

The Prehistory and Meaning of Civil Society and its Role in Political Life in Different Countries

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Abstract

The democratic system of governance reform is one of the main directions of the establishment and development of the civil society. Civil society is any activity, any initiative of individuals, spontaneously created self-governance and citizens based associations and organizations, which are supported and protected by the law of the state in their work.

Tocqueville first presented civil society to the West as voluntary, non-political social organizations that strengthen democracy preventing a tyranny of the majority. Associations, which can be "religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive", protect diversity by uniting equal but weak individuals into powerful groups. These associations prevent the fragmentation of society by forcing men to consider the affairs of others and to work with their neighbors. In different epoch and in different situations the term "civil society" may be understood in different ways, it may be freedom of speech, wide field of opportunities, democracy, unity of some interests, communication, globalization, activity, governmental and non-governmental associations. In order to get effective functioning of the mechanism, the main thing is to inform society and earn good reputation and trust. All citizens should be acknowledged with the main point of civil society, their functions, duties, obligations and when they can apply to them and what kind of problems they are concerned with. Most important, is more communication, and civil society itself should be interested in providing them with more information about their job, aims, plans and do their best to make citizens get involved in any business or activities. This communication should be bilateral, active and effective. The purpose of the paper is to discuss what kind of prehistory civil society had and how great its role is in the development processes of democratic governance.

Keywords: Association, Activity, Citizen, Communication, Development, Government, Politics, Rules, Right, Union

Introduction

Civil society has been changing over centuries. Its concept and shape depends on political, economical and social situations. State arrangement system can be clearly seen by the activities of civil society, which constantly changes according to international atmosphere.

In the past, civil society was any kind of initiative and activity. It did not have a specific look, direction, form of expression. In antiquity, the civil society meant defense and survival. People knew that they needed to be protected and create a safe environment for activities. In post-soviet union period, civil society was the way spreading the ideologies. Rulers used it in order to inform people about their broad of administration. Civil society changed its meaning over the long time. It has become organized. Civil society has become a key of expressing economic, social, cultural desires.

In global epoch it is accompanying democracy, it is a communication of governmental and non-governmental organizations and the way of spreading the ideology. It's any activity, any initiative, protest, new idea...today it has a specific look and purpose. "The term civil society to refers to a wide array of non-govern-

mental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) therefore refer to a wide of array of organizations: community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations". (The World Bank, 2013).

For most of human history, people have lived in stateless societies, characterized by a lack of concentrated authority, and the absence of large inequalities in economic and political power. The anthropologist Tim Ingold writes: "It is not enough to observe, in a now rather dated anthropological idiom, that hunter gatherers live in "stateless societies" (Stephen Jay Gould, p.88) as though their social lives were somehow lacking or unfinished, waiting to be completed by the evolutionary development of a state apparatus, rather, the principal of their society, as Pierre Clastres has put it, is fundamentally against the state.

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Methods: Due to the specificity of the research, our paper will be conducted by the facts, examples and history. Look at the historian assessments and discuss about them. So get ready to "travel" to the past and observe how civil society progressed in different countries.

The emergence process of civil society: If we recall prehistory of civil society, it is interesting to overview "communism father"-breadwinner Karl Marx's idea about civil society, who was the biggest enemy of our research subject: civil society (buerliche Gesellschaft) Buerger's winner, bourgeois society (buerliche Gesellschaft). "Biurgerlikhe" means "civilian" as well as "bourgeois". Civil society emerged from Europe after the revolution and it resulted in forming civil society (However, it should be said that the civil society on certain elements existed in antique Greek policy).

