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The Modern Aspects Of The Development Of Democracy

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Abstract:

The present article is an attempt to theoretically understand the reasons for the transformation of democratic institutions and regimes in modern conditions. One of the most important stages of the democratic theory is a liberal model of democracy, which is divided into "defensive" (N. Machiavelli, T. Hobbes, J. Locke, S. L. de Montesquieu, J. Madison, J. Bentham, J. Mill) and "developmental" (A. de Tocqueville, J.S. Mill) models.

Unlike classical liberalism, modern liberalism is a complex synthesis of trends that combine socially oriented views and the main values of "social state" liberalism (J. Rawls), as well as views rejecting the social direction in the state's activities (R. Nozick, F. A. von Hayek).

In the philosophical and theoretical-political discussions about the formation and development of theoretical models of democracy in different historical periods, the main conclusion is that the formation of a particular theory of democracy was determined by historical conditions, the emphasis is placed on various features of democracy: civil rights and freedoms, active civil participation, equality, regular general elections and so on. Given the variability of the developed and developing theoretical models of democracy, we belive that it is essential tp conduct complex comparative study of democratic models, which is presented in this work.

In the modern era, democracy faces unprecedented difficulties caused by the high pace of technological development of society and the globalization processes.

The main conclusion when studying the role of mass media in the preservation of democracy is that: modern mass media pose new threats to democracy, which are related to the manipulation of the capabilities of mass media and the complication of the structure of political communication, which is manifested by the personalization of politics, decline in civic participation, changing the principle of civil participation itself.

One of the important results of this study is clear evidence that the evolution of the modern theory of democracy is characterized by a change in the nature of political communication, an increase in new types of demands from the citizens of democratic states (for example, environmental protection), and inefficiency of the modern democratic governments, which is caused by the event of the crisis situations that pose a threat to democracy, with the need to prevent these situations. The development of these processes in a number of countries has led to the transformation of modern society in the direction of the formation of the "post-democracy" structure.

The modern world society is really in search for new methods of adequate governance. Political scientists and philosophers often discuss the problem caused by the inability of the modern state to practically implement the principles of representative democracy through its formal procedures and control over the execution of decisions and laws. Today's situation can be called "post-democratic", which implies the search for responses to the challenges that modern democracy faces.

In our view, a potential option to overcome the crisis processes is an expansion of the concept of public option, which should not be limited to the formal process of electing the elite. Civic engagement should reach beyond the voting process and public opinion polls.

According to the results of the conducted research, we can make the following conclusions. The analysis of democracy as a category of political science and the phenomenon of socio-political practice is a theoretical basis on which it is possible to develop a strategy for preventing negative anti-democratic trends in public life and recommendations for improving democratic institutions and procedures.

Keywords: democracy; liberal model; civil rights; representative democracy; democratic institutions; post-industrial society; mass media; crisis of modern democracy; post-democratic society; political elite; referendum; parliamentary institutions.

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I. Introduction

Recent developments in the world and structural changes in society have seriously jeopardized Western

liberal-democratic traditions, which requires a substantial revision of the essential elements of the theory of democracy. The further growing role of multinational enterprises in the world, the emergence of new forms of political communication, the changing nature of political parties, and the configuration of the largest players in the international arena clearly indicate that the structural changes in society in the world have created a number of problems for democracy and have brought new challenges to it. This, in turn, contributed to a new scientific discussion in the political sciences, which is primarily concerned with the trends and prospects of democratic development in the 21st century.

In conditions of the most difficult historical changes, in modern post-industrial society, democracy is really undergoing a new test, and the diversity of its interpretation is again becoming obvious. The specific nature of a new world order affects a gradual transformation of political power, political culture, and the crisis of democratic institutions. The contemporary political scientists (S. Huntington, M. Kroze, D. Watanuk, J. Dzolo, K. Crouch, I. Muller, K. Lanfor, etc.), who actively participate in scientific discussions on the crises of democratic institutions, consider the changing nature of political communication to be a primary aspect of the crisis. The modern media, in addition to providing instant contact between people, is actively involved in the creation and dissemination of the standard forms of various political orders. A lot of times, the mass media promotes pre-written standard views and triggers an appropriate intellectual and emotional response, which in turn helps to manipulate public opinion. From that perspective, critical analysis of the media's role in the context of the theory of democracy is quite justified.

