

EXPERIENCE OF DEMOCRATIC STATES WITH DEVELOPED SOCIAL COOPERATION

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the experience of democratic states where social cooperation has developed. Social cooperation arose in connection with the unification of the working class in trade unions and their struggle for their rights. It has acquired different characteristics in different cultures and historical contexts. Western scientists have actively studied this phenomenon in the context of industrialization and democratization of society. Social cooperation is designed to regulate the interests of various social groups and encourage cooperation, not conflict.

Keywords: cooperation, association, rights, cultures, order, promotion, active.

World history and experience show that social cooperation was formed in those times when the working class began to unionize, and their first trade unions began to appear. Until then, employers had the opportunity to impose their desired conditions on the working people.

Social cooperation is formed in its own way, based on the spatial and temporal relationships of each society. In this respect, although the theory and practice of social cooperation in Eastern and Western societies have common sides, there are also differences and identities between them [1].

The idea of cooperation has manifested itself differently in different periods of the past, depending on each historical situation and reality. In parallel, it also embodied the mental characteristics characteristic of Western and Eastern peoples: if Homer's hero, Odysseus, seeks happiness in an individual way through personal wanderings, then the hero of Alisher Navoi, Farhad, sees his happiness in mutual respect, social cooperation, and love between many people, independent of nationality, language, religion, and geographical space.

Foreign scientists, in particular A. Smith and G. Spencer, have extensively studied this topic. According to research by Russell and others [2], while cooperation intensified with the formation of an industrialized society in the West and its entry into a period of democratic development, the interdependence of social partnership in research became more comprehensive. Foreign sociologist specialists, such as V. Vasovich, D. Gorovis, H. Lins, A. Stepan, M. Notturmo, and S. Huntington, explored the problems of social partnership in terms of the democratization of society [3]. With the advent of early trade unions, capitalists began to have difficulty exerting their unilateral beneficial advantage. As a result, they were forced to show some side pressures on hired workers.

In different Western countries, first bilateral cooperation, then tripartite, developed differently. Nevertheless, they also had common characteristics.

Let's consider the three main common models of social cooperation, based on the level of negotiation processes. The first model is common in Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Belgium in Northern Europe. In these countries, the state actively participated in labor relations and their management. Additionally, three levels of cooperation are important in this model: nationwide, network, and finally enterprise-institution. For example, in Belgium, a National Council for Labour operates at a nationwide level. It includes an equal number of

participants from all three partners. The state also assumes a legislative function. At the enterprise-institution level, however, issues are dealt with in a two-way manner: employer and trade union.

During the world economic crisis of 1929-1933, tripartite cooperation spread widely, especially in Western countries. According to experts, it was thanks to this event that social stability was maintained in many countries [4].

The second model is distinguished by its singular level focus, at the enterprise-institution level, where a collective agreement is concluded. This model is found in Canada, the United States, Japan, and Latin American countries. Employers' associations, like trade unions, attempt to exert their influence on the legislative process through their representatives [5].

The third model, characteristic of Central Europe (Germany, Austria, and other countries), can be thought of as a connecting ring between the first and second models. In this model, social collaboration focuses on the network level. One of the forms of implementation of such a model is the "model" contract. Such a contract, typically concluded in the industry, acts as a model for others.

Particular attention should be paid to the development of social cooperation at the level of the European Union. The EU applies the first, threefold model. In a 1992 communiqué signed in Maastricht by EU social partners (excluding the United Kingdom), the union recognized employers and workers' enterprises as partners who coordinate its measures [6].

The model of tripartism was approved under the presidency of the UN at a meeting on the topic of social development in Copenhagen in 1995. During this conference, it was noted that social progress could not be achieved solely by relying on the market mechanism. Full employment and the fight against poverty were defined as the main tasks, with a reliance on "Human Resource Development." [7]

It's a state's duty to protect the interests of the working people, a principle reflected in several international documents. For instance, the Social Charter, adopted by the Council of Europe in 1961, stipulated that countries must uphold the following rights [8]:

- Right to work;
- Right to fair incentives;
- Right to work and rest under decent conditions;
- The right to unite and conclude collective agreements.

The basic principles of tripartite cooperation are also echoed in many recommendations of the International Labor Organization. For example, at its 1960 general conference, the ILO recommended a Tripartite Consultative system for member countries, applicable both nationwide and at the sectoral level.

