POLITIKA I BEZBEDNOST

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NAVIGATING POLITICS IN THE INFORMATION OCEAN: IMPACTS AND SCENARIOS OF AN INEVITABLE COURSE

Summary: *The evolution of politics and communication in the information society has generated a series of complex challenges and opportunities. This study analyzes the paradigmatic shift in political communication in a context where information is accessible through a myriad of digital channels. Through an interdisciplinary perspective that encompasses communication, political science, and sociology, this work examines the role of new media and digital platforms and focuses on the emerging power dynamics in digital politics. The implications of this transformation will be discussed, highlighting the various interconnected interpretive interplays to ensure informed and responsible political participation in the information society. The primary goal of this study is to provide a comprehensive framework of the ongoing dynamics, enabling a critical reflection on the future direction of politics and communication in the information age.*

Keywords: *Political communication, Information society, Digital platforms, Political participation, Political customization*

1. INTRODUCTION

The interactivity and public participation in the media are not a novelty in the broad digital landscape but have grown significantly with the adaptation to the digital convergence process[1]. The use of social platforms and the sharing of user-generated content have long raised new ethical and legal issues[2], which are still the subject of intense debate. In this context, social media play a crucial role both in introducing new participatory experiences and in the discussion of media behavior in relation to their users. The aim of this article is twofold: on the one hand, to explore and decode the new way of conducting political

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1 Jenkins, H. (2007). *Cultura convergente*. Milano: Apogeo.

2 Battista, D., & Uva, G. (2023). Exploring the Legal Regulation of Social Media in Europe: A Review of Dynamics and Challenges—Current Trends and Future Developments. *Sustainability*, *15*(5), 4144.

communication, and on the other hand, to highlight some emblematic cases in this regard. The exploration of the mechanisms offered by public media shows that social media are the predominant tools, and at the same time, it is necessary within the field of political communication to exploit new innovative strategies. The adaptation to online technologies has brought about a transformation of the media and the audience[3] in the conditions of the contemporary media ecology[4]. Web tools and current communication strategies advance in this direction, proposing a system of intercreativity[5]. Furthermore, there is now an established continuity between the offline and digital dimensions in which citizens navigate and express their opinions and sentiments in a social climate of increasing media personalization, in line with the multidimensional nature of life that unfolds between online and offline[6]. Over time, political communication has undergone a process of desacralization[7], leading to an adaptation to the standards of the media system, primarily television. However, the need to adapt to changes has expanded politics into various spheres, even making it an attraction for entertainment or a product of popular culture. In this new arrangement, there is an adaptation of the language of politics to the language of the media, as well as the importance of the personal sphere of the politician, personalizing politics after dramatizing it. In this increasingly pervasive environment, it acquires considerable consideration in total connection with communication to create a mix that can engage a significant portion of the audience within the much-vaunted information society. Moreover, political communication is also evolving in an increasingly complex digital context, where political leaders use social platforms and digital technologies to interact with the public, create new forms of storytelling and participation to build a constant and engaging presence[8]. This new modus operandi is redefining the boundaries between the public and private spheres, between political actors and the public. It is precisely in this context, while navigating the vast sea of politics, that it plays a crucial role in making political communication attractive and engaging by using innovative techniques for content production and distribution. In this article, therefore, we will explore the mechanisms that govern the new environment and aim to investigate how some political leaders have adapted to new technologies and digital platforms to promote their image and interact with the public in an ever-evolving political communication landscape. After all, we have long been aware of being immersed in a reality defined as "technologically engaging"[9],

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[3]   Díaz-Noci, J. (2010). Medios de comunicación en Internet: Algunas tendencias. *El Profesional de la Información*, 19(6), 561-567. https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2010.nov.01

[4]   Scolari, C. A., Winocur, R., Pereira, S., & Barreneche, C. (2018). Alfabetismo transmedia. Una introducción. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, 33, 7-13. [URL: https://bit.ly/2Tmen5u]

[5]   Fernández-Castrillo, C. (2014). Prácticas transmedia en la era del prosumidor: Hacia una definición del contenido generado por el usuario (CGU). *Cuadernos de Información y Comunicación*, 19, 53-67. https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_CIYC.2014.v19.43903

[6]   Boccia Artieri, G. (2012). *Stati di connessione: pubblici, cittadini e consumatori nella (social) network society*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

[7]   Mazzoleni, G., & Shulz, W. (1999). Mediatization of politics: A challenge for democracy? *Political Communication*, 16(3).

