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PHILOSOPHICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELECTORAL TECHNOLOGIES

Abstract

The main purpose of the article is to characterise the philosophical and historical perspective of the development of electoral technologies. The methodological basis of the research is conditioned by the peculiarities of the research subject, its interdisciplinary nature and expediency of a combination of sociological, historical-philosophical, political science and other approaches. Philosophical and historical analysis showed that electoral technologies should be understood as a kind of political communication used to manipulate public opinion. In turn, this makes it possible for politicians to have a monopoly on the management of the electorate in order to obtain its support in the elections. Considering electoral technologies, we must consider their connection and combination with the totality of electoral technologies. That is, it should be noted that the actual electoral process involves the passage of two mega stages: 1) the preparatory (pre-election) stage, at which pre-election technologies are applied, and 2) the official election campaign itself (purely electoral stage), in the process of which the actual electoral technologies are used.

Keywords: philosophy, philosophical perspective, historical perspective, electoral technologies, technologies.

Introduction

A democratically philosophical approach of understanding the electoral technologies presupposes the conformity of the actions of subjects and participants in an electoral campaign with state legislation. Electoral technologies need to be directed towards ensuring free, direct, equal elections. It is in this legitimate plane that candidates for elected office should conduct their election campaigns. The elections themselves are not limited only to the act of voting. They are held within the framework of the election campaign, which applies a whole range of procedures and measures to form government bodies. The philosophical essence of political relations in democratic states is revealed through the connection

between society and power, people and state. The main task of democracy is the resolution of contradictions and conflicts in the political system (Singer, 2013, pp. 210-214). This makes it possible to achieve stability in the state and the consolidation of society for solving the problems of its development. During the election campaign, the electorate is significantly influenced by political forces, which induce them to vote for them. The leading role in this influence belongs to electoral and communication technologies. An essential task of electoral technologies is to achieve consensus between candidates and voters. The former receive power, while the latter ensure their representation in the government.

The philosophy of technologization of modern political processes and election campaigns

actualizes the need for a high-quality professional approach to ensuring national interests in political campaigns. This problem is rather fragmentarily considered in similar studies, which determined the choice of the topic and the direction of the dissertation research (Schakel & Romanova, 2021, p. 301).

The article's principal purpose is to characterize the philosophical and historical perspective of the development of electoral technologies.

Methodology

The methodological basis of the research is conditioned by the peculiarities of the research subject, its interdisciplinary nature and expediency of a combination of sociological, historical-philosophical, political science and other approaches.

The solution of the set research tasks became possible with the use of such general scientific and special research methods:

- the systemic method was applied when considering selective technologies as a holistic organism with a clear internal organization of components that interact with the environment, responding to public demands and support;
- the structural and functional method made it possible to identify the main functions of electoral technologies in the electoral process;
- the comparative method helped to identify the main trends in the development of electoral technologies.

And, of course, the historical analysis method was used to understand the philosophy of the development of electoral technologies.

Research Results and Discussions

The general democratization of society determines the development of the institution of elections. The modern civilized society forms the political elite only through democratic elections.

Elections are a prerequisite for democracy, the philosophy of which is revealed in transforming the sanctions of citizens with the right to vote on the power of politicians. Throughout the history of human society, elements of democracy can be found.

For the first time, the ideas of democracy were outlined in ancient Greece. It was a direct democracy, in which the collective legislator was a set of free citizens without a system of representation. Direct democracy was made possible by the extremely limited size of the ancient Greek states of the city-states. They covered the city with the adjacent rural area with a population of up to 10 thousand citizens. Every citizen had the right to take part in deciding concerning his life and work. This system encouraged citizens to participate in the political life of the state actively. A significant difference between ancient and modern democracy is understanding the concept of "equality". In the ancient Greek philosophy of democracy, slavery was allowed as a way to free citizens from physical labour, which devoted them to solving social problems. Women, children, semi-free citizens and slaves were denied the right to vote.

In Athenian democracy, only one-fifth of the population could participate in political life. Around 480 BC in Athens, there were 25-30 thousand citizens per 120-250 thousand population. In the year 313 BC, there were 21 thousand of them in 135-180 thousand. In medieval states, this number was even less. In Florence, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, with 98 thousand people, only 3200 people had the right to vote. The theory of representative democracy took shape in the 17th and 18th centuries. The actual content of this theory is revealed in the idea that no one can control another person without the latter's consent. Since every individual citizen cannot directly participate in the government, the interests of various categories of the population can be represented by representatives to whom citizens delegate the appropriate right to exercise power on their behalf.

