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The Importance of Social Media and Religious Perceptions in the Service of Politicians' Communication and Images

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Abstract

Technological determinism, a theory examining the role of technology in societal development, is a subject of extensive discourse in the internet era. This theory perceives technology as a pivotal force shaping societal progress. Within this framework, divergent perspectives emerge, ranging from utopian views depicting technology as a vehicle for salvation to dystopian views highlighting its disruptive potential. This duality is particularly evident in discussions regarding social media's influence on political communication. The hybridization of media systems, as proposed by Andrew Chadwick, further blurs the lines between traditional and new media, exemplified by Barack Obama's groundbreaking 2008 presidential campaign, which utilized social media alongside traditional platforms. Social media's and religion perception impact on political communication evokes both optimism and skepticism. While proponents laud its role in fostering citizen engagement and enhancing political participation, critics like Malcolm Gladwell argue that it amplifies expression without tangible impact. Moreover, the influence of social media on political campaigns underscores the evolving landscape of communication strategies, with leaders leveraging platforms like Facebook and Twitter to shape public perception. In navigating this terrain, understanding the complexities of image construction becomes paramount for political actors. The interplay between rhetoric, communication strategies, and public perception shapes the success of political campaigns. However, maintaining control over one's image amidst the fluid dynamics of political discourse remains a formidable challenge. In conclusion, the discourse surrounding technological determinism and social media's impact on political communication underscores the need for nuanced analysis. While social media offers unprecedented opportunities for engagement, its dual nature necessitates vigilance against manipulation and polarization. Ultimately, the compatibility between desired images and genuine personas remains central to effective political communication in the digital age.

Keywords: Social Media, Politician, Communication, Religious Perceptions, Political Image, Digital Era, Determination

Siyasilerin İletişimi ve İmajların Hizmetinde Sosyal Medya ve Dini Algıların Önemi

Öz

Teknolojik determinizm, teknolojinin toplumsal gelişimdeki rolünü inceleyen bir teoridir ve internet çağında geniş kapsamlı bir tartışma konusudur. Bu teori, teknolojiyi toplumsal ilerlemeyi şekillendiren belirleyici bir güç olarak algılar. Bu çerçevede, kurtarıcı olarak teknolojiyi tasvir eden ütopyacı görüşlerden başlayarak, onun bozucu potansiyelini vurgulayan distopik görüşlere kadar farklı bakış açıları ortaya çıkar. Bu ikilik, sosyal medyanın siyasi iletişim üzerindeki etkileriyle ilgili tartışmalarda özellikle belirgindir. Andrew Chadwick tarafından önerilen medya sistemlerinin hibridleşmesi, geleneksel ve yeni medya arasındaki çizgileri daha da bulanıklaştırır. Bu, Barack Obama'nın çığır açan 2008 başkanlık kampanyası tarafından sergilenen, geleneksel platformların yanı sıra sosyal medyayı da kullanan kampanya ile örneklenmiştir. Sosyal medyanın ve dini algıların siyasi iletişim üzerindeki etkisi, hem iyimserlik hem de şüphecilik uyandırır. Destekçileri, vatandaş

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katılımını teşvik etme ve siyasi katılımı artırma rolünü överken, Malcolm Gladwell gibi eleştirmenler, somut etki olmadan ifadeyi artırdığını savunur. Dahası, sosyal medyanın siyasi kampanyalara etkisi, liderlerin Facebook ve Twitter gibi platformları kullanarak halkın algısını şekillendirmesiyle, iletişim stratejilerinin evrilen manzarasını vurgular. Bu zeminde gezinirken, politik aktörler için imaj oluşturmanın karmaşıklıklarını anlamak, hayati öneme sahiptir. Retorik, iletişim stratejileri ve kamu algısı arasındaki etkileşim, siyasi kampanyaların başarısını şekillendirir. Ancak, politik tartışmanın akışkan dinamikleri içinde bir kişinin imajını korumak, zorlu bir meydan okuma olarak kalır. Sonuç olarak, teknolojik determinizm ve sosyal medyanın siyasi iletişime etkisi etrafındaki tartışma, nüanslı bir analiz gerekliliğini vurgular. Sosyal medya, katılım için eşi benzeri görülmemiş fırsatlar sunsa da, ikili doğası, manipülasyon ve kutuplaşmaya karşı dikkatli olunması gerektiğini gerektirir. Son olarak, istenen imajlar ile gerçek kişilikler arasındaki uyumluluk, dijital çağda etkili siyasi iletişimin merkezinde kalır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Politikacı, İletişim, Dini Algılar, Siyasi İmaj, Dijital Çağ, Belirleme

