Pluralism, religious freedoms and democracy in Guanajuato

Pluralismo, libertades religiosas y democracia en Guanajuato

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Abstract

On the issue of the research, I lectured about the limitations of census data from Statistics and Geography (INEGI) for the full understanding of religious pluralism in the state of Guanajuato. With regard to religion, I have argued that the city of Guanajuato is not only pure Catholicism and concepts such as' religious diversity ',' plurality / religious pluralization, 'deregulation' and 'Reconfiguration of religious beliefs and practices' that are some distinctive marks of the post-seculares'3 companies belong in the above entity. Also in the first part of the research, I realized that in the city of Guanajuato the presence of multiple religiosity is evident, and is a city inhabited by several D (d) IOSes simultaneously. In the state capital, the socio-religious universe is shared by Catholics, followers of other non- Catholic religions are Jehovah's Witnesses, and Honey Wheat, Christian Church, Methodist, Baptist, Mormon, Eastern religions, among others denominations. Additionally, Guanajuato should emphasize that in the presence of seers and counselors (as) spiritual who have dedicated themselves to esoteric practices are also denoted.

Resumen

En la parte problemática de la investigación, he disertado sobre las limitaciones de los datos censales del Instituto de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) para la cabal comprensión del pluralismo religioso en el estado de Guanajuato. En lo concerniente a la religiosidad, he sostenido que la ciudad de Guanajuato no es solamente catolicismo puro y que conceptos como 'diversidad religiosa', 'pluralidad/pluralización religiosa, 'desregularización' y 'reconfiguración de las creencias y prácticas religiosas' que son algunos marcos distintivos de las sociedades post- seculares'3 tienen cabida en la susodicha entidad. Asimismo, en la primera parte de la investigación, he dado cuenta que en la ciudad de Guanajuato se evidencia la presencia de múltiples religiosidades, y es una ciudad habitada por varios D(d)ioses al mismo tiempo. En la capital del estado, el universo socio- religioso está compartido por los católicos, los seguidores de otras religiones no católicas como son: los Testigos de Jehová, Trigo y Miel, Iglesia Cristiana, Metodista, Bautista, Mormones, religiones orientales, entre otras denominaciones. Adicionalmente, merece subrayar que en Guanajuato se denota también la presencia de videntes y consejeros (as) espirituales que se han dedicado a prácticas esotéricas.

Pluralism, Religious Freedom, Democracy, Guanajuato

Pluralismo, Libertades Religiosas, Democracia, Guanajuato

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Introduction

This presentation is a fairly abbreviated version of the chapter I wrote for the book entitled: Liberties and political participation: Challenges for democratic consolidation in Guanajuato. In my chapter entitled Thinking about democratic consolidation and the construction of citizenship from religious freedoms: a case study of the city of Guanajuato, I proceeded to an empirical analysis of the 'religious freedoms' in gestation in the city of the state to arrive at a theoretical construction through which I explained the way in which the city of Guanajuato is embarking on a dynamic of transformation of traditional values. I interpret this as a positive signal that can have a favorable impact on the process of consolidating democracy in the entity.

Roughly, we must examine the relevance of this research taking into account the general project on the one hand, and on the other, take into account the current debates that are taking place in the social sciences and especially from the sociology of religions, on the interconnections between 'religious field' and 'political field'

Throughout the time that it is imparted to me, the great argument that I am going to develop has to do with the idea that: "There can be no consolidated democracy without 'recognition' (Taylor, 2009; Gutmann, 2009) and the valuation of pluralism that has to be reflected in the daily coexistence of any democratic society. In the case of today's presentation, I will deal with the pluralism of religious minorities, more specifically.

Thus, in this presentation, I argue that "there can be no consolidated democracy in Guanajuato as in Mexico if we continue to think of values as fixed and rigid elements. In a democratic society, it is the society itself that marks the change in values. Therefore, it is a contradiction to try to deny human rights to third parties using slogans such as "Guanajuato, land of values."

c   One of the sources for the theoretical support of my argument is the proposal of the "Radical Democracy" elaborated by the political theorist Chantal Mouffe, who based on an interesting theoretical and epistemological discussion with John Rawls, Norberto Bobbio, Bryan S. Turner, Quentin Skinner, Michael Walzer, among others.