In 1998, Denmark initiated an international conference attended by about thirty countries from Europe, America, and Asia. This gathering discussed social cooperation with a focus on models that ensure the social well-being of the population in the third millennium. Issues such as unemployment rate reduction, specialist training, social population protection, and increased corporate social responsibility were central to discussions. There are three specific models of cooperation, based on worker representation in various processes:

Trade Union Representation: Here, trade unions legally represent even non-union laborers. This model is prevalent in countries like the United States, Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Ireland.

Pure Representation Model: In this approach, the labor team elects representatives to the enterprise board. These representatives negotiate directly with employers. Such a model is observed in Spain, Greece, and Portugal [9].

Mixed Representation Model: In this model, labor-elected councils also include employer representatives, which broadens their powers. This method is typical for countries like Belgium, Denmark, and Ireland.

The years of experience with social cooperation in foreign countries attest to its effectiveness, making it a factor of social stability and progress. Now, focusing on the peculiarities of social cooperation in the Russian Federation:

First Identity: The introduction of social cooperation indicates a weakening of state power monopoly, replaced by a union of other institutions, such as trade unions and entrepreneurs.

Second Identity: The launch of the social cooperation mechanism requires a slew of legal instruments.

Third Identity: In conditions of limited stability, a trilateral cooperation agreement becomes crucial.

Fourth Identity: The role of the state in social cooperation remains debated: does it act as an intermediary among partners, or does it function as an employer [10]?

Fifth Identity: During the Russian transition, “employment-promoting coordinating committees” in centers and places held special powers due to high unemployment.

Sixth Identity: High levels of corruption among public officials and increasing economic crimes hinder social cooperation progress.

Seventh Originality: The subjects of social cooperation, still forming and unstable, are significant obstacles to its development.

Knowledge about social cooperation has been evolving since ancient times. This concept has always encompassed visions of societal ideals and has become a “strategy” for public behavior and specific social actions. Today, social cooperation is also a global process that aligns with economic, political, and cultural shifts in society.

During the era of the former regime, the notion of social cooperation wasn’t a focus. According to Soviet ideology, the theoretical studies conducted by Western researchers on social cooperation were dismissed as “works of capitalist madmen” and were seen as merely “compromises.” Such perspectives supposedly undermined Marxian theories of classes and class struggle, replacing them with the “concept of Labor and capital cooperation.” In essence, this concept was perceived as a reactionary-utopian idea crafted to fit the bourgeois social order.

Interestingly, the concept of social cooperation as a societal phenomenon began to be studied in Western countries in the latter decades of the 20th century. In Uzbekistan, it gained attention post-independence, starting in the 1990s. While foundational ideas and rules related to compromise, cooperation, and community have been reflected in the works of Eastern and Western thinkers, mechanisms for their practical implementation remained largely unexplored.

From a sociological standpoint, social cooperation entails relationships between equal social entities capable of mutual agreement within a defined civil society. Such cooperation doesn’t manifest if relationships are purely hierarchical or administrative. Consequently, state initiatives aiming to bolster social cooperation are essentially endeavors to build a more robust civil society. Historically, in developed countries, groundwork

was laid for social consensus. Labor unions began to gain legal recognition, labor legislation evolved, and negotiation mechanisms between employers and trade unions started taking shape.

Social cooperation facilitates a balance in realizing the paramount socio-economic interests of primary societal groups. It symbolizes profound transformations in society as a whole and the evolving state of its varied social groups. As the market economy emerges from societal evolution, the development of social cooperation ties closely to the economic, social, political, and spiritual maturation of society.

As the first president of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, noted in his lecture, “further deepening democratic reforms in our country and the concept of civil society development,” amplifying the role of NGOs and other civil institutions is pivotal for society’s democratization and its integration into the global community.

The years of independence marked a rapid rejuvenation and growth of civil society institutions, garnering wide public support. At this contemporary stage, reinforcing the role of NGOs and other civil society establishments is crucial for democratization, molding a civil society, and integrating Uzbekistan into the global fold. In this context, it’s imperative to ensure the transparency and efficiency of ongoing reforms, execute socio-economic development agendas, resolve social challenges, and delineate the relationship between non-profit organizations and state entities.

Most developed countries have instituted clear regulatory frameworks for the efficient operation of the social cooperation system. Emphasizing social partnership, it is perceived as fostering mutual collaboration between society’s three sectors – public entities, commercial organizations, and NGOs (often termed the “first,” “second,” and “third” sectors). Collaboration and joint efforts of these sectors are pivotal in addressing significant social challenges, driving towards consensus, and subsequently ensuring societal stability, progress, and effective socio-economic development.

