



ORIGINAL PAPER

Political Communication between Tradition and Actuality

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Abstract

The present age may perhaps be the era of space, public space, and public communication in general. We are in the age of simultaneous, juxtaposing, of our neighbor and the distance, of the join, of the dispersed. We are at a time when the world perceives itself less, I think, as a great life that would develop over time, as a network linking points and waving its labyrinth. Today's dismay concerns fundamentally the space, communication and relationships that take place between individuals or organizations far more than time; time probably appears only as one of the possible distribution games between elements that are distributed in space. In spite of all the techniques that invade him, despite the whole knowledge network that allows its determination and formalization, contemporary space is perhaps not entirely desacralized - unlike, of course, time that was desacralized in the nineteenth century. There has, of course, been a certain theoretical desacralization of space, but we have not yet come to a practical desacralization of space. And maybe our lives are still listening to a certain number of oppositions we cannot reach, to which the institution and practice did not dare to touch them; some oppositions that we admit as data: those, for example, between the private space and the public space, between the space of the family and the social space, between the cultural space and the useful space, between the space of entertainment and the workplace; all continue to be animated by a deaf sacralization. The space in which we live, in which we are attracted, in which the erosion of our life, time and history is taking place, this space that grinds and creeps us is itself a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of vacuum, within which individuals and things can be placed. We do not live within a void that would stain with different shadows and lights, we live inside a set of relationships that define irreducible sites that are absolutely unsurpassable.

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The theory of communication, as a coherent and autonomous scientific discipline, is relatively new, dating back to half a century. We can say, however, that the preoccupations regarding the inter-human communication, the underlying ideas have experienced a certain permanence, go far back in time, some even to the dawn of human civilization. The first elements of a theoretical thinking in this field appear with the invention of writing, its authors seeing the problems of translating the articulated language into a visual code. In this sense, an analysis of verbal expression was necessary to identify possibilities whereby the development of a transformation of thought was reflected in the language and the system of graphic signs that makes it possible to communicate through a completely different sensory channel is achieved. Following the natural evolution that exists in the treatment of inter-human communication over time, different approaches can be observed depending on the historical stage, ranging from moments of maximum interest to others of stagnation or, on the contrary, the renewal of concepts. Overlapping with the great historical stages, we can speak of a classical period (500 BC-40 BC); the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (400-1600); the modern period (1600-1900).

Political communication is understood as the whole of the means by which to attract or maintain the integrity of the voter to a political symbol. The whole mass of citizens with the right to vote is addressed by all political representatives, from which we can also conclude that: political communication has the widest public among similar forms of communication. "What we call political communication today is a field with extremely unclear features, which is why we consider it to be a set of theories or techniques. It is a science characterized by the interdisciplinarity and the diversity of similarities related to the transversality of the issues addressed. Sociology, linguistics, semiotics, anthropology, law, history, psychosocialism, philosophy are as many fields of analysis of political communication. Political science must strive to integrate them into its own interrogations, addressing the various paradigms they face. But political communication also means a process. In this case, it resembles a toolkit for various experiences, from rhetoric based on natural language to direct marketing of high-tech campaigns, the increased appeal to these techniques is accompanied by a transformation of public space and game rules." (Gerstlé, 2002:19)

Even if it addresses the majority of voters, the political man can not afford to always adopt the same message, but needs to adapt his political discourse by operating a few segments within the large target group he / she is targeting. It is all the more necessary to raise awareness of those groups recognized for the lack of political disinterest, which puts the politician in a difficult situation: on the one hand, the ones who have been informed by electoral messages must be satisfied, on the other hand, the reluctance of those who tend to reject them, systematic suspicion, or total disinterest. There is, therefore, a category of citizens who do not attach importance to the political message. In a bipolar classification, passive citizens can reach up to 90% of the total voters by placing the active in a minority that is almost insignificant. Different degrees of political partisans can be distinguished. The simplest dichotomy of the electorate, depending on the degree of adherence to a party's doctrine, could be convinced, hostile and hesitant. Another classification makes the distinction between devotees and distant individuals (both of which defining groups: a favorable one, a hostile one), unsure of potential (presenting a solid predisposition to vote for someone else, but who can be convinced), to which we add the absolutists, who generally abstain from voting because of doubt and voluntary refusal.

Political Communication between Tradition and Actuality

In its generality, the act of communication consists of an exchange of information. It can be said that “there is communication whenever an organism, in particular a living organism, can affect another organism, modifying it or modifying its action, from the transmission of information (rather than through direct action such as the one exercised by a physical force that puts an energy into operation)” (Amado & Guittet, 1991:191). In the present case, we speak of two fundamental groups: those who disseminate information (in different ways) and those who receive it. The purpose of the transmitters is always the same: to convince. For this, they will use at the same time language, rhetoric, advertising or debates.