The first phase of civil society establishment was in – XVI-XVII centuries. In this period rapid development of production and trade started to appear. In 1640 London residents launched a rebellion, which was soon developed into the English bourgeois revolution, the revolution – in the civil war. This is the start date of the most influential historians of the era of human history in the calculation of the three – the bourgeois order, a new time, and civil society! The second stage is from the beginning of XVII century to the end of XIX. It is believed that civil society was established in the most advanced countries of the West. It's believed that there are two models: First British-American constitutionalism is based on freedom, as absolute value that should dominate and there is no interference from the state in an individual's life. According to Ivan: person's rights belong to the person and some duties to the state. In Europe, the second model of Constitutionalism is operated. It describes the relationship between the state and civil society in France and Germany. According to this model, the state has strong positions in individual's lives (Nakashidze G., 2012).

The idea of civil society existence is not only monitoring administration or self-administration, or oppositional forces, but it has quite wide economical, social and cultural importance. The role of civil society in the country is important in order to develop economically, as in democratic state any kind of legal or small business must be developing without all kind of external intervention or discrimination and this is the stimulation and guarantee for financial development in any countries. The interest of civil society in any case must be oriented to this above internal direction.

The main difference between civil society and political parties is that political parties always have political interests and aim. Civil society is like a negotiator between interests of current government and citizens. Its major aim is to keep the interests and needs of society and provide appropriate agencies with information.

Civil society as an important part of society, has been existing, actively, since post-union period along the modern globalization development, when the breakdown of the hugest political union- soviet union left the enormous emptiness in world's political space, it highlighted democratic governance, which above all, was based on human's rights supremacy and there appeared the importance of creating something intermediate, not only society, not governing force, but the third circle, which would deal with relations between them. In spite of that, civil society takes place in ancient period, its practical and active usage has been carrying on since the mid 19-th century. The necessity of existence of civil society appears from this. It should constantly be in search of justice, researching main problems of population and providing the government with everything.

Civil society development in antique countries: The establishment of civil society has a long history. It was originated in antique era. Antique era BC.Sec. 7th century – AD.Sec. 6th century (Greek slave-owning society) and BC.Sec. starting in the 2nd century – AD.Sec 6th century (Roman slave-owning society) Greek citizen actively involved in public life in antique epoch, they expressed their views and thoughts freely and most importantly, activities, based on citizens' private initiative independently from the government, played an important role in the state. This is the civil society in ancient Greece.

This process was further deepened in ancient Rome. Ancient Romans created the Civil Code setting out many of the legal norms, which has not lost its importance and the fundamental principles of modern legislation even nowadays. Court became the basis for the regulation of the activities of civil life. The term "Civil Society" first was used by Aristotle (Greek philosopher and scientist), He called civil society free and equal citizens living together in some form of political arrangement (state policies). Medieval stopped the development of civil society, strengthened the government and the church authority. Private initiative is suppressed and it is impossible to work independently. Thus, civil society could not function.

In the epoch of the disintegration of the XVII-XVIII, begins disintegration process of Feudalism. Two great revolutions (French Revolution and the American bourgeois revolution) annihilated feudalism's class-title social inequality people were freed from serfdom and equalized before the law. The subjects turned into citizens. Citizen live and work and civil society is given rise. (Jorjoliani G., 2000)

The big French Revolution (1789-1794 Years): The revolution overthrew the feudal-bourgeois-democratic revolution and the soil was prepared for the establishment of capitalism. Bourgeois-democratic revolution was preceded by an ideological revolution, which was prepared by the great French educators (Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Diderot, Delamberg and others). Their main slogan of the revolution was - "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity". However, the driving force of revolution was economically strong, but politically powerless bourgeoisie, which led the third rank (third rank united together the bourgeoisie, peasants and city workers). On July 14, 1789 year Parisians stormed captured Bastille, which gave the beginning of the bourgeois revolution.

The first result of revolution was the free press in Paris, public societies. On August 26, 1789 Constituent Assembly adopted a landmark document, "Declaration of the Rights of people and of the Citizen", and the 1791- Constitution. In 27-28 July of 1794 the counter-revolutionary coup took place and it appeared to be the end of French revolution.

