. There is always something missing.

In contrast to objective and universal approaches, constructivists assume that action, participation, and observation have their origins in culture. This means that the objectivity and universality of discourses turn out to be so fragile in the current conditions that they quickly disintegrate and are destroyed during the postmodern turn. Perhaps they retain their relevance in themselves, but with the slightest attempt to go outside and collide with other discourses and arguments,

they are no longer able to maintain universalistic applicability for all people and any constellations of human interests. In other words, they become just one view among many others.

Discourses, as have been repeatedly emphasized in the scientific literature, are not just language games outside of practice and institutions. They are deeply immersed in the cultural context. Therefore, the practice of discursive communication is not limited to the search for a scientifically based, objectively provable way of thinking inherent in a particular community; it certainly takes into account the context of relationships and life worlds that escape the attention of scientific objectification. For example, Habermas (1978) proposed an interpretation that combined rationalism, universalism, and modern democracy while emphasizing their connection to the life world. From his point of view, liberal democracy is the embodiment of progress in rational argumentation and transcultural value premises, the embodiment of the regulating ideal of free and undistorted communication.

Other theorists, such as Mouffe, Laclau, Derrida, and others, place more emphasis on disagreement than agreement. In their opinion, democratic politics cannot, in principle, be based on complete consensus. Conflicts, social contradictions, and clashes of interests, whether in domestic politics or on the international arena, are expected at all levels, public or private. “Indeed,” Mouffe emphasizes, “the specificity of liberal democracy as a new political form of society lies in the legitimization of conflict and the refusal to destroy it through the introduction of an authoritarian order. Liberal democracy is first and foremost a pluralistic democracy” [Mouffe 1996]. Accordingly, political institutions’ support for liberal democracy presupposes a dynamism between agreement and dissent. In this sense, constructivism follows the tradition of postmodernism, which Lyotard called “strife”.

These themes acquire special significance among the most modern “third generation” of constructivists. The third generation of constructivists returned to postpositivism (In all its many faces) and again turned to the study of discourses and the interpretation of meanings.

If the constructivists of the second generation (at the end of the last century) were almost not interested in the problem of the human “I”, the relationship of the individual with other people, and did not take too carefully into account the deeply social nature of human connections, then the interest of representatives of the third generation is aimed primarily at studying the behavior of individuals and, to a lesser extent, institutions, groups, and structures as a whole.

From this point of view, an appeal to the ideas of the famous existentialist philosopher Martin Buber (1878–1965) and his philosophy of dialogue has become important. In the book “I and You” (1923), Buber argued that there is a close connection between a person’s relationship with God and their relationship with their neighbor [Buber 1993].

The conditions for interpersonal dialogue, according to Buber, are not just the presence of another person but a genuine intention to jointly solve some problem, the condition for which is openness towards each other. As a result, the “I-Thou” relationship arises, that is, the ability to hear the interlocutor and realize the unity of coexistence with them. The construction of “I-Thou” relationships allows one to connect several “I’s around a common center and thereby create an “interpersonal sphere” of relationships, or, in other words, “we” as a community.

But this is only one side of the problem. The other is the type of relationship called “I-It”, which is based on the instrumentalization of members of society and distancing people from each other. These relationships prevent the emergence of dialogue and the formation of a “we” community.

In any case, Buber’s interpretation presupposes the acceptance of the other and the recognition of the admissibility of otherness. Buber emphasizes that there is no room for dominance or hierarchy in dialogue, nor is there room for excluding anyone from participation. Accordingly, a “dialogical world”, according to Buber, is an event that occurs between people without mutual reservations. However, genuine dialogue has become impossible in our time; there are too many accompanying circumstances, so restoring the purely human ability to conduct dialogue should be the most important task. Moreover, the dialogue itself often turns out to be an imitation; dialogue is replaced by polemics, that is, an a priori demonstration of confidence in the correctness of one’s point of view and rejection of alternatives (later, the French philosopher Foucault would write about this in detail).

