RECONSIDERING LIBERALISM: AN APPROACH TO IDEOLOGIES, DEMOCRACY, AND POLITICAL PARTIES

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Abstract. *The article develops normative assumptions about what the political ideologies, democracy and political parties ought to be and advocates a reconsidered version of liberalism, which is perceived as an alternative to the prevailing modern political ideologies. Assumptions of reconsidered liberalism about the role of ideologies in democracy are generalized in the concept of ideological pluralism. The article also presents a concept of comprehensive democracy as an alternative to representative, direct, deliberative, civic and other modern conceptions of democracies. In this perspective democracy is perceived as a mode of collective decision-making process. Normative criteria for the basic elements of a collective decision making process, i.e.: participants of decision-making processes, decision-making procedures, content of decisions and implementation of decisions, are formulated. Assumptions about the alternative role of political parties in democracy are derived from the conception of the comprehensive democracy. It is proposed to assign to political parties functions such as civic education, organizing and moderating public deliberations, monitoring policy implementation.*

Keywords: *reconsidered liberalism, ideological pluralism, comprehensive democracy, public deliberations, political parties.*

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Introduction

The article considers what implications ideologies have for democracy and for political parties as the institutions indispensible to the modern liberal democracy and assesses the changes of democracy and the role of political parties. The article suggests a normative analysis, that is, critically assessing changes of political reality and models developed by theorists of democracy, it is designed to formulate statements about what ideologies, democracy and political parties ought to be.

Ideologies are a product of the epoch of modernity. Ideologies were developed in the 18th century in France and flourished until the mid of the 20th century. Since then the role of ideologies in the political process has declined and more and more theorists proclaim the "end of ideology"[1]. In the second half of the 20th century ideological tensions still remained as one of the signs of the Cold War, but after the collapse of the socialist system in Eastern and Central Europe in the late 80s of the 20th century this sign has disappeared.

The quality of democracy nowadays remains a relevant issue. Even in the countries of Western Europe and North America deep democratic traditions show signs of the crisis of democracy. Thus, it is not surprising that such countries as Lithuania, liberal democracy over the last twenty years, are faced with even greater challenges.

Modern liberal democracies are based on representation of the population by political parties. The latter consist of elected candidates whose task is to "carry out the will" of the electorate. It is true that the early theories of political representation assessed political parties as having either negative impact on or having no relevance to democracy and unworthy of attention; after all, it was difficult to reconcile the idea of party discipline with the principle of democratic representation[2]. Edmund Burke was the first who took account of the role of political parties. Burke defined a political party as "a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavors the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed"[3]. While stressing the importance of the principles for political parties, Burke at the same time acknowledged that political parties should be based on ideologies. Eventually the view, that political parties, party discipline is established through ideologies, are a necessary component of representative democracy, was entrenched primarily in political practice, and then in the theory of democracy[4]. If, as noted previously, the role of ideologies is diminished in the politics of the 21st century, and ideologies no longer fulfill one of its main functions, i.e. to bring together party members around common goals and strengthen the party-discipline,

1   Bell, D. *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000.

2   Thomassen, J. Empirical Research into Political Representation: Failing Democracy of Failing Models? In Miller, W.; Jennings, K.; Mann T. (eds.). *Election at Home and Abroad*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1994, p. 250.

3   Cited in Sartori, G. *Parties and Party Systems. A Framework for Analysis*, *Vol. 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 9; See also Thomassen, J., *op. cit.*, p. 250.

4   Schumpeter, J. *Capitalism, Socialism, Democracy*. 5th ed. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976, p. 83; See also Thomassen, J., *supra* note 2, p. 251.

then could such a diminishment be the major reason for the many problems of modern democracy? Low voter turnout, public distrust of political parties and of the parliament, populism, political corruption and cynicism aren't all of these and other faults of modern democracy a result of the fact that we live, according to Bell, in the epoch of "the end of ideology"? And how could these problems be addressed?

Here it is attempted to formulate answers to these questions, based on the assumption that the decline of ideologies as well as the crisis of democracy and of political parties is social constructs, i.e. recognized as conventions, more or less entrenched in academic and political discourses[5]. I also hold the pragmatist's view that theories are instruments to improve practice[6]. Following this approach, it is likely that these problems could be addressed through interventions into political discourses by changing concepts of ideologies, democracy and political parties.

In the first section assumptions of the prevailing modern political ideologies about what democracy and political parties are and ought to be will be evaluated and insights on how the role of ideologies in democracy is perceived in diverse ideological discourses will be presented. Also, the task is to reconsider a liberal approach to ideologies, democracy and political parties, and to introduce ideological pluralism as an alternative to conservative, Marxist and traditionally liberal assumptions about the role of ideologies in democracy. The second section will present the concept of comprehensive democracy as a reconsidered liberal position comprising an alternative to concepts of representative, direct and deliberative democracies. A model of comprehensive democracy will be constructed on the basis of the idea that democracy should be understood not only as a particular form of state organization, but also as a mode of any collective decision making process by integrating features of various concepts of democracies. The third section seeks to formulate a broader view of the functions of political parties based on assumptions of reconsidered liberalism and the model of comprehensive democracy.

