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Yulia Skokova

Movement of Election Observers in Russia: Social Composition, Factors and Dynamics of Development

Thesis Summary for the purpose of obtaining PhD in Sociology

Academic Supervisors:

Doctor of Science in Sociology, Prof. M.A. Shabanova

PhD in Sociology, C. Froehlich

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Problem statement

Russian society has traditionally been ascribed to the "asocial syndrome" (Diligensky 2002, p. 165), that is, "the absence of a culture of joint action," as well as Russian civil society has traditionally characterized as weak and undeveloped (Evans et al. 2006). Meanwhile, starting in the 2010-s, many researchers began to record a surge in informal grassroots self-organization (Clement 2010, 2013; Romanov, Yarskaya-Smirnova 2009), the development of nonprofit organizations (Mersiyanova, Korneeva 2011; Krasnopolskaya et al. 2015; Skokova et al. 2018), and charitable activities (Korneeva, Minnigaleeva 2017; Mersiyanova, Korneeva 2013; Chernysheva 2016). At the same time, a significant part of collective actions was associated with target assistance to socially unprotected categories of citizens and the protection of private rights and interests. In the first case, self-organization was mainly based on the idea of helping children with serious illnesses, disabled and elderly people (Tarasenko 2015; Bindman 2015; Fröhlich 2012; Kulmala 2016; Kulmala, Tarasenko 2016; Tarasenko 2015). In the second case, researchers recorded the most significant mobilization in the field of protecting socio-economic interests (Clement 2007; Clement et al. 2010; Klimov 2008; Romanov, Yarskaya-Smirnova 2009) and the protection of local spaces from infill development, deforestation, etc. (Aidukaite, Fröhlich 2015; Belokurova, Vorobiev 2010; Clement et al. 2010; Evans 2012). In this regard, several researchers noted that Russian society is depoliticized and rarely self-organizes in civil and political rights (Daucé 2014; Casula 2013$ Zhuravlev 2015).

This assessment of Russian civil society began to change with the growth of protest mobilization in 2011-2012. Researchers, on the contrary, began to talk about its politicization, the growth of political discourse in grassroots social movements (Belokurova, Vorobyev 2020; Turovets 2015; Zhuravlev 2015; Zhuravlev et al. 2019; Zhelnina 2020). When speaking about the politicization of a part of Russian civil society and its transformation, researchers most often turn their interest to the study of the protest movement in 2011-2012 and urban movements that subsequently

emerged on its basis (Erpyleva, Magun 2015; Dollbaum 2020; Zhuravlev et al. 2019; Zhelnina 2020). However, the mass movement of election observers, which was close to the protest movement but proved to be more stable in time, with tens of thousands of participating people all over the country, has not been studied by researchers in the same detail. Researchers most often consider the movement of election observers as part of the general protest movement (Van'ke et al. 2014; Erpyleva, Magun 2015; Lobanova, Semenov 2012, 2013; Semenov, Lobanova 2013; Sobolev 2012, 2013; Greene 2013; Smith et al. 2013; Smyth, Soboleva 2016; Dollbaum 2020; Rosenberg 2017; Zhuravlev et al. 2019) and except a few research it's practically not studied as a separate object (Bader 2013; Davydov et al. 2016; Davydov, Lebedev 2015; Fudin 2012). The thesis argues that the movement of election observers is an independent social movement, with its own factors and dynamics of development, and cannot be fully equated with the protest movement, which has been studied well enough. The dissertation research continues the discussion about Russian civil society and its transformation processes with the case of the movement of election observers, which is unique for several reasons.

The election observer movement emerged on the wave of the protest mobilization of 2011-2012. Although the current legislation did not have norms for civic election observation by public organizations in 2011, and widespread belief that "elections will not change anything" (Volkov, Goncharov 2015; Zorkaya 2017), during the presidential elections in March 2012, 690 thousand people became domestic election observers. A significant part of them (57.5 thousand) were recruited by the new public organizations of election observers created at that time – "Citizen Observer," "Union of Election Observers" (hereinafter - SONAR), "RosVybory," and other organizations not affiliated with active political parties and running candidates (Forbes 2012).

Although the movement of election observers appeared during one protest wave with the protest movement, they cannot be fully equated to each other for a number of reasons. Therefore, the movement of observers should be considered and studied as

a separate object of research. The main difference between these two movements, first of all, is the composition of the participants. Despite several researchers concluding the intersection of participants in the protest movement and the movement of election observers (Bikbov 2012; Volkov, Goncharov 2014), their composition was different. Less than half of the protesters (44%) were ready to become election observers *[Data LC 2011b, N=791],* and 74% of election observers had experience in protest events *[Data 2012-1, online survey of observers, N = 1025]*. Thus, there is no complete or close to is overlap in the composition of their participants.

Second, although based on shared democratic values and criticism of the authorities, the protest movement and the observer movement publicly declared different goals and had different motives. While the protest movement openly declared its goals to revise the elections and change the government (Rosenberg 2017), the observer movement was focused primarily on institutional changes, not political ones – conducting procedurally "fair elections" and countering electoral frauds. As for motivation, it also differed among the participants of these movements. If the protesters joined them with a desire to show the accumulated dissatisfaction and express indignation *[Data LC 2011b, N=791],* the motives of the observers were based on emotions only at the beginning. Later on, they started to express more pragmatic motives – the desire to test and control the "fairness of elections" and realize "civic duty" based on one's own experience.

Fourth, these movements had different organizational structures and repertoires of actions. Neither observer's organizations, nor personally leaders of the observer movement acted as organizers of protest actions; political parties and individual politicians performed these functions. As for the repertoire of actions, if several hours were enough to participate in the protest action, in order to participate in election observation, it was necessary to undergo preliminary training, spend a whole day off until late at night at the polling station, bring a copy of the final protocol on voting results to the headquarter's movement. It makes the movement

of election observers more resource-intensive than the protest movement and requires a different motivation from its participants.

And, finally, the protest movement and the movement of election observers had different dynamics of development. Despite the same origin in time and main reasons, their further paths diverged significantly. The protest movement ended with the end of a wave of rallies in 2012-2013 and demobilized (Lasnier 2017; Zeller 2020). Researchers claim that its members have continued their experiences in urban movements to combat infill development, renovation, environmental protests (Erpyleva, Magun 2015; Zhuravlev et al. 2020). However, the protest movement itself has ended its existence. On the other hand, the election observer movement continued to develop in subsequent years, despite the demobilization and the drop in the number of participants. Moreover, the movement has become institutionalized – organizations of observers have gained more strength and formed a core of its participants, the movement has become less mobilizing, the practices of organizing election observation have become more stable, and election observation activities have become a normal part of electoral process. The movement of election observers can be called as the only modern example of an institutionalized social movement, working in civil and political rights.

The listed differences between the movement of election observers and the protest movement give grounds to consider it as a separate case. The uniqueness of the movement of election observers raises questions about what factors influenced its formation, what was the dynamics and trajectory of its development, who and why took part in it, and the why some decided to "quit." A separate study of the movement of election observers will provide answers to questions about its characteristics and supplement conclusions about the transformation processes within Russian civil society. The main research question in this regard: how did the movement of observers emerge, how did it become stable over time, and how does this characterize Russian civil society?

