Political Culture: The Features of Political Decision Making in the Context of Globalization

Ksenia K. Kostina

The subject of this article is the impact of globalization on the political decision-making process and the necessity to change the theory of political decision making because of the new circumstances of current political reality.

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The late twentieth century brought about the recognition that the world had become, in Marshall McLuhan's words, a 'global village' (McLuhan 1996). The phenomenon of globalization has completely changed our perception of politics and of the nature of political interaction. The traditional view of politics used to be state-centric: the state was treated as the principal political actor, and attention was focused on the national level of government activity. Therefore, there was a clear distinction between domestic and foreign politics. Although nation-states continue to be the most significant actors in the world arena, one can hardly deny the growing impact of supranational bodies and transnational groups and organizations.

Anyway, in the twentieth century, all philosophical schools of thought took the state and the state system for granted in politics, and therefore the task of political science was to proceed from this assumption and draw out its implications. In other words, the state was considered as a vehicle through which politics was conducted. The remaining questions in Political Philosophy concerns the way one should understand the state and its relations to other forms of association, or the way the state power could be used to solve social problems. For the utilitarians and pragmatists in particular, political theory became a form of problem-solving and with a growth of cognitive disciplines such as Economics and Law, many traditional issues of political theory were transformed into a technical matter best left to 'experts'. This is also true for decision-making theory.

But, unfortunately, in the early twenty-first century, in the era of 'facilitated knowledge', political science is characterized by a considerable simplification. The prevalence of practical experience and political technologies prevent our assessing the current status of the decision-making theory. We should re-examine the existing methods of political science in terms of their congruence to the current situation in public administration in the context of globalization.

Actually, the dominance of political technologies approach has become the reason why a political decision is not investigated as a philosophical category. Thus, many statements, machinery, and technology in the decision-making theory can no longer work in full within current political reality, in the world of globalization. Concentrated on technology and strategy, we forget about the complexity of such phenomena as a political issue,

political challenge, political solution, and political space. At present, the decision-making theory is more a technology, rather than a system of ideas and principles.

In fact, the category of political decision is substantially similar to the category of political action that unfolds in space and time, it is based on some contacts and relations formed on the basis of information and values and put into practice within particular political discourse.

The spatial and temporal ontological feature of political action is characterized by such a phenomenon as world globalization (which implies a territorial expansion of local political solutions) and time compression for problem-solving process. Categories of space and time are the key to any process of political decision making. In fact, when analyzing any action we have to take into account the territory or group where the decision will be distributed and how much time the decision making will take and what its implementations will be. Nowadays, the analysis of these two categories (space and time) is complicated by the multi-level relationships in the international community and swift information channels.

When we are talking about 'universality' in the context of problem-solving and decision-making processes we reveal a significant intertwining of local and global challenges. This defines the integral and fragile character of the world order. Global problems develop in complex and increase global interconnectedness and interdependence of regions, countries, nations, peoples, and individuals (see, *e.g.*, Grinin and Korotayev 2009).

One of the features of the political decision-making process is its potential consequences for the whole world. Of course, this is also related to economic integration, transfer and exchange of material goods.

Another characteristic within the framework of ontological analysis is the time component. Any political decision-making process unfolds in time. Almost in any theory, for example, in the theory of bounded rationality, the decision-making process is divided into stages. Those phases can be defined as follows: to identify the problem, to analyze it, to develop optimal solutions, to choose the best solutions, to make a decision and to implement it. All these steps are time-constrained. The decision effectiveness mostly depends on the speed of problem detection and on the ability to quickly implement the decision. And, of course, the information and information processing play here a significant role.

Epistemological characteristics of a political action consist in obtaining knowledge, accumulation, analysis and development of knowledge. In the global world this process is determined by the development of information technology, the increasing amounts of information, and, what is most important – by the ever more complicated procedure of distinguishing between false and true information.

In the twentieth century, there were debates on how the value system of the state or the moral, psychological, and subjective expression of the ruler's will could restrain the policy-making process. But today we face another challenge. We question the whole rationality because the data for the policy making can turn false. And to reveal the truth is almost impossible as far as criteria of truth have been blurred for a long time. Besides, it is practically impossible to check the information that is propagated by modern information channels. And what is most important, nobody is interested in truth.

