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**DEMOCRACY AND DIGITAL SPHERE: SOME PROBLEMS**

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**Abstract**

The state is the main political organization and the primary subject or actor in the international law and international relations. The state has and executes some fundamental functions in social relations. Modern democracy is being realized in an entirely different environment comparing to the XX<sup>th</sup> century. With the development of the Internet and digital means, public relations are also changing. This implies a new role for the democratic state in the fulfillment of its functions.

**Keywords**

Democracy – Digital sphere – State – Globalization

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## Introduction

The state is the main political organization and the primary subject or actor in the international law and international relations. The state has and executes some fundamental functions in social relations. The digitalization is one of the most important characteristics of social relations in democratic political systems nowadays. Therefore it is necessary to indicate some problems arising because of this fact.

There are several conceptions about the origin of state. According to the antique one the state has natural origin<sup>1</sup>. The theocratic conception is dominant through the Middle Ages. In XVII-XVIII century the social contract theory of the origin of the state emerged where it was assumed that state came into being as a result of the reason, experience and voluntary consent of the people who delegate to the ruling certain authorities. The Marxist concept connects the origin of the state with the division of society of antagonistic classes as a result of the division of labor and the emergence of private property. The concept of the violent origin of the state defines it as the result of the conquest and the violence of the powerful over the weak.

## Developing

Modern political science proceeds from the fact that the state emerges in the course of the historical development of society as a result of the complication of public life, the division of the group and individual interest, the development of asymmetrical relation between the governing and the governed. Regardless of the state government and system, the state itself comprises some basic components:

- territory;
- population;
- public authority<sup>2</sup>;

In the second half of the XX century, groups of people rejected the rule of other countries. They wished to form their own governments and their own people to rule their own countries. As a result, the number of states has enormously increased. In 1945, there are around 50 countries in the world, as in 2000 the United Nations members number is 189. This means that since 1945 r. around 139 have emerged<sup>3</sup>. Today, their number has increased even more and the desire of creating new states still exists at different levels.

All of the diversity of states causes the necessity of analyzing their systems or regimes. The states can be classified on different indications. There are at least three ways to classify them, as for example:

- In accordance with the number of the population;
- In accordance with the history, economic structure and economic organization;
- In accordance with the source of power. When we stress on this particular criteria, it runs into two extremes. On the one hand, there are the authoritarian or totalitarian states and on the other, there are the democratic ones.

<sup>1</sup> V. N. Lavrinenko; Zh. B. Skripkina y V. V. Yudin, *Politologiya: kurs lektsiy* (Moscow: Volters Kluwer, 2010), 193.

<sup>2</sup> V. N. Lavrinenko; Zh. B. Skripkina y V. V. Yudin, *Politologiya...* 194.

<sup>3</sup> M. Trevor, *An Introduction to Politics: Lectures for First-year students* (Jamaica: Canoe Press, 2002), 38.

Authoritarian and totalitarian states are those where almost the whole amount of power is concentrated into one or several people, into one political party, an army or a religious group. They can be ruled by military, religious or ideological principles.

Democratic states on the other hand are being characterized by:

- Democracy of participation (direct or pure);
- Representative democracy.

On other indications:

- Welfare state;
- Minimalist state.

By form of government - Republic:

- Presidential;
- Parliamentary;
- Semi-Presidential<sup>4</sup>.

Monarchy as a form of government is absolute, constitutional or parliamentary.

One of the most used concepts in recent centuries is “democracy”. Even in the epoch of the Internet and digitalization, the concept of “democracy” has its exceptional significance and use. The term is used with wide understanding either to describe or justify particular policies or government, for instance “popular democracy”, „spread of democracy”, in the name of protection of democracy, etc.

Part of the principles of liberal democracy in Europe and North America, are the following:

- Rule of law;
- Constitutionalism;
- Recognition of the people as a source of power and the necessity of their unconditional consent for major political changes – constitution, form of government, etc.;
- Periodic elections;
- Equality of the rights of the citizens in the participation in the government;
- Liberty;
- Respect for fundamental human rights;
- Political pluralism;
- A combination of direct and representative forms of participation of the people in the government of the state;
- The principle of separation of powers;
- Principle for the taking of decisions by the majority with unconditional recognition of minority rights, etc.

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<sup>4</sup> M. Trevor, An Introduction to Politics: Lectures for First-year...

