



# On Stability and Sustainability of Political System

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## **On Stability and Sustainability of Political System**

Vasila Hajiyeva  
Azerbaijan  
E-mail: vasila\_h@hotmail.com

### **Abstract**

On the one hand, the integrity of political system calls for its division into diversity of elements, on the one hand; and it attributes its elements to identical spiritual environment and basic features of social system, on the other. This forms an indispensable precondition for elements' complementariness and integrity.

Integrity and completeness of system, its sovereignty is dependent upon correct subordination and balance of its elements. For this reason, changes of borders, measurements and functions of elements may be construed as process directed to changing system's idea and goals.

Subordination between intra-system elements within the framework of vertical elements is conducive to regulating these relations, while the problem of balance lies, to greater degree, in the elements of horizontal relations. Its protection is aimed at ensuring democratization.

Activity, sovereignty and effectiveness of system as organism are dependent upon logic, completeness, accuracy and harmony of horizontal and vertical relations.

Vertical relations within political system call for an appropriate force behind an element at superior position; for an appropriate force behind an element at inferior position.

Internal vertical and horizontal relations of sub-system within political system are reflective of norms and principles within general structure of political system.

Acting as energetic subject of social system, political subject contributes to the creation of legal and economic systems; formation of cultural system. Political system seeks to uncover possible pressures arising from sub-systems of social system it embraces, to render them harmless.

Like sub-system of regional system, political system is exposed to direct and indirect pressures (by means of economic, legal and cultural systems). Correlation between counter-pressures and pressures upon regional system is accounted for by correlation between specific weight of political system and that of regional system.

**Keywords:** political system, element, balance, subordination, relations

## **Paper**

### ***Political system as structure and idea. Problem of idea's subject***

The scientific literature defines the political system as “political structures, norms and ideas, totality of processes” which apply, to that territory of the state. The gist of the system becomes apparent in its structure, relations, functions and directions, while its criteria are based on the origin and subsequent formation of the system. To our thinking, it would be appropriate to explore, in the first turn, the origin of the system proper before forming theoretical views on system's relations and problems. The formation of the system taking place under the effect of external factors notwithstanding, it is, nevertheless, active as structure or idea and goes back to the common source and creative subject. Taken as the initial idea may be the constitution (sub-system as an element of the political system); as the creative subject – the state (another sub-system). If the state “is unwilling” to function as the single political structure or the subject and is interested in establishing the politician system, hence, it is poised for confining itself with certain standards and boundaries within the framework of certain territory and thus reducing to then to the level of a component of the organism.

In fact, the point here is about the security and development of the state. When adjusted for the restrictions imposed on powers, functions and scope of activity of the political system being established by the state, these boundaries and restrictions are binding to establish necessary ties with other social spheres and systems as sub-systems of the political system. In other words, the state comes out as one of the ideological authors of the political system and its active subject. Other subjects operate outside the system and raise system-forming proposals before the active subject, i.e. the state.

### ***Problem of alien element in the political system and its development (“cancerous tumour” of the political system). Causes and culprits of the problem***

When construing the political system as organism based on system principles, it becomes apparent that the ideological nature of the system, its functioning, existence and development as a single whole are dependent upon harmony and mutual complementariness between congenial elements.

The condition sine qua non is that all the elements should be of common origin, characterized by common features our stuff composed of identical items. In other words, all the elements of the political system should echo features of the identical environment and social system. Otherwise, it becomes impossible for them to feed and complement each other, to serve the common idea. Thrusting alien elements on the system takes place die to the interests of some

political subjects (or with the purpose of pursuing geopolitical dividends through pressuring the system or destroying it completely).

The after-effect is different. An alien element is reminiscent of “cancerous tumour” on the body of the political organism: it feeds on organism and simultaneously gets support from external medium. The most radical remedy is to solve the problem once and for all. As a rule, the problem is thoroughly and deliberately stirred up by external political actors and is bound to be extirpated inside the system proper. If no changes are possible for objective reasons (ethno-demographic situation, religious, cultural, social distinctions, etc.), the best way out of the impasse is to avoid the problem’ being transformed into the sort of a system (organism). In other words, it is essential to destroy a network of intra-element (intra sub-system) connections in their first stages; to frustrate, in every possible way, extra-system political connections (this time, it is not intended to damage inter-state relations).