Introduction

In the era of the internet, technological determinism emerges as a highly debated theory, attributing a pivotal role to technology in shaping societal progress. This deterministic viewpoint is dichotomized into utopian and dystopian perspectives. The utopian stance views technology as a catalyst for salvation, leading humanity towards advancement and rejuvenation, while the dystopian perspective portrays technology as disruptive, alienating, and potentially harmful to human well-being. These contrasting viewpoints also pervade discussions surrounding social media and its impact on political communication. Scholars such as Clay Shirky, Andrew Chadwick, Zizi Papacharissi, and Philip Howard advocate for social media's capacity to create novel avenues for communication and foster closer connections between politicians and the public. They argue that social media platforms have diminished the barriers between them and enhanced freedom of expression. Conversely, scholars like Matthew Hindman, Cass Sunstein, Evgeny Morozov, and Malcolm Gladwell view social media as a sophisticated tool for propagating propaganda and misinformation, characterizing the phenomenon as "echo chambers".

Technological determinism, as a theory, also explores how technological advancements drive social, economic, and political transformations. Researcher Christian Fuchs challenges this notion, arguing that technology's influence on society has been overlooked. However, following pivotal events like the Arab Spring in 2011 and subsequent protests in North America, Greece, and Spain, social media has emerged as a crucial tool for citizen mobilization and information dissemination. Everett M. Rogers' "innovation diffusion theory" holds particular significance in understanding these dynamics. Andrew Chadwick, with his theory of hybrid media systems, sheds light on the distinction between traditional media and new media and proves that these types of media can be used for the same purpose. Chadwick argues that this hybridization reveals how the logic of old and new media intertwin, overlap, network and coevolve in the fields of media and politics (2013, p. 4). We can take the case of Barack Obama`s campaign for the 2008 presidential election, as a moment when social media ruled out the logic of traditional media by being the main tool of the Democratic candidate during that campaign. But even the Obama`s campaign on social media was intricately linked to other activities, such as elections rallies, and aimed to reach as much media coverage as possible, on television or in the newspaper. The logic of the old and new media sometimes flows independently, but increased flows together (Chadwick, 2013, p. 290).

There is also hybridization of the media in case of various social movements and here we can take an example from the case of the toxic waste that would be dumped in Côte d'Ivoire. The British 38 Degrees Movement used Twitter (in that time the company's name was Twitter), human resources and other media mobilize the public about the case, and this is a great illustration of how

political activists are increasingly hybridizing logic of traditional media and new media, in their efforts to shape news and policy agendas (Chadwick, 2013, p. 290).

When it has come to the hybrid media system in the UK, Chadwick focuses on two key moments, according to him, during the 2010 elections campaign, the first televised debate of candidates for Prime Minister and the bully gate scandal. During the election campaign, on 15.04.2010, the first televised debate between candidates for Prime Minister of the UK, Gordon Brown, David Cameron, and Nick Clegg, was held in Manchester. The debate was broadcast on ITV; however, Chadwick describes how, in addition to television broadcasting, several types of media found ways to work together, newspapers used their online versions online, different journalist used their twitter profiles. Was a kind of ``cross media creation``, as Nick Canary puts it (2002, p. 286). Because certain opinions and beliefs were formed using different media. The second case is the "bully gate" scandal of British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who was accused of killing of member of his staff. Brown categorically denied this in an exclusive interview for the TV Chanel ``Chanel 4`` although he had announced the broadcast of the interview in the evening, but on the other hand the publisher ``it on`` the Internet three hours earlier. Therefore, the first public denial of allegations of harassment or intimidation by the Prime Minister was published on the Internet by a television channel. This combination of traditional media with new media reflects the hybridity of media in the UK, but we go in the context of some other Balkans states, we see how televisions constantly use the internet to broadcast content live and online on.