1. The Constructivist Approach to Ideologies

It is possible to claim that ideologies are systems of factual and normative assumptions affecting human activities. Understanding the concept of 'ideology' might vary, however, here I have in mind such political ideologies as liberalism, socialism, conservatism, anarchism, fascism, feminism, nationalism, which consist of assumptions about what society ought to be (normative assumptions), about what society is (factual assumptions), and evaluations of society obtained by comparing the desirable state of society with its actual state, i.e. by comparing normative premises with the factual ones, as well as projections of how society could be changed. Political ideologies condition

5   Berger, P.; Luckman, T. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967.

6   Eldridge, M. *Transforming Experience: John Dewey's Cultural Instrumentalism.* Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1998, p. 5.

government policies, institutional formation and changes, relationships between individuals and groups as well as wars and revolutions.

According to Freeden, political ideologies are closely linked to political parties, but in ways that are different from the past, when the parties were perceived as bearers of ideologies, and the left - right spectrum was an unquestionable graphical representation of ideological division[7]. Political parties can rely on one or another ideology and even partly determine a change of ideology, however, political parties will inevitably simplify ideologies, adapt them to their structures, and to electoral and political environment[8]. Freeden suggests that the left - right spectrum, invented by the French Revolution, which is widely used in the social sciences, simplifies ideological differences – political parties must be attached either to "left" or "right" ideologies, when, in fact, an ideology of a political party could encompass elements of many different ideologies[9]. In Freeden's point of view a political science should more thoroughly study political ideas, which are prevalent in a society and impact its development, and their interconnectedness, leading to a fuller understanding of political parties themselves.

Such study is important since political ideologies condition popular understanding of democracy as well as of one of democratic institutions, political parties, and even of ideological transformations. This suggests that talking about "the end of ideologies" in the modern world has no justification, because political thinking is necessarily ideological, and relates to one or another ideology. Such argument could be accepted on one condition – compared to ideologies of the modern times, the postmodern political ideologies are different, because their assumptions are reflected, i.e. people understand that their political speech and actions are based on a certain ideology. Political ideologies are perceived as constructions of human thinking, so they are not believed unconditionally, but deliberately chosen while preserving the opportunity to distance themselves from them. Therefore, there is nothing unusual, if people change their ideological beliefs. Such a predominantly constructivist approach has consequences for both the development of political ideas and for political culture. On the one hand, ideological differences blur, significance of ideologies decreases (hence the talk of "the end of ideologies"), on the other hand, more opportunities for innovative political ideas open up.

Here I will clarify the claims that the understanding of ideologies, democracy, and political parties is conditioned by ideological assumptions. Table No. 1 summarizes how the three dominant modern political ideologies - conservatism, liberalism and Marxism – explain democracy and the role of ideologies in political parties. The ideologies could be understood as frames, conceptual schemes or narratives, which shape knowledge and actions of members of a political community[10]. Such classification is abstract, since definitions of conservative, liberal and Marxist ideologies are ambiguous, and some ideas developed in political theory do not fit into this classification. These generalizations

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7   Freeden, M. Ideology and Political Theory. *Journal of Political Ideologies*. 2006, 11(1): 18.
8   *Ibid*.
9   *Ibid*., p. 19.
10   Rein, M.; Schon, D. Frame Critical Policy Analysis and Frame-Reflective Policy Practice. *Knowledge, Tech-nology and Policy.* 1996, 9(1).

rather should be understood as "ideal types"[11]. However, the argument is designed to demonstrate that political ideas, theories, and models are more or less affected by ideological assumptions.

Table 1. Different approaches to ideologies, democracy and political parties

	Conservative frame	Liberal frame	Marxist frame
	Right		Left
Ideologies	End of ideologies (a pesimist view)	End of ideologies (an optimist view)	Society is ideological; ideologies are used for interests of ruling classes
Democracy	Party democracy, representative democracy	Constitutional democracy (limited representative democracy), pluralist democracy	Direct democracy, participatory democracy
Political parties	Political parties represent values and public interest; political parties important to democracy	Political parties represent individual or group interests; political parties unnecessary to democracy	Political parties represent class interests; political parties unnecessary to democracy

Source: developed by the author

As it is seen from the above, the conservative approach is characterized by the pessimistic assessment of modern democracy in which traditional moral and political values and ideology are in a state of crisis[12]. The conservative politician (or an intellectual) longs for a traditional representative democracy, where ideology is a significant element in consolidating political parties. However, he is willing to accept only those ideologies that do not pose a serious threat to established economic order and institutions of the democratic state; he does not recognize radical ideologies and regards them as dangerous. Political parties that do not have a clearly defined ideological identity, are regarded as populist, i.e. failing to meet criteria of moral politics. In Lithuania it is characteristic of the conservative approach to legitimize both Social democratic and liberal ideologies and to recognize political parties representing such ideologies, while ascertaining shortcomings of these ideologies. The conservative approach is expressed by Burke's observation that political parties are based on values and principles, that is, ideologies[13].