Language often takes the form of verbal symbols, but there are also many ways of communicating through non-verbal symbols. Verbal images become the most important form in which political reality is resolved. Meanwhile, non-verbal symbols are of particular importance for the integrity of transmitted information.

In general, the ability to control the terms of discussion by political leadership is appreciated as a very important quality. To draw attention to situations, people or events, politicians interpret the political scene in many ways, closely related to their own position. They explain the importance of events, show the causes that have caused them, justify their actions, etc. In this sense, the connections that speakers prefer to make explicitly or implicitly, analogously or conceptually, shape the message and its impact.

Thus, different realities can be created, starting from the same set of facts, emphasizing certain aspects and insinuating different meanings.

Another function of language is the design of the past and of the future, which is the domain of words. Much of the political discourse contains prediction or reconstruction elements of the past and the design of the future. Reconstruction of the past shows how beneficial some experiences were, while the prediction of the future refers to the expectations of those who do it, preparing the audience for the events that follow.

All of these designs are, of course, subjective, made to serve their own purposes, differing from one policy to another, and adapting according to the historical times lived.

The connection between verbal and action design is not just one of the many examples of how language can be used to impulse and incite action. Messages can even order people to act even though message recipients are not always convinced of the discipline of orders. At the same time, messages can also be a substitute for action, but with a chance to act in action. International treaties, such as alliances, are promises by some countries to support each other in wartime. Their mere existence can cause potential aggressors to change their minds.

At the same time, however, the frames of coexistence impose the need to keep discussions at an acceptable, civilized level, forcing partners to reach a moderate language, independent of human animosities or conflicts of interest.

A former leader or a retired politician is used as a source, advertising is more effective than using a current leader or a candidate. Studies focused on the length of the message, the differences in perception of color advertisements in contrast to black and white, rational messages with emotional messages, etc.;

The most commonly used forms today are radio, television, newspapers, postcards, flyers, telephone advertising and various badges. Of these, the top four are the most commonly used. Individuals are caught by the entertainment side of the advertisement rather than the information.

A series of research has revealed three types of receptor effects: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. On a cognitive basis, the effects have been highlighted by the growing interest in the direct effects of advertising. Research shows a positive correlation between political advertising, attention and the level of political knowledge of individuals.

The emotional components of the ad have often taken the form of an assessment that the individual (the public) explores about the subject of the ad. The use of advertisements must be weighed very well, taking into account both the moment when it is transmitted and its content.

Our century marks a revival of communication studies. The intense concerns have been manifested especially in the last decades. They make substantial contributions to: the structure of the act of communication, the factors directly and the context involved, principles governing such human activities, types of communication, etc. Transactional analysis is an interesting approach to analyzing communication situations in order to select the most appropriate responses.

Mood is the most well-known and most important concept with which transactional analysis operates, being a system of thinking, emotions and behavior related to the different stages of an individual's or even a group's development. By reversing the transaction concept it can be defined as a form of social exchange between two / more people. Exchange of information is itself a transaction that can be done orally, in writing, through gestures, looks, objects, etc. and referred to as a communicative transaction. When two people are in an interpersonal communication, it is possible to enter into play six states of mind, three for each interlocutor. In order to achieve and master communication (communicative transaction) it is important to identify the active mood at that time for each of the participants in the transaction. "If a transaction is the bilateral exchange unit between two states of mind, the relationships between individuals and groups are made up of successive series of transactions." (Popescu, 1995: 12)

The communication made by the parties in writing is advantageous to the advances of printing techniques, to the momentum of public instruction, and to the fact that it mainly addresses the possibilities of analyzing and judging the population. The printed press imparts its own style to party propaganda, focusing on ideas, on programmatic issues, not on people or party figures. The press plays a leading role in political communication, in promoting public discussion, in mediating the relationship between citizens and the political power. Political messages can take the form of statements, speeches, announcements, or even statements about an event, a proposal, a change, or even the policy of another political group. Another medium of broadcasting is the radio, but in this case the transmission of the signals is done by means of the radio waves. and the basis for the appearance of the radio has been numerous inventions and discoveries: the discovery of electric waves, telegraph, wireless telephones, phonograph.

