

## PLURALISM AND DEMOCRATIC THEORY: FOUNDATIONS AND CHALLENGES

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the pluralism within democratic theory as it has been a crucial element along with the socio-political development of the modern liberal democratic theory. Thus, our understanding of what is the real essence of pluralism and how it contributes to democratic processes could be developed. The discussion starts with what elements are necessary for the pluralist conceptualization of liberal democracy. Then, it is suggested that the Federalist Papers are great examples to understand how the modern liberal democratic system of America has been constructed, regarding pluralism. Separation of powers and federalism as the source of pluralism are pointed out in the study. The essay concludes that pluralism and its implications have contributed greatly to the development of liberal democracy both at the institutional and societal levels. Madisonian principles of separation of powers, the system of checks and balances, and federalism constituted the institutional dimension of the pluralism whereas Tocquevillian arguments focus more on the societal dimensions as he makes emphasis on the importance of the idea of equality, dangers of the tyranny of a majority, and the existence of associations. In order to sustain democracy and prevent populism, as one of the emerging challenges that need to gain further scholarly attention, there occurs an urgent need to find solutions to promote and sustain the concept and implications of pluralism.

**Keywords:** Pluralism, Democratic Theory, Liberal Democracy

## ÇOĞULCULUK VE DEMOKRATİK TEORİ: KURUMLAR VE GÜÇLÜKLER

### ÖZ

Bu çalışma, modern liberal demokratik teorinin sosyo-politik gelişimi ile birlikte önemli bir unsur olan çoğulculuğu demokratik teori içindeki değerlendirmeyi amaçlamıştır. Böylece çoğulculuğun asıl özünün ne olduğu ve bunun demokratik süreçlere nasıl katkıda bulunduğu dair anlayışımıza katkı yapılabilir. Tartışma, liberal

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Received/Geliş: 27/03/2019 Accepted/Kabul: 11/04/2019, Research Article/Kavramsal Makale  
Cite as/Alıntı: Çetin, S., Hamşioğlu, O., Çetin, R.A., Turan, E. (2019), "Pluralism And Democratic Theory: Foundations And Challenges", *Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, cilt 28, sayı 1, s.191-205.

demokrasinin çoğulculuğu kavramsallaştırması için hangi unsurların gerekli olduğu ile başlamakta; Federalist Bildiriler'in çoğulculuğun Amerika'nın modern liberal demokratik sisteminin inşasındaki etkilerini anlatan bazı önemli örneklerle devam etmektedir. Bu süreçte, çoğulculuğun kaynağı olarak, güçler ayrılığı ve federalizm kavramlarına vurgu yapılmış olması da ayrıca dikkat çekmektedir. Makale, çoğulculuğun ve bunun sonuçlarının hem kurumsal hem de toplumsal düzeyde liberal demokrasinin gelişimine büyük katkı sağladığı sonucuna varıyor. Madisonian'ın güçler ayrılığı, denetim ve denge sistemi ile federalizm çoğulculuğun kurumsal boyutunu oluştururlarken, Tocqueville eşitlik fikrinin önemi, çoğunluğun tiranlığı tehlikesi ve çeşitli sosyal kurumların varlığına vurgu yapan toplumsal boyutlara odaklanıyor. Demokrasiyi sürdürmeye ve popülizmi önlemeye dönük çabalar gittikçe daha fazla gündeme getirilmekte; ortaya çıkan zorluklardan biri olarak da, çoğulculuk kavramını ve uygulamalarını geliştirmek ve sürdürmek önemli ve acil bir ihtiyaç olarak ortada durmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çoğulculuk, Demokratik Kuram, Liberal Demokrasi

### **Introduction**

Today, even the world's most democratic nations have been challenged by the implications and policies of the populist leaders who gain a substantial amount of popular support. As one of the characteristics, it is the idea of pluralism which has been challenged by the same populist leaders who aim to centralize power in their hands, diminish any other oppositional element and eliminate the variety of interests and opinions that have been seen as a challenge to their power and authority. All these policies address their challenge of pluralism. Mouffe argues that the increase of extreme right is one of the most prominent challenges that the liberal democratic societies are ill-prepared to confront since they are unable to grasp its nature (Mouffe, 1999, p.745). At this point, we believe it is important to analyze the idea of pluralism within the democratic theory, as it has been a crucial element along with the socio-political development of the modern liberal democratic theory.