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11   Weber, M. *The Methodology of the Social Sciences.* New York: Simon&Schuster, The Free Press, 1949.
12   Jokubaitis, A. *Politika be vertybių* [Politics without values]. Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2008.
13   Thomassen, J., *supra* note 2, p. 250.

For the liberal as well as for the conservative approach the premise that ideologies have lost their meaning for the contemporary society, and for this reason ideological differences erode, is equally important. However, unlike a conservative thinker, a liberal is not overly concerned about ideological erosion, but assesses prospects of development of democratic political system optimistically. A liberal is content with such a condition of society, where fundamental rights and freedoms are enshrined, democratic institutions function. For such a liberal, the so called liberal democracy is the best possible form of governance. The liberal approach is generalized by Francis' Fukuyama's pronouncement concerning "the end of history"[14]. The representative democracy, which obtained its theoretical justification from liberal thinkers (C. Montesquieu[15], J. Madison[16], J.S. Mill[17]), is perceived as the best of all possible forms of government, could function without ideologies, political parties and non-party candidates may compete for electoral votes without clear ideological commitments[18]. On the other hand, the liberal approach (or at least some of its versions, for example, economic liberalism, represented by the Austrian School of Economics and public choice theorists[19]) is characterized by its distrust of democratic institutions. According to those liberals who do not trust democracy, decisions made in a democratic way could result in harmful state interventions into "the free market", and limit rights or liberties of a certain group of people. Therefore, traditionally liberals are supporters of constitutional democracy, that is, of limited democracy.

A proponent of the Marxist ideology tends to maintain that society is necessarily ideological, and the claim that the ideology has lost its significance is designed to mislead the public by the threat of the ruling class. The Marxist ideology perceives itself to be in conflict with the ideologies of the ruling classes[20]. A Marxist does not trust representative democracy, but for reasons other than a liberal. The representative democracy, according to the Marxist view, only serves the interests of ruling classes, and therefore alternative forms of democracy, allowing various strata of society to participate in governance are sought for. Various direct and participatory forms of democracy are based on assumptions of the "left" ideology, whose origins can be found in Marx's theory. In the beginning of the 20th century Social Democratic Parties were the hottest proponents of the direct democracy, and in the second half of the twentieth century ideas of the participatory and the deliberative democracy were put forward, in particular by theorists affected by the ideas of Marx (e.g., Habermas[21]).

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14   Fukuyama, F. *The End of History and the Last Man.* New York: Free Press, 1992.

15   de Montesquieu, Ch. *The Spirit of the Laws.* Cambridre: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

16   Madison, J. *Federalist Papers.* New York: Doubleday, 1966.

17   Mill, J. S. Considerations on Representative Government. In Acton, H. B. (ed.). *Utilitarianism, Liberty, and Representative Government.* London: Dent, 1951.

18   Schumpeter, J. *Capitalism, Socialism, Democracy.* 5th ed. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976.

19   Degutis, A. *Individualizmas ir visuomeninė tvarka* [Individualism and order of society]. Vilnius: Eugrimas, 1998.

20   Dunleavy, P.; O'Leary, B. *Theories of the State: The Politics of Liberal Democracy.* New York: New Amsterdam Books, 1987.

21   Habermas, J. Discourse Ethics: Notes on Philosophical Justification. In *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.

Here I propose arguments to counter various critics of liberal ideology, both from conservative and Marxist camps[22] by reconsidering the traditional liberal position and proposing an alternative normative framework in which democracy, the role of ideologies and political parties in democracy could be constituted.

Ideological pluralism is a normative alternative to different approaches to the role of ideology in democracy presented in Table No. 1. This is a liberal democratic alternative both to abandonment of ideologies, to strengthening of traditional ideologies, to the dominance of a single ideology and to the conflict of ideologies. The concept of ideological pluralism could be derived from the Rawlsian advocacy of political liberalism, though Rawls understands pluralism in a broader sense – not just as pluralism among political ideologies, but as pluralism among different concepts of morality[23]. Ideological pluralism is associated with liberalism rather than with conservatism or Marxism because it shares with liberalism an optimistic view towards opportunities of liberal democracy, a view different from the conservative pessimism or the Marxist's suspicion.

The main assumptions of ideological pluralism as an alternative normative approach are the following: 1) the left - right scale is not the only one which explains the variety of ideological schemes – other scales are possible (e.g. environmental, foreign policy, moral, national, etc.), it is not necessary for a political ideology to be categorized on the left - right scale; 2) ideologies, in order to be legitimized in a democratic society, must comply with the general principles of democracy (do not have to oppose fundamental human rights and freedoms, and need not promote violence and hate, etc.); 3) political ideologies constitute values and principles on the basis of which political parties generate visions of social reality and alternative programmes of public policy, develop concepts of public interest, and thus become a necessary element of democratic political parties; 4) political ideologies compete with each other in the political sphere, however, proponents of one or another ideology recognize visions and arguments of competing ideologies as legitimate.