In developed societies, radio is considered a kind of absolute weapon in political life, as it allows for a relatively easy summation of a wide variety of messages coming from parties and their leaders, as well as the confrontation of different political points of view. Radio propaganda has also become, more convenient and cheaper than other modern communication channels. Radio favors the cultivation of political interest among some categories of the population that are less attracted to party preoccupations to disseminate their goals through prints or visual means.

Political Communication between Tradition and Actuality

The radio-receiver establishes direct person-to-person relationships between party and listeners and opens up a new perspective in the relationship between parties with their sympathizers, as they have the feeling that they are watching the voice of their leader or believe they are in a familiar relationship. Voice is one of the first elements underlying the reactions of sympathy or adversity towards an unknown.

Television was born from the conjugation of three series of discoveries: photoelectricity; image analysis and reproduction; transmitting by waves the electrical signals corresponding to each point analyzed. Image analysis becomes possible around 1900 with Thomas Edison's lamp, which assures the current transformation - light and the use of the first light - sensitive photocells to convert it into current. Television was set up as a new broadcasting process between 1925 and 1930. In 1925, the first complete television systems were presented. Of course, giant steps are took place over the course of time and on television: transcending national borders through direct broadcasting satellites, diversifying programs and channels within traditional television - local and specialized channels and programs (cultural, sporting, informative), media diversification, the technologies for transmitting and receiving messages and programs related to these media outlets (cables, videocassettes, video DVDs).

Rosca argues that: "Television has redefined the political action seen today as a theatrical performance. Subject to a commercial logic, the show's activity, political activity has become synonymous with visibility and star-system management. Representative politics, as the basis of political action, is no longer a resource of legitimation and action of the political man. Today the importance of apolitical elements (style, charisma, rhetoric, clothing, notoriety, etc.) increases in the perception of politics and they become forms of political action. Television has changed the condition of a political man who can no longer legitimize political programs and projects. Politics has become a personalized action. The value of public policies has been replaced by the value of political leaders, a value that results from image and notoriety." (Rosca, 2007:44)

Shortly after, television became the main source of information at the expense of media and even radio. Moreover, it is the television that dictates priorities in public space, imposing strategies on political actors. Television is regarded as the most agreeable way of information, the easiest to understand, the place where political figures can best assert themselves. The small screen depends not only on the behaviors, but also on the chances of political parties and politicians. This is the so - called populism phenomenon. Populism as a method and political conduct is manifested through political speeches, televised meetings with the electorate who are promised the immediate satisfaction of the claims.

There are three ways in which a political man can feel his presence on the small screen. First, through regular programs, respected shows, especially apolitical: even the most uninterested viewers will enjoy seeing political affairs taking place. A politician must therefore be able to do everything, be able to talk about anything. Another possibility is the broadcasts offered or sold to parties or candidates, the stands in which they express themselves freely, assuming responsibility for what they say, provided they comply with a setting established by the host station, in which the message policy is inserted into the ads for products and services.

Of course, advertisements, especially when they are political, do not greatly entuse the viewers: they are afraid of the programs that persist in convincing, they are afraid of indoctrination and manipulation. Hence the need for short and concise

messages to be placed between broad audiences. Finally, TV stations schedule specific political broadcasts, making full use of their audio - visual language resources. These programs will be objective, generally contradictory, the political man has no control over them and is intended to be spectacular enough for the public to want to watch them.

In his book "The Discourse of Power" (2009), Constantin Salavastru asserts that: "As far as the freedoms of action are concerned, we must recognize that the political discourse benefits from an unprecedented problem amplitude in the discursive perimeter, which gives it increased possibilities for influencing the audience. When you can talk about any problem to influence an option and action on the receiver, then choosing the issue depends only on its ability to influence a particular audience more strongly, when you can change the thematic register according to the discursive context and the increased possibilities of manipulating to the public, then you really have a handy tool of action on austerity. Freedom of political discourse is also manifested in the fact that this type of discourse is allowed for any other form of discourse thus allowing the possibility of manipulation." (Sălăvăstru, 2009:23)

The ability of television broadcasts to make people watch and follow the party's concerns by supporting them in the elections, the ability to convey exactly the same thoughts, the same pattern for the nation as a whole is paramount. Through this the small screen tends to assume conservative functions, attesting to the legitimacy of powerful parties. A powerful TV presence explains reality to people from a unilateral perspective, limiting themselves to what they say and to what the representatives of the parties in question are avoiding. The goal it creates in political communication, indispensable in party relations with citizens, is covered to a certain extent by the other means of information mentioned above.

Media is a means of expression and, at the same time, a means of influence and possible means of pressure. For some scholars, it acts in the sense of uniformity and conformism, for others, in the way of diversity and complexity. The media explosion has led to the development and commemoration of persuasion techniques through which it can become a tool of manipulation.

