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STATE FORMATION PROCESS: SPECIFICITY OF THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT

The article presents an analysis of both classical and modern theoretical and methodological approaches to the interpretation of the state nature and origin having a claim on the status of a scientific paradigm as they relate to understanding and explaining the state formation process in the modern political field. In order to study the contemporary political practice of new states formation the author proposes considering not the state as it is within the traditional political theory of the institutional approach but the state formation process as a dynamic characteristic of the society political system.

Key words: state formation process, modern theoretical and methodological approaches, institutional approach, political system

Particular importance among the theoretical and methodological foundations of investigating political phenomena and processes belongs to the scientific paradigm – a set of fundamental scientific statements, views and terms – accepted and shared by the scientific community and bringing together most of its members. It is the paradigm that ensures continuity of science and scientific creativity. One should agree with well-known American political scientist S. Huntington stating that «for a thoughtful analysis of the world situation and the effective influence on it one needs some kind of a simplified map of reality, some theory, a model paradigm»¹. According to Russian expert in geopolitics J. Volkov, «socio-political paradigm provides a philosophical, value and regulatory framework for political socialization of the subject, forms his or her personal parameters and characteristics, through which the process of perception in individual and social consciousness of reality is exercised»².

Traditionally, the state is considered within the institutional policy framework by political science, i. e. as the main link of the society political system, the most important political institution, and a special form of organization of political power in the society. Historically, political science developed two approaches to the definition of the state:

– the supporters of the first definition consider the state to be a special kind of collectivity which appeared for the common good and happy life. This tradition originated in ancient times and is associated with the name of prominent Greek philosopher Aristotle who believed the state to be a union and association of free and equal citizens³. Considering the state as a political community dominated in political science until the last quarter of the 16th century when there appeared the preconditions of the industrial society and bourgeois revolutions;

– the supporters of the second definition present the state as a set of institutions of public authorities, officials and bureaucracy. This interpretation was formed in the 16th century; its development is associated with French scientist J. Bodin who in his «Six Books about the State» defines the phenomenon under the study through the concept of «sovereignty»⁴.

Both approaches are consistent in considering the state as a political universal which comes into being sooner or later in any community and defines, regulates and determines the course of social development. In this regard, it is necessary to mention the Marxist approach which does not fit into any of the above mentioned positions. Marxists recognize the state only in a class society, they consider it as a

¹ Хантингтон, С. (2003). *Столкновение цивилизаций*. Москва: АСТ, 26.

² Волков, Я.В. (2001). Современная геополитическая парадигма обеспечения национальной безопасности. *Безопасность Евразии*, 7, 625-636.

³ Аристотель (1997). *Политика. Афинская полития*. Москва: Мысль.

⁴ Боден, Ж. (2001). Шесть книг о государстве (отрывки). *Антология мировой философии. Возрождение*. Москва: Харвест.

«machine for the oppression of one class by another»¹ and, as a variant of social development, predict the transition to a stateless situation.

The emergence of the state as a social institution reflects the complexity of social life and differentiation of economic, political, social and cultural interests and needs of individuals and social groups making up the society. State formation is conditioned at a certain stage of social evolution by a controversy between the loss of social consent and the preservation of the society members need to act in concord. The advantages of the state in realization of common goals and interests are connected with the fact that the state as a social institution has sufficient economic and other resources for making and enforcement of policy decisions.

Modern political theory interprets the state as a product of social development which having emerged at a certain stage of human society maturity turns into its main control system due to economic, social, psychological and other laws. State-organized society acquires new opportunities for its existence: development of productive forces, social relations, morals, spirituality, science, and international relations.

On the modern world political map there are many countries dating back more than a century, and there are also countries political history of which began thousands years ago. This means that the state is a historically developing phenomenon. The state, its goals and objectives, government structures and functions are a kind of indicators of social development. Evolutionary changes in society result in changing the views concerning the state; its role and purpose in public life are interpreted in accordance with the history challenges. Modern views concerning the development of the state and state-building highlight the quality of life and the position of the individual provided by the state. The main criteria for the state evaluation in the modern world are respect for human rights and freedoms as well as favorable life conditions.

The twentieth century political history saw an increase of the state role in the society. However, not only in applied political disciplines but also in political theory there is some drift towards a narrow pragmatic interpretation of the state in which it is presented both as a management body having a monopoly in the use of violence and a set of tools for regulating social development. Thus, a popular West edition – a textbook on Philosophy by P. Wolf – provides the following definition of the state: «The state is a group of people who govern, make laws, regulate social processes and work out rules for social groups within certain areas and certain borders»².

