

"Amateur Politics" in the Trend of Western Populism

Jing Li^{1, a}

¹School of Public Administration, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing 210023, China.

^abecky82818@126.com

Abstract

"Amateur Politics" is increasingly becoming a normal phenomenon in today's western social life, which is not only attributed to the technical conditions such as the change of political election methods in the Internet era, but also profound socio-economic, political, cultural and other factors. fundamentally speaking, it is the populism bred by the predicament of western social development that gives birth to the rise of "Amateur Politics". In essence, "Amateur Politics" reflects the profound changes and transformation that the political society of western countries is undergoing. To a certain extent, it injected new vitality into Western-style democracy and reflected the rebalance between elites and grassroots in the distribution of political power, but it also had great risks and uncertainties, which not only impacted the western democratic political system, but also had a significant impact on the existing international order.

Keywords

Populism, Amateur Politics, Western-style Democracy, Anti-globalization, International Order.

1. Introduction

In recent years, populism is very popular in Europe and the United States, which not only impacts the operation of Western-style democracy, changes its political ecology, but also profoundly affects the process of world globalization. Driven by this populist trend, a group of "political amateurs" who basically have no experience in politics and lack experience in running the country have suddenly emerged as a new force, won inner-party and even domestic elections, walked to the center of the political stage, and began to give advice. For instance, American businessman President Donald Trump, Italian law professor Prime Minister Conte, Slovak lawyer President Captova, Ukrainian comedian President Zelensky and so on. This list of "political amateurs" is still expanding, so that some people exclaim that the era of so-called "Amateur Politics" in the West has come.

2. The Reasons for the Rise of "Amateur Politics" in the West

The reason why "political amateurs" can change from " political rookies" to " politicians ", and then enter the center of the political arena and become political leaders, in addition to technical conditions such as changes in the way of political election in the Internet era, there are also profound socio-economic, political, cultural and other factors. fundamentally speaking, it is populism bred by the predicament of western social development that gave birth to the rise of "Amateur Politics".

2.1. The Emerging Social Media Has Changed the Traditional Way of Political Election, Providing Technical Conditions for the Rise of "Amateur Politics"

"every revolution in the media will certainly promote a political revolution." In the Internet era, the emerging social media has profoundly influenced the way politics operates. In the past,

political campaigns relied on traditional rallies, but today, with social networks, some people with political aspirations can find another way to spread their ideas of governance and ideas of governing the country, so as to widely absorb fans. Under the influence of emerging social media, "political amateurs" can become "political influencers" in a short period of time, a Facebook account can attract and gather a large number of like-minded people, and they can be known to everyone with only one online headline. The "political amateurs" who can win the election are often experts in the use of social media, and they are well aware that social media is an important carrier of election image design. John Quilch, a professor at Harvard Business School, once pointed out, "candidates who perform better in elections tend to be people who can make more and better use of social media for self-promotion." In Ukraine's general election, Zelenski attracted a large number of young voters through social media, providing a strong public opinion base for the campaign. Trump's successful election as president of the United States also has something to do with his skillful use of social media. He has fully mastered the discourse style of Internet social media and has a say in the virtual world of cyberspace. and then evolve into a powerful political influence in real political elections. Trump, who tasted the benefits, even developed the "Twitter Election" into "Twitter Governance" after he was elected president. It can be said that it is the development of emerging social media that provides important technical conditions for "political amateurs" to counterattack in the election.

2.2. The Populist Trend of Thought Prevailed, Which Influenced the Value Choice and Behavior Orientation of the People in the Political Election, and Provided the Social Basis and Political Opportunity for the Rise of "Amateur Politics"

Populism has existed in western society for a long time, after several ups and downs, the best part has emerged since the international financial crisis in 2008, and now it is in full bloom. Although the populist trend of thought is very complex, its core idea is "anti-elite and anti-establishment". This is highly consistent with the disappointment and dissatisfaction with the existing political system and political reality, and the questioning and boredom of the traditional political elite. Nowadays, with the economic recession and social contradictions in western countries, ordinary people in anxiety are eager to change the status quo and find a feasible way of hope. The populist trend of thought makes use of this social psychology, promotes populism, opposes elitism, calls for a redefinition of political figures, and calls on ordinary people to use votes to support those "political amateurs" who do not belong to the traditional elite alliance. Therefore, it plays a strong role in mobilizing the rise of "political amateurs" to become "political leaders".