### ***Balance Between Intra-System Elements***

It is obvious that the formation and targets of the political system are aimed at serving the basic idea – constitution and state ideology. Hence powers, dimensions and functions of intra-system relations, elements and subsystems have to be brought into conformity with requirements of the idea and thus be helpful in its realization. That said, the problem of balance between elements evolves into the problem of protection of the system, its make-up and constitution. Thus, frustration of structural functions and boundaries of any element (state institutions, bureaucracy, local autonomous power, separate branches of political culture, etc.) is fraught with the risk of changes in the political regime, ideology and structure.

As is seen, any attempts of the element to modify its boundaries, dimensions and functions are none other than naked endeavor to alter the ideology, make-up and targets of the system. However, realization of this endeavor in practice or any activities on this track are accompanied by chaos and crisis. For instance, inflation of bureaucratic apparatus, its politisation, establishment of police regime, imposition of martial law, etc. lead to the restriction of freedoms and strengthening of stability (anti-democratic stability), while attempts to expand powers of autonomous structures, political parties and blocs, democratization of social groups and enhancement of their role in the political system and the restriction of political power result in mass confrontation, chaos and crisis.

### ***Horizontal and vertical relations***

The balance between intra-system elements finds its parallel primarily among elements with horizontal relations, i.e. sub-systems. In a sense, the democratization is directed to ensuring the balance between elements of one and the same order.

Logic, complementariness, accuracy and harmony typical for horizontal relations of unilevel sub-systems, vertical relations based on subordination between higher- and lower-level institutions are to be consistent with the constitution and natural regularities and thus ensure the realization of system principles and the formation of the system capable of operating like a congenial organism. Thus, if a medium-level ministry is responsible for drafting laws of

constitutional and strategic importance, while a legislative body as higher level political structure is in no position to adopt a law without the permission of the above medium-level ministry. From this it follows that the effectiveness of the system is out of the question.

In considering that the vertical relations attend to the system's subordination, it is obvious that these relations call for an adequate force to back each level. In some parts of the system these laws being secured through court and executive bodies notwithstanding, it is the public opinion and related authority that performs a role of pressuring factor. In this respect, the problems of democratization balance and subordination are adapted to the entire political system and its regularities, and thus an opportunity arises to solve the problems above and secure the integrity of organizations through the intensification of the lower level of the social basis of the public opinion and organizations.

Where appropriate, vertical and horizontal relations of system's institutions, related standards and principles should reflect regulations between structures and institutions of the political system. The point is about the regulations which are adopted by the political culture of the society.

### ***Manifestations of sub-system's structural problems within the political system***

Owing to the fact that elements which form the political system are big system with their own internal structures each, they are conventionally titled as sub-systems. Note that these institutions perform functions of element within the political system and thus contribute to the establishment of system-shaping connections. On the other hand, they are complex systems with their subordination principles, horizontal and vertical relations. Activities of sub-systems and their structural distinctions manifest themselves within the political system. Changes and implications in this sphere are of complex nature, so the entire system risks being fully transformed or, even worse, destroyed completely.

Sub-systems, or elements are diverse, and it would be appropriate to consider them separately in view of the fact that the means of their manifestation within the political system are different.

It should be stressed that internal discipline, principles of structure formation standards and rules of activity of the leading political parties are not different appreciably. Processes going on this track are those of medium level, unofficial; or reserved and secret disposition. That said, standards and rules of competition tend toward non-democratism, authoritarianism. Even despite the intra-Party democratization develops at the higher level (inter-Party relations), it is faced with great obstacles. This is vividly apparent in proposing candidates in the course of pre-election campaign. A question of political activity and the selection of mainstay (domestic oligarchs, foreign political, economic, religious, etc. actors) arises in view of relations within the framework of the political system and thus contributes to the identification of related problems.

