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AmurCon 2021: International Scientific Conference**EVOLUTION OF THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF POLITICAL
PARTIES: EXPERIENCE OF WESTERN COUNTRIES**

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Abstract

The article touches upon the change in political parties' structural and organizational characteristics in Western countries in the XX and XXI centuries. We pay particular attention to such aspects as structural party units and their evolution, the development of intra-party democracy, party membership, and its change. The views of the fathers of party science on these problems are investigated. We analyse a party discourse of the problem of intra-party democracy and participation. Changes in the models of intra-party democracy are investigated through the prism of the transformation of political parties' historical types, such as elitist, mass, inclusive, cartel, and cyber parties. The factors stimulating the democratization of the inner-party life of Western parties are shown. We offer generalized verbal models of intraparty democracy in various types of parties. Special attention is paid to the structural features of cyber parties and the influence of information and communication technologies on the internal structure and change of behavioural strategies of traditional political groups. Changes in the membership of parties, their status in traditional and new political parties are shown. The ambivalence of the tendency to reduce the number of members for party organizations is noted. The conclusion is made about the importance of preserving traditional elements of internal organization for modern political parties.

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1. Introduction

Consideration of their structural and organizational characteristics has become a classic tradition in the study of political parties.

Bryce and Ostrogorsky (as cited in Dyuverje, 2007) were among the first researchers of intra-party structures, they were followed by Michels (1974) and Weber (1974). Later, the structural approach was investigated by Dyuverje (2007) and American scientists. The specified problems remain topical for the current political parties as well. In modern party science, attention is paid to the issues of interaction between the party leadership and the basis, the influence of new information technologies on the internal structure of parties, the problem of reducing the size of political groupings. In this paper, we analyse the evolution of the internal structure of the parties in Western European countries through the prism of the transformation of historical types of political parties, such as elitist, mass, inclusive, cartel, and cyber parties.

D. Bryce and M. Ya. Ostrogorsky investigated the mechanism of the organization of American and British parties of the XIX century. James Bryce distinguished two constituent parts in the structure of the US party associations, namely that financed election campaigns, as well as meetings designed to nominate candidates. Moses Ostrogorsky studied the history of forming a permanent organization of English parties, which was based on a structural unit called the caucus (as cited in Dyuverje, 2007).

Dyuverje (2007) made a special contribution to the study of the organizational foundations of political parties of the XX century. He believed that the internal organization of parties was the factor determining their true nature. Therefore, the structural party unit became for him the starting point of the typology of parties.

Conceptualized by the French scientist, the concepts of personnel (consisting of committees, loosely articulated and freely organized) and mass parties (well-organized, articulated, and controlled, based on sections), although in a transformed form, remain in the arsenal of modern party science.

2. Problem Statement

The article deals with the problem of adapting the internal structure of political parties to social changes, the need to transform the organization of internal party life by the challenges of the modern era.

3. Research Questions

Analysing party associations from a structural point of view, three aspects can be distinguished:

- the actual organizational aspect, involving the study of the structural units of the party and indirect party associations;
- problems of internal party democracy and bureaucratization;
- analysis of political parties' membership, its changes.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the paper is to analyse the evolution of the internal structure of political parties in Western European countries and explicate current trends in their organizational and structural changes.

5. Research Methods

We used historical-genetic, structural-functional, and comparative methods of study.

6. Findings

Describing the internal structure of the parties, Dyuverje (2007) distinguished groupings with direct and indirect structures. The former was characterized by the presence of individual members directly involved in its life. The latter, which emerged from various kinds of non-parliamentary associations (parties of external origin), was built on the principle of collective membership, the basis of which was the organizations that founded the party (trade unions, cooperatives, insurance companies, etc.).