Tracing pluralism within the historical texts, as well as within more recent texts may help to critically develop our understanding of what is the real essence of pluralism and how it contributes to the democratic processes. We believe a research, based on a comparative analysis of a few studies, in that sense, would pave the way for a better understanding of the bases and challenges that recent democracies experience. Additionally, since pluralism emerges as a theoretical element of the liberal democratic theory during modernity, our scope should be the modern liberal democracy. With these considerations, in this paper, we focus on the concept of pluralism within the democratic theory. By critically analyzing the texts of Müller, Publius, and Tocqueville, we argue that, as a concept that was born as part of the modern liberal democracy, pluralism becomes an inseparable element of the democratic processes. And, it is the absence of the ideal of pluralism that challenges the sustainability of the very existence of modern liberal democracy in populist governments.

First, we will try to elaborate this argument by reflecting my theoretical analysis on Muller's famously known study "What is Populism?" where he argues that it is the anti-pluralist structure of populist regimes that make themselves as anti-democratic. Second, we will focus on Madison, Jay and Hamilton's groundbreaking Federalist Papers in which they theorized the modern liberal democratic state and its parts within an institutional framework with many references and to pluralism. Lastly, Tocqueville's "Democracy in America" will be examined within the same similar scope, with its special emphasis on the concept of the

tyranny of the majority and associational structures of the American democracy which has been seen as unique features of modern liberal democracy, by Tocqueville.

### **Populism as Anti-Pluralism**

Populism, as a term, has many definitions in many areas of social sciences. However, those definitions from various dimensions, in fact, address to similar social challenges as Schwartz defines as an antonym of-snobism where, Leon Lemonnier, French novelist, defines as a reaction founded on the realistic tradition and directed against the literature of analysis (Walter, 1934, p.356). However, we find it necessary, to begin with, Muller's study, *What is Populism?* in order to critically analyze what is problematic in populism and, from here, what elements are necessary for the pluralist conceptualization of liberal democracy. In his study, Muller combines theoretical elements of the populism with the empirical, concrete examples from the very recent political regimes. He organizes the book around three main questions: What do populists say? What do populists do when they are in power? How should the populists be dealt with?

There are of course some other points of views in approaching the pluralism, rather than explaining populism as being at the core. Mouffe dwells upon the term “deliberative democracy” to propose a reformulation in communicative terms of the classical notions of democratic theory, especially the concept of popular sovereignty (Mouffe, 1999, p. 746). On the other hand, Stevens and Foster adopt an analytical method to examine the feasibility of democratic pluralism, based on majority rule characteristic of group decisiveness and potential existence of many interconnected, politically powerful interest groups (Stevens and Foster, 1978, p. 401).

Populism has been interpreted as not being just a reaction against power structures but an appeal to a recognized authority as well (Spryut, Keppens, and Van Droogenbroeck, 2016, p.336). Among others, we argue Muller's study is quite relevant for this paper while focusing on the idea of pluralism within the idea of liberal democracy since Muller thoughtfully characterizes the populism with its relation to today's democracies. For Muller, among many, one of the important features of populism is that it is anti-pluralist. According to this view, many populist leaders claim that they alone represent the whole people while speaking in the name of people as a whole. Calling it as “...something like a permanent shadow of modern representative democracy, and a constant peril”, Muller argues that it is the feature of populism where the possibility of pluralism is almost impossible in a sense that populist leaders leave almost no space for any opposition in the political processes while also claiming they are representing the whole people (Muller 2016, p.11).

Under such an argument, Muller's core claim is that populism is a moralized form of anti-pluralism, where, Morelock and Narita define it as an emergence of political representation that stretches beyond the institutional procedures of representative democracy (Morelock and Narita, 2018 p.137). Far from being empirical, their claim of exclusive representation is a moral sense. Muller argues that such a representation claim of populist leaders is not compatible with the idea of pluralism. Instead, the moralistic

conceptualization of politics emerge from this anti-pluralist structures where populism produces some excluding and including criteria for distinguishing moral/immoral, pure/corrupt, and people who matter/people do not mean anything. Under this non-empirical, but a moralistic claim of representation, as Muller points out, they actually accept and use the features of the representative democracy and the idea of the common good. It has also a fictional side where the people of populists exist outside of the democratic procedures. If they fail in the elections, it is not that they do not represent the people, but it means the majority have not given their decision yet. Muller also explains their idea of representing the whole population by underlining the concept of "symbolically correct representation" as it refers to the populist claim of representing "true identity". This true identity coming from the people have the power to decide, according to populists. Instead of allowing the free mandate-allowing politicians to use their own judgment, populists have the imperative mandate while telling their politicians what to do.

