

For Hobbes, human beings are motivated by self-interests. Moreover, the self-interests of human beings are often contradictory in nature

Upon realizing the danger of the anarchy, human beings became aware about the need of a mechanism to protect them

Rationality and self-interests persuaded human beings to combine in agreement, to surrender sovereignty to a common power

Social contract theory of Thomas Hobbes set forth two types of relationship.

One was vertical, between the Leviathan and the people

The second system was the realm of horizontal relationship among the people

In that system, people, under the surveillance of Leviathan, were compelled to limit their natural rights in a way that it did not harm others' rights. The first system denotes the state and the second represents civil society in the present meaning

**Hobbes'** paradigm shows that the formation of the state conduced to the formation of civil society. Therefore, in his view, the state is imperative to sustain civility in society

**Locke** forged a social contract theory of a limited state and a powerful society

Human beings led a peaceful life in state of nature

People gathered together to sign a contract and constituted a common public authority. Nevertheless, Locke held that the consolidation of political power can be turned into autocracy, if it was not brought under reliable restrictions

Two treaties on government with reciprocal obligations:  
the **first treaty**, people submit themselves to the common public authority. This authority has the power to enact and maintain laws;

The basic rights of human beings denote the preservation of life, liberty and property

The state must operate within the bounds of civil and natural laws.

They considered civil society as a sphere that maintained civil life, the realm where civic virtues and rights were derived from natural laws

People are peace lovers and the wars are the creation of absolute regimes (Kant and Rousseau). This civil society system was effective to guard against the domination of a single interest and check the tyranny of the majority

Adam Smith argued that wealthy state might become despotic, that would lead to wars and territorial conquests.

Hegel completely changed the meaning of the idea, appears modern liberal **understanding of civil society as a form of market society**. The leading thinker of the Romanticism considered civil society as a separate realm, "system of needs", that stood for the satisfaction of individual interests and private property

Therefore, the constant surveillance of the state is imperative to sustain the 'civility' in society

The political state has the capacity and authority to correct the fault points in civil society.

Alexis de Tocqueville contested Hegel putting weightage to the system of a limited state with voluntary associations as counterbalance to liberal individualism (**individualism but not selfishism**). However, Hegel's perception of social reality was followed in general by Tocqueville who distinguished political society and civil society

Agreeing with the link between capitalism and civil society, Marx held that the latter represents the interests of the bourgeoisie. The state as superstructure also represents the interests of the dominant class

Marx argued that the state cannot be a neutral problem solver. Rather, he depicted the state as the defender of the interests of the bourgeoisie. He considered the state and civil society as the executive arms of the bourgeoisie, therefore, both should be withered away (an ideological view determining most of the socio-Marxists at that time being)

The **New Left** assigns civil society a key role in defending people against the state and market and in formulating democratic will to influence the state

The **neo-liberals** consider civil society as a site for struggle to subvert communist and authoritarian regimes.

Thus, the term civil society appropriated an important place in the political discourses of the New Left and neo-liberals

Post-modern way of understanding civil society was first developed by anti-communist opposition in former soviet block East European countries in 1980s.

From that time stems a practice within political field of using the idea of civil society instead of **political society**.

The emergence of the nongovernmental organizations and the New Social Movements (NSMs), civil society as a **third sector** became a key terrain of strategic action to construct 'an alternative social and world order.'

For a long time, social scientists believed that we lived in a two-sector world. There was the **market or the economy** on the one hand, and the **state or government** on the other

'**Society**' was pushed to the sidelines and ultimately became a very abstract notion

Yet, until quite recently, such third-sector institutions were neglected if not ignored outright by all social sciences

Events in Central and Eastern Europe were indeed instrumental in bringing the topic of civil society to the attention of social scientists in the West but not only to them

It is very much of interest to the European Union as well. The Civil Dialogue initiated by the Commission in the 1990s was a first attempt by the EU to give the institutions of society-and not only governments and businesses-a voice at the policy-making tables in Brussels

There is increasing recognition that international organizations and national governments have to open up to civil society institutions. Some of those (UN, CoE, OSCE, NATO) are deeply involved on issue of straightening civil societies all over the world or the regions by giving them an extremely important role in information providing or social perception describing.

The **concept civil society** is related to the issues of limitation of power, relations between state and society and their mutually dependent impacts to democracy, state law (Rechtsstaat), rule of law, constitutionalism, freedom and rights of individuals, democratic participation...

## **Dahrendorf quotation:**

“Civil society is the set of civic rights, including primarily everyone’s right to participation in public life. These rights provide the compass which helps us to steer the right course between the Scylla of the state with all its competences of power, and the Charybdis of the corporate cartel of organizations and institutions which in some circumstances can be equally dangerous to freedom...”

