INFOKRATIYA AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

INFOKRACIJA I POLITIČKA KOMUNIKACIJA

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Abstract
Internet, social networks and global media significantly change the socio-psychological model of democratic decision-making, since citizens more and more their own attitudes, beliefs and behavior patterns replace by media pictures. Willingness of individuals is breaking and reshaping, becoming the part of political reorganization, whereas the state with the invisible lash force them to be truly their own as they are unable to do that themselves. The power of thematization pushes into focus the interests, proactive communication strategies direct public dialogue, and personalization blurs ideological interests. Instead of critical communication, masses are offered promising packages of filtered information, the attention is focused to goals of the rich and governing while political communication is hiding more than discovering. Analyzing increasingly noticeable role of media management, PRs and advertizing in the public sphere, the authors ascertain that digitalization increases separation between those who manage and those who are managed, and also political democracy gradually transforms into infokratija which delegates sovereignty to citizens on communication centers.

Introduction/1/

Modern society is in crisis: theory structures and experience facts are more often in disagreement, values and patterns loose recognizable forms, the objective reality is transformed by technological tools in symbolic performances, while logic methods and opinion forms gradually give way to propaganda skills formed upon creations of PR weaving masters. Hence, political communication is gaining in importance since the planning, conducting and controlling of media contents, in practice means social processes managing and influence on decision making. While at the same time, politics of representation (visibility in the public space) is in direct dependence on media support which intensifies, weakens or filters the citizen’s expectations. Traditional state (parliament, government) and many other agencies (churches, syndicates, citizen initiatives, NGO-s, universities and so on) due to in-

Sažetak
Internet, društvene mreže i globalni mediji bitno mijenjaju socijalno-psihološki model demokratskog odlučivanja, jer građani sve češće vlastite stavove, uvjerenja i obrasce ponašanja zamjenjuju medijskim slikama. Volja pojedinaca se lomi i preoblikuje, postajući dio političkog preuređenja, pri čemu ih država nevidljivim bićem prilijeva da budu istinski svoji kada to ne mogu sami. Moć tematiziranja izbija u fokus interesa, proaktivne komunikacijske strategije usmjeravaju javni dialo, a personalizacija zamagljuje ideološke interese. Umjesto kritičkog komuniciranja masama se nude obećavajući paketi filtriranih informacija, pažnja se usmjerava ka ciljevima bogatih i vladajućih, dok politička komunikacija više skriva nego što otkriva. Analizirajući sve uočljivije uloge medijskog menadžmenta, PR-a i oglašavanja u javnoj sferi, autori zaključuju kako se sa digitalizacijom povećava podvojenost između onih koji upravljaju i onih kojima se upravlja, ali i da se politička demokracija postepeno transformira u infokratiju koja suverenitet građanina delegira na komunikacijske centre.
Hence, political communication is gaining in formed upon creations of PR weaving masters. Modern society is in crisis: theory structures reignty to citizens on communication centers.

advertizing in the public sphere, the authors a promissing packages of filtered information, the personalization communication strategies direct public dialogue, and pushes into focus the interests, proness of individuals is breaking and reshaping, and more their own attitudes, believes and behavior.

