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FOUNDATIONS OF GLOBAL DEMOCRATIC TRANSFORMATIONS IN
THE 21ST CENTURY

SOBRE LAS TRANSFORMACIONES DEMOCRÁTICAS GLOBALES EN EL SIGLO XXI

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ABSTRACT

Democracy is crucial because of its ability to ensure citizen participation, protect fundamental rights, and foster accountability. However, in the 21st century, challenges have arisen that can affect it. Political polarization and social fragmentation make consensus difficult and weaken democratic functioning, technological advances pose challenges for privacy and individual freedom, such as mass surveillance and state control online, but at the same time global problems such as change climate change require international cooperation, although political polarization and a focus on national interests make collective action difficult. Recognizing these challenges and acting accordingly is essential to ensure that democracy continues to be a solid political system that responds to the needs and demands of society. Considering the above, the paper examines the modern democratic transformations taking place in the world, and in Azerbaijan in the context of socio-economic and political conditions created by the global environment. Negative and positive parameters of global and regional democracy are addressed, as well as the impact on the country's state structure system.

Keywords: democratic transformations, state structure, civil society, globalization

RESUMEN

La democracia es crucial debido a su capacidad para garantizar la participación ciudadana, proteger los derechos fundamentales y fomentar la rendición de cuentas. Sin embargo, en el siglo XXI, han surgido desafíos que pueden afectarla. La polarización política y la fragmentación social dificultan el consenso y debilitan el funcionamiento democrático, los avances tecnológicos plantean desafíos para la privacidad y la libertad individual, como la vigilancia masiva y el control estatal en línea, pero a la vez los problemas globales como el cambio climático requieren cooperación internacional, aunque la polarización política y el enfoque en los intereses nacionales dificultan la acción colectiva. Reconocer estos desafíos y actuar en consecuencia es fundamental para asegurar que la democracia continúe siendo un sistema político sólido y que responda a las necesidades y demandas de la sociedad. Considerando lo anterior, en el trabajo se examinan las transformaciones democráticas modernas que tienen lugar en el mundo, y en Azerbaiyán en el contexto de las condiciones socioeconómicas y políticas creadas por el entorno global. Se abordan parámetros negativos y positivos de la democracia global y regional, así como el impacto en el sistema de estructura estatal del país.

Palabras clave: transformaciones democráticas, estructura estatal, sociedad civil, globalización

INTRODUCTION

Democracy is a system of government in which laws, policies, leadership, and major undertakings of a state or other polity are directly or indirectly decided by the “people,” a group historically constituted by only a minority of the population (e.g., all free adult males in ancient Athens or all sufficiently propertied adult males in 19th-century Britain) but generally understood since the mid-20th century to include all (or nearly all) adult citizens. The term is derived from the Greek *dēmokratia*, which was coined from *dēmos* (“people”) and *kratos* (“rule”) in the middle of the 5th century BCE to denote the political systems then existing in some Greek city-states, notably Athens (Dahl, 2023). However, democracy is a complex concept that can be defined and understood in different ways depending on various factors such as cultural, historical, and ideological contexts (Bochsler & Juon, 2021).

There are several democratic principles that are widely considered to be important to the functioning of a democratic society (Prothro & Grigg, 1960). In our opinion we highlight:

1. **Citizen participation:** Citizens in a democracy have the right and the responsibility to be actively involved in the political process and to make their voices heard through voting, petitions, protests, and other means.
2. **Equality:** All individuals should be treated equally under the law and have equal access to opportunities and resources, regardless of their race, gender, or other personal characteristics.
3. **Accountability:** Political leaders and institutions should be accountable to the people they serve, both through transparent decision-making processes and through mechanisms such as free and fair elections.
4. **Transparency:** Citizens have the right to access information about how their government operates, how decisions are made, and how public resources are being used.
5. **Political tolerance:** Citizens should be able to express their opinions and engage in peaceful political discourse without fear of retribution or violence.
6. **Rule of law:** All individuals, including political leaders, should be held accountable to the law and no one is above it.

Then, related to the above, studying the concept of democracy is of huge importance for several reasons. Firstly, it allows us to understand and safeguard individual rights, as democracy emphasizes the protection of these rights. Secondly, it promotes political participation by empowering citizens to engage in decision-making processes and hold elected officials accountable. It helps us analyze

power dynamics within society and work towards addressing imbalances of power. Additionally, it enables us to evaluate the performance of governments and policies, ensuring transparency, effectiveness, and accountability. Finally, the concept of democracy plays a crucial role in preventing authoritarianism and fostering peaceful co-existence. By examining the principles and practices of democracy, we can build societies that prioritize freedom, equality, and justice while promoting active citizenship and inclusive governance.