Problem development

The degree of problem development is determined, on the one hand, by the empirical study of social movements in Russia, taking into account the specific applicability of Western theoretical concepts to domestic cases, and, on the other hand, by the study of the research object itself – the movement of election observers.

Thus, from the point of view of studies of social movements in Russia and the contribution of domestic sociologists to the general theoretical discussion, it should be noted that this research trend in Russian sociology is relatively weak. However, as the practice of foreign studies shows, the study of social movements is closely related to their emergence and development. Research began in the second half of the twentieth century, when movements of African Americans, women movements, environmental and anti-nuclear movements, peace movements, and others began to develop in the United States actively. Subsequently, they became a central political figure at the level of individual states and in the global dimension. The data accumulated through years of interdisciplinary research (Klandermans and Roggeband 2007), based on a wide range of methods (Klandermans and Staggenborg 2002; Della Porta 2014b), became the basis for creating theoretical concepts.

Domestic sociological studies of social movements began much later and became a response to their mass emergence in the period of social change in the 1990-s. As E. Zdravomyslova notes, “the first sociological works devoted to social movements date from 1987-1988. Most of them were descriptive, incomplete and fragmentary” (Zdravomyslova 1993, 503 p.). O. Yanitsky directly pointed to the underdevelopment of this sub-field: “the sociology of social movements is developing worldwide, from Iceland to the island of Tasmania. Everywhere except Russia” (Yanitsky 2010, 52 p.). Nevertheless, as new cases of social movements develop, research in this area continues. There were a few monographes with case studies of social movements (Erpyleva, Magun 2015; Clement et al. 2010; Romanov, Yarskaya-Smirnova 2009); reserchers studied the protest movement that

arose against the background of the reform of social benefits in 2005 (Clement 2007; Klimov 2008; Levada 2005); there is an extensive body of literature on the protest movement in 2011-2012 (Bikbov 2012; Volkov 2012; Semenov 2012, 2013; Semenov, Lobanova 2013; Sobolev 2012, 2013; Greene 2013; Smith et al. 2013; Smyth, Soboleva 2016; Dollbaum 2020; Rosenberg 2017; Zhuravlev et al. 2019); separate cases of urban movements continue to be studied (Aidukaite, Fröhlich 2015; Evans 2012; Zhelnina 2020). However, it is hardly possible to say that research on social movements in Russia is systemic.

Another aspect of problem development is the study of the case of the election observation movement. In general, it should be noted that both foreign and domestic studies devoted to the study of election observation are characterized by the predominance of political science rather than the sociological approach in posing research questions. This is mainly due to the global democratization process, which since the early 1990-s has caused a significant increase in the number of elections held with the participation of election observers, especially international (Kelley 2008). This has left researchers with new questions about the reasons for the growing number of countries where elections are held with the participation of international observers (Hyde 2011; Kelley 2008), their significance for promoting democratic values (Bjornlund 2004; Chand 1997; Hutcheson 2011; Hyde 2007; van Aaken 2009), the impact of observers on voting results (Hyde 2007; Kelley 2012), and the improvement of election institutions in general (Bachelard 2009; Elklit and Svensson 1997; Laakso 2002). Importantly, a number of these works (Bachelard 2009; Bjornlund 2004; Carothers 1997; Chand 1997; Laakso 2002; Nevitte, Santiago 1997) argue that domestic election observers have several advantages over international ones – they have more knowledge of the country context and have closer relationship with local civil society, which means, the research focus should be shifted to studying them more.

Concerning the study of citizen observers, the research conducted has also focused more on political science issues. In general, there are two main research questions

posed about domestic election observation in various countries worldwide, mainly developing countries. The first is the analysis of electoral statistics, where the question of the impact of observers at polling stations on the voting outcome is studied (Podlazov 2014; Asunka 2013; Bader, Schmeets 2013; Buzin 2016; Enikolopov et al. 2013; Herron 2010; Ichino, Schundeln 2012; Sjoberg 2012). The second direction is the study of the influence of observers on the democratization process in different countries of the world (Igarashi 2008; Lean 2007, 2013; Legler et al. 2007; Nevitte, Santiago 1997; Ngwainmbi 2014; O'Grady et al. 2006; McFaul 2015; Suryani 2015; Yaakop, Virgianita 2016).

Existing research rarely focuses on citizen election observers as an active social actor. Although in practice non-profit organizations or social movements are engaged in domestic civil election observation in various countries around the world (Grömping 2017; Giuliano 1996; Hedman 2006; Lean 2013; O'Grady et al. 2006; Suryani 2015; Selivanova 2020), they rarely appear as an independent subject of research. As M. Grömping notes, "at least half of elections globally are monitored by such groups and large sums of international aid spent on them. However, scholarly research about the causes, dynamics, and consequences of domestic election monitoring and advocacy is scattered" (Grömping 2017, p. 407). However, there are a few important exceptions – E. lotta Hedman's study on the movement of election observers in the Philippines (Hedman 2006) and G. Selivanova's study on the movement of observers in the post-communist countries of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (Selivanova 2020). The authors of these works analyze the reasons for the formation of the movement of election observers, their internal structure, support networks, and the impact on social and political processes in the country. E. Hedman showed that the movement of election observers in the Philippines was largely based on the already existing network of non-profit organizations, the Catholic Church, local business communities, and educational organizations in the country. The movement had a significant impact on the democratization process of the Philippines. G. Selivanova's work was comparative and showed how differences in

the external political and institutional context affect the development strategies of election observer movements in the three studied countries and to what extent the activity of election observers leads to an improvement in the quality of elections.

Similar to the international academic context, Russian studies of domestic observers are much more often a contribution to political science, rather than into sociological knowledge the object of study of which could be questions about the internal dynamics of the development of the movement of election observers, their social composition and functions, etc. Political scientists study the role of Russian civil observers in ensuring the openness and transparency of the electoral process (Buzin 2012), the contribution of observers to detecting violations at polling stations (Bader 2013), and the impact of the presence of observers at polling stations on voting outcomes (Enikolopov et al. 2013).

Nevertheless, since the beginning of the formation of the election observation movement in Russia, several academic studies and sociological measurements have been made. These works can be divided into four areas – assessment of readiness to participate in election observation, the social composition of the movement participants, motives for participation, and infrastructure of the movement (organizations, practices, procedures).

The growth of citizens' interest in participation in election observation activities in 2011-2012 and the growth of relevant discussions in mass media (Davydov, Lebedev 2015) has caused a corresponding interest of various sociological services in assessing the readiness of people to engage in this activity (Zorkaya 2012b; Volkov, Goncharov 2014, Data FOM 2012a). However, these studies are rather descriptive and have not been used to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the participants' social composition, their motivations for participation, and other characteristics.