Propose the idea that "democracy in its modern sense cannot be dissociated from a series of concepts such as 'citizenship', 'political community', 'pluralism', 'freedoms' and 'Rights'. Which leads Chantal Mouffe to define citizenship as a system of socio-political constitutional rights available (and / or guaranteed to) all members of a given political community (Mouffe, 1992: 6). But why was it crucial for me to make use of the proposal of the theorist of Radical Democracy? In the background of my chapter, I developed two brief arguments.

First, radical democracy is relevant to understanding the debates on pluralism and democratic consolidation by recognizing that in order to achieve social diversity and plurality, it is necessary for knowing subjects to fight to achieve the creation of a flexible community that reflects their identities.

Second, because Chantal Mouffe and her collaborators: a) understand democratic politics as a discursive construction that recognizes the multiplicity of social logics; b) they place modern democracy at the crossroads of political liberalism and classical democracy; c) they present democracy as a regime that gives paramount importance to the notion of human rights; d) that advocates for the spherical distinction between State and Church (s), civil laws and religious laws and, finally, the proposal of radical democracy, the contigent and ambivalent character of identities and sociocultural values (Mouffe, 1992). So I defended the idea that "modern democracy - in the name of the principle of pluralism - it must rest on the recognition of the rights of both majorities and minorities; and that democratic consolidation should contemplate the acceptance of religious differences.

Research structure

In the problematic part of the research, I have discussed the limitations of the census data of the Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) for the full understanding of religious pluralism in the state of Guanajuato. Regarding religiosity, I have argued that the city of Guanajuato is not only pure Catholicism and that concepts such as' religious diversity ',' religious plurality / pluralization, 'deregulation' and 'reconfiguration of religious beliefs and practices' are some distinctive frames of post-secular societies' have a place in the aforementioned entity.

Likewise, in the first part of the research, I have noticed that in the city of Guanajuato the presence of multiple religiosities is evident, and it is a city inhabited by several D (d) ioses at the same time.

In the state capital, the socio-religious universe is shared by Catholics, the followers of other non-Catholic religions such as:

Jehovah's Witnesses, Wheat and Honey, Christian Church, Methodist, Baptist, Mormons, Eastern religions, among other denominations.

Additionally, it is worth highlighting that Guanajuato also shows the presence of seers and spiritual counselors who have dedicated themselves to esoteric practices.

Religious pluralization, freedoms and construction of democracy

In my opinion, one of the most important sections of my chapter is the one entitled "Religious pluralization, freedoms and construction of democracy." Why? With the aim of making an original contribution to the topic of democracy building, I have theoretically developed the idea that "in order to advance in the construction of a meta-theory on the consolidation of democracy, it is necessary to have a series of cultural variables capable of accounting for what is happening in the symbolic world, in order to understand the subjective side of politics, recalling Norbert Lechner.

This argument becomes crucial to the extent that, many times, the processes of religious pluralization are samples or signs of changes in values and gestation of attitudes that can be very compatible with the construction of democracy. Which has led me to argue that religious freedom is a sample of the level of tolerance that prevails within a 'pluralist' society (Hirst, 1993).

Also, it is important to point out that I got into the symbolic world to discuss the question of the consolidation of democracy in Mexico because I have been quite dissatisfied with the way in which this notion has been worked recently in the social sciences. Generally, when I read the political sociology and political science books that deal with the notion of democracy, I have generally come across two broad perspectives.

