KEY WORDS: democracy, disasters, civil society mobilization, networks, social movements, Russia

1. Introduction

Not only science, as many social scientists stated, but the very nature are the creators of new, emergent problems in human interaction with nature. On the other hand, the relationships between state and civil society rescuers shifted in favor of latter, especially if they learned to use internet and other IT devises.

It is often argued in political and academic circles both in domestic and abroad that Russian civil society is going to an end. It is not true. This society had existed even in totalitarian era, but in the overt and dispersed form. Nor it extinguished in 2000s. The article examines the changing role and structure of Russian social movements (SMs) under conditions of huge natural disaster. I mean summer fires of 2010 which embraced the territory of Russia comparable with that of the EU. It has been a challenge not only to environmental but to many other social movements and charity organizations and grassroots. The disaster revealed a true disposition of forces in relation to the disaster and showed the actual role played by civil society at large and social movements in particular in mitigation of this eco-catastrophe. Section 1 examines theoretical background for 'disaster-civil society' relationships. Section 2 analyses three main phases of an SM mobilization: usual, targeted and critical. In the next Section I consider the issue of framing the disaster by SMs and they changing structure and action repertoire accordingly. Section 4 counts the major positive effects of civil society mobilization, and in Conclusion some general outcomes of this mobilization as well as a set of methodological issues of analyzing it are considered.

2. Theoretical background

The conceptual framework for our field research is based on a set types of sociological thought. Firstly, it was based on theorization of classical sociology (see Weber, 1995; Marx, 1967; Sorokin, 2003) on the state of emergency of a society as it is and in particular of the impact of natural and man-made disasters on human nature, human behavior and social order. I see the Sorokin's idea of negative selection is central here (Sorokin, 2003). Second-

ly, my conceptual framework based on the concepts of civil societies and its social capital in modern risk society (Beck, 1992; Yanitsky, 2000). Distribution of 'bads' becomes as important for society as the distribution of goods'. "Beck contends that now the 'latency phase of risk threats is coming to an end. The invisible hazards are becoming visible" (Beck, cite by: Murphy, 2010: 13).

It should be stressed that in my view, the Beck's and others risk society concepts are insufficient in relation to Russian recent condition. But before, I must say that I fully agree with Murphy who argued 'that sociology and a large part of social sciences had, however, ignored and abstracted out an important set of contextual influences on social and cultural life. It had, to use its own "bracketed", and language, "put in parentheses," and "suspended" the effects of the biophysical context. That was a mistake because humans are beings embedded in biophysical dynamics' (Murphy, 2010: 342).

Therefore, I introduced the concept of all-embracing risk society (Yanitsky, 2000, 2010). The concept of 'normality of catastrophe in modern society introduced by Ch. Perrow (1984) is of principled importance as well. As he argued, 'we acted in terms of our own designs of a world that we expected to exist – but the world was different'...'Disaster research has found that there has often been a "failure of foresight" during "the incubation of disasters" which has led to man-made disasters. Thus researchers argue that disasters occur when there is a divergence between socially constructed expectations about nature's energy and nature's movements resulting from that energy' (cit. by: Murphy, 2010: 27).

Thirdly, it has been important to analyze and use the concepts embraced by the notion of 'complex emergences' (Beck, 1992; Keen, 2008; Murphy, 2010; Yanitsky, 2000, 2010). Keen, defining the term 'complex emergences' stresses that they are "linked to internal or external conflict" such as civil wars, ethnic cleansing and genocide. Nevertheless, he wrote that "violent conflict and natural disaster may interact'… 'Though we are distinguishing natural disasters from complex emergences on the ground of absence of large-scale conflict, there is always a politics to any disaster, and there will be elements of conflict and even out-right coercion in a natural disaster (Keen, 2008: 2-3). Nevertheless, the concept applicable to the cases of rather complicated biosociotechnical catastrophes with unavoidable 'boomerang effect' (Beck), that is a specific feed-back defined neither spatially nor sub-

