

# The "Consent " in the cultural and civilizational development of Kazakhstan (socio-philosophical analysis)

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## Abstract

The article provides a socio-philosophical analysis of approaches to defining the essence and content of the concept of consent as an idea, problem and principle. It applies a phenomenological methodology that allows us to record the phenomenon of consent and how it takes place.

The concept of harmony in Kazakhstan's cultural and civilizational development is an important aspect in overcoming economic, socio-cultural and political crises, gaining socio-political and economic stability by the state.

Only a public system based on the consent of citizens can effectively use the opportunities, resources and mechanisms for further development and qualitative transformation of all spheres of public life.

Achieving social harmony is necessary since the main goal of social modernization is to enter the orbit of sustainable development.

A multi-ethnic and multi-religious Kazakhstan can achieve this goal only by gaining civil peace and democratic consensus. Therefore, efforts should be made to organize and implement a discourse on a wide range of socially significant topics to achieve constructive social agreement.

**Key words:** consent, coordination of interests, models of modern democracy, harmony, unity, solidarity

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## Introduction

The diversity of definitions of "consent" in social and humanitarian knowledge is reflected in the polymorphism of interpretations of different aspects of this phenomenon. "Consent" is resolution, unanimity, solidarity, and unanimity harmony. L. Wittgenstein, in *Philosophical Studies*, noted an important feature of this phenomenon: the consent of people refers to language.

It is a consensus not of opinions but of forms of life. Hence, for there to be similarity and agreement in opinions, it is first necessary to agree about the language used, thus presupposing agreement in the way and forms of life."

Consent is considered today as a universal value and a philosophical category. For example, in the "New Philosophical Encyclopedia" the following definition is given: Consent is a specific form of interaction of objects and processes, reflecting the spontaneous and conscious connection of opposites, their correlation with each other, the achievement of harmony, symmetry and proportionality of the parts of the whole in certain ratios. In a narrower sense, consent is the acceptance by opposites of each other in certain properties and interactions" (Stepin et al., 2010).

Consent is a form of interaction between different parties, assuming their unity and integrity based on equal value and equality of the parties before each other, even though they may have different statuses, thereby ensuring the possibility of conflict-free coexistence. In human relations, consent is important, especially when struggles, conflicts, and contradictions exist. In the interaction of various parties, their similarities are revealed, identities that allow us to form unity and conflict-free integrity. Similarities set up a mutual understanding of the opposing, conflicting

parties, smooth out contradictions and bring polarities closer. Since agreement presupposes similarity, it is unnecessary for agreement to be preceded by a struggle, contradiction, or conflict, i.e., disagreement. Consent is possible initially, i.e. not as a result, but as a starting point.

Consent can be considered as a phenomenon of human relationships, interactions that are carried out at different levels (from interpersonal to interstate). At the level of social life, when talking about consent, the term consent is not always used. "There are a number of terms that correspond to certain types of relations that arise on the basis of the principle of consent: brotherhood, friendship of peoples, civil peace, social unity, solidarity. While the understanding of dissent, social contradictions occurs using the terms non-fraternal relations, enmity, war, class struggle, discord. The contradictions that arise in the social world are different from natural ones, since in nature changes occur evolutionarily, and in society, in addition, revolutionarily or with the help of reforms (Nikovskaya, Yakimets, 2019).

### **Reaching agreement**

Problems of reaching agreement are the subject of research in political science, sociology, philosophy, psychology, management, management theory, and a number of other social sciences and humanities. Most interpretations of the concept under consideration focus on its result, which is evaluated as a compromise and the result of interaction between subjects. Of course, consent in any sphere is an act resulting from the activities of individuals, social groups or States.

The process of reconciling interests and finding their resultant is influenced by many factors, for example, agreement in politics is always determined by time and situational factors. A low level of consent or lack of it can lead to a decrease in confidence in the authorities and, consequently, to a decrease in their legitimacy, or in difficult situations - to social tension and destabilization of society (Grinberg, 2012).

Thus, consent acts as a certain arithmetic mean, a certain resultant (in terms of mathematics in relation to politics) of various factors. The basis of consent in modern society: democracy, stable social development and political order.

The concept of consent in a broad sense is one of the possible emerging models of relations between political institutions and subjects in the political sphere and allowing them to interact. However, it can also be considered as a result of the interaction of political factors, which is expressed in the coordination of the positions of the parties on topical issues of development.

It is possible to distinguish several subject fields in the analysis of the concept of consent:

- mechanisms of its achievement (technological component);
- forms of interaction between social communities and groups;
- the value aspect of the "concept of consent" category (the moral component);
- socio-psychological factors that affect the process of achieving consent in society in general and political consent in particular;
- socio-cultural aspects that have a significant impact on the worldview and behavior of people, as well as on the process of socialization in general;
- the impact of the crisis state of society on the process of reaching agreement;
- the phenomenon of the "concept of consent" is interesting for the researcher, first of all, in the context of social changes (RANEPА, 2014).