American bourgeois revolution: In US civil society had been as team before American state found and solved many fundamental problems. American bourgeois revolution and establishment of an independent state (XVIII century in the middle of the 70's and 80s), war for independence in North America (1775-1783) was the first bourgeois Revolution in America. Its peculiarity was that once was a national - liberation, national - and a feudal unifying movement. In 1776 July 4 in second Continental Congress in Philadelphia Thomas Jefferson's Declaration on independence was accepted, which announced the establishment of independent state - USA. In 1783 England recognized the independence of the USA. In fight for the independence of the colonies a crucial role was played by people. The revolution created conditions for the rapid development of capitalism, but the South serfdom was not removed.

After the US War of Independence – the class struggle escalated, bourgeois Revolution methods were suppressed by armed forces. In 1887, the Constitution of the US was signed, which officially declared the USA as a federal state, bourgeois democracy was established in the form of bourgeois domination and planters. The first president of the America became George Washington, the chief of troops in the war for independence. (Nakashidze G., 2012).

"Zivilgesellschaft" in German: "Civil society" developed in Germany as the term "Zivilgesellschaft". In Germany after the revolution of 1848, in a phase of reaction, worker's associations were shut down and autonomous organizational structures were dissolved. As a result of state persecution in Eastern Europe in the 1980s, civil society actors established parallel politicised structures; Vaclav Havel coined the term "parallel polis" for this situation. And, finally, the protest movement in the German Democratic Republic started in September 1989 that the "disturbed relationship between state and society paralysed the creative potentials within our society" (Havel V., 1990, p.23). These examples show that very interesting and important questions regarding civil society, civil engage-

ment and self-organization arise exactly in such contexts, where one is asking for those intersecting zones between the state, the public and the private spheres, on the one side, and civil society, on the other side – and does not postulate fixed boundaries between them at the turn of 19th century, when the two concepts of civil society and state become clearly distinguished (in the German case George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel became most influential), the search for institutions to mediate between state and civil society began. Philosophers, political theorists and jurists attracted attention to these “intermediate spheres”. (Segbers K., 2009)

Nevertheless in German you will find a variety of formal and informal procedures, institutions, initiatives and networks that aim to connect political actors and civil society. Though overall participation of CSOs in Germany is high, there exist only few binding rules and implementation varies across government institutions. Regarding EU issues public consultations have an ad-hoc character and are not institutionalized.

Two specific forms of consultation procedures in Germany are dialogue forums and networks. Dialogue forums (in various forms; conference, round tables, internet consultations) are appointed by the ministries to gain expertise in the policy forming process, whereas policy-specific network connect different CSOs, giving them opportunity to exchange their views and aims among themselves, and with political institutions. At federal level one major CSO network is the “National Network for Civil Society.” (Segbers K., 2009)

Civil society in Britain (England and Scotland): It is interesting to reconstruct the “prehistory” of the concept, referring specifically to Britain (England and Scotland) and to the different meanings that were attached to it from its emergence in the later middle ages. While the lexeme “civil society” as such makes its appearance in print in English in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the concept of “civil”, as it began to be used with “society”, was, naturally, much older and manuscript documentary evidence of this stretches back to at least a century and a half previously. In this early meaning “civil” is contrasted with either ecclesiastical or with military law and power. The specific term “civil society” was used in English by thinkers of the stature of Thomas Hobbes in seventeenth-century England, a generation and more later by John Locke, and then, by Adam Ferguson in eighteenth-century Scotland. The present reconstruction of the use of this term begins with a comment on the uses of “civil” or “civil society” in English around the beginning of this era. What emerges here is the notion that a civil society must have multiform functions, undoubtedly of a markedly hierarchical form for Sandys, and possibly civil society may here, albeit in an embryonic form, have set off along the path of differentiating itself from the State.