Of course, each of the three sectors, whose names are mentioned, has a unique understanding of its responsibility for solving problems and possesses different opportunities and reserves. As previously noted, the passage of the Social Partnership Act was a significant step toward fostering the growth of civil society institutions.

Civil society institutions, like NGOs, are vested in a social partnership-based cooperation with government bodies. Through this, they achieve effective outcomes in the realization of the rights and freedoms of their members or specific population layers they target.

Civil society institutions underpin the grassroots development of democracy, working to bridge the gap between the state and individual citizens [11].

This law is intended to amplify the influential mechanisms of social partnership, bringing together non-profit organizations (NGOs), public authorities, and businesses in this domain. Some tangible forms of this collaboration include establishing commissions on social partnership, facilitating information exchanges on socially significant matters, conducting mutual consultations and negotiations, and executing targeted socio-economic development programs. One effective modality of social partnership is the creation of commissions at various administrative levels. These commissions address socially significant challenges, developing and executing socio-economic programs, and enhancing civic activity and workability.

The experience from foreign countries highlights the pivotal role of formal agreements in the realm of social partnership. Particularly in the labor sector, continuous assessment of trade union activities is paramount. Trade unions often remain as mere observers, and thus, the need to revisit organizational norms becomes evident.

These structures should define the rights and obligations of all parties involved in social cooperation, emphasizing the roles of NGOs, public authorities, and business entities. It is crucial to set up public and state control mechanisms and hone influential strategies for the collaboration of social cooperation entities.

The concept of “social partnership” denotes harmonious interactions. When conflicts emerge between employers and employees, the essence of social partnership is to mediate and ensure equity, guiding citizens through market relations dynamics. Furthermore, social partnership endorses political power while considering the economic dimensions.

At the dawn of Uzbekistan’s independence, the diversification of property forms, beyond state-owned assets, was already being championed. Equal rights-based social partnerships between various stakeholders were underscored. As property forms diversified, societal stability was bolstered, and democratic institutions took root.

The middle class represents individuals with average income levels. While there may be disparities within this category, they generally share comparable consumption and property expenses. The emergence of a robust middle class mitigates social tensions and strengthens the societal foundation, facilitating the attainment of social consensus.

From the outset of our nation’s independence, bridging the urban-rural divide has been an integral facet of social cooperation. To assist rural entrepreneurs with legal, technical, and financial challenges, there has been an emphasis on establishing consultancy firms and ensuring robust informational support. Furthermore, to enhance the rural service sector, a comprehensive concept was crafted, considering the profound economic reforms the Republic was undergoing.

Over the years, institutional modifications and reforms have amplified the contribution of the non-state, non-governmental sector to the economy. This sector now produces a significant portion of industrial and agricultural outputs and employs a vast segment of the population.

Today, efforts are being directed towards forming stable relationships among subjects of social cooperation to address socially significant issues. Assistance is provided to NGOs in executing their socially beneficial initiatives and to promote the development of civic actions. The recent adoption of the law “on the openness of the activities of public authorities and governing bodies” aims to bolster the responsibility of these entities in enhancing the quality of decision-making. This law fosters transparency in their activities relating to social cooperation and bolsters citizens’ trust.

Practical efforts are in progress to cultivate a system of public oversight, refine the current mutual action models of social cooperation, and devise new ones. A focus is on developing civil society institutions that represent the interests of the youth, women, those with disabilities, and others in need of social protection. The goal is to launch programs that defend their rights and legitimate interests, thereby facilitating expanded collaboration.

Learning from international experiences, special emphasis is placed on crafting an environment conducive to an effective system of social cooperation. This system should ensure the protection of the rights, freedoms, and interests of diverse population segments, while balancing the interests of social partnership stakeholders. Ensuring transparency and open decision-making processes by state bodies and their officials is imperative. Achieving mutual understanding and harmony between state bodies and civil institutions can significantly mitigate social discord.

Public oversight in the domain of social cooperation is spearheaded by non-profit organizations and business entities. Their activities range from studying social sentiments and collaborating with the media to suggesting improvements for the workings of state bodies. State officials assist by promoting non-violence initiatives and

ensuring the populace is informed about the outcomes of public oversight. Such organizations also monitor the execution of socio-economic development programs and the targeted utilization of the state budget and designated state funds.