Social media can be categorized into two primary factions. On one side, there are scholars who hold an optimistic perspective regarding the role and significance of social media in contemporary societies. Conversely, there are scholars who harbor skepticism towards the notion that social media has contributed positively to societal progress, with some expressing outright criticism. They argue that social media has only expanded the array of tools readily utilized by political and economic elites for their own agendas. Clary Shirky views social media as an extension of freedom of expression, believing that it enhances the availability of freedom globally. He contends that the internet and social media play pivotal roles in facilitating public discourse on various issues, enabling individuals to voice their opinions both privately and publicly and engage in debates encompassing conflicting viewpoints. Shirky asserts that social media has catalyzed significant transformations in societies by creating additional avenues for public discourse, fostering cooperation, dissemination, and interaction skills among individuals (Shirky, 2011, pp. 28-41).

Similarly, American professor Zizi Papacharisi espouses a positive stance on social media, asserting that contemporary society is now more actively engaged in political activities with greater autonomy, flexibility, and expressive potential. Papacharisi argues that social media has bridged the divide between the private and public political spheres, transforming the private sphere into a realm of connection rather than isolation. She contends that social media serves as a conduit for linking personal experiences with political discourse and connecting individuals with politics and society at large (Papacharissi, 2015, pp. 12-23).

Two researchers from Oxford University, Corinna di Gennaro and William Dutton, claim that the proliferation of online communication channels has led citizens to have more alternatives to political engagement (2006). Homero Gil de Zuniga, Professor at the University of Vienna, agrees with the goals given by the Corina. In a join study, Gil de Zuniga, Valenzuela and Weeks, say that social media has created opportunities for greater citizen engagement in political and public discussions (2016). Gil de Zuniga says that engaging people to get information on social media, even though their interactivity, creates a pattern of persuasion "that suggests that people are more open to persuasions in three cases:

Case 01: When they consume political news through social media;

Case 02: When they exposed to political dissent in online and offline discussions;

Case 03: When political arguments are presented in a reasoned and civil manner (Zuniga, Barnidge & Diehl, 2018, p. 310).

Stephen Stiglitz and Linh Dang-Juan emphasize the importance of social media as a communication channel and state that citizens can be more active in policymaking if social media is used for interaction between citizens and politicians. Stieglitz and Dang Xuan emphasized that political parties are increasingly attaching importance to the analysis of topics being discussed on social media, as knowing the main subjects can also build up a proper political strategy (Stefan, and Xuan, 2013, pp. 89-96).

In today`s media age, where everyone is also the creator of media content, it is especially important to develop critical judgment ability toward media in general and media content in particular. Everyone's ability to publish increases the need for better reading and comprehension skills of media content, because already everyone is exposed to material that does not pass through any professional literature. To this and, along with the possibility of rain, expression, social media has also brough the possibility of online manipulation. This does not mean that these social media do not strengthen democracy, as propaganda and manipulation have been conducted in traditional media, newspapers, radio, and television. Social media leaders must be constantly held accountable, who are already looking to conduct public discussions online, through algorithms, without displaying national, racial or gender hatred.