False information being spread through the new media, either accidentally or deliberately, can generate pseudo-issues for which we will have to search pseudo-solutions. And this would mislead the whole system of government, destabilize, endanger, and compromise it. Of course, the media play the main role in this process, and thus, have fundamen-

tally changed the motivation for survival in the twenty-first century. Today the media do not inform people about current events in the country and in the world; they have actually become a marginal factory of sensations and 'hot news', when it becomes common to transmit information inaccurately, to take it out of context and, finally, to sacrifice the truth for the sake of catching headlines.

In the early 1970s, this trend has been brilliantly emphasized by Michel Foucault in his work devoted to Nietzsche's 'Will to Knowledge' (see, *e.g.*, Eribon 1991). Foucault expressed his belief which in the future would become the theme and thesis of his main work *Surveiller et punir* [Discipline and Punish] (Foucault 1975). So Foucault underlined the mandatory falsification on which the true knowledge is based. Foucault points to the subjective base in the management and regulation of power. Decision is made not on the basis of pure truth, but on the basis of the corporeality, body, pleasure, and pain, limits and wishes of moral freedoms.

So, moving on to axiological and praxeological characteristics of political action, we note that the value (axiological) characteristics of the political decision are determined by the influence of subjective factors, behavioral assessment, decision development, and decision making. And here we also have to speak about the impact of globalization, in particular, about cultural globalization. National mentality, psychological contexts of the actions, human behavior and the way they influence the policy-making process became, perhaps, even more significant than a mere technology.

One should mention one of the most popular concepts in the theory of political decision making, namely, Harold Lasswell's behavioral model (see, *e.g.*, Lasswell 2009). At the core of his model there is an idea of interpreting the decision-making process as human behavior regulated by mechanisms such as incentives and motivations, attitudes and reactions. According to this model, a macro-political process consists in the distribution of key values (resources) by means of governmental institutions. Lasswell's early work *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (Lasswell 1951) puts forward four basic questions for the analysis of political process.

Micro-level decision making is related to behavior of individuals who have personal motives, feelings, and emotions. Personal psychological characteristics have a strong influence on any decision of a person who is in power to take political decisions. Thus, in the mechanism of political decision-making we should take into account the psychological characteristics of an individual political leader.

Meso-level. Private motives and public interest are considered as binding for meso-policy. Within the political decision-making process, the politicians often sublimate their own feelings and release their personal egos, thus solving their personal problems. The decision-makers have to gradually shift the emphasis from their private motives to the public interest.

In general, this model attempts at connecting the role of public institutions, interests, and values with the assessment of psychological parameters of individual behavior like irrational motives, emotions, perceptions, and attitudes which are considered in this case the dominant factors of the policy management.

When analyzing the value aspect of political action one can hardly ignore the issues related to cultural globalization which has blurred the boundaries of national consciousness, and this, in turn, made it possible to unify political decisions and political language (see, *e.g.*, Grinin and Korotayev 2010).

The praxeological characteristics of the political decision define it as a discursive practice. It encompasses the experience of writing laws, using the political decision language, and the creation of a modern law system as the formalization of political decision making in practice. This refers not to Political Science, but rather to Law. So everybody understands that the importance of a decision is determined by the degree of its formalization, by the fact who signed the document and how the control over its implementation is performed. Power and language are inextricably linked not only because power is exercised through the language itself (laws, orders, *etc*.), but also because it organizes the language itself. And in the process of globalization and improvement of the global law the language of political decision becomes unified.

In summary, we have an interconnected system of holistic formation of political decision and political action. Using the methods of systemic philosophy and with the account of the characteristics of globalization, we have focused our attention on the fundamental categories constituting the phenomenon of political decision (political action). In fact, we do not use such categories as state, society, sovereign, decision-maker, political cycle and so on; instead, we deal with other categories, actually, with the global categories like space, time, knowledge, information, value, language, and discourse. We go beyond those conceptual models that form the basis of the political decision-making theory. The shift in focus from technology to the internal nature of politics and political action does not mean diminishing their practical relevance. On the contrary, the philosophical categories help us to grasp those unchanged and permanent characteristics of the process and the nature of political action in the context of the world order. Playing with political strategies we forget about the nature of politics itself, its constants, about its existence in space and time, about the dangers of falsification and the attempts to approach the truth. We have to take into account the global information flow, the system of values, and human mental nature, the language as a means of transferring and analyzing information and of expressing deep feelings.

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