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IDEOLOGICAL ABBERRATION OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

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In the article, within the general scientific discourse on the crisis of democracy, the loss of ideological integrity of liberal democracy is considered. Covering ideological deviations from the norm, distortion of liberal democracy. The “value confusion” of this ideology is shown.

Key words: ideology, liberal democracy, middle class, freedom of choice, freedom of speech.

Looking at today’s social and political plane of distortion, deviation from the truth, to some extent the deception, the classical liberal doctrine and the idea of democracy in general, among the general population, one should pay attention to the statements of the American philosopher and psychologist John Dewey, who observed: “It is necessary to study the idea itself again and again, the very meaning of democracy. Democracy needs to be constantly opened and reopened <...> Democracy as a form of life can not to be stable. For a life, it needs to evolve in accordance with the changes that have already been made and those that have only to happen. If democracy does not move forward, if it tries to remain unchanged, it is on the path of regress, which leads to its extinction” [1, p. 182].

Now the perception of liberalism as a “hopelessly outdated relic of the nineteenth century” is provoked by its complete isolation from reality and the expectations of society, its self-sufficiency. Today it is necessary to rethink critically the basic provisions of the classical liberal doctrine to make liberalism and democracy more attractive to the general public. At that time, many ideologues, scholars, and thinkers were involved in the development of “new liberalism”, namely, Dewey’s above-mentioned, proposed his liberal socialism, which became an intellectual response, a reaction to processes that threatened to transform democracy into a “formula of powerlessness and stagnation” (F. Fukuyama). As you know, the basic thesis of social liberalism is the access of every individual to basic needs, such as education, housing, health care, pensions, help for the needy etc. The state, using its power, is obliged to provide its citizens with social benefits, to provide social protection to the population, to create conditions for the development of the individual. Representatives of social liberalism as advocates of “common good for all” favored the state’s participation in the redistribution of the part of the social product to the needs of the poor, in order to stabilize and harmonize social relations and their socio-political stability. Being supporters of the capitalist type of economy, the state was given the right to intervene in economic processes in order to maintain a competitive market environment. Therefore, a “social economy” based on

private property and regulated market relations. All this provided an opportunity to re-think liberalism as a constructive construct.

Later in the 70's of the twentieth century ever stronger scholars began to talk about "the gloomy future that awaits democratic rule". The report of the Trilateral Commission entitled "The Democracy Crisis", in which its authors – authoritative scholars F. Crozier, S. Huntington, D. Watanuki, outlined the dangers, threats, challenges that are awaiting democracy. So, already in the middle of the twentieth century the problem of a democratic crisis has become relevant and controversial in scientific circles. Today, most scholars are very critical of the very concept of "democracy". For example, the British social philosopher Z. Bauman emphasizes that the "risk zone" of democracy is directly related to the "fatigue of freedom" which manifests itself "in the apathy with which most of us are watching the process of consistent restriction of hard-won civil liberties and rights" [2, p. 65]. Instead, the Italian political theorist D. Dzolo relates the apathy of the majority of the population to democratic principles with the lack of their implementation in practice. Most of the "democratic promises" have never been fulfilled. Italian philosopher and representative of liberal socialism N. Bobbio supports the opinion of his compatriot. Like an Italian intellectual of the twentieth century he even wrote a "letter of conveyance" of democratic promises, which emphasizes the discrepancy between "the true functioning of democratic institutions" and "promises" by liberal-democratic thinkers, such as: J. Locke, J.-J. Rousseau, A. de Tocqueville, J. Bentham, J. Mill. According to N. Bobbio, this discrepancy is not only a consequence of "the degradation of public life, the shameful spectacle of corruption, apparent ignorance, careerism and cynicism that are shown to us every day by the bulk of our [democratic] politicians", but also linked to the process of "transformation democracy", which led Western democratic institutions to a large number of paradoxical and distorted consequences [3, p. 185]. In the future, the crisis of democratic values is associated with the majority of West European scholars with the personalization or verticalization of political representation.

