

Iakovleva L. «Damocles' sword» of power: factors of legitimacy in ancient Athens

The article is devoted to the study of the factors of the legitimacy of power in the Ancient World. Legitimacy is "the Sword of Damocles" of the era of antiquity; the doubts of citizens about the legitimacy of power is a direct way to its loss. That is why the rationale for the authority of power and the right to power become one of the central one for ancient philosophy and politics.

The factors of the legitimacy of the power of the monarchy (religion, traditional domination), aristocracy (noble origin, military victories), tyranny (charismatic legitimacy of personal power), demos (collective legitimacy, rationalism) are singled out. "Ostracism" as an obvious result of the process of delegitimization of power is interpreted. The peculiarities of Pericles' reforms, which are based on rational organization of power, introduction of payment for work for the sake of public benefit ("mystophoria"), democracy, are noted.

In the era of antiquity, firstly, in the political world history the need for power to be recognized, supported and legitimated was clearly articulated. Economic well-being, political stability and security of policies depended on the level of legitimacy of power. In the era of antiquity, the "Sword of Damocles" of needs for recognition and support hung over power, from this time onwards – forever. However, the authorities can choose what will be the basis of legitimate governance, what factors will determine the fate of power.

The era of the early Archaic in Athens was characterized by the decisive influence of the aristocracy, whose power was based on wealth and economic strength. In addition, an important source of legitimacy of the aristocracy was religion.

The citizens of the Athenian Police not only realized that they were the source of power, but also sought a foundation of power that would ensure its legitimacy. The abandonment of violence was the main aspect in this search for legitimacy.

Solon, using his own authority, received extraordinary powers, i.e., he legitimized his own power both among the aristocracy and for the demos. One of the most important lessons of Solon's reforms for the legitimacy of the era of antiquity is that the authority of a centrist, who, as an archon, carried out reforms, lasted only for a year. The innovations, introduced by Solon, remained valid in Athens over the next decades; instead, the problem of the legitimacy of the aristocracy's power was not solved.

The archaic stage was characterized by the rule of the kings (basileans), whose legitimacy relied on royal origin and found its basis in traditional domination, religion, military valour and victories in the Panhellenic games. A very important, even decisive component of legitimacy was the identity of the Greeks as free citizens as opposed to the Persians who worshiped the king as God and their "hospitality", which became the foundation of cosmopolitan legitimacy.

The classic stage of the development of the Athenian policy is the domination of the aristocracy, which from time to time gave power to tyrants. The governance of the latter represented a reliance on the charismatic type of legitimacy. They relied on their own authority, and their descendants could not claim to power. The tyrants, as charismatic leaders, introduced reforms, and most importantly, they actively fought against the aristocracy (the descendents of which, in fact, they were), considered the aristocracy as rivals in the struggle for power, and thus prepared the ground for strengthening the power of the demos.

The democratic stage, which began with the reforms of Kimon and reached its peak during the reign of the "first citizen" Pericles, can be called a period of domination of a rational-legal type of legitimacy. After all, Pericles himself was a "great rationalist"; his power was based neither on tribal relations, nor on religion and tradition.

This list is not exhaustive, but it allows us to see that in the era of ancient Greece, the boundary principles and fundamental ideas about the phenomenon of the legitimacy of power were formed. Its role in the political life of the policy was determined. All the risks, disadvantages and dangers of each type of legitimacy also appeared in the policy. In the end, the Athenians themselves developed and implemented the extreme form of delegitimization of the political leader – ostracism.

Key words: legitimacy of power, Pericles, authority, ostracism, delegitimization, democracy.