The social composition of the election observation movement has been mentioned mostly in the context of the protest movement of 2011-2012. Separate quantitative studies of the social composition of participants of the movement of election

observers, except the data obtained in the current work, have not been carried out before. However, some research note the similarity between the portrait of the participant of the protest movement and the movement of election observers (Bikbov 2012a; Volkov, Goncharov 2014). According to the research of A. Bikbov, both groups have "experience in managing their own lives" – they work as freelancers or are engaged in entrepreneurial activity, work in the field of research and teaching, have experience traveling abroad (Bikbov 2012, p. 160). These characteristics give reason to believe that a significant part of the participants of these movements belongs to the "new" middle class, employed in intellectual labor and based mainly in the capital regions and large cities (Shkaratan 2008).

Another line of the research is devoted to studying the motives of participation in the election observation. The greatest contribution to understanding this issue was made by S. Davydov, O. Logunova, and E. Lytkina (Davydov et al. 2016). The authors of the study identified three main motives for participation in observation – (1) the desire to show the civic position and influence the openness and transparency of the electoral process, (2) curiosity, the desire to understand how the voting mechanism works, (3) professional interest of students of relevant professions (sociologists, political scientists, journalists). The study results also revealed the factor of the influence of "significant others" on the decision to become an observer at the elections – public intellectuals and politicians. The significance of the "fair elections" motive is also evidenced by A. Levinson, who argues that the purpose of observers is primarily the prevention of election violations rather than the support of a particular candidate or party (Levinson 2012). At the same time, these works do not answer the question about the demobilization of the movement and the motives of "exit" from it, which is a separate research question in studying the dynamics of social movements.

Finally, several studies are devoted to various aspects of election observation infrastructure – practices, organizational foundations, procedures, and social media discourse. One of the first published works on the election observation movement

was the paper by A. Fudin (Fudin 2012), who analyzes their social practices (like preparation for observation and choice of the polling station). The practice of crowdsourcing by election observers has been the subject of two foreign studies (Bader 2013; Bader, Schmeets 2013). The organizational base of the movement is described by D. Volkov (Volkov 2012a), noting the specificity of different organizations in terms of internal structure and the main functions. I. Berlyand and M. Stupakova have compiled observers' accounts of their own experiences (Berlyand, Stupakova 2012). The discourse of social media devoted to election observers was studied by S. Davydov and P. Lebedev (Davydov, Lebedev 2015).

Thus, to date, there is a certain amount of empirical sociological and academic research conducted on what constitutes the "election observation movement in Russia." Various sociological surveys have assessed readiness and participation in election observation. Researchers have made some conclusions about the social composition and motives for participation in it and the internal and external infrastructure of the movement. Among them, only a few works put the election observation movement at the forefront of the research (Bader 2013; Davydov et al. 2016; Davydov, Lebedev 2015; Fudin 2012), and more often, they casually mention the election observation movement within the context of the protest movement in 2011-2012 (Van'ke et al. 2014; Lobanova and Semenov 2012, 2013; Semenov and Lobanova 2013; Sobolev 2012, 2013; Greene 2013; Smith et al. 2013; Smyth, Soboleva 2016; Rosenberg 2017). Such works focus only on fragmented aspects of the activity of the movement of election observers, and the questions of how and by what factors the movement of election observers took place remains unexplored.

The thesis puts the movement of election observers into the main focus of the research and is devoted to answer questions about the factors and dynamics of its formation and development, about the social composition of its participants. The obtained results will continue the research line on the study of the rote the movement of election observers pays in civil society in various countries (Grömping 2017; Hedman 2006; Lean 2013; Selivanova 2020), and will also complement the

discussion about transformation processes in Russian civil society (Daucé 2014; Skokova et al. 2018, Stuvøy 2020; Toepler et al. 2020).

Research goal and tasks

The indicated relevance of the study leads to the main **research goal** – to establish the characteristics of the social composition of election observation movement, identify the factors and dynamics of its development.

To achieve this goal, the following **research tasks** are supposed to be solved:

1. Based on the systematization of classical and modern theories of social movements, develop a theoretical framework for the study;
2. Identify the factors of the movement formation;
3. Identify the dynamics and the stages of the movement development during the period of 2011-2016;
4. Determine the social composition of the movement's participants;
5. Determine the motives of "entry" into the movement of election observers, as well as the motives of the "continuation" of participation in it and "exit" from it;
6. Using regression analysis, identify individual determinants of inclusion in election observation and the intensity of participation in the movement.

Theoretical background

The movement of election observers is studied through the prism of theories of social movements. Based on the systematization of various theoretical approaches to defining the concept of social movements (Blumer 1953; della Porta, Diani 1992, 2009; Moss, Snow 2016; Snow 2013; Tarrow 2011; Giddens 1999; Smelzer 1994; Shtompka 2008), the following working definition is formulated in the thesis: Social movements are sustainable collective actions aimed at achieving social change or

preventing them, which can exist within the framework of social institutions and in the institutionalized form of organizations, united on the basis of common goals and the collective identity of its participants.

The movement of election observers meets all the main criteria of social movements. At its initial stage, it had a mobilization and spontaneous character, always retained an orientation towards institutional changes, was stable over time. The movement participants formed a shared idea about the movement's goals and built a sense of collective identity. Such characteristics conceptually distinguish social movements from one-time collective actions that are not long-lasting and from volunteer activities or the activities of non-profit organizations, the definitions of which do not contain an orientation towards change and the mobilization nature of formation.

The dissertation is based on systematized knowledge of social movements theories: mass society (Kornhauser 1959), collective behavior (Blumer 1953; Marx, McAdam 1994; Smelser 1962), relative deprivation (Gurney, Kathleen 1982; Gurr 1970; Morrison 1971), resource mobilization (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy, Zald 1977), political process (Eisinger 1973; McAdam 1982; Tarrow 2011; Tilly 1978) and new social movements (Buechler 1995; Kriesi et al. 2015; Melucci 1980, 1994; Offe 1985; Pichardo 1997). Based on the systematization of these theories, the paper establishes the boundaries of applicability of different theoretical approaches to the study of the movement of election observers.

The choice of theoretical systematization rather than applying any single theory to the research object is explained that different theories of social movements focus on different issues of their formation and development. As Klandermans and Roggeband pointed out (Klandermans, Roggeband 2007, p. 9), there is no general theory of social movements, and it is very fragmentary. In fact, none of the existing theories of social movements in isolation can provide answers to all the available research questions related to their empirical study. At the same time, a set of theories and theoretical approaches extends the boundaries of understanding the whole range of problems studied within the sociology of social movements. In order to analyze

the factors of formation, dynamics of development, social composition, and motives of the participants of the election observation movement, the systematization of theoretical approaches to the study of each of the raised questions is needed.

Multifactor model of social movements formation

Summarizing the main postulates of classical and modern theories of social movements and approaches to their systematization, the author has identified three fundamental factors underlying the formation of most social movements. The first is social conflict, which acts as an initial trigger for the emergence of a movement. Thus, virtually all the basic definitions of social movements declare their orientation toward achieving or opposing social change (Smelser 1994; Sztompka 2008; Giddens 2005). As D. della Porta specifies, "the involvement of a movement in political and/or cultural conflict means that it promotes or opposes social change... presents claims that, if realized, would harm the interests of other parties" (della Porta, Diani 2009, p. 21).