We would like to note the universality of the meanings of the concept of "consent" - the multiplicity of ways to achieve it and ideas about consent implies its multi-aspect and multi-faceted vision. An indispensable condition for raising the question of consent is the understanding of the factors of the need to change the political landscape, change, change the vector of development. There is no doubt that consent

is necessary at every stage of the progressive movement of society, because it is its presence and meanings that determine the future of society, in fact, it formulates the program of "self-development of society".

The political reality of the modern world is characterized by a change in the political landscape under the influence of new trends, one of the manifestations of which is the changing model of modern democracy in developed countries. Despite the abundance of theoretical concepts of democracy proposed by political scientists in the twentieth century, a number of modern scientists express ideas about the transition of modern democracy to a new quality, or a new stage of development, which Professor of sociology at the University of Warwick (UK) Colin Crouch describes as "post-democracy" (Wittgenstein, 1998).

In modern Western political science, attempts are made to rethink the existing models and concepts of democracy, while one of the areas of active theoretical research is the study of the possibilities of their integration. For example, the Belgian political philosopher Chantal Mouffe, author of the theory of Post-Politics, writes in the article "Towards an Agonistic Model of Democracy" about "a new paradigm of democracy, a model of 'democracy of discussion', which is now becoming the most rapidly developing direction".

The researcher focuses on the characterization of the views of scientists who are followers of this approach: "supporters of the democracy of discussion argue that it is still possible to reach a consensus that was deeper than "simple agreement on procedures", a consensus that could be called "moral"... The peculiarity of their approach is to support a certain kind of normative rationality, as well as to try to provide a solid foundation of loyalty to liberal democracy by reconciling the idea of democratic sovereignty with the protection of liberal institutions."

According to Chantal Mouffe, the "democracy of discussion" has formed two main schools, influenced by John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas. She characterizes them as follows: "the point of contact between these two types of democracy of discussion is the assertion of the possibility of relying on power and legality on certain forms of public justification, as well as the belief in the existence of rationality, which would have not only an instrumental, but also a normative dimension: "reasonable" according to Rawls, "communicative rationality" according to Habermas. In both cases, a sharp distinction is drawn between "simple consent" and "rational consensus", and the field of politics in the proper sense of the word is identified with a discussion between reasonable people guided by the principle of impartiality (Muff, 2014).

**The methodological basis for studying the concept of consent** can be both general scientific methods and private methods of political science, sociology, cultural studies, philosophy and a number of other political sciences. According to Professor A. I. Solovyov, "the political space creates its own theoretical aura, suggesting a special form of application of various methodological approaches to all parameters and aspects of the political."

The use of an integrated approach allows us to qualitatively analyze complex social processes. The institutional approach to the problem of political consent offers an examination of the role and functions of political institutions in the process of ensuring procedures for achieving political consent. The activity approach to political consent consists in the fact that consent is considered as the final result of activities aimed at coordinating the interests of social groups and the authorities (Mikhailova, 2016).

When analyzing the stages of achieving political agreement, it seems appropriate to use a number of methodological approaches proposed by political science. These include, first of all, behaviorism (Merriam, 1993; Lasswell, 1965) and incrementalism (Taylor, Lindblom, Dahl, 1953), which identify various key variables in assessing the

political behavior of subjects, which together have a significant impact on the coordination of the political positions of subjects.

The concept of consent is also a state of "balance" in the political sphere, achieved as a result of mutual concessions and on the basis of agreements between the parties. Political actors, as a rule, have divergent interests, often offer opposite methods of achieving socially significant goals, and most often are not interested in reaching agreement and do not even strive for it (Weber, 2021).

The phenomenon of the concept of consent includes variables of different order and level. The structural elements of political consent are the subject and object of consent in politics. The subjects of the concept of consent in the political field are the bodies of legislative and executive power, officials (who have authority), political parties and socio-political movements and organizations, interest groups, pressure groups, public figures, journalists, social groups, ordinary citizens. In the context of the transition to the information society, the mass media and communications are playing an increasingly important role.

The concept of consent will almost always be associated with the management activities of the subjects. A compromise reached in the process of discussing, preparing and implementing a political solution will also be a real form of agreement in politics. Agreement in politics, as a kind of consensus, involves the convergence of the positions of the participants on the basis of possible benefits and preferences that the contracting parties will ultimately receive. However, hierarchical relationships between subjects largely determine the "vector of consent".

In our opinion, it is necessary to rethink the concept of "consent" in relation to the political sphere and other areas. In the context of globalization and informatization, meanings, symbols, and mechanisms of consent are changing. For example, "a sign of the moral health of society" is a value agreement, which is practically absent today in the conditions of mass culture, a large-scale spiritual civilizational crisis. It seems that it will take quite a long time to form new conditions for a new state of value agreement (World Economic Forum: Network Readiness Index, 2014).

An important condition for humanity's survival and continued existence will be an ever-expanding dialogue between countries, peoples, and cultures. It presupposes the achievement of a certain consensus on the main problems, including in terms of coordinating efforts to solve global problems, which can be a confirmation of the understanding of unity while at the same time preserving the diversity of the modern world. Despite the significant gaps in the level of development of the world's countries, future politicians will inevitably have to agree.