A novelty involved here comes from the fact that the State – even and especially slightly later, under the Scottish Stuart monarchy, which began its rule in England too, at the beginning of the seventeenth century – had great pretensions to absolutism. Florio has the use of the word “ciuill” stem directly from *incivilire* and indeed it is well known that at the end of that century English underwent and even welcomed the influence of the Italian Renaissance with its references to Greek and Roman antiquity. Hobbes was absolutely clear on the division of civil from ecclesiastical power (a separation that is reflected in the division into books of his *Leviathan*), as it is equally clear that behind the State or “common-wealth” there had to be a long-standing philosophy that was not just a simple duplication of the religion on which ecclesiastical power was based. In John Locke’s Second Treatise on Civil Government the term is used to denote a state under the “rule of law” rather than a state of nature, where “rule of law” is the English-language equivalent of what – when retranslated into English words from other languages – is the “State of right” or “State of law”.

The point about the intimate connection between law and civil society is made explicitly in §87 of the Treatise, where Locke states that, those who are united into one body and have a common established law and judicature to appeal to, with authority to decide controversies between them and punish offenders, are in civil soci-

ety one with another. The only way by which any one divests himself of his natural liberty and puts on the bonds of civil society is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe and peaceable living one amongst another (Locke J., 1948, pp. 43-48). In stating that as long as there was no legal guarantee of the property right the people “could never think themselves in civil society”, Locke makes explicit reference to the above-mentioned section of the book by Richard Hooker, which is ample demonstration – if such were needed – of the continuity both of terminology and of the development of political thought over the course of a century, notwithstanding the Cromwellian revolution in between. Before Ferguson, very few links were established between civil life or civil society and economic activity, as if this latter was a matter of some disdain. Ferguson was writing at a time, when previous notions of civil society, as outlined above, were beginning to be no longer relevant. As seen from the writings of his contemporary, Adam Smith, nations and societies were in flux. Smith gave the famous example of pin-making, in which, instead of a single artisan producing a pin, through the division of labour into different processes, as many as nineteen labourers, working together in what was a modern factory, could increase many-fold the production of the object – or indeed any object – in question. Here suffice it to think of the changes in social organization from the time of the classical world, through the European Middle Ages, thence to the first modern industrial societies and on to the last examples coming from what has in Europe and North America been called a “Post-industrial society” (which of course as a social form depends on the creation of new industrial societies in other nations and continents). (Boothman D., 2007)

Civil society development process in Russia: History of term “civil society” in Russia is often taken to refer to civil organizations and movements created during and after the break-up of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. First, it considers both registered organizations and more spontaneous or informal civil actions. Second, it follows local experts in challenging the idea that Russian civil society began in 1989-1991. In 2011, Russia is a middle-level country on many indices and highlights two main trends: First, the continuation of Russia’s tradition of civic and political activism, seen most dramatically in the mass demonstrations in Moscow and other cities in the run-up to the parliamentary and presidential elections in late 2011-early 2012; but also around the country on a range of social and economic themes. Second, the major steps made by CSOs and local government in implementing social partnership, with new funds from the state that both replace and build on the contributions of foreign donors during 1995-2005.

In history, the ideology of civil society played a large part in the pro-capitalist revolutions in Eastern European and former Soviet Union countries that heralded their “transition periods”. In most of them, the new regimes required a re-evaluation or rewriting of history, including both the soviet and pre-soviet period. Some experts date its appearance to the late-18th or early 19th century, when the first voluntary associations appeared. Others prefer a date around the turn of the 20th century – when voluntary groups achieved a firmer legal basis and consequently the variety and geographical spread of organisations, their popular support and relations with government were all more developed. One of the most important sections of the Geographical Society was its Ethnographic Division. Both Litke and Baer were particularly interested in studies of non-Russian people living within the Empire. In 1847, the Society sent out 7,000 questionnaires to all corners of the Empire to collect information on a wide variety of topics: the physical features of the people of Russia; language, dialect and slang; domestic life including material goods and customs; intellectual, moral and social aspects of life; folk legends and memories.