Although the theories of social movements often do not speak directly about the conflict genesis of movements, the terms used to describe the factors of their emergence – tension, deprivation, dissatisfaction – have a common conflictual origin and reflect the opposing interests of various social groups. A. Zdravomyslov, the author of a monograph on the sociology of conflict, explains the association of these concepts into a "class" of conflicts leading to the formation of movements as follows: "The source of aggravation of conflicts between large groups... is the accumulation of dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs, the growth of claims, a radical change in self-consciousness and social well-being... Dissatisfaction, acquiring an open form, stimulates the emergence of a social movement" (Zdravomyslov 1996, p. 93-94). E. Oberschall also considers discontent, dissent, and tension in political, social, and cultural relations as sources of conflict that stimulate the emergence of collective action and social movements (Oberschall 1978).

Classical theories of social movements view conflict as a structural tension (N. Smelser), social discontent (R. Park, G. Bloomer) and relative deprivation (T. Garrom). These authors consider this phenomenon as a necessary factor for the formation of social movements. In modern theories of social movements, the understanding of the nature of conflict has changed. For example, the theory of new social movements sees the conflict underlying the formation of movements in the challenges facing modern post-industrial society – achieving equality of opportunity, identity and lifestyle choices (Diani 1992; Offe 1985). As C. Offe notes, the social and political conflict model in the new social movements differs from its classical one. First, its parties are not classes, but social associations of people representing different classes and "non-classes," and, second, that the conflict is based on more universalist or, on the contrary, particularist demands of different social groups (Offe 1985).

Despite the fundamental role conflict is playing, this factor is not sufficient for forming a social movement. Social conflict is ever-present in any society, but it does not always lead to the formation of a movement. In this context, other factores are necessary to facilitate mobilization. These, according to resource mobilization theory and political process theory, include the presence of external and internal resources and capabilities that allow a movement to form. Although numerous works on resource mobilization theory do not elaborate much on the concept of resources but instead provide a typology of resources, they all agree on the fundamental importance of resources for movement formation (McCarthy, Zald 1977; Jenkins 1983; Jenkins, Eckert 1986; Cress, Snow 1996; Edwards, McCarthy 2004; Kniss 1996; Eltantawy, Wiest 2011; Diani 2000).

As for the other factor of movement formation, opportunity, political process theory has focused on it. This theory argues that neither social conflict nor resources can lead to the formation of a movement if the external environment does not facilitate or critically hinders it. To analyze the external context, the notion of political opportunity structure was introduced. It determines the extent to which the external

environment is open or closed to the manifestation of collective action (McAdam 1996, p. 27), what is the impact of external threats (Tilly 1978; Tarrow 2011) and the subjective perception of the opportunity-threat ratio on movement formation (McAdam et al. 2004).

A significant limitation of these theoretical approaches to understanding the opportunities contributing to movement formation is that they are often reduced to questions of a political nature and do not include other aspects of the external context. A solution to this problem was proposed by D. Rucht, who suggested analyzing the external environment of movements not only through political contexts, but also through social and cultural contexts (Rucht 1996). His definition of social context includes, in particular, the social and class structure of society, which has a direct influence on the formation of movements. Cultural context includes social attitudes and values and the extent to which they resonate with the declared goals of the movement (Rucht 1996, p. 188-191). In addition to the social and cultural context, the institutional context is important for the sociological analysis of the formation of the election observation movement. As noted earlier, the movement of election observers was formed in a legal environment with already developed formal norms and regulation rules. In this connection, the study of the formation of the election observation movement requires analyzing its interrelation with the already existing institutional context.

The third factor for the formation of movements is a collective identity among movement's participants that is a common shared and understood goal of the movement, a sense of unity of a collective actor (della Porta, Diani 2009; Tarrow 2011; Diani 1992). In fact, the presence of a collective identity among movement's participants distinguishes them from participants in ad hoc collective actions, such as protests, marches, and demonstrations. S. Hunt and R. Burford note that the concept of collective identity in the sociology of social movements "seems to be either a central concept or a residual category in virtually all theoretical approaches and empirical issues related to the study of social movements" (Hunt, Benford 2004,

p. 433). N. Smelser, the author of collective behavior theory, was one of the first to speak of the significance of collective identity, he argued that one of the final stages of movement formation is the "formation of shared generalized beliefs," which translate a situation of structural tension into a conscious and meaningful one for potential movement's participants (Smelser 1962, p. 16). Subsequently, new social movement theory has redefined the notion of collective identity and put it at the forefront. Thus, collective identity is, on the one hand, an important predictor for the movement formation in post-industrial society, where not class but group, collective solidarity, based on non-class attributes of common values, lifestyles, demands for recognition are the basis for mobilization (Buechler 1995; Cohen 1985; Melucci 1995; Polletta, Jasper 2001; Johnston et al. 1994). On the other hand, collective identity is understood within new social movement theory as an attribute of an established social movement (Polletta, Jasper 2001).

Collective identity can manifest itself at both the individual and collective levels. At the individual level, collective identity is reflected through "cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution" (Polletta, Jasper 2001, p. 285). We can talk about the collective identity of movement participants when they associate themselves with the movement, feel like a part of it, whose goals are shared and supported by their actions (Holland et al. 2008, p. 97). In the course of acquiring joint experience, emotional experiences, participants in movements form a feeling of "we" and define their boundaries from "others" (Snow 2001). At the collective level, the collective identity of the impulse manifests itself through "shared definition of a group that derives from members' common interests, experiences and solidarity" (Taylor, Whittier 1992, p. 105).

Dynamics of the movement development: the main stages

Among the existing theoretical approaches to understanding the dynamics of social movements, we can distinguish two levels of regularities. The first, macro-level pattern, is presented in the framework of the political process theory and reveals the

cyclical or wave-like nature of mass mobilization in the long-term historical perspective. S. Tarrow, using the example of social movements in Italy in the 1960-s and 1970-s, showed how protest sentiments spread from workers and students to other groups in society, causing a wave of violence in society, which subsequently leveled off. There was a return to the traditional model of governance (Tarrow 1993, 2010, 2011).

The second level of regularities is on the level of individual movements and their organizations. H. Blumer (Blumer 1953) was the first to distinguish the stages of development of social movements in the most systematic way in his theory of collective behavior. He proposed a model of movement dynamics (Blumer 1953) consisting of four stages: “social ferment,” “popular excitement,” “formalization” and “institutionalization”. The unambiguity of the last stage caused the greatest argumentative criticism among the researchers. As D. della Porta and M. Diani point out (della Porta, Diani 2009, p. 150-152), there are other forms of movement development besides institutionalization – from radicalization and reduction of contacts with the outside world to the disappearance of a social movement because achieving its goals.