Democracy in the new media network

The capability of the society to plan, manufacture, process, control, store or distribute the public information to others reveals its political and security power. The model of Deliberative Democracy /4/ founded on permeability of the public sphere channels is in direct dependence on choice, information type and format, discourse and data selection, which gives to communication space and time its contextual frame. By abolishing of geographical distance (it all happens in front of our eyes) and psychological isolation (maybe we are the next), enforced by technological dispersion, media gradually adopt our freedom and also our opinion, attitudes, habits, behavior patterns. “The truth order reclaims on imposing of symbolic presentations, new type of the spiritual violence as social challenge, whereas magnetic field of events in the public space is made of public information, ways of the presentation and manipulation”./5/ The webbing is simultaneously woven on the braid of both classical and digital media, which in real life announces severe battle for the attention of the public and also for spreading of consociational democracy./6/ The communication processes with the appearance of internet and social networks are close to what Karl Raimund Popper calls the third world./7/ This author explained the transformation through the world of object, things somewhere-out; which is somehow confronted to subject. The second world is the idea in the awareness, the world of subject, while the third world is made of physical representations of ideas, statements, texts, pictures that originate from the second world and exist at the same level as the first one. Hence the space of social networks is not geometrical, but logical because the connections are established on the basis of subject category (such as on Yahoo, Lycos or other searchers) or metaphoric connections (words have implication within text frames, supporting connection with similar words or phrases). In his time, Aristotle the power of demos (people) perceived in the mass: oligarchs have wealth, aristocracy heritage while population reclines on the number./8/ Philosophers suggested numerous types of cognition efficiency justification:” knowledge that may be deduced from some privil-
The classical parliamentarism that dominated in 19th century and partisan partocracies glorified in transition communities during the last decades of 20th century, allowed the appearance of public democracy. /11/ which is in direct dependence on the management of communication flows and contents. Without media there is neither continuous and stable communication between political actors, nor the influence on constructing of pictures about reality. The sphere of political action has gradually transformed: mass, social structure and ideological loyalty in political parties are separating, while citizens are choosing according to interests which seem to be the most suitable to them. /12/ In practice people, facts, values and events are still integral parts of every environment and they get political visibility and social influence only when media meanings, constructions, opinions and interpretations are created. The problem is not relevant by itself but it becomes such only when the debate is opened in the public space, and the fight for its monitoring means also invisible fight for society management! The power is formed in communication activity, and only when there is media feedback it becomes recognizable! Media produce social consensus, by which political communication and symbolic mobilization become the activators of public opinion. The awareness of individual is forming, modeling and adjusting to establishment interests, but the whole of the process is invisible to an ordinary and uneducated observer who, as an object of political process hardly perceives the interaction of politics, safety, management and media. The pictures created by journalists, PR services, agencies for marketing or informing, spin masters, lobbyist, professional communicators and other tailors of propaganda webbing determine the strategy of political communication, with the aim to adjust reality to interests of the ruling powers.

Media in the service of power elite

The dream about free and independent media was the myth in the past. To rule the society means to master communication flows, conflict situations and crisis; in a word to decide on ways of media presentation. In this way we come to the new paradox: mass media industry informs, announces, entertains but also creates the sophisticated type of ideological control. The process of making decision is impossible without cooperation with media that become “operational modus’ of contemporary community. /13/ The journalism character has also changed, but few people even mention it: the middle classes that created institutions of independent press have disappeared, thus the new order transfers information into market services which values increases with deficiency! Consequently, instead of working for citizens, media is working for elite, advertisers, political leaders, parties or media owners, thus becoming the part of the establishment and accepting the adequate rewards of corporate money or the closeness to the holders of the power. /14/ New media change the Planet, and us as well! The overproduction of information in the digital form converts the human mind, personal relations and cultural activities, whereat cognitive level weakens. Nicholas Carr notes that modern readers (viewers and listeners) lose the ability for deeper analysis of media contents, and also less remember because they are lulled that they can always and everything find on the Network. /15/ The practice of deep reading that was popular at the time of Gutenberg’s invention, in which “the silence was the part of the meaning, peace of mind”, is becoming pale, presumably it will retain among rare and decreasing intellectual elite. /16/ Also, the focus of content has been changed: instead of the story about general good (public issues) there has been instrumentalization of the contents that provoke and
smear political opponents, incitement or packing of the affairs for the purpose of their credibility destruction. Sensations and spectacles seduce the critical mind, so the attention is directed to fun and tabloidism, while political actors silently realize the true goals. The communicative reference framework is constructed behind the screens, attitudes and behavior of citizens are in the spotlight, whereas euphoric transparency hides the discretion of elite itself deciding on important issues. In difference from the past when the party made the new class, today a class (specially the middle one) disappears while a party becomes stronger! Leaders and masses become more distant than ever, so media by flowing of statements, surveys, announcements and similar forms distribute the impressions important for further actions. Social networks create illusion on interactivity of leaders and electorate, creating of political communication control models from which disappear like noise confronted attitudes, ideas and opinions. Elite as groups of people who directly execute authority or are in position to strongly influence it are changing in the transformed community. If they at the beginning made “the upper layer of society, nominally determined groups of people......called aristocracy,”/17/ with Marx’s theory of social classes and conflicts developed the apprehension that they base their power on instruments of economic production and in thus acquired privileges. The compensation of elite itself, especially in modern democratic societies has been changing, because with the transformation of social structure the strategic power of information is increasing. Media, actually become “the means that provide social legitimacy to newly emerging elites”./18/ They, then use the pages of press and TV and radio programs minutes as a platform for idea presentation and programs and by mediating between social base and political leadership become the mirrors of public opinion. The orientation towards the public, demands and market changes the media effect logic. Big business (corporations), army and police (force), and political clique make the political triumvirate of power, whereby the control of economic and information flows is important. The approach to media is selective, voters may decide which elite is to be in authority, but can never change the fact that the authority will be in the hands of some elite! Immense number of media platforms makes the battle for support harder, because the ability of imposing issues in the agenda of public debate is in possession of mainstream media only. Hence, the subordinated class is becoming poorer and more distant from the financial power, which is radicalized by concentration of the wealth on only one side./19/ Big corporations make world markets using propaganda campaigns for own needs, but also for psychological remodeling. In this way elite become richer, but it is not enough because they are constantly hungry for new territories and markets.