Discussions about the impact of social media on political communication are ongoing, but not always positive. In recent years, the concept of "sharp power" has begun to be used, something that is neither soft nor hard power. It has to do with one state trying to manipulate online content, including social media, to influence the domestic policy of another state. The concept was first used in a foreign affairs article (Walker & Ludwig, 2017). In 2017 and, since then, its use is growing. For the other two negative influences, bubble and echo chamber, voters are more aware of them day by day. Bubble filter means displaying content to the user in accordance with the information's collected about him/ her, which means that the user does not see content that contradict his/her views, or when it does not correspond to his/ her interest and, therefore, the media social does it through algorithms (Pariser, 2011). Echo Chamber meaning closing people down to certain points of view, because the same attitudes are constantly repeated to them, consequently "citizens do not see or hear a wide range of topics or ideas, which limits their ability to reach a base of common positions on political issues or even other issues (Barbera, 2020, p. 38). The Echo Chamber is considered one of the reasons for the development of extremist views. Dan Schill and Jhon Allen Hendricks, argue that it is precisely these negative functions of the social media that Donald Trump has exploited in the US presidential campaign. Thay claim that Trump has campaigned on social media using the ``Ter-letter bubble`` to make the split between the two camps. Hendricks and Schill consider that Trump`s strategy was one of the reasons in his network again Clinton (2017).

Malcolm Gladwell, who is one of the most vocal skeptics about the effect of social media on democratizing society, says that social media "will make it easier for activists to express themselves and more difficult to that expression have any impact (2010, p. 49). The researchers concluded that there is a fair relationship between social media and political impact. Their research suggested that increasing people's engagement on Facebook for political activities results in increase its political participation in the other countries, outside the world of the Internet (Vitak et al., 2011, p. 112). Dutch professor Jan Van Dijk in his book The Network Society, it is said that every new discovery in the field of media and communication has been tried to portray it as a tool supporting democracy. He says that this is not the first time that such a sight is being seen with the advent of social media.

Van Dijk mentions distribution, Telegraph, telephone, radio, television etc. An says that all of them are seen as media with the democratically potential. Van Dijk calls the group of optimistic scholars who have forgotten three elements, users, current usage, and the social and political context in which social media is used, in advocating the Internet as another tool in favour of democracy (2016). Another essential element is the issue of ownership. Apart from the opportunities offered by social media and its role as an online public domain for the public, social media, like another media, is owned by an individual or company. Therefore, it is always important to consider who owns social media. In the case of Facebook, the largest number of shares are held by one person, Mark Zuckerberg, while on Thread, the major of shares are held by the three founders, Jack Dorsey, Even Clark Williams and Peter H. Owned by phantom. If Chomsky and Kelner refer to the ownership of traditional media, seeing that at times it affects the content they send through them, social media is no exception. The social and political power that Facebook and Twitter have in this digital age makes them even more attractive to the political and economic elite. Therefore, the use of those social media for political communication is either increasing and these social media are always the main competitors of television in many countries, not to mansion that in some countries, they are the main source of information for citizens. Has become "thanks to social media citizens are no longer passive consumers of political party propaganda government spin or traditional media news but in the fact they citizens are able to access resources share perspectives on their choices. Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells says that in a network it's society, the main power is communication control. While he adds that in that society a new form of social communication has been created and, this new form he conceives yes mass self-communication. And, always according to Castells, "it is a mass communication because it reached a potentially global audience through net folks and the Internet, it is also self-production in content, self-orientation in broadcasting and self-selection in acceptance, by many people who communicate with many people (2009, p. 53).

