The Role of Participatory Culture in the Armenia's "Velvet" Revolution

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Abstract - In Armenia's political life the manifestations of participatory political culture have been observed since the 1990s. The civic activism conditioned by some events of various social and political significance and amplitude varied from low to high level and vice versa. Since the independence movement the cases of civic activism in Armenia, as an expression of participatory culture, were mainly directed against the current authorities and their policies, particularly they were characteristic of post-electoral processes in 1996, 2003, 2008, 2013 and other years.

The article explores the expressive political behavior of the Armenian society during 2018's revolutionary process in spring, based on the behavioral approach in political settings. Behavioral and comparative methods offer techniques for clarifying the theoretical meaning of concepts such as revolution and to make inferences that provide insights into the causes and consequences of revolutions. Summarizing the results of explored issues we concluded that the Armenian "Velvet" Revolution is a kind of revolutionary modernization with public large-scale support and civic participation based on expressive political behavior of citizens. It promoted the participatory political culture in the Armenian society raising it obviously to more stable level. This revolutionary process has created important prerequisites for Armenia's modernization, where civic participation became key factor. It is necessary to note that participatory culture consolidation must become the most important and sustainable precondition for political institutionalization and civic culture development in Armenia. To realize the values and ideals of revolutionary modernization in Armenia the political legitimacy institutionalization is needed.

Keywords - **Participatory Culture, Behavioral Methodology, Comparative Analysis, Revolutionary Moderinzation, Post-Soviet Transformation, Political Process, Legitimacy.**

I. THEORETICAL APPROACH TO ACTIVE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN ARMENIA

The study of masses' political behavior during revolutionary process is an essential issue of political science. A growing literature has focused attention on 'expressive' rather than 'instrumental' behavior in political settings, particularly voting. A common criticism of the expressive idea is that it is *ad hoc* and lacks both predictive and normative bite (Hamlin & Jennings, 2011, p. 645). It is important to note that some protests, as political turbulations by different frequency in Armenia, were more active during presidential elections. Nevertheless, it should be noted that over time the participatory culture of citizens has become a more stable political factor in Armenia, with certain stages of development being conditioned by the transition from chaotic participation to the systemic participation. An organized nature of participatory culture has already been noticeable in 2013 when during the post-election period, the protests of the opposition leader supporters continued to last for about two months. It should be noted that the participatory culture of citizens had both violent and non-violent forms of manifestations in Armenia, conditioned as well as with the logic of their initiators, and with the strong response of the opposing forces when the violence reached its peak in March 1 of 2008.

In the context of participatory culture, A. Alexanyan rightly points out that in case of sufficient cohesion the society gets real levers to prevent possible abuse by the

representatives of public authorities. That's why society's members need a political regime and a government that regulates relationships between the "sovereignty of everyone" and the "sovereignty of people" (Alexanyan, 2005, p. 33).

Certainly, the society cannot and should not always be in active state, because the transformations of passive and active situations are inevitable in social life. It is explained by the fact that the society is multidimensional and multilayered, and all institutions in different spheres of public life cannot always be active at the same level (Alexanyan, 2005, p. 39).

Participation is a central thematic whitin theories of democracy and points to questions of citizens' inclusion in decision making. Taking a broad historical sweep, it could be traced the genealogies of two intersecting fields: media participation and political participation, whitin the context of Western democracies. The history of participation in media organisations begins with the power struggles in print media organisations in the 17th nd 18th centuries, and continues into the 19th and 20th centuries, with the emergence of alternative media, and the rise of the internet.

The genealogy of political participation in an equally impressive account of struggles, setbacks and progress, and is inexorably linked to the establishment of democracy. Focusing on the 20th and 21th century it is important to highlight the democratic revolution and the establishment of civic cultures in both societal fields, and how they interlock and strengthen each other, contributing to the gradual structural transformation of Western societies (Carpentier & Pasquali & Dahlgren, 2014, pp. 123-141). These theoretical allegations based on practical experience also correspond to the case of Armenia. As in 2018, the success of the Armenian revolutionary process was largely due to the large volume of media and citizens' involvement. In that period the media coverage of political process was also stimulating civic participation and vice versa, which, in essence, ensured a mass mobilization among the people.

