



Finote Ethio-Canadian Information Centre In Toronto

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Various paradigms/models of democracy [Enlightenment: Organized by Finote Ethio-Canadian Information Center in Toronto (FECICT)]

Introduction

For enlightenment purpose of different paradigm (model) of democracy and the necessity of state change, first we try to define or describe the term paradigm and its historical development. Then, we will continue to present the various forms of democracy : **Institutional democracy and political democracy and how people's struggle can construct the framework of genuine democracy.** The development of democracy encompasses a long and much contested history. The field of democratic theory comprises a vast range of considerations and debates, and both this theory and the debates need to be understood if the changing meaning of democratic discourse over time-its key contents, theories and concerns-is to be grasped. Thus, we need to develop more flexible concepts of which democratic paradigm (example: *representative* or *direct democracy*) are the most amenable/ accommodating, at least in the first instance, to the various sizes of human practices. In most circles, the debate is caught within the framework of **representative democracy** and tends to focus on questions regarding the nature of the actual representatives (which is the purpose of this write up).

We will first present the logically necessary conditions of democracy and then the present various paradigm of democracies (Protective democracy, Developmental democracy, Participatory democracy, Cosmopolitan democracy, Marxist democracy, and Social democracy)

The mental processes by which a theoretical physicist works are beautifully described by **Thomas Kuhn's concept of a paradigm**, who received his PH.D. in physics from Harvard in 1949 and then became an eminent historian and philosopher of science, introduced the concept of a paradigm in his 1962 book ***The Structure of Scientific Revolutions***. Here are some more definitions of the word paradigm, which follow along similar lines with Kuhn's discussion of history of science:

- A **paradigm** is a fundamental image of the subject matter within a science. It serves to define what should *be studied*, what questions should be asked, and what rules should be followed in interpreting the answers obtained. The paradigm is the broadest unit of consensus within a science and serves to differentiate one scientific community (or sub-community) from another. It subsumes, defines and interrelates the exemplars, theories, and methods and tools that exist within it.
- A **paradigm** is the specific collection of questions, viewpoints and models that define how the authors, publishers, and theorists, who subscribe to that paradigm, view and approach the science. There also seems to be another thread of definitions that have stemmed from Kuhn's definition, generalizing the meaning of the word towards "what we observe the world through."
- Here are three definitions in chronological order of being made, which we believe shows a semantic evolution around the word :
- the basic way of perceiving, thinking, valuing, and doing associated with a particular vision of reality

- *a set of rules and regulations (written or unwritten) that does two things: (a). it establishes or defines boundaries; and (b). it tells you how to behave inside those boundaries in order to be successful.*
- *A constellation of concepts, values, perceptions and practices shared by a community, which forms a particular vision of reality that is the basis of the way a community organizes itself.*

The first name to mention must be Marx. There were certainly others before him who thought in terms of systems, but it was Marx whose work, above all Capital, made a lasting impression on people's way of thinking by creating the capitalist-socialist pair of concepts. He contrasted two formations: an existing one and a Utopia that he considered desirable. He can be considered the pioneer of the system paradigm because he did not confine himself to examining a certain sphere of capitalism (the political sphere or the economic, or the social or the ideological). He viewed all these spheres altogether and analyses the interactions between them. Ever since, the influences that these spheres have upon each other, and the main directions of causality between them, have been among the main subjects pursued by researchers who think in terms of the system paradigm. Marx took a systemic view by not confining himself to examining some institution of capitalism or other, but looking at the sum of its institutions—not at one part or the other, but at the system as a whole.

The logically necessary conditions of democracy

Lively (1975: 49-51) pinpoints the norms dictating inclusive citizenship and political equality, while Holden (1988: 6) boils democracy down to popular sovereignty. The conditions largely refer to rights, freedoms and decision mechanisms. Each follows deductively from the equality assumption and the responsive rule definition. The basic freedoms reflect the requirements flowing from the equality assumption. Citizenship and participation conditions reflect the need for minimal rights and specified mechanisms essential to the maximization of responsive rule. The publicity condition is a key background condition making responsive rule possible and helping citizens to develop informed interests. If the general argument holds, then these minimal conditions taken together form the indices of democratization. These indices of democracy are:

(I). Basic freedoms

- *Each citizen has the right to freedom of speech and expression.*
- *Each citizen has the right to freedom of movement.*
- *Each citizen has the right to freedom of association.*
- *Each citizen has the right to equal treatment under the law.*
- *Each citizen has the right to freedom of worship.*