Democracy is often defined as a political way of ruling, legally and institutionally ensuring the sovereignty of the people and respect of human rights. The realization of these principles in an altered environment of social relations development, namely into the online environment, will address its challenges.

It is necessary to note the forms of democracy:

- Direct – citizens are personally involved in the governance of the state at all stages – put questions for discussion, debates, making decisions and their practical implementation;
- Plebiscitary – it differs from the direct democracy because people are involved in the final decision-making process – the voting. The preparation of the decision and the procedure itself is determined by the state structures;
- Representative – the basic form in most contemporary states where people delegate power through the election of representatives to exercise the three powers (legislative, executive and judiciary)<sup>5</sup>.

Democracy as a concept and a phenomenon has a long history back in time, but the circumstances and conditions today are dynamic and diverse. Nowadays, the political process is being developed in the context of globalization and this process is characterized both with positive and negative sides and is being directly linked to the technological revolution which has emerged over the recent decades. Modern democracy is being realized in an entirely different environment comparing to the XXth century. With the development of the Internet and digital means, public relations alter too. This implies a new role for the state in the fulfillment of its functions. Specific in this regard is the condition of the constitutional-pluralist democracies in the name of the preservation of the freedom, which is their fundamental principle. The digital sphere is often examined as a global network consisting of all of the resources needed for digital network users. It connects the world through digital technology. The digital network includes services, applications and files on web pages. By joining this network, people across the world have the opportunity to communicate and share their knowledge<sup>6</sup>. Obviously democracy has problems facing digital sphere nowadays. This is a common phenomenon in Europe and Nord America. In Latin America is the same<sup>7</sup>. It is understandable for Yuval Noah Harari to ask where the whole power has gone? According to him, cyberspace is crucial for our daily round, economy and safety of the individuals and society as a whole. Internet, as a space freed from any laws contravene to the state and its sovereignty. Voters are aware of the unavailability to have control over power because of the democratic mechanism. Not realizing who holds the power, they actually assume that the European Union or the political class in the United States has control over it and they respectively vote for Brexit and Donald Trump<sup>8</sup>. Social networks have also a significant role in the digital environment and the development of society. It is reasonably to claim that “social networks are a platform to reflect the pulse of the society reveals problems, social tensions and activates and mobilizes the citizenship. Ongoing dialogue between politicians and the electorate can

<sup>5</sup> V. N. Lavrinenko; Zh. B. Skripkina y V. V. Yudin, *Politologiya: kurs lektsiy* (Moscow: Volters Kluwer, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> S. Geetha y Asnath Vicky Phamila Y., *Combating Security Breaches and Criminal Activity in the Digital* (USA: IGI Global, 2016), viii.

<sup>7</sup> A. I. Katrandzhiev,

*Regionalniyat protses v Latinska Amerika i Karibskia baseyn ot 50-te do 90-te godini na XX vek* (Sofia: Propeler, 2017).

<sup>8</sup> Yu. N. Harari, *Homo Deus. Kratka istoria na badeshteto* (Sofia: Iztok-Zapad, 2018).

be supported by the possibility to easily access information and its fast circulation in the online space, as well as realized through social media presence. This could make political campaigns more effective<sup>9</sup>. This is only one of the issues in the interaction between constitutional-pluralist democracy and the digital environment.

## Conclusions

Constitutional-pluralist democracy has several basic principles. They determine the extent to which political systems are truly liberal democracies. How is constitutional-pluralist democracy being realized in a digital environment? This is one of the major problems of modern society and its individuals. It is necessary to analyze the basic principles of the liberal democracy and their implementation in digital environment. In this regard, the issues related to the rule of law in digital environment, are an example. The same problem also exists in the process of realization of the fundamental freedoms in digital environment. Again, they happen to be peculiarities in the implementation of the election process in digital environment. The realization of the political and religious pluralism in a digital environment is undoubtedly causing problems. It may be assumed that some of the major threats and possibilities in the present day related to the functioning of constitutionally-pluralistic democracy are connected to the digital environment where most of the social relations are being implemented.

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<sup>9</sup> S. T. Angelova y L. V. Hristova, "Efektivnost na sotsialnite mrezhi za politicheski pr v predizboren period". Spisanie Pravo, Politika, Administratsia. Br. num 1 (2018): 15