Serious security problems come out into the foreground due to the cadre and structural questions of the group in power. It is obvious that the population with low level of political culture is practically incompetent in the election nicety. It is not astonishing where a political group with no professional

background wins elections and comes to power. In case where the population votes for one political grouping in an effort to protect itself against another grouping, the elect political grouping has sometimes to replenish its cadre potential with representatives of the competing camp. As a consequence, a situation dangerous both for the power and the political forces arises. For instance, when representatives of the national-liberation movement came to power in Azerbaijan they staffed their cadre reserve with pro-Russian professionals (Communists), following which unexpected developments broke out.

Problems of the structures of ideology arise from the political culture of society (through the public poll), bitter historical experience of the political system, as well as intensification of regional and global political subjects. Each of the factors above is intended to specify the structure of the political ideology, to change, renovate, actualize and finally withdraw it from the agenda. Note that this process does not occur at the ideological level only; it tends toward standards and regulations of the political system, internal and external political line of the state, internal structural relations and connections of the system, targets of the constitution and political system.

***Involvement of social system, regional and global systems in the sub-systems (particularly ideology) formation process. Degree and dimensions of the involvement***

By their basic qualitative indices (relation to power and ensuring questions), sub-systems of the political system are political elements. Contributing to the formation of these political elements are elements both of political and non-political spheres.<sup>1</sup> Instrumental in this process are ideological, political culture and public opinion institutions. Actively involved in shaping these institutions are religious, national consciousness, cultural and educational structures. Of particular importance is the factor of subordination between them. Account has to be taken of the fact that the said subordination is variable, and this unsteadiness results in re-shaping the institutions above or, at least, modifying their appearances. These changes manifest themselves within the political system as well. In some cases, the political system declines from accepting them; in other cases, it undergoes reforms, embarks upon the path of evolution. The process is characterized by stirring-up of regional and global systems, elements of these systems. The stirring-up may be of progressive or reactionary nature.

It would be appropriate to recall that if elements of the spiritual sphere and subjective content are active in forming a part of sub-systems-institutions (political culture ideology, etc.), objective conditions (economic, demographic, cadre potential, social indices, etc.) come out into the foreground in shaping another part of institutions (administrative bodies, political parties, etc.)

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<sup>1</sup> Of interest is the fact that the political system enters into contact with other spheres, i.e. elements of other systems establish relations with separate elements of the political system and thus experience bilateral influence and pressure. At the same time, the structure of political institutions and their formation take place with the joint participation of political and non-political elements.

***Self-regulation, alterations and potentialities of the political system. terms of self-defense***

In turn, the political system is a sub-system of the social system, just as approaches of the political system to the social system and its other sub-systems. The state, being internal element notwithstanding, comes out as active subject of the political system, while the latter plays a role of active subject of the social system. Thus, it independently creates legal and economic systems, gives impetus and shapes the cultural system. These systems are guarantor which is intended to ensure sustainability and security of the political system. These systems are subject to effect and counter-effect. Regularly affected and pressured by other systems, the political system is seeking to independently oppose these pressures and make them serve its own interests. With that end in view, it attempts to regulate these systems properly on the basis of appropriate acts and programs. Iston termed incoming and outgoing influences as “entry” and “exit”. (Iston, 1997).

At the same time, the political system is a sub-system of the regional system. Pertaining to this system is not only the regional political system but also its supporting systems: regional law, economic and cultural systems. As soon as the state becomes an irrefutable leader of the region capable of dictating political, legal and economic values and principles, the political system is prevalent over role and influence of other sub-systems of the regional system. The role of the political system of this type within the regional system is similar to the one played by the state within the political system and, in turn, by the political system within the social system. In most cases, the point is about strong influence and pressure of political, economic, legal and cultural factors of the region. The correlation between the counter-effect of the political system and the affected regional system is tantamount to the correlation between a specific weight of the political system and that of the regional system.