Turning to Buber is by no means accidental. This is another confirmation that constructivism, as a theoretical approach, rejects all forms of rational universalism.

This statement is important considering the particularly obsessive recent ideologization of liberalism, which obviously creates a distorted and dogmatic picture of the world, primarily through communication. Universalism inevitably makes discourse extremely one-sided, constructivists believe. Even the most rational individuals, relying on the common interests of their interpretive community in their desire to find the most rational solution to existing problems, cannot avoid excluding some other people from the community of interests, effectively preventing the other side from presenting their arguments. The French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas wrote that Auschwitz (as a concentration camp, an extermination camp in which over 4 million prisoners perished, over 1 million of whom were Jews) became a symbol of barbaric reason, which ultimately corresponded to the discourse of the “West” and the orientation of the “Western” universalist type of thinking on selfhood and the evidence of otherness and rejection of others [Levinas, 2006]. The denial of others is present wherever a higher mind is proclaimed, even if purely formally. In a contradictory, pluralistic society, the very practice of argumentation deconstructs such formal concepts of the final argument since it sacrifices the

ideal-typical. Thus, the very expectation of consensus blocks the recognition of the otherness of the other and of different opinions in interpretive communities striving for recognition. Constructivism is inherently prone to arbitrariness in interpretation and therefore prevents the ideologization of put-forward positions and arguments [Kalinina 2020].

To avoid totalitarian polemics, it is interpersonal dialogue that is considered by third-generation constructivists as the main medicine for a modern society of general alienation. Moreover, it is assumed that constructivism itself is open to dialogue, preventing it from becoming dogma, which, unfortunately, is characteristic of many other paradigms as well as some of its movements. Accordingly, it becomes possible to view constructivists as active builders of the global community outside the academic world, which some of them see as their strategic goal. In their approach, the fundamental building blocks of social life are the interactions of individuals with each other, or, in other words, communication.

Communication as a problem of constructivism

Over time, the approach to society itself has changed. Under the influence of non-classical and post-non-classical pictures of the world, the nature of knowledge changed: concepts of scientific ontology (such as atom, quantum, quark, matter, gene, neuron, virus, etc.) began to be considered as social constructs. Even the very concept of society has turned into a social construct, and such a construct, the origin of which, as another major German sociologist, Niklas Luhmann [2004], argued, cannot be explained in any other way except from itself. Luhmann was the first to reduce the entire social process to a single operation: communication, i.e., the unity of three elements: message, information, and understanding. Thus, Luhmann's views ultimately turned out to be a unique form of socially radical constructivism.

Several problems arise when considering communication issues, including the fact that there is still no precise definition of the concept and its components. However, we intuitively realize that we are talking about another “substantially challenging concept”, which suggests different interpretations while preserving a mobile “nerve node” [Gallie 1956], although “floating” depending on the context and objectives of the study.

It is important to note the fact that we act and, most importantly, interact, as a rule, within the framework of a certain logic, which implies a constructivist principle. There are countless approaches to communication. They are considered both in a narrow and broad sense by such authors as Newcomb, Mead, Saussure, Jakobson, Chomsky, Bell, Galbraith, and others. In general, approaches can be divided into linguistic, interactional, and technocratic. Accordingly, despite the fact that their subject is similar, the specificity of the object in communicative discourse changes. If linguistic

approaches consider the problems of language, then the interactional approach puts interaction itself at the forefront. In turn, technocratic approaches are in part similar to those previously mentioned but pass through the prism of means of information delivery—means of communication.

As is known, communication, which affects the fundamental aspects of human understanding, has a social orientation as an activity that, if successful, establishes mutual understanding between people. In contrast to the structural approach to society, which considers the integrity of social institutions (state, religion, family, etc.), the microsociological approach, one of the options of which is third-generation constructivism, is focused on human interactions and, most importantly, the interpretation of people's behavior. This requires observing people's behavior and explaining the motivations for actions—hence the desire of researchers to understand the nature of their communication with each other.

