NEW MEDIA IN THE PROCESS OF MEDIATIZATION
OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Nataliia Horbenko

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv,
Faculty of Philosophy, Political Science Department
Volodymyrska str., 60, 01033, Kyiv, Ukraine

The article considers the concept of new media as a phenomenon influencing the mediatization of modern political discourse, analyzes approaches to the definition of new media, identifies differences between traditional media and new media, and determines key characteristics of new media that contributed to the mediatization.

It is argued that the media is the main channel of communication between citizens and political actors, and the development of information and communication technologies has contributed to new ways and forms of interaction between politics and the media, which has strengthened the interaction of media and political fields.

It turns out that new media are characterized by underdetermination. The most complete definition of new media is a wide range of phenomena of the web-environment, which includes a large number of media formats. In the article the relations of new and traditional media are considered as symbiotic. And while new media are gaining in popularity, traditional media continue to coexist with new media, maintaining relatively stable formats. It is noted that the main difference between new and traditional media is the direct transmission of information, the ability of the audience to create and disseminate information.

The main features of new media that influenced the transformation of political communication were identified. These include the use of digital encoding, new ways of transmitting information, the relationship between traditional and new media, the dual role of the audience, which can be both a consumer and a creator of information, the diversity of political information, the lack of an agenda in the traditional sense.

The study concluded that new media played an important role in the merging of media and political fields, because with the emergence and development of new media has significantly increased the potential of media discourse. Political actors were forced to take advantage of new media opportunities and to adapt to the new media reality. Today, the new media are an effective tool in political activity, a stage for direct interaction between government and civil society, a platform for the development of various groups and communities, a place of direct communication between politicians and voters.

Key words: traditional media, political communication, Internet, mediatization, political agenda-setting.

The modern world is characterized by the active development of new digital and network technologies and communications. The spread of information and communication technologies stimulated the creation of new ways and forms of interaction between politics and the media, which intensified the merging of media and political fields.

The media is the main source of information and channel of communication between citizens and political actors. This definition is the basis for any view of the impact of the media or media effects on political communication. In the information society, more and more messages are reproduced through the media, ie they are indirect. Today, however, it is a more complex process by which communication in the media shapes and reformats society and politics [1, p. 89]. This process is called "mediatization". It is one of the key processes shaping modern society. Mediatization is associated with changes in the means of communication, such as the development of new means of communication and the dissemination or use of different media, leading to the complete or partial replacement of social activities or institutions by the activities of the media [2, p. 250].

New media have transformed the ways in which state institutions work and the ways in which political leaders communicate. Politicians have increasingly used the new media as a political tool. They changed the political media system and the role of journalists. New media have transformed the way elections are held and citizens participate in politics, and their role has been changing in parallel with the level of political participation that is part of the e-democracy development process.

And although the term "new media" appeared at the end of the last century, scholars in the field of political science and the media have not yet agreed on a definition, its boundaries remain blurred, indicating the relevance of new media research, defining their role in modern political processes, in particular the mediatization of political discourse.

The purpose of this article is to determine the role of new media in the process of mediatization of political discourse.

The realization of this goal led to the following tasks: to define the term of new media, to identify differences between new media and traditional media, to clarify the features of new media and their role in the process of mediatization of political discourse.

In the process of research such scientific methods as comparative, systemic, structural-functional were used.

New media are characterized by underdetermination. This situation is defined by a large number of terms that try to cover new media developments: "digital media", "information and communication technologies", "computer communication", "Internet", "social networks" and even "new new media". The term "Internet" is often used to refer to new media [3]. However, it is a set of different media and modalities with different communicative characteristics and different conditions of use [4, p. 57].

The lack of a common understanding of the concept of new media can be explained by the instability and rapid development of the environment in which they operate. Different points of view on the definition of new media can be generalized to two approaches: narrow and broad. According to the narrow approach, new media are online media, ie electronic versions of traditional media, as well as independent online publications. The Internet serves as a platform for hosting content with a certain set of properties. That is why the term "new media" is synonym with the terms "online media" and "network media", which are associated with the presentation of a media product in digital media directly on the Internet [5, p. 72]. The disadvantage of this approach is that it does not fully take into account the full potential of the Web 2.0 environment and focuses only on technological capabilities.