So, social media is another tool for the public sector, but the public should always keep in mind the fact that, even in these media, the interests of the owners make conflict with the interest of the public and as a result, social media may to put in service. To not be another voice for minority and public opinion. In this case, social media would fail to become a public domain because it will not meet one of the basic criteria outlining by Douglas Kellner when referring to those media. Kelner says that social media should serve the interests of the people, not the elite, promote diversity and democratic debate, and play an informative, non-manipulative role for the people (2000, p. 280). Michael Daly Carpino post spoke about how social media is changing the entire media landscape in the context of election campaigns (Carpino, 2018, p. 19). He says that "the past regime has led to a collapse of perceived and implemented differences between news and entertainment, mass and interpersonal communication, information producers and consumers as well as facts, opinions, and beliefs. On the other hand, it has created a political landscape, which is also multi axis low of professional journalists and their control over the public agenda has been given to many actors, many different and sometime even earlier invisible secondary or less powerful and Hyper-real. The spread of information's and communication technology has created a new window for Internet communication. Social media can be used as a tool for organisation and mobilisation and as a space for dialogue and debate, as a socialist Anthony Giddens says: "thanks to the Internet it is now easier for like-minded people to connect with each other, even if they have never met face to face" (2009, p. 824) use of social media date back to the late 19 and early 20 centuries, when websites like Blooger.com and MySpace.com where created an, ask journalism professor Stephen Russ Mohl puts it "on the Internet today anyone can present for the world an at low cost himself and the way he sees the world (2011, p. 30). There are different definitions of what social media is. Lon Safeco and David Braque define social media as activities, practices, and behaviours between communities of people that use chat media to exchange information, knowledge, and opinions online. Chat media are web-based applications that make it easy to create and stream content in the form of words, photos, videos, and audios. Lon Safeco and Break, Brian

Solis, in his definition of social media, emphasized interactivity given the online tools that people use to share content, profiles, opinions, knowledge, experiences, perspectives, as well as the media itself, thus easing online interactions and interactions between groups of people (2022).

The Typology of Images

The category "Image" is not a modern invention and has its own scientific background and way of formation. Unlike the concept that has been formed recently, the image, as a phenomenon of social life, has existed at all stages of the development of human society. Indirect confirmation of the fact that the concern for a proper image was characteristic of a person in different periods can be preserved the nicknames of historical persons: Richard Zimra Luan, Yaroslav the Wise, Ivan the Terrible, Phillip IV the Beautifull. Ancient states, having a complex social structure, left in their cultural heritage not only magnificent works of art and literary monuments, but also specially created images, carefully thought out by rulers. The social definition of the image is the most important feature of the culture of Ancient Egypt. The portrait of the sovereign was based on a consciously elevated image, without everything accidental and insignificant, with clearly selected and carefully crafted features. In Pharaoh`s ceremonial attire, every detail, symbol, colour works to create the idea of divine power. Here everything is thought out down to the smallest detail.

In the late 20th century and early 21st century, Ukrainian and other specialist in Imaging look to define the essence of the image as a socio-political phenomenon. However, it should be noted that there is no complete unity here. Thus, V. Korolko considers the image as "artificial imitation or artificial elevation of the external form of an object and, in particular, of a person" (Korolko, 2000, p. 294). Some scholars believe that political image is a package of ideas, package of feelings, and set of the beliefs that an individual or a group of individuals has about different political phenomena or goods. As a rule, the concept of image refers to a specific person, but can be extended to a group of people, an organization, a product. It is formed both on the basics of a person`s real behaviour and under the influence of evaluations of others. So, in the practice political science, an image is, first, a genderized image that arises in citizens about political entities. Another think is that now image creators have intentionally formed it. An image is an image of an ideal and real political figure that is formed in the mind of the public. An important part of imagery is devoted to the functions of this phenomenon. Thus, G. Pochepkof singled out three imaging functions, and they are like: Identification (an image stereotype, so you can at once link it to a specific person, because it defines already proven ways of identification. The object becomes secure, easily distinguishable); Idealization (the image tries to pass the desired thought, that is, the leader seeks to adapt to the expectations of the electorate); Opposition, as it is built systematically, based on existing images (each feature becomes brighter compared to the opposite) (Pochepkov, 2000, p. 47-48). Value and Technology. If we go deeply to the problem issue, we are faced with the value facts like in the following: Personality lifter: Thanks to the creation of an attractive atmosphere around the personality, he becomes in social demand, unrestrained in displaying these best qualities. I Comfort in Interpersonal relations: The essence of this function is that the charm of people objectively instils sympathy and goodwill in their communication, and therefore a moral measure of tolerance and fact. Psychotherapeutic: Its essence is that a person, thanks to the awareness of his individual uniqueness and increased sociability, gains a stable positive mood and self-confidence. Thus, the value functions of the image testify to its indisputable importance in building a healthy spiritual organization of the personality accessible to other people, is manifested the inner world of a certain person. This is the role of image value functions is so great. I would like to emphasize that the main function of building the image of political leader is to manipulate the minds of citizens. If this function has worked successfully, then the political leader has a real chance to increase the percentage of his electorate and thanks to this appear victorious in the elections. Also, when studying and building an image, it is important to know the main components of this phenomenon, because it is impossible to create something truly functional and successful without knowing the internal content of the topic. Ukrainian scientist P. Frolov finds the following components in the