The participatory culture is a component of political culture. Some researchers misinterpret that Armenia has a typical post-Soviet political culture and for that, they put forward some arguments to substantiate this statement (Paturyan & Gevorgyan, 2016, p. 66). However, this statement is quite superficial. There is no commun post-Soviet political culture by the simple reason that post-Soviet countries are not homogeneous in this respect. There are many cultural, civilizational, ethnic, religious and other differences that are obviously justifiable grounds to not

unify all post-Soviet countries under the bearers of the same political culture. And what about political subcultures? How can the experience of Baltic post-Soviet countries be identified with the political culture of East Asian post-Soviet ones? These differences are clearly emphasized both in the political regimes' international indexes (for example, in the data of Nations in Transit by Freedom House) and in the results of some political researches (for example, in a joint study by T. Torosyan and H. Sukiasyan).

At the same time, the above-mentioned authors again misinterpret the lack of trust and dialogue between the parties because of that kind of political culture shaped in Armenia (Paturyan & Gevorgyan, 2016, p. 66). However, it should be noted that it is more accurate not to exclude the possibility of a dialogue but to notice that the basis of that distrust is not the lack of dialogue, but the imitation of political dialogue or the quasi-dialogue.

Due to the lack of political will on the part of the authorities, people resort to peaceful resistance in the streets, hoping to win there (Paturyan & Gevorgyan, 2016, p. 67). In this regard, it should be noted that in the case of former Armenian authorities there was not a lack of political will, there was a lack of political interest to lead the democratic changes in a good way.

Armenia's political culture is confused, and it seems that the time is not yet ripe for greater public participation and change. To achieve that aim, people hope that a civic initiative (advocating any cause) might develop into a massive political campaign (Paturyan & Gevorgyan, 2016, p. 68). Finally, this is what had happened in the case of "Velvet" revolution.

Until April-May of 2018 all manifestations and massive protests against the authorities in Armenia have not reached their final goals. However, the precursor of participatory culture, in essence, has shaped a more complete, organized and purposeful civic attitude that succeeded in spring of 2018, thanks to its collective and effective tactics and methods.

This popular movement called "Velvet Revolution" was the most effective demonstration of participatory culture in Armenia in terms of applied political technologies and achieved results, which proved that the sovereign is not the government, but the people itself. From this point of view it is important to explore the theoretical foundations and the practical experience of "soft" revolutions. This will let us to deeply understand the main reasons, the process, and the expected outcomes of the Armenian "Velvet" revolution.

The first attempt of Velvet Revolution in modern history (Czech: sametová revoluce) was made in Czechoslovakia in 1989 (Saxonberg, 1999, pp. 23-36). During that almost identical processes took place, which are comparable to the Armenian political developments in April-May of 2018. In Czechoslovakia, youth and students were more likely to participate in protests with peaceful disobedience (Konvička & Kavan, 1994, pp. 160-176). The violent actions of authorities shocked public opinion and contributed to its immediate mobilization. The demonstrators were lighting candles as a sign of silent protest. As a result, the "velvet" revolution led to the political independence in Czechoslovakia. The struggle was against the Communist Party. The participatory culture of citizens in these process had a crucial role, as it had in the case of Armenia.

Perhaps, it is particularly important to study the experience of other countries with similar political processes, which will help us to understand the realities of their sober approach and to draw appropriate conclusions.

II. COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO POST-SOVIET REVOLUTIONS

In the post-Soviet period, the reasons of revolutionary processes are largely conditioned by the logic to renounce the Soviet heritage and to ensure a democratic modernization. It is no coincidence that post-Soviet transformation was never seen as a continuation of the third wave of democratization, but was introduced as a totally different, independent process by the logic of its special political developments. And in the early 2000s, a number of post-Soviet countries began to experience revolutionary processes, which in some cases (in particular, in Ukraine) were held in several stages. In this context K. Kozłowski rightly mentions that the Colour Revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan have resulted in the regime change in all the three countries. However, from a decade-long perspective one may notice that the revolutionary changes in the political systems of Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan did not actually take place (Kozłowski, 2016, p. 135). It is important to understand that the final effect of the post-Soviet transformation was neither a Western democracy nor a Soviet or Asian authoritarian state. The post-Soviet political reality is not a straightforward reference to an absolute rupture with the past. It is an inherently new reality based on an innovative combination of the Western standards, local traditions and the Soviet heritage (Kozłowski, 2016, p. 140).

This approach can be substantiated according to L. Way's definition which points out that the fall of autocrats throughout postcommunist Eurasia between 1996 and 2005 did not always bring full-scale democracy (Way, 2008, p. 55).

Continuing his statement K. Kozłowski rightly notes that in each case the society had demonstrated radical disobedience to the ruling post-communist regime. However, after the regime change the new political elites did not represent the disappointed masses but adhered to the existing rules of political game and adapted to the existing political reality instead of changing it. This was possible because:

1) the place of citizens in the decision-making process was assumed by other political actors, who usurped the role of the political sovereign (the presidential elites in Georgia, the oligarchs in Ukraine, the clans in Kyrgyzstan);

2) the democratic institutions and rules of conduct were a façade covering the post-Soviet mechanisms promoting the then modes of thought (the central position of the presidential elites in Georgia, the paramount importance of the equilibrium between the oligarchs in Ukraine and between clans in Kyrgyzstan);

3) the idealised memory of the independence mixed with the rejuvenation of the ambitions of the civil society under slow formation left very little space for a genuine reflection on the true goals of the opposition leaders (in each case after just one term of office all the presidents were criticised for having abandoned or betrayed the ideals of the Colour Revolutions) (Kozłowski, 2016, p. 141).

The assessment of these risks is also crucial for the case of Armenia, as their neglect may also create a similar situation in our country as well. Hence, the maintenance and the institutionalization of citizens' active participatory culture in the face to develop sustainable civil society institutions can prevent the prospect of such developments in our country. Only an active civilian control can create direct democracy tools for the new government not to go beyond the ideals of the "Velvet" revolution.

The vision of the democratic Colour Revolutions was useful in the short run. The victory has borne fruit but not to the citizens who protested and democracy supporters. The new ruling elites assumed power, the West and Russia reorganised their areas of influence but the citizens were left alone (Kozłowski, 2016, p. 149). Therefore, the experience of post-revolutionary developments in color revolutions in

this regard can be definitely useful for Armenia to avoid the same mistakes.

Despite the fact that the revolutionary processes that have taken place in the post-Soviet space have been called "color revolutions" (Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004, and Kyrgyzstan in 2005 mainly because of external factor), however, the Armenian revolution of 2018, did not receive any "color" qualification. And the main reason for this was the absence of an external element in the Armenian revolutionary process. But even after the revolutionary process in the Armenian foreign policy, if not strategic, some tactical adjustments are still needed.

In this respect M. Kubiak rightly mentions that the Armenian *creeping revolution* have had predominantly internal character and included: crystallization of the oligarchic politico-economic system, lack of perspectives for the improvement in the economic sphere and last but not least – constantly rising potential for civic disobedience outbreak. At the same time it can be argued that external factors (e.g. growing animosity towards Russian Federation) did play minor role in the process, resulting in the fact that 2018 protests agenda lacked slogans which would relate to the geopolitical orientation of the country (Kubiak, 2018, p. 127). We have to note that the lack of external influence factor in the Armenian internal political process allows to argue why the revolution in Armenia could not have any similarities with the Ukrainian "Maidan". In this sense, the Armenian political practice was exceptional as a revolutionary process.