Kerrine and Neuhaus examine the changing role of "Mediating Structures" in democratic pluralism, arguing that an effective and believable linkage between the vast institutions of the public sphere and the values by which people live day by day is lacking today where the advent of the modern welfare state has tended to undermine those structures from forming linkages between the individual in his private life and the vast institutions of the public order (Kerrine and Neuhaus, 1979, p.10). In parallel to this, for Muller, populists also rely on the non-institutionalized notion of the people while showing their distrust to the institutional structures of the government and arguing they are not the ones who should be trusted. As it will be further analyzed with the contribution of the Federalist papers, this non-institutionalized notion of the populist practices in which they almost rely on conspiracy theories about the institutions is quite contrary to how Madison, Jay, and Hamilton established modern liberal democracy by combining the idea of pluralistic formation of institutions (i.e. separation of powers, system of checks and balances, and the idea of federalism) with representative democratic processes.

Muller also critically analyzes the structure of the intra-party dynamics of the populist ideologies. According to him, far from being diverse, populist parties are internally monolithic, similar to their vision of non-diverse, anti-plural conception of society. Intraparty isolation and rank-and-file system subordinated to one, a single leader at the top may also be the result of the above-mentioned principled anti-pluralism and their commitment to democracy. Overall, being defined as the moral way of imagining the political world and involving the claim of exclusive representation, Muller underlines that the claim of populist leaders is moral and symbolic.

According to Muller, based on their claim of exclusive representation with such a moral justification of "we are representing our people", there are four major policies that populists apply. First, they colonize and hijack the state where they are in power. He gives the example of Viktor Orban and his Fidesz Party where they aim to transform the laws and reshape them so that they enable the party to place loyalists where should have been nonpartisan bureaucratic positions. Another crucial point as part of this process of

"occupying" the state is the capture of media in which "...the clear signal went out that journalists should not report in ways that violate the interests of the nation (which were of course equated with the interests of the governing party)." (Muller 2016:45). The populist leaders undertake this process of colonization in a quite open way as they also gain the support of their core claim to the moral representation of the people.

Second, they follow what Muller calls "mass clientelism" where they aim to pursue the interests of their supporters, instead of the whole people (which is quite against their claim of representing the whole people). This can be considered different from simple clientelism, which buys the support of key groups via transfers or other material enhancements (Brender and Drazen, 2009, p.304). In this process, according to Muller, populists' objective is to exchange the material and immaterial favors by elites for the mass support. Similarly to the colonization of the state, they practice this openly and with moral public justifications where for them only some of the people are the people and deserves the support by the state.

Thirdly, it occurs that only some groups of people should benefit from the full protection of the laws and policies whereas those do not belong should be treated in a harsher way, which might be suspected of working against the people. This is called as discriminatory legalism. Last but not least, they systematically repress the civil society while leaving almost no space for any civil society organization, under this monolithic, singular and anti-pluralist understanding of state-society structure. In so doing, Muller critically addresses a paradox: "...opposition from within civil society creates a particular moral and symbolic problem: it potentially undermines their claim to the exclusive moral representation of the people." (Muller 2016, p. 48). Thus, they try to silence or discredit people who are active in civil society by declaring them foreign agents or claiming that those people are being controlled by 'foreign agents'. At the end of the process, it can be said that populists create a world consisting of homogenous people, without taking any other interests into account.

In the end, the occupation of the state, mass clientelism, discriminatory legalism, and the oppression of civil society have been the major policies of those populists. This creates another irony: Populists end up following exactly the same stages what the "old establishment" or "corrupt, immoral elites" follow. However, at the end of the day, they find themselves reinforcing or offering just another version of the exclusionary system of the establishment with democratic, representative, moral justifications which are far from being plural.

