

Thursday Sociological Seminars

20/10/2022  
13:30

HYBRID FORM  
room 207  
Jilská 1, Praha 1  
and ZOOM

# VIKTOR VAJDA- PASISNYCHENKO

## Conceptual rethinking of civil society: going beyond the institutional dimension

In social sciences, the concept of civil society gains both excessive popularity and severe criticism for its ambiguity and even paradoxes. The need for its relevant conceptual rethinking is also linked with the following vital question: is it possible to meet our new challenges, in particular, to talk about democracy in terms of civil society, without using old-fashioned theoretical constructions?

Short analysis of the paradoxes and conceptual history of civil society aims to provide a clarification of some key methodological reference points in this chaotic space. It also indicates limitation of civil society conceptualization mainly in terms of formal institutions. Going beyond formal institutions means that we have to add another cultural dimension to civil society, which is the solidarity of the community that shares common democratic values. Some examples of this innovative approach in contemporary sociology confirm that such a combination of institutional and cultural dimensions of civil society could show real and complex relationships between civil society and democracy.

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