The democratic states of antiquity and the Middle Ages gradually degenerated. The widespread dissemination of the idea of state sovereignty caused the formation of political equality in European countries without property qualifications and restrictions on race or article. In Great Britain, the proportion of people over 20 who had the right to vote varied as follows: in 1831 it was only 4% of the population, in 1864 - 9%, in 1883 - 18%, in 1914 - 30%, in 1921 - 74%, in 1931 - 97%.

In a philosophical sense, an electoral system is a procedure for organizing and holding elections to a representative body or individual governing representative. The electoral system is an integral part of the political system. However, it is itself divided into structural components, of which the electoral law is distinguished as the most general - the theoretical and legal component and the electoral procedure (or electoral process) - a practically organizational component. Also, the electoral system can be presented as a political institution. It is revealed through the procedure of transferring votes to the seats of candidates elected by citizens in representative bodies. The classification of the electoral system can be carried out according to various criteria: scale, object, term of elections.

Most modern countries have proclaimed the rights of citizens to general and level elections by secret ballot in their constitutions. By this criterion, one can trace the development of the institution of elections in a democratic direction.

Modern democracies do not recognize divisions based on social origin, class, race, or gender. For the first time, universal suffrage for men over 21 was introduced during the French Revolution. Only half a century later, it was applied with restrictions on the residency qualification. In full measure, universal suffrage began to be applied only at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is the right to vote that makes modern representative democracy different from its previous forms. Even in the most democratic countries in those days, women were denied the right

to participate in political life. But even today in some countries of the East (for example, in Jordan), women do not have voting rights. The women's movement for equal suffrage with men was called suffragists and was part of the feminist movement.

For the first time, women were allowed to participate in elections in the countries of Anglo-Saxon law, but with an increased property, age and educational qualification. The first vote of women took place in federal states in the election of local authorities. Furthermore, this changed the very philosophy of elections.

In the state of Wyoming (USA), women voted in elections for the first time in 1888. By the twentieth century, women won the right to vote in Colorado and Idaho. At the end of the XIX century in the UK, women could vote in local government, parish and county elections.

In New Zealand, women took part in the national elections in 1893, in Australia in 1902. Between 1891 and 1916, only in 6 countries of the world: Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, women received voting rights. From 1917 to 1920, women received voting rights in fifteen states and state entities: USSR, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Canada, Hungary, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Ireland, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Many countries that are considered democracies granted suffrage to women even later. During the period from 1921 to 1944, the suffrage extended to women in 14 states (including Brazil 1934 and France 1944), from 1945 to 1950 - in 21 states (including Italy and Japan in 1945), from 1951 to 1967 - in 57 countries of the world (Taagepera, 2002, p. 250).

In Switzerland, this only happened in 1971. Property, racial and educational qualifications disenfranchised a significant number of men. Supporters of this position were often people who considered themselves representatives of the Democrats. In the US Constitution of 1787, only 120 thousand US citizens with a population of 3 million people were granted the right to vote for

the first time.

In 1791, in France, only 16% of the adult population had the right to vote. With the adoption of the Constitution of 1791, the property qualification was increased, and the share of citizens with the right to participate in elections decreased to 8%. Since 1817, elections have become direct, and the established property qualification was 300 francs of direct tax. During the revolution of 1830, the property qualification was reduced to 200 francs of direct tax. In Belgium, the property qualification established by the Constitution of 1831 was also relatively high. To participate in the Senate elections, it was necessary to pay 1,000 florins of direct tax. In the Portuguese Constitutional Charter of 1821, the property qualification was set at 100 priesthoods of direct annual income. In a latent form, the property qualification still limits the access of the poor to information about elections, which reduces the possibility of full participation in elections.

In the United States, until the end of the Civil War, African Americans were not allowed to participate in the electoral process. It wasn't until 1870 that the 15th Amendment to the US Constitution was passed, which gave African Americans the right to vote. However, they made real participation in the voting only in the 20s of the twentieth century. In the future, this was significantly helped by the laws of the 1950s-70s, cancelled the restrictions for African Americans to participate in the electoral process, and this, in turn, also became the impetus for a change in the philosophy of the vision of the electoral process (Tavits, 2005, pp. 287-290).

