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**LIBERALISM AND CONSERVATISM AS THE WORLD POLITICAL
TRENDS: THE HISTORICAL ASPECT**

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In the article the historical aspect of liberalism, neo-liberalism, conservatism and neo-conservatism has been analyzed. Liberalism has been defined as the social and political theory founded on ideas of liberty and equality, free and fair elections, inborn civil rights, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, free trade, and private property. Liberalism is also a kind of political philosophy and worldview, program and practice. Conservatism has been defined as a social and political movement which is oriented on maintenance and reinforcement of existing forms of social, economic and political life, traditional spiritual values and which denies revolutionary changes and express distrust to people's movement and radical reforms. The accent has been made on the fact that conservatism appeared after the Great French Revolution as a result of criticism of its experience. It was actively developed by many thinkers: E. Burk, J. de Maistre and L. de Bonald, F. de Chateaubriand, F. de Lamennais, B. Disraeli and O. von Bismarck, G. Moska, M. Heidegger, D. Bell and S. Lipset.

Key words: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism, Conservatism, Neo-Conservatism, Historical development, Politics.

Historically, in the 18th and 19th centuries “conservatism” comprised a set of principles based on concern for established tradition, respect for authority and religious values. This form of traditionalist or classical

conservatism is often considered to be exemplified by the writings of Joseph de Maistre and the Pope in the post-Enlightenment age. Contemporaneous “liberalism” – now recalled as classical liberalism – advocated both political freedom for individuals and a free market in the economic sphere. Ideas of this sort were promulgated by John Locke, Montesquieu, Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, who are respectively remembered as the fathers of classical liberalism, the separation of church and state, economic liberalism, utilitarianism and social liberalism. Both conservatism and liberalism play an important role in modern world. Deep understanding of the historical problems of forming of these trends can help in resolving of many problems of modern world politics and social development.

The purpose of this article is the historical analysis of the development of liberalism and conservatism as the world political trends.

The term “liberalism” became wildly used in the 19th century in European countries where the liberal parties appeared. Words such as liberal, liberty, libertarian, and libertine all trace their history to the Latin liber, which means “free”. One of the first recorded instances of the word liberal occurs in 1375, when it was used to describe the liberal arts in the context of an education desirable for a free-born man.

The word’s early connection with the classical education of a medieval university soon gave way to a proliferation of different denotations and connotations. Liberal could refer to “free in bestowing” as early as 1387, “made without stint” in 1433, “freely permitted” in 1530, and “free from restraint” – often as a pejorative remark – in the 16th and the 17th centuries.

In 16th century England, liberal could have positive or negative attributes in referring to someone’s generosity or indiscretion. By the middle of the 19th century, liberal started to be used as a politicized term for parties and movements all over the world [1, p. 170].

The background of liberalism is 17th and 18th centuries' revolutions. The classics of liberal thought are J. Locke, A. Smith, Ch.-L. de Montesquieu, I. Kant. W. Humboldt, T. Jefferson, and D. Madison. Their ideas were developed by J. Mille, G. Spenser, F. Hayek, J. Galbraith, R. Dahl and others.

Liberalism can be defined as the social and political theory founded on ideas of liberty and equality, free and fair elections, inborn civil rights, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, free trade, and private property. Liberalism is also a kind of political philosophy and worldview, program and practice. It is the dominant political theory of the modern West. Liberalism appeared in the period of fighting against feudalism, absolutism and spiritual dominance of the Church. From the first days it was the worldview of middle class.

The main liberal principles are the following:

- The idea of individual freedom in society; the right of a person to determinate his or her life purposes and spheres of activity, personal responsibility for its results, for individual prosperity and social position;
- Individual freedom is closely connected with political freedom and "natural rights" (right to life, to freedom, to private property, and etc.);
- Limitation of the degree of state influence on private life of people; freedom of individual action in legal state boundaries;
- The main function of the state is to protect social order and provide international security of a country.

Liberalism played very important role for the development of modern democracy. But at first a lot of liberals were against democracy because they thought that the right of voting had only those citizens who had some private property. The situation changed after the works of French philosopher A. de Tocqueville ("Democracy in America", "The Old Regime

and the Revolution”, etc.) when it became obvious that democracy and liberalism had much in common. Due to liberalism the principles of equality of everybody before the Law, civil rights (freedom of conscience, religion, expression, press, assembly and association, speech, the right to privacy, etc.), tolerance and protection of the rights of minorities became an essential part of modern democracies.

The ideal of liberalism is the law-governed state the organs of which work in the context of democratic laws and which has division of powers into three branches.