Historically, the genesis of democracy was a lengthy and contradictory process that still continues today. We believe that no country in the world represents an ideal of democracy. There are states with a very high level of democracy, such as Switzerland, Scandinavian countries, etc. However, it is too early to say that the "history of democracy" is coming to an end.

The relevance of the topic of the article is due to the crisis of democracy at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries, which continues to this day. In addition, it was revealed that there is no universal theory of democracy that would fully meet the main requirements of democratic norms and values.

II. Research Methods

The methodological basis of the research involves a combination of historical, normative, institutional, comparative, and structural-functional methods. The historical dialectical method has helped us to explain the phenomenon of democracy in terms of its origin, development, and transformation of democratic institutions. The historical method also enabled us to clearly understand the objective historical regularities of the development of the theory of democracy. Let us follow the nature of changes in the theoretical models of democracy.

The historical method enables us to show the genesis and development of democracy, including the concrete-historical conditions of the formation and functioning of democracy. A. Kevler writes: "The historical approach considers the research object as a single system that has passed through different stages of development, when a change in these stages is taking place under the influence of objective laws. Therefore, when considering representative institutions, from ancient Greek assemblies to modern parliaments, we can see that historically, the principles and forms of representation have changed, while the representative origin itself has been preserved and changed from one form of democracy to another.

The comparative method allows us to identify the general patterns and development features of different forms of democracy in the light of the development of the nation, religious denominations, culture, and historical aspects in different countries. When comparing different institutions, processes, systems, elements, procedures, and events, the common and distinguishing features will be identified between them.

The structural-functional method involves the study of a complex research object by dividing it into structural parts and revealing the relationship between these parts, determining the role of each of them for the object as a whole, and presenting the function of this object within the surrounding complex system. Structural functionalism considers society to be a system that includes stable elements, between which certain connections are established and which form the structure of the system as a whole. Each element performs a specific function necessary to maintain the integrity of the system. Structural functionalism is the basis for the creation of theories of political systems; it pays great attention to the factors determining the stability of the political system. The methodologically important principle of the structural-functional method is based on four major functions of any social system identified by T. Parsons, the author of this method: the adaptive function provided by the economic subsystem of society; the function as the way to achieve goals, which is implemented by the political subsystem; the integration function, which is implemented through the legal subsystem; and the function of reproduction of the system, which is implemented in the form of religion, morality, and generally accepted norms.

III. Literature Review

The theory of democracy is a priority in philosophical and theoretical-political discourse because, at the current stage of social development, the liberal-democratic state is the most adequate form of political organization.

The above concept was suggested and developed in the book "The Democratization," which was published in 2015 under the editorship of K. Harper, P. Bernhagen, and R. Englehart. The authors note that "in almost all countries in the world, democracy has become the only viable basis for gaining political legitimacy."

In the 2004 book "The Public Opinion,", U. Lippman emphasizes the danger of irrational public opinion determining state policy. The author points out that, although democratic theory suggests that citizens make rational decisions based on their own knowledge of the outside world, in reality, not all citizens are able to form a competent opinion on politics [18].

At the end of the 20th century, from the point of view of the so-called transitological theories, post-communism is regarded as a state of transition from authoritarianism to democracy, at the end of the 20th century. According to such an approach, the development of former socialist countries is seen as a regular part of the transition to a democratic system.

As V. Achkasov explained in his article "The transitology: a scientific theory or an ideological construct?" published in 2015, post-socialist economies have entered the world capitalist system as a provider of cheap labor force or raw materials and a favorable market for key Western commodities [1].

A significant role in the formation of post-industrial society is played by the mass communication system, particularly telecommunications. Researcher D. Bell, in his work "Democracy and Rights: The Greatest Dilemma of Our Time," published in 2010, is right when he writes of the need to increase the importance of the State in the development and management of the information infrastructure of society [7].

While discussing the super-industrial society, the researcher E. Toffler in his work "Future Shock" describes the future of humanity, where all ideologies will disappear, production will be universally automated, the scope of services will expand, etc., and he rightly notes about the mass media: "When society is systematically under the continuous influence of radio, television, newspapers, and magazines, waves of coded information coming from them affect the human nervous system" [23].