The doubts about the efficacy of liberal democracy in the era of globalization are by most scholars, it is worth recalling the words of British researcher E. MacGrew, namely: "If state sovereignty is no longer considered indivisible, but partly given to international organizations; if the states no longer control their own territories; and if territorial and political boundaries become more and more permeable, then the central principles of liberal democracy – self-government, demos, consensus, representation and popular sovereignty become clearly problematic" [4, p. 12].

Thus, the majority of scholars prophesied the demos of a band of confusion, uncertainty and unpredictable events. The actualization of democratic issues is already emerging as a symptom of its crisis phenomena. It is sad to note that when liberal democracy collapses then its analysis begins.

Unfortunately, the very concept of democracy is speculated like politicians as ideologues. At one time, representatives of state socialism and fascism opposed themselves to liberal parliamentary democracy spoke in the language of democratic values, where the fascist state is a people's state, a democratic state par excellence. In our time, the noisy phrases: democratic regime, democratic rule, democratic decisions, democratic rights and freedoms – are often subject to semantic uncertainty and absurdity in the speech context, used by the establishment for any purpose. In other words, democracy as the institutional freedom of the majority is less articulated and effective in practice.

Instead, American analysts are more confident in the bright future of democracy, since it has the greatest legitimacy among the existing systems of government. Governance

“by the name of the people, by the forces of the people and for the people” (A. Lincoln) was and remains the slogan of the American nation. Liberal democracy is capable of supporting a majority of the population. As a majority, the middle class usually serves. Thus, “no bourgeois, no democracy” as B. Moore said. As is well known, the middle class has received mass character and socio-political subjectivity as a result of the transition of Western societies to the industrial and late industrial stages of development within which the “service sector” (the third sector of the economy) and the special state model were socially active. However, already from the 80’s of the twentieth century there were tendencies for the reduction of the middle class, the growth of social inequality and polarization, the formation of a new social system whose characteristic features are “compression of the middle class” due to the growth of the “top” and “bottom” of the social scale.

The causes of the “squeezing” of the middle class are the process of globalization, which destroys the social base of the middle class and creates conditions for the concentration of goods in the hands of a small group of people in the field of finance and the latest technologies, as well as the reduction of social spending. The decline of the social state or the state of universal welfare leads to the deterioration of the living conditions of most of its citizens, to the dissolution of the social contract between capital, labor and the state. As a result, institutes and civil society organizations, built around a democratic state and a social contract between capital and labor, turn into “empty shells” (M. Castells). “The tragedy and farce lies in the fact that at a time when most countries of the world eventually gained access to the institutions of liberalism, these institutions were so far removed from the structures and processes that play a real role today, which for the majority of them appear as a humorous smile on a new face of history. <...> Both the king and the queen and the state and civil society turned out to be at the forefront, and their citizens-children were scattered today at different shelters” [5, p. 297].

An unusual point of view regarding the social instability of the middle class in the twentieth century said the American sociologist Buchanan P. He is convinced that it was the representatives of the Frankfurt School who “criminalized the middle class”, just like Marx had “criminalized the capitalist class”. They ignored the fact that “that the middle class had given birth to democracy and that middle-class Britain had been fighting Hitler, nor did it matter that middle-class America had given Adorno and his colleagues an sanctuary when they had fled the Nazis” [6, p. 81]. However, this did not prevent Adorno unconditionally claiming that “that susceptibility to fascism is most characteristically a middle-class phenomenon” [6, p. 82]. The “message in a bottle” of Frankfurt has persuaded many representatives of the privileged generation of the 60s and 70s that they live in hell. Thus, the tiny band of renegade Marxists is the main accuser of the loss of the middle class and the death of the West.

Consequently, liberal democracy, as ideology above all of the middle class, reflects the specificity of its social existence, serves as a means of protecting interests and general guidance for action. The reduction of this class pushes the liberal-democratic ideology to the periphery of socio-political life. According to the American philosopher F. Fukuyama, liberal democracy today is a leading ideology not least “because it responds to and is facilitated by certain socio economic structures. Changes in those structures may have ideological consequences” [7, p. 53].