From this perspective the argumentations of the Armenian researchers A. Markarov and V. Davtyan on the external challenges of Armenian foreign policy could be useful. The authors rightly note that Armenia's foreign policy is highly determined by the regional geopolitical environment and the constant security threats it faces. These security threats will not go away under the new government. Armenia's deep and complex relations with Russia in various strategic areas limit Yerevan's room for maneuver to some degree. Nevertheless, Armenia is working to balance the interests of different regional players by focusing on the areas in which they have common interests. It is particularly important to develop political and economic dialogue with China that will, first and foremost, integrate Armenia into the "One Belt, One Road" economic initiative. This will enable Armenia to attract funds for the development of its strategic infrastructure, as well as to integrate into international geoeconomic processes (Markarov & Davtyan, 2018, p. 545).

Thus, the professionalism of the Armenian political elite should lay on the control and balancing of internal developments' influence on the foreign policy agenda. At the same time, some of the strict requirements for this professionalism are the correct evaluation of foreign political impulses as well as the development and aggregation of that information according to the national interests. Any inadequate assessment of external non-legal, political impulses on the internal legal process and our response to that can make a serious impact on the state sovereignty. If any problem is in the legal plane, foreign political assessments should be adopted with some reservations. It means that legal issues should not have ambiguous perceptions. Otherwise, if they are considered, the credibility of the justice system can be inadvertently moved to the field of suspicion and mistrust, and therefore, it will hinder the effective functioning of that system. The professionalism in foreign policy should be reflected in the balancing of impulses received from different vectors, considering them exclusively in the context of national interests of the Armenian state. External political impulses should not turn into interference in our internal affairs. Such political strategy will allow the state to rely on sovereignty and, as a result, strengthen the position of the state in the international arena, forcing other actors to consider Armenia as a full subject of international relations.

III. MAIN REASONS OF REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

Political regime peculiarities of post-Soviet countries, particularly in countries where "color" revolutions took place in the 2000s, were largely conditioned by a sharp authoritarian nature. This circumstance had a potential for revolutionary process launching in these countries.

In this context L. Way was rightly emphasizing that just because so many post-Soviet authoritarian regimes have survived until now does not necessarily mean that they will remain stable in the medium to long term. An examination of authoritarian party and state capacity reveals potential fissures in the foundations of authoritarian rule that may lead to regime collapse in the future (Way, 2008, p. 67). So, the revolutionary process against the overthrow of the ruling authoritarian regime in Armenia is an evidence of that statement.

A. Atanesyan points out that the protest activity of Armenian citizens in April-May 2018 led to a change in political elites. The proclamation by new elites of a number of modernization areas predominantly for the Armenian internal politics, includes the fight against authoritarianism,

corruption and the monopolization of the country's economy under the previous government. The author considers these processes to be natural and associated with a number of objective factors preceding these events, as well as their perception in public consciousness. In particular, the institutionalization of the mechanisms of formation and circulation of political power within a single political-oligarchic elite led to a conservative stagnation in the economy, which, in turn, aggravated the problems of unemployment, poverty and, as a result, mass emigration. The political discourse regarding these issues in the media and virtual social networks in view of the relatively high level of freedom of speech in Armenia contributed to the accumulation of protest potential and its realization through the massive political protests of recent years. The accumulated experience of protest activity also contributed to the realization of the events of spring 2018 (Atanesyan, 2018, pp. 80-98).

The fight against corruption, as an important element of the new government, refers both to political and economic spheres where the main target is the circle of former regime's direct representatives and its fellows (Avaneszadeh, 2018).