structures of a leader`s image: the personality traits of a politician, the type of his political orientation, this place in power institutions or informal formations (president, parliamentarian, idol of the crowd.) Italian scholar D. Garcia argues that the personal qualities of a political leader play a crucial role for voters, as they provide an attractive label that suggest who will be the type of leader and candidate: perseverance, trust, credibility, leadership appeal, as well as appearance (Garzia, 2011, pp. 697-698).

Social Media Tools at the Service of Image of World Leaders

Two researchers of the Massachusetts Institutes of Technology, Joseph C. R. Licklider and Robert W. Taylor in 1968, conclude that after a few years, people will be able to communicate more effectively through a device than face-to-face. Known as the father of the Internet, Licklider and his colleague Taylor had this vision confirmed decades later, when he was able to communicate interactivity, introduced by Lickliter and Taylor more than five decades ago. Is now truly relevant, especially given the interactions on social media where an entire community interacts using the Internet. Facebook is the most widespread social media and with the most users in the world. Facebook was created 2004 and it was opened to public by 2006 and was first used for political purposes that year along with "Election Puls" which has papers of candidates for federal or state elections (Nucci, 1999, pp. 221-222). Ralf Caers et al. says that the rice of Facebook has been one of most important social trends of the last decade (2013, p. 983). This social media has become especially important in the political world as well, becoming an especially important means of communication, especially after the 2008 presidential elections in the United States of America. The US has consistently been at the forefront of change in its political communications, starting with Roosvelt, who had given radio biggest role in the election campaign, Kennedy - television, Obama – social media. In addition to his website, Obama used fifteen social media pages to run his campaign (Effing, Hillegersberg & Huibers, 2011, p. 26). Obama`s election campaign is considered one of the most active in the Internet world and, if television was decisive in Kennedy`s victory in 1960, in Obama`s race against Republican Senator Jhon McCain, the candidate used the Internet for the Democratic Party. The winer of those presidential elections was Barack Obama. Over the years, the Internet has gained even more ground in electoral contest in the United States and beyond. In the 2016 presidential elections, social media in particular, Twitter played a key role. Twitter was the main media in the campaign of Republican nominee, Donald Trump, who managed to win the presidential election against Hillary Clinton, despite not having the support of traditional mainstream media in the US. In their book Political Campaign Communication: Principles and Practises, Robert Denton, Judith Trent, and Robert Freudenberg shows how Clinton spend about 75% of money on Tv spots, while Trump invested early in new media, 85 million dollars, spend in July to 130, 000 dollars spend by its rival (2020, p. 338).

Religious Perceptions and Evaluation of Political Image

The interaction between politics and religion has been an old phenomenon, also has long been a subject of scholarly inquiry and societal debate. In societies that uphold democratic values and prioritize the freedom to practice religion and express oneself, it is essential to grasp how religious perspectives affect the assessment of political figures. Understanding this connection is pivotal in deciphering the fluctuations of public opinion and electoral results. This article looks to delve into this complex interplay, elucidating the diverse ways in which religious convictions and affiliations mold people's judgments of politicians and governmental measures. People might assess political leaders and policies in line with their religious convictions to alleviate cognitive dissonance. Moral standards derived from religion often offer a lens for evaluating political choices, affecting views on the ethicality and trustworthiness of political figures. Deep affiliation with religious communities may prompt individuals to judge politicians according to their perceived adherence to religious principles, nurturing a collective sense of belonging. Socialization: Religious

organizations function as agents of socialization, molding individuals' political outlooks and predispositions through religious instruction and communal standards.