2.3. The Proliferation of Populist Movements Directly Gave Birth to the Rise of "Amateur Politics"

Populism is not only a political trend of thought, but also a political movement, and the rise of "Amateur Politics" is an important manifestation of the most exciting part of the development of the populist movement. In a sense, the victory of the "political amateurs" in the election is essentially the victory of the populist movement. The populist movement goes hand in hand with the populist trend of thought, and it has also become rampant in western countries in recent years. Not only do populist political parties in many countries in Europe and the United States continue to grow, gain power in the political arena, and even form cabinets, and there are often populist "achievements" behind an endless stream of "Political Black Swans" events such as Britain's Brexit referendum. As for major social conflicts such as the "Yellow Vest" movements in France, they also show distinct populist characteristics-people's mistrust of politicians and even the social elite as a whole. As the French historian Gerard Novalier said, the "Yellow Vest" movement is a struggle between the "people VS government / elite" and the result of an outbreak of anger accumulated by the mass class as a result of increasing

impoverishment and declining public services. Populist political movements have widened the rift between anxious people and traditional arrogant elites and interest groups, and further magnified the incompetence of pro-establishment politicians in dealing with the plight of social development due to party interests and party values. based on dissatisfaction and even "despair" with existing politicians. Many voters turn to support "political amateurs" who are relatively "fresh and pure". It is hoped that they can find another way to sweep away the long-standing political haze and solve the development problems facing the country. Although many people admit that "political amateurs" may not be reliable, compared with the decaying traditional political elites, "political amateurs" still give people some hope.

3. The Influence of the Rise of "Amateur Politics" in the West

In essence, "Amateur Politics" reflects the profound changes and transformation that the political society of western countries is undergoing. To a certain extent, the rise of "Amateur Politics" has injected new vitality into Western-style democracy and reflected the rebalance between elites and grassroots in the distribution of political power. However, the rise of "Amateur Politics" also has great risks and uncertainties, which will not only impact the western democratic political system, but also have a great impact on the existing international order.

3.1. "Amateur Politics" Injects New Vitality Into Western-Style Democracy and Promotes the Reform of Its National Governance, Which, to A Certain Extent, Can Ease the Crisis of Western-Style Democracy

"Amateur Politics" is not only the product of Western-style democratic changes, but also the result of social transformation in western countries. in essence, "Amateur Politics" does not touch the foundation of the western democratic system, but only the result of internal adjustment of the capitalist system. It has a certain degree of rationality and effectiveness. As mentioned earlier, Western countries are facing serious difficulties in development, the drawbacks of the original national governance model are constantly exposed, public discontent is rising day by day, and "change" has become a universal social consensus. Compared with the narrow and conservative of the traditional political elite, "political amateurs" have no historical burden and are often able to put forward election platforms that are more approachable and cater to the needs of the general public. To inject fresh nutrients into political life, once they win the election, in order to effectively respond to the demands of voters, they will try their best to promote the fulfillment of election promises, so as to promote the change of national governance. In addition, the western democratic system has always been unable to solve the problem of social polarization, especially in the era of globalization, the strength of trade unions and other mass organizations has gradually weakened or even mutated, losing the capital that competes with the elite groups in politics, resulting in a further imbalance between the elite and the grassroots in the distribution of political power, the power of the elites cannot be effectively checked and balanced, and it is impossible to talk about the so-called "Popular Sovereignty". Thus seriously damaged the foundation of the operation of Western-style democracy. The rise of "Amateur Politics" can be regarded as an alternative political struggle of the grassroots, which helps to break the monopoly of political power by elite groups and ease the crisis of Western-style democracy to a certain extent.