Analyzing the political developments in Armenia spring 2018, M. Kubiak points out that mass protests which erupted in Armenia in April 2018 were the biggest demonstrations in this country since the nineties of the XX century. With the dismissal of prime minister Serzh Sargsyan and appointment of the "temporary" government, the so called *#RejectSerzh* movement has been quickly proclaimed as another *velvet revolution*. The 2018 protests led to such an unexpected outcome because of the number of factors: their well-thought organization based on the civil disobedience methods, simultaneous decentralization of the protesters and clearly defined aim – ousting the incumbent prime minister embodying corrupted, oligarchic political system. At the same time it seems that the *#RejectSerzh* movement would not achieve such a success without the "legacy" of the civic, grassroots initiatives taking place in Armenia since 2008 and especially since 2013. All of these movements were highly interlinked and constituted continuous (however still incomplete) *creeping revolution* leading to the change of the oligarchic political system in Armenia (Kubiak, 2018, p. 125).

In this context it's worthy to mention that since 2000s RA citizens more massive participatory culture manifestations formed such kind of citizens, who became tempered during civic claims and disobedience actions, who obtained proficiency. And finally citizens could reach power change not by evolutional, it means by election process, but by the way of civic revolutionary process. Before the popular movement in spring 2018 the most known civic disobedience manifestations as a kind of participatory culture, held in July of 2013 in Yerevan. It was the movement against transport fare increase "I'm not paying 150 dram". After there were the civic movement against mandatory accumulative pension system investment "I'm against" in 2013-2014, the movement against electricity fare increase "Electric Yerevan" in June of 2015, the armed rebellion of "Sasna Tsrer" in June of 2016, which had considerable popular support and some participants of that took part already in spring of 2018 to "Reject Serzh" initiative which became more known as "Make a step" movement. Aftermath, this movement led to Prime Minister Serzh Sargsyan's resignation by "velvet", nonviolent methods, then to the dissolution of National Assembly by law. On December 9 of 2018 anticipated parliamentary elections took place.

Any revolutionary process defines certain political myth, in which terms it realizes political actions directed to the aims of citizens high participation expectation which is conditioned by the myth to be harmonic to political situation and process. In this case the Armenian "Velvet" revolution also was not exception.

N. Melkonyan and E. Asriyan referring to RA "Velvet" revolution myths mention that during political crises when people need integrating symbols, the political myths' symbolic component is considerably strengthened with huge diversity in certain situations and is limited by complete set of interrelations offering a quite small number of "forever" *(*archetype*)* subjects of several decades which are generalized categories such as "hero", "rascal", "stupid", "victim", "clown" etc. That characters and subjects absolutely not set and can supplement with great deal of conversions and with new events after which the myth becomes catalyst of social and political actions, at the same time making the most important functions of integration and identification (Melqonyan & Asriyan, 2018[a], p. 75).

In the context of "velvet revolution" was also modernized the myth of "unification" which is a kind of myth about identification. From that moment when social and cultural crisis fluctuates identification system stability, the human immediately searches support to be identified with this or that group of ethnicity. Very often this is about to be unified with referential group. Such kind of example can be the Ukrainian crisis. Ukrainians consider crisis

solution chance when joining the European Union. As for the Armenian "Velvet" revolution, then unification myth operated in favor of internal consolidation underneath of "We" (Melqonyan & Asriyan, 2018[b], pp. 93-113).

In this case it is worthy to refer to legitimacy issue of authorities which is the most important precondition for political stability. The low level of legitimacy has a theoretical potential of moving political process to revolutionary field and the reasons of revolution developments on spring of 2018 can be seen also in authorities' low level legitimacy.

To understand the popular movement in Armenia it is necessary to reveal on such preconditions which objectively could become a first cause for such kind of political developments in April of 2018. For that it is important to refer to 2017 National Assembly (NA) election, and to analyze it on the base of official result statistics.

In 2017 NA elections the voters general number was 2 585 134, voting participants number: 1 575 786 which makes up 60,9% of general voters and about 52,5% of population (according to the last census of 2011, the RA population was 2 871 771, and constant inhabitants were 3 018 854, about 3 million). The number of those who did not participate to voting in NA elections was 1 009 384 which makes up 39% of general voters and 33,7% of population.

