

A Theoretical Analysis of Political Conservatism

Turaev Abrar Salokhiddinovich

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Sciences (PhD)
Jizzakh State Pedagogical University, Uzbekistan

Abstract: This article discusses the political ideology and its structure, categories and tasks, the manifestation of conservatism as a political ideology and its characteristics, and the factors affecting its ideological-political evolution are theoretically analyzed.

Keywords: ideology, political ideology, conservatism, neoconservatism, tradition, value, history, power, politics.

Introduction

Ideologies play a major role in the history of human society and are recognized as influencing factors ranging from socio-political stability to everyday life issues. “It's no secret that nowadays most people look at the word “ideology” a little hesitantly, considering it alien to a democratic society. But when we say ideology, first of all, we understand education of thought, education of national and universal human values”, states the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoev[1;293].

The concept of “ideology” is one of the categories that are deeply studied as an object of research in social sciences. This concept was first introduced into scientific circulation in the 18th century by the French thinker A. Destuyt de Tracy. Tracy interpreted the term as a doctrine of ideas arising from human emotional experience[2;336].

Materials

Debates about the place and role of ideology in society continue to this day. In particular, attention is paid to certain functions of ideology in social life. Ideology is of practical importance as it performs a number of functions. In particular, ideology has a targeting function, and ideology shows the content, system, and goals of society and the state, social development, and individual activity. The mobilizing function of ideology, proposing the idea of a new, virtuous society, political ideology emerges as a direct motive for political activity and mobilizes society and social groups for its implementation. In the unifying function of ideology, giving meaning to political action within the framework of the proposed new image of the world, political ideology gives it such importance that it transcends any individual or group interest in its scope. Political ideology opposes private interests and thus emerges as a unifying factor. At the same time, ideology also has an amortization function, that is, political ideology serves to alleviate social tension in a situation where there is a discrepancy between the needs of society, groups, individuals, and the real possibilities of their satisfaction. Political ideology is formed on the basis of the interests of one or another social group through the function of expressing and protecting the interests of a particular social group and is called to contrast them with the interests of other groups.

Ideology differs from science in terms of its functions. If the function of science is to study existence, then the function of ideology is to occupy the mass political consciousness of the population, to introduce its own criteria for evaluating the current and future development of society, and to define the goals and tasks that people aim for in the political space. Having a group character, ideology strives to create a rational and objective image of the way it wants to be implemented, and that it corresponds to the interests of one or another class, nation, state. In this regard, ideology is not limited to the promotion of one or another ideals and values, but is also engaged in stimulating the purposeful activities of citizens, parties and other political structures.

“Ideology appears as a form of social consciousness based on stable values established in certain conditions. Often, it is hidden. Political ideology is one of the forms of existence of political consciousness, and it can be defined as a set of ideas about the political sphere in general. From this point of view, political ideology appears as one of the most influential forms of political consciousness” [3;3].

Political ideology is interpreted as a certain doctrine that justifies the claims of this or that group to

power or its use and, based on these goals, serves to achieve the submission of social thought to its ideas.

According to B. Berdiev, one of the young scientists from Uzbekistan, “The factor that ensures the cohesion of the people in the transformation of any country from one system to another, and increases its tolerance to any dangerous changes that occur in the world in the process of globalization, is the creation of the nation's own idea and ideology and instilling it in the people's consciousness” [4;30].

In the researches in the field of ideology, certain analyzes are also carried out on the issue of the structure of ideology. In particular, the researcher D.M. Mamatkulov's article entitled “The concept of ideology, the role of ideas and categories in it” states as follows: “When studying ideology scientifically, it is known that it consists mainly of three components. Its components are:

the first is a set of ideas, categories, principles (based on scientific, philosophical, religious and other aspects) put into a specific system;

the second, subjective factors (ideological institutions and ideological individuals) that implement the ideas, categories and principles of ideology to society;

the third is the ways, methods and tools used in the process of applying ideas and categories to society.

Although ideology consists of three components, in fact, it is an indivisible, integrated mechanism. The role of these components of ideology in the achievement of society's goals is immeasurable. Only their equal movement in ideological practice will lead the society towards the goal. Otherwise, this ideology is flawed and loses its leadership in society” [5].

To date, the effectiveness of the ideology factor and the cases of using the power of influence for various purposes are becoming clear. In particular, the influence of ideologies formed on the basis of a system of various destructive ideas is increasing and serves as an ideological program for some political forces. At the same time, certain changes are taking place in the system of traditional ideological views under the influence of globalization processes.