A perspective that many authors (such as Giovanni Sartori, Juan José Linz, Robert Dahl, Adam Przeworski, just to name a few) call procedural logic. In the aforementioned perspective, we speak of 'Rule of law' referring to a machine or apparatus that rests on a dense and functional institutional complex. A state endowed with infrastructural powers as proposed by Michael Mann. That is to say, a State in which the laws exist and are put at the service of the citizenry. Therefore, from the procedural logic to achieve the consolidation of democracy, a healthy 'electoral competition among elites' is required. That presupposes two great conditions. First of all, there is a pluralistic political party system open to competitions. And as a logical consequence of the preceding one, we must have electoral bodies in which both candidates and voters can trust. This is what the specialists of political-electoral issues in Mexico call the strengthening and citizenship of electoral institutions (Olvera, 2005). Here it goes without saying that for this, "in any democracy that aspires to consolidation it is necessary to hold elections that must: hold at regular intervals, be free and fair.

These three prerequisites are often raised as the basic pillars of any democratic regime "(O'Donnell and others, 1988; Bobbio, 2003; Linz, 1987; Huntington, 1991; Held, 1996). Additionally, within the procedural vision, the famous expressions of "accountability" and "responsiveness" are mentioned, which in the Spanish-language academy have been translated by the notion of "accountability". A democracy will hardly be consolidated in a situation where the public administration or rather bureaucratic-administrative entities are used as if they were the "pater-familiaris" of the power elites. So accountability is like a padlock to limit the levels of political and economic corruption. Likewise, the idea of intra-governmental equilibrium is valued, recalling Charles Montesquieu, as well as the access of citizens to public governmental information.

The second perspective that accompanies the debates on the consolidation of democracy is generally called the "substantive perspective of democracy". In this perspective, particular importance is given not only to institutions, but also to political actors and subjects.

It has endeavored to measure democracy in terms of, or rather on the basis of, the enjoyment of rights and the enjoyment of freedoms by individuals. In the substantive perspective, the levels of participation of the actors located in the spheres of civil society and their involvement in socio-political and cultural issues are taken into account. Thus, from a substantive perspective, researchers have asked themselves about the equality that individuals have in the exercise of their civil and political rights and / or freedoms.

So, in ideal situations, I believe that the consolidation of democracy should rest on the two great perspectives because each one contains valuable elements to advance in this construct known as 'democracy'. But, sadly, the institutional and procedural perspective tends to prevail in the debates about democratic consolidation. Based on this theoretical observation, I have endeavored to contribute to the analytical understanding of democracy by emphasizing the substantive perspective. From this point of view, I broadly share the vision of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the Organization of American States (OAS), which, since the 1990s, raises the idea that "the consolidation of democracy must urgently go through the processes of promotion and consolidation of values ".

The debates on the consolidation of democracy are inserted in an advanced stage of globalization. In these global times marked by international population movements (migratory waves) and cultural exchanges, the consolidation of democracy requires the existence of societies open to cultural, ethnic-racial and religious differences, recalling Michael Walzer (1992, 1993) , Alain Touraine (1994) and Will Kymlicka (1994). Thus, then, I have argued in this chapter that the construction of democracy requires societies in which there are knowing subjects who are working every day to build pluralistic communities and societies, open to dialogue and that give sacred value to notions such as' respect ',' tolerance 'and' freedom of conscience '. And here I quote classical and neoclassical authors such as John Locke [1689] (1990), José María Mardones (1988), Leszek Kolakowski cited by Beck (2009), among others.

Based on all the previous approach, in my research on Religious freedoms in modernity, I advocate for the expression of 'democratic consolidation' to be apprehended as a criterion-variable or variable dependent on freedoms that is measured according to certain indicators such as it can be the degree of enjoyment of religious freedoms, fundamental civil rights in the construction of a democratic citizenship. The relevance of my argument lies in the fact that my understanding of democratic consolidation does not rest solely on the "physically solid factors that are palpable and touchable", but equally and above all on the values (freedom, equality, pluralism) that participate actively in shaping the symbolic world.

