

Transformation of democracy in the information age: the role of new media and civic communication

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Abstract. The article aims to outline the transformation in the functioning of modern democracy as a form of government, to explore the influence of modern media on the mechanisms of its implementation. The issue is raised about the preservation of its fundamental principles during the information revolution (primarily in the media sphere) and changes in the forms and methods of communication of people during political interaction. The model of „monitoring democracy” was chosen as the theoretical and conceptual basis for considering these processes, which is based on the „idea of a monitoring citizen” and which is caused by rapid growth of various extra-parliamentary (non-representative) mechanisms of government. Among them, the most important for us is the rapid development of media instruments, namely social networks. The imperative of elections, political parties and parliamentary life, typical for representative democracy over the last two centuries of the history of civilization, is now far behind the capacity of other actors of public life to influence the political decisions of citizens. The author also points to the fact that technology companies, which have concentrated both information – microtargeting supply of information based on psychological profiling, and business activities, demonstrate a new phenomenon, which is assessed by citizens as the most competent and ethical center of gravity and trust. At the same time, governments, independent public institutions and traditional media are perceived as less effective and ethical. Such a concentration of information and corporate influence in one actor (a small group of technology companies) is a new challenge for democracy. Respectively, basic principles that ensure its functioning as the most successful form of government, namely – election and control of power, protection of human rights, participation of citizens in political life and governance, rule of law and accountability of government agencies, prevention of usurpation of power - nowadays experience theoretical rethinking, and are embodied in new political practices. In addition, they (foundations of democracy) are torpedoed by negative phenomena of the period of transformation and political turbulence, among which populism in all its manifestations is the most threatening.

Key words: representative democracy, monitoring democracy, mediocracy, constructive journalism, civil communication, social networks.

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