Discussion

In the post-1980s and 1950s, the ideology of conservatory ideas in the world increased interest in the world. That is, the role of conservative ideas in the new world order has increased, and its influence on the development of internal and external political strategies of certain countries has increased. In particular, conservatism is one of the biggest ideological currents that has taken its place in the world's ideological landscape.

In the dictionary sense, the word “conservatism” (lat. *conservatisme*) means “to save”, “to protect”. Conservatism appeared in the 18th century as a representative of the interests of secular and ecclesiastical feudals, various social strata that are leaving the scene of history, and are longing for the future, a defender of the idea of the inviolability of divine orders, and an ideology condemning liberalism.

Russian researcher S. Shestakov's dissertation abstract states that “Conservatism as a political-ideological phenomenon was initially formed in the West, more precisely, in the Anglo-Saxon cultural and historical space. Therefore, the study of conservatism in Great Britain, the United States and other Western countries is characterized by a long and stable tradition” [3;3].

The analysis of the phenomenon of tradition is an important theoretical aspect of understanding the nature of the ideology of conservatism. That is, it can be said that conservatism is based on a certain tradition, and this has been the main and supporting principle of any national conservatism.

Another Russian researcher, G.I. Tronina, states in his research: “Today, many scientists and politicians are referring to the experience of conservatism as an ideology suitable for the conditions of the reforming country” [6;4]. Because the ideas of nation, strong statehood, stability, religion, family, social order, legality, guaranteeing rights and freedoms are gaining special importance in the current era.

By the time after the Second World War, in the course of understanding and critical analysis of conservative political practice in Western countries, attention was paid to the absorption of conservatism experiences and the high potential of conservatism in ensuring social and political stability.

Political conservatism is an integral part of political life in any country and has been an important ideological factor in the socio-political, economic and spiritual development of many countries from the 18th-19th centuries until today. Despite the high potential of conservatism in organizing and managing the political system, as a political ideology it is characterized by its resistance to change.

In the textbook "Introduction to Political Science" by V.P.Pugachyov and A.I.Solovev, conservatism is defined as follows: "Conservatism, as a political ideology, is a protective system of mind that prefers the old to the new management system, political participation, attitude to the state, also has clear principles of attitude to social orders" [7;302].

According to many experts, the beginning of conservatism is associated with the publication of E. Burke's famous essay "Thoughts on the French Revolution" in 1790. From this period, the main values of conservatism were first theoretically justified and classified. The term "conservatism" first became popular in 1815 when it was introduced into scientific circulation by the French writer F.R.de Chateaubriand.

Q.Nazarov, one of Uzbekistan's leading scientists in the field of ideology, quoted in his book "Philosophy of Ideas", "The development of the ideas of conservatism has never been uniform and smooth. E. Burke writes about this in "Thoughts on the French Revolution": "First, religion is the basis of civil society and is higher than political and social activities; secondly, society is a product of historical development. If society needs change, these changes must be made gradually; thirdly, people's feelings are of great importance in social life; fourth, society should be above the individual. Therefore, the rights of a person are related to his duties; fifthly, any society, first of all, consists of various layers, groups and hierarchies of individuals; sixth, the existing management methods of society and the state are preferable to new, unused methods" [8].

According to some interpretations, "conservatism is a system of views on the world around us, a type of knowledge and political-ideological order. But it is not always associated with specific political parties, such as liberalism and social democracy. If attention is paid to the fact that conservatism includes various, sometimes conflicting ideas, concepts, doctrines and traditions" [9], in some definitions, it is emphasized that conservatism is a political ideology aimed at preserving historically formed moral and legal foundations, forms of state and social life[10].

In the views of the founders of conservatism, attention is paid to the fact that only a society based on a hierarchical system is natural and legitimate. If liberalism and socialism emerged as ideological and political currents of the bourgeoisie and the working class, it is very difficult to express a single and clear opinion about conservatism. In general, conservatism is characterized by a view of objective trends in socio-political and socio-economic development as a threat to the stability of ideas, ideals and values specific to the historically formed social system.

Thus, conservatism emphasizes the need to preserve traditional rules, norms, hierarchical authority, social and political systems, and institutions. If a choice between the individual and the community is necessary, conservatism is dominated by the primacy of the community and the steadfast belief that the community is historically, morally, and logically superior to the individual.

Researcher D.Muller points out that there are three main approaches to defining political conservatism in modern political and philosophical sciences: value-based, situational, and clearly historical[11;3]. Commenting on the main approaches in his research, he says, "Supporters of the value-based approach, such as D.Allen, K.Lenk, and F.Stall, see conservatism as an immutable ideology defined by absolute values that always apply. D.Allen considers the basis of values, including the idea of conservatism, to be a set of ideas such as a negative attitude to the revolution, loyalty to the ideas of aristocracy and monarchy, clericalism, rejection of industrial development.

