

# Everydayness of Peace and War

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**Abstract:** The article examines everydayness as an integrative sphere of society, which is dominant for a person since it is at the micro level that an individual forms his or her social reality. Dialectical relationships between the individual and the general can be traced in everydayness, a semantic content is formed, which makes it possible to understand what happens every day in the everyday life of a person. Therefore, everyday life acts as one of the mechanisms of formation of values, socialization and a source of formation of social capital at the micro-, meso-, and macro levels.

On the basis of empirical data, it is shown that social capital accumulates in the everyday sphere, which is strong and can withstand external aggressive manifestations, such as Russia's war against Ukraine. Ukrainian society can withstand full-scale military aggression due to solidarity ties, dense network communications, and social trust at the level of horizontal relationships. In this way, everyday life has a latent effect on the functioning of social institutions at the level of the city and the state which are the field of implementation of people's everyday routines.

**Keywords:** Everyday world, social capital, solidarity ties, war.

## INTRODUCTION

Unpredictability and turbulence, discontinuity and ambivalence are the concepts used by scholars to describe the beginning of the 21st century. Such states are prescribed to the macro level of society and they are less used to explain the micro level, the everyday sphere. This aspect of life is inherently conservative and s, unlike the public sphere, and therefore it has not been considered as valuable, which significantly affects the functions of social institutions and the mechanisms of their social interaction.

At the same time, the system of values and worldviews offered by the macro level are directly implemented in the daily activities of individuals and social groups. In this way, the dialectic of the individual and the social is realized through the constant mutual influence of everyday practices and generally accepted norms. Therefore, an adequate study of the processes of social life is not possible without studying the mechanisms of human daily life. According to Anthony Giddens, a feature of modern society is the relationship between globalizing influences and personal dispositions. He explained social order in terms of trust between people and the reutilization of their daily activities (Giddens, 1991). Therefore, the scientific issue that determines the relevance of our study is a certain lack of knowledge that everyday life has an uncertain axiological potential that affects the state of public consciousness, cultural dominants, social norms, and attitudes. The values of the everyday world

are especially evident in times of social crises, disasters, wars, revolutions, epidemics, etc. The unprovoked Russian military aggression on the territory of the sovereign state of Ukraine has changed people's everyday world and daily routines, and understanding these changes provides data for further research on transformational changes at both the national and global levels.

## EVERYDAYNESS AS A SOURCE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

At the everyday level, a person creates his or her social reality, transforming meanings, ideas, images and views depending on individual experience, beliefs, conscious and unconscious mindsets, emotions, collective communications, etc. Even creating his or her everyday life, a person brings there his or her social images, reflected experience and mental patterns through the things he or she is surrounded with. These are external signs of identity. They allow studying a person's attitude to the state, the society, the dominant system of values, etc. In this way, a person builds his or her own world based on his or her "I" as a subjective sense of centre.

Obviously, everydayness combines various aspects of a person's life: private life and public life, utilitarian actions and ideological choices, personal interests, and group or general social interests, and it transforms everyday moods into social mental attitudes. In these semantic contents, a person socializes and implements his or her own life and social projects. This method allows for a differentiated approach to characterize the turning periods of history: revolutions, wars, reforms, coups, etc., and it reveals how social groups determine

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the areas of problematization and ways to solve problems in everyday practice (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). In this regard, everyday life is indeed a "semantic universal" (according to Alfred Schutz, 1988), through which one can understand a person, his or her essence and history.

Evidently, everyday life can be considered one of the dominant spheres of society, which has integrative capacities, powers, and a certain social capital that extends to other social levels.

In everyday life, the vector of social trust extends to the level of micro-groups, in which a person is considered as an active subject of interaction with the immediate environment, which forms him or her and which he or she creates in the course of various interactions. This type of trust is based on the individual's self-identification with a certain "moral community", he or she feels trust in all members, considering that they will behave in a generally accepted way. According to Anthony Giddens (1991), when existing in a situation where any element of the social order can be revised and destroyed or changed, any value can be transformed or replaced by the opposite, an individual needs a sense of security to maintain his or her own productive life.