A very difficult situation arises in cases where the political system is not confined to one region (from cultural and political values standpoint) but to several regional systems. It is excessive toil to specify an adequate line for the political system to integrate into the regional system. However, the geopolitical structure of the state specifies the political line, and in spite of the fact that intra-system political actors are faced with contradictions, which, in the end, despite turmoil in the system, reduce to the common denominator because of the dictate of objective conditions. Yet, the political choice taken separately cannot resolve the problem. The relationship with several regions manifests itself in cultural and social spheres, demographic reality, while regional differences are traced in population's values, mode of life, culture, even economy. For this reason it is impossible to affiliate the population to a specific regional system. Though it is possible to adapt the political system to requirements of the regional system, all the attempts to bring its supporting systems (cultural, legal, etc.) into an appropriate position are unavailing. Under these circumstances, both the political system and its targets become worthless, since favorable conditions are then available to violate the stability and create problems. An eloquent testimony to this is systems of Turkey, Russia and Ukraine. This system of relationship, along with serious structural and external (probably, bigger organism's native and working elements) problems (threat of

graft rejection), disposes of certain opportunities of economic, trade and geographical nature<sup>1</sup>, particularly important for regions as strategic target, and as means of entry into the global system. The point is that when choosing the regional system as target of the political system, an indispensable condition (quality) is the entry into the global system. Naturally, at certain historical stages a certain regional system predetermines the global system, its values and structure; if successfully on this track, it spreads its dominance over the whole of the globe. Instead of joining a certain regional system, though beyond the global system and backward, it would be more optimal to side with a complex, contradictory political system at the intersection of several regional systems.

The fact that the political system is susceptible to changes, adaptation to other systems and self-regulation is an indispensable condition of longevity. For this to happen, intra-system horizontal and vertical relations, as well as authorities and functions of elements should be brought into harmony, conformity with natural laws, and the political system has to be based, at least, on one level, not one element, nor one entity. Thus, if a subject in charge of creation, regulation and control of the system is run by the head of the state, the steadiness of the system is as fragile as one person's or his family's destiny. The power realizes the above and, as a result, finds itself at the crossroads. Cited as an example is a dilemma with which Saudi Arabia is faced today. (Albright, 2007). Meanwhile, the political system, perpetually adapting itself to other systems, has to reconcile with changes and development. Changes and self-regulations are essential functions of the political system. (Olshanskiy & Penkov, 2005). Sovereign status of the self-changing and developing political system becomes apparent when, at least, one stratum of society with its own level, and self-controlling autonomous structures come out as its source. In this case, it may turn into self-controllable and regularly developing working mechanism.

In the course of adaptation of the political system to other systems, some of its institutions (political parties, power, etc.) come out not as a single object but as a mutually related subject, active participant and functionary of the alteration process. Political culture and public opinion institutions obtain information from other spheres – systems, change appropriately and then convey to political organizations, urge them transform and thus play a part of bearer of the adaptation process and concurrently that of a subject. The system has potentialities to change within the framework of the constitution and national (state) security. When these potentialities run out and transformation requirements are not complied with, the constitution crisis breaks out, and the problem of its alteration comes into the foreground. Under such circumstances, the problem resolution is dependent upon a balance between amendments in the constitution and ensuring of the national security.

Changes and reforms in the system are intended both for system institutions and relations between them. Reforms may be normative and functional. Where normative and functional are mutually complementary, reforms within one of them entail respective changes in another. Note that the need in reforms is never resultant from lower levels of the system. Sometimes this need matures

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<sup>1</sup> Resulting from the objective necessity is the military system which as stronger element does exist, develop and preserve its fighting efficiency.



at the upper levels, and not always reforms being initiated by the upper stratum are welcomed by the lower stratum. Reforms are always topical for the political system. Also, the ability of the system to protect itself is primarily dependent upon the resolution of the problem.

### ***Main targets of the system***

The building of the system and its orientations are directly related to its main target. These may openly be declared or kept closed. Thus, in non-democratic countries, specifically, authoritarian, traditional ones, where the power is in the hands of one person or clan, the main target of the system is to secure interests of the ruling group (authority). In doing so, the power is put on the same level with the state and the political system which this state is eager to build, including its supporting systems, are aimed at keeping the power of a single person or group. In all other systems the target is changed with a view of protecting the ruling stratum. It should be noted that irrespective of the level of democracy there may be a single stratum capable of building the power. No principle of the building of the power with the joint participation of the people and all the strata has so far been realized.