The political role of contemporary media is characterized by complex and varied manifestations. As spokespersons for various interest groups, they are a source of information on which to define their choices and make decisions both politicians and various categories of voters. The influence of the media lies in the fact that they are perceived as more appealing and more credible sources, being also more accessible than other sources.

The consequences of political communication are: the media harnessing of the leaders' personality; moving to forms of competition between parties that value media performance against ideology; the proximity and even the convergence of the political objectives of the various parties; increasing the attention paid by politicians to voters' opinions.

In the social space, the interaction between individuals manifests itself through the multiple roles that individuals play. Norms are a role-specific obligation, being the rules governing individual and collective conduct. Social groups tend to spontaneously generate rules whose function is to create a collective framework of action, the basis of consensus. The roles and norms adopted by individuals are determined by the context and space of human interaction.

Any debate in the age of globalization, of globalization, however violent it may be, however ad personam or, on the contrary, to be argued is, certainly contributes to

Political Communication between Tradition and Actuality

something, in that what lies only in individual bearers is placed in the middle, by sharing content, resentment, reactions, ideas, arguments, verbal violence. That's good for public space, it's like a collective therapy session where no one is leading, we're all on the psychoanalyst's couch and we're arguing.

From the consolidation of an ideological line that allowed for a net polarization of social classes in party nuclei, to the age of visual media expansion, exponential expansion of political audience and reaching zenith in the current informational affluence, the evolution of political communication has now become a common body with media entertainment. It is argued that global media and private media flows within the latest generation democracies are internationalizing, given the political, economic and cultural circumstances of globalisation. Thus, multiple competitors have emerged, all of which are converging into competition for access to the public sphere of information. The political actor is now on the electoral stage facing not only the danger of a horizontal antagonism from his opponents but also of a vertical one, generated both by the media's commercial management policies (the abundance of entertainment programs, the news channels 24/7, the formal pressure of the market and the mystery of other institutions of authority), as well as the position of the citizen in relation to the coordinates of his socio-political sphere (access to information, pluralism of opinions, privilege of critical attitude and sanction of absenteeism).

In all modern societies and social groups, there is a certain scheme of collective life, every man knows how to behave in certain situations, knows what other members of the community expect from him and knows what reactions he can expect from his actions. He knows first of all to communicate, to be heard. In order to ensure that the members of the company or groups concerned are maintained within this scheme, a system of social control is formed for the observance of norms, the prevention and suppression of undesirable behavior.

Each group, each community, develops measures, suggests ways of constraint, prohibitions, persuasion and pressure systems, sanctions to physical congregation, systems and ways of expressing gratitude, awarding distinctions and awards, which make the behavior of individuals and subgroups are conducted in accordance with the accepted models of action, respecting the value criteria, in a word, with which the members' conformism is formed. This system forms the system of social control. "The current political communication has a strong control over society through a set of institutions, rules, norms, measures, means of influence that are designed to respect the recognized and permissive patterns of conduct in specific circumstances, according to the status and roles of each individual." (Gheorghe and Luminosu, 1996: 108)

The normal functioning of society would be inconceivable in the absence of such rules and means to influence people's behavior. Social control is a means of self-regulation of the social system's balance. It is achieved through a variety of mechanisms. These include ethical and religious sanctions, economic rewards or penalties, social approval or ostracization, threat of force, or actual use of force.

Ed Ross characterizes "social control as a form of the influence our fellow men exert on our conduct within the groups and societies to which we belong. After that the means of social control consist of public opinion, law, beliefs, social suggestion, education, habits, religion, personal ideal, ceremonies, art, popularization, illusions, social evaluations, morality." (Gheorghe and Luminosu, 1996: 109)

G. Gurvitch, referring to the means of social control, considers them to be "instruments of psychological pressure implemented, consciously or unconsciously, to

influence individuals to adopt the expected behaviors from them. These tools are numerous and diverse: positive and negative sanctions, rewards, encouragement of convictions, etc .; they may also consist of less obvious elements such as symbols, models, prestige effects, acts of propaganda or publicity, influences which are mainly exercised by means of mass communication and which, in general, shape opinion.” (Gheorghe and Luminosu, 1996: 110)

