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Institutions of civil society in space of democratic politics

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Abstract

The article presents an analysis of a civil society organization depending on the democratization of the political system from three points of view: Liberal Democratic, Social Democratic and that generalizing the first and the second ones. Democracy is considered as a subordinate use; requirements for compliance of democracy in relation to civil society are identified and their relationship is defined.

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1. Introduction

Consideration of the role of civil society in democratization of the political system depends on how the institutional structure of civil society is developed. There is a deep relationship between functional and structural aspects, namely, between democracy and civil society (Kean J., 2001; Ferguson A., 2000; Baranov N.A., 2006; Dahrendorf R.G., 2002).

The purpose of the work is a study on the role of civil society in democratization of the political system. To achieve this goal in this paper the following problems are solved sequentially. The civil society is considered from three positions: liberal-democratic, social democratic and generalizing the first and the second ones; a relationship existing between them is determined; particular requirements for compliance of democracy are identified.

In the early 19th A.de Tocqueville travelling to the New World, summarized his observations in the "Democracy in America" which is still called "the best book on democracy and the best book about America". Reflecting on these aspects of the relationship, he systematized the results of his observations (Tocqueville A.de, 2008).

2. Terms and theoretical framework

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A.de Tocqueville confirmed that to ensure stability of the democratic system, it was important that civil institutions, that provided stability, had always been undemocratic and hierarchically organized. For example, the Catholic Church and the patriarchal family considering their internal undemocratic character, he referred to functional democratic institutions.

Although in his views, de Tocqueville was a conservative, a danger of splicing of an undemocratic society with a totalitarian state was evident for him. He noted that members of a democratic society hardly left personal affairs, being confined to their private interests and had the only view - to shift the responsibility to the State which was the only obvious and permanent expression of collective interests. To minimize this danger democracy could through institutionalization of the civil society.

This problem was very excited for the founders of the American Constitution. If we turn to the Constitution of 1787, we see that each state within its territory possessed full legislative, executive and judiciary power, managing their elected representatives. Religious tolerance and non-interference of the government into religious affairs became one of the main conditions for the institutionalization of civil society. Given the abundance of faiths, such a policy had helped to unite the inhabitants of the North American States in primary cells of the civil society. In those cells relationship was based on religious and moral basis, forming a relationship of mutual tolerance. To date, the important characteristics of social components of the civil society are the priority of moral regulators in relation to legal and political ones and mutual tolerance of all social groups. These are sustainability indicators of the existing social order (Levin I.B., 1996).

3. Results and discussion

A civil society is necessary for creating and sustaining democratic politics. Western analysts I.Shapiro, J.Joy, G.Marison, A.Hamilton worked on this problem. This problem is reflected in the work by L.Hartz "Liberal Tradition in America". The author asked why U.S. policy had not evolved in the direction of socialism or democratic socialism. L. Hartz answered that America did not oppose the feudal past; America did not have any basic elements of class differences, of which the socialist policy could develop (Hartz L., 1993). In his work L.Hartz used the concept of American policy that had existed since the time of debates on the feudal constitution in the late XVIII.

Political experts had made systematization in the 1920s. Its uniqueness (American civil society) expressed itself through a plurality of intersecting "interest groups" or factions, each of which had its structure, interests and the range of issues. In European societies, in contrast, there was a main border line between the propertied classes and all others. American society had many border lines but there was no base or permanent line of separation on socio-economic grounds. A diversity of religious, professional, family and local associations increased, as pointed out by Hartz, and it reduced the likelihood of the socialist tradition, that could unite the poor classes under capitalism. And this was the answer to the question of the author: "Why Socialism is unknown to America?"

Proponents of the "Theory of Groups" that prevailed in the early XX century, sought to interpret theoretically plurality of dividing lines, which determined the overall American political situation. The most famous was A.F. Bentley, whose theoretical motto was: "Each group corresponds to the interest; each interest corresponds to the group". In 50-60th theoreticians of pluralism emerged. The most famous of them, Robert Dahl, drew on the Theory of Groups. Based on a series of experimental and practical studies of American cities, he demonstrated an extensive dispersal of authorities in terms of making decisions in the public sphere, control of the various organized groups on various issues. His work "Who Governs?" (1961) is considered to be a classic one (Dahl R., 2011).

A leader among all rejected theories was the theory of Marxism, and, namely, that under capitalism the state "is no more than "the executive committee of the bourgeoisie". And they did not accept the theory of G. Mosca, R. Michels, C.Wright Mills, who claimed that under any political system one or other elite would govern through

a network of informal relations and power relations. Worded the "iron law of oligarchy" said: powerful small elite controls over society, and institutional mechanisms can not prevent this (Lasch C., 2002).