According to Russian researchers R. Sokolova and V. Spiridonova, «the development of pragmatic approaches identifying the state with the government function is promoted both by the increase of the positivist methodology popularity with its rejection of value judgments and metaphysics and by the spread of Marxist ideas about the state as a temporary, transitional condition of the society associated with the stage of its class development. A significant role in disparagement of the state importance and restriction of its function to form a society is played by radical versions of liberalism postulating the existence of a «minimal state» and opposing interests of the state and civil society»³. However, in contrast to the above mentioned trend, the political process urgently requires some grounds to determine the role of the state as an organizational beginning of the human society civilization development. This task becomes more actual in the modern political field facing transformation processes associated with the formation of new independent states since the late 1980s. Taking into consideration everything mentioned above, we are not afraid to define the state as a result of the society self-realisation.

Despite the variety of interpretations of the concept of «state» and essential differences between them, they are united by the rational and instrumental perception of the state role in the society and its definition as a mechanism of social order, a tool to establish and maintain public order and resolve social conflicts.

The origin and state social purpose are interpreted even more ambiguous in political science than the concept of «state», which is the reason of the variety of theories on the state origin and nature in the political thought history. The most popular of them constituting the classics of political theory are familiar to any student of the Political Science Faculty:

– theocratic theory considers the state as God's creation basing on the thesis that all power is given by God;

¹ Энгельс, Ф. (2014). *Происхождение семьи, частной собственности и государства*. Санкт-Петербург: Лениздат.

² Соколова, Р.И., Спиридонова, В.И. (2003). *Государство в современном мире*. Москва: ИФРАН, 19-20.

³ Соколова, Р.И., Спиридонова, В.И. (2003). *Государство в современном мире*. Москва: ИФРАН, 19-20.

– patriarchal concept treats the state as a large family in which the relationships between the ruler and his or her subjects are identical to the relationships between father and family members; and this family is the result of uniting kins in tribes and tribes in communities and states;

– treaty theory explains the emergence of the state due to people's consent to transfer some of their natural rights (freedom) to a special institution – the state – in order to ensure other natural rights (especially rights to live and have property);

– class theory holds that the state creates an economically dominant class, when the society is differentiated into antagonistic classes as a result of social division of labor and the emergence of private property;

– theory of violence presents the state as a result of the victory of the majority over the minority or the victory of a more powerful tribe over a weaker one through a direct political action – an internal or external conquest.

– organic theory of the state uses biological patterns and compares it with a body giving state authorities the functions of physiological systems of living creatures.

For the time being, some of the suggested concepts belong to the past either partly (theocratic) or fully (organic) and have no influence on the current considering the state, while others, though formulated centuries or even millennia ago, still are in use today. At the same time, political science offers new, more appropriate to our time, paradigms to interpret both the state and the process of state formation. An interesting classification of modern approaches to define the state is proposed by Russian state researcher B. Chirkin including in it theological, arithmetic (classical), legal, sociological and technical (information)-cybernetic theories¹:

– theological approach is presented in the views of Islamic fundamentalism supporters who believe the state is created by Allah through His Messenger – Prophet Muhammad. From this perspective, the state should be built and act like Caliphate; it is an emanation (incarnation) of Allah;

– supporters of the arithmetic approach consider the state as a sum of three items: power, territory and population. This approach is typical of Western political scientists concerned with the international law. However, it rather points to the conditions of the state existence (which is not possible without population and outside the territory). As for power, it exists not only in the country but also in interpersonal relationships, family, and numerous corporations;

– representatives of the legal approach consider the state primarily as a system of law relations, a specific normative unity. They are right in that the state can act (and acts) as a legal entity, but this approach does not reveal special qualities of the state as a governing system;

– sociological (political) approach to the definition of the state is the most widespread in modern political thought but there is no unity of views among its supporters. This approach internal structure includes Marxist approach and a variety of non-Marxist trends and schools. From the point of view of Marxism, the state is an organ of a certain class dictatorship. Among the non-Marxist sociological schools the most spread treatment is the one combining legal, economic and political features; it defines the state as a legal personification of the nation (population); that is, the state is an official representative of the society acting as an arbitrator between social strata, parties, public associations and even individuals;

– cybernetic approach was formed not long ago – in the 1960s. From the point of view of this approach supporters, the state is an information system with direct and feedback links. Exercising the state power is presented as a flow of information from the state to the society (direct link) and from the society to the state (feedback).