2. The Concept of the Comprehensive Democracy

The concept of comprehensive democracy is a liberal alternative, as mentioned in the previous chapter, to ordinary concepts of democracy. Here democracy is conceptualized as a property of a collective decision making process, not only as a form of state government. This means that whenever any group of people makes decisions, it could be asked to which extent the process of decision making is democratic. The concept of democracy has a normative content for it is desirable that any collective decision making process would be democratic. Thus democracy is a criterion according

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22   Jokubaitis, A. *Liberalizmo tapatumo problemos* [Problems of liberalism identity]. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2003.

23   Rawls, J. *Political Liberalism.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

to which any collective decision making process could be evaluated. I will construct a model of comprehensive democracy by identifying the basic elements of collective decision making process: participants of decision making processes, decision making procedures, content of decisions, and implementation of decisions. Participants of decision making process, their expertise, motivation, and moral values determine which decision making procedures will be agreed on, what the content of decisions will be and how decisions will be implemented. It is presumed that for each of these elements certain requirements of democracy could be formulated. In other words, comprehensive democracy is achieved only if all elements of collective decision making process meet the criteria of public participation. Each of these elements will be discussed in detail.

2.1. The Participants of a Decision Making Process

In a successful democracy citizens must be competent, motivated and guided by publically established provisions. In order for them to successfully participate in the processes of decision making two levels of knowledge could be distinguished. Information about objectives and principles – i.e. knowledge about rights ("what can I do?"), obligations ("what have I to do?"), personal interests ("what is good for me?"), group interests ("what is good for the group to which I belong?") and the public interest ("what is good for society, humankind, world, etc.?") – belongs to the first level. The first level knowledge consists of normative statements. The second level is information about environment and means, so to say, the knowledge of systems ("what are systems and what they ought to be?"), processes ("what are processes and what they ought to be?"), rules ("what are rules and what they ought to be?") and action ("how should I act?"). This second level consists of normative and factual statements. The following requirements for civic motivation and moral values could be stated: on the one hand, in a situation where group interests are confronted with personal interests, citizens ought to give priority to the group interests; on the other hand, in cases when group or personal interests confront the public interest, citizens ought to give priority to public interest. The system of knowledge, motivation and moral provisions of participants of decision-making process could be defined as a civic culture while the totality of individuals taking part in various decision making processes could be named a civil society.

The concept that a successful democracy is impossible without conscious and responsible citizens stems from the tradition of republicanism. It is in this tradition of political thought, whose origins can be traced to ancient Greece and Rome (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero[24]), which was rekindled in political ideas of Machiavelli, Rousseau[25], and of the founders of the US constitution during the periods of the Renaissance and

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24   Plato *Republic*. Translated by Grube, G. M. A. Cambridge/Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1992; Aristotle *The Politics*. London: Penguin Books, 1981; Cicero, M. T. *Selected Works.* London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1971.

25   Machiavelli, N. *The Prince*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; Rousseau, J. J. *The Social Contract.* New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2008.

Enlightenment, and was further developed by de Tocqueville[26], Putnam[27] in the 19th and 20th centuries. The concepts of "citizenship", "civic virtues" and "common good" were developed as well as the perception that citizens have not only rights but also duties.

2.2. The Procedures of a Decision Making Process

For governance to be democratic, institutions were formed for procedures that allow and require collective decision making. In the tradition of the democratic political thought such institutions as majority vote, separation of powers, checks and balances, mechanism of representation, political parties, federalism, etc. were developed. Some of these institutions are associated with the representative democracy, which was reflected and justified in works of such thinkers as de Montesqueu, J. S. Mill[28]. The theory of pluralist democracy (R. Dahl[29]) took into account the importance of such institution as competition of interest groups. The concept of direct democracy, whose origins are in the Athenian polis of the IV to VII century BC, implies such decision-making procedures as referendums and voter surveys. Theories of deliberative and participatory democracy (developed by theorists such as Bessette, Elster, Cohen[30]) emphasize priorities of institutions such as consultations with citizens, citizens' forums, public deliberations on policy issues, and petitioning. Thus different theories formulate diverse positions which institutions are essential for democracy, although there is a common assumption that procedures are an important or even crucial factor of successful functioning of democracy. In the model of comprehensive democracy it could be assumed that: 1) appropriate procedures for collective decision making are not a sufficient condition for successful democracy; 2) procedures of representation, direct rule or deliberation are effective depending on a specific situation of collective decision making; and 3) in some situations of collective decision making various combinations of procedures are possible. The first assumption is confirmed by a number of examples where democratic institutions did not prevent decisions that were obviously non-democratic or harmful to democracy (it is a known historical fact that Hitler came to power through democratic elections in the 30s of the 20th century; in modern Belarus democratic institutions formally function, however, many decisions by the government of this country could hardly be called democratic). The second assumption stems from contingency perspective, which was widely used in organizational studies in the mid-20th century. It could be argued that such factor as the size of a decision making group matters for application of democratic

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26   de Tocqueville, *A. Democracy in America.* New York: Signet Classic, 2001.