An important problem of the development of parties was their susceptibility to bureaucratization. The flip side of it was the question of the degree of intra-party participation or intra-party democracy. Thus, M. Ostrogorsky (as cited in Dyuverje, 2007), describing the functioning of the English and American caucuses, showed that they were based on the mechanism of manipulation of the party masses by their organizers. The growth and strengthening of the caucus structure professionalize and bureaucratize the party, turning it into a tool of functionaries. However, in the most concentrated form, the problem of bureaucratization and oligarchization of modern parties was described by Michels (1974). Formulating his famous 'iron law of oligarchy', Michels wrote (1974):

Whoever speaks about an organization speaks of a tendency towards oligarchy. There is a deeply aristocratic trait in the very essence of the organization. The machinery of the organization inspires respect because it creates an impressive structure, changes in the organized masses that result in a shift in the centre of gravity. It changes the attitude of the leader to the mass and the attitude of the mass to the leader. (p. 6)

According to Michels (1974), bureaucratization, oligarchisation, and leadership in parties are objective and inevitable, this makes it impossible for the real implementation of intraparty democracy.

The statements of Michels (1974) created a long-term debatable potential in the party science in Western European countries, the core of which was their empirical confirmation (refutation). Thus, Weber (1974) considered parties as phenomena, the effectiveness of which was based on the quality of their organization. It was the bureaucratic apparatus of the parties that was the basis without which they were unable to perform their functions and withstood inter-party competition. "According to their internal structure, all parties have made the transition to a bureaucratic organization over the past decade. ... The ever-increasing importance of party bureaucracy is inherent in all stages of party development" (Weber,

1974, p. 89). He also suggested that it was the hostility of party apparatuses, and not programmatic differences, that were the main driving force of inter-party rivalry. From the point of view of internal party influence, Weber (1974) identified the party leadership and party headquarters, party activists, passive elements (voters). Party patrons also played an important role, as a rule, remaining in the shadows.

In the party literature of Western European countries, R. Michels' thesis about the inevitability of intra-party oligarchization was as a whole more criticized and refuted than it was confirmed. First of all, the researchers drew attention to the one-sidedness and lack of complexity of the question itself, when the tendencies to curtail democracy in parties were considered only based on the processes of their internal development, without taking into account some other circumstances. The latter should include legal norms regulating the activities of party groups, their ideological orientation, social composition, the nature of interest groups, etc. According to Beyme (1984), the factors that impede the development of the trends described by R. Michels are the following:

- amateurs in politics continue to compete with professional politicians;
- the rivalry of intra-party groups, as well as the struggle between the party organization and the parliamentary fraction, prevents the unlimited domination of the bureaucracy within the parties;
- inter-party competition also restrains the arbitrariness of the party oligarchy;
- the monopoly of parties in the political system is challenged by non-party groups, protest movements are forced to comprehend the fact that without the development of participation, the party basis loses its activity and effectiveness (Beyme, 1984).

It should be added that new opportunities for the development of intra-party democracy have opened up with the transition of society and political parties to the era of information and communication technologies. Also characterizing the internal state of modern parties of Western European countries, scientists are more inclined to support the thesis of their stratarchical nature, when power in them is distributed among several levels, without concentrating in a single centre. Another factor contributing to the diversification of power in the parties is the presence of a federal system of state power, which allows regional intra-party organizations to maintain a high degree of autonomy. The most striking example of the latter was the experience of the Federal Republic of Germany. Thus, when describing the internal state of traditional German parties, the term 'freely connected anarchy' (Lösche, 1993) has become commonly used among researchers, meaning a state of fragmentation and decentralization that allows the coexistence of numerous intra-party groups, currents, and working communities.

The emergence of mass parties with a homogeneous and cohesive membership has put on the agenda the problem of intra-party expression of will and participation. The lower party ranks here claimed the right to control their leaders and determine the political course. To a greater extent, this applied to left-wing parties, while in the right-wing ones, which were also forced to adapt to the model of a mass party, the party basis was initially assigned a secondary role. However, even in left-wing associations, the rights of rank-and-file members were guaranteed formally rather than realistically. As mentioned above, the position of R. Michels was opposed by the view of the stratarchical (multilevel) nature of modern (including mass) parties. From the point of view of intraparty democracy, this means that they do not function on a direct and collectivist basis, they use a representative-group (pluralistic)

model, which is characterized by the competition of intraparty elites. It is not the participation of rank-and-file party members in the policy-making process that is central to this concept, but participation in the recruitment of cadres.