A person can gain security through trust in existing social institutions, through a non-rational emotional feeling that the system continues to work and is orderly.

The orderliness of society grows from this belief of people in order, particularly from their reutilized everyday actions that support the institutional system, and due to the reflection on this orderliness social dynamics are implemented.

The subjective psychological basis that stimulates people's desire for unity is a sense of connection with others, which gives a sense of protection from the environment. Belonging to a significant group enables the realization of mutual solidarity among its members.

Trust is one of the quintessential elements of the existence and accumulation of social capital. Anatoliy Kolot (2010, p.135), studying the issue of trust and social capital, notes: "It is quite obvious that the categories of 'trust' and 'social capital' are not identical, but correlate with each other as the essence of the phenomenon and its manifestation. In this case, the form is social capital, which is generated in the system

of "trust/distrust or manifestations of distrust". There is every reason to conclude that trust/distrust is the current level of saturation of society with social capital."

The classics of sociological science, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, considered trust to be the main component of social capital, which under certain conditions can cease to be an individual quality that characterizes a person and can be extended to a social group or society as a whole.

The well-known political scientist Francis Fukuyama thinks in the same vein (Kyiv Lecture by Francis Fukuyama, 2006). According to him, social capital is "a certain potential of a society or its part that arises as a result of trust between its members", i.e. social capital is a form of materialised trust. Pierre Bourdieu (1986, p. 245) defines social capital as "resources based on family relations and relations in a social group organized according to the principle of participation", and emphasizes the importance of benefits "which are accumulated due to group membership, they are the basis of possible solidarities". The author draws attention to the important role of the family as a source and resource of social capital.

Everyday activity unites people by common everyday needs, affairs, realization of common interests, mutual assistance that arises in relationships between people. Responsibilities and expectations, the exchange of information and social perceptions create a certain order of life that greatly enhances the influence of ordinary citizens on issues that affect their lives and well-being.

Such groups, formed through everyday routines, have a certain "radius of trust", i.e. a circle of people among who commonly adapted norms operate. The radius of trust formed in a micro group can extend to other social groups and society as a whole.

Thus, the everyday world is the life of a person "here and now" on a certain territory and in the closest social environment. In this space, a person constructs his or her social reality based on his or her conscious attitude to social norms and practices, cultural heritage, politics and existing ideologies, government institutions, the state, civilisational and globalisation challenges, i.e. his or her own sense of being. Everyday life is a value dominant for a person. He or she is primarily concerned with the needs of the world of life: material well-being, friendship, love, family well-being, personal peace add absence of troubles. And only after their

satisfaction, a person thinks about participation in public life, solving social issues, high official and public status, the opportunity to benefit people, environmental safety, etc.

Thus, everyday life has its own hierarchy of significance, the study of which makes it possible to identify priorities in solving problems at both the meso and macro levels of society.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The empirical basis involves the results of a complex sociological study conducted by the Centre for Sociological Research of Bohdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University, which consisted of two stages. Stage 1 was a questionnaire survey "The Impact of Social Communications on the Formation of the Socio-Cultural Capital of Melitopol", which was implemented using Google Forms among the residents of Melitopol in the period from 09.10.2021 to 25.10.2021. This form was used due to the difficult epidemiological situation in the city and the country as a whole caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a population frame, they took the adult population (18+) of Melitopol, numbering 122,275 people by January 1, 2021. Accordingly, a sample was calculated, which proportionally represented the residents of Melitopol aged 18 and over. The sample was formed according to the following principles: uniqueness (survey participants could participate in the survey only once), quotas (survey participants were selected by gender, age, level of education and nature of employment) so as to reflect the overall portrait of the city based on statistical data. The sample population (n) was 1,100 respondents, error  $\Delta \pm 3$ , P = 95%. The sample is unrepea, quotas.

Stage 2 included focus group discussions with the residents of Melitopol who had left the city as a consequence of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. Two focus groups were organised and held with a total of 21 participants.