(II). Citizenship and participation

- *The political community must have a common and standardized form of legal membership compatible with the basic freedoms.*
- *Citizens have an equal right to run for elective office.*
- *Citizens have the right to be equally eligible to serve, and, where appropriate, granted an equal probability of being selected for service, in non-elective representative and decisional bodies.*
- *Citizens have the equal right to vote in all elections and referendums.*
- *Citizens' votes must be decisive under all decision mechanisms.*
- *Mechanisms must be available for citizens to vote directly on substantive outcomes. If elected officials deem a decision inappropriate for direct decision, the burden of demonstrating the grounds of such inappropriateness lies with those officials.*

- *There must be a voting system (such as two-stage contests) which allows for the expression of a majority preference in multi-sided contests.*
- *Where votes for representatives are conducted, these votes must be renewed at regular and specified intervals.*
- *Regular opinion polls must be conducted by an appropriate agency on all issues of substantive importance, whether or not these issues are to be decided by representative decision. The burden of demonstrating the appropriateness of not following citizen preferences on a given issue lies with elected representatives.*
- *There must be a presumption that all issues will be decided by referendums, and clear guidelines as to when a referendum may be forgone.*
- *All issues not specifically prohibited from majority decision must be open to majority decision via one of the appropriate mechanisms.*

(III). Administrative codes

There must be appropriate codes of procedure for employees in public bodies.

- *There must be regularly produced evidence that public decisions are being put into effect.*
- *There must be appropriate time limits placed on the realization of the substance of public decisions.*
- *There must be instituted adequate appeals and redress mechanisms with respect to public bodies and their functions.*
- *There must be freedom of information from all government bodies. The burden of proof of demonstrating the inappropriateness of full freedom of information in specific cases lies with the elected representatives.*

(IV) Publicity

- *There must be a constant and formal process of public notification of decisions, options, arguments, issues and outcomes.*

(V) Social rights

- *Every citizen has the right to adequate health care.*
- *Every citizen has the right to an adequate education.*

Following the logic of the general theory, in principle each of these rights or freedoms must be guaranteed to each citizen in spite of the will of a majority or minority of citizens, and must be protected by a judicial system which is not itself a part of majoritarian decision processes. In other words, each should be constitutionalized.

(VI). Democracy and competing values

A democracy - or a partial democracy - always exists somewhere, within some unique set of background conditions. In a huge variety of ways, those background conditions can and will constrain the extent and the character of the democratic regime achieved. In this context we need-to consider a range of values, or political principles, that we can expect in theory (and which, in some cases, we know in practice) to operate at variance with the democratic principle. Arguably, the key ones to consider in a full analysis are:

- *political stability,*
- *justice,*
- *nationalism,*
- *the environmental imperative and*
- *efficiency.*

Two basic components of consciousness-raising:

- *it is a reflection of in search of understanding dehumanizing social structures.*
- *it is transformative praxis aimed at altering social conditions. The two are dialectically interconnected: action without reflection is as unjustifiable as reflection without action, thus, changes of consciousness regarding societal relations are necessary precursor in the transformation of those relations*

Consciousness-raising is like thinking *in higher dimensions*. To illustrate how adding higher dimension can make things simpler is , imagine how major wars or guerilla warfare was wedged by EPRP against tyrannical regimes or 1888 Second Minilik's fight against Italy, during Ethio-Italian partition for Africa. The great guerrilla warfare, often involving many smaller battlefields, were invariably fought with great confusion, with rumors and misinformation pouring in both sides from many different directions. With battles raging on several fronts, the generals were often operating blind. Minilik or EPRP won its battles more from brute strength than from elegance of its strategies. That is why one of the first principles of warfare is to seize the high ground (Assimba Mountains/Zequla-Adwa, etc.)- that is, to go *up* into the third dimension, above the two dimensional battle field. From the vantage point of a large hill with a panoramic view of a battlefield, the chaos of war suddenly becomes vastly reduced. In other words, viewed from the third dimension (that is from the top of the hill), the confusion of the smaller battlefields becomes integrated into a coherent single picture. Thus, a deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation (adding one *more dimension to static consciousness*). Only, and only, through a quantum leap of conscious-raising the current complex struggle for **people's democratic state** can be solved, and this is justified by A. Einstein's maxim " ***Blind belief in authority is the greatest enemy of truth.***"

Organization and education are necessary ingredients for achieving authentic social transformation. They will need to be more extensive, coordinated and critical than they often have been in the past: learn from the past mistake to avoid the future one. For this to happen, activists, especially political leaders, must have a clear ***understanding of democratic institutions and the peoples objectives for fundamental change.*** All, confused and opportunists leaders, need this understanding to create a more just and humane reality. Moreover, political ignorant and opportunity seeking sycophants have to expand their span (add more dimension of consciousness) of understanding transformative praxis if not stay out of the political game. "***If wishes were horses, beggars would ride it***" is a good maxim that describes the renegades who are tantalized by euphoric missionary prophet/messiah of fallacy of change.

To be Continued.....