Many countries establish a residency requirement, which requires that the voter is a citizen of this country and permanently resides in the country. Usually, this qualification is from one month to two years. To obtain the right to vote, a citizen must permanently reside in the territory of a particular constituency for a period established by law. The greatest harassment from the residency qualification is experienced by seasonal workers

and citizens who change their place of residence due to their type of activity. The legislation of some countries has established a literacy (educational) qualification for participation in elections. Supporters of this restriction motivate their point of view with the assertion that illiteracy makes it impossible for citizens to follow political life, to understand the positions of various leaders and parties. This makes it impossible to make a conscious choice. On the one hand, such a position contains a grain of truth, but on the other hand, the literacy qualification is anti-democratic and violates the rights of the poor who do not have a basic education level (Shvetsova, 2002).

The goal of equal suffrage is to provide every citizen with an equal opportunity with others to influence the outcome of elections. The philosophy of equality in electoral law provides for citizens to have an equal number of votes in elections, as well as the level of grounds for participation in the electoral process.

Today, each voter, as a rule, receives one vote, in any case, voters are given an equal number of votes. In almost all countries where state and local authorities are formed on the basis of elections, the principle of equal suffrage has been established. However, it was not always so. In France since 1830, upon payment of 1000 francs of direct tax, a citizen received the second vote in the elections. After the revolution of 1830, the property qualification for a second vote was reduced to 500 francs. For guaranteed expression of will in elections, the principle of a secret ballot is applied. The voting procedure in most countries is carried out using ballots. This takes place in a special room with only one voter (Aidt, Veiga, F., & Veiga, L., 2011, p. 24).

It can be noted that the basic principles of electoral law in modern democratic countries are: universality, equality, the principle of direct and indirect elections, and the secrecy of voting. More and more supporters are acquiring the principle of periodicity of elections, which is enshrined in the legislation of many countries.

Carrying out research on the philosophy of

electoral systems, it should be noted that their traditional distribution into majoritarian and proportional does not reflect the variety of election models in the world. It is advisable to talk not about two systems but about majoritarian and proportional principles, which can be implemented through various electoral procedures. The single transferable vote system is often defined as proportional, but it differs in almost all respects from the party list voting system (Abou-Chadi & Orłowski, 2016).

If the majority principle is applied to determine the voting results, then such systems are called majority and divide them into three types - absolute, relative and qualifying majority. The main advantage of the absolute majority system is the formation of single-mandate constituencies. This suggests that such a system provides an opportunity to create a strong and stable government supported by a reliable majority in parliament. The disadvantages of such a system include the inability to establish a correspondence between the influence of parties in the political life of the country and their influence in parliament. The majority system is always effective. This is due to the fact that a certain political candidate or party always gains a relative majority. Such a system makes it possible to create a solid majority in parliament and a stable government. A significant disadvantage of this system is the deprivation of representation for small parties. The majority system of a qualified majority is rare. According to this system, a candidate must collect the number of votes established by law (Selb, 2012, pp. 875-878).

In the XIX century, the introduction of proportional electoral systems began. This allowed for a wider representation. Proportional systems are used in Finland, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Austria, etc. The difference between proportional and majoritarian electoral systems is that majority systems are based on the principle of the majority and proportionally based on the principle of proportionality between the received mandates and votes. The propor-

tional system reflects the actual balance of political forces in the representative body. The proportional system creates large districts. This system applies only to party elections. Each party nominates its own list of candidates, and voters generally vote for it.

The positive and negative aspects of electoral systems are actively discussed in modern academic literature. It has been proven that there is no ideal democratic election procedure. Philosophers and mathematicians emphasize that in the presence of more than two candidates, none of the voting options allows an accurate account of the will of voters. The presence of a large number of factors makes it impossible to determine the "best" electoral system. The advantages and disadvantages of electoral systems are associated with the specific conditions of their application (Roussias, 2021).

Certain priorities play a significant role in the choice of the electoral system: if the main goal is to form a stable and effective government, then the majority system is used; if the emphasis is on the adequate representation of the interests of various groups of the population in parliament, then a proportional system is used. This is primarily determined by the nature of the relationship between the legislative and executive branches. If the government is formed by parliament, it is essential to build a stable parliamentary majority.

In a philosophical and historical context, electoral technologies arise due to a democratic form of government. Elections in democratic states are the only possible and generally recognized procedure for achieving the legitimacy of state power. Electoral technologies are their central toolkit.

