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Education, Plurality of Truths and Antinomy of Post-democracy

Prof. Thomas Hauer, Ph.D.

Department of Pedagogical Studies
Faculty of Humanities at the University of Žilina
Univerzitná 8215/1, 010 26 Žilina, Slovakia
thauer777@gmail.com

Abstract: *What exactly does it mean to educate in a world where there is a plurality of forms of rationality? How is the transmission of knowledge aligns with the current cultural relativism, a plurality of truths about the world? The term "post-democracy" has recently appeared in sociology and political theory as a part of effort to grasp late modern pathologies of liberal democracy conceptually and defining them critically. This term was probably used for the first time by a political theorist Jacques Rancière. In his book Disagreement he devoted one whole chapter to consensual democracy or "post-democracy". He observes that post-democracy denotes a paradox that in the name of democracy emphasizes consensual practice of suppressing the display of political action. Post-democracy represents governmental practice and conceptual legitimization of democracy after the demonstrations, it is democracy that has eliminated performing as well as numerical errors and disputes among the people, and it is therefore reducible to the interaction of state mechanisms in itself and to the combination of energies and interests of the society. This diagnosis corresponds with sociological observations by Colin Crouche, as described in his book called Post-democracy. The study analyses Crouche's texts, presents the interpretation of the main propositions of his theory and their relationship to the general theory and education.*

Keywords: *education, post-democracy, liberalism, egalitarian, firms, democratic institutions, disagreement.*

Post-Democracy differs from democracy itself. In "post-democracy," a direction towards which Crouch argues Western democracies have been moving for the past several decades, elections are held and governments change, and all of the formal orders of democracy are in place. "In most of Western Europe and North America, we had our democratic movement around the mid-point of the twentieth century: slightly before the WW11 in North America and Scandinavia; soon after it for many other''. He continues by giving emphasis that. " By then, not only had the final great movements against democracy- Fascism and Nazism- been defeated in a global war ,but also political change moved in (…) with a major economic development which made possible the realization of many democratic goals.'' C. Crouch. (Crouch 2004, p. 7).

However, the form is misrepresented by the substance. And to understand it better he makes a better model which helps in the better understanding of what is perceived as 'post-democracy.'

"The idea of 'post-' is thrown around rather easily in contemporary debate: post-industrial, post-modern, post-liberal, post-ironic. However, it can mean something very precise. Essential is the idea mentioned above as the parabola through which the thing being attached to the 'post' can be seen as moving. This will be true whatever one is talking about, so let us first talk abstractly about 'post – X'. Time period 1 is pre-X, and will have certain characteristics associated with lack of X. Time period 2 is high tide of X, when many things are touched by it and changed from their state in time 1. Time period 3 is post-X. This implies that something new has come into existence to reduce the importance of X by going beyond it in some sense; something will therefore look different from both time 1 and time 2. However will still have left its mark; there will be strong traces of it still around; while some things start to look rather like they did in time again. 'Post-' periods should therefore be expected to be very complex.(If the above seems too abstract, the reader can try replacing 'X' by 'industrial' every time it occurs, to have the point illustrated with very prominent example). Post-democracy can be understood in this way. At one level, the change associated with it gives us a move *beyond* democracy to form a political responsiveness more flexible than the confrontations that produced the ponderous compromises of the mid-century years" (Crouch 2004, pp.20 - 21).

C. Crouch feels that what was important was (Crouch 2004, p. 2) "a need to restore confidence in stock markets, and that was the most important than ensuring that the verdict of the majority was truly

discovered.'' And whose details are determined through behind-the-scenes interaction, here between elected officials, elites, and business interests. New elections may come, and the voters may have discrepancies throw out the old and vote in the new; however, the policy differences between the old and new political coalitions will be slight if at all the same. The deference toward corporate interests will remain, and little effort will be laid out in challenging the status of already existing affairs and the existing structures of power that govern the society. In the mind of the politician, the elections maintains the current status of affairs and provide a mandate for their platform—a tragic irony when all major political parties platforms come together and agrees on certain positions that the public opposes (e.g. lowering the corporate income tax, reducing Social Security benefits).