[8]   Battista, D. (2023). For better or for worse: politics marries pop culture (TikTok and the 2022 Italian elections). *Society Register*, *7*(1), 117-142.

[9]   Pecchinenda, G. (2003). *Videogiochi e cultura della simulazione. La nascita dell'"homo game"*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.

thanks to the pervasive capacity for engagement and interaction of digital technologies with users. For this reason, in light of the growing importance and role of media in shaping public opinion, it becomes urgent to address the current issue. Considering these reflections, we hope to contribute to the understanding of the new landscape of political communication and provide food for thought on the challenges it will have to face in the near future.

2. POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN THE COMPLEX INFORMATION SOCIETY: THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN PERSONALIZATION AND PARTICIPATION

In modern democracies, we observe a distinct inclination towards the personalization of politics, a phenomenon that has influenced the gradual decrease in the importance of political programs and parties[10] and is also reflected in the growing distrust of political parties themselves[11]. This distrust has reached significant levels, leading to a profound downgrading of the traditionally attributed role of political parties within the democratic process. As a result, we witness the emergence of a new paradigm in which identification with a political party is replaced by identification with a charismatic leader[12]. This political transformation implies a series of significant changes in the broader political landscape. The heightened personalization of politics suggests that citizens increasingly attribute greater importance to the charismatic individual or political leader within the political context, as opposed to traditional adherence to political ideologies or party programs. This phenomenon can be seen as a reaction to the perception of inefficacy or detachment of traditional political parties from the needs and expectations of citizens. This shift towards a politics more focused on the figure of the leader can have a series of consequences and challenges for the political system. For example, political instability may increase as citizens' preferences can vary significantly based on emerging charismatic leaders. Furthermore, the personalization of politics could hinder the formation of lasting political compromises and coalitions, as alliances may be influenced primarily by the personal charisma of leaders rather than the compatibility of political programs. In this context, there is a need for a profound reflection on the dynamics of personalized politics and its implications for the functioning of modern democracies. The challenge lies in balancing the need for strong and charismatic leadership with the importance of democratic principles and inclusive political representation to ensure a healthy and responsible political system in the era of political personalization and the acknowledged centrality provided by this so-called "always-on" society[13][14]. The underlying trend of *presidentialization*, that is, the pronounced role and visibility of political leaders, can be interpreted as a strategic response to the need to capture the floating electorate, a segment

10   Mancini, P. (2011). Leader, president, person: Lexical ambiguities and interpretive implications. *European Journal of Communication, 26* (1).

11   Dalton, R. J., & Wattenberg, M. P. (2003). *Parties Without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford Scholarship Online.

12   Ceccobelli, D. (2017). *Facebook al potere: Lo stile della leadership al tempo dei social media*. Santarcangelo di Romagna: Maggioli.

13   Susca, V. (2022). *Tecnomagia. Estasi, Totem e incantesimi nella cultura digitale*. Milano: Mimesis.

14   Turkle, S. (2023). *Always-on/always-on-you: The tethered self. In Social Theory Re-Wired* (pp. 485-495). London: Routledge.