According to a broad approach, new media is defined as a set of phenomena of the web-environment. This approach focuses on content consumers who are also its producers. According to this approach, new media include the widest possible list of media formats: Internet portals, Internet media, Internet television (webcasting), Internet radio (podcasting), mobile television, blogosphere, social networks, virtual communities, virtual books, movies designed for Internet audiences and other Web 2.0 resources [6, p. 223]. This is a different understanding of new media, which is enshrining in modern science. Synonyms of new media in this interpretation are convergent media, multimedia media.

New media have grown rapidly over the past three decades and continue to grow today. New political media are forms of communication that promote the production, dissemination and exchange of political information on platforms and networks that ensure interaction and cooperation [7, p. 3]. Traditional media coexist with new media, supporting relatively stable formats, while the wide list of new media continues to expand with new ones. New media give the audience the opportunity to create and disseminate information on their own, while traditional media is a communication that takes place in only one direction. The ability to transmit information

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directly to individuals without the intervention of editorial or institutional controllers has led to an increased level of instability and unpredictability in the process of political communication.

The innovativeness of new media lies in the direct dissemination of information, making political information more accessible, facilitating its dissemination, facilitating feedback between citizens and the government, wide public discussion of political events, ensuring direct dialogue of the Internet community with political leaders, policy decision-making. On the one hand, such freedom is a positive factor, and, on the other hand, it attracts special attention and control from the authorities. Such freedom is also manifested in the diversity of content, which can be, for example, both fact-based journalistic investigation and material considered as alternative facts. Since 2017, this term has become quite common as a synonym for the willingness to adhere to certain beliefs while completely ignoring or completely ignoring reality [8, p. 137]. In the age of mediatization, the boundaries that share reliable information with alternative facts become blurred. The number of media outlets guided by news principles and standards has decreased. Today, social media editors and analysts are trying to get the audience's attention, regardless of the news value. Consumers of information must carefully select and verify information to distinguish real facts from fiction.

New media have become one of the preconditions for the mediatization of political discourse – one of the main processes involved in shaping modern society – as they have created new opportunities and constraints to which political actors have had to adapt [9, p. 23]. Political and corporate actors have always tried to use new media functions and opportunities for their strategic goals, so it is important to identify the main characteristics and benefits of new media to understand their role in political processes and, in particular, mediatization of political discourse.

O. Stins and D. Van Fuht define such advantages of new media over traditional ones as speed, openness, activity, brevity. They are addressed to the user, not the public. New media allow the user to simultaneously act as a recipient and independently generate and disseminate information [10, p. 98].

Common to traditional and new media are the functions they perform, only the forms and methods of their implementation differ. O. Vartanova notes that the new media take over many areas of the old media: they successfully perform well-known functions of organization, agitation and propaganda. The researcher tentatively uses the terms "Internet" and "new media" as synonyms and notes that the Internet today successfully performs informatization, mobilization, participation, integration and even recreational functions, which are the most important in the theory of mass communication [3]. The feature is an enhanced communicative function, which means that new media perform the same functions as the old media, but more successfully.

In general, the relationship between traditional media and new media can be defined as symbiotic [7, p. 3]. Developed media markets in many countries around the world show that often versions of traditional media on the Internet are an additional presence in a new field, and despite competition with new media, their audience remains stable. Ukraine is characterized by a large number of media that do not exist offline. Traditional media distribute materials through the channels of old and new communication platforms.

Despite the changes, traditional and new media continue and will continue to coexist. Even if traditional media lose some of its importance, they will survive by specializing in the communicative role that traditional media can play in a dynamic environment.

Media revolutions typically concerned and improved one or more elements of communication: encoding, storing, transmitting and receiving messages, organizing, distributing, and financing the production of messages. The last revolution covered all these functions, but most of all – the encoding function [4, p. 58].

The use of digital coding is a defining feature of new media. It has contributed to the emergence of new media opportunities and benefits used in political communication. Among the

advantages of the new type of encoding is the rapid spread of a large amount of information, as well as great opportunities for its processing and storage, which far exceeds the capabilities of analog encoding of traditional media. This facilitates the establishment of political networks, cooperation and the development of creativity at the global level by enabling users to easily copy, distribute and share political information. However, speaking about the accessibility and large audience of new media, it should be noted that territorial, economic and national borders still play a role, because not all people for various reasons (territorial location, material income, etc.) have access to the Internet.

In addition to a new way of encoding, storing and transmitting information, new ways of creating and receiving messages have appeared. New technical means (computer, smartphone, tablet, smartwatch, etc.) have become universal interfaces for creating messages and exchanging them [4, p. 59]. Sometimes custom texts can compete with the materials of professional journalists and entertainment media.