Today, particularly great importance is attached to symbols that embody the social world as well as to language (speech). It is assumed that the person participating in the communication recognizes it and, at the same time, interprets it. In the process of communication, people can change roles, but the key point is understanding the other, which means not just the need to put oneself in their place but also to include imagination, reflecting their idea of the external environment.

Thus, the third generation returned to the sociological ideas of symbolic interactionism. It is a question of considering the various forms of dominance and structural inequality before exposing them as interactive processes. The “mirror of the self” much more often recreates negative emotions such as excessive pride, irritation, or anger than positive ones. In other words, a person is constantly reproduced in an interactive experience, in the daily interaction of emotions, identity, and body. This applies not only to humans, but also to international actors. Thus, Subotic and Zarakol [2013] emphasize that the “sense of self-determination” of the state “may contain emotions such as shame, guilt, and embarrassment, and not only positive feelings”. Hence, the self-identification of a state is not simply the result of its struggle to improve its position in relation to other states as a form of realizing national interest but also a consequence of an assessment of its own past and internal conflicts, and in many cases, a revision of their meaning under external influence. In a book with the very telling title “After Defeat: How the East Learned to Live with the West”, Zarakol shows how historically Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and Japan externalized Western norms, which, in their opinion, led to the emergence of “inferiority complexes” and attempts to correct their own identity [Zarakol 2017]. Or, in other words, variants of the “post-imperial syndrome in the East” in the former metropolises, which, as it seems to “Western” theorists, combines depression with arrogance. Obviously, this opens up opportunities for external forces to use this kind of

syndrome for their own purposes and manipulative techniques, which, in fact, is what is being done.

The specificity of the rules governing social interaction is crucial for understanding international relations, as constructivists constantly emphasize. Therefore, the researcher does not simply need to take into account the phenomena of world politics as a given, but to understand the events and the decision-making process, that is, to record the characteristics that until recently were simply ignored by scientists and analysts.

So to speak, symbolic interactionism knocks “high politics” off its pedestal, makes it trivial, and therefore makes it open to criticism. In other words, the understanding of decision-making processes is becoming more democratic and less totalitarian in nature; in a sense, “big politics” is being “humanized”. Constructivism thus reaffirms the social nature of science. “Political reality from the position of a new ontological politics (and the third generation of constructivists obviously works in this way—AT) is unfolding before our eyes and requires active participation now, without relying on past events and without much regard for the future. Objects, things, people, forces, and ideas manifest their potential political substance in the actual struggle and conflict of network relationships” [Smorgunov 2020].

Another important aspect of the third generation’s thinking is the focus on the influence of context and conditions on international political and foreign policy decisions, the perception of which is largely determined by the framework of a strategic culture. For example, in the case of Russian-American relations, there are such aspects of conditions that in turn radically changed the main ways and mechanisms of foreign policy: (a) asymmetry instead of parity—players try to influence each other based on the provision of raw materials, level of interest, declared values, and other parameters that distort the perception of the actions of the other side and change the course of negotiations; (b) there is no single dominant instrument (e.g., what were nuclear weapons in the era of the “Cold War”), increased importance is given to economic and other sanctions, manipulative-information operations, methods of “hybrid war”, etc. Finally, it is also necessary to take into account the changing international environment: pandemics, climate change, natural disasters, and transnational radical movements [Jordan, Stulberg, Troitskiy 2021].