The elections themselves are not limited only to the act of voting. They are held within the framework of the election campaign, which applies a whole range of procedures and measures to form government bodies. The essence of political relations in democratic states is revealed by connecting society and power, people and state. The main task of democracy is the resolution of

contradictions and conflicts in the political system. This makes it possible to achieve stability in the state and the consolidation of society for solving the problems of its development (Neto & Cox, 1997, p. 160).

The thinkers of ancient times were also interested in the problem of elections. Plato defines elections as one of the instruments of the state, which arose through an agreement between people - as a means to "do justice and not suffer from injustice". Aristotle and other philosophers of that era had similar views of Plato. However, it was a direct democracy, and, consequently, it is too early to talk about the emergence of electoral technologies during this period. The ideas of democracy, developed by the ancient Greek philosophers, have long been rejected by the church's authorities. The then monarchical states did not need elections. Only in the Renaissance did interest in ancient democracy renewed. Taking as a basis the idea of Aristotle about man as a "political animal", the thinkers of the Renaissance began to develop the theory of the original (natural) human rights. The expression of these rights in the will of the people gained recognition as a source of power. The novelty of understanding the origin of the state required a rethinking of power relations and the search for new ways of organizing power. The central event in this context was the emergence of the theory of the state contract, which proved the need for elections as an instrument of state power (Shugart & Carey, 1992).

One of the essential principles of modern democracy is the election of the main bodies of state power through the conduct of free, competitive elections. Accordingly, electoral technologies should be based on an open, competitive struggle between political forces and ensure the free expression of the will of citizens. A democratic approach to understanding electoral technologies presupposes the conformity of the actions of subjects and participants in an electoral campaign with state legislation. Electoral technologies need to be directed towards ensuring

free, direct, equal elections. It is in this legitimate plane that candidates for elected office should conduct their election campaigns. Western political scientists were the first to study electoral technologies. Later, this issue acquired active study among representatives of Russian and Ukrainian political science.

The philosophy of organizing an election campaign is, of course, a complex procedure in terms of content. It includes the election of the campaign strategy, electoral technologies, organizational measures. According to the results of which political parties and candidates are selected, there is a certain difference in the application of electoral technologies between campaigns. However, the basic campaigning methods and electoral technologies are almost the same.

The conceptualization of the philosophy of electoral technologies as a basic category of the electoral process is explicated as an indicator for measuring the qualitative state of the political development of transitive societies. Therefore, in our opinion, electoral technologies are a set of actions and means aimed at supporting a candidate or a party during election campaigns and are used to win elections or perform a spoiler function.

Electoral technologies include political advertising, a PR campaign, a party or candidate's program, voting controls, creating an image, brand, and the like. If we consider this philosophical phenomenon in a broad sense, then we can say that electoral technologies are part of political technologies, without a clear distinction. Even the time interval from the official start of the campaign to the formal end is rather arbitrary. This is confirmed by the fact that in a real election campaign, even before its start, in 1-2 years, preliminary measures are taken to implement the campaign. That is why, when considering electoral technologies, we must take into account their connection and combination with the totality of pre-election technologies. That is, in our opinion, it should be emphasized that the real electoral process involves the passage of two

mega-drinks: the first is the preparatory (pre-election) stage at which pre-election technologies are applied, and the second is the most official election campaign (purely electoral stage), in the process of which they use proper electoral technologies. During the election campaign, the electorate is significantly influenced by political forces, which induce them to vote for them. The leading role in this influence belongs to electoral and communication technologies. An important task of electoral technologies is to achieve consensus between candidates and voters (Moser & Scheiner, 2009, pp. 55-57).

In conditions of a political crisis, the authorities must establish communication and exchange thoughts with the public. This presupposes “the ability to translate a certain political decision into the language of the media, to arouse the interest of the mass media consumer. However, this may create a discrepancy between the language of politics and the language of the media. This not only interferes with effective communication between politicians and the public but also diminishes citizens’ interest in politics. Information is transmitted in a distorted form and is significantly different from the original.