As S. Tarrow notes, while movements emerge in roughly the same scenario, their “dying” has a much greater variety of forms (Tarrow 2011, p. 212). However, the question about the ways of demobilization remains much less studied than about how and why movements are formed (Tilly, Tarrow 2015). In response to this lacuna, C. Tilly and S. Tarrow, in their works on “contentious politics”, theorized ways of movements’ demobilization and identified the main paths. They proposed three ways of demobilizing social movements (Tarrow 2011, p. 188-190; Tilly, Tarrow 2015). The first path is internal exhaustion and external polarization. The second path of demobilization arises in choosing the movement’s strategy of action – whether it will radicalize and become violent or follow the non-conflict path of institutionalization. The third way of demobilization depends on the reactive actions of the state, which can either conduct a targeted repression of the movement, or

conduct a tactic of absorption of the movement, which will lead to a complete loss of autonomy and thus reduce the interest of activists to participate in it.

All outcomes, except the institutionalization of the movement and the case when the movement has achieved its goal, can be referred to as negative. Institutionalization, on the other hand, means that movement has become "incorporated into a routine" (Tarrow 2011, p. 190), when it has become "an organic part of society and crystallizes into a professional structure" (della Porta, Diani 2009, p. 150). S. Staggenborg (2013) refers to the mechanisms of movement's institutionalization formalization of SMOs and their professionalization. We can talk about movemet's institutionalization when their goals and ideas are normalized and become generally accepted and when their activities become a full-fledged part of any social institution or organization (Staggenborg 2013). An example of internal (in terms of formalization and professionalization) and external (in terms of accepting goals and normalizing in public perception) institutionalization of a movement is the environmental movement in developed countries (Guini, Grasso 2015). Thus, the environmental movement began to be global, professional organizations appeared, and separate "green" political parties were formed, and the environmental agenda became everyday.

Determinants of individual participation

In terms of developing a theoretical framework for analyzing the determinants of individual participation, the following works were studied and systematized (Andretta, della Porta 2014; Barkan 2004; Klandermans, Oegema 1987; Klandermans 2004, 2015; McAdam 1986; Putnam 1995; Schwartz 1992, 1994; Snow et al. 1980; Passy, Giugni 2001; Opp et al. 1995; van Stekelenburg et al. 2009; Urdal 2006). On their basis, four categories of analysis were established, which are necessary to identify the determinants and intensity of participation in the movement of election observers. These are the motives of participation, socio-economic status, values, and social capital of the participants.

At the same time, as S. Barkan et al. (1995) note, the analysis should include not only the determinants of individual participation in a social movement at the stage of entry but also within the process of keeping it in motion and exiting it. Several authors also propose to consider participation in the movement not as a dichotomous variable (participate or do not participate), but taking into account the intensity of participation in the movement (Passy, Giugni 2001; Rainsford 2017; Saunders et al. 2012; Andretta, della Porta 2014) or as the degree of involvement in the movement, from potential to real participants (van Laer 2017). Such recommendations are valuable for analyzing the determinants of individual participation in the movement of election observers because of the presence of a certain number of elections in which observers could potentially participate and the mass character of the movement with the constant presence of new participants. In this regard, the dissertation raises a more complex question about both the determinants of participation in the movement and its intensity.

Motives

Dutch researchers B. Klandermans and J. van Stekelenburg have contributed to the systematization of various approaches to the analysis of motives for participation in social movements (Klandermans 2004, 2015; van Stekelenburg et al. 2009; van Stekelenburg, Klandermans 2010). They understand the motives themselves as a scheme of subjective interpretations and explanations of individual participation in the movement by the participants themselves (van Stekelenburg, Klandermans 2010). The researchers proposed a model according to which there are "three fundamental reasons people participate in the movement" (Klandermans 2004, p. 361). Briefly, the authors of this paper call these motives instrumental (aim to achieve social change), identity motives (individual's desire to act following their identification with a group), and finally ideological or expressive motives (desire to express views and feelings) (Klandermans 2004, 2015; van Stekelenburg, Klandermans 2010). However, based on a review of various empirical works, the

authors argue that motives for participation in most movements are based on a combination of instrumental and expressive motives (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010).

As for the motives for quitting the movement, this question, except the model of B. Klandermans, is practically unstudied. According to his model of "dynamics of disengagement," the intention to quit the movement is stimulated either by insufficient satisfaction from participation in the movement, or a decreased sense of commitment to the movement (Klandermans 2004, p. 371-374). B. Klandermans understands the first motive as the awareness of unattainability of the movement's goals and loss of interest in their achievement, the second – through the decrease in communication with the members and leaders of the movement.

Socio-economic status

Due to the constant development of new forms of social movements and the changes taking place at the macro-context level, there is no consensus at the theoretical level about the typical social portrait of movement's participants. Classical theories that emerged in the middle of the 20th century saw participants of social movements as marginalized, inferior, and socially excluded (Blumer 1953; Kornhauser 1959, Garr 2005), while modern theories, particularly new social movement theory, by contrast, describe them as people belonging to a "new" middle class, with high socio-economic status and employment in intellectual non-physical work (D'Anieri et al. 1990; Kriesi 1989; Offe 1985; Rose 1997). In today's empirical works, researchers are moving away from identifying general characteristics of the socio-economic status of social movements' participants to analyzing specific cases and developing analytical schemes for studying. The social status of social movement participants refers primarily to the level of education (Andretta, della Porta 2014; Rüdig, Karyotis 2013; Beyerlein, Hipp 2006; Barkan 2004), employment (Cotgrove, Duff 1980; Jasper 2008 Beyerlein; Hipp 2006; Petrie 2004 Grasso, Giugni 2016; Rüdig, Karyotis 2014) and income level (Barkan 2004; Barkan et al. 1995). In this work,

the socio-economic status of movement's participants is understood primarily as the level of education, employment, and income (Brady et al. 1995).

To formulate research hypotheses about the social portrait of election observers and the nature of the relationship between socio-economic status and the involvement and intensity of participation in the election observation movement, we rely on the previously identified characteristics of the "typical" participant of modern social movements. This is explained by the nature of the movement itself, which sets itself the intangible goals of "fair elections," belonging to the public good category.

Thus, it is assumed that most of the participants in the election observer movement have a relatively high socio-economic status and are also employed in the field of intellectual work. They can be attributed to the "new" middle class. High socio-economic status means higher education, high material well-being, and the presence of self-identification with the middle class and above.

As a result, the following hypotheses are formulated as follows (H1):

(H1-1) Most participants of the election observation movement have high socio-economic status and employed in intellectual work, based on which they can be classified as a "new" middle class.

(H1-2) High socio-economic status and employment in intellectual work increases the likelihood of becoming election observer and the intensity of participation in the movement.

Values

The influence of values on individual participation in social movements began to be thoroughly examined only in the later, more modern stages of theorizing. With the emergence of the theory of new social movements, values came to the forefront of research. They were singled out as the basis for their formation and development (Offe 1985, Inglehart 1990a, 1990b).

Current quantitative studies examining the influence of values on pro-social behavior (Schwartz 2010) and volunteering (Plagnol, Huppert 2010), participation in NGO activities (Luengo Kanacri et al. 2012), and political activism (Vecchione et al. 2015; Chrona, Capelos 2017), and various social movements (Karp 1996; Morselli, Passini 2018; Schultz, Zelezny 1999; Schwartz, Huismans 1995) predominantly apply the validated technique of the Schwartz questionnaire, developed within the framework of basic values theory (Schwartz 1992). According to S. Schwartz (1987) values are "(a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviors, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance." (p. 4). Years of cross-cultural research have resulted in the identification of 10 basic values (Schwartz 1992, 1994, etc.) that can be grouped into four aggregated categories of values that form two value axes "Self-transcendence – Self-enhancement," "Conservation – Openness to Change."

