ORGINAL SCIENTIFIC PAPER

MARCIN KONIECZNY *

# Ignorance, disinformation, manipulation and hate speech as effective tools of political power

**Abstract**

*The outbreak of the pandemic, military conflicts and political maelstrom have changed the constellation of the information environment, generating a noticeable increase in ignorance, disinformation, and manipulation resulting in fake news, conspiracy theories and hate speech. The phenomena are escalated and intensified by rapid technological progress, widespread digitisation and its impact on all areas of life, especially political activity. Due to the changes brought about by the digital revolution, a new social formation has emerged, known as the information society, represented not only by politicians and social activists. The modified architecture of digital space causes the formation of new instruments, influence factors, and harmful social phenomena – previously present and recognised but never before so intense. This article describes and analyses the issue of ignorance, misinformation, disinformation and manipulation as potential and actual tools of political power and terrorism. The study assesses the impact of disinformation, manipulation and hate speech disseminated through social media sites and abused by politicians who use it to build and extend political power. It also examines the impact of these detrimental and injurious phenomena on the functioning of the rule of law, democracy and fundamental human rights. The article defines the terms ignorance, misinformation and manipulation, proving that a language, as a means of communication, should be neutral but is actually used for promoting ideology, coming to power, serving hatred and violence, and inciting criminal acts and crimes. Thus, worldwide political players use language and media to justify violence, spread false ideologies, and improve their public image.*

***Keywords:*** *ignorance, misinformation, disinformation, manipulation, war theories, hate speech, hate crimes, political power, political terrorism.*

   * Marcin Krzysztof Konieczny, PhD – lawyer, graduate of the Faculty of Law and Administration of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, National Defense Academy in Warsaw, Police Academy in Szczytno and the MilitaryUniversity of Land Forces in Wrocław. ORCID – 0000-0002-1798-1509.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Political power is a common phenomenon in social life, although this does not mean it is easy to grasp its essence and propose its legal definition. One of the reasons for the difficulties in defining political power is its common occurrence in public life, its presence in almost all social contexts, and the wide range of social fields it is involved in. In addition, the exercise of political power affects the public interests of individuals and various social groups, which is significant for the entire cognitive process associated with this category. This is why political power so easily uses ignorance, misinformation, and disinformation. All these are strategic tools widely used in both political power and even war tactics. Still, the theory and practice of international relations, political and war studies do not have enough space for a punishment model for political demagogs and terrorists. If disinformation is a tactic of politics and terrorism, and hate speech is a cause of crimes against humanity based on breaking human rights, why can political criminals not be punished by depriving them of power.

## 2. THE POWER OF IGNORANCE

The digital revolution, also known as the fourth industrial revolution, is another era of changes caused by the development of computerisation and modern technologies. It is characterised by rapid technological progress, widespread digitisation and its impact on all areas of life. Due to the changes brought about by the digital revolution, a new social formation has emerged, known as the information society, for which knowledge has become a strategic resource instead of capital and labour.

Why does the law protect war criminals responsible for genocide, political and military terror, and mass murder?[2] What kind of protection have criminals had, and what changed during the last hundred years? Where is the limit of civil liability for committed crimes? Why are many warnings ignored, accounting for the deaths of million people?[3] The division of violence into good violence and wanton destruction implies that good abuse is not associated with any perpetrator's responsibility towards victims.[4] The very idea of violence is, by definition, evil, even if violence finds its justification in international relations and its use is to ensure peace, stability, and security. The problem of violence - both justified and unreasonable - is the wrong strategy to reduce it. Violence against civilians for crimes committed by the state's authorities has no justification for demonstrating power.

The stopping of force requires the use of appropriate methods and tools against the direct perpetrator. If the perpetrator is the military strength of a given country, as was the case

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[2] Anuradha Chakravarty, "Tokyo International Court" in Marsha E. Ackermann, Michael J. Schroeder, Janice J. Terry, Jui-Hwa Lo Upshur, Mark F. Whitters, eds., *Encyclopedia od World History. Crisis and Achievement 1900 to 1950. Volume 5* (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 2008), p. 381.