In-depth interviews were conducted in the format of a telephone conversation with the residents who remained in the occupied city during the 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> month of the war (9 interviews with the respondents who agreed to talk despite certain dangers). Information collection was carried out from 12.06.2022 to 10.09.2022.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In pre-war peaceful times, Melitopol residents prioritised social security issues (ecology and crime), living conditions, then economic issues, relations with local authorities, and social assistance. Issues related to the functioning of democratic institutions were of little importance.

Informatisation of municipal administration, i.e. what is really essential for the information society, was practically irrelevant.

Explaining the primacy of the above values, we assumed that these axiophenomena are the foundation of the well-being of human life. After all, without social security, a person cannot feel secure, his or her living conditions are closely connected with economic problems, as they directly affect the financial situation, and the relations with local authorities affect the comfort and convenience of the community where a person lives.

In the urban community, the level of trust based on personal acquaintance or common membership in a primary group prevailed. Thus, relatives were fully trusted by 47.3%, rather trusted than by 52.7%, friends were fully trusted by 18.0%, rather trusted by 49.3%, neighbors were fully trusted by 42.7%, rather trusted by 23.3%. At the same time, the local deputies were the least trusted (22.0% trusted completely, 15.7% rather trusted), as well as the representatives of the executive branch (21.5% trusted completely, 19.2% rather trusted), so the city residents relied mainly on themselves and their loved ones.

Such a particularized type of trust makes possible collective interaction within a separate micro community. And in its turn, under favorable conditions, it is necessary for the emergence of political trust, which is formed in the process of the gradual expansion of the "moral community" to new, wider circles of the population and it is accompanied by the formation of a hierarchy of identities from the family through civil associations to the political nation (Fukuyama, 1995).

A more objective component in the structure of social capital is communication networks, i.e. the bridges that connect us with other people. It considers interpersonal and intergroup communication, the saturation of urban space with social communications of various types. One of the forms of networking communication on an everyday level is neighborhood.

This is because the possibilities of satisfying the needs and realising the interests of local residents are objectively linked to the fact that they live together in a limited area, with neighborly relations (Kataev & Barzenkova-Myasnikova, 2012). Neighborhood is one of the most direct forms of social communication.

According to the survey, half (50.0%) of the respondents agree with the statement that "neighbors help each other", 46.7% partially agree. Obviously, neighborhood is a resource for self-organisation in creating and improving the well-being of the common environment. Neighborhood is a social phenomenon and the closest social environment, and everyday mutual assistance, a resource of cohesion and a source of social capital formation.

Neighborhood is one of the micro communities, which affects the intensive media social communications in the city. The survey showed that among those who reported receiving help from their neighbors, 71.2% read local newspapers; 65.7% read local websites; and 68.5% watched local television. That is, direct communication ties in the format of neighborhood communication increase informational interest in the city life, form social groups of citizens with strong communication skills. And the accumulation of social capital directly depends on direct and indirect communications in the community: the denser and more intense the communications, the greater the amount of social capital.

Neighborhood as a form of community, based on the closeness of direct contacts between the city residents, is connected with a sense of pride for the entire city. As an ethical indicator, it demonstrates the existence of emotional ties of attachment to it, both to the territory and to the urban community. Pride encourages the city residents to present and promote the positive features of the city, prominent personalities, and to advertise the city, including through the social media.

Without this feeling, it is impossible to build solidarity norms of behavior. The study shows that among those who agree with neighborhood assistance, 62.7% are proud of their city; among those who partially agree, 57.8% are. It can be stated that the development of urban self-government directly depends on social communications and interrelations with micro-communities of the city. This is especially true in small cities, where neighborhood as a form of solidarity is more developed than in large cities.

## WAR IS AN EVERYDAY REALITY NOW

On 24 February, 2022, at 5a.m. the lives of people in Ukraine were divided into "before" and "after". On that day, Russia started a full-scale war with large-scale bombardment of Ukrainian cities, missile attacks, artillery shelling, and the invasion of armoured vehicles and troops. Burning houses, destroyed villages and towns, thousands of dead military and civilians, including children. The photos of these horrors have spread throughout the civilised world. The war has caused horrific death and suffering, millions of people have been forced to leave their homes (according to the UN Refugee Agency, one-third of Ukraine's population), and millions are under occupation or surviving in close proximity to the frontline.