"Pluralists" believed that they reasonably presented arguments and proved that dismemberment of the government was possible. The structure of American policy, which was based on "interest groups", provided greater fragmentation of government than Republicans thought it would be attainable. Theorists drew an analogy between political activities and the economic market as it follows: the government can respond to requests expressed in terms of fractions and interest groups, as proposal responds to demand in economy.

The analogy gave to "pluralist" the opportunity to reorganize A.de Tocqueville theory, the Theory of Groups, and the theory of L.Hartz regarding heterogeneity of the American political elite and a set of border lines in the political sphere, into a constructive theory of democratic politics which became known as "democratic pluralism". They interpreted fragmentation of authority as a favour to achievement and maintenance of democratic politics.

According to L. Hartz societies in Europe suffer from the following drawback: in any conflict two opposing classes or two groups are embroiled. This contributes to stable unions and oppositions; as a result one class (group) always wins on the expense of another one. Instead of compromise, the Bolshevik policy is applied, according to which it is necessary to win over opponents and completely remove them from the political arena. In contrast, in a society with a great number of border lines a conflict is mixed and requires constant mutual concessions.

Thus, we can recognize the functionality that is a distinctive feature of a democratic political system – diversity of the society. Borders run through classes, ethnic groups, races, religious communities, and professional associations. American political scientists believe that existence of such border lines promotes a culture of harmony, a culture of mutual concessions and gives people resistance to the Bolshevik policy. Elites control different interest groups that form the civil society. Movement of the elites on the political orbit impedes forming of ruling coalitions, who are able to control the political process (Benoist Alain de, 2009).

The Pluralistic theory of democracy includes components relevant to discussions about the future of civil society in post-socialist countries. This theory has been criticized by many researchers for errors and significant gaps in the picture of social realities. The motto of the Theory of Groups "Each group corresponds to the interest; each interest corresponds to the group" ignores the fact that different groups have unequal opportunities to represent their interests in the current policy. Not all groups have means to express their interests. If low-income people, healthless people, youth, etc. are not arranged in active groups, it does not mean that they do not exist, or that their interests are embodied in the political process by themselves. The so-called elite, that are wealthy and important persons, have all the necessary resources to create successful pressure groups; for this a team of professional lobbyists is involved who pay their knowledge, skills and abilities to influence public officials and the media for passing or holding up legislation according to the wishes of the elite.

Weakness of the theory was that disagreement between the interests of the groups was on the surface, but in fact its essence was formed by the difference in the class power. Researchers of logic of public choice noted that the policy system built on groups of interest leads to a constant increase in the range of management. In Western countries this is reflected in a steady increase in taxation, government spending and the use of borrowed funds. Reason is as follows: interest groups that are formed around a particular subject in order to pass the necessary legislation enter into an agreement to support each other. The society bears the costs involved through increased taxation and government loans. Politicians operate in a similar manner when agree on mutual assistance for their projects in their constituencies, creating lobbies to promote general increase in taxes or government loans to compensate costs.

Contradiction of this system is in the fact that if people were asked they would never favour increasing taxation; as they express their interests through a network of interest groups that grow around the political process, then there is a constant expansion of range of management. This process is almost irreversible, because each group defends its interest through its affiliated politicians and representatives.

To come to power, governments cut taxes (the Reagan administration in 1980-1988s) but it does not affect the expansion of management. Expenses replace taxes on account of the budget deficit.

There is not a pluralistic democratic system, but a system in which powerful groups of interest replenish their resources through the use of state funds.

Pluralist system of democratic politics is characterized as irrational. Political systems that control everything, looking from the perspective of democratic theory, have sometimes immoral features. Decision making is a process where the majority votes, so citizens' wishes are revealed, but it is a theory; but practically a counter dynamics may occur.

Pluralist theories have some advantages. The essence of pluralism is to support diversity of the border intercrossing lines, whereby various ideological, religious and other groups always would have an incentive to compromise; eventually it would help to avoid turning to the Bolshevik policy. As an example, there was a dispute over the appointment of Thomas Clarence, a black conservative, a member of the U.S. Supreme Court. In this particular case, white conservatives and conservative African Americans united on ideological grounds. But despite this, white conservatives for 30 years advocated against enfranchisement of all citizens of the United States. At the same time there was an association of the feminist movement and the Negro liberal groups against the appointment of T. Clarence. As a result, most of the black population had achieved their goal (T.Clarence was appointed) impossible before, and defended their true interest, which was connected to the existing political system. It was pluralist politics that encouraged such social balance.

How does this apply to the construction of democracy in countries that have abandoned state socialism? Communist parties have created societies where border lines run between the Party and the rest of society (Cohen Jean L., 2003). In communist countries sovereignty of democratic "secondary associations" was prohibited. A.de Tocqueville called religious, racial and professional workers' associations "secondary" which made up the basic structure of civil society and the ground for pluralist politics. Active work of these groups, their help directly in the political life would contribute to the progress of society.

The civil society is considered from three positions: liberal-democratic (J.Mill, A.de Tocqueville, I.Berlin), social democratic (R.Dahl, F.Engels, C.Patman), the third position generalizes the first and the second ones.

For the liberal-democratic position freedom and equality are particularly valuable (Kashnikov B.N., 2004). Democracy protects freedom and, therefore, is good. This becomes a certain purpose, which helps to build democratic politics. The civil society forms a certain protective structures between an individual and the state in a democratic state. This is a negative-libertarian position. Freedom exists by itself, does not tolerate any interference, especially from the state. Negative-libertarian position does not explain how and when to dispose of freedom, who exactly can dispose of it, what opportunities a person should have to dispose of the freedom to fully.

Opponents of the negative-libertarian tradition (their point of view is defined as positive-libertarian) voicing criticisms quote Anatole France: from a negative-libertarian point of view "the poor enjoy freedom to sleep under bridges of Paris". In positive-libertarian interpretation freedom is the freedom of something we should be able to do, if we have the opportunity. The State needs to provide such assistance, that citizens have the opportunity to use certain resources in order to use freedom.

J.Mill, A.de Tocqueville, I.Berlin representing negative-libertarian position, claimed that the most important value of life and, in general, the source of existence is the civil society. Democratic institutions enable people to make the most use of freedom, in their sole discretion and will.

A. de Tocqueville did not believe that civil institutions built on a democratic foundation would be successful; they still would distort the practice of democratic politics. He believed that the cultural self-identity of people was formed in the family, church, professional associations of the democratic society, where there was no system of values formed under the influence of the political centre, what the system was in aristocratic societies. If the state did not affect the formation of the society, that civil society institutions took fundamental importance.

"Tyranny of the majority" would prevail, society would have equalized and here would be a uniform social panorama.

The civil society is the center of politics; this is the approach of the Social Democratic tradition. Democracy in politics should rise from democracy in civil society. Politics so seizes power relations and social life, that democracy can stay itself in the case of particular power relations that will shape the image of the civil society.

In the modern capitalist world market appears to be the most pronounced in this role, which may prove destructive expansionism in relation to other areas of society. According to J.Schumpeter, it is this action which produces dominating impact on the civil society. Social Democrats do not believe that the process of destruction can be creative and constructive. According to them, the State must ensure activities of civil institutions, thereby the guarantee of democratic management will be confirmed, and the market, as a part of the civil society, will not develop into the expansionary power which will have a devastating impact on any thing that does not coincide with its philosophy.

The median approach to civil society was developed by M.Walzer and A. MacIntyre in "Spheres of Justice" (1983). The authors say that the main root cause of injustice and prejudice in complex societies leads to expansionism, so consider Social Democrats. An individual or classes in any area of social life subordinate and try to influence everything that happens around them. M.Walzer believes that the state does not have necessary knowledge and reserves for democratic changes in any sphere of the civil society; as a result, he determines the state's role as mediating. The State using certain control measures (private wealth) and the laws against bribery can aim at limiting the impact of economic inequality on the political system. The structure of inequality in the economy should not be influenced by the state. The state should control and regulate processes in different areas of the civil society, and people themselves have to generate their goals in different areas of their lives (MacIntyre A., 2000; Walzer M., 1983).

You must live your life in the democracy, but it is fancy to feel reliance in democracy omnipotence. Democracy is a use subordinate; its manifestation is effective when organized by a human activity. It refers to certain mandatory moments for any human interaction; nevertheless, in various spheres, these mandatory moments are determined depending on the renown of people, on cooperation in various spheres, on a number of other factors that are associated with the above.

4. Conclusion

Based on the studies when considering democracy as a subordinate use, the authors note that under democracy requirements must be observed relative to the certain points, which form the civil society and which are interconnected.

First, the determination of basic values of an organizing civil society M.Woltzer and A. MacIntyre say that participants in different spheres of social life have the right to negotiate and determine voluntarily final destination of their joint work and cooperation.

Second, what role and in relation to which the requirements of democracy play in the formation of civil society when the social world is filled with all sorts of hierarchies, the effect of which is to impose the values and methods of following them. M. Walzer and A.MacIntyre indicate some consensus in the various spheres of civil society, claiming at the same time, that universality of the lattes must not be violated. Their appeals to the consent of the people follow from the clues of democratic moral intuition.

Third, claims arising out of loyalty to democracy, relate to methods to achieve the democratization of civil society. Criticism of social-democratic traditions expresses some objections. It is necessary to turn to regulators of democratic processes that take place in different spheres of social life.

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