Constructivism today, thus, clearly demonstrates how in social cognition there is a transition from the “classical, mechanistic” (Newton) picture of the world to “non-classical” (Einstein) and then to “post-non-classical” (Prigozhin), which was expressed in the abandonment of the traditional dichotomy “subjective-objective”, according to which “science” implied ignoring the “subject” in the process of research. On the contrary, human consciousness, over time, began to be recognized as a priority parameter in constructing

ontological space. The field of study of constructivism gradually includes the main features of “post-non-classical science”: non-linearity, co-evolution, self-organization, the idea of global evolutionism, synchronicity, systematicity, randomness, etc. Reality is perceived, on the one hand, as a process and, on the other, as a network of relationships that includes a person. A connection occurs during the study of systematicity and historicity. The natural sciences ultimately involve the problem of understanding in socio-humanitarian design and constructive activities. Determining the tools with which rational thinking can be formed, constructivists have recently paid special attention to the mechanisms of changing community frames.

Framing in communication

In recent years, framing theory has become one of the most frequently applied theories in the communication sciences. The roots of the approach lie in cognitive psychology and anthropology. Gradually, framing was recognized in other disciplines, including sociology, linguistics, political science, international relations, etc., and the meaning of the theory often changed.

As a rule, frames are used in the context of the production and interpretation of news; that is, they are a kind of connection between the creation and consumption of information about events. They show the most typical manner in which journalists shape the content of news in accordance with latent structures of meaning, as well as the reception of them by an audience previously prepared to imagine the world in accordance with the presentations of journalists [McQuail 2005].

Framing can be identified in several phases of the communication process, in the thinking of journalists and audiences, as well as in media content and culture in general. In a sense, frames surround us on all sides, but it still remains unclear where they begin and where they end. Goffman [1974] showed that frames follow their own logic and meaning, separating themselves as much as possible from individuals but emphasizing their connection with culture. Frames are a central part of any culture, but they can be institutionalized in different ways. Accordingly, culture is an organized group of beliefs, codes, myths, stereotypes, values, norms, etc., as well as frames contained in the common collective memory of a group or society. Since the individual is not able to change cultural phenomena, frames are usually imposed from the outside. Thus, a person cannot change the principles of the stock exchange game, parliamentary elections, or traffic rules. However, individuals constantly make use of cultural phenomena. Journalists include them in the content of media reports and then present them to the audience as a kind of self-evident fact.

Baldwin Van Gorp [2007], using a constructivist paradigm, attempted to integrate culture into the framing process. He draws attention to some aspects of frames:

- 1) Framing allows journalists and audiences to see that the same events can have different meanings depending on the frame used. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the most frequently used frames in other historical contexts and periods.
- 2) Since frames are part of culture, actual frames are not included in the content of information in the media; they are largely independent of each other. The meanings attached to the content of media messages and their connection with certain frames are part of the reading process. Having a certain prior knowledge of cultural phenomena, readers or viewers seem to pass through them the new information they receive. Accordingly, its meaning may change.
- 3) The process of social construction of the meanings of frames remains invisible precisely because of their connection with cultural phenomena. It is, as it were, implicit and unnoticeable to the participants in communication. But then it becomes a kind of power mechanism. Another point is that the perception and assimilation of frames by an individual depends on several factors, in particular the recipient's attentiveness, interests, beliefs, expectations, desires, and attitude toward what is happening in general. In this regard, the frame becomes an invitation or demand to read the message in a very specific way.
- 4) The cultural approach also includes the influence of macrostructure on the framing process. In other words, the way in which individuals perceive information is both motivated by their internal inclinations and reactions and directed by cultural processes as a whole. Belonging to a culture makes frames very stable, giving a broad interpretation of reality, in contrast to mobile and dynamic "schemas"—organized knowledge, personal experience, memories, and feelings associated with them [Fiske, Taylor 1991]. Therefore, no strictly individual frames are possible in principle.
- 5) The stable meaning of frames means that they change extremely slowly over time. This means that "dynamic" ones, which are in the process of constant change and depend on the situation and topic of conversation, strictly speaking, are not frames. However, they cannot be called static. The process of framing is dynamic in its own way. The use of frames is the object of negotiations between journalists and audiences; new ones are approved, others disappear.