The results of previous studies suggest that the value portrait of participants in various types of social movements differs (Karp 1996; Schultz, Zelezny 1999; Schwartz, Huismans 1995; Morselli, Passini 2018; Roets et al. 2014). Thus, it has been shown that participation in the "inclusive" type of protest movements focused on achieving public good for the whole society, and the "exclusive" type, aimed at acquiring goods for a specific group, is associated with different values shared by their participants (Morselli, Passini 2018). While the former has pronounced values of "universalism," the latter is characterized by a conservative set of values – "traditionalism," "security," and "conformity."

It is assumed that the movement of election observers belongs to an inclusive type, focused on achieving a public good ("fair elections") available to all members of society. In this regard, the following hypotheses are formulated (H2).

(H2-1) Participants of the election observation movement have specific value portrait, with more pronounced values of "Self-transcendence" and "Openness to change."

Social capital

The presence of a dense network of interactions at the stage before joining a social movement is one of the essential factors for further participation in it (Edwards, McCarthy 2004a; Diani 1992, 1997, 2004). This understanding of the role of social networks, which fosters unification and determines collective action, is consistent with the definition of social capital (Diani 1997).

The concept of social capital is very broad, however, in the basic definitions of R. Putnam, P. Bourdieu, M. Granovetter, firstly, say about its functions - assistance in interaction, and, secondly, about its forms - social networks and trust (Bourdieu 1986; Granovetter 1973; Putnam 1995). Thus, R. Putnam defines social capital as "networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam 1995, p. 67). In the discussion about social capital, R. Putnam separately highlights the issue of civic engagement and membership in various associations, which he considers as an empirical reflection of social capital. P. Bourdieu also speaks of social networks and group membership as social capital, but the relationship of social capital occupies an important place in his discussion about economic and cultural capital and "the profits which accrue from membership in a group" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 247). M. Granovetter in some sense unites these two discussions and, separating "strong" (family members, close friends) and "weak" (acquaintances) social ties, demonstrates the power of the latter, which allows people to have greater access to information and bring greater benefits (Granovetter 1973).

Research shows that the level of interpersonal trust (Jeong 2013; Krishna 2002), the experience of participation in non-profit organizations (Jeong 2013; Andretta, della Porta 2014), and protests (Grasso, Giugni 2016; Rüdig, Karyotis 2013; Welzel et al. 2005) have a positive relationship with movement participation. Such variables act as an empirical operationalization of the concept of social capital. The main conclusion of these works is that the level of social capital is positively correlated with participation in social movements. However, one should take into account the

variability and multidimensionality of both social capital (Jeong 2013; Paxton 2002; Welzel et al. 2005) and the movements (Rüdig, Karyotis 2013 ; Jeong 2013), intensity of them (Andretta, della Porta 2014; Saunders et al. 2012) and participation format (van Laer 2017).

In terms of the differential impact of social capital and particularly the experience of participation in various nonprofit organizations, several studies conclude that it is unnecessary to aggregate the experience of participation in all organizations in general. On the contrary, it is necessary to separate NGOs by type of activity (Jeong 2013), for example, by what audience the organization's work for – internal (utilitarian organizations created for group interests, including trade unions, parties, professional associations) or external, where organizations are focused on achieving public good (charitable, human rights, environmental organizations) (Welzel et al. 2005).

More correct approach to defining the types of non-profit organizations, not focusing on specific areas of activity, but considering them as equivalent, seems to be the typology of "isolated" and "open" NPOs proposed by P. Paxton in her study on the relationship between social capital and democracy (Paxton 2002). She suggests defining the "openness" and "isolation" of organizations by the average number of other non-profit organizations in which their members participate (Paxton 2002). Those organizations whose members also take part in other organizations are of the "open" type. For "isolated" organizations, on the contrary, they are inherently closed - their members rarely take part in other NPOs.

The previously obtained theoretical insights and empirical results suggest that most participants in the election observer movement have a high level of social capital, which means the presence of high interpersonal trust, the experience of participation in NPO activities, volunteering, and protests. These variables reflect embeddedness in various social networks and reflect the experience of cooperation.

Thus, the following hypotheses are formulated (H3):

(H3-1) The majority of participants of the election observation movement have high level of social capital – they express high level of interpersonal trust, participate in volunteering and protests.

(H3-2) High levels of interpersonal trust, the experience in nonprofit organizations, and protest increase the likelihood of inclusion in election observation activities and the intensity of participation in it.

(H3-3) Experience in "open" NPOs increases the likelihood of inclusion and intensity of participation in election observation activities, while experience in "isolated" NPOs decreases it.

Data and methodology

The empirical base of the research is the quantitative and qualitative data collected and analyzed within the mixed methods methodology. Data triangulation made it possible, on the one hand, to quantitatively study the social composition and factors of inclusion in election observation activities. On the other hand, qualitative data supplement conclusions about the motives of participation and the dynamics of movement development with narratives and subjective argumentation of the movement participants themselves.

The research period is 2012-2016. This period covers two federal electoral waves and allows you to track the development of the movement of election observers in dynamics. The quantitative data of the research – data from online polls of election observers conducted by the author among the participants of public organizations and projects of election observers in 2012-2016. (2012: N = 1025, 2013: N = 1327, 2016: N = 766, see Table 4 for details), as well as data from a representative survey of the population conducted in 2013 by the Center for Civil Society Research and non-profit sector of the HSE University in the project "Monitoring the state of civil society" (N = 2000).

Qualitative data are presented by in-depth interviews with key informants of the movement in various regions of Russia (Novosibirsk, Yekaterinburg, Rostov-on-Don, Bryansk, Nizhny Novgorod), including in Moscow and St. Petersburg (N = 14). Also, the source of qualitative and quantitative data was the texts of news and personal blogs collected on "Medialogia" during the month before and after the elections in 2011-2014. (the total number of analyzed news texts and online diaries is more than 20 thousand). Thus, the qualitative and quantitative for the period from 2012 to 2016 made it possible to reveal the dynamics of movement development at its different stages and dynamics of individual motives of participation in it.

Methods of descriptive and regression analysis (multinomial regression) using the SPSS 22 and Stata 13 software were used to analyze the quantitative data from online surveys of observers and the population survey. "Medialogies." The text analysis was carried out using the open coding technique in the Atlas.ti 5.0 program for further critical analysis of citations. The Medialogia data were also quantitatively analyzed by the method of frequency analysis.