Citizens targeting mediatization

The power of new media is not in talking to people what to think, but in invisible imposing of issues and attitudes what they should think about. It is absurd, in communication rich society to information transformed by media give the importance, for mass media and social networks are often the first and only information sources. The agenda setting theory is important because it points the relevancy of the events, appearances or personalities, and also influences the political attitudes of the public. The speed of communication is constantly increasing (each new appliance is faster than the previous one and has greater information flow), innovation is emerging to forefront (the message has never before been more original), interactivity is enchanting (it is always to reply the message), while creativity has never been at this level (almost unlimited possibilities of picture aestheticization, tone filtration and similar). “The truth” is created in front of TV cameras, microphones or in digitalized studios, while audience slowly and disappointed realize that more often is the victim of media fraud./20/ The political communication serves spreading of ideological constructs whereby a citizen becomes a consumer who in rich offer on information market searches for data scattered all around. He believes that chooses rationally, that participates in creating of democratic sphere for the purpose of general benefit, not realizing that he is only the target of the mediatization attention. The increasing differentiation of media platforms, aimed addressing to different voters segments and
strategy for attention attraction lead to the new role of auditorium receiving the possibility to secure the image of a candidate, and also to destroy it completely! The personalization emerges to forefront and spotlight is focusing on strong personality and less on a party and promising program. Instead of content, images are offered, so in the voter’s minds signs that simulate feedback and closeness of the leader and ordinary citizens are produced. The political campaign from the terrain is always more efficient than the advertising campaign whereby the ability of influence on actual social happening is understood. Networked society is based on pictures production tending to simulate process of mental images in the human mind, in order to overlap more sophisticated the lines between real and intermediated. The will of an individual is created by selection of statements, but on awareness, emotions and actions have been impacted by combined methods and means. The articulation of media representations, through new forms and the new meanings and relation systems, create the special kind of visual opinion. It leads to social commit, creating dialectic interdependence: the thought prepares the terrain for practical activity, while activities in the public space are only the applications of the imposed opinion! The media philosophy is dialectically intertwined with political practice because it performs purposeful changes by mental operations within the society, creating an artificial milieu that further changes social, communication, psychological, anthropological and economic surrounding. While theoreticians discuss about changes in recipient’s behavior, everyday for many hours used Internet leads to changes of perspective in relation to different attributes of temporality (past, present, future). Here and now is the credo of the new public, who is technologically spoiled and information incaustic becomes the prey for the “fishers of souls”. Walter Benjamin would say “how within frames of big historical periods, with the complete way of human collectives lives, change the way of their sensory observation.”