The issue of its certainty is important for identifying ideological deviations of liberal democracy. The modern understanding of the latter involves the combination of “procedural” and “liberal-constitutional” conditions. The procedural component of liberal democracy is primarily based on the “minimalist definition” of the Austro-American thinker J. Schumpeter,

according to which “the democratic method is an institutional system for making political decisions in which individuals receive power to make decisions through competition for the votes of voters” [3, p. 166]. Liberal constitutional component involves the rule of law, separation of powers, a clear human rights and freedoms, protection of minorities and others.

In our opinion, quite logically registered “collective image” liberal democracy modern American political scientist L. Diamond, namely power belongs to elected officials and persons they appoint; executive power constitutionally limited, and its accountability is provided by other government institutions; election results not previously identified, there is a real possibility of periodic changes of parties in power, with each group that adheres to constitutional principles, ensured the right to form parties and their participation in the electoral process; minorities (cultural, ethnic, religious, etc.) is not forbidden to express their interests in the political process and use their language and culture; in addition to political parties and periodic elections, there are many other channels for the expression and representation of the interests and values of citizens; freedom of association and pluralism are complemented by the availability of alternative sources of information; individuals have basic freedoms, such as freedom of thought, beliefs, words, press, meetings, demonstrations and petitions; all citizens are politically equal; freedoms are protected by non-partisan independent judiciary; the power of the law protects citizens from arbitrary arrest, exile, terror, torture and unjustified interference with their privacy [8]. Today, most of the properties of liberal democracy identified by the scientist serve as benchmarks for the annual study of democracy, political freedoms and human rights in the world conducted by the international human rights non-governmental organization Freedom House. The latest report by this organization – “Freedom in the World 2018: The Democracy Crisis” – captures the tendency towards a decline in the level of freedom over the last 12 years and an increase in the number of autocratic and repressive countries. Democracy is in crisis. The values it embodies – particularly the right to choose leaders in free and fair elections, freedom of the press, and the rule of law – are under assault and in retreat globally [9]. Therefore, the study of Freedom House’s NGO, interpreting and assessing actual reality, makes a significant contribution to defining the vector of intellectual debate on democratic issues, thus maintaining the link between socio-political practice and theoretical discourse.

The inherent characteristic of the ideology of liberal democracy, apart from freedom of speech, is the free and fair election, which today, unfortunately, is at stake. The main purpose of them is “production of government”, civilized non-violent formation (periodic renewal) of the staffing of institutions of state power. Classically democratic elections involve a competitive struggle for free votes of voters. Political competition implies a situation of political pluralism, competition of real political alternatives, between which one can make a meaningful choice. Instead, now there is a disregard for this demand, voters are offered quasi-alternative political proposals. Consequently, political competition appears as a “three-legged race” (J. Keane) – political programs and platforms are proposed that are almost identical to the platforms and platforms of the opponents, differences can only be traced in detail. The lack of genuine political alternatives, such as “freedom without choice”, pushes on another ideological aberration of liberal democracy. It is about freedom of choice – “this symbol of the faith of democracy” (J. Baudrillard), which in modern terms is noticeably neglected.

Appealing to the classical German philosophy in the person of I. Kant, freedom of choice is, first of all, the freedom, in all cases, to publicly use his own mind. It is above all the determination and courage to use their own mind without being guided by someone else. Apply

your mind independently without laziness and cowardice. Instead, today we should be ashamed of “the global process of gradually narrowing the space that I. Kant called “the public use of reason” (S. Zizek).