As part of the populist policies, Muller also draws his analysis on the process of creating a "populist constitution" where populists seek to establish and maintain a different constitution replacing the existing the constitution of old-establishment or status quo. Here, these new constitutions are aimed to be what Muller calls "operating manual of populist politics" (Muller 2016, p.62). It can be highly partisan and restrains the room for policy choices other than the populist voice that is in power. Both in the writing and enacting process, what populists do is to exclude the opposition and create a constitutional system

based on a constitution that prioritizes their own interests and policies that would help them to stay in power. Under this constitutional process, occupying the state, then, takes two different ways: One is increasing the executive power of the populist actors and the second one is decreasing the power of independent judiciary while replacing the members of the judicial parts of the governments with populists' own partisan members. This process is, again, a great example of how populism ignores the diversity and oppresses any possible oppositional voices that might challenge it by creating such an anti-plural system.

Muller sees the possibility to benefit populist's policy of mass clientelism as well as their discriminatory legalism can be the most appealing factors behind populists' increasing public support and popularity. Additionally, for Muller, it is the representation crisis of democracy that populism uses to gain popular support. In this case, broken promises of democracy have been at the very center of Muller's analysis of populism. As the "folk theory of democracy"<sup>5</sup> suggests, the promise of democracy is that the people have the ability to rule. However, there is a boundary problem emerges: Which people should get represented? Which of them should be included in the democratic processes? It is also crucial to note that the crisis is not just about who is represented. For Muller, it is more than this concern: "...the crisis might not be who gets represented but also how citizens get represented, just as the demand for inclusion might turn out to require a change in political and social structures as a whole (as opposed to just including ever more groups into structures that remain essentially unchanged)." (Muller 2016:72). Here, populists represent a break of the chain by advocating a constitutional closure, unlike the ones who are arguing for further inclusion or continuation of the claim of chain making. As part of their moral representation claim (which is quite anti-plural) by using the democratic processes, it is actually the populist assertion that the people can be conclusively identified and represented. With a more unified and homogenous character attributed to people, populists claim that "the people as a whole not only have a common and coherent will but also can rule in the sense that the right representatives can implement what the people have demanded in the form of an imperative mandate." (Muller 2016:76). At least, in theory, populists speak *as if* those promises have been fulfilled. Being anti-plural, they speak and act *as if* there exists one, single judgment and will and singular mandate.

In democratic theory, pluralism and liberalism have also been associated. On the other hand, as Muller suggests, it can be very difficult for the one to get the presence of pluralism from a principled endorsement of liberty. At this point, he thoughtfully clarifies this point by underlining that its populism's denial of diversity which consists of denying the status of certain citizens as free and equal. From this point, it can be inferred that pluralism is an important element of liberal democracy and populism lacks in both being liberal and democratic. Based on populism, then, Muller concludes what is missing in populism, with regards to the liberal democracy and the concept of pluralism. Arguing that they are the parts of not just liberalism but also democracy, Muller underlines the importance of the free

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<sup>5</sup> Achen and Bartels (2016)

election, freedom of speech and assembly, media pluralism, and the protection of minorities, checks, and balances, as well as many other fundamental rights. However, these are the most important aspects that are mainly ignored by populist governments. Thus, in the end, they are both anti-institutional and anti-constitutional that challenges the most important elements of modern liberal democracies.

### **The Federalist Papers**

In the context of America, diversity and pluralism have been at the very center of the idea of American liberty, since the colonial period. Various colonies that are getting together into a single American nation solidified pluralism where no single colony had enough power and potential to dominate the others. As a result, instead of a one, particular characteristic, different communities have contributed to such a pluralistic and diverse makeup of American society. The pluralistic version of such an American ideal consisted of fragmented cultures, demographics, and economies. Likely, there existed various economic, religious, political and social interests. Since no single interest can dominate, it was their interest to support rights, liberties, and freedom with a sense of equality. It is in this context where we aim to analyze the arguments of Jay, Madison, and Hamilton in their groundbreaking Federalist Papers where they theorized the liberal democratic American state and its governmental system in a pluralistic fashion, embracing such a historical diversity and plurality of America.