Melitopol, a city in southeastern Ukraine, which is strategically important (crossing European highways and having an international railway line to the occupied Crimean peninsula). The city has been under temporary occupation since February 25, 2022 as a result of Russian military aggression.

According to some analysts of the Institute for War Studies, Ukrainian and foreign experts, the city is the key to the liberation of not only the south of Ukraine, but the entire territory of the country, as Russia loses the whole point of the war of aggression in case of de-occupation of Melitopol. Therefore, the main battle of this war will unfold for it.

Solidarity ties at the level of everyday life helped Ukrainians survive the first days and months of the war. The residents of different parts of the country mobilized - each in their own sphere of activity - to oppose the invasion and help those who need it. The residents of Melitopol, who have been under occupation since the second day of the war, were immediately cut off from the Internet and mobile communications by the occupiers, who intended to block the city residents from the Ukrainian information space and the ability to call their relatives and friends. The people went out into the streets of the city and looked for "communication access points", small locations in the city where the mobile network was "breaking through". Queues were formed in such locations, and then information about them was passed on to friends and neighbors. In the small micro-territories, streets or multi-storey buildings, neighbors told each other news, shared food and medicine, and took care of the sick and disabled. The realization came that everyone's life is happening "here and now", on your street with the people who live nearby. And this feeling of "your native" was in contrast

to foreigners in military uniforms who walked around your city with machine guns, checked documents, telephones, took people to unknown places, and their equipment mercilessly destroyed the streets of your city. Queues at ATMs, where people had to sign up in advance, empty shelves in shops, shortages of medicines, looting, life at the barrel of a machine gun ... That was the beginning of the occupation of Melitopol.

*"I don't understand, when tomorrow comes and this hell goes away, I can't stand it anymore, what if everything will be like in the Crimea and Donbass and we won't be liberated?" (Serhiy, a resident of occupied Melitopol).*

*"You have no idea that the residents, who remained in the temporarily occupied city live in constant stress, feel fear and anxiety, panic, exhaustion, desolation..." (Galyna, a resident of Melitopol, who has left the occupation).*

*"Every day it gets scarier and scarier, when you constantly see people with machine guns, hundreds of their machines destroying our roads, queues at banks, at Ukrposhta, and I can't leave the city. My hands are already shaking from nerves. How to live on? When will they liberate us? I wish I could be alive..." (Katya, a resident of occupied Melitopol).*

Currently, around 60% of Melitopol's population has been forced to leave their homes and move to Ukrainian-controlled territory or abroad in search of safety. The internally displaced people have to suddenly say goodbye to their usual life and break established social ties. The main skill to be mastered is to survive a difficult emotional state and adapt in times of uncertainty.

*"I am afraid of people after the occupation, I am afraid to tell someone how and what, in general I am afraid of communication" (Margarita, a resident of Melitopol, who has left the occupation).*

*"I am afraid to go outside after the explosions, I have been sitting in a chair for a fortnight, it was even hard to stand up" (Inna, a resident of Melitopol, who has left the occupation and lives in the frontline zone).*

*"My child is afraid to sleep undressed, in case we have to run to a shelter" (Victoria, a resident of Melitopol, who has left the occupation and lives in the frontline zone).*

*"My husband is at war, my children are abroad, I'm here alone my neighbors said that Russian soldiers live in my apartment. They take my things, sleep on my bed... I don't know how to survive it, how to cope with it..." (Tamara, a resident of Melitopol who left the occupation).*

According to Gradus Research (2022), Ukrainians are very concerned about safety of loved ones (63%), loss of income (42%), risk of loss of property (37%), risk of death during combat (37%), separation from family members (32%), risk of injury (24%). More than half of them limit themselves in entertainment and shopping. 21% of families live at a distance.

For almost two years of Russian aggression, Ukrainians have learned to live with the war, which has gradually become a routine. Daily, filling their routine with everyday activities - watching the news from the frontline, doing their job, communicating on social media, following events in the international arena - people create their new everyday world. When you are involved in constant routine activities, they begin to save you from nightmares, stress, fear, and depression.