And while Web 2.0 resources are typically used for non-political purposes, political actors also do not lose the chance to use new media as a political tool. Initially, politicians turned to new media to circumvent the mainstream press' control over the news agenda [7, p. 5]. Almost every politician has their own pages on social networks today. It is important that in this way the young generation of citizens of the country, who are the main users of the Internet and social networks, is involved, which provides greater support for young voters in the elections.

New media are an important tool in political activity, especially in creating a political image. The main thing is to assess the scale and resources of new media, their ability to influence the situation and form almost any ideas and attitudes. Political actors, adapting to the new reality of new media and using their advantages, can expand the coverage of their organization, attract new supporters, geographically expand their activities.

If the Internet media space is considered as a field for political participation, it can be noted that it performs important political functions: expression of opinions, mobilization of protests, organization of protests. In addition, new forms of political participation have emerged, as well as non-traditional forms of participation, political protest and political consumerism.

A feature of new media is interactivity due to its digital nature. Interactivity is an important element for political participation [11, p. 26]. Today, new media are not only a platform for political discussions and debates, expressing one's own political views and beliefs, forming various groups and communities with certain political preferences, obtaining information about the political sphere, but also a platform for direct interaction between civil society and government, a place for direct communication between a politician and a voter. Thanks to the new media, citizens have changed from a passive viewer to an active participant. Today, the Internet media space is the most interesting field for independent activity of political actors, as well as a platform for the formation of political discourse, free discussion of the political agenda and influence on it.

With the emergence and development of new media, the question arose about the influence of the media on public opinion, especially on the political agenda-setting. Some scholars point to a decrease in media participation in shaping the agenda. They are convinced that the media will no longer change the worldview of the audience, but only consolidate established views. The term "new era of minimal effects" has been used to describe a situation where people in the new media environment have access to any political content that suits their beliefs [4, p. 59].

Eli Periser, describing the structure of perception of modern man, uses the metaphor of "bubble filter". "Bubble filter" is a set of individual preferences that, surrounding a person, do not allow new, unexpected, non-standard information to penetrate into his mind. In the formation of the "bubble filter" an important role is played by the mechanisms of the human psyche, as well as personalized information retrieval and recommendation services, which are present in large numbers on the

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Internet and in mobile applications. They represent exactly the information that the user wants to get, adapt to the tastes and preferences, thus leaving less chance to obtain a variety of information, different points of view on one event, ie actually lead to intellectual isolation [12, p. 121].

J. Stromback and A. Shehata tested the hypothesis concerning the role of the media in shaping the agenda by conducting research among European countries. The scientist is convinced that traditional media continue to participate in shaping the agenda. His research also showed that citizens are less influenced by traditional media if they use multiple online sources [13, p. 722–725]. The work of M. McCoubs and R. Coleman also demonstrates that, despite the low use of traditional media by the younger generation, the diverse media do not have a significant impact on setting the agenda [14, p. 504–505].

Based on the properties of new media, we can conclude that the theory of the agenda cannot exist in its classical sense in new media. Because one of the key conditions for shaping the agenda is a clear distinction between gatekeepers and consumers of information, ie the vertical orientation of the distribution of materials, while Web 2.0 technologies have provided opportunities for the production and mass distribution of user content. In new media, users are both consumers and producers of information, thus participating in the construction of media reality. The speed of dissemination of information in new media also calls into question the possibility of the existence of the agenda in the traditional sense, as time delay is considered a necessary condition for establishing the agenda, and in the field of new media it may not exist.

Technological features of the existence and dissemination of information in new media allow the spread of diverse, more fragmented and personalized agendas, which to some extent include parts of the traditional agenda. However, it cannot be said that alternative media agendas are being constructed in the new media segment. Traditional online media distribute relevant agendas in the digital environment.

The agenda of new media can be considered the most discussed topics in them in a certain period of time, but there are some points to consider. First, keep in mind that the audience decides what is important. Unlike traditional media, users determine the list of important issues. The focus function is shifted from the vendor and interpreter to its distributor. The most discussed topics become the agenda; those topics that received the most response and therefore became widespread. The user with his personalized agenda is both a consumer and a distributor of information. Secondly, it is necessary to distinguish between content and agenda, which is revealed through the analysis of new media content [15, p. 632–634]. Today, researchers are faced with the difficult task of developing a new methodology for researching the agenda, which would take into account the characteristics of new media, content and audience.