[3] William A. Schabas, *Genocide in International Law. The Crime of Crimes,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 29.

[4] Stephen E. Brown, Finn-Aage Esbensen, Gilbert Geis, *Criminology. Explaining Crime and the Context* (New Providence, N.J.: Lexis Nexis, 2010), p. 392.

in Germany and Japan during World War II, the solution should not be bombing cities and destroying the lives of civilians, especially since victims of this violence were consequently left without the specialised assistance necessary for victims of the use of nuclear weapons. The rational use of force finds its justification if it is carried out strategically - the destruction of power centers and political centers, places where criminals reside, is much more justified than killing civilians' living space. Ignorance on the part of the government's policy is, therefore, to punish civilians, especially in cases where the perpetrator is not later liable to the victims.

After the Second World War, thousands of war criminals were convicted during the Nuremberg trials, but many have never been judged. German genocide in occupied Europe was one of the highest mass killings in history – this part of European history has never been billed. Thousands of war criminals were tried in the Nuremberg trials, but a significant proportion of the criminals responsible for leading and commanding mass murder actions have never been decided.

There is a belief that restoring peaceful relations with the aggressor requires release from charges of the genocide of war criminals to work out the foundations of national security, as was the case in Bangladesh.[5] As a consequence, war crimes often remain unpunished, politics becomes more important than justice, and genocide acts are related to the political goals of individuals.[6]

What happened with war criminals and people responsible for crimes? The history of ignorance is related to the history of human development, especially when the subject of research is human knowledge about the crimes and responsibilities for it – the study of ignorance and its deliberating shows dependence between deliberate ignorance and social life. Insufficient knowledge naturally should motivate one to explore new directions and solutions. Still, ignorance of facts with data manipulation is a real threat to security at the national and international levels. In 1847, the Viennese physician proved the high relation between physicians' handwashing and maternal deaths from puerperal or childbed fever, but his discovery was ignored.[7] Foolish ignorance is one of the most critical national security threats, primarily when associated with experts' and politicians' knowledge. People with significant control of state management responsible for other's life with the wrong decision-making process can kill residents and citizens and generate war state on an international scale.

Ignorance means homogeneity and lack of diversity. Seeking a solution migrant crisis in the European Union in two thousand years of Christian heritage is ignorance. The EU is

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[5] Gary J. Bass, „Bargaining Away Justice: India, Pakistan, and the International Politics of Impunity for the Bangladesh Genocide," International Security, Vol 41, No 2 (Fall 2016), pp. 140-187, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00258.

[6] See, for example, Bass, " Bargaining Away Justice: India, Pakistan, and the International Politics of Impunity for the Bangladesh Genocide," Ganguly Sumit, "Pakistan's Forgotten Genocide – A Review Essay," *International Security,* Vol 39, No 2 (Fall 2014), pp. 169-180, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00175 .

[7] Larry Dossey, "Agnotology: On the Varieties of Ignorance, Criminal Negligence, and Crime Against Humanity, " *Explore,* Vol. 10, No. 6 (November – December 2014), p. 333.

cultural, natural, economic, and political diversity. Before Christ, every present state had its cultural heritage, which was destroyed in the name of Christianization to build a religiously homogeneous Europe[8]. The concept of the country has evolved, and its borders have been placed within tolerance - Christian heritage's tolerance towards other cultures and religions. Further attempts to build unity based on shaping divisions based on Christianization achievements are both a sign of ignorance and disrespect for diversity. The progressing divisions' effect is more and more numerous crises harassing Europe as a continent and each of European countries as a sovereign and culturally and historically independent nation.

## 3. THE POWER OF MANIPULATION

The term manipulation means "directing someone without their knowledge, also bending or distorting facts in order to influence others' views and behavior to achieve their own goals".[9] The phenomenon of manipulation is the subject of research by scientists from various fields - political science, media studies, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, pedagogy, and also sociology. There are different types of manipulation in politics. They include media, opinion polls, images