27   Putnam, R. D. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.

28   Montesquieu, Ch., *supra* note 15; Mill, J. S., *supra* note 17.

29   Dahl, R. *Democraxy and Its Critics.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

30   Bessette, J. M. Deliberative Democracy: The Majority Principle in Republican Government. In *How Democratic is the Constitution?* Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1980; Elster, J. (ed.). *Deliberative Democracy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998; Cohen, J. Deliberative Democracy and Democratic Legitimacy. In Hamlin, A.; Pettit, P. (eds.). *The Good Polity.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

decision making procedures, procedures of direct rule are more suitable in cases where decisions are made by a relatively small group of people, and in other cases procedures of representation are more appropriate. For example, institutions of direct democracy were successful in the city states of the Ancient Greece while today they successfully function in the Swiss cantons; Rousseau[31] developed ideas of direct democracy on the basis of the model of the government of the city of Geneva. The third assumption about variety of procedural combinations is purely normative and it opens the way for the creation of new democratic institutions by integrating various elements of currently existing democratic decision making procedures.

2.3. The Content of Decisions

Another element of a collective decision making process, which determines whether the decision making process is democratic, is the content of decisions itself. Even if all procedures of democratic decision making function sufficiently, there may be cases when the quality of decisions does not satisfy the criteria of democracy. For example, voters in a referendum or representatives elected in a democratic way can enact laws which infringe the rights of a certain group of people or laws which are socially unjust. Criteria by which the democratic characteristics of a decision could be judged are found in the tradition of the political theory, i.e.: they are the principles of human rights, freedoms, equality. General principles of justice were formulated by Rawls[32] as well as by other theorists, and such principles are embedded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations, as well as in constitutions of the modern liberal democratic states. However, these principles are sometimes perceived differently, and uniform criteria are not always agreed on. It could be said that criteria of democracy for collective decisions are conditioned by political ideologies or different understanding of the common good. Liberal democracy, Christian democracy, and Social democratic theory provide alternative views as to which human rights and principles of justice should get priority in public policy of a democratic state. The model of a comprehensive democracy implies that it is necessary to identify those democratic criteria for collective decisions which would be welcomed by people of different ideological views, and those issues on which consensus cannot be found, but could be addressed in a democracy by establishing appropriate decision making procedures.

2.4. The Implementation of Decisions

A decision making process could not be considered fully democratic if decisions of institutions which fulfill criteria of democracy and are consistent with the principles of justice are not effectively implemented, and, moreover, if the participants of the decision making process do not comply with legal norms approved in this process.

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31   Rousseau, J. J., *supra* note 25.

32   Rawls, J. *A Theory of Justice.* Boston: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971.

Thus a basic criterion of democracy for this process is the principle of the rule of law so well justified by Plato and Aristotle, and, in the Modern times, by Rutherford, Locke, and de Montesquieu[33]. The same principle of the rule of law was discussed by Dicey, Hayek, Raz[34] in the 19th and 20th centuries. The principle of the rule of law is prerequisite for democracy, even though this principle can be implemented in non-democratic decision making processes, for example, in authoritarian states[35]. An entity of collective decision making, such as the state, has at its disposal various means to ensure the implementation of decisions adopted by its institutions, even if states, known as democratic, do not always succeed in this practice. It is much more difficult to ensure the implementation of decisions in such bodies of collective decision making which do not have sufficient resources to develop mechanisms of accountability, such as non-governmental organizations, political parties, and business organizations. The implementation of decisions, the compliance to norms adopted by a group, organization or state also depends on the civic culture of participants. In a highly developed civic culture, mechanisms of accountability would be redundant, since everyone, who has voluntarily chosen to belong to such a group, would understand his/her responsibility to implement what was decided in the group (organization, country, etc.), even if he or she internally disagrees with the decision.

Table No. 2 summarises requirements which ought to be met by the participants of the collective decision making processes, i.e.: procedures of decision-making, the content of decisions and the implementation of decision in order to call those processes democratic, and implies the theoretical origins of the criteria. Thus, the model of the comprehensive democracy is not an alternative to currently prevailing views on democracy, but it is an attempt to integrate the normative assumptions of those theories that are currently seen as opposing each other. Another advantage of the model of the comprehensive democracy is that democracy is identified not only as a form of state government, but as a property of any collective decision-making process. Thus this model could be applied in discussing the democratization of policy making processes, decision making processes in public, private and non-profit organizations, and interorganizational networks. Such an integrated theory may have practical significance, because it creates possibilities to establish new democratic institutions, to change decision making practices. The next section will discuss how political parties which are traditionally perceived as institutions of representative democracy could function in the comprehensive democracy.