The main thesis

1. The movement of election observers has been formed in 2011-2012. The factors for its formation became (1) the conflict caused by the citizens' disagreement with the procedure and results of voting at the State Duma elections in 2011-2012; (2) the presence of enabling opportunities in the form of institutional, social, and cultural contexts that stimulate the formation and development of the movement; (3) accessible and successfully mobilized resources; (4) collective identity of movements' participants.
2. The movement of election observers is characterized by high dynamics of development. Quickly formed during the growth of the protest movement in 2011-2012, the movement moved to the stage of formalization and consolidation, which is evidenced by the growth of the organizational strength

of the movement, the formation of coalitions of several election observer organizations, the growth of the repertoire of collective action. However, at the subsequent stage, the movement began to demobilize. Three ways of demobilizing the movement of election observers have been identified - exhaustion, polarization and institutionalization. As a result, the movement of election observers lost its mobilization character, their activity was institutionalized and continues to develop as the activity of public organizations of election observers.

3. Various motives of participation in the election observation movement during the "entry" into the movement, "continuation" of participation in it, and "exit" from it were revealed. At the initial stage of "entry" into the movement, the main motives were expressive and share dissatisfaction with the results of the previous elections, the desire to check the fairness of the voting results or defend it by preventing possible violations. The most significant for the motive of "continuation" of participation in the movement was the level of political competition in specific elections and the subjective feeling of observers of the possibility to influence the fairness of elections. In the absence of these conditions, the movement's participants started to express a motive of "exit" from it supplemented by disappointment in the movement and the impossibility of achieving its goal of "fair elections".
4. Participants of the election observation movement have distinct demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Election observers are primarily people aged 18 to 45 years old, with higher education, employed in intellectual work (information technology, science, education, etc.), with relatively high official and financial position, with relatively high-class self-identification. Based on the results obtained, more than half of the participants of the election observation movement (61%) can be classified as representatives of the "new" middle class.
5. In comparison with the general population, election observers are notably distinguished by high level of social capital expressed in high level of

interpersonal trust, participation in NPOs, volunteering and protest. It was found that more than half of the participants of the election observation movement (59%) are representatives of the "core" of the social base of civil society.

6. According to the theory of basic human values of S. Schwartz, the dominant values for election observers are Benevolence, Universalism and Autonomy. Election observers noticeably exceed the population by values of the enlarged level of Self-transcendence and Openness to changes.
7. The determinants of inclusion and intensity of participation in the election observation movement were established using regression analysis. For the population at large, inclusion in the election observation movement is determined largely by the socio-economic status – higher education and self-identification with the middle class or higher classes. The intensity of participation in the election observation movement is determined to the greatest extent by the level of social capital (experience of participation in protests, public hearings, NGOs).

General conclusions and results of the research

The movement of election observers emerged during the 2011-2012 federal election campaign. Its spontaneous and mass mobilization was unexpected for many, including researchers. Previously existing formal norms prescribed by law and informal practices of election observation did not demonstrate the potential for extensive and intensive development. Moreover, the context of low interest and trust in the elections, low political and civil activity made it impossible to predict the formation of a mass movement of election observers. However, the movement formed gained public recognition and approval. The actual participation in the movement of election observers reached several tens of thousands of people throughout the country in the 2012 presidential elections.

According to the research results, the movement of election observers was formed in a quite enabling environment. The main factor for the growth of mass mobilization was the conflict expressed in spontaneous dissatisfaction with the procedures and results of the voting in the State Duma elections in December 2011. The widespread dissemination of videos of election irregularities caused a series of sharply negative emotions that affected the civic identity of Russians, almost half of whom did not consider the elections to be fair. The published videos and the emotional involvement in its understanding became the main trigger that raised the wave of protest mobilization. Protest mobilization has mainly become possible not only due to the mobilizing event and dissatisfaction with the procedures and results of the elections but also due to the generally accumulated social and political unrest in society, especially among the representatives of the middle class, as well as the request of a specific part of society for working democratic institutions. This reinforced protest mobilization and increased citizens' interest in participating in election observation activities, which was a legally possible practice of participation in the electoral process, to the implementation of which there were no formal restrictions.

> *"The movement emerged for a reason... very complex. Of course, electoral fraud, deceived expectations, the understanding of a need for change and the feeling that there is no way it can be done. The understanding of responsibility that we can do it, that we can move it and, of course, the "castling" (rokirovka) of September it also played its role."* (female, movement participant, Nizhny Novgorod)

Nevertheless, unrest and enabling external context would not be enough to form a sustainable movement of election observers. It required resources, available for mobilization – organizational, human, and moral. The movement was formed based on the accumulated practical experience of election observation. Accumulated experience in the organization of the election observation process helped to form the movement. Besides organizational resources, the human, moral, and social resources

available for its development became significant. The readiness of many people to join the movement, their previous experience of participation in various practices of civil society, and the presence of significant supporters (public intellectuals) is no less significant factors for the movement's formation than the practical experience they have accumulated. As a result, the coincidence in time of all the necessary and sufficient factors from a theoretical point of view led to the formation of a movement of election observers, whose participants formed their collective identity around the goal of achieving "fair elections." The shared experience and discussions of it made it possible to strengthen the sense of belonging to the collective "we" of the movement and to consolidate its collective identity.

> *"People in the movement of election observers are involved in the process, they are not one-on-one... They have a subject to communicate. Their negative experience becomes not just their negative experience, but their life experience, which helps them to move, to find people, to find associates. It is probably the feeling of formation of civil society that keeps us all there."* (female, Novosibirsk, participant of election observation movement)

In the context of theories of social movements, the case of observer movement confirms the conclusion that the formation of movements is a process with many necessary components (della Porta, Diani 2009). Only when all the required factors coincide – conflict or, in other words, the discontent that activates mobilization, and the desire to achieve any changes in society, is not enough. For mobilization to lead to sustainable social movement, both an external enabling context and the resources available for mobilization are needed. A formed movement can be talked about when its participants form a collective identity, self-define their collective "we" and share the common goals of the movement.

In addition, it should be noted that when analyzing the external context of the formation of movements, researchers traditionally pay special attention to the external political context or, in D. McAdam's terms, the structure of political

opportunities (McAdam 1996). However, as the case of the movement of election observers shows, not only the political context, but also the institutional (norms, rules, organizations associated with the activities of the movement), social (the social structure of society, the accumulated experience of self-organization) and cultural (the society's acceptance of the goals of the movement, the presence in society of corresponding attitudes and values) contexts were important for its formation. This approach is consistent with the model for analyzing the external context of social movements proposed by D. Rucht (1996), but which is rarely used by researchers.

The second research task was to identify the stages of movement formation. Research results show that having formed, the election observation movement began to develop dynamically. It passed to the next stage of formalization and consolidation. The organizational strength of the movement began to grow, a coalition of several observer organizations was formed, the repertoire of their collective actions grew. Nevertheless, having reached its peak, the movement began to demobilize at a subsequent stage. The study revealed three ways of demobilization of the election observation movement – exhaustion, polarization and institutionalization. If in the first and second cases we can talk about "negative" demobilization due to the formation of a feeling of disappointment with the movement, inability to achieve the original goal of the "fair elections" movement and the transition of some of the movement participants to other grassroots movements, then the "institutionalization" of the movement can be attributed to being "positive" path of demobilization. The institutionalization of the movement took place both through the strengthening the organizations of election observers and through the growth of their professionalization. The leaders of observer organizations have received external recognition as experts in election observation activities and the field of electoral legislation in general. Also, the external institutionalization of the movement manifested itself in the normalization of election observation activities in the public perception, which has become an integral

part of the electoral process. Subsequently, this led to the co-optation of the election observation agenda by the state and the formation of new mechanisms (through regional Public Chambers) for recruitment, training, and coordination of election observation activities. In general, today, we can talk about the demobilization of the movement of election observers, which continued its development as the activity of public organizations of election observers, formed on the wave of mass mobilization and general institutionalization of this activity.