It should be noted that “narrowing the space of public use of reason” is due to several reasons. In particular, it is a powerful destructive pressure on society and a separate person from the media. The latter, depriving a person of a zone of independent (autonomous) comprehension of political realities and proposals, atrophy with the risk of “amputation”, its rational-critical abilities. Citizens are increasingly difficult to understand their “objective” interest and they are increasingly voting on the basis of media representations. In this regard, Bobbio states the establishment of a “post-democratic teleopoligarchy” regime, in which the overwhelming majority of citizens do not elect and choose, but remains ignorant and obeying [3, p. 12]. By monopolizing the right to choose, the media made it impossible for a person to “think for himself”. Therefore, even today, even a personal election in accordance with formal procedures is still not an indisputable testimony to a citizen’s own free choice. “As long as they (autonomous individuals) are deprived of autonomy, as long as their consciousness is an object of suggestion and manipulation, their response can not be regarded as belonging to them” [10, p. 24]. Therefore, a modern citizen does not elect and choose, because he is not a “sovereign” political consumer, his right to choose is extremely limited. Accordingly, the basic value of liberal democracy is free and fair elections – it is an illusion, an exaggeration, a “false sense” that mask, camouflage reality.

However, awareness of this should not be accompanied by attacks of pessimism and catastrophism. We have an “informed citizen” as an unhelpful cliché, an “antidemocratic ideal”; instead, one should argue for “conscious” citizens who “know that they do not know everything”, and who are suspicious of those who “feel” as if they know all, especially when such people try to mask their supremacy and thirst for power over others” [11, p. 35, 137]. A similar opinion is expressed by Dzolo, pointing out the direct dependence of the future of Western democracy on the outcome of the struggle for the fundamental human right, namely, “inviolability of consciousness” – *habeasmentem* [3, p. 18].

The ideological architecture of liberal democracy centers around the idea of representation, within which the parliament is recognized as the leading institution. Representation primarily means “acquiring a form”, a direct determination of the will of the people and its unity as a political entity, rather than a simple sum of individuals. However, today this idea is substantially devalued. A number of current authoritative researchers point out that the meaning of representation is ruined, parliament becomes an “empty apparatus” (F. von Hayek). The idea of parliamentary representation continues to dominate the world of our democratic fantasies. The concept of law is distorted, which is the determining meaning of the definition of liberal constitutionalism. The powers of the national parliaments, which “are concentrated in the hands of a new managerial class, which consists of representatives of the state executive, an increasingly politicized bureaucracy and leaders of transnational corporations, are significantly narrowed” [12, p. 242]. Instead, a modern model of globalization makes democracy more authoritarian than permitted by the theory of liberal representation [12, p. 242].

The fact of distortion and distortion of representative government takes place on modern media markets, the oligopoly of which threatens the existence of various sources of information, thoughts and feelings. “The rapid growth of giant media companies allows them to “privatize” politics for their own benefit, falsifying, distorting and distorting the rules of representative government” [11, p. 210]. The number of unelected representatives is increasing,

the latter appear as advocates of public interests and values, public figures whose authority lies outside of electoral politics. Public support, sometimes used by non-elected representatives, reaches such indicators as to cast doubt on the legitimacy and viability of elected politicians and parliaments as the central organizing principle of democracy. In other words, the unelected representatives are an indicator of the underestimation of the principle of universal suffrage and are capable of carrying as a threat to liberal democracy and benefits. Having lost the confidence of citizens, elected representatives are leveled by the unelected, which expand the boundaries of political representation, do not allow the official parties, parliaments and members of the government to remain in peace.

So, summing up, it should be noted that the ideological deviations of liberal democracy are not exhausted by the outlined aberrations in this article. Theoretic reflection needs other key ideas that fill the value of liberal democracy and which, under current conditions, undergo erosion, or are annihilated altogether. In particular, the idea of human rights and freedoms, consensus, personal and public security, the problem of the “dictatorial minority” and others that form the ideological foundation of liberal democracy are of interest to subsequent in-depth scientific research.

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ІДЕОЛОГІЧНА АБЕРАЦІЯ ЛІБЕРАЛЬНОЇ ДЕМОКРАТІЇ

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У статті в межах загальної наукового дискурсу про кризу демократії розглядається втрата ідеологічної цілісності ліберальної демократії. Висвітленні ідеологічні відхилення від норми, викривлення, спотворення ліберальної демократії. Показана «ціннісна розгубленість» даної ідеології.

Ключові слова: ідеологія, ліберальна демократія, середній клас, свобода вибору, свобода слова.