of citizens that rarely identifies with traditional parties but is drawn to the figure of a charismatic leader, perceived as more approachable and accessible. This phenomenon is partly explained by a profound change in the political context, where the image and personality of the political leader have become central elements in electoral competition. Mazzoleni and Sfardini (2009)[15] have outlined this transformation, highlighting how current leaders can adapt to the demands of the political spectacle, where communication and visibility are essential for electoral success. Another aspect to consider is the trend of "vetrinizzazione," a concept proposed by Codeluppi (2007)[16], which manifests as a significant emphasis on the visibility of the private lives of political leaders. In this context, political leaders often find themselves exposing aspects of their personal lives, including intimate details, to enhance their appeal to the electorate. This can include sharing family moments, details about daily life, and even displaying personal emotions in public. The "vetrinizzazione" of political leaders can have significant impacts on politics and public perception. On one hand, it can contribute to creating a stronger bond between the leader and the voters, making the leader appear more human and accessible. On the other hand, it can raise concerns about privacy and the blurring of boundaries between the public and private spheres. Furthermore, this emphasis on the personality of the leader may overshadow the role of political parties and programs, reducing political discourse to a matter of individual charisma. Ultimately, these are significant aspects of the contemporary political landscape that require in-depth analysis of the dynamics and implications for the functioning of modern democracies. The politics of spectacle and private visibility have become key elements in electoral competition, pushing political leaders to develop communicative strategies that take these changes into account. The privatization of politics marks a shift in importance from television to social media, as the floating public is less interested in administrative qualities and more in personal attributes that connect with people's everyday lives. This also corresponds to the progressive downsizing of formal political engagement by citizens: focusing on the politician's persona rather than the organization and program conveys legitimacy to the values and political actions conveyed by the public figure[17]. In addition, it is clear that political leaders themselves are actively promoting the personalization of politics, leveraging their personal qualities of affability and likability. These leaders believe that emotional consent can overcome the resistance of an audience that shows an increasing disinterest in formal politics[18]. Focusing on the emotional aspect of political appeal, based on charisma and leader's empathy, represents a key strategy to capture the attention and support of the electorate in a context where traditional politics risks appearing distant and unengaging[19]. It is important to note that this evolution of politics does not occur in a static media environment. On the contrary,

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[15]   Mazzoleni, G., & Sfardini, A. (2009). *Politica pop. Da Porta a porta a L'isola dei famosi*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

[16]   Codeluppi, V. (2007). *La vetrinizzazione sociale: Il processo di spettacolarizzazione degli individui e della società*. Milano: Bollati Boringhieri.

[17]   Rega, R., & Bracciale, R. (2018). La Self-Personalization dei leader politici su Twitter. Tra professionalizzazione e intimizzazione. *The Lab's Quarterly*, 2.

[18]   Langer, A. I. (2010). The politicization of private persona: Exceptional leaders or the new rule? The case of the United Kingdom and the Blair effect. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 15(1), 60-76.

[19]   Battista, D. (2023b). Knock, Knock! The Next Wave of Populism Has Arrived! An Analysis of Confirmations, Denials, and New Developments in a Phenomenon That Is Taking Center Stage. *Social Sciences*, *12*(2), 100.

we are witnessing a complex transformation of the media ecosystem, combining the logic of traditional media with that of new media, creating a hybrid environment. This transition involves the integration and interaction of new channels, next-generation communication formats, and contemporary languages within the traditional media landscape[20]. In this hybrid context, the logic of new media adds an additional dimension to political personalization. Political leaders can leverage a wide range of digital platforms and social media to reach the electorate more directly, creating a more immediate and interactive dialogue with voters. However, this transition is not without conflicts, as the integration of new media logic with that of traditional media raises complex issues related to credibility, information quality, and control of the political message. In summary, the personalization of politics relies on the personal qualities of political leaders, such as affability and likability, to capture an electorate desensitized to formal politics. This dynamic take place in a rapidly evolving media landscape, where the logic of new media overlaps with that of traditional media, shaping how politics is communicated, perceived, and participated in by the electorate. Engagement with the public within digital platforms, known as "networked publics," proves to be an inherently ambivalent process, with the potential to both enhance and deteriorate the reputation of political actors and their proposals, reinforcing or questioning their appeal. "Networked politics"[21] marks an important shift away from the dominant role of television in political communication, opening the door to new forms of political content consumption characterized by a high degree of unprecedented interactivity within the continuously evolving society, bridging the gap between information and entertainment. One of the most tangible manifestations of this interactivity is the "second screen" phenomenon[22]. This concept implies the simultaneous participation of the public in online political discussions while watching television programs or talk shows dedicated to politics. This practice highlights the wide range of opinions and comments from participants, often influencing the debate and the perception of the political topic in real-time. The widespread use of digital media has opened new horizons in the representation of politics and the participation of diverse audiences. Digital platforms serve as an extended stage, allowing active and direct public participation in political discussions. This expansion of the political stage has been accompanied by a diversification of sources of information and opinion, creating a context in which political narration intertwines with information, often challenging traditional hierarchies and channels of political communication. In summary, the digital age has radically transformed contemporary politics through the interactivity of networked publics, active public participation through the second screen, and a wide spectrum of voices and sources present online. Politics is no longer a unidirectional process but rather a context where diverse voices and narratives converge in a dynamic dialogue, constantly redefining how we perceive and engage in politics. This profound reshaping of the political landscape in the digital age is a testament to a significant shift, as emphasized by Manin (2013)[23], from the traditional "party democracy" to a "public democracy." This shift