Regarding pluralism, Federalist Papers are great examples to understand how the modern liberal democratic system of America has been constructed. As it has been outlined in the Federalist 1, papers particularly discuss the following: “the utility of the union to your political prosperity, the insufficiency of the present confederation to preserve that union, the necessity of a government at least equally energetic with the one proposed, to the attainment of this object, the conformity of the proposed constitution to the true principles of republican government, its analogy to your own state constitution, and lastly, the additional security which its adoption will afford to the preservation of that species of government, to liberty, and to property.” (Federalist 1, p. 3). With these statements, Madison, Jay, and Hamilton draw an institutional framework of a liberal democratic system where the concept of pluralism plays a crucial role, similar to Muller’s emphasis on the necessities of the existence of institutional and constitutional dimensions for a regime to be liberal, democratic and, thus, plural<sup>6</sup>.

Throughout the Federalist Papers, it can be claim that the most salient parts concerning the pluralist understanding of state formation based on institutional conceptualizations are a new kind of federalism that they offer based on the existing confederacy of various states, principle of checks and balances, and lastly, the importance of

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<sup>6</sup> Throughout the analysis, for ease of understanding, we sometimes used the pseudonym "Publius" to refer to the authors of the Federalist Papers, including Madison, Jay, and Hamilton.

the individual rights and liberties that constitute the basis of this institutionally pluralistic understanding. Their way of theorizing the liberal democratic state in a pluralistic way would help us to perceive the real constituents of a pluralistic democracy in today's modern democracies which has been seen as the main reference point for Muller while he was analyzing the problematic side of politics of populism.

### **Individual Liberties and Human Nature**

In my opinion, it is the individual rights and liberties that the one need to primarily focus while analyzing the Federalist Papers, since we would argue that it is the recognition of individual rights and liberties and willingness to embrace the differences in people's interests that constitute the basis for the pluralistic makeup of modern liberal democracies. In Federalist Papers, as Publius argues, there is this realistic view of human nature behind the institutional formation of modern liberal democracy. Like Muller underlining the necessity of the pursuit of the individual rights and liberties for liberal democracy, Publius also recognizes the possible existence of rights and liberties at the individual level, with a sense of equality. However, the authors also underline that humans have the susceptibility to passion, intolerance, and greed. Due to these features within the human nature, we have the risk of the violence of action in which many interests may compete with each other, creating a chaotic state of nature in the Hobbesian sense at the end. In Federalist 10, Madison discussed this danger of violence. For him, it is this potential of violence created in an environment by various interests which are quite dangerous for a popular government, since these interests might endanger the rights of others. Factions have the danger to divide along with different interests, as Madison states "A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up necessity in civilized nations, and divide themselves into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and view." (Federalist 10, p.2).

In order to be able to manage these various interests, Madison underlines two important points. He maintains that "The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government." (Federalist 10, p.2). It can be inferred from here is that a proper government form of government is needed to prevent any of the wills (either the will of the majority or minority) to dominate against the general good. As far as the Madisonian view of the government concerned, it is the representative (Republican) form of government which should be consisted of educated men of good character. In that sense, Madison offers an elitist solution to overcome the problem of managing representing various interests and factions at the political level. Because, as for Madison, only educated men have the potential to have a larger vision with an ability to effectively and objectively represent the people, thanks to their claimed distance from the mass public. Being expected to be realized under the new Constitution, Madison further states that widening popular and geographic basis of the republic is also necessary in which each representative would be chosen by a larger number of citizens, thus, it would be less



likely for the factious leaders to be able to influence the general will through the other states. In the end, with this popular and geographic enlargement of the political system, Madison aims to lower the risks of chaos derived from diversity and individual influence of each faction within the governmental levels. For Muller, it was actually this representational form of the liberal democracy in a moral sense that has been used by populists as a mean to achieve political power.

Considering all these, it should be visible for the one that what they offer in the Federalist Papers is a clear version of pluralism based on individual liberties and human nature. Yet, even more importantly, Madison's view includes an attempt to balance the conflicting interests, so that none of the interests can be a hegemonic and oppressive element at the national level. Thus, although it can be an elitist version of pluralism when it comes to the representation of interests, this understanding of pluralism has the invaluable feature of co-existence, rather than conflict of interests.

### **Federalism as the Source of Pluralism**

As one of the main constituents of such a plural system, a decentralized, federalist structure has been offered within a liberal democratic system, by Publius of the Federalist Papers. As far as their approach concerned, under the system of confederation in which the absolute sovereignty of each state has been recognized under the Articles of Confederation, the states would have the residual sovereignty in some specific areas that require a concern not at the national, but at the state level. It can be inferred from this point that it is actually a creation of a federal system from this confederacy where the central government has been given limited powers whereas the residual sovereignty has been kept at the state level, without fully diminishing the states' autonomous powers.