Agreements in the realm of social partnership are formulated to foster collaboration among public authorities, NGOs, and business entities. The objective of these agreements is the collaborative development and execution of socio-economic policies and programs, resolution of societal issues, and protection of the rights, freedoms, and interests of various population groups.

Such agreements can be bilateral or trilateral [12]. Tripartite partnerships involve the state, employers, and employees. This arrangement is premised on the principles of voluntarism, autonomy, and equality of all parties involved.

During negotiations, aspects such as working conditions, labor remuneration, social protection for employees, and other essential facets are mutually agreed upon. The consensus reached is then formalized through relevant contracts and agreements [13].

Broader agreements delineating overarching socio-economic policy principles can be established between major trade unions, industry chambers, and, if proposed by the involved parties, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Territorial accords, which address specific socio-economic challenges tied to regional characteristics, are formed with the involvement of trade unions, employers, and local executive bodies. The Labor Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan and other legal documents prescribe the procedure for these collective negotiations, their formalization, and subsequent implementation.

Social cooperation might, at times, encompass political partnership, wherein numerous political entities, such as political parties and trade unions, are deemed as social structures. Political cooperation defines the relationships among political institutions, public movements, and their leaders. This form of cooperation seeks to acknowledge, align, and actualize the interests of various political stakeholders. In this context, political entities, be they parties or movements, along with diverse participants, emerge as partners in the political landscape.

Justice is at the core of the SDP's pre-election Action Program, reflecting the broader commitment to social justice. The focus is on expanding social cooperation and fostering partnership and cooperation among members of society and organizations within the party's electorate. Today, the party's primary objective, especially its Deputy Corps and faction, is to encourage business (both commercial and entrepreneurial) structures to enhance their collaboration with the party and to solidify social cooperation.

Political leaders hold a pivotal role in political cooperation. The trajectory of political cooperation largely hinges on their competence, maturity, accessibility, and their ability to prioritize the broader social and public interest over their individual political aims. Recognized as independent entities under international law, national states, and international organizations (like UNESCO, Unido, IAEA, BST, ILO, BSST, etc.) can also play significant roles as partners in this arena. Their collaborative ventures aim to uphold peace, ensure stability, and foster a comprehensive system of international collaboration and ties.

An intriguing concept worthy of analysis is "Fordism," which offers a unique perspective on the management and regulation of social processes. This term can be traced back to Henry Ford, the renowned American entrepreneur known for promoting "mass production for mass consumption." The term "Fordism" was later popularized by political figure Antonio Gramsci. At its core, "Fordism" posits three foundational pillars of societal power: organized labor in the form of trade unions, capital as represented by entrepreneurial associations, and a state committed to the "general welfare." These foundations collectively ensure that the

underprivileged sectors of society are catered to through various means such as assistance programs, collective labor agreements, and provision for pensions, medical services, and training.

The concept of corporatism also finds a place within the broader theory of social partnership. This principle embodies the pursuit of societal stability achieved through optimal harmonization of interests across significant societal forces—including the political elite, military, service sectors, trade unions, and youth and women's organizations.

In earlier times, principles of compromise prevailed over antagonistic viewpoints. As societies evolved, the emphasis shifted more towards consensus-building, not just acknowledging the validity of opposing perspectives but also embracing them as integral to social progress. True consensus isn't just about reaching a midway agreement; it's about collaborative efforts towards a shared objective, considering diverse viewpoints. Such a consensus, achieved through mutual dialogue and consultation, contributes to a culture where agreement and compromise thrive. Politics, inherently, demands compromise, especially when addressing pressing societal challenges. The aim is not just to meet objectives, but to forge solutions that are widely acceptable. This ethos underpins the policy of social partnership, which endeavors to navigate and mitigate conflicts through civilized and equitable relations.

Historically, under previous regimes, social group dynamics were interpreted through the lens of class struggle. One class's gain was perceived as another's loss. In contrast, contemporary thought promotes inter-category cooperation or what's globally termed as "social cooperation." [14] This principle has been incrementally realized, and several insights can be gleaned from its manifestation in developed nations. Firstly, formalized cooperative relationships emerged considerably later by almost half a century compared to previous models. Secondly, a universally agreed-upon definition of "social cooperation" remains elusive. Various scholarly works often offer a narrow interpretation of "cooperation," restricting its scope solely to certain social phenomena. Comprehensive definitions are sparse, leading to subjective interpretations heavily influenced by individual scholarly perspectives.

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