The image is also considered a phenomenon of our social lives. Because the "image" is not an invention of humanity, ore neither modern invention. The image has its own scientific and historical background. Ancient states, having a complex social structure, left in their cultural heritage not only magnificent works of art and literary monuments, but also specially created images, carefully thought out by the rulers. Based on the ancient Egypt, social definitions of the image were the most important phenomenon. In Egypt, the portrait of ruler or sovran was based on a consciously elevated image, without everything accidental and insignificant, with clearly selected and carefully crafted features. In Pharaoh's ceremonial attire, every detail, symbol, color works to create the idea of divine power. All who look at Pharaoh should not doubt that before him is living God, the son of Osiris. Another example for the religious feelings and evaluation of political Image is in ancient China. In ancient China, one can also very clearly see a great deal of attention to the image of the ruler. Based on the ancient Chines view of political (sovereign) leader characteristics, the political leader had to personify qualities such as justice, wisdom, morality, nobility. So, the image of the emperor before the people can be called the "son of heaven", who appears as a saint before the people. On the other hand, the most famous philosophers of antiquity Socrates, Plato, Aristotle created the theory of harmonious development of the individual, raised the question of what education makes the perfect person. These problems are considered in relation to such basic philosophical categories as man, society, soul, and body, beauty, and harmony. The Middle Ages created fine symbolic art, symbolic poetry, a complex and delicate religious cult, and secular side of everyday life. In the Renaissance era laid out the ideal of harmoniously developed person. Attitude towards man as a core value was expressed in the fact that human dignity was brought to the fore in a set of moral values. Italian scholar D. Garcia argues that the personal qualities of a political leader play a crucial role for the electorate (2011, pp. 697-698). They are focusing on the typology of the political leader based on their perseverance, trust, honesty, integrity, credibility mainly with in the religious and moral values image. The American sociologist K. E. Boulding, in his book Image: Knowledge in Life and Society, proposes a concept according to which an image is a certain stereotype of behaviour that influences the actions of an individual, a group of individuals or a nation. According to him, the concept of image is opposite in its meaning to the concept of knowledge. "Knowledge is based on truth; image is based on faith" (1956, p. 75).

Differences between Secularism and Religious Conservatism: Divergent views on the division between religion and government affect how people see political leaders in terms of their commitment to secular ideals or religious customs. Comparative studies across countries reveal differences in how religious views affect the assessment of political figures, influenced by historical, cultural, and institutional contexts. Recognizing the significance of religious feelings in shaping public opinion carries important implications for political communication, campaign strategies, and governance. Politicians and policymakers need to manage the varied religious landscape with sensitivity and insight, acknowledging the role of religious values in shaping public sentiment. Further investigation should delve into the complexities of religious diversity, polarization, and political involvement, deepening our understanding of the changing interplay between religion and politics in modern societies.

The tactical approaches employed by politicians in their communication strategies directly influence the construction and portrayal of their political persona: Every political party crafts its strategies for communication during election seasons. Strategic political communication entails purposefully organizing information and messages to fulfil the political goals it has set for itself. According to American scholar Anthony Downs, the foremost aim of political parties is to "maximize political backing" (1985, p. 57). Certainly, enhancing political backing during elections equates to garnering more votes, after leading to increased opportunities for a political party to