It is clear that all the theories on the state origin and nature, without any exception, reveal some causes of emergence and signs of the state as a phenomenon of sociogenesis; that is, they answer the question why the state originated at all. Most researchers agree that the main reasons for the emergence of such an institution of public life as a state is should include an appearance at a certain stage of social evolution a necessity to:

– improve the governing of an increasingly complex society which is associated with economic development, population growth, socio-economic differentiation of the society, and so on;

– organize major public works (construction of irrigation systems, roads, water supply, and so on);

– suppress the resistance of the oppressed (exploited) classes and social groups;

– maintain social and law order;

¹ Чиркин, В.Е. (2005). *Система государственного и муниципального управления*. Москва: Юристъ, 76-83.

– conduct defensive and aggressive wars¹.

But still, none of the theories presented above, nor even they all together answer the question why new states emerge. Moreover, those theories cannot explain why new states are formed in the modern political area. Therefore, the question on the state origin remains controversial as political history, political anthropology, ethnography and other social and humanitarian sciences introduce previously unknown facts into scientific discourse till now which allows to have a fresh look at the causes and conditions of the state formation process.

The source of the problem under consideration seems to be in the discourse on the state concept traditionally based on the institutional approach according to which the state, like any other social institution, is regarded as a form of arrangement of people joint life formed historically or established purposefully, the existence of which is dictated by the necessity to meet the society basic needs either of a whole entity or of its part. Naturally, this interpretation is connected with the systematic approach, but only in the part of the state definition as an essential element of the institutional component of the society political system. It is justified to a certain extent if we study nature, essence, features and purpose of the state; but while determining the degree of the state influence on the history course this methodological framework is not enough if we study preconditions, stages and results of emergence, formation and development of the state (which in total makes up the state formation process).

The term «state formation» is used in literature rather seldom (traditionally, the phrase «the state formation process» is used). Perhaps, this is due to the lack of research on the state formation as a political process; and most of the studies focus on assessing the state formation as an event and consider the emergence and development of specific states specific people have. Although, in our opinion, it is the use of this very term that most fully characterizes the processes of origin, formation, development, functioning, and decline of the state as a political institution.

However, it should be noted that the term «state formation» is slowly but surely gaining its own place in the political theory. Thus, in December 2013, Simferopol (at that time an Ukrainian city) hosted the International Scientific and Practical Conference «Problems of State Formation and Law Formation in the Ukraine». There, Russian jurists A. Vasilev² and A. Popova³ used the term «state formation» along with other terms in their works. The author of this paper also supports the use of the term «state formation».

Introduction of the term the «state formation process» is, in our opinion, an attempt to give a deeper philosophical meaning to the concept of «formation of states». This is due to the traditional connection of this concept with the early period of human history when there was a transition from savagery and barbarism to civilization, from the primitiveness to the state organization of the slave or feudal system. This new lexical form allows to consider the processes of emergence, formation and development of the state to be extended within time and realize that the formation of the state – a complex social mechanism designed to arrange and regulate social relations – is not a one-time act but actions associated not only with a change in the organizational forms of people's living together but also with their development, i. e. with the transition to a qualitatively new stage in accordance with the challenges of a certain historical period. In other words, comprehension of the state development process, its forms, its socially significant qualities and functions as a process of the state formation allows to consider the state within time and space, in a retrospective and prospective development, in comparative terms, and so on, which gives the researcher new methodological possibilities.

As a lexical unit, the word combination «state formation» includes two bases – «state» and «formation», i. e. it denotes an action and a chain of events connected with the state formation. In our opinion, to investigate the problem it is necessary not to start with the state as a political institution but with the process as a dynamic characteristic of the society political system.

Political sphere is primarily a process of interaction between its actors: the state institution, public organizations parties, elites, leaders and citizens; the political system cannot function outside their activity. At the same time, the political system is characterized by the variety of types, forms and kinds of political processes determining the political development direction vector.

According to famous Russian political scientist R. Mukhayev, «the category of «political process» is one of those universals which are most widely used both in political science and in mass consciousness.

¹ Лазарев, В.В. (2001). *Общая теория права и государства*. Москва: Юрист, 34.

² Васильев, А.В. (2004). *Законодательство и правовая система дореволюционной России*. Санкт-Петербург: Питер.