New technologies create specific forms of social activism producing symbolic narratives that in the sphere of public bring in pictures of spectacles, carnival spirit and entertainment, habits of spending and individualism, whereby the ethic and transparent competition by ideas retreat in front of spun and manipulative messages. In the era of Neoliberalism media expressions make social currency, allowing mind seducing. The rough force, compulsion and physical confrontation with ideological opponents are the constant companions of human community, but in infokratiya the will is bent, developed and hammered according to idea of media subjects often hidden behind the screen of political, economic or military power. Internet and network communication is most often used for fast and superficial informing, fun or self presentation, because of the significant number of digital loners their modest contribution scatters and loses in information forest. Networked communications imply multipliers which effects are spread with the speed of an avalanche, although very often behind are hidden rumors (fame) of unknown authors. Thus we come to understanding of parallel processes existence: everyday reality production and its media presentation. If we consider that politics is the interest management process then it is clear to us why the true cognition as the part of science possible is to replace by media cognition as a part of social practice.

Infokratiya influence on global order

The globalization brought the digital sphere together with the change of behavior patterns: from analogous to digital, cable and satellite; from television to mobile phones; from agencies to bloggers. The system revolutions in Tunis, Algeria, Morocco, Bahrain, people’s uprising in Libya and Egypt, attempt to change the authority in Syria, showed the characteristic pattern of network activism: change of ossified, one party systems or authoritarian, tribal leaders and their families, political awakening by the help of Facebook, Twitter or satellite TV program and installation of malty-party and market capitalism. The matrix of contents is broadcasted on all media channels, while frequent semantic repetition is targeting to problematize the public participation concept. The responsibility and guilt are focused on one side, the alternative opinions stay away from global media allowing media influence to
spread on political field as well. The change of ownership character of media ensured the non transparent corporate capital to expand its influence, while the battle for profit and influence becomes unlimited by application of scientific methods in business. In practice, the power of the audience seducing belongs to the mightiest, and numbers in circulation warp the mind of an ordinary man. The planetary society with the controlled information creates the global order (pseudopolis), fed by “democracy export” that abolishes classical state boundaries. It is about the essential change of media philosophy, new dioptr of political world observation that searches for new knowledge and opinions. The flood of media fiction on democratization gives the results in short time, but upon social wake-up it is realized that in practice there has been only the functional replacement, for the society sovereignty is replaced by market sovereignty. Infokratiya elusively hid that the attack on a state sovereignty is practically the attack on the freedom of a man and a citizen! The legitimacy of liberal democracy in this way gets into crisis because the capital dictatorship, more and more alienates the bearers of social decision-making, producing oligarchy, elitism and plutocracy of formally democratic institutions, reducing the participation of citizens in the political life. Media narcissism overshadows the reality, admiration of the power of frames and symbols goes into deceptive self-indulgence, while myths on journalist objectivity and media independency is changed by semantic dictatorship. Thus, the truth is further than ever, the facts are bent, broken, mangled, falsified or glossed over, the statements and opinions are spun depending on the interest of hidden masters, and it may be argued that journalism becomes the service of financial and political oligarchs. Journalists should, according to their profession be fair-minded, objective, balanced and honest, but how much is it possible in the world of profit? If there is no objectivity, what replaces it? It is agreed that we witness the erosion of values in public life, but let us question: may journalism stay untouched? Is it not the eulogy only a good line about objective journalism just for audience attraction, and also the means for dispersion of the power within the community? The concept we are talking about has been changing daily because the topic, focus, concentration and modeling are very often ideologically determined. Theoricians introduce the term rhetorical sensitivity, recognizing that editorial offices, by the help of marketing services chose what personalities, topics and contents are to become the themes of narrative modeling. The decisions are made under the pressure of circulation and ratings, and also the awareness on necessity for dominant political interests promoting, corporate budgets or owners’ demands. The masks on objectivity and independency are cunningly camouflaged by propaganda patterns, and lies and manipulation impose the fastest way to quick fame!