In this case it should be mentioned that unlike legality, the legitimacy of authorities is much more important factor for political stability, because any democratic power should have not only general voters' or voting participants' but also population's majority trust.

Therefore, the reasons of the revolutionary political process happened in spring of 2018 in RA must be also observed in this context. For authorities the legality is necessary but not enough. A high level of legitimacy must be added to it which was pretty low in case of 2017 NA elections even without taking into account the many cases of election frauds. It means that political majority already had a "mechanical insufficiency" of legitimacy.

The civic protests against political authorities in spring of 2018 were giving evidence that the political order in Armenia was not able to operate with efficiency. In this context S. Huntington rightly mentions that "A weak government, a government which lacks authority, fails to perform its function and is immoral in the same sense in which a corrupt judge, a cowardly soldier, or an ignorant teacher is immoral. The moral basis of political institutions is rooted in the needs of men in complex societies" (Huntington, 1968, p. 28). Continuing the author adds "The faster the enlightenment of the population, the more frequent the overthrow of the government. How high is the education level of unemployed, displeased and alienated, their destabilizing behavior gets more extreme form. The university alienated students make revolution, alienated graduates of technicians and secondary schools plan subversions, and alienated people with elementary education take part in less important political protesting forms" (Huntington, 1968, p. 47).

Nobody can deny that in Armenia enormous information flows have formed informed (enlightened) citizens. But the unemployed level was also high, and the number of alienated people between those who had different educational level, became politically extra active in April-May of 2018. If this issues have been taken into account in time, the authorities confidently could avoid the revolutionary political development.

From this perspective S. Huntington rightly points out that in eastern-style revolutions how much powerful the revolutionary movement is, less it tends to violence (terror) (Huntington, 2004[a], p. 278). Perhaps, the Armenian revolution process validates Huntington's fundamental theoretical commitment when the revolution wave's cumulative effect strengthened the revolutionary process by fast collection of masses.

It is worthy to mention that bloody revolution could provide backward in all respects, but never no bloody revolution. What was happening in that days is an example of revolution without blood thirst, hatred towards each other and without violence strive. These events were emphasized with an obvious civic participatory culture.

As for applied methodology in revolutionary process, we have to point out that the application efficiency of this "nonviolence tool" was not accidentally. This kind of technology never could provide backward in all respects. It is possible to find the full arsenal of nonviolent disobedience technologies in G. Sharp's work "From Dictatorship to Democracy", where the author mentions the weaknesses of violence, its "Achille's heel" and the tactic of accurate hitting of them (Sharp, 2005).

In this respect Martin Luther King Jr.'s following description is also remarkable "Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon, which cuts without wounding and ennobled the man who wields it. It is a sword that heals" (Luther King, 1964).

As manifestation of nonviolent participatory culture, the "Velvet" revolution was a confrontation between molded and free thought, it was a conflict of values between old and new generations socialization. That was a conflict between denying the old and striving the new.

That situation was objective because when social, political, even juridical and economic problems permanently are not solving in evolutionary way, get ignored or depressed, it does not mean that problems disappear. They are continuing to be compressed in people's consciousness, and one day like it was in April-May of 2018 these problems turn into revolutionary political behavior.

It should be noted that in this case that behavior weared peaceful and nonviolent character. It is not important that how much time that situation would take because even on that days the public consciousness got changes, and even such social groups were politically activated which previously constantly have been showing only passive behavior. Noticeable the youth's strive for the new, democratic values. Armenian revolution methodology was "velvet", but the context of it should be founded on values. The revolution of values must put an end to nepotism and become a start for meritocracy as the main goal of political modernization.

In this case remarkable French political philosopher Alexis de Toequeville rightly mentions that "In democracy we get the government we deserve. If we find that our representatives are doing things that we consider wrong, we have to accept that we've set the game up this way. We can either allow it continue, get another player to play for us, or try and be a player ourselves (Tocqueville, 1995). An unprecedented civic activism as participatory culture was displayed during "velvet" revolution. It confirms that in Armenia the population preferred to become a player and change its representatives.