³ Попова, А.В. (2008). *Теория государства и права*. Санкт-Петербург: Питер.

The purpose of this category is its ability to reflect the dynamic aspects of policy and express the political system variability»¹.

Modern political practice is characterized by complex and contradictory processes conditioned by the emergence of a qualitatively new world system and order. According to Russian political scientist T. Karadge, «multidirectional time streams of different cultures forced to interact actively in the global space increase the turbulence of political processes in social systems on the one hand and make their modeling possible according to certain patterns defined from the outside on the other hand. The world political space turns into a «chessboard» or a «ground for games» where players perform taking into consideration their own interests»². This interpretation can be fully attributed to the definition of the state formation process as a systemic element of the modern world political development.

The state formation process has two sides – the initial and the derivative state emergence:

– the former is a gradual aging of the state as a special public institution representing the social life arrangement as a result of the human society evolution;

– the latter is an establishing of a new state in the state-organized society as a result of a fundamental secession from the parent state which is often accompanied by a revolutionary process radically altering the state nature and form.

The multi-factor approach to the initial state emergence dominates in modern political science. The state formation process is considered as the one conditioned by socio-economic, political, demographic, psychological, anthropological and other factors.

The derivative state emergence is conditioned by other processes; new states are established as the result of organizational changes:

– elimination of the former state due to a revolution or a coup d'etat;

– forming a federal (union) state by a few states;

– break down of a federal (union) state;

– peaceful or war secession of some territory from the parent state and declaration of an independent state within this territory;

– establishing new states in the place of colonies which achieved independence from the parent country.

It is not difficult to notice that all these processes take place in the political history of the 20th century and go on in the 21st century. So, it is safe to say that the development of the state formation process (i. e. a derivative emergence of new states) appears to be a quality (specific) characteristic of the current social development stage. Therefore, it is not by chance that in the second half of the 20th century, the interest to such a seemingly trivial issue as the state formation increased significantly and in the result there developed modern paradigms determining new approaches to the comprehension of both the state and the state formation process.

In today's world, there is an increasing trend to appearing the contradictions between the declared democratic principles, the importance of public opinion and the practice to use sophisticated manipulative technologies shaping the political space in accordance with the interests of certain political powers. Therefore, the estimates of the new states emergence on the world political map are very ambiguous; they reflect both political and geopolitical interests not only of these countries but also of other players within the geopolitical space: the development of some states is supported by the international community while the establishment of others it strongly opposed. Nowadays, the international community development is going on in such a way that there are both objective preconditions and causes to establish new states and those ones artificially created under certain political conditions. In the modern world, these political conditions along with socio-economic, ethnic, linguistic and religious problems are the catalysts of the state formation processes in different regions of the world.

A distinctive feature of the political history current stage is increasing the number of different kinds of risks - technological, environmental, social, and so on. The political risks are of particular importance as their effects have a significant impact on the whole social system functioning. According to the political practice of the late 20th and the early 21st centuries, formation of the new independent states on the world political map is directly connected to the degree of political risks both in certain regions and on a global

¹ Мухаев, Р.Т. (2005). *Теория политики*. Москва: Юнити-Дана, 295.

² Карадже, Т.В. (2007). *Политическая философия*. Москва: Мысль, 403.

scale. Therefore, in our opinion, a detailed analysis of the state formation processes gets a status of not only an actual scientific problem but also of an urge practical problem of social development.

The state, therefore, is a historically developing socio-economic, political and moral phenomenon and a result of the society objective development¹. Basing on this definition, we can make a conclusion on a deterministic relationship between the society development in general and the state formation process that characterizes the society organizational beginning. The historical development experience proves that the reasons for the origin of the society and state is a totality of laws giving rise to individual and social life of a person. The main task is not to deny the diversity of scientific approaches to the subject of study but to be able to integrate their objective conclusions into an overall theory to explain the phenomenon essence using not only one point of view but the diversity of its manifestations in the real world. The events associated with the origin, formation and development of the new states between the late 20th and the early 21st centuries clearly indicate the necessity to develop common criteria for the recognition (or non-recognition) of the new states; mechanisms giving them international legal subjectivity for the period to settle the problem of recognition; and a special order to include such countries into the international and regional security system which might help to avoid bloody civil and international local conflicts.

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¹ Хропанюк, В.Н. (2011). *Теория государства и права*. Москва: Омега-Л, 37.