Nowadays, in the conditions of globalization, there are many common factors to be addressed in the process of governance with democratic principles. When looking at the organizational and legal factors some key ideas stand out like the need of: 1) ensuring the rule of law and carrying out reforms in the judicial and legal system, improving the administrative, criminal, civil, and economic legislation, increasing the efficiency of activities, 2) combating crime and violations, 3) the role of the prevention system, 4) the full application of the principle of competition in litigation, 5) the improvement of the legal aid and legal services provision system. When analyzing economic factors, it is important to consider key elements such as ensuring macroeconomic stability and promoting sustained economic growth. (United Nations 1995). This can be achieved through measures to improve competitiveness and modernize agriculture, as well as through liberalization of the economy. It is crucial to continue implementing institutional and structural reforms that reduce the participation of the State in the economy and at the same time strengthen the protection of rights. Another important factor to address for a better democracy is the improvement of security, inter-ethnic harmony and religious tolerance, implementing a balanced, mutually beneficial and constructive foreign policy aimed at strengthening the independence and sovereignty of states.

However, despite these remarks, it can be said that the concept of democracy has evolved significantly, and it continues to this day. Considering this, the purpose of this article is to analyze the contemporary democratic transformations at a global and national level, taking into account the socioeconomic and political conditions generated by the global environment.

DEVELOPMENT

As any other concept, democracy has evolved over time, and different factors have contributed to this evolution, among which we can emphasize, but is not limited to:

- The development of social rights in constitutions, which has played a role in the evolution of the concept

of democracy and human rights (Ben-Bassat & Dahan, 2008; Jung et al., 2014).

- The expansion of the public sphere and changes in how the democratic process is implemented have led to the proliferation of politics of the populist variety. The rise of media has become one of the reasons for this, and it has become a source that breathes life into populist politics as a means to seize power (Akkerman, 2003; Danylenko & Rodina, 2020; Ruth-Lovell & Grahn, 2022).
- The feminist movements. Feminist critiques of deliberative democracy have focused on the abstraction, impartiality, and rationality of mainstream accounts of deliberation. Feminist writers propose a capacity for broader self-definition as a model for democratic politics (Boboc-Cojocar, 2012; Cornwall & Goetz, 2005).
- The idea of a participatory democracy, which has evolved over time, and its history tentatively dates back to the 5th century BC in Athens, Ancient Greece. The gradual expansion of electoral rights and the processes of emancipation paved the way for its large-scale development. In this sense, the 80s of the XX century in Western Europe and the USA, the idea of participatory democracy gained momentum (Barber, 2014; Nikitenko, 2022).

It is necessary to distinguish between the democratic transformations related to the concept of the global state and the democratic development parameters of individual states. Most countries of the world insist on implementing the principles of democratic development based on subjective national interests, far from the concept of a global state. However, the rise of globalization is changing global governance (Waltz, 1999). This creates new requirements for multilateral institutions and initiates the concept of regionalism. The result is new policy options available to developing countries and a new imperative to reform and revitalize multilateral and regional institutions. In this direction, it is necessary to study the transformation of governance in several important areas - finance, health, migration, economics, social conditions, security and highlight its implications for developing countries.

In every area, developing countries have clear and strong collective interests but there are also issues of global governance. On the one hand, there is a relatively well-institutionalized financial sector where reforming existing institutions is key. Today, global governance faces a new challenge. The United States, the European Union, China and other major economies have developed deeper and stronger economic ties with their neighbors and the developing world. They quickly expanded their global markets and production. As they become more dependent on access to global markets, they will require more and more

global rules to protect that access. Global rules can be developed in formal, multilateral institutions, or in informal, standards-setting networks of private and non-governmental actors. Developing countries are likely to prefer the former. Other giant economies and developing countries are state-oriented in their management and defend their sovereignty in international relations. An important factor here is respect for the authority and processes of national governments in the representation and decision-making of multilateral institutions (Woods et al., 2013).