Instead of conclusion

The state sovereignty is seriously disturbed, and if we accept Racel’s (Racel Masako) understanding that war consists on spreading of own boundaries over foreign territory we realize that political power and cultural influence, thanks to communication conquest are personified in corporate multinational empire. States loose slowly their functions and authority, because the political life is less and less embodiment of nations will, and more and more the result of media campaigns which by reality creation sell dreams about better life! Actually, media have grown into power, whereat private interests are distorting them by corruption of the truth, and also the people who get in their way. Any problem in any country may become global under the condition its meaning and expressiveness brings political, economic or safety benefit for the group that promotes it. The political power has been more than ever in dialectic coupling with media resources, which by communication meaning reform the public space creating the pre-modeled patterns of political thought, life styles, habits and needs. The history of civilization is the history of conflicts, but they are in the sphere of infokratiya and are invisible to an ordinary observer. Media, apart from technology are made of people, and it is possible to model their awareness. The cognitive mobilization will grow with the increase of the education level and political interest whereby media will develop the active role, performing the constant inflow on the process of political decision making.
In the political arena there is the strategic battle for mind control, for simulating of certain contents, ideas, movements and activities media projection in advance have been programed in details. By combining of nanotechnology, biotechnology, informatics and cognitive technology, media power becomes additional, but in no way an exclusive power, its role is increasing only in the system in which apparently is offered the freedom of choice. Symbolic conflicts of corporate capital and traditional state in reality has been at full: those who produce, filter and process information will rule the processes!

Notes

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/2/ The author does not consider democracy as plane rule of the people, but as the power of demos which possesses certain qualities allowing the establishment of an ideal order based on the truth rule, humanism and social justice. The new step in further development is the rule of information (infokratiya), as the basic tool in search for freedom!

/3/ The follower of the British School, so called cultural studies, Rowland Lorimer, the centralization of the increasing number of data, sees as the danger for centralization of decision making, whereas the important political decisions shall be less and less issued by individual countries. More in: Lorimer, Roland: Mass Communications, Clio, Belgrade 1998, pg 201.

/4/ The Jürgen Habermas’s term implies the model in which political decisions are made by the processes of negotiation, consultations and persuasion. The authors in this area recognize the importance of the communication activity paradigm, as the kind of the media power and the specific new social and cultural capital.


/6/ It means transformed form of democracy observed through power distribution and close connection between large number of political parties, interest organizations and similar ideological formations.


/10/ For example, more and more people cure themselves, via medical sites or experience of others they diagnose the symptoms; instead of reading long novels the text value is accepted based on short summaries on specialized sites or media presentations or similar. In this way obtained opinion is unreliable, but recipient relates it to knowledge or practical case thinking that it is effective and true.

/11/ The term first was introduced by Bernard Manini, who by it meant the model of representative government based on “personalization of participants in elections and rise of the experts for political communication, all presence of public opinion and displacement of political discussion from the back rooms of parliament committees or party centers to media public”, (See in: Manini, Bernard: Principes du gouvernement représentatif, Paris, Flammarion, 1995).

/12/ “The whole City Committee of Social Democrat Party - Rasim Ljajic and Democratic Party Local Committee and also Democrat Party of Serbia, about 300 hundred people, on the same day joined the Serbian Progressive Party”, wrote Belgrade Politika on 5th April 2014. “Only three days earlier the whole of Panovo Committee of Mladjan Dinkic United Regions of Serbia “moved” to progressive party. Upon joining of the whole of governing body and over 500 members of Democrat Party of Serbia Subotica branch, the Executive Board of Progressive Party was dissolved and formed new commission in which the former members of Democratic Party of Serbia were immediately included.” This is the illustration of what happens in Serbia every day, and confirms the thesis we represent.


/14/ The American writer Chris Hedges, former winner of the Pulitzer Prize, claims: “Media, church, university, Democratic party, art and worker syndicates – pillars of liberal class - are bought by corporate money and promises that they will be infiltrated close to power circles. Media fed by corporate advertisers and sponsors, during that time make invisible the whole segments of citizens whose misery, poverty of hardship should be, according to
principles in the focus of journalism". (Hedges, 2010:10).

/15/"There have been more things in our lived that destructed our attention, but never have existed the medium programmed to scatter that wide and that persistently such as Networks does". More in: Nicolas Carr,: Shallow: How the Internet is Changing the Way We Think, Read and Remember, Helix, Smederevo, 2013.

/16/The authors make difference between terms "intellectual" and "intelligence" in the following way: in the first case they think of the smaller group of people who contribute creation, transmission and criticism (writers, artists, scientists, philosophers, journalists and similar) while the letter term includes all who are university educated regardless the contribution to community or the way they acquired it.


/19/Today the 1% of the richest population control 40% of world’s wealth, only 10% of the richest manage 85% of world values, while lower 50% has only 1% of world wealth. (More in: Hikel, Christa J.: Brief History of Neoliberalisms ( and how it may change), Golden Beams, No. 133/134, Novi Sad 2012).

/20/The most wanted Austrian boulevard journal, Vienna Kronenze Zeitung, in the text about Bashar al-Assad troops offensive, from devastated Syrian city Alep, at the end of July 2012, publish photos of a woman carrying a traveling, accompanied by a man with a bay in his hands, The graphic designers changed the background in the way they put the pictures of demolished buildings from the city of Homsa 170 kilometers far away, and when they were criticized they called for “embellishing” of the shooting, jus as Reuters did in 2007 when broadcasted the photo of bombarded Beirut with the smoke over ruins which was montage in the Photoshop!

/21/This is important because the voters in political campaigns do not recognize political influence and importance for elections as an advertisement. Certain events are staged or time tempered, and media echoing is spreading in all directions. The good example was saving passengers on snowed over highway Novi Sad- Subotica (1/2/2014) when the government of Serbia the first Vice President Aleksandar Vucic by helicopter arrived on the place of drama and from snowed motorcade rescued a child.


/23/"The separation of objects from their shells, devastating of aura, is the feature of perception which sense for similarity has very much increased in the world that this similarity, by the help of reproduction is also perceived in unique. Thus in the area of sense perception is manifested what in theory area is perceived as increased importance of statistics. The orientation of reality on masses and masses on it is the event of unlimited far-reaching, both for the opinions and for visual observation" (Benjamin, Walters, Essays, Nolit, Belgrade, 1974:121).

/24/The authors with “media subject” mean every personality, group, community, organization, institution and similar, that performs significant influence on communication flows and contents at any phase of their forming of diffusion.

/25/By formulations such as “the rumor has it”, “people talk about that” or “rumors circulate” a fame provides itself the approach to ears and hearts of people. Rumors as short-term collective event exist only at the time of announcement. (More in: Neubauer,Hans-Joahim: Fama- History of Rumors, Clio, Belgrade, 2010, pg 11).

/26/For example, ESNP (leading American sports TV network with over 7.000 employees) is 40 billion dollars worth. In comparison, the leading daily paper “The New York Times” (founded in 1851) is estimated on 1,3 billion dollars!

/27/Stuart Price by it means “the way of thinking about what should be said, then the way of deciding how to say it”, (Price, Stuart: Media Studies, Clio, Belgrade, 2011, pg. 32).

/28/The characteristic example is the of Janet Cook, from the Washington Post, who 1981 was awarded the Pulitzer Price for the story “Jimmy’s world” in which she described the life of eight year old heroin addict boy. Only two days after big confession it was discovered that the story was invented, and that prominent journalist falsified data from her own biography.


Literature