The term "post-democracy" has recently appeared in sociology and political theory as a part of effort to grasp late modern pathologies of liberal democracy conceptually and defining them critically. This term was probably used for the first time by a political theorist Jacques Rancière (Rancière 1999, p. 177). In his Disagreement (Rancière 1999, pp. 95–121) he devoted one whole chapter to consensual democracy or "post-democracy". He observes that post-democracy denotes: "... a paradox that in the name of democracy emphasizes consensual practice of suppressing the display of political action. Post-democracy represents governmental practice and conceptual legitimization of democracy after the demonstrations, it is democracy that has eliminated performing as well as numerical errors and disputes among the people, and it is therefore reducible to the interaction of state mechanisms in itself and to the combination of energies and interests of the society." (Rancière 1999, pp. 101–2)

This diagnosis corresponds with sociological observations by Colin Crouche, as described in his book called Post-democracy, until the formal aspect of democratic institutions is more or less preserved, the politics and the government gradually lapse into the rule of the privileged groups again, reminding of the pre-democratic period (Crouch 2004, p. 6). Elections and election discussions that still have the power to change governments, are being transformed into "strictly controlled show, organized by professional experts and limited to a few topics chosen by these experts, while most inhabitants have only been assigned a passive role." Behind this façade – however, not outside the visual field – "the politics on the basis of the interaction between the elected governments and elites, predominantly representing commercial interests, is formulated in privacy" (Crouch 2004, p. 4). Marx's formerly scandalous proposition that the governments are purely sales representatives of international capital, is nowadays undisputable reality that both 'liberals' and 'socialists' agree on. Absolute identification of politics with administration of the capital is no longer an outrageous mystery concealed by various 'types' of democracy, but openly declared truth that this is the way our governments acquire legitimacy. (Rancière 1999, p. 113)

The contrast between the democratic ideal and post-democracy reflects on an underlying tension between egalitarian democracy and liberal democracy. During the Cold War, the United States actively sought to equate democracy with its own form of liberal democracy. Egalitarian democracy is that of maximalist participation, "when there are main opportunities for the mass of ordinary civilians to participate through discussion and independent organizations, in shaping the agenda of public life, and when they are actively using these opportunities" (Crouch 2004, p. 2).

In an egalitarian democracy, According to thefreedictionary.com is a trend of thought that favors equality for all people. Egalitarian doctrines maintain that all humans are equal in fundamental worth or social status. The Cultural theory of risk holds egalitarianism as defined by:

- A negative attitude towards rules and principles.
- A positive attitude towards group decision-making, with fatalism termed as its opposite.) The informed and engaged public comes together through means of deliberation to identify new problems or discover new identities and organizes around them to effect change through legislative means. Liberal democracy, Liberal democracy when defined in simple terms is a form of government in which representative democracy operates under the principles of liberalism, i.e. protecting the rights of minorities and, especially, the individual. It is characterized by fair, free, and competitive elections between political parties and into in to different branches of government. On the other hand, de-emphasizes this spirit of democracy and emphasizes electoral participation as the main type of mass participation, wide freedom for lobbying activities (which always means business interests), as emphasized by C. Crouch "…cooperate lobbies shows no signs of losing interest in using the state to achieve favors for themselves" (Crouch 2004, p.19). And these also

extends limited circumstances in a capitalist economy. The difference also designate from that of positive and negative citizenship and positive and negative rights. Positive citizenship that of organizing, deliberating, and making demands emphasizes positive rights such as the right to vote, the right to form a union, the right to an education, and the right to accurate information. Negative citizenship, that of complaint and allocation of blame, stresses negative rights, e.g. the right to sue and the right to property, instead.