[20]   Chadwick, A. (2017). *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power* (2a ed.). Oxford University Press.

[21]   Cepernich, C. (2017). *Le campagne elettorali al tempo della networked politics*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.

[22]   Cepernich, C., & Novelli, E. (2018). Sfumature del razionale: La comunicazione politica emozionale nell'e-cosistema ibrido dei media. *Comunicazione Politica, 1*, 13-30.

[23]   Manin, B. (2013). *Principi del governo rappresentativo*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

is crucial as it reorients political dynamics from the mediation of political parties, which acted as intermediaries between citizens and the decision-making process, towards a model based on a direct connection, both politically and communicatively, between leaders and citizens themselves. In this new phase, the logic of traditional representation undergoes a substantial transformation, giving rise to a paradigm of "representation." This concept implies a shift from the depth of analysis and debate typical of electoral assemblies, where parties played a central role, towards the search for faster deliberation, often mediated by the media[24]. Media, with their ability to reach a broad audience in real-time, accelerate the deliberative process, often to the benefit of visibility and popular participation. This shift in political paradigm entails a series of significant implications. On one hand, it can increase citizen participation, enabling a more direct engagement in political discourse and decisions. However, it can also lead to a simplification and superficiality of deliberation, with an excessive emphasis on spectacularization and communication at the expense of political substance. Moreover, it may raise questions about charismatic leadership and media control over public perception, at the expense of traditional democratic institutions. As a result, the transition from party democracy to public democracy represents a profound change in contemporary political dynamics. This shift from representation to representation involves a change in the nature of political deliberation, accelerated by the media, posing unique challenges and opportunities in the interconnected global landscape. The figure of the politician, therefore, extends further into the multitude of facets that have emerged. As mentioned earlier, politicians are increasingly appreciated for their visibility in the media and in sensationalized politics rather than for their political ideas or positions on relevant issues. In this scenario, the popularity of a charismatic leader can create emotional consensus, but it does not necessarily guarantee fair representation of various interests and positions within society. Furthermore, a focus on the leader's image can limit active citizen participation in political life, favoring a culture of sensationalism and political consumerism. This raises important questions about the ability to ensure democratic participation of citizens and address the complex challenges of the current global context. However, the personalization of politics seems destined to remain a key element of the political system, as it responds to the needs of digital communication and the society of spectacle. Still, it requires constant critical reflection and greater attention to promoting effective and inclusive democratic participation in the intricate and contested contemporary society.

3. THE VARIOUS APPROACHES TO POLITICAL COMMUNICATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Videopolitics has undoubtedly revolutionized how political leaders present themselves to the public and how they are perceived globally. This transformation has been fueled by the increasing centrality of the leader's figure worldwide, as visual and multimedia communication has become a predominant means of connecting with voters and the general public. This phenomenon has been made possible by the widespread availability and democratization of technology and media, making video content production and consumption accessible to all,

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[24]   Sorice, M. (2009). *Sociologia dei Mass media*. Roma: Carocci.