In this chapter, to make the notion of the consolidation of democracy explicit, I have emphasized that democracy is a construct and it is an idea that Chantal Mouffe has expressed quite elegantly. Indeed, in the presentation of her book entitled: Dimensions of Radical Democracy, she Mouffe supports the idea that no democracy is "fully achieved", that is, completely finished (Mouffe, 1992). In other jargons, all democracy is inscribed in a process and within a conflictual relationship between freedoms and equality. Likewise, making the opinion of the Bolivian sociologist Fernando Calderón Gutiérrez my own, this construct that we call democracy has a place and can progress only with the 'elimination of the dialectic of the denial of the other' (Calderón Gutiérrez, 2002). For this, we need a political-cultural context that values the culture of tolerance that implies the recognition of the other despite their differences.

In summary, I do not think that democracy should be exhausted in procedural logic, but rather that it has to take into account and above all focus on the construction of the subjectivity of the participants. And in this sense, I close my following argument to the social scientist Norbert Lechner who, in his reflections on politics, highlighted the meaning of human subjectivity. Lechner states that:

[N] o democratic politics can be conceived from national unity or some pre-social identity, but from differences ... and that [within] a democratic process requires us to understand that the future rests on an intersubjective elaboration in which the freedom of the other ceases to be a threat to one's own identity, but rather appears as a condition of its unfolding… (Lechner, 1995).

Religious freedoms in the modern theory of citizenship and democracy

Religious freedoms in the modern theory of citizenship and democracy is the title of the section of the conclusions of my chapter. There, I remembered that the objective of my chapter was to propose, as a theoretical framework, some analytical categories that serve to help understand the plurality of religious freedoms that currently prevails in Guanajuato capital, a city that is experiencing an interesting process at the that of social and cultural values.

Based on empirical data, I have pointed out the current religious cohabitation that takes place in this reputed state as the bastion of conservatism-Catholic-   Guadalupano. Consequently, my research highlights the way in which this latter paradigm that does not develop the aforementioned arguments. Due to time constraint, he cannot synthesize them. For information, I mention sections such as:

1. Brief sociological essay explaining pluralism in the socio-religious universe of the city of Guanajuato. 2. Globalization and reconfiguration of religious beliefs and practices in contemporary modernity. 4. Cultural and religious changes since the sixties and their impact on the pluralization of the religious field in the city of Guanajuato. 5. The contributions of sociology and humanistic disciplines to the understanding of cultural and religious changes in contemporary modernity. indicating us about the transformations of the values, of the cultural codes and of the mutations of the religious fact in Guanajuato capital.

In strict adherence to this analytical logic, I have shown that the plurality of religious freedoms observed in the city of Guanajuato is a key variable to understand the dynamics of the transformations of values in the aforementioned city that participates at once in cultural globalization. There I quoted the French political scientist Jean-François Bayart, who in his book Le gouvernement du monde: une critique politique de la globalization presents globalization as an 'event' (event in Gilles Deleuze's sense) and as a 'moment' of constitution of our subjectivity.

Adhering to this perspective, I have presented the plurality of religious freedoms evident in the city of Guanajuato as an event inscribed in the heart of globalization.

I close my intervention by stating that "the great challenges facing the consolidation of democracy in the city of Guanajuato do not only lie in the level of intra-elite electoral competition, nor in accountability: accountability and responsiveness (horizontal and vertical), on the guarantees that the mass media (radio, television and newspapers) can enjoy, etc., but it depends above all on a set of cultural factors that are closely linked to the changing values within the Guanajuato society.

The consolidation of democracy in this city will be a reality when the political, religious and cultural elites understand and accept as such that in this city the current social values are not only those of the Guadalupano-Apostolic Roman Catholicism. The plurality of religious freedoms observed is a sign of the cultural and religious differences operating in the aforementioned society. In this sense, any project to consolidate democracy must take into account differences (differences). Therefore, laws (rights and obligations), as well as public and social policies must be apprehended on the basis of criteria capable of reflecting these differences (see Walzer cited by Mouffe, 1992). And paraphrasing John Rawls, I would say that: "recognizing and accepting differences and cultivating tolerance" are fundamental elements of any liberal-democratic regime (Rawls quoted by Kymlicka and Norman, 2004: 360).

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