Crouch describes the movement of democratic politics as a parabola, rather than a circle reverting to the Gilded Age. We have, as he sees it, passed the peak of democracy, which he locates in mid-century (the New Deal era for the U.S., the post-war period for the U.K). Democratic politics have lost their energy even though there have still been concrete advances over time, most notably the increased participation of women which is in the contrary how it used to be initially. Crouch explains the condition of women as guardians of the family, who had non work sphere, and were actually less inclined than men to shape their political outlook with reference to political outlook. The women that time and democracy did not go together as they participated less organizations of all kinds. They always went to the church, and participated in church activities. Threatening these advances are the reappearance of pre-democratic features like corporate privilege; only now they come dressed in distinct of markets and free competition. In un-democratic societies openly talk about social classes. Today's post-democracy denies their existence. Analysis would have revealed these classes, although almost perceive ourselves, or cannot be included in certain classes.

In the early days of democracy were different classes among themselves clearly separated poorest working class sought to combine, to form trade unions and participate in the political development of the country. This class was gradually growing and spreading and its prosperity. Working class became a class, to which all political parties built their political agenda and fight elections. Its peak working class and thus democracy achieved in the second half of the 20th century. Since then, the political agenda has narrowed only to protectionist protect the working class, caused by the change in technology and de-industrialization in all countries. After all Crouch continues "the political rise of the manual working class was similarly accompanied by the growing independence of the economy on its consumption of power." Other professions and social classes that were always better conditions than the manual working class has become today a heterogeneous majority, who can no longer define their social identity and are unable to pursue their interests as a class of workers, which was from the beginning of the social hierarchy at the very bottom." … it is in relationship to them that manipulative politics is most used; the group itself remains largely passive and lacks political autonomy" (Crouch, 2004, p. 63). Man activity in public life was granted. For the last 40 years, however, women began to assert themselves in jobs but the problem experience or as a challenge was " although large numbers of women had joined the workforce during the past thirty years, the majority have done so part time, so their particular connection to the domestic sphere has not been disturbed." (Crouch 2004, p.61). Initially only part-time jobs. However enforce their demands as women were always more difficult for them than for men because they express their feminine vision meant stand up against the male , which was previously only a natural course. In managerial positions in the fields, in all movements and organizations were only men and women had their problems gradually enforced. Poorly enforced mainly married women in the event of a conflict in work and society essentially acted against his men. Greatest success in promoting the interests of women should therefore mainly liberal and feminist women and focused organization. Crouch elaborates further in "gradually too the political system started to respond and produce policies addressed to women's expressed concerns in a diversity of ways," and the situation began to change and women were beginning to promote their power in all areas. (Crouch 2004, p.62)

The key institution of the post-democratic world is the global firm. These are corporations that have outsourced all substantial tasks, focusing on the global movement of their brand assets and the electronically traded value of their shares. Beautiful epigram: "Having a core business itself becomes a rigidity" (Crouch 2004, p. 37). Not surprisingly governments tried to mimic this organizational pattern that they envied by outsourcing their core competencies. The result is ridiculous, but more sad than funny: "Government becomes a kind of institutional idiot, its every ill-informed move being anticipated in advance and therefore discounted by smart market actors." (Crouch 2004, p. 41) This explains the paradoxical "return to corporate political privilege under the slogan of markets an free competition." (Crouch 2004, p. 51). In Crouch's narrative, the rise of the firm has both a correlative and causative relationship with another factor driving the trajectory of post-democracy: the decline of

the manual working class. This comes as no surprise as Crouch has written about a "parabola of working-class politics" in the past and the working-class especially the trade unions had traditionally been the constituency and funding source of centre-left parties. The ties between trades union and the parties of the centre-left were always much stronger.