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33 Rutherford, S. *Lex, Rex or the Law and the Prince: A Dispute for the Just Prerogative of King and People.* London: Hess Pubns, 1998; Locke, J. *Two Treatises of Government.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; Montesquieu, Ch., *supra* note 15.

34 Dicey, A. V. *Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution.* London: Elibron Classics, 2005; Hayek, F. *The Constitution of Liberty.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960; Raz, J. The Rule of Law and It's Virtue. *The Law Quarterly Review.* 1977, 93.

35 Rown, N. *The Rule of Law in the Arab World.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Table 2. Classification of theories of democracy

	Participants of decision making process	Procedures of decision making	Content of decisions	Implementation of decisions
Questions	"What ought society and citizens be in order democracy to be successful?"	"What ought the decision-making process be in order democracy to be successful?"	„What ought the content of decision be in order democracy to be successful?"	„How ought decisions to be implemented in order democracy to be successful?"
Conditions for democracy	Knowledge, motivation, moral values	Democratic institutions: majority vote, separation of powers, political parties, referendums, public deliberations, etc.	Human rights and freedoms, social justice	The rule of law
Theoretical origins	republicanism, civic democracy (Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, de Tocqueville, Putnam, etc.)	representative democracy pluralist democracy, direct democracy, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy	liberalism (Locke, Rawls, etc.), conservatism (Burke, etc.), socialism (Marx, Engels, etc.)	Aristotle, Locke, de Montesquieu, Dicey, Hayek

Source: developed by the author

3. The Role of Political Parties in the Comprehensive Democracy

The aim of this section is to consider changes in the role of political parties, taking into account the different understanding of political ideologies and of democracy presented in the previous sections.

Political parties are institutions of the representative democracy which function to articulate and aggregate interests and to formulate public policy options[36]. Claiming that these functions of political parties have declined, Bartolini and Mair also identify institutional or procedural functions of political parties such as the selection of political

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36   Bartolini, S.; Mair, P. Challenges to Contemporary Political Parties. In Diamond, L.; Gunther, R. (eds.). *Political Parties and Democracy.* Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2001.

leaders and the organization of parliamentary and governmental work and argue that in modern democracies political parties have no real alternative. In their classification of functions of political parties Diamond and Gunther[37] distinguish between electoral (to select candidates for representative institutions, to mobilize voter support for candidates and to encourage voter participation, to structure choices of different public policy issues between competing groups of candidates) and governmental (to represent different social groups, to aggregate interests, to form governments, to support their activities, and to involve citizens into political process of the state) functions.

However, the model of the comprehensive democracy implies that political parties should also carry out the following functions: 1) to develop civic competence, motivation, values; 2) to initiate and to moderate public deliberations; 2) to monitor implementation of decisions.

3.1. Civic Education

One of the functions of political parties should be the development of civic competence, motivation and values. This function can be derived from the definition of comprehensive democracy which lists certain requirements of civic maturity for participants of collective decision making processes. Democratic institutions such as political parties should not only adapt to the current civic culture, as it is customary in representative democracy, but also to undertake the role of the makers of the civic culture. How could this be implemented in practice?

Political parties are organizations, whose members in their vast majority are involved in political activities on a voluntary basis, without receiving any financial reward. Thus, the very participation in activities of political parties is indicative of a civic maturity. Members of political parties sacrifice their personal priorities (time, social and financial resources) for the benefit of a group (for opportunities of political party representatives to get into the parliament or government) or for some abstract public interest (public welfare, development of democracy or some ideological principles). Naturally, members of political parties are guided not just by such civic motives - many of them perceive their participation in political activities as a particular way of achieving personal gains, for example, hope to make a political career, to expand their social networks or the like. Personal interests as reasons for taking part in activities of political parties are justifiable from the point of view of the comprehensive democracy, however, it is important that they would not outweigh collective interests in the case of the conflict of interests. Thus political parties, by aiming to attract new members to their activities, to increase numbers of their members, naturally contribute to the function of civic education. It can be argued that democracy will be strengthened if party leaders and ordinary members strive to involve more people into party activities and set examples of civic motivation to political newcomers. Examples of civic motivation within political parties could gradually make an impact on voters who are not likely to participate in

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37   Diamond, L.; Gunther, R. Types and Functions of Parties. In Diamond, L.; Gunther, R. (eds.). *Political Parties and Democracy.* Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2001, p. 7−9.

political activities themselves as members of the party, but who support one or another political party and vote for it and its representatives in elections. The issue of how public could be informed about such examples of civic motivation should become a task of public relations' strategies of political parties.