The Canadian philosopher G. M. McLuhan, in his 2004 book "The Gutenberg's Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man," specifically investigated the role of the media in a modern democratic society. In his opinion, the development of society is determined by the development of mass media. According to this researcher, with the emergence and improvement of audiovisual means of communication (radio, cinema, television, etc.), the dominance of the printed word ends. According to the philosopher, "...when electricity creates conditions of close interaction on a global scale, we quickly go back to the audiovisual world of simultaneous events and universal consciousness." Thus, with the development of communication technologies, society is gradually transformed into a "global village" [19].

In their socio-political work "Civil Society and Political Theory," the researchers E. Arato and J. Cohen point out that the concept of "civil society" had become comprehensive by the period after World War II, embracing all that was suppressed by communist regimes and military dictatorships. They believe that the difference between civil society and political society is related to the fact that civil society is not seeking political power and, at the same time is a public interest defender in the government. E. Arato and J. Cohen attribute to civil society structures such as "socialization, association, and other organized forms of society that are institutionalized or are in the process of institutionalization" [4].

According to the view of the analyst Habermas, which is presented in his book "Democracy, Mind, and Morality", civil society is a variety of autonomous associations within which the process of political communication occurs, more specifically, this analyst notes that "associations are specialized based on practical considerations, that is, their basic function is to disclose the topics of essential importance to society and contribute to the solution of particular problems to develop solution proposals, integrating public values" [14].

The philosophical interpretation of the transformations of political relations in the modern era, including in the context of the theory of democracy, is well presented in works by the philosopher J. Agamben. According to the view of Agamben, expressed in his book "Sovereign Power and Bare Life," the "state of emergency" becomes the dominant guiding paradigm in Western biopolitics [2].

The vision of above-mentioned J. Agamben is shared by M. Hart and A. Negri, which they expressed in their book "Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire." From their standpoint, if in the modern era war and the state of emergency were temporary, in the era of modern, global weapons, the state of emergency becomes permanent and universal [16].

The researcher Huntington, in his work "Crisis of Democracy," submits that in the modern era, marginalized social groups become full participants in the political process, in connection with which there is a danger of overloading the political system.

- I. Habermas, in his work "Legitimation Crisis," identifies four types of crises: economic crises, crises of rationality, crises of legitimacy, and motivational crises [15].
- F. Schmitter, in his book "Dangers and Dilemmas of Democracy," rightly noted about the processes taking place during the last quarter of the twentieth century that "the fascination with the general transition from autocracy to democracy since the seventies has trumped some serious dangers and dilemmas that promised the uncertain political future of the world" [22].
- K. Crouch, in his book "Post-Democracy," which was published in 2010, believes that at the beginning of the 21st century, democracy found itself in a paradoxical situation. Formally, it is experiencing its prosperous period: the number of countries where free elections are held is growing rapidly. According to him, democracy reached its peak in welfare states in the 1960s and 1970s. After that, the democratic parabola is descending, which in our time leads to the emergence of such a political system where there are formal democratic organizations, institutions and procedures, but the main role in politics is played by capitalist structures and mechanisms (post-democracy) [9].

The philosopher S. Wolin, in his article "Democracy Incorporated: Managed Democracy and the Specter of Inverted Totalitarianism" wrote that at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the growth of the role of companies in the process of public administration and the political demobilization of citizens were massively implemented [24].

- K. Crouch writes in his book "The Strange Non-death of Neoliberalism": under neoliberalism, the best way of reaching people's aspirations is through free markets, through which individuals get the maximum profit [10]
- M. Gurevich and J. Blumler, in the book "Political Communication Systems and Democratic Values", note that among the democratic functions of the mass media, the following circumstances are observed: the timely receipt of information; the rapid identification of current political and social problems; the timely provision of a platform for discussions; the ability to hold government officials accountable for their actions; encouraging the participation of citizens in political processes, etc. However, in reality, political scientists are concerned about the fact that the mass media cannot or, rather, do not fulfill the functions mentioned above, but the broad layers of society "look through the eyes of the mass media" and behave in a way they are asked for [12].

The second, equally important aspect of the modern world, which indicates the multiplicity of modern forms of public opinion manipulations, is related to the operation of public opinion polling agencies. The political scientist Z. Bauman, in his work "Freedom" (2006), states that modern governments are not concerned with the withdrawal of the masses from politics, on the contrary, they are more interested in the passivity of civil society [6].

The French philosopher J. Baudrillard, in his work "Consumer Society" (2006) rightly asserts that in the modern world coercive methods of state control have been replaced by "participatory" integration, which is manifested primarily in the electoral participation [5].