The global firm, which increasingly diverges from the abstract firm of the economics textbook, is the key institutional (and institutional model) of the post-democratic world (Crouch 2004, p.32). Traces the history of the modern global firm to the collapse of the Keynesian paradigm in the 1970s, in which rapid technological change, intensifying global competition, and more demanding consumers threatened the previous stability of product markets leading to higher rates of corporate bankruptcy and unemployment as companies failed to adapt. This was coming just after bad condition of workers where Crouch explains. "Initially it seemed to be solely a device for reaping profits from owners and exploiting workers.'' This after caused a big difference between the successful and the unsuccessful became so visible and noticeable, social status fell and survival of the only reasonable successful firms could no longer be taken for granted. He continues that (Crouch 2004, p.32) "Lobbies and pressure groups working for the interest of the cooperate sector were more likely to be listened to, just as complain about draught from an invalid have to be taken more seriously than those from a healthy person.'' and Because of their instability businesses were able to get the ear of governments more easily than before. The governments simply never stopped listening, and the heightened competition of globalization ensured that the surviving firms were stronger and more assertive against both governments and workers. These new, stronger companies can use their global reach against the host governments by threatening to leave unless the government weakens labor laws, guts the public sector, or lowers taxes, and politicians are often not willing to call their bluff. In order to maximize flexibility, furthermore, such companies increasingly become (Crouch 2004, p. 35) "phantom firms," These were kind of firms which were functional entities yet invisible, like ghost banks. They were characterized by:

- rapid changes in identity through engagement in take-overs, mergers, and frequent re-organizations and
- The growing casualization of the workforce. Eventually, Crouch highlights, "having a core business itself becomes rigidity," and firms will out-source and sub-contract to maximize flexibility and mobility, leaving the firm in charge of brand management alone. The distance between management and labor grows ever larger (Crouch 2004, p. 37).

With the increased quality of the market ideal in society, governments have difficulty in sketching out public and private boundaries. Just as the "phantom firm" seeks to sub-contract its main operations, the government seek to contract out more and more of its own functions, leaving a shortage of expert knowledge that will only offer further justification for outsourcing government functions. Moving away from its past specializations, the state becomes an "institutional idiot" that sees its primary role as guaranteeing the freedom of markets. Moreover, there exists a clear parallel between the "phantom firm" and the post-democratic political party, which outsources its policies to business lobbies and increasingly focuses its attentions on the more theatrical side of politics. Microeconomic concept of the firm is that the firm is not only an organization, but it is also a concentration of power. As governments withdraw from their public spending, non-profit institutions those focusing on research, education, and culture increasingly turn to the corporate world for financial sponsorship and, of course, grow less likely or willing to challenge the status quo. Moreover, the interaction between government and business shifts from the relationship with employers' associations to relationships with individual corporate leaders whom the government celebrates as sources of expert knowledge. Since markets are not perfect, we cannot assume that successful firms had the best knowledge, and the rapidly changing nature of the world negates the possibility of perfect knowledge itself.

CONCLUSION

In his conclusion, Crouch addresses how the citizen should grapple with both the firm and the political party in the post-democratic age. In discussing corporate dominion, he notes that prior radicals would have called for the abolition of capitalism; a solution Crouch claims is no longer viable because no one has yet found a more effective alternative to promote product innovation and customer responsiveness. In lieu of abolition, he calls simply for the regulation and restraint of capitalist behavior as well as the establishment of new rules to prevent, or at least closely regulate, the flow of

money and personnel between parties, circles of advisers, and corporate lobbies. He likewise recommended re-establishing the concept of public service. First, stay alert to the potentialities of new movements which may at first seem difficult to understand, because they may be the bearers of democracy's future vitality. Second, work through the lobbies of established and new cause organizations because post- democratic politics works through Lobbies.

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AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Prof. Thomas Hauer, Ph.D., Department of Pedagogical Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Žilina, Slovakia,; main research field: Philosophy of Education, Postmodern Philosophy, Contemporary Philosophy, Philosophy of Technology, Ethics, and Philosophy of the 20th century.

The postmodern philosopher prof. Thomas Hauer is an author of a number works and studies on - postmodern philosophy, contemporary philosophy and philosophy of technology. The main results of his work can be seen four scientific books - Natural World and Postmodernism or Wandering is not Beating Around, Ostrava 1995, A Through Postmodern Theory, Prague 2002, Write Your Own Bookcase (or Language Vagabounds and Postmodern Public area), Prague 2002, Antropology, Dromology and Faith, Krakow 2012. Books can be considered as four different, but equally inspiring introductions to postmodernism.

Research fields: postmodern philosophy, contemporary philosophy, philosophy of technology, ethics, philosophy of the 20th century.