CSOs expanded gradually, became more professional, and began to provide educational and health support to vulnerable groups across the country. Early Russian charitable associations, before 1917, lacked a system of social security and this gap was filled by mutual assistance organisations. This included financial or material support to groups such as widows, orphans, or victims of accidents at work; Problems tackled included homelessness,

abandoned children, crime, and so on. The societies undertook a range of activities familiar to today's NGOs. The Mozhaik Charitable Association provides an example of the comprehensive approach developed by many of them. Its aims were not simply to feed and care for children, but to teach work skills, find them work, and assist in the development of school education and distribution of textbooks. Later it opened a gymnasium (college) and a sewing workshop for girls, supporting their progress into teacher-training institutions. However, in the 1930s this phase gave way to a period of repression and political regimentation – occasioned by the Soviet government's decision to forcibly collectivise agriculture and go for rapid industrialisation.

Now civil society includes the dissident movement. Dissidents developed various modes of resistance to the Soviet state – writing and publishing artistic or journalistic critiques of the regime, creating a variety of informal circles and discussion groups, and making statements on political and human rights issues that brought down considerable persecution on themselves. But they had many sympathisers and considerable impact on the political atmosphere in the country and its reputation abroad (Konovalova E., 2012).

Civil society as third sector in Georgia: In Georgia civil society was founded after disintegration of Soviet Union and since then experts have argued, if we have third sector or not and nobody has decided yet. Today in Georgia there are about 10 000 registered non-governmental organizations, but in fact even a tenth of them do not function. Civil society, might say, is ever one of the most important sector, which hold potential abreast of ongoing economic, social and cultural processes and ensures maximum engagement of their conduct and their interests. However, what is interesting to the public along with the willingness and confidence, is the civil society as a mediator between them. Civil society is different from political society, because it does not seek to gain political power, it is not just a government oversight, but the political elite to carry out management functions.

Civil organizations managed to promote human rights issues and protect the rights of citizens to manifest their property rights violations and contributed to the recovery of them, at the expense of media ownership more transparent, etc. Liberal civil society in the Acts of the civil culture also affects the low level. Citizens are less likely to have a feeling that the government can work and, in general, influence political process. "The Caucasus research Resource Center," a study conducted in 2011, by the drawing, is of their low level of activity.

Finally, if we compare the situation in Georgia with the neighboring countries acts of civil society are more active, more serious. Role-profit organizations are able to demonstrate problems of the public and make and propose solutions to the government. (Tso-maia L., 2013)

Conclusion

A civil society is comprised of groups or organizations working in the interest of the citizens, but operating outside of the governmental and for-profit sectors. Organizations and institutions that make up civil society include labor unions, non-profit organizations, churches, and other service agencies that provide an important service to society, but generally ask for very little in return. Putnam argues that social capital influences citizen engagement in the community, which in turn influences government. A developed civil society is necessary for democracy to work well, for it relies on and develops the trust among individuals and the leadership skills necessary for a representative government.

Civil society includes the family and the private sphere, referred to as the "third sector" of society, distinct from government and business. In different countries and situations civil society is used in the sense of the aggregate of non-governmental organizations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens or individ-

uals and organizations in a society, which are independent of the government. Civil society is seen also as a concept of civil values.

As we see civil society, it is any kind of activity that people need to supply their claims and interests, they join around their problems, create civil activities in various forms. We agree that civil society is an integral part of any developed country, especially if we are talking about democratic governance and it has interesting development levels, flow and stages in any countries.

We can summarize meaning of a civil society, first of all by a Tocquevillian definition, in which civil society and democracy are assumed to complement each other, and second, by a Middle Eastern definition, in which civil society does not consist of formal groups, and which is designed to achieve specific goals. Civil society is instead a series of informal relationships based on religious, familial and clientele connections.

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