stantially (the Chrenobyl accident is the best example). Whilst W. Catton and R. Dunlap in their New Ecological Paradigm stated that 'Although the inventiveness of humans and power derived there from may seem for a while to extend carrying capacity limits, ecological laws cannot be repealed' *(Catton and Dunlap, 1980: 24). R. Murphy went much further stating that 'biophysical events undermine assumptions of safety and mastery of nature' (Murphy, 2010: 15). Of a no less important the Keen's idea that 'Humanitarian aid is habitually based on needs assessments and early warning systems that are themselves based on systems of counting – on measurement of thinnes, rainfall, production, number of displaced people and so on. Such number-based systems may miss most of the important things that are going on in a particular society. The danger is that they provide an apparently unobjectionable, technological screen behind which ethnic manipulation and economic exploitation can proceed unhindered. Many of this variables came to prominence (становятся очевидными) in relation to natural disasters (Keen, 2008: 161). My choice of these concepts (risk society, normal accident, complex emergences) which form the theoretical pillars of my study of the social consequences of the above fires is explained not only by my specific interest to depict the mobilization state of Russian civil society, but the general process of speedy growing instability of the Biosphere which manifests itself in growing number and scale of natural accidents (fires, floods, tornados, sharp oscillations of air temperature and/or atmospheric pressure) and, what is the most important, its social consequences each of them is needed a specific and long-term rehabilitation. As D. Smith argued, 'today fear and anger reasserting themselves. We are moving into an era where greed will no longer be central force in out lives. The battle to get more will gradually be replaced by the fight to keep what you have, which will, in turn, unless things change, gradually become a more basic struggle for survival. This struggle is already central for the poor. Sooner or later, some of middling rich may join them in the same boat' (Smith, 2008: 347).

Finally, the character of discourse and rhetoric are critically important for our analysis because 'they result in particular practices that are either benign or harmful in human interaction with biophysical dynamics. In particular, what the population and leaders define as safe or as risky determines the actions that will be taken… Discourse analysis focuses on 'claims-making' by complaining groups. The key question is "how are claims presented so as to persuade their audiences". For example, how are claims of risk of disaster or environmental degradation assembled, presented, and contested? What

does the claim come from, who manage it, what resources do they have, and what interests do they represent? Storylines create meaning and mobilize action…Consent of the population is internalized by *framing* the debate in a particular way and suppressing opposing *framings*, which both use and construct (Murphy, 2010: 21-22).

3. Three phases of a SM mobilization

The first and the most world-vide phase I call a 'usual'. It depends on political and social opportunity structure (Tarrow, 1988, 2005). In Russia from early 1990s onwards, this structure gradually shrank, and finally became hostile to the majority of Russian SMs except so called pro-Kremlin SMs. Nowadays, these movements exist and used to practice in the hostile political context (Yanitsky, 1999, 2010). The second phase of a SM mobilization can be labeled as 'targeted' or planned when something extra-ordinary already happened in a particular place, be it a natural disaster or man-made accident. This phase is characterized by mobilization resources at hand plus, if necessary, by the attraction some sister movements or organizations (say, local grassroots or charity organizations). The third phase I call a 'critical' (extreme) case when all accessible resources should be mobilized.

Accordingly, the first case could be labeled as a limited mobilization because it presents a particular SM's response to usual and long-term hostile context pressure. A limited mobilization means that the SMOs leaders mobilizes resources *at hand*, that is, the mobilization of any extra-efforts are not needed. Their already accumulated knowledge and experience (action repertoire) is well enough for coping with the particular accident.

The second case may be depicted as targeted mobilization of a particular SM and his sister organization's resources for mitigation of a given disaster. And the third case presents all-embraced mobilization of a global civil society (or at least of its concerned majority) for coping with the large-scale natural or man-made catastrophe. Or as it happened quite recently, it presents the all-embracing civil society response to a new challenge such as global warming. In this latter case SMs of various kinds could united in an alter-global social movement.

It is quite natural that whilst in the first phase the process of resources mobilization presents a routine work (gathering information, mapping local re-