often resulting in viral content on social platforms. In this context, political leaders often find themselves at the center of the political and media stage, harnessing the power of visual media to communicate their positions, personalities, and proposals directly to voters and the general public. This is particularly evident during election campaigns, where image and visual rhetoric have become key elements in capturing the attention and support of the electorate. On the other hand, the information society, with its constant proliferation of data and content, has significantly contributed to the centrality of videopolitics. The information society is characterized by an uninterrupted flow of data and information, making visual communication an effective way to synthesize and communicate political messages immediately and effectively. Furthermore, the information society has created a kind of "addiction" to speed and dynamism, which has made visual communication increasingly congruent with the current political scene, where rapid response and visibility are crucial for success. In this scenario, political leaders have adapted to the expectations of the information society, embracing the potential of videopolitics to reach and engage the public directly and persuasively. The centrality of political leaders in videopolitics is, therefore, a pragmatic response to the communication and visibility needs in an era characterized by increasing interaction between politics, technology, and the information society. In the contemporary world, characterized by hyper-complexity and information overload[25], visual media plays a crucial role in conjunction with the trend towards a more popular-oriented politics[26]. In this environment, these media emerge as agents that perform a remarkable task of simplifying political issues to provide citizens with a tool for navigating the intricate contemporary political scene. The combination of these elements reflects a pragmatic response to the challenges posed by the hyper-complexity of today's world, where political issues often intersect with a wide range of factors, making it difficult for the average citizen to fully understand political dynamics and the implications of political decisions. In this context, popular and visual media offer an effective means to simplify and condense complex political information, allowing citizens to have a compass to orient themselves. However, this simplification is not without challenges and issues. The reduction of complexity can lead to an overly superficial and simplified view of political issues, reducing understanding of the details and nuances of political matters. Additionally, there is a risk of politics becoming overly oriented towards a popular approach, which could overlook real challenges and complexities that require more sophisticated and informed solutions. Therefore, it is crucial to balance this simplification with the need for a deeper and more detailed understanding of political issues to ensure informed and conscious engagement in political life. Despite some aspects and processes being now incontrovertible, such as the sensationalization and personalization of politics which have led to a marked acceleration of political processes, resulting in a significant emphasis on the figure of the political leader, who is configured and treated as a true personal brand[27]. This phenomenon reflects a profound transformation in the contemporary political arena, where the political leader is no longer just an institutional

[25]   Gallo, M., Fenza, G., & Battista, D. (2022). Information Disorder: What about global security implications?. *Rivista di Digital Politics*, *2*(3), 523-538.

[26]   Mazzoleni, G., & Sfardini, A. (2009). *Politica pop. Da Porta a porta a L'isola dei famosi*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

[27]   Barile, N. (2014). *Brand Renzi: Anatomia del politico come marca*. Milano: Egea.

actor but becomes a charismatic, almost iconic figure who takes on the characteristics of a personal brand. The acceleration in question is evident as election campaigns and political activities are increasingly conducted in a concise and dynamic manner, reflecting a culture of short and quick attention typical of the digital age. In this context, the image and personality of the leader become fundamental elements for capturing the immediate attention of the public, often at the expense of more complex political details. Moreover, configuring the leader as a political brand implies particular attention to the construction and promotion of a coherent and distinctive image, leveraging branding elements such as style, language, charisma, and emotional appeal. This emphasis on building the leader's image as a political brand is supported by targeted communication strategies, often with the goal of creating an emotional connection between the leader and the electorate. Contemporary political leaders, therefore, adopt a communication strategy that involves the construction of a continuous and consistent narrative, which unfolds through a constant presence on various media platforms, including print, television, and social networks[28] .This continuous political narrative reflects a broader trend in which contemporary politics is increasingly oriented towards symbolic representation, image, and gesturing, rather than focusing exclusively on laws and decrees[29]. This shift in political perspective has been influenced in part by the theory of the "liquid society" formulated by Bauman (1999)[30], highlighting the fluid and volatile nature of social and political dynamics in the contemporary era. Electoral volatility, as discussed by Norris (2011)[31], is a central aspect of this reality, where voters play a significant role in a constantly evolving political process, often characterized by rapid changes in opinion and political affiliation. In this context, the importance of continuously employing political communication professionals to manage and shape the public image of political leaders becomes evident. These professionals are responsible for developing and promoting a coherent and persuasive narrative that resonates with the public, ensuring a constant and adequate presence on various media. This approach has been described as a "permanent election campaign" by Blumenthal (1980)[32], emphasizing the fact that contemporary politics requires continuous commitment to communication and image management of leaders beyond electoral periods. In summary, contemporary politics increasingly focuses on constructing coherent narratives and symbolic representation, with a constant presence on various media platforms. This is partly due to the dynamic nature of the liquid society and electoral volatility. Therefore, the employment of political communication professionals to shape the public image of leaders has become a necessity, supporting the concept of a permanent election campaign. Undoubtedly, the image of a political leader receives careful and multifaceted attention on multiple fronts but assumes fundamental relevance in the realm of visual presentation, especially in today's information society, which embraces both traditional and new social media. The emphasis on visual presentation is evident in the way