Liberalism never was a homogeneous movement. It includes two main trends:

- 1) Liberalism of classic period (made accent on individual economic independence and free market);
- 2) Liberalism of the beginning of the 20th century (L. George, P. Stolypyn) made accent on liberal reforms and strong state power.

Neoliberalism is characterized by the following features [2, p. 311]:

- New understanding of social and economic role of the state: in its functions are involved active protection of free market and entrepreneurship, competition, struggle with monopolism and acceptance of anti-monopolistic laws, support of small and medium business, extension of the number of owners;
- Development of the general strategy of economic growth and practical ways of its realization;
- Social protection of citizens and especially poor and low income citizens.

Liberalism is also characterized by different views on the limits, forms and methods of state interference into economy [3, p. 18].

Liberal principles are realized in social and political life of modern western countries (parliamentarian government, division of powers, supporting of individual liberties and civil society).

The parties of liberal and democratic orientation are unified in the Liberal International of 1947. In some countries they are ruling parties or are members of the ruling coalitions. The main program document of this movement is "Liberalism Manifest".

Conservatism (from Latin "*conserve*" – "to preserve") is a social and political movement which is oriented on maintenance and reinforcement of existing forms of social, economic and political life, traditional spiritual values and which denies revolutionary changes and express distrust to people's movement and radical reforms.

Conservatism appeared after the Great French Revolution as a result of criticism of its experience. But later it was actively developed by many thinkers. Among them are E. Burk, J. de Maistre and L. de Bonald. Then conservative ideas were articulated in works of F. de Chateaubriand, F. de Lamennais, B. Disraeli and O. von Bismarck. In 20th century conservatism was brightly represented in teachings of G. Moska, M. Heidegger, D. Bell and S. Lipset [4, p. 174].

The main ideas of conservatism are the following:

- The idea of unnaturalness of social transforming on rational ground;
- Denying of consensus as a basic element of the state;
- Identification of political freedom with the limitation of state power;
- Strong conviction that the state cannot be natural and effective organ of ruling (replacement of its function by religion, morality and traditions);
- Maintaining of social stability and protection of existing social and political order;

- Giving of many arguments against radical reforms because there are no guarantees that they will be effective and successful.

Neo-conservatism appeared in the 20th century as a synthesis of conservatism, liberalism and technocracy. Its main theorist is F.A. Hayek. R. Reagan, M. Tetchier and J. Chirac are it's the most famous political representatives.

There are two main ideas in neo-conservatism: 1) submission of an individual to the state; 2) providing of political and spiritual uniting of nation. Neo-conservatism adherents are more tolerant to the state and its interference into social development. They are against radical individualism and support national and state interests. That is why their main idea is that all political decisions should be made in accordance with national (but not personal or group) interests. In the international context the main priority of neo-conservators is to strength the state power of their own country. To achieve it political leaders should use the most effective methods. The essence and real role of the state authority can be seen only in extraordinary situations. In normal situation it is impossible to say something about real influence of a statesman.

Conservators claim that it is necessary to strength the power functions of the state and make great accent on its hierarchy. Only elites should have the access to political power.

The bright examples of conservatism are "The Conservative and Unionist Party" ("tory") in Great Britain, "Republican Party" in the USA and Christian Democratic parties in Sweden, Italia, Namibia and other countries. In 1983 they founded the International Democratic Union (IDU) – a center-right international alliance of conservative, Christian democratic and liberal-conservative political parties.

Liberal conservatism is a political ideology combining conservative policies with liberal stances, especially on ethical

and social issues, or a brand of political conservatism strongly influenced by liberalism.

Liberal conservatism incorporates the classical liberal view of minimal government intervention in the economy, according to which individuals should be free to participate in the market and generate wealth without government interference. However, individuals cannot be thoroughly depended on to act responsibly in other spheres of life, therefore liberal conservatives believe that a strong state is necessary to ensure law and order and social institutions are needed to nurture a sense of duty and responsibility to the nation. It is a political position which also supports civil liberties along with some social conservative positions and is usually regarded as a centre-right ideology. In Western Europe, especially northern Europe, liberal conservatism is the dominant form of contemporary conservatism and has also adopted some socially liberal positions.

Generally, conservatism and liberalism appeared in the past and exist today. Modern parliamentary democracies choose them by rotation. The truth is somewhere between these two approaches. In politics one can be a liberal conservator or conservative liberal. Most of citizens support moderately conservative and reformative programs and cast strong doubt on radical projects.

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