*"We work... if you don't work, it becomes extremely painful..." (Tetiana, IDP from Melitopol); "We need to live to see the Victory and return home!" (Natalia, IDP from Melitopol).*

Power outages, air raid warnings, flying shaheeds, and constant explosions and shelling in frontline towns and villages have become commonplace. Selling handmade goods on the streets, giving small local concerts to raise funds for drones, having food baskets in shops for the military are now commonplace in Ukrainian cities and towns. "Routine is what we have been through and what has formed our neural connections. Our brains are now being tested by shifting this routine" (Chaban, 2023).

The language of everyday life, which is very sensitive to social changes, has been "enriched" with new words that have filled the news and Internet space and have gained important meaning for every Ukrainian. The new socio cultural context provokes the

emergence of neologisms in the living language - newly created words, terms or phrases that describe the surrounding reality in a certain time-space (Shkoliar, 2023).

For example, such new concepts as: "donate" (financial assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine), "arrival" (an enemy missile or shell hitting something), "alarm" (a signal about the need to go to the shelter), "clear sky" (the end of air raid warning), etc. This everyday vocabulary is a kind of marker of human life, expressing emotions and actions that are repetitive every day.

During the full-scale war, Ukrainians have expanded the space for mutual assistance and cooperation. They began to cooperate with their neighbors more often to solve domestic issues, for example, to build shelters in their homes together. The neighbours' rapprochement was influenced, in particular, by the presence of common spaces where they had to spend a lot of time and common problems that could be discussed or solved together. For example, some basements of houses where people hid from shelling during air raids with their neighbors have become places of meeting, communication and support (Bobrova, 2023). Reflecting on their own lives, Ukrainians emphasise that during the war, they have developed a desire to help and support others.

In the cities of Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Lviv, and Dnipro, the city authorities of Melitopol have set up coordination centers for IDPs, which offer an educational hub, humanitarian aid, legal and medical advice, and more. These locations have become places for meetings, communication, scientific conferences and seminars, training sessions, World Cafés, clubs for children and youth, etc. In this way, everyday practices affect norms, values, worldviews, and form consciousness and citizenship.

According to a national opinion survey (2023), Ukrainians live and fight for their right to freedom due to their belief in victory (88%), focused on the freedom of all captives and the return of deportees (69%), the punishment of all Russian war criminals (42%) and the reparation for all damage caused to the economy and citizens (41.5%). The vast majority (almost 89%) are proud of their citizenship.

## CONCLUSIONS

Russia's full-scale military aggression against Ukraine has become a major social shock. The war

affects the emotional state, everyday life, public opinion, interpersonal relations, socio-economic situation, employment, and civic activity. The scale of these changes is unprecedented for both Ukraine and Europe in the perspective of decades. At the same time, these changes will affect the future of public institutions in post-war Ukraine and its further development in general.

War is not only a battlefield, but also a home front that provides funding and moral support for the army. Human existence is manifested in extreme situations, on the "edge" (life and death). Solidarity, mutual support, and mutual assistance are qualities that are formed at the level of everyday life and they have proven to be resistant to external aggressive factors. In the everyday context, a certain amount of social capital has been accumulated: residents' trust to each other, intensive network connections, interest in military and political events that are constantly discussed which has formed horizontal solidarity ties. It is the everyday social capital that has showed strength and endured during the war.

At the same time, everydayness has been filled with new meaning, modifying its structure to meet new challenges. The war is dynamically destroying the old social order, it is producing new everyday practices that quickly become routine, sometimes without the possibility of adapting to it. New value profiles and lifestyles are changing or developing, both individual and group lifestyles are transforming, and new markers of identification are forming. They will not disappear automatically and completely when the shocks pass, but they will necessarily and permanently determine the reality in which society and its citizens will live after the active process of confrontation is over.

The exploration and comprehension of the meaning of everyday life provides data for further study of Ukrainian society during and after the war, as well as for planning transformational changes.

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