> *"Again, the motivation of observers also depends on the elections that take place. If they are competitive, if they are interesting, then, of course, people are willing to monitor so as not to steal votes. Moreover, if the elections are not interesting, not competitive, then the voters do not go, and observers do not need it. That is why paid observers from the candidates pretend that we have decent elections, with observers, with everyone. But the real observers are not interested in this, because what is there to control if everything is already clear." (male, observer, Moscow)*

The third research task was to determine the social composition of the participants in the election observer movement in terms of the demographic, socio-economic composition of the election observer movement, the level of their social capital and their inherent values. According to the results of the study, participants in the movement of election observers are primarily people aged 18 to 45 years old, with higher education, employed in the field of intellectual work (information technology, science, and education), with high financial status, and are not supporters or members of the existing parliamentary political parties. Therefore, most participants in the election observation movement (61%) can be classified as members of the "new" middle class. This confirms hypothesis H1-1.

At the same time, election observers, in comparison with the general population, are noticeably distinguished by high level of social capital expressed in high level of

interpersonal trust, participation in NPOs, volunteering and protests. Hypothesis H3-1 is confirmed.

Also, the participants of the election observation movement have a specific value portrait. According to the model of basic human values of S. Schwartz, the dominant values of election observers are Benevolence, Universalism, and Autonomy. As a result, it was found that the observers are noticeably surpassed the population by the values of the enlarged level of Self-transcendence and Openness to Changes. The results obtained confirm the hypothesis H2-1.

The obtained conclusions regarding the social composition of the participants of the movement of election observers show that they are a very specific part of Russian society. The portrait of the participants in the election observer movement shows that they are not only representatives of the "new" middle class - that is, the most educated, financially secure part of society, engaged in intellectual work, but also people with a high level of social capital. If the earlier experience of election observers in protest actions can be explained by the general protest mobilization of 2011-2012, then their previous experience in volunteer activities and NPOs requires a separate further discussion. This experience suggests that non-political activity in volunteerism and NPOs can act as a "school of democracy" and lead to activity in the political and civic spheres not only in democracies but also in countries with a "hybrid regime."

The specificity of the social composition of the election observation movement significantly impacts the inclusion and intensity of participation in it. For the population at large, inclusion in the election observation activities is determined to the greatest extent by high socio-economic status. Higher education and high level of social capital are also significant determinants of inclusion. For the participants of the election observation movement, the intensity of participation in it is determined to the greatest extent by the level of social capital. Thus, hypothesis H1-2 on the positive relationship of socio-economic status with participation in election observation is partially confirmed, only when analyzing involvement in election

observation activities. The results on the relationship between the level of social capital and participation in the movement support the hypothesis of hypotheses H3-2 and H3-3 only partially.

> *"I'm proud of what I do. The people we have in different regions are the most active, the most advanced, these are truly knowledgeable people, these are opinion leaders, they are not just anyone. That's why we have become such a force."* (female, participant of the movement, Novosibirsk)

As for the research task about the individual motives of participation in the movement of election observers, following the theoretical framework, three types of motives were identified – "entering" the movement, "continuing" participation in it, and "exit" from it. The motives for "entering" the movement are expressive and instrumental and are explained by dissatisfaction with the results of the previous elections, the desire to test the fairness of voting or to defend it by preventing possible violations. Expressive motives proved to be less critical than instrumental ones for the continuation of participation in the movement of election observers. The question about the potential effectiveness of this activity and rational explanation of participation in it became the key one for them. In the absence of visible political competition, the motive of "leaving" from the movement began to form. It was expressed in the feeling of disappointment in the movement and the impossibility to achieve the goal of "fair elections." The results show that expressive and emotional motives are only triggers for mobilizing and forming movements. At subsequent stages, other motives required rationally explaining to the participants their potential contribution to achieving their goals. It means that in subsequent studies of the dynamics of movement development, the question of motives should be studied at least at these three stages.

The limitations of the study should be noted. In terms of data, the use of the online survey to analyze the target sample is limited by the self-selection bias of respondents. Nevertheless, given the high response rate (38%) and the triangulation of the data obtained from interviews, online blogs, and secondary quantitative

population survey data, this limitation does not significantly affect it. Moreover, given that studies of social movements are more often qualitative, the current quantitative survey is an advantage of the work and allowed us to test several theoretical hypotheses about the social composition of election observation movement, the determinants of involvement, and the intensity of participation in the movement. Another limitation of the study is the non-inclusion of political factors in analyzing the formation and dynamics of the election observation movement. This is due to the sociological nature of this work. However, these issues would be necessary to include for a complete analysis of the study.

Also, a number of recommendations can be made concerning the design and methodology of further social movements research. From the methodological point of view, the analysis demonstrates that it is impossible to use representative population surveys alone to analyze any narrow social groups, including those engaged in social activism and, in particular, participate in the election observation movement. For the analysis of narrow social groups, it is recommended to combine different methods of data collection and analysis, which will allow to clarify and deepen the results obtained.

Second, when studying the motives of participation in social movements and other spheres of civil society, it is recommended to differentiate motives into motives of "entry", "continuation," and "exit." As research results show, the motives of participation and non-participation differ significantly, and their study allows deeper analysis and studies its dynamics.

Third, the division of movement participants according to the intensity of participation demonstrated statistically significant differences between the groups with participation in the movement 1, 2, and 3 or more times. Therefore, in the future, it is recommended not to consider participants in social movements and other practices of civil society as a "monolith," but to classify them, as recommended in the literature and tested in this study, according to the intensity of participation.

Fourthly, the differentiation of NGOs into “open” and “isolated” organizations also demonstrated consistency and showed that the experience of participation in “open” NPOs has a stable positive relationship with both inclusion in election observation activities and intensity of participation in the movement. It cannot be said about the relationship with the experience of participation in “isolated” organizations. In further research examining the relationship between the experience of participation in NPOs and other practices of civil society, it is also recommended to consider different types of organizations separately, rather than in combination.

List of publications of the author

1. Skokova Y. A. Sociology of Social Movements: Opportunities and Limitations of Min Theoretical Concepts // Sociological Research. 2014. № 3. S. 132-140.
2. Skokova Y. A. Electoral Observers in Russia // Sociological Research.. 2015. № 10. S. 57-63.
3. Skokova Y. A. Movement of Election Observes in Russia: The Role of NPOs as a “school of democracy” // Sociological Journal. 2016. № 2. S. 55-72.
4. Skokova Y. A. The Dynamics of Movement of Election Observers: The Research Results of 2011-2016 // Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology. 2016. № 3. С. 65-79.