It is important to note that in post-revolutionary period the political "ballast" often starts to show displacing activity towards healthy and uncorrupted political field. It is due to:

1. Opportunistic principals with tendency to find a comfortable place in renewing system,
2. Intention to affect healthy and uncorrupted political field.

Consequently political forces must prevent and stop that intentions. But political forces which ignore that circumstances, allow the "ballast" to be intervened in their ranks, unwillingly endanger the current achievements. One of the important requirements for political modernization is the institutionalization of political forces with personnel consistent policy.

In post-revolutionary period, Armenia collides to certain internal obstacles, where so called "Deep State" has a key role. It is a state consisting of covert mutually beneficial relations (De Leon, 1903), when in state governance system's medium links which still have not been fully replaced in terms of personnel, the practical tradition level continues to stay ruling in corresponding relations. In all ways they resist to revolutionary modernization trying to preserve the previous conditions into which they were perfectly integrated. In this situation the Deep State strives de facto to obtain the power figuring latent impact groups with the aim to influence on higher bodies' decisions which are contradictory to their own interests. In essence, it is more complicated to fight this phenomenon, than to change the ruling elite representatives by revolutionary way. However, Deep State's breakdown is possible by governance system structural change and personnel optimization for what the Armenian government has already been betake.

As for expected results from the Armenian "Velvet" revolution, parallel to successful and efficient revolutionary modernization it is becoming necessary to betake the party system institutionalization in Armenia, because none of regimes can really become democratic without party system development. Even free and without frauds elections only can provide short-term political stability which necessity is vital mostly in case of external threats and regional challenges.

It is politically proven that even in case of *de jure* multi-party system, the existence of *de facto* one dominant political force lead to authoritarian regime. That was the situation in Armenia until 2018 April's political events. And that political reality was also reflected in the international democracy indexes.

With a number of reasons the party system failure and instability in Armenia led to revolutionary process. Being in transition to the parliamentary system, the revolutionary modernization must take into account also the issue of party system model selection.

Perhaps, two-block or two+one party system can be effective for Armenia if we take into account the experience of countries which have developing parliamentary culture. At the same time, however, the accounting of local peculiarities must be on the agenda. Two-block or two+one party system development also will allow to extrude

"satellite" or "pygmy" (Duverger, 2002) parties from real politics, the effectiveness of which was not considerable during previous 20 years. In Armenia the political "pygmies" constantly tend to join to political majority (even without taking into account ideological contradictions) and to leave the political coalition in proper time avoiding political responsibility.

From this point of view L. Way mentions that the regime in Armenia is particularly vulnerable. In this case, autocrats are especially susceptible to defection by allies due to the weakness of the ruling parties. At the same time, the regime's grounding in a loose coalition of competing ruling parties makes it more vulnerable to high-level defections (Way, 2008, pp. 66-67).

In essence, we became a witness of this theoretical thesis's practical realization when during National Assembly's 6th convocation the ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation) which was in coalition with RPA (Republican Party of Armenia), in a result of "Velvet" revolution in May 8, 2018 voted in favor of Nikol Pashinyan's candidacy for the Prime Minister, despite the fact that he was nominated from parliamentary minority.

For party system development the most important is the ideological foundation. And as for traditional political forces, they have to return to their ideologies. If political forces in Armenia asripe to develop and obtain political identity, they should not answer the question "With whom they are" but "Who they are" (Huntington, 2004[b]). The lack and failure of developed party system in Armenia were conditioned by the absence of the answer to the second question, because political forces mostly have been guided by the principle "with whom they are". As if even today that tendency is not disappeared. Without political identity development it is impossible to be established as political force.