Democratic transformations at the regional level and individually also have a number of disadvantages. Even at the end of the 19th century, the prominent Italian political sociologist Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923) applies the principles and methods mentioned in the "Treatise on General Sociology" and other works to the current political situation in Italy and Europe. Pareto shows how the power of the central government is eroded and why a democracy can turn into a plutocracy in which interest groups use the government for their own gain (Pareto, 2011). Then, under the global imperative condition, sometimes democratic transformations do not meet current national interests preventing the personal formation of subjective citizens and the management of a stable state system in democratic transformations across countries. Therefore, during the development of democracy, social and economic stability, as well as ensuring a strong centralized state apparatus, is an important factor. Economic and political diversifications serve to strengthen the development of the state, to increase prosperity, peace and geopolitical influence. The main thing here is to respect the territory and state sovereignty of neighboring states and ensure the same respect for your own state.

Within the framework of exact sciences (mathematics, cybernetics), and later in political science, an approach was formed in which communication is often understood as the process of transferring information from a source to an addressee. In systems theory, communication served to reproduce the political system. A significant threat to democracy is the possession of knowledge only by the state administration, the concealment of information, and the restriction of civil society. In this regard, the democratic regime develops in the embodiment of "unified education", through which it realizes the acquisition of knowledge and information on general social issues equal to the expert, political leader and ordinary citizen. It helps rationalize public opinion (Lasswell, 1971).

The basis for the functioning of the public, which serves to preserve the democratic regime, is a new type of knowledge, public rationality, arising from the existence of freedom of public discussion; creation of certain methods

of public discussions and researches, dissemination of their results; formation of methods of dissemination of information, popularization of scientific research; creating conditions for citizens, allowing them to judge the socially significant knowledge developed by experts. The existing disorganization of local communities, the lack of strong ties between citizens impedes democratic self-government. Communication between citizens can be communication, containing signs and symbols, language and mutual communication, which contributes to the integration of society and its self-government. Ultimately, such a local community becomes the mediator of a new type of rationality, embodied in democratic governance.

To study global democracy, quantitative methods are widely used, represented by various indices. Traditionally, under indices in comparative political science understands the aggregation of a number of interrelated indicators into a new complex indicator. These projects are based on quantification - a quantitative expression of qualitative characteristics, and allow us to analyze the conditions of democracy, the main mechanisms and the effectiveness of its impact on society. The conceptual difficulties of the empirical approach are associated with the complexity and ambiguity of defining the very phenomenon of democracy, its presentation in a complex of characteristics of behavior, structures, functions, processes, etc. (Smorgunov, 1999).

Modern researchers agree that the classical definition of democracy is unconvincing, since the people, due to their large number, cannot govern the country. Today it is obvious that the real levers of power and influence are in the hands of individuals and bodies representing citizens. For democracy, it is fundamentally important that the people act as a source of power, and the state authorities are formed through the election procedure by citizens with equal political rights. Therefore, the interpretations of democracy in modern political science are quite broad. In political science, when studying this phenomenon, they focus firstly in the form of government, which is determined based on the sources of power of the government and the goals it serves, and secondly, on the procedures for the formation of government bodies. Therefore, researchers prefer the procedural definition of democracy, which fits into the mainstream of democratic-political practice. Thus, democracy is distinguished by a certain procedure and result of functioning, which constitute a complex and orderly system of negotiations within the government, within society and between government and society about the goals of social development, the means to achieve them and the distribution of resources (Huntington, 1993).

Political freedom is a necessary condition for democracy, but it is not sufficient, because there is no real choice where there is little political participation, where election campaigns turn into a business dominated by the financially wealthy, where social inequality is so great, that there is only a low level of civic awareness. A people's government is democratic only when, in free elections, the citizens confirm with their votes the confidence in their rulers. Thus, the idea of freedom of choice is not simply the absence of obstacles to rivalry between candidates. Democracy is not just an adversarial political marketplace; it implies the ability of each individual to act as a citizen, that is, to directly link the pursuit of his ideas and interests with laws or political decisions that provide the basic framework for public life. There can be no democracy where the demands and convictions that arise in the hearts and minds of citizens do not find adequate expression and protection in the public sphere.

Democracy can only be founded on a twofold concern for the establishment of a government capable of ensuring social inclusion and thereby leading to a sense of citizenship, and respect for diversity of interests and opinions. In fact, all Western political regimes are liberal democracies. They differ from each other in who is the head of state, the types of electoral systems, the presence of unicameral or bicameral parliaments, the rights of voters in referendums, etc. But they are all based on the main principles of democracy: representative government, the principle of separation of powers, freedom of expression and legal government. In all liberal democracies, the focus is on the personality of a person with his fundamental rights and responsibility to respect the rights of other members of society. Democracy as democracy cannot but include political freedoms and fundamental human rights, and therefore, in its essence, it is always a liberal democracy.