Proponents of the situational approach of conservatism - S. Huntington, F. Meyer and others define conservatism as a tendency to preserve the "status quo". In this approach, attention is paid to the need for social stratification in society, and to be skeptical about the human mind and nature. Traditionally, conservatism has been identified with the defense of the "status quo", the institutions, social structures, and values that exist in each specific historical period.

The third approach to the consideration of political conservatism is the concrete-historical approach, which focuses on trying to understand conservatism as a phenomenon of a new era, with the need to protect existing foundations from new trends in European social and political life" [11;3].

In conservatism, the state is embodied as the source and protector of law and morality. A strong state tradition is seen as a factor protecting the society from the influence of patriarchal rule. The rejection of these values is considered to be the main cause of all negative events in modern society. At the same time, conservatives mainly recognize the need for power and discipline as a guarantee of state stability.

In interpreting the role of the state in various spheres of social life, depending on the specific

circumstances, the positions of conservatives change. As existing structures change, so does the composition of conservatism. As R. Goodwin noted, "Conservatism is a kind of ideological chameleon, because its appearance depends on the nature of its enemy" [12;65]. In other words, the most important rules of conservatism were formed and are developing as a response to changes in opposite ideological and political directions.

In general, initially, conservatism was formed as a political-ideological doctrine reflecting the interests of the financial upper layer of society. In the field of politics, conservatism favors elite management, that is, power should be held by a group of people with the best professional training. Based on such a tradition, the organization of management and the determination of power is described as meritocracy, that is, the power of those who deserve to be managed.

In explaining the essence of conservatism, some researchers use the civilizational approach as a basis. In particular, the Russian researcher S. Shestakov sees conservatism as a phenomenon of civilization in a national and broad sense. In his opinion, "The main principle of conservative ideology is the principle of belief in tradition, and since every stable society (people, nations, civilizations) has its own tradition, it is necessary to assert that conservatism as an ideology exists only in its own form based on its own traditions in the space of a certain civilization. Each independent type of conservative ideology is defined by its own, unique set of principles and values. The principles and values of conservative ideologies belonging to different national and civilizational communities may be partially or completely incompatible" [3;6]. In our opinion, this approach can be the basis for evaluating the changing nature of conservative ideology. That is, it allows us to conclude that conservatism is a reliable ideological basis for the stability of a particular nation or civilization.

By the 19th century, conservatism attempted to become the ideological and political platform of the upper and middle classes of society by adopting some of the tenets of classical liberalism. The modern conservative doctrine is developing as a product of the synthesis of classical liberalism and conservative theory. In particular, it will be known that the synthesis of liberalism and conservative doctrines went through two main stages. First, conservatism and liberalism converged in the conditions of the complex socio-economic crisis that occurred in the early 1960s and 1970s in Western countries, and secondly, in the 1980s and 1990s, the conservative doctrine experienced the significant influence of liberalism while retaining its characteristics. Based on this, it can be said that in the conditions of global changes, conservatism cannot deny all transformation processes in society. Perhaps, as a result of social progress, serious changes were observed in the ideology of conservatism. Conservatives, like liberals, demanded to ensure the freedom of the market and competition, to limit the intervention of the state in the economy. In particular, in the second half of the 19th century and in the 20th century, conservatism adopted many important ideas and principles that were previously rejected. For example, free market relations, constitutionalism, representation of authorities and electoral system, parliamentarism, political and ideological pluralism. At the same time, conservatism, like liberalism, began to defend the values and institutions of industrialized society and to oppose state intervention in the economy because it could harm the interests of big business by slowing down the development of free markets and competition.

In this direction, conservatism underwent profound changes in the 1970s and 1980s. In this regard, in the history of the development of conservative ideas in the United States, one can see complementary and sometimes conflicting aspects. In the 1930s, the conservative wave in the United States was marked by the influence of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's policy of expanding the control functions of the state. Although the USA entered the 20th century with old liberal approaches, the political course of the country began to be determined by conservative principles. If after the First World War US conservatism succeeded in returning the country's foreign policy to traditional isolationism, then after the Second World War, the main foreign policy priorities were taken over by liberals. Conservatives had to reckon with the "Marshall Plan", the creation of NATO, and the international military participation of the United States. Because it became clear that it was impossible to conduct the "Cold War" without them.