The power seeks to formulate ideology on the basis of power's origin, and other principal target of the system is to protect this ideology. The system is thereby eager to protect the present type of the state, ensure its territorial integrity, etc.

### ***Directions of political processes and purpose of the system***

As has been noted above, the state-power is engaged in shaping the political system and its institutions, identifying authorities, potentialities and functions of related institutions, specifying purposes and targets of the system. When building and regulating the system, the purpose here is to make political processes serve targets of the political system. For this reason, some authors tend to believe that the political activity, processes and decisions may be identified through the use of formal and informal regulations of political institutions (formal regulations of political institutions, informal political institutions and political culture are interpreted as informal regulations). (Rorstein, 1999).

However, this process is of complex nature, for not always this objective is realized, nor directions of political processes serve these targets. Forces involved in the problem regulation (active element – sub-system and its supporting social basis) are in need of support within the system proper and outside it.

Another problem here is the necessity of stability and balance as set forth by Iston, which are aimed at urging processes toward the specific target. (Iston, 1997).

### ***Adaptation of the political system to other systems. transformation activity***

The dependence of system's sustainability, security and durability upon harmonious relations with other systems has been shown above. It was stressed that the system should regularly be brought into conformity with related systems; that reforms are essential to be carried out on this track. However, the

process should proceed in two ways; at the same time, external systems have to be adapted to the political system and transformation activity carried out. Basic principles and values of economic, legal and cultural systems in the capacity of supporting structures should be fed by the present political and ideological norms and values.

Even though relations of sub-systems of the social system within the framework of the political system as a whole are taken as horizontal, that is not to say that these should be treated uniquely and unilaterally. Where appropriate, the political system does independently form the systems above. When merging economic, legal and cultural systems with the political system as integral organism, the current norms and regulations are sure to be applied.

Depending upon the state's might, its specific political, military and economic weight in the region and the world as a whole, the process is taking its course in close connection with regional and global systems. For this reason, if norms and regulations are out of use in the course of processes taking place due to great powers, the situation varies in minor states. The political system appears to be subordinated to the effect of the current norms and values. Norms come into effect from abroad both directly and through the mediation of cultural system.

Under such circumstances, the viability of the political system and its development are fall into dependence upon intra-system and extra-system balance. The intra-system balance is an indispensable condition for positioning of political institutions, boundaries and authorities within the system; for inviolability of dimensions and boundaries of each institution; for regulation of power sources which patronize relations of the system to comply with natural laws. Note that the intra-system balance outstrips the extra-system balance and is more complex. Still, it is the extra-system balance that regulates these relations on the basis of objective laws, geographic, ethnic, demographic, economic and military factors.

### ***Economic, social and cultural crises and threat to the political system***

Should the harmony between the political system and other systems be violated, a problem of "misunderstanding" and "inadmissibility" arises among systems which finally lead to political and economic crises within economic, cultural, social, regional and global systems. As crises and difficulties aggravate, threats, first, to the power, then the state and finally to the political system intensify. The system tends toward collapse. At the moment, reforms are belated and the situation is fraught with explosion. The question is that these reforms may stir up the system's immediate destruction. An eloquent testimony to this is the USSR disintegration experience. Disabled, in static conditions, the Soviet system was doomed to collapse. Gorbachev started reforms with the objective of saving the Empire notwithstanding, these reforms, instead, stepped up the disintegration of the system. It is like a surgical operation of a seriously ill: if there is a chance to save him, it is essential to prepare his organism for the operation. For this reason, certain regulations and changes are required for establishing relations with extra-system subjects (social, economic, cultural groups, regional and global power centers, etc.). In responding to intra-system regulations and extra-system alterations, it would be

appropriate to make some changes to remove the crisis; following the removal of the crisis, it is time to start reforms and thus protect the system and prevent the crisis (referred to as “stress” by Iston).

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