Deeper analysis can be done, based on the Federalist 51 where the authors mentioned the important aspects of such a new federalist understanding with pluralistic elements. In line with Muller's emphasis on individual liberties, freedom and the principle of equality while considering pluralism, Madison underlines in Federalist 51 that liberty comes from the various interests of the country. Instead of centralization policies, he offers the principles of federalism while also underlining the importance of justice for civil society. More specifically, first, federalism has been seen as a guaranteeing factor that protects the liberty of the people. At the second step, the justice system should be the protector of various interests, parties and sects derive from the existence of individual rights and liberties. In the end, it has been underlined that a system of government can be provided by a judicious modification and mixture of the federal principle. They use the term balanced government where the powers have been diffused at the local and central levels. Madison's idea of federalism (both a powerful central government and local governments) constitutes one the unique and most powerful American pluralism of interest that guarantees individual liberties which have been constructed within the institutional and constitutional order.

### **Separation of Powers**

With power divided between national and state governments, then, the idea of federalism in the Federalist Papers has been conceptualized as the unique expression of the American ideal of pluralism. However, in this system, they also address the possibility of a tyranny of the majority in a situation where the majority is united by a common interest but the minority is insecure. As this point would be further problematized in more details by Tocqueville in the following paragraphs, I would like to draw the attention on how Publius offered the separation of powers to overcome the problem of the tyranny of the concentrated power (i.e. the majority), contributing to the well-functioning of the pluralist elements. As an institutional solution, different branches of the government have been developed with special duties and responsibilities where each of them has expertise. Regarding the executive, Hamilton uses the term 'energy in the executive' that has the functions of defending the country against foreign threats, fair administration of laws, as well as protecting individual liberty and private property. The executive authority should also be in the hands of one, single person, under this plural framework, since, it has been argued that plurality in the executive has the potential risk to lead to governmental crisis. In line with this function and necessity under plurality, the executive must implement the law without favoritism and reserving space for none of the self-interests.

As for the legislative, he uses 'deliberation and wisdom' for a legislator who is expected to earn the confidence of the citizens of the county and manage their diverse interests. With the aim of checking and balancing the power of the government, Hamilton and Madison considered the legislative body as the most powerful branch of these elements under the government. This argument includes the expectation that the House of Representatives would be checked and balanced by a Senate which would be chosen by the state legislatures. Under this institutional structure, the judiciary should have integrity and moderation. Like Müller's emphasis on the independence of these institutions, Publius also takes attention to the necessity of the independence of the judicial elements, for the sake of a democratic structure. In that sense, judicial members of the state should be appointed for life, independent from the public, as well as independent from any other element, including executive and legislative powers. Having been institutionally conceptualized as executive, legislative, and judiciary elements, separation of powers, then, becomes an inseparable element of the pluralism under the modern liberal democracy, aiming to sustain the condition of co-existence with peace and stability.

### **Tocqueville and "Democracy in America"**

While discussing pluralism, we find important to discuss Tocqueville and his reflections of America's experience of democracy in his famously known work "Democracy in America". Throughout the book, based more on sociological observations, he critically tries to examine how the case of America is unique where the most visible and developed form of democratic elements have been applied. It is a great and crucial work to mention in detail, however, considering the scope of this paper, we will only focus on the parts where he

analyzed the concepts of tyranny of majority, the importance of civic and political associations that have been seen as one of the unique elements in the United States, as well as his insights on the concepts of equality, within the scope of the previous discussions that have been analyzed above.

### **On Equality and Liberty**

As one of the fundamental points of the author that can greatly contribute to the debate of pluralism, we find crucial, to begin with, his reflections on the concepts of equality and liberty. Unlike the previous authors that have been discussed above, Tocqueville interestingly analyzes the concepts separately. For him, liberty is not a precondition of democracy as it can appear in the various contexts in various regimes. However, equality has a different dimension while having the feature of exclusive to democracy. In the sense of equality of opportunity and equality of condition, Tocqueville sees equality as one of the most important characteristics of democracy. To be more specific, equality is a passion in the democratic society which cannot be left to the others and should be the applied openly to each and every member of the society whereas individuals in the democratic system have a natural taste of freedom left to themselves.