The social modernization of Western European countries in the second half of the XX century caused the modification of parties, an integral part of which was the transformation of intra-party democracy models. The entry of 'omnivorous' parties into the political limelight changed the relationship between the basis and the leadership. They were becoming more democratic, without requiring both sides to observe the discipline characteristic of the former mass parties based on class confrontation. During the same period in Western European countries, party legislation was intensively developing, which also democratized intra-party relations. Despite this, the internal party balance of forces was shifting in favour of the elite, and the role of ordinary party members began to be reduced only to approval (acclamation function) of its actions. Party leaders increasingly focused on voters rather than members, being accountable to the former rather than the latter (Katz & Mair, 1995). Party groupings are turning into electoral and professional ones.

At the same time, one of the results of this modernization was the deployment of the so-called participation revolution, which brought to life a new model of intra-party democracy practised in parties that emerged from new social movements. In its most classic form, this model, called the basic (participatory), was embodied in the activities of the 'green' parties. The activity of party members, according to this concept, is not limited to simple participation in organizational matters but means participation in decision-making. One of its integral elements is the presence of an imperative mandate, which presupposes the dependence of party representatives elected to certain positions on the basis. Thus, the German 'greens', striving in practice to follow the ideal of a sovereign party base, introduced into everyday practice such principles as the constant rotation of elected posts, their incompatibility with party positions, the use of plebiscite mechanisms in the preparation and decision-making.

The emergence of cartel parties also resulted in a change in the patterns of intra-party interaction. On the one hand, the tendency to statisticize and professionalize the party elite increased the influence of the parliamentary-governmental part of the party, giving rise to a 'new' oligarchy in it. On the other hand, there was an increase in participative principles in Western European parties, when ordinary members began to participate in decision-making procedures and the selection of candidates, which were previously jealously guarded by elites and activists (Katz & Mair, 2002). In addition, there is a clear division of labour between the parliamentary and local levels within the parties. Katz and Mair (2002) point out, party organizations can increasingly take a stratarthic form in which different and mutually autonomous levels coexist with each other and in which there is a minimum of power control, regardless of whether it is directed from the bottom up or from the top down. Thus, considering the modern parties of Western European countries from the perspective of the development of intra-party democracy, it should be noted that there is a certain ambivalence, in which the partitioning of the basis and the autonomy of territorial divisions coexist with the tendency to concentrate resources and influence among the party holders of state posts.

The emergence and development of information and communication technologies are becoming a new era in the evolution of the internal organization of political parties. Since the mid-1990s the parties of

Western European countries have been actively exploring the Internet space, creating their websites. A qualitative shift in this process was the transition in the early 2000s from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 technologies, as well as the emergence of the first social networks (MySpace, Facebook), which allowed parties to stimulate communicative interaction with their supporters (Aliaskarova, 2019; Smorgunov, 2014). The consequence of this is, on the one hand, the transformation of existing party systems as a whole, which, due to the emergence of new political actors, becomes more fragmented and pluralistic, on the other hand, causes a change in intra-party models of interaction in traditional parties. The first trend resulted in the emergence of a fundamentally new party type, the party of the Internet era, called a virtual party or cyber party (Smorgunov, 2014). The distinguishing features of such parties were the rejection of physical membership and direct communication with voters through various forms of networking, while traditional parties were blamed for the lack of methods of direct democracy (Morlok et al., 2018). The intensive growth of such parties began at the beginning of the first decade of the new century, while the organizational impulse for their formation was mainly coordinated actions in the Internet space. Having emerged on a different organizational and communicative basis than traditional, affiliated political parties, the new actors radically differed from the first in their structural characteristics, combining the signs of social movements of a new era, the era of the Internet and globalization, and the technological consequences they generated. The studies on new political forces noted their common behavioural denominator was a predominantly right-wing anti-establishment and populist style (Badaeva, 2018; Kapitonova, et al., 2020; Ostapets & Klyuchkovych, 2021; Pozhidaeva, 2019; Samarin, 2018; Sergeev et al., 2018; Smorgunov, 2014; Turovsky et al., 2020). Their emergence is interpreted in political science discourse as a manifestation of alternativeness, anti-mainstreamness about the established rules of political behaviour and traditional political actors (Sergeev et al., 2017). At the same time, in Europe, cyber parties arise not only at the national but also at the supranational level, taking an active part in the pan-European elections (Guseletov, 2021).