Analyzing the factors of regime changes in post-communist countries, Melville (2004) identify as one of the most important independent variables influencing the success/failure of the entire process of democratization, the concept of state solvency. As the basic functions of a modern state, it is singled out: ensuring external security; internal order, legitimacy, management, development.

A developed modern democracy (liberal, pluralistic, representative community system with elements of direct participation of citizens) must meet the basic fundamental requirements. The most important property of democracy, which ensures its viability and has been repeatedly noted by researchers, has been and remains the ability to be modern, to correspond to the complexity of the real world, which has always given rise to contradictions, crises and as a result, the desire to revise, or fundamentally

supplement the main provisions of democratic theory with each new stage of social development. Modern research devoted to the problems of democracy is characterized by the blurring of the “exemplary” model, polarization of opinions and growing research disappointment in the ability of democracy as a political regime and as a certain system of values to serve as some ideal of socio-political development and a worthy result of those dramatic efforts that accompany the process of democratization. In a number of countries. Having solved many of the tasks set before it two centuries ago, modern democracy is still unable to cope with the challenges of a new stage of development: the contradictory impact of globalization, the erosion of nation-states, and the growth of social expectations of citizens against the background of the crisis of the welfare state model. Emphasizing problems and risks, thinking about “defective” options for democratic development, revising ideals and posing new questions, along with accepting a variety of real models, constitute the content of the current stage of conceptualization of the concept of democracy.

D. Rustow was one of the first profound researchers of democratic transformations: he raised the problem of the conditions necessary for the genesis or restoration of democracy. Rustow believed that the starting point for the development of a democratic model is the only preliminary circumstance - the existence of national unity, which implies the stability of borders and a constant composition of citizens (Rustow, 1996).

Finally, in political research, different approaches have been developed that explain the process of formation and consolidation of new democracies. These approaches are divided into structural and procedural. The structural approach focuses on objective and historically established conditions, as well as the nature of political culture. Structural factors influencing the formation of new democracies include a relatively high level of economic development, an effective state and a high level of national identity, a civil-type political culture, the absence of irreconcilable divisions and intolerance in society, high quality of political institutions and the absence of excessive wealth inequality. On the other hand, the procedural approach highlights the role of subjective aspects, such as personal principle and concrete political decisions. Procedural factors influencing the consolidation of new democracies are the nature and characteristics of the transition from authoritarianism, a massive rise and a controlled and elitist liberalization pact, the institutional design chosen for the new democracy, the replacement or retention of old elites, the rotation of power, the level of political competition, the quality of the elections and the

specific political decisions that determine a particular political course. So, although different, both approaches are complementary and contribute to understanding the development of democracies in different contexts.

CONCLUSIONS

The transformation of power and the state is currently influenced by a whole range of factors of a global, regional and national nature. In this regard, the study of this issue is an urgent and complex interdisciplinary task that requires the accumulation of knowledge in the field of political science, regional studies, economics, information technology, socio-cultural and anthropological research. Both developed and developing countries are subject to a transformation, which indicate the need for a significant revision of existing theoretical concepts, and also warns against the use of dogmatism in real politics. In this sense, expanding scientific and practical contacts with non-Western countries' conducting joint research in the field of global governance, information technology, party-political and constitutional design seems to be very promising.

The transformation of power and the state in the post-Soviet space is the most difficult case, since here global trends are superimposed on post-Soviet transformations that have not yet been completed. The experience of the 21st century reforms shows that stereotyped solutions will not work in these countries due to the presence of historical, socio-cultural and economic specifics, so the task of analyzing the design of political institutions in the post-Soviet countries can be considered as one of the most important from a theoretical and practical point of view.

The search for answers to the questions posed within the work made it possible to highlight a number of key features of the global democratic model. The historical process of the formation of global democracy was associated with the formation of a whole range of political institutions (influential political parties, parliament, electoral system, competitive political leadership, economic considerations, transnational corporations), the level of which corresponded to a certain stage in the development of the countries of the world. Considering this, the most important element of the emerging political landscape has been an active, ramified civil society, whose independent role was especially noticeable during periods of political crises and the dominance of global power. Then, democratic processes, as modern political and philosophical disputes testify, are not constant. Their dynamics and direction are not recognition of stability, not an answer, but a question, a conflict, a contradiction, a choice, a rejection of the old and a search for new alternatives.

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