In the study of this problem, it is necessary to pay attention to two technological factors - information and communication. Connecting with each other, they create certain political effects, significantly influencing the course of election campaigns. Participants in electoral processes use information flows to familiarize voters with their programs and carry out campaigning and disseminate information about candidates and parties. For the mutual exchange of information between candidates and voters, they can use debates, rallies, personal meetings, etc. In politics, it becomes necessary to attract special means of information exchange to establish and maintain constant interaction between political actors. For a rather short period of time, the number of means of political communication has increased. This was facilitated by the development of information technologies: the spread of cable and

digital television, as well as the Internet. Political power becomes vested in those who “can create cultural codes used by society to reflect reality and develop conscious decisions (Shugart & Wattenberg, 2001).

The philosophical essence of the electoral struggle is focused on assessing the voters’ behaviour of candidates as “moral” or “immoral”. The candidate who retains his “moral” image has an advantageous position. In modern conditions, the image of a candidate can be equal to the image of a political party that is a participant in the electoral process. Political parties that use the image of famous politicians can have significantly better results than campaigning without famous personalities. So, image technology can achieve its goal by representing famous people. Associated images of political forces are deposited in the minds of voters. To increase the popularity of candidates or parties during the election campaign, such information and communication technologies as political advertising are used. With each subsequent election, participants increasingly use the media to establish a communication process with voters.

In the current scale of election campaigns, direct communication between candidates and voters is too complicated. In such circumstances, delivering information about the candidates and their programs is possible through indirect communication through media sources. The field of electoral struggle is shifting into the field of information struggle. The influence of the media is due to the following factors: the characteristics of the consumer of information, the willingness to trust the information message, the technology of the impact itself.

Assessing the possibilities of the philosophy of manipulating the use of the media, we can say that they are large but not limitless. Mass consciousness defines the boundaries of manipulation through existing stereotypes and attitudes in society. To achieve high efficiency, manipulation must rely on the people’s mentality, traditions, and everyday ideas. It is difficult to determine

the most effective method since each of them has a certain purposeful impact. All means of manipulation significantly affect the consciousness of people, make them think and act in the right way. Examples of effective methods of manipulating public consciousness are disinformation, informational distraction, fragmentation of political events, the method of resonance, the creation of an “enemy image”, the formation of political stereotypes (Birch, 2003).

Such a philosophical aspect plays an essential role as a “symbol”. An example of a symbol in the political sphere is “socialism”, and an example of a stereotype is “socialist state” as an example of social security and justice. Politics creates myths, stereotypes and symbols using political technology. In addition to the above, considerable attention is paid to the construction of the image. In this case, public opinion is artificially accentuated on some properties of an object or subject in order to form general social ideas (Cronert & Nyman, 2020, p. 340).

A characteristic feature of electoral technologies is their focus on attracting socio-psychological regulators of voters’ behaviour, appeals to beliefs, values, aspirations and expectations. One of the most important issues of the election campaign is the question: is electoral technology only a means of manipulating the electoral consciousness or an effective way of forming and establishing the image of a candidate or party? PR technologies provide for two interpretations. It is more expedient to identify which of them dominates. In a democratic society, the second option prevails, and in an authoritarian or totalitarian society, the first.

Conclusion

Modern society is in a transitional state. The complexity of this process manifests itself in the simultaneous emergence of the foundations of the information society, one way or another affecting the peculiarities of the exacerbation of socioeconomic and political problems. Under

such conditions, the problem of introducing an effective procedure for achieving the legitimacy of state power as the main guarantor of democratic transition - elections - becomes especially urgent. Electoral technologies are its main tool. Politics is the art of government, and the history of government has ancient roots. The political technologies of a transitive society combine post-modern communication technologies, formal democracy, and authoritarian technologies.

Elections and the electoral system affect the general political processes in the state. The latter determines the general direction of the development of society. Improving the electoral system provides for the solution of certain tasks, one of which is increasing the electoral process’s efficiency and compliance with democratic norms.

The essential condition for the effectiveness of electoral systems is taking into account the national characteristics of a particular country. The advantages and disadvantages of electoral systems are associated with the specific conditions of their application. It is noted that the granting of electoral rights did not immediately lead to equality in this area. The dynamics of the granting of suffrage in different historical periods and different countries is traced, a slow movement in the field of legislation towards real equality in this area is demonstrated.

Interpretation of philosophy, the concept of “selective technologies” depends on the scientific direction, which explores this issue. Various conceptual approaches focus attention on various aspects of electoral technologies and are understood by them as important. These can be resources, a communication component, psychological mechanisms of influence, etc. The broad sense of understanding electoral technologies interprets them as part of political technologies without a clear distinction.

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