Political parties also ought to develop competences of their members and their constituents in order to enable them to participate successfully in democratic decision making processes. Political parties generate ideas, visions, policy alternatives and positions in various public policy issues, that is, they generate certain knowledge of what a society is and ought to be, how positive changes in a society could be achieved by means of public policies, and knowledge upon which the content of democratic decisions is dependent. Thus political parties can be seen as certain centers of excellence which mobilise human resources to generate knowledge. Political parties may use experts or rely on their own members or supporters for this purpose. The aggregated knowledge should be distributed among party members, disseminated among potential voters by using traditional and electronic media and via other means of communication with voters. One example of how political parties contribute to the electoral public policy capacity building is an electronic voter assistance tool created for Lithuanian Seimas' elections of 2008 - the website "Mano balsas" (it was adapted to the European Parliament and the Presidential elections of 2009) as well as similar websites in other countries - smartvote. ch, euprofiler.eu and the like. Although those websites were not created on the initiatives of political parties themselves, the websites operate as a medium by which political positions of political parties become known to voters.

3.2. The Initiation and Moderation of Public Deliberations

Another function of political parties in the comprehensive democracy ought to be initiation and moderation of public debates. Deliberations on issues of public policy are a democratic institution recommended by theorists of deliberative democracy[38]. However, the role of political parties in organizing public policy deliberations gets little attention in the work of theorists of the deliberative democracy. It can be assumed that these theorists perceive political parties purely as institutions of the representative democracy to which their own concept of democracy is opposed. It is only in the last decade when theorists of democracy became focused on opportunities to integrate deliberative and representative institutions[39]. But even in this work of Gastil it is not addressed how political parties could participate in processes of public policy deliberation.

However, in the model of comprehensive democracy political parties are important agents of processes of public policy deliberation. Unlike isolated individuals, informal groups of citizens and even some non-governmental organizations, political parties usually have more resources, which are necessary to organize discussions on various

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38   Bessette, J. M., *supra* note 30; Cohen, J., *supra* note 30; Elster, J., *supra* note 30.
39   Gastil, J. *By Popular Demand: Revitalizing Representative Democracy through Deliberative Elections.* Berkley: University of California Press, 2000.

public policy issues[40]. Such public discussions, also via information technologies, could be held before the elections, as a part of election campaigns, and in the period between elections. In this case processes of public deliberations would supplement representative and executive institutions, assist those institutions in making more rational, more deliberate decisions and ensure democratic accountability. (It would be publicly discussed how decisions are being implemented, what results of implementation are. One example how information technologies were used for the initiation and moderation of public deliberations before elections of 2008 was the website "Open Government Programme" created by the Liberal and Center Union in Lithuania. Site developers created an opportunity for visitors to submit proposals to be included into the Government programme in the case of victory of that political party in the Seimas' elections, and to assess and comment on the proposals submitted by other visitors. As the Liberal and Center Union did not receive enough voter support in the Parliamentary elections to form the Government, this project was not fully implemented.

In processes of public policy deliberations political parties ought to take an active stance – to debate policy agendas, to offer alternatives and drafts of policy decisions for further consideration. However, public deliberations ought not to be held solely as an advertising tool for political parties by maintaining their pre-determined positions. In this case public deliberations would be ineffective in terms of democracy. Political parties ought to launch processes of public deliberations with the aim to improve policy decisions, even to the extent of rejecting the preliminary drafts of decisions should discussions bring up strong arguments of the opposition. Public deliberations could focus on programmes of political parties, draft legislation, projects of investment into public infrastructure.

3.3. The Decision Implementation Monitoring

Another function which could be conducted by political parties in the comprehensive democracy is monitoring of how public policy decisions are implemented. As it was argued in the previous chapter, the successful implementation of collective decisions is an important condition of comprehensive democracy. Various mechanisms to ensure accountability of implementation processes are possible and political parties could be one of those mechanisms[41]. For this purpose political parties should also mobilize human and financial resources.

Conclusions

The article has attempted to present a reconsidered liberal approach to ideologies, to democracy and to political parties. According to the constructivist epistemology, the view that concepts of ideologies, democracy and political parties are socially constructed,

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40   Cohen, J., *supra* note 30, p. 31−32.
41   Peters, P. G. *Policy of Bureaucracy.* London: Routledge, 2001, p. 299–347.

created by human beings and freely chosen, normative assumptions of prevailing political ideologies of contemporary democracy, i.e.: conservatism, liberalism and Marxism, were evaluated, an alternative approach of reconsidered liberalism was suggested.

The concept of ideological pluralism summarizes assumptions of reconsidered liberalism on what ideologies ought to be. Under the conditions of ideological pluralism in a democratic society different ideologies which acknowledge common principles of democracy can function and compete, not just traditional ideologies which are categorized on the left – right scale. The variety of ideologies provides greater opportunities to voters. Ideologies can be transformed, new ideologies can emerge through learning and creative design processes. Ideologies perceived in this way are a necessary condition for the effective functioning of political parties. Ideologies are values and principles motivating party members and supporters to achieve common goals. Democratic ideologies are not essentially hostile to each other, differences in ideological approaches are not reasons for hatred between groups of society, but rather an opportunity to learn from each other, to seek the best or compromising solutions in public debates.