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[28]   Ventura, S. (2019). I leader e le loro storie. Narrazione, comunicazione politica e crisi della democrazia. Bologna: Il Mulino.

[29]   Salmon, C. (2014). *La politica nell'era dello storytelling*. Roma: Fazi Editore.

[30]   Bauman, Z. (2011). *Modernità liquida*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.

[31]   Norris, P. (2011). Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited. Cambridge University Press.

[32]   Blumenthal, S. (1980). *The Permanent Campaign: Inside the World of Elite Political*. Boston: Beacon Press.

various factors and domains, previously considered distant from the traditional political context, have assumed a significant role, reconnecting with the political sphere. The care of the visual image of a political leader reflects the understanding that public perception is profoundly influenced by outward appearance, visual communication, and symbolic representation. This aspect has become even more relevant in the information age, where images, videos, and visual communication dominate the media landscape. The strategy of visual presentation includes elements such as attire, facial expression, body language, and the appropriate use of social media platforms, all aimed at building and solidifying a desirable image. Furthermore, contemporary politics has been deeply influenced by a range of sectors and disciplines that in the past may have seemed distant from the political sphere. Interaction with the worlds of entertainment, art, journalism, marketing, and visual communication has become an essential element in constructing the leader's image. This multidisciplinary collaboration has often been driven by the desire to create an emotional connection with the electorate and to translate political complexity into accessible and engaging terms. In conclusion, the care of a political leader's image, especially in the realm of visual presentation, has become a fundamental component of contemporary politics. Its significance is amplified by the information age, where visual media play a predominant role in communication. Additionally, politics has opened up to a range of disciplines and sectors previously distant, with a view to constructing an engaging and captivating political narrative. Undoubtedly, throughout different historical epochs, various tools and protagonists have emerged in the context of political communication. However, some fundamental techniques and principles have shown remarkable resistance to change over time. This continuity and coexistence of traditional elements and new elements characterize the evolution of political communication across epochs. In historical analysis, we can identify a series of tools that have emerged and disappeared over time, often in response to technological changes and social dynamics. For example, when we consider the transition from political communication based on traditional media such as print and radio to digital communication and social media, we see a radical transformation of the tools used. However, beyond these instrumental variations, key principles such as persuasion, voter mobilization, and the construction of the leader's image continue to play a central role in political communication. Furthermore, the figure of the protagonist in political communication has undergone significant changes. Each era has witnessed the emergence of new political leaders, the rise of new generations of politicians, or even the transfer of power between different political parties or movements. These changes in political protagonists are often influenced by historical events, cultural shifts, and emerging political challenges. Nevertheless, despite fluctuations in protagonists and communication media, many of the techniques and principles of persuasion and voter mobilization have remained constant over time. For example, the use of rhetoric, storytelling, and image management remains crucial strategies for political leaders in any era. In conclusion, political communication is characterized by a complex dynamic in which tools and protagonists change over epochs, but some fundamental principles and techniques maintain their relevance in pursuing political objectives. This interplay between continuity and change is a distinctive feature of the evolution of political communication throughout history.