reach its aim—seizing power. It's inconceivable to imagine a scenario where parties don't view elections as pivotal in their endeavors, a sentiment underscored by Sartori, who defines political parties based on their ability to field candidates in elections. Nevertheless, Norwegian political analyst Karee Strom goes a step further by categorizing parties into three types based on their primary aims: those seeking votes, seeking political dominance, and seeking policy influence. Parties focused on gaining votes aim to maximize their electoral support, while those focused on power strive to enhance their control over political offices rather than solely boosting their vote share. In the third category, Strom places parties whose principal aim is to maximize their impact on public policy. Political marketing theorists introduce another classification of political parties: product-oriented, sales-oriented, and market-oriented. Political marketing expert Jenifer Lees-Marchmont explains that a product-oriented party advocates for what it believes in if voters will recognize the righteousness of its ideas and so support it (2011, p. 696). The French Professor, Philippe J. Marek, in planning the strategy for the election campaign, considers the creation of a context and field analyses as a basic step, and then moves on to defining the aims, purpose and type of the campaign, for the construction of the image, or for elections. In this strategy building, Marek goes to the implementation of the campaign and, there then come the threw of the tools used by the party or politician, media, and other forms of communication with citizens, rallies, posters, etc. Undoubtedly, the media play a key role during the election campaign because it is the main source of information for citizens.

In addition to using media channels, political communication strategies encompass direct engagement with citizens, targeted outreach to specific groups, telephone conversations, direct messaging, and even interaction with influential circles, including journalists. Election campaigns are highly dynamic, characterized by ever-evolving political landscapes. This dynamism stands for another crucial aspect of political communication strategy. Alongside strategic planning for the campaign, parties must remain vigilant about ongoing developments, activities of rival parties, and media coverage. Marek outlines two significant steps in implementation, with one of them addressing the potential changes that may arise during the campaign's progression. While parties often expect the trajectory of the campaign, it's not uncommon for unexpected shifts to occur, needing swift adaptation.

In the 2008 U.S. presidential election, Republican nominee John McCain's choice of Alaska Governor Sarah Palin as his running mate was aimed at bolstering his chances against Barack Obama. However, Palin's performance, particularly in interviews with journalists, proved detrimental to McCain's campaign, deviating from expectations. American professor Stephen Medvic (2014) finds four functions performed by election campaigns: easing voter decision-making, fostering political engagement through debate and discussion, providing a platform for outsider voices, and ultimately contributing to the democratic process. These functions are considered vital for a country's democracy, signifying the maturity of its electoral processes. Regarding the first function, Gelman and King argue that voters' ultimate decisions are shaped by the knowledge and information bought during campaigns. They suggest that voters often lack sufficient information to make informed choices and rely on campaigns to inform and possibly reshape their beliefs.

Given the significance and potential impact of election campaigns, political parties invest resources in enhancing their communication strategies, striving to secure greater visibility across both traditional and new media platforms. The strategic aim for political entities is to project a positive and enduring image to a wider audience, ultimately aiming to increase voter turnout and support.

Conclusion

Leaders use communication rhetoric and their image to gain support. From what we analysed above world leaders who know how to use their image have won. The combability of the lexeme image in the text of public discourse shows that it considers all the constitutive features of the

image. Thanks to the image created by the voice and the silent one, a political elect also shows that he is a flesh and bone being with a personal life, an influence where viewers can find materials to find him. The creation of the image by the voters must be qualitative and well based on the material not only superficial that is offered to them. What image politicians want to project during a televised debate, during a manifestation, during a photo session? Can politician control all this? It is extremely difficult for them to manage to keep the desired image throughout the debates. Numerous analyses, which are the source of society, especially of the image created by the photographs can be ruthless for the image of a politician. On the one hand it happens that the ego of the political individual to be exposed is wide-mouthed and on the other hand this exposure in turn is uncontrollable on the ground and can be interpreted in a thousand and one words. The image of a political person is manly expressed in two stages: when the politician exercises full control over his interventions and during periods of exchanges with his opponents. Debates allow politicians to present themselves to voters with their political options and set up their own image. The cautions but positive visual performance of the politician confirms that the strategists have captured a reality that the people want regardless of the circumstances. A second explanation refers to the notion of compatibility, the closeness between the desired concept of the image and the current personality of the politician. All the analyses of the comments from the public suggest that the image of a politician cannot be artificially formed. The public image of the politician, his visual representation, must be known and for this at any time he cannot exercise any control. If there are a few gaps between the desired image and the projected image of politicians we must understand that the concept of his first figure is well related to his personality, his featured.

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