In the article the concept of the comprehensive democracy is developed. The concept of the comprehensive democracy is a certain alternative to the concepts of representative, direct, deliberative, civic or other democracies. Democracy is seen as a property of the collective decision making process. In the model of the comprehensive democracy, by applying benefits of the well-known models of democracy, normative criteria are formulated to the following basic elements of a decision making process: participants of decision making, procedures of decision making, the content of decisions and the implementation of decisions. The argument is that from the normative point of view realization of all these conditions is the ideal of comprehensive democracy, yet, in reality, more or less imperfect democracies exist.

On the assumptions of the comprehensive democracy the alternative role of political parties is determined. If political parties were traditionally understood as institutions of representative democracy and their main functions were to articulate and aggregate interests and to formulate public policy alternatives, to select candidates for elective institutions and to mobilize voters, such functions as civic education, initiation and moderation of public deliberations, monitoring of implementation of public policy decisions could be attributed to political parties in the comprehensive democracy. Political parties ought to operate in accordance with ideologies consistent with the already mentioned conditions of ideological pluralism. The internal governance of political parties should also be organized democratically according to the criteria of the model of the comprehensive democracy.

The article develops an approach to ideologies, democracy and political parties as a theoretical response to the manifestations of the crisis of the contemporary democracy. Here an alternative to the liberal democracy facing numerous challenges is not proposed. Ideological pluralism, comprehensive democracy and a new approach to political parties are an opportunity to strengthen institutions of liberal democracy, to use the potential of liberal democracy in a broader way. These ideas could also have practical significance

as directions for interventions and reforms of democratisation of various institutions of the contemporary society.

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PERSVARSTANT LIBERALIZMĄ: POŽIŪRIS Į IDEOLOGIJAS, DEMOKRATIJĄ IR POLITINES PARTIJAS

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Santrauka. Straipsnyje plėtojamos normatyvinės prielaidos, kokios turėtų būti politinės ideologijos, demokratija ir politinės partijos. Formuluojama persvarstyto liberalizmo, kuris suvokiamas kaip patraukli alternatyva vyraujančioms šiuolaikinėms politinėms ideologijoms, versija. Persvarstyto liberalizmo prielaidas, kokios turi būti ideologijos, apibendrina ideologinio pliuralizmo samprata. Ideologiniam pliuralizmui būdinga: 1) skirtis tarp „kairės" ir „dešinės" nėra vienintelė, kuri paaiškina ideologinių schemų įvairovę – galimos ir kitokios skirtys, politinės ideologijos nebūtinai turi būti kategorizuojamos kairės-dešinės skalėje; 2) kad ideologijos būtų pripažintos demokratinėje visuomenėje, jos turi atitikti bendrus demokratiškumo principus; 3) ideologijos padeda politinėms partijoms generuoti

alternatyvias socialinės tikrovės vizijas ir viešosios politikos alternatyvų paketus, įtikinti rinkėjus, suburti komandas, kompetentingas įgyvendinti šias vizijas ir viešosios politikos alternatyvas, išugdyti lyderius, kurie sugebėtų įkvėpti ir motyvuoti žmones siekti bendrų tikslų.

Taip pat formuluojama visapusiškos demokratijos samprata, alternatyvi tiek atstovaujamosios, tiek tiesioginės, deliberatyvinės, pilietinės, tiek kitų šiuolaikinių demokratijų koncepcijoms. Visapusiškos demokratijos modelyje demokratija yra suvokiama kaip kolektyvinio sprendimų priėmimo proceso savybė, formuluojami normatyviniai kriterijai pagrindiniams kolektyvinio sprendimų priėmimo proceso elementams: sprendimų priėmimo proceso dalyviams, sprendimų priėmimo proceso procedūroms, sprendimų turiniui ir sprendimų įgyvendinimui. Tokia integruota demokratijos teorija sudaro galimybę formuoti naujas demokratines institucijas, keisti sprendimų priėmimo praktikas.

Iš visapusiškos demokratijos sampratos išvedamos prielaidos apie kitokį politinių partijų vaidmenį – politinėms partijoms siūloma priskirti tokias funkcijas kaip piliečių ugdymas, viešųjų diskusijų iniciavimas ir moderavimas, viešosios politikos sprendimų įgyvendinimo priežiūra. Politinės partijos visapusiškoje demokratijoje turėtų veikti vadovaudamosi ideologijomis, kurios atitiktų jau minėto ideologinio pliuralizmo sąlygas. Politinių partijų vidaus valdymas taip pat turėtų būti organizuotas pagal visapusiškos demokratijos modelio kriterijus.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: *persvarstytas liberalizmas, ideologinis pliuralizmas, visapusiška demokratija, viešieji svarstymai, politinės partijos.*

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