In accordance with Tocqueville's conceptualization of equality and considering the fact that each citizen has different interests and each of them has the equality of condition and opportunity, then, equality becomes an invaluable element of the concept of plurality. It is only through the real existence of equality among people that liberal democracy can effectively promote plurality where each and every citizen would have the equal opportunity and conditions to be able to pursue their various demands and interests. Thus, it can be inferred from this point that, equality becomes one of the most important elements of democracy where it exclusively increases the opportunities for plurality and diversity.

### **Tyranny of Majority**

It is also crucial to underline that Tocqueville not only reflect his observations in America based on social and political elements and their relevance to the formation of democracy in America, he also makes few critiques that have been derived from the very existence of the democracy itself. Namely, his analysis on the *tyranny of the majority* has been one of the greatest contributions to the democratic theory which is also relevant to our discussion of pluralism. Focusing mainly on the dangers of the majority rule, a tyranny of the majority dominates his vision of American life. To be more specific, being based on society, for him, power is something social which is superior to the others in the same society. However, as for this social power, there is a potential danger of the elimination of the concept of liberty when this social power finds no obstacle. In regards to this danger, Tocqueville introduces the concept of the tyranny of the majority as a problem that emerges when the rights and means of the absolute command are conferred on any power, regardless of the regime. His understanding of pluralism comes into the stage at this point where he

conceptualizes that public opinion, legislative, executive, and the jury in the political system are all tied and constituted together by the majority.

The problem of the tyranny of the majority is that has been representing the majority, these democratic institutions have irresistible strength to any other opinions or interest representing the minority. At this point, it can be argued that, unlike the Federalist Papers conceptualization of the institutional dimension where they have the system of separation of powers and system of checks and balances in the federal system aiming to protect the plurality of interests, Tocqueville sees this institutional and political system actually as an obstacle for the liberty of any individual opinions to be recognized within an understanding of plurality. With this understanding, he sees the majority as the source of this tyrannical problem where body left free, but the soul was enslaved. It is so dangerous concept that staying out of the majority can be even worse than the death for an individual in this system.

At this point, it can be inferred from his texts that equality and democracy did not go hand in hand with the understanding of liberty and freedom while there has been little room left for the independence of the mind. For him, democracy and equality are the great levelers making it impossible for the individual to be free from any possible oppression. In that sense, such an absence of eccentricity and divergence from the norm can result in a tyrannical condition in which the majority takes a decision and everyone else has to comply. Consequently, from the Tocquevillian perspective, rather than promoting plurality and recognition of diversity, we see a political and institutional structure in America constituted by the democratic majority becoming absolute tyranny of all people. Whereas Publius sees the possibility of the existence of diverse interests with the help of the institutional structure of the federalist system, Tocqueville sees this process rather as a problematic implementation where the majority becomes the dominant and oppressive power making use of those institutional powers. Unlike the early individualism, he points out the dangers and problematic sides of the sameness, uniformity, and conformity of modern American democracy as a system becoming intolerant to the freedom of being different or minority.

How is it possible to overcome the potential dangers of the tyranny of the majority and sustain plurality in a modern liberal democracy? Tocqueville offers two ways to promote more freedom and pluralism within such a democracy. Similar to Muller, he first underlines the importance of the freedom of expression and media, as the precondition for modern liberal democracies for the sustainability of plurality and protection of people from any possibilities of the tyranny of a majority. According to him, as also underlined by Muller in his discussion of pluralism and populism, the existence of the independent press is crucial. Preserving its freedom and independence in a modern liberal democracy is a must, for Tocqueville, where individual voices could have the opportunity to appeal from any oppression or tyranny of the majority.

Second, very similar to the federalist conceptualizations of Publius, he addresses the necessity of the policy of decentralization where the power should be diffused through localities in a decentralized way, so that we could have the possibility to sustain a true, plural liberal democracy, without any danger of the tyranny of the majority. However,

unlike Federalist Papers, Tocqueville follows more society-based arguments while offering societal solutions to overcome the problem of the tyranny of any concentrated power representing the majority. At this point, together with local governments, social, economic, intellectual associations play an invaluable role where especially the associations give a free man a stake in the society. Moreover, as for the author, the power of the associations is actually that they also have the potential to give the people a sense of responsibility and self-importance which could protect them from getting lost in the majority of the crowd. Lastly, very similar to both Publius and Muller, Tocqueville also states that the legal profession and the judiciary function of the political system should exist with the objective of sustaining plurality and diversity. The independence of the judiciary, like Publius and Muller, has also underlined as an important factor by Tocqueville, as a major dimension of the political structure that has been designed to protect the interests of a minority in a system of plurality.