The analysis of the electoral campaign reveals how electoral communication, as a part and essential component of political communication, can open new horizons of understanding the evolution of communication. Butler and Kavanagh claim that: “[...] more than ever, electoral campaigns are directed and orchestrated. Each party tries to influence the public agenda in order to see their views on some of the most important themes reflected in the media. Public opinion is monitored through opinion polls. Electoral campaigns are increasingly seen by those charged with organizing them as marketing exercises, and the willingness to sell their goods and services to their customers is now being applied to the electorate. These developments have broadened the scope of action of experts in public opinion polling.” (Butler and Kavanagh, 1992:77)

A typical electoral campaign begins at least one year before the election, and in the first few months there are at least a dozen candidates. An ordinary voter will love politics in small doses; he will probably react to a long campaign ignoring most of the events. But the media feel compelled to pursue this campaign extensively, even when the number of candidates and campaign activities is far greater than the media's ability and desire to represent. If, for example, six presidential candidates are campaigning on a certain day in January, it will not be possible for the local post to show everyone. Thus, the whole issue of the day should contain only politics. Similarly, in print media, not every candidate will benefit from a front page presentation.

The judgments of the mass media determine the people and the problems to be presented, how much space they will receive and how they will appear. Because the audience is not actively involved in campaign news, especially in the early months, the precursor of the presentation is crucial. Those candidates who will have a broader presentation will be better placed in the attention of the public. Since candidates compete for funds and volunteers, as well as votes, this visibility becomes very important. Who will benefit from the widest presentation? It is a matter of discretion in the press. The evaluation process works throughout the campaign as publishers, producers and reporters decide who deserves and who does not.

The power of the press to shape a candidate's destiny is a source of irritation for politicians. The defeated candidates are increasingly defined by their failures by blaming the press - not because of reporter bias, because of a prejudice of exclusion limiting the voters' perspective on the candidate's efforts.

When the press chooses a favourite at the start of a campaign, this significantly changes the political strategy. A candidate must be proactive at first and catch the attention of the press. Waiting until the end of the first phase of the election to focus your attack on the opponents, could seem a good strategy from the perspective of electoral campaign theories. But the one who expects to make these moves already risks having the press push him out of the political game.

The study of electoral communication has long been an important aspect of research in the field of political analysis and especially of the science of political communication. The interest in studying campaign mechanisms has been strengthened

Political Communication between Tradition and Actuality

by the acoustic evolution of political life, which tends to turn into a permanent campaign in which the character engaged in politics tries to legitimize its actions and efforts to conquer or maintain power. It has also been observed lately that the representation of the electoral campaign has changed.

If the classical analysis was focused on the actors of the political game - people, forces and coalitions - describing their arrangements, maneuvers and positioning, we now see that the analysis of strategies, the content of the media and the role of these elements is limited to interception between candidates and their voters.

The new analyzes redistribute the roles and redefine another electoral scene, inspired not only by juxtaposition but also by the interaction of the protagonists. As a result of these analyzes, the electoral campaign was considered as a game structure, characterized by conflict, cooperation or mixed relations, which in turn produce structural effects that none of the actors act upon. The latter point is all the more sensitive as we evaluate the effects of a campaign not only from the perspective of immediate election results but also through the redefinition of a political situation, and we are referring here to the symbolic plan. Signs circulating during the electoral sequence have different cognitive and symbolic effects, such as the acquisition and recycling of political knowledge, the redistribution of political capital, the reconstitution of political identities and, in a global manner, the recognition of the system. The electoral communication thus presents itself as “a privileged sequence of building the political reality to which all actors contribute, depending on specific resources and interests.” (Gerstle, 2002: 163)

Most conflicts and communication difficulties are generated, often by the great differences between perceived reality and reality itself. Human perception is subjective, selective and also carries the personal footprint of thought processes. From the entire environment, a vast array of stimuli of all kinds abound and try to instantly shake all our senses. By thinking, the mind organizes, structures, adjusts or complements the information obtained to give it meaning.

Whatever the forms, context, and levels of human communication, perception remains the central issue, it remains the key to all the meanings of a message. Perception is the process of awareness of the internal and external stimuli that causes the senses and which also relates to the sensory and mental phenomena that give birth to the primary, unitary image of the objects and phenomena that act on the sense organs.

The received message differs, often significantly, from the one sent. That is why in analyzing any political message or when we want to know something accurately, we must go beyond simple words, beyond their meaning. At the same time, we must take into account the historical status, the political regime, public opinion and the phenomena that occur in any society. For this reason, politicians must ensure that their messages are agreeable, give them substance, make sure that they accurately reflect realities, concrete issues, and propose effective solutions, so that political campaigns lead to an exchange, to a communication that does not flow in a single direction. Ultimately, communication means sharing, therefore, political communication should mean embracing and understanding political and social responsibilities.

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