The legitimacy institutionalization is also one of expected results from the "Velvet" revolution, because in information age it is impossible to keep the charismatic leadership for a long-term. Information flows are so massive that each second they direct new impulses to society, and there is no difference this will be information or misinformation. It will surely influence on public opinion. In nowadays Armenia citizens' political values are mainly formed with the mediation of social media which in its turn forms appropriate political attitude and behavior. In this case it is impossible to keep charismatic leadership permanently because the "electronic eye" sees and throws light on everything what happens. In a result, the charisma

can gradually weaken. This explains why in developed countries there cannot be charismatic leaders without institutional legitimacy. The same problem exists also in Armenia. In the classic sense the charismatic leader can lose his univalence due to situational circumstances. Consequently, how fast but without haste the charisma turns into institutional legitimacy, so faster the crisis is restrained, and the country relies not on individuals but institutions.

Observing the Armenian "Velvet" revolution in the context of participatory political culture, we can characterize it as revolutionary modernization after durable standstill in political process.

Thereby, the revolution can be a way of modernization. It cannot happen in any society, in any historical period. It is not universal category, rather soon historically limited phenomenon. It does not have place in very traditional societies which have low level of social and economic complications. And it does not have a place in too modern societies. The revolution often happens in such kind of societies where some social and economic developments already happened and where political modernization stays away from social and economic changes process (Huntington, 2004[a], p. 270).

The maximum of revolutions is the change of social order (for example: French Revolution, Socialist and Communist Revolutions and others). While the minimum of revolutions is the change of rejected regime (Rose Revolution in Georgia, Orange Revolution in Ukraine etc.).

As for the Armenian "Velvet" revolution, it is early to assess it, because this political process is not yet over. And the assessment usually is the last stage of political process. In the framework of reasons for such kind of political process developments in 2018 we have to segregate the fall of management degree, the authorities' gradually delegitimization, the dominance of nepotism in administration circles, the periodical growth of criminocrats and privilocrats' influence on governing system, the corruption of rich and poor people, when the first was changing money with power and the second was changing power with money.

In case of the Armenian "Velvet" revolution the "velvet" was the revolutionary process method but the revolution ideals must be the "values" and the rejection of previous regime and political order.

The effectiveness of revolutionary process was conditioned also with the logic of rhizomic development actions when decentralization or networking approach have

been creating insuperable difficulties for responding to implemented actions. And such kind development of actions was allowing to foster civic participation and involve larger masses. In result of that participatory culture manifestations became more reliable. In such cases people become not a political tool but an effective political factor.

As for the revolution discourse, we have to notice that in last period the sentimentalism is dominating in the Armenian society. This can be explained as an aspiration to materialize the expectations and ideals defined in the result of post-revolution period. At first sight it can be seem as normal and harmless social phenomenon. But by its depth the public discourse sentimentalization can make risky the aims implementation defined by the revolutionary modernization agenda. Sentimentalism is a practice of being sentimental, and thus tending toward basing actions and reactions upon emotions and feelings (Sterne, 2008).

As O. Wilde and R. Ross note "Sentimentalism is simply the will to have the luxury of an emotion without paying for it" (Wilde & Ross, 1905). The political experience shows that growing sentimentalism in public discourse may lead to negative practical consequences. Consequently, this trend must be gradually reduced in current public discourse. And the rationality must become dominant factor as in public and new bureaucrats' behavior.

IV. CONCLUSION

Summarizing the results of above mentioned issues' analysis we can conclude that the Armenian "Velvet" revolution is a kind of revolutionary modernization process with public large-scale support and civic participation based on expressive political behavior of citizens. It promoted the participatory political culture in the Armenian society raising it to more stable level. This revolutionary process has created important prerequisites for Armenia's modernization, where civic participation became key factor.

It is necessary to note that participatory culture consolidation must become the most important and sustainable precondition for political institutionalization and civic culture development in Armenia. To realize the values and ideals of revolutionary modernization in Armenia the political legitimacy institutionalization is needed. In this regard the coincidence of political discourse and political activities must become the milestone for political system stability in Armenia.

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