3.2. "Political Amateurs" Lack Experience in Governing the Country, and the Problem of "Winning the Election" But Not "Competent Position" Is Prominent

Politics is the specific behavior and the specific relationship formed by various subjects of power to safeguard their own interests in the field of superstructure, which not only has a

significant impact and role on all aspects of social life, but also has its unique operation law. On the other hand, political leaders are those who play a major role in political life and political process, hold the leadership and can influence and control others, and have high requirements for their quality and ability. Although there is no shortage of so-called "political genius" in the world political arena, they cannot grow into qualified political leaders without rich political experience. In particular, as a government leader, he undertakes the important task of governing the country, and he cannot be competent only by the "clank oath" during the election campaign, and the successful experience of his original work must not be simply copied to the governance of the country. As the world can see, after Trump, who is all-powerful in the business world, became president, he ignored (or was ignorant) international norms and copied his set of ideas and practices in doing business, provoking disputes with many countries and setting off huge waves. It has fully exposed the disadvantages of being in power by "political amateurs". In addition, although "political amateurs" can achieve a counterattack in the general election, it is impossible to break away from the original political ecological environment in the process of administration, and they have to face all kinds of complicated political relations, but they lack political experience and political resources. They do not have sufficient conditions to manipulate with the traditional establishment, and they are subject to a lot of constraints, which aggravate the difficulty of their administration.

3.3. "Amateur Politics" Challenges the Traditional Political Power, Which Leads to The Change of Western-Style Democratic Power Structure and the Imbalance of Political System

"Amateur Politics", with the power of populism, realized the counterattack against "elite politics", broke the institutional system constructed by the traditional political elites and the interest structure formed accordingly, and inevitably led to the resistance of the traditional political elites. The fierce game between "Amateur Politics" and "Elite Politics" will not only lead to changes in the Western-style democratic power structure, but also lead to the imbalance of the original political system. One of the serious consequences of the spread of populism is to turn the traditional institutionalized political life in the West to the political life of social movement, and its destructive effect on social development is obvious. once the "political amateurs" who rise in the populist movement come to power, they often negate or even destroy existing policies and institutions out of political ideas or the need to consolidate their political status. With the help of the political movement, some unconventional methods are adopted to achieve their own political goals, which further aggravates this trend. Apart from continuing to use populism to incite the people and win the hearts and minds of the people, they will also try their best to expand the scope of their power and do not hesitate to challenge the original political structure and order, which will inevitably lead to an imbalance in the political system over a period of time. Aggravate political unrest and make social development pay a heavy price for it.

3.4. "Amateur Politics" Conforms to the Trend of Anti-Globalization in the World and Has An Impact on the Existing International Order

Since the 2008 financial crisis, the trend of anti-globalization in the world has intensified. "Trade protectionism is escalating, global multilateral mechanisms are weak, and various regional trade and investment agreements are fragmented. The immigration, investment and regulatory policies of the United States and Europe are developing in the direction of de-globalization." this trend echoes the proliferation of populism in western countries. In this trend, the rise of "Amateur Politics" is inevitably marked with the brand of anti-globalization, and reflects a more obvious trend of conservatism in both domestic and foreign affairs. While "Amateur Politics" challenges the traditional domestic political pattern and order, it is bound to impact the international order. In particular, the "political amateur " is in power in a big

country, and the slight change in its governance policy will have a direct impact on the world situation and international relations. The most typical is that after the Trump entered the White House, he stubbornly adhered to the so-called "America First" principle in international exchanges, abnormally pursued the maximization of US interests, broke his promise and withdrew from the group, and wantonly brandished the stick of trade hegemonism. Unilateralism has not only subverted the diplomatic tradition of the United States, but also had a serious impact on the existing world order. As "political amateurs" take power in more and more countries, the uncertainty of their policies and the untraditional nature of their behavior will make international relations even more.

References

- [1] L.Zhang: Diverse European populism and its impact on democratic institutions, International Forum,(2019)No.1,p.62-77.
- [2] J.J.Zhen: Analysis of the wave of populism in the west, Truths and Facts,(2017)No.12,p93-97.
- [3] C.Y.Gao: Populist challenges in western democracies: correction and threat, Contemporary World and Socialism ,(2018)No.6,p118-119.
- [4] J.Z.Guo: Values and empirical phenomena: the embarrassment and reconstruction of the concept of populism, Social Science Abstracts,(2019)No.3,p33-35.