In turn, traditional political parties, under the influence of the Internet and the growing virtualization of political processes, have also actively adapted their communication strategies, sometimes borrowing the digital Internet agenda from the newly appeared cyber parties to strengthen their political influence (Basov, 2021). As mentioned above, in the middle of the last decade of the last century, political parties began to create their websites very actively, turning today into professionalized media and communication organizations (Smorgunov, 2014).

The network communication resources of both new and transforming traditional political parties have qualitatively changed the models of intra-party interaction. First of all, we are talking about an increase in the volume of circulating information, an increase in the intensity of feedback between party headquarters and the party base, the pluralization of contacts both within the parties and in their external environment. Thus, the virtualization of politics transforms modern parties, stimulating their democratization, transferring intraparty participatory opportunities to a new qualitative level (Miroshnichenko & Morozova, 2017). An additional perspective in this regard opens up in connection with the development of distributed database technologies (registers), which contributes to the development of the so-called 'fluid democracy', forming institutions of procedural justice (Smorgunov, 2018). At the same time, scientists have noted the potential dangers that Internet democracy has,

including in the process of intra-party communication such as the ability of social network owners to filter political positions, as well as the increasing influence of elitist groups (Samarin, 2020). It should also be noted that in the context of the growth of the communicative activity of ordinary citizens and users of social networks, the problem of increasing the culture of communication as an integral part of the political culture as a whole becomes obvious (Koulman, 2018).

Returning to the issue of the development of models of intraparty democracy, let us summarize their historical evolution in the form of the following table (see Tab.1).

Table 1. Characteristics of intra-party models of democracy

Party Type	Characterization of Democracy Models
Elitist	Lack of mass membership. The problem of internal party democracy is not raised. Patronage-client relationship between party members and its supporters.
Mass	Party members are formally endowed with the right to control the leadership and the right to determine the political course, the party leadership is legitimized by-elections from below. Clearly defined mutual obligations between elites and the masses.
All-encompassing	Weakening of mutual obligations of leaders and rank-and-file members. Strengthening the influence of the former and decreasing the role of the latter. Strengthening the role of the parliamentary-government part of the party.
Cartel	Weakening the influence of the central leadership. The growth of elements of participatory democracy. Coexistence of several autonomous levels of party government (stratarchy).
Cyberpathy	Replacement of the institution of formal membership with the institution of volunteering. Strengthening direct ties with voters. The growth of elements of direct democracy. Network communication channels.

An important issue for the parties has been remaining the problem of internal membership. As it is mentioned above, historically, the organizational consideration of parties was associated with the emergence of parties with a mass membership, which gave rise to a distinction between mass and cadre parties (parties of individual representation). Initially, the institution of mass, fixed membership was formed in parties of so-called external origin, as Duverjer (2007) called them, the emergence of which was not associated with either parliamentary or electoral mechanisms. First of all, these were left-wing groupings (social democratic, communist), as well as fascist parties that later came to the political forefront. Subsequently, under the pressure of competition from the left, the right-wing parties of individual representation also took the path of mass membership creating organizations. Thus, the presence of a mass internal organization is becoming an integral attribute of modern political parties.