Based on the analysis, it is known that the general view of conservatism as a political ideology is expressed in the following principles: the superiority of morality; traditionalism - social life should be based on past traditions, customs, and values; being suspicious of changes, not applying new reforms; political realism; social inequality; strong government; that politics is the work of professionals; the primacy of local

values, such as the belief that regions preserve past traditions and values.

The results of the analysis of conservatism show that, up to the present time, the definitions justifying and explaining the ideology of conservatism are different and are mainly related to a specific historical period, that is, the characteristics of time and space, the scope of established traditions and values, and political will. In our opinion, conservatism is a political ideology aimed at preserving the historically formed foundations of state and community life, incorporating stable values and lifestyles of certain nations and social groups.

“The most paradoxical situation in the current “conservative renaissance” is that conservatives are considered the initiators of change. The guarantee of their success lies in the fact that they proposed a strategy of change at the same time as the majority of voters in Great Britain and the United States, then in Germany, France and other countries, wanted radical changes. It is noteworthy that the promise of change was the basis of the election platforms of most conservative parties. The conservative vocabulary was filled with concepts such as “turn”, “change”, “reevaluation”, “new direction”, “renewal” [12;66]. In particular, new trends in the development of conservatism began to appear after the 50s of the 20th century, with the emergence of a new direction of conservatism in the USA - neoconservatism as a political-philosophical view. A feature of the development of his political views is that neoconservatism supported an interventionist approach aimed at protecting national interests. This ideological trend was formed in a specific response to the economic crisis of 1973-1974, youth protest movements in Western Europe, and the increasing influence of John Keynes's ideas.

The formation of neoconservatism in the USA began to occur in the combination of traditional conservatism and liberal ideas. That is, it is necessary to recognize the changes in the original conservative ideas. In this regard, American scientist B. Clark emphasizes that modern American conservatism emerged from the merger of classical liberalism and social conservatism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The term “neoconservatism” was used for the first time in 1973, in an article devoted to the welfare policy of the democratic-socialist M.Harrington in the “Dissent” magazine[13;31].

According to the results of the neoconservatives' research on socio-economic problems in the 1960s, the central idea in the neoconservative worldview was to justify the lack of system of liberal politics, to resolve the idea of a unified America. In particular, the American researcher Amitay Etzioni explains the causes of the crisis of conservative traditions and the formation of a new ideological current. Only in recent years has the conservative school begun to return to its historicity. The concept of “neoconservatism” was introduced to distinguish the new conservative spark from its predecessors[14;21].

To date, in the analyzes of modern ideological currents, there have been different interpretations regarding the content and ideological basis of neoconservatism. Notably, most of the research on this trend is directly related to US neoconservatism. This is due to the fact that, as a political ideology, it affects the formation of political systems and power structures around the world, but in the last few decades, it has been clearly distinguished by its influence and role in the formation of US state administration, in particular, domestic and foreign policy. In other words, it is customary to understand “US neoconservatism” as a political ideological current.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of political conservatism, the following conclusions were reached:

firstly, conservatism appears as a political ideology formed on the basis of national development traditions of states;

secondly, in the ideological evolution of conservatism, there is a tendency of its convergence and integration with liberal ideas;

thirdly, the development of the ideology of conservatism is manifested in national models based on the traditions of political development and political culture;

fourthly, the main conservative ideals such as tradition, natural inequality, faith, strong government have always attracted people in political-ideological competition in society;

fifthly, at the current stage, the tendency to turn to the principles of conservative ideology is increasing, and its main principles are primarily social stability, respect for traditional state institutions, recognition of private property, loyalty to traditional values, national unity and patriotism, religion and family foundations. at the same time, the practice of social reforms contrary to radical revolutionary movements is supported;

sixth, the influence of liberal ideas and views can be seen in modern interpretations of the doctrine of conservatism. It is observed that the representatives of this stream, which denied the idea of socio-economic equality for almost two hundred years, accepted principles such as universal suffrage, social protection of citizens, rights and freedoms of the individual formed under liberalism;

seventhly, neoconservatism was formed as a destructive ideological-political trend, based on the idea of preserving the integrity of the United States and the superiority of the socio-political traditions specific to the United States, incorporating the principles of harsh political decision-making and the priority of national interests;

Eighthly, neoconservatism was considered as a system of ideological programs that can lead society out of crisis and it seeks to manifest the advanced ideas of traditional conservatism, liberalism and other ideologies. On this basis, its manipulative properties are also manifested. So, neoconservatism appeared not as an absolutely new ideological current, but as a renewed conservatism.

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