Hence, Van Gorp emphasizes the distinction between event, media content, and frame and draws attention to the reconstruction of "frame packages", the relationship

between “frame packages” and cultural phenomena, as well as the interaction between the sponsors of certain frames, the most important events, the content of media messages, schemas (objects or relationships between objects), and the entire set of frames.

Thus, the essence of frames is social interaction. Media workers interact with their sources and other actors in the public sphere; recipients interact with the content of information in the media as well as with each other. Therefore, framing simultaneously “works” at the textual, cognitive, and higher external levels (In particular, among sponsors and government agencies), which can introduce their own requirements in the coverage of information and its presentation, and, finally, take into account the totality of frames rooted in a given culture.

A frame is a device used to correct meanings, organize experiences, alert others that their interests and perhaps identity are at stake, and offer solutions to current problems. For the purpose of standardization, schemas provide an individual’s interpretation of a particular situation and then suggest appropriate behavior within that context. As follows, the carefully designed structure of interpretation is a social source of power with relative autonomy in relation to the material sources of power.

Bertram Scheufele [2004], one of the most famous framing theorists, identified four main framing effects: activation, transformation, the formation of a new frame, and, finally, the creation of general attitudes.

Frames are the building blocks for the creation of many resonant forms and thus function in carrying out legal normative orders. There are many examples in the empirical literature advocating an effective framework for engaging target regions and developing winning strategies for global change.

It can be concluded that the constructivist paradigm in politics envisages the analysis of the communicative environment as a tool for achieving the objectives of constructive policy: the destruction, change, and preservation of frames; interference in the habitat of society; and the construction of systems, including at the international level.

The unrelated elements of the text are united into something through cultural phenomena that simultaneously reflect the dynamic process of constructing social reality. Frames then fit into the schemes of recipients, who easily fill in the blanks due to previous experience, education, reading, impressions, traditions, etc. Constructivists, in essence, point to the interaction between the interpretative activity of the recipients of information and the power of frames manifested in different aspects of the information content. The micro- and macro-connections that arise place journalists and their audiences in a context in which they interact with a wider society; this is precisely the social process through which social reality is created, reproduced, and transformed.

It should also be noted that integrating different aspects of communication processes into framework analysis does not mean limiting media activity. Frames, as

has been emphasized many times, are part of culture. Therefore, “frame packages” and cultural phenomena are the main elements of influence on the schemes of both the media and their audience, because it is the frames that are the essence of collective memory and, at the same time, the basis of a constructivist approach.

Conclusion

Constructivists acknowledge, according to Finnemore and Sikkink [2001], that “all research includes interpretation, and therefore there is no neutral position from which they could obtain objective knowledge about the world, but they differ among themselves in what this interpretation should be and what kind of explanation it receives”. Moreover, the meanings can be hostile towards each other or more or less friendly; accordingly, they can contain a threat of destruction of social structures or, conversely, contribute to the realization of the interests of both individual states and communities.

First of all, the context is revealed—international events and processes against the background of which structures form meanings. Accordingly, constructivists study when, how, and why some specific practices became relatively fixed while others continued to remain mobile, unstable, and changeable. The next step is the establishment of rules regarding the behavior of individuals (for example, diplomats or statesmen), as well as institutions. These rules, generally reflecting ideas about the existing order, also stabilize the expectations of actors, including in relation to the authorities.

Clusters of rules—techniques and generalized procedures used in social practices—already carry more or less stable meanings that gradually acquire causal and normative force. At some point, they begin to turn into structures.

But the process does not stop there. Step by step, structures absorb more and more types of social order, including formal organizations and specific institutional regimes, and ultimately reach the level of the global social system. In any case, the most significant is not this or that institution in itself, but the “meaning” that is given to it.

Thus, constructivism of the “third generation” comes quite close to propaganda, the creation of an illusory reality, the formation of socially constructed phenomena that serve the implementation of foreign policy, and “soft power” as such. As a political theory, it is by no means harmless, and, if only for this reason, it deserves thorough reflection.

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