It seems that globalization puts on the world agenda, along with the need to solve many global problems, the development and implementation of the "global theory of consent" in practice. In our opinion, one of the most promising technologies of the future will be the "technology of consent", considered as a technologically and socially mediated process of coordinating positions on topical issues of human development in the context of globalization (Crouch, 2010).

**Is the "Consent Concept" project possible for Kazakhstan today?** Of course, it cannot be comprehensive and complete, but pursuing it by all the factors of the political process ensures stability and social development. According to the Doctor of Sociological Sciences L. I. Nikovskaya: "The emerging trends in the development of the country's socio-political system, the activation of civil society, and the increased demands for improving the efficiency of the functioning of the public administration system have significantly increased the social demand for the scale and quality of civil participation, the system of interaction between government and civil society.

An important task of such interaction is to establish a meaningful dialogue between civil society institutions, on the one hand, and state power and management structures,

on the other, and to overcome mutual distrust among civil servants in civil society initiatives, mechanisms of public control and independent expertise."

There is no doubt about the relevance of the problem under consideration for the Russian political elite, which formulates the country's development goals, methods and means of achieving them (Report on the methodological seminar of the Research Committee on Political Communication Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences "Communicative Audit of the political sphere", 2014).

In modern Kazakhstan, there is virtually no discourse about the concept of consent in society, the need to achieve it, or, in extreme cases, putting this problem on the political "agenda".

However, the search for a national idea in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, an appeal to the origins-the past, an attempt to rethink the complex, controversial periods of national history, the increasing attention of the state and government to the issues of patriotism, the understanding of the need to educate the younger generation of civil identity-all this indicates the awareness of the importance and significance of these issues and problems.

Kazakhstan's model of consent, based on the traditions of domestic political history and political ideas of the past (in our opinion, political scientists and politicians still have to rethink the history of political thought in Kazakhstan in the context of modern realities), will allow us to find the best ways to develop the country. Its use concerning Kazakhstan's practices will prevent social conflicts or minimize their negative consequences (Stepin et al., 2010).

Public problems are usually the "agenda" of the administration, but the task of the authorities is, to a certain extent, to structure it, to formulate problems that require urgent solutions and proposals for the implementation of political solutions. Coordination of interests at the stage of preparation and adoption of political decisions will be a form of political agreement.

Reaching an agreement is difficult in conditions of social division in times of "turmoil" or destabilization of the political situation. At the same time, in fairly "quiet" periods of history, political consent serves as a factor and a condition for dynamic social development.

One of the socially significant results of achieving the concept of consent will be the value agreement in society, but this is more a symbolic result than a real one. But the implementation of socially significant projects is already a real result of the agreement (Neveleva, 2002).

Consent acts as an idea in the context of social solidarity and partnership teachings. More effective are the transformations made by joint efforts, i.e., without violence against each other. They allow us to achieve harmonious integrity and optimal order in society. In solidarity, mutual assistance, mutual support, fraternity between people, partnership, and cooperation (all of them exclude mechanical communication), the attitude of consent is manifested, the significance of which is to ensure not only survival but stability and security of human existence, as well as to preserve the integrity of the world in all its diversity, thereby sustainable development.

At a time of danger that threatens the existence of not only an individual but also the whole of humanity, the importance of the principle of consent, which fixes the necessary basis for the relationship of people in the world, is growing. Its essence is not only to act in consent but initially to predict the possible struggle when achieving an agreement. This is the key for a confident existence and development in the present and future.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, consent acts as a leading idea in the context of social solidarity and partnership teachings. The relations of consent in society are extremely important, as they contribute to the resolution of social contradictions, and not in a revolutionary

(violent) way, but peacefully, thereby ensuring the stability of social development. Solidarity, mutual assistance, mutual support, cooperation, and cooperation partnership, which are forms of relations of consent, are creative in nature since they imply mutual communication on the basis of common interests, goals, norms, etc., respect for equal rights, which contributes to the formation of unity not mechanical, but organic and conflict-free integrity, thereby stability. Without a relationship of consent, the existence of society and the individual in it is impossible, so they can be considered a principle-a guide to act together. Joint actions and activities of people in society ensure their social life. The connection of people on the basis of equal rights in public life is the basis of their solidarity and partnership as a conscious, voluntary desire to stay together based on trust in each other. Consent, being social and dialogical, is a generic principle in human nature, without which it is impossible to coexist peacefully and develop steadily (Malyshevsky, 2004).

Consent is an objective phenomenon, and not only socio-political but also socio-cultural. Without it, it is impossible to sustain the existence of society and the entire human world, designated as a whole by culture. Since there are inevitable contradictions, disagreements caused by differences, diversity, and agreement – an important and necessary phenomenon of human existence. The consent of a person with himself and with others allows you to feel the integrity of the external and internal world. Although consent exists intermittently, not always, it acts as a way to resolve contradictions, resolve conflicts, and solve problems at different levels (from interpersonal to international and global) and can be a starting point, a paradigm in relations between people, peoples and states

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