Civil society must also have foundation in a mature democracy and a mature political culture. It can be built only if there is widespread determination on the part of society to demand respect for, and observance of, individual rights, and popular will to hold accountable anyone or any institution, which violates them.”

## **Dahlgren:**

“If the state is too weak it cannot foster democratization of civil society. If it is too strong, it becomes too interventionists; without a viable civil society, the state becomes too all-encompassing. The democratization of civil society has to do with the development of a democratic culture or mentality within the context of everyday life.”

# Civil Society, State and Democracy

J. Keane:

“Publicly funded, non-profit and legally guaranteed institutions of civil society, some of them run voluntarily and held directly accountable to their audiences through democratic procedure, are an essential ingredient of a revised public service model.”

## **DEMOCRACY as correlation and as an aim of civil society activism**

Do You know any single state or government in the world saying that it is not democratic? State or government may be corrupted, mal-administrative, strong, weak, small, big, making mistakes, making history, glorious, important, undermined, not appreciated by international community, but undemocratic – NEVER.

Even though there is no universally accepted definition of 'democracy', there are **two principles** that any definition of democracy:

The first is that all members of the society have **equal access to power** and

The second is that **all members enjoy** universally recognized freedoms and liberties

The "majority rule" is often described as a characteristic feature of democracy, but without responsible government it is possible for the rights of a minority to be abused by the "tyranny of the majority"

# THE PILLARS OF DEMOCRACY

Sovereignty of the people.

Government based upon consent of the governed.

Majority rule.

Minority rights.

Guarantee of basic human rights.

Free and fair elections.

Equality before the law.

Due process of law.

Constitutional limits on government.

Social, economic, and political pluralism.

Values of tolerance, pragmatism, cooperation, and compromise.

The satisfaction of the above conditions for political and economic democracy would represent the re-conquering of the political and economic realms by the public realm

This is the re-conquering of a true social individuality, the creation of the conditions of freedom and self-determination, both at the political and the economic levels

Political and economic power are not the only forms of power and therefore political and economic democracy do not, by themselves, secure an inclusive democracy.

An inclusive democracy is inconceivable unless it extends to the broader social realm to embrace the workplace, the household, the educational institution and indeed any economic or cultural institution which constitutes an element of this realm

Democracy is incompatible with any form of a closed system of ideas or dogmas, at the ideological level and with any concentration of power, at the institutional level.

Democracy is founded on a self-reflective choice and on institutional arrangements which secure the equal sharing of political, economic and social power.

These are just necessary conditions for democracy. The sufficient condition so that democracy will not degenerate into some kind of “demago-crazy”, where the demos is manipulated by a new breed of professional politicians, is crucially determined by the citizens’ level of democratic consciousness

Non-democratic systems of government limit and restrict people’s political choices. In a dictatorship, a single person makes the decisions that affect the whole country without any of the citizens having their say.

Under military rule, the army rules the country and the citizens have no choice but to accept it. Fascism means that one person, a “strong man” solves all the problems of a country on his own, as long as he receives loyalty and unquestioning obedience.

Under totalitarianism, the political rulers control every aspect of private and social life in a society, and their political power is so extensive that almost no freedom in decision-making is left to individuals or groups outside the political power system.

Democracy is the one type of government that cannot exist without the approval and input of the people. This is because its main characteristic is choice – without active political choices being made by the citizens living in a democracy, a democracy does not really exist.

## Open questions on the State, civil society, media and democracy

Whatever You say (or write) it may be used against You (doesn't matter is it truth or not, is it important to the society or not)

It is good idea but not so good to be heard by yourself

The state, that's me! (if it is the state)

Your thinking is good, but the same thought was expressed by the political opposite

I'll decide whether You will be guilty or not prior to the final verdict (if there is no an impartial and independent court)

Why we do have to discuss an issue when it is obvious that you are wrong

I know that it is against the law but why you are insisting so hard? Who are you to talk about that?

Everything should be claimed and processed within the system of the state institutions. I believe them (because I make them)

We (the State) will cooperate with the civil sector. Let me just to make the list of partners to be invited. Is there anyone who talked too much?

We would like to listen if you say what we would like to hear

To whom you are working for? This question is not in our agenda when communicating with international community actors

Who “gave” you the right to speak about that? This is not your business

Citizen, I do not need to listen you. I don't care. Citizens gave me the votes.

I know that it is against the law but it is for the best sake of you and of the next generations

We are running toward Euro-Atlantic integrations. We do not have time to loose in solving “minor” deviations suchlike equality before the law or legal certainty

Yes, we did not destroy illegally constructed house of your neighbor but yours. We will come (if) to him next time.

Who will take you to the EU if I resin?

Nobody can be over the law! This is the principle prescribed by the law! Let me to decide when it will be implemented.

I am a represent of civil society interest because I have more organizations to support me