4. CONCLUSION

In the face of this revolution, several latent and unresolved questions arise, representing challenging alarm bells that are difficult to interpret. Could this series of changes disrupt and influence the functioning of democracy? Today's reality has reduced aversion to new media, but the issue concerning the relationship between media consumption and civic engagement remains open. The question and concern primarily relate to the quality of content and its consumption by citizens. In other words, it is a question of whether the purpose of politics, as it is represented today through a sensationalized communication of politicians, is to generate interest, attraction, and participation among citizens. Or, as some scholars argue, whether the pop culture turn in politics entertains but does not inform, triggers emotions but not commitment. Political and sociological research has not yet produced an answer capable of satisfying everyone. Indeed, on this topic, there are many conflicting opinions that make expectations about the case in question even more interesting. The only statement capable of garnering unanimous agreement today is that politics, in conjunction with marketing, has emerged as an inevitable strategy in the field of political communication[33]. This transformation can be interpreted in the light of multiple factors and dynamics inherently linked to the evolution of contemporary society. In particular, the increasing intersection of politics, technology, and media has created a context in which the competition for the electorate's attention has become increasingly intense and complex. In this scenario, political marketing has asserted itself as a fundamental tool for the promotion of candidates, parties, and political causes, through the application of strategies and tactics traditionally associated with the commercial world. This approach involves the segmentation of the electorate, the formulation of clear and persuasive messages, the management of candidates' images, as well as the use of advanced communication tools, including social media and new technologies. Political marketing aims to create a winning political identity and to effectively convey the proposals and values of the parties to gain the consent of the electorate. Furthermore, the growing importance of political marketing is amplified by the need to promote civic engagement and actively involve citizens in the democratic process. However, it is essential to acknowledge that this evolution is not without challenges, as it raises ethical and regulatory questions regarding the manipulation of public opinion and the transparency of political communication practices. Therefore, political marketing represents a complex and ever-evolving reality in which strategies, technologies, and democratic values intersect in a dynamic that warrants critical and in-depth attention from academic research. This also demonstrates that this marriage between politics and new technologies can paradoxically serve as a "lifeboat" for large segments of the public who are traditionally distant from or disengaged with the world of politics. The products resulting from this mix can serve as stepping stones for political engagement, as they contain just enough substantive information to prevent the public from being completely alienated from the realm of political events. Politics, therefore, can benefit from new technologies by engaging voters, stimulating participation in political life, encouraging proposals, and triggering greater mobilization,

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[33]   Baltezarević, R., & Baltezarević, V. (2022). The influence of digital political communication supported by neuromarketing methods on consumer perception towards a tourist destination. *Megatrend revija*, *19*(2), 13-33.

creating a sense of belonging under the banner of engagement. From my perspective, the wide range of tools offered by digital political communication represents an unprecedented opportunity for politics. Although there is no definitive answer on how this communication should be structured to achieve the best results, citizen engagement in political issues can be facilitated through the use of new technologies. The challenge for politicians is to find the right balance between the use of innovative technological tools and the provision of high-quality content capable of informing, engaging, and educating the public.

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Daniele Battista

UPRAVLJANJE POLITIKOM U INFORMACIONOM OKEANU: UTICAJI I SCENARIJI NEIZBEŽNOG TOKA.

Sažetak: *Evolucija politike i komunikacije u informacionom društvu stvorila je niz složenih izazova i prilika. Ova studija analizira paradigmatsku promenu u političkoj komunikaciji u kontekstu u kojem su informacije dostupne kroz bezbroj digitalnih kanala. Kroz interdiscipli-narnu perspektivu koja obuhvata komunikaciju, političke nauke i sociologiju, ovaj rad ispituje ulogu novih medija i digitalnih platformi i fokusira se na dinamiku moći u nastajanju u digitalnoj politici. Razgovaraće se o implikacijama ove transformacije, naglašavajući različite međusobno povezane interpretativne interakcije kako bi se osiguralo informisano i odgovorno političko učešće u informacionom društvu. Primarni cilj ove studije je da pruži sveobuhvatan okvir tekuće dinamike, omogućavajući kritičko promišljanje budućeg pravca politike i komunikacije u informacionom dobu.*

Ključne reči: *politička komunikacija, informaciono društvo, digitalne platforme, političko učešće, političko prilagođavanje*