Undoubtedly, one of the prominent signs of the crisis of modern democracy is the weakening of the political role and organization of various social groups. The philosophical interpretation of "classlessness" of modern society is widely presented by J. Agamben in his work "The Coming Community" (2008), where the researcher explicitly claims that "in the modern era, social classes no longer exist... they have been scattered among the world's petty bourgeoisie" [3].

Despite the development trends of the post-democratic society listed above, we believe that the post-democracy maintains and will continue to maintain a number of external signs of democracy, particularly: the principle of free speech, protection of human rights, etc., but power will be in the hands of a small elite and the rich, who will aspire to receive economic privileges from the center of power. As a result, democratic institutions will be purely external, they will perform the functions of an imitation of holding pre-election debates, elections, etc. As the famous political scientist Zh. Rancièr states in his work "On the shores of politics" (2006), "the caricature of democracy itself, which is common today, obliges it again to understand democratic fact more decisively" [21].

Finally, it can be said that today politics is returning to its pre-democratic state, but legitimizing itself through democratic institutions and procedures. At the same time, we believe that the current state of the world society should be called "post-democratic", which requires more self-organization and the creation of new effective mechanisms of the political system.

IV. Research Results And Their Discussion

In the modern era, we can surely say that mass media, together with family, school, and religious organizations, are an important component of the socialization of citizens [17].

Today, people learn about political events through television, radio, Internet and other mass media and form their own political views based on the information received.

Modern political scientists identify the following circumstances among the democratic functions of mass media: the timely receipt of information about important socio-political events; the rapid identification of the most pressing political and social problems; the timely provision of a platform for discussions; the ability to hold government officials accountable for their actions; encouraging the participation of citizens in political processes, etc. [12]. However, in reality, political scientists are concerned about the fact that the mass media cannot or, rather, do not fulfill the functions mentioned above, but the broad layers of society "look through the eyes of the mass media" and behave in a way they are asked for [20]. With no other stimulus, an overwhelming majority of society judges the importance of an issue based on the number of mentions in the mass media, while focusing only on those events that are most intensively discussed by the media [8].

It is a fact that most of the newspapers, radio and television channels get most of their income from advertisements. That is why they (mass media) try as much as possible to satisfy the interests of advertisers, which often do not coincide with the interests of readers, listeners, and viewers. However, in the case of advertising, the interests of users are satisfied only if they coincide with the interests of advertisers [11].

Liberalization of the information market aims to implement as much as possible representation of the interests of different groups of society, although a number of theorists (B. Cohen, S. Lenart, W. Lippmann, G. Marcuse and others) believe that mass media not only do not meet consumer demands, but they themselves form their demands.

In recent times, the situation has worsened due to the fact that the control of the mass media has been in the hands of a narrow elite, therefore, the commercial mass media, which are controlled by transnational companies, cannot be considered to be a tool of democracy. As the researcher J. Sartori rightly states that a necessary condition for the freedom of public opinion is the polycentric structure of the mass media, which implies the existence of many alternative sources of information. The main condition here is not the objectivity and independence of mass media, but the existence of various state and opposition information centers and channels [13].

In modern conditions, the decline in the quality of political communication is also reflected in the personalization of electoral politics. Today, even Democratic voters vote for the candidate, not the party, meaning that candidates showcase their own individuality and talent, not joining forces with other party members to present a political program. The result of this is the strengthening of the entertainment and spectacularity of politics, where the advertising appearance of the candidates is important, not their programs. To quote the British sociologist Z. Bauman, modern politics is a drama of the individual, in which the main role is played by personal charisma of "teledemocratic" leaders.

In modern democracies, polls are more important than elections, and images created by the media are more important than political ideas themselves. Public opinion polls "push" a particular voter to take a particular decision in the elections. When a preferred candidate or party is predicted to win, the average citizen loses faith in the importance of their own participation in the contest, believing that it is already known who will win. Thus, polling leads to political conformity or absenteeism. As a political scientist Z. Bauman states, modern governments are not concerned with the withdrawal of the masses from politics, on the contrary, they are more interested in the passivity of civil society [6].

The French philosopher J. Baudrillard, in his work "Consumer Society" rightly asserts that in the modern world coercive methods of state control have been replaced by "participatory" integration, which is manifested primarily in the electoral participation. At such a time, formal participation comes to the fore through electoral rights, referendums, parliamentary institutions, which ensure a staged public consent [5].