The third quarter of the XX century went down in the history of party development as a period of rapid quantitative growth of Western European parties, which peaked in the 1960s and 1970s. However, since the beginning of the 1980s, the reverse process began, which acquired a landslide character in some countries and became one of the manifestations of the global party crisis. So, for two decades (from the late 1960s to the late 1980s), the share of voters with party affiliation decreased in the UK from 9.4% to 3.3%, in Denmark from 21.2% to 6.5%, in the Netherlands from 9.4% to 2.9%. In the same period, a decrease in this indicator was observed in Austria and Sweden, while in France it remained at a very insignificant level (1.7%) (Beyme, 1997). In the following decade (from the 1980s to the end of the

1990s), the degree of party voter coverage among thirteen Western European countries fell from an average of almost 10% to less than 6% (Katz & Mair, 2002). The most numerous European parties are German ones, which lost more than half of their membership from 1990 to 2016 (Niedermayer, 2017). At the same time, the German Social Democrats suffered the greatest losses, their memberships decreased by 57.7% over 50 years (from 1976 to 2016) (Wiesendahl et al., 2018).

Meanwhile, in the research environment, the facts of the decline in the number of party members are interpreted ambiguously. Along with the consideration of the quantitative reduction of parties in the context of reducing their social influence, explanations are linking this process with the internal transformation of the political groupings themselves. In particular, it is assumed that the era of numerous parties has become a thing of the past since membership fees have lost their former financial significance in comparison with other sources of revenue (primarily with state subsidies), while the maintenance of a large intra-party organization becomes costly (Katz & Mair, 1995). Also, the large basis restricts the mobility of the party elites, which provide the parties with competitive manoeuvrability. In addition, the role of ordinary members during election campaigns is becoming less and less significant, being replaced by professional organizers (image-makers, journalists, political strategists, and consultants), and the election campaigns themselves are managed directly by the central party headquarters (Katz & Mair, 1995). The emergence of cyber parties, which have begun to use new mobilization technologies and rely on direct connections with the electorate, also stimulated the tendency to decrease physical membership in parties.

At the same time, it has been noted that parties still have reasons to maintain the large size of their membership organizations (Scarrow, 1994). These include the fact that the latter, despite the above-mentioned, is a valuable resource for winning elections. Membership fees, the amount of which directly affects the number of subventions paid to parties by the state, have not lost their significance. Party members also act as a reservoir of 'close people' that can be used to maintain its presence in local government. Katz and Mair (2002) noted, through their members, the party can show its influence, as well as use feedback. In this sense, the basis provides a mechanism for communication between party groupings and society outside parliament. Analysing the modern party experience in Sweden, J. Pierre, and A. Widfeld state that "parties want to maintain the image of a mass party with positive dynamics of membership development, which serves as proof of its perception as a viable channel of political representation" (as cited in Katz & Mair, 2002, p. 128). Finally, the membership organization serves as a means of democratic legitimization of parties, which is the social foundation of the latter. Thus, despite the changed social conditions that encourage parties to maintain economical, skeletal organizations, internal membership remains their invariable and multifunctional attribute, and its magnitude is evidence of the influence degree in society. It is also worth noting that the decrease in the membership of parties is not a universal trend. Party research specializing in the study of comparative dynamics of quantitative characteristics of political parties, in the period from 1960 to 2010, demonstrated that almost a quarter (23%) of 47 Western European parties did not experience a decrease in their membership (Kölln, 2016).

7. Conclusion

Summing up the evolution of the internal features of Western European political parties, it should be stated that for more than a century and a half of their existence, they have gone from poorly rooted in the society clientist organizations of the XIX century to well-organized mass parties with an extensive structure and a large membership in the third quarter of the XX century. Along with the evolution of the internal structure of the parties, the models of intra-party democracy also changed, stimulating the tendencies for the growth of participatory principles and the formation of a stratarchical structure. The social transformation of Western societies of the late XX - early XXI centuries, their entry into the era of new information technologies qualitatively changed the habitus of parties, stimulating their transformation from membership organizations into network political media-management structures with fundamentally different internal and external communication strategies. However, despite all the social technological, and social changes, the growth of public criticism, the parties still retain the traditional elements and attributes of their internal organization, being the main intermediaries between civil society and the institutions of the political system (Bull, 2020).

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