### **Associations in America**

Connecting between equality and freedom of association, Tocqueville also gives great importance to the associations in American society. He says it is not a coincidence that Americans of all ages are forming associations constantly in a society where citizens are free, equal, and independent. Based on the extreme amount of skills and voluntariness of the inhabitants, Americans pursue common interests and demands. As he outlines, associations in the U.S. are established to promote public safety, commerce, industry, morality, and religion. For him, reciprocity should be artificially created via these associations in democratic societies where commonalities and uniformities might be hard to realize. With an understanding of mutual assistance and help, in America, "Feelings and opinions are recruited, the heart is enlarged, and the human mankind is developed, only by the reciprocal influence of men upon each other." (Tocqueville 1984, p. 200).

He continues to underline the necessity of associations while saying that "In democratic countries, a science of association is the mother of the science; the progress of all the rest depends upon the progress it has made." (Tocqueville 1984,p.202). Again with a pluralistic understanding, Tocqueville observed that governing power of the state alone can be dangerous and need for associations emerge here. In relation to the transformation of the potential power of those civic associations to the political associations, he states that civic associations should facilitate political associations which have more power to bring and unite them, as well as to make their diverse interests and commonalities aware. Therefore, it can be inferred that freedom of association becomes a factor that has the potential to strengthen the state at the end, which was initially promoted to sustain commonality within diversity. However, in terms of the scope of liberty and freedom of association, we would argue that Tocqueville's arguments are paradoxical.

On one hand, Tocqueville is critical of giving absolute and limitless freedom of association to the citizens, with the belief that it may result in "the verge of anarchy" where their limitless power might be a danger to the unity (Tocqueville 1984, p. 209). On the other

hand, according to him, associations lowers the differences among individuals, thus, rights of associations can remain unrestrained. Yet, despite this, Tocqueville's conceptualization of associations in the U.S. provides an example of how usage of free will and a reason for a greater sense of commonality may become a solution to overcome the tyranny of majority while also preserving the idea of plurality and diversity that gains take its power within society.

### **Conclusion**

All in all, with the aim of examining the concept of pluralism and its undeniable relevance to the processes of the modern liberal democracies, we have first started my analysis with Muller's study where he focused on the populist structures and their practices to explain what happens when we omit the importance of pluralism, as the critical and inseparable characteristic of liberal democracy. Then, I have continued my analyses on the concept of pluralism while evaluating its historical and theoretical development throughout the works of Publius and Tocqueville, showing how pluralism constitutes a major part in their way of formulating modern liberal democracies both theoretically and practically. Deriving from these analyses, it could be concluded that pluralism and its implications have contributed greatly to the development of the liberal democracy both at the institutional and societal levels.

Madisonian principles of separation of powers, the system of checks and balances, and federalism constituted the institutional dimension of the pluralism whereas Tocquevillian arguments focus more on the societal dimensions as he makes emphasis on the importance of the idea of equality, dangers of the tyranny of a majority, and the existence of associations. Müller contributes this debate by focusing on how a regime (i.e. populism) could be anti-democratic (as well as illiberal) as populists challenge such institutional and societal structures of pluralism that have been outlined by Tocqueville and Publius.

In the end, it becomes clear for the one that, in order to sustain democracy and prevent populism as one of the emerging challenges that need to gain further scholarly attention, there occurs an urgent need to find solutions to promote and sustain the concept and implications of pluralism. Because, as it has been discussed, it could be only with a pluralism that citizens could have the opportunity to enjoy the outcomes of liberal democracy. That is to say, only pluralism may promote a modern liberal democratic environment where diverse interests are protected with the help of individual rights and liberties as well as with the principle of equality. Any attempt aiming to challenge these crucial elements of pluralism and diversity might result in emptying and challenging the real essence and meaning of liberal democracy.

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