New media became one of the preconditions for the mediatization of political discourse, as they created new opportunities and constraints that political actors had to take into account and to which they had to adapt.

To sum up, the features of the new media that have influence on the transformation of political communication include:

– the use of digital encoding, which led to the emergence of new media opportunities and benefits (rapid dissemination of large amounts of information, easy copying, ample opportunities for storage and processing of information);

– new ways of creating and receiving messages;

– symbiotic relations with traditional media based on universal language and flexibility of digital media;

– focusing on content consumers who can also act as producers (interactivity);

– diversity of political information, availability of alternative facts;

– lack of agenda in traditional exchange.

With the advent of new media, the potential of media discourse has grown significantly. They have played and continue to play a significant role in the merging of media and political fields, ie in the process of mediatization of politics. Anticipating the consequences of such a merger, not all scholars evaluate them positively, but among the positive views on the development of new media is to avoid a crisis of democracy. E-democracy, e-participation and e-government are e-words that symbolize an optimistic vision of media development [16, p. 23]. An optimistic approach to the development of mediatization and, accordingly, new media includes Coleman's concept, described in his work "New Mediation and Direct Representation: Reconceptualizing Representation in the Digital Age". The concept is called "digitally-mediated representation", which involves rethinking the idea of democratic representation. The author noted that the relationship between citizens and politicians can be improved through three elements: a more interactive form of accountability, a pluralistic network of representation and the creation of new spaces of public self-government [17, p. 190].

New media play an important role in modern society and the process of mediatization, which today determines its development. Today, they play an significant role: combining events in remote arenas of political life and participating in the formation of people's awareness of what is important or of what is interesting to them, but among the causes of a possible democracy crisis, the media is often considered as one of the reasons. However, there is also a positive vision of media development, where they are a cure for a possible crisis of democracy.

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НОВІ МЕДІА У ПРОЦЕСІ МЕДІАТИЗАЦІЇ ПОЛІТИЧНОГО ДИСКУРСУ

Наталія Горбенко

Київський національний університет імені Тараса Шевченка,
філософський факультет, кафедра політичних наук
вул. Володимирська, 60, 01033, м. Київ, Україна

У статті розглядається поняття нових медіа як явище, що впливає на медіатизацію сучасного політичного дискурсу, аналізуються підходи до визначення нових медіа, визначаються відмінності між традиційними медіа та новими медіа, а також визначаються ключові характеристики нових медіа, які сприяли процесу медіатизації.

Стверджується, що ЗМІ є головним каналом комунікації між громадянами та політичними акторами, а розвиток інформаційних та комунікативних технологій сприяв появі нових способів і форм взаємодії політики з медіа, що спричинило посилення взаємовпливу медійного та політичного полів, тобто розвитку процесу медіатизації політики.

Виявляється, що нові медіа характеризуються недовизначеністю. У найбільш повному розмінні – це широкий комплекс явищ web-середовища, що включає велику кількість медіа форматів. У статті відносини нових і традиційних медіа розглядаються як симбіотичні. І хоча нові медіа здобувають неабияку популярність, традиційні ЗМІ продовжують співіснувати з новими медіа, підтримуючи відносно стабільні формати. Зазначається, що головною відмінністю нових медіа від традиційних є пряма передача інформації, можливість аудиторії створювати та розповсюджувати інформацію.

Було визначено основні властивості нових медіа, що вплинули на трансформацію політичної комунікації. Серед них використання цифрового кодування, нові способи передачі інформації, взаємозв'язок традиційних та нових медіа, подвійна роль аудиторії, яка одночасно може виступати споживачем та творцем інформації, різноманітність представлення політичної інформації, відсутність порядку денного у традиційному розумінні.

У ході дослідження було зроблено висновок, що нові медіа відіграли значну роль у зрощенні медійних та політичних полів, тобто медіатизації, адже з появою та розвитку нових медіа значно збільшився потенціал медіадискурсу. Політичні актори вимушені були використовувати нові медіаможливості та адаптуватись до нової медіареальності. Сьогодні нові медіа є ефективним інструментом у політичній діяльності, майданчиком для безпосередньої взаємодії влади та громадянським суспільством, платформою для розвитку різноманітних груп та спільнот, місцем прямого спілкування політика з виборцем.

Ключові слова: традиційні медіа, політична комунікація, Інтернет, медіатизація, політичний порядок денний.