Undoubtedly, one of the prominent signs of the crisis of modern democracy is the weakening of the political role and organization of various social groups. It is currently difficult to highlight the particular class as a sharply defined social group, an exception can be considered only representatives of large businesses. In our vew, all the above mentioned are linked to the fact that as a result of scientific progress, the number of workers producing products has sharply decreased, instead, the number of employees in the administrative sector (representatives of the service sector) has sharply increased. The representatives of the other groups (intellectual workers, administrative personnel, state officials) are not able to take a unified stand against the existing political system due to wide dispersal of political spectrum.

The philosophical interpretation of "classlessness" of modern society is widely presented by J. Agamben in his work "Society of the Future", where the researcher explicitly claims that "in the modern era, social classes no longer exist... they have been scattered among the world's petty bourgeoisie" [3].

The above-mentioned French philosopher J. Agamben introduces a new concept of the "community without identity", implying a reality that is equally opposed to collectivism and individualism. He unequivocally states that there is no shared existence, but there is "existence together" [3].

In our view, there is no doubt that the change in the nature of political parties in politics is a manifestation of the weak representation of social groups. At present, the most viable parties are those parties which are organized by a narrow political elite.

In the modern era, the process of separation of the political elite is taking place with great intensity, which is becoming more and more distant not only from its electorate, but even from the ordinary members of the party. One of the most important functions of classical political parties is the articulation and aggregation of social interests in society, but unfortunately, in our era, this function is performed not by political parties, but by governmental organizations and movements, which do not have direct access to making political decisions.

Another important factor contributing to the crisis of traditional parties is a wide circulation and development of modern information technology, especially the Internet, which enables the public to participate in non-partisan politics and express their interests bypassing political parties.

The function of political parties to legitimize the political system is only a result of the fact that parties as bureaucratic bodies are interested in the stability of state institutions. As the researcher D. Dzolo rightly noted, "Party rulers practically become the owners of the power that I. Schumpeter attributed to voters".

In today's era, by using the latest mass communication technologies, political parties are able to easily provide the necessary information to the voters. As for the modern electorate, it is clearly focused on the short-term goals of politics, which the parties promise to achieve, and not on the party ideology characteristic of traditional parties. Therefore, along with a gradual reduction of class contradictions, those parties that only represent the interests of some social group are disappearing. In such conditions, parties are forced to focus on the interests of different social groups.

The natural continuation of the situation described above is the fact that today's political parties refuse to have a clearly expressed ideology: because the modern voters are not interested in the program and ideology of a particular party, it is more important for them what kind of image the leader of particular party has, and how it is described in mass media. Based on all of the above, the success of the pre-election campaign depends on how well it is organized and financed.

The well-known political scientist K. Crouch describes the modern model of today's political parties as follows: "the classic party of the century can be considered to be a political organization run by an internal elite, separated from the supporting mass movements, while at the same time they are sandwiched between various corporations that in turn finance the conduct of public opinion polls, the services of political advisers and the work of attracting voters. In return, in case of victory of the parties financed by them, they are rewarded handsomely".

An illustrative example of the political party described by the political scientist K. Crouch was the Italian movement named "Forward Italy", which had the ability to both create and disseminate information through the mass media under its control (the leader of this political party, S. Berlusconi, owned several TV channels in Italy).

Despite the development trends of the post-democratic society listed above, we believe that the post-democracy maintains and will continue to maintain a number of external signs of democracy, particularly: the principle of free speech, protection of human rights, etc., but power will be in the hands of a small elite and the rich, who will aspire to receive economic privileges from the center of power. As a result, democratic institutions will be purely external, they will perform the functions of an imitation of holding pre-election debates, elections, etc. As the famous political scientist Zh. Rancièr states "the caricature of democracy itself, which is common today, obliges it again to understand democratic fact more decisively" [21].

Finally, it can be said that today politics is returning to its pre-democratic state, but legitimizing itself through democratic institutions and procedures. In such a situation, direct contact with corporations and control of their activities is essential.

It is true that "post-democracy" is still a general term. However, we cannot deny the fact that the world community is in crisis and is trying to find new methods of adequate management of the XXI century.

Also, an undeniable fact is that representative democracy with its formal procedures and delegation of powers is a problem for many states today, and it remains a problem to establish effective control over the implementation of laws and decisions made by the government. From this perspective, the current state of the world society can be called "post-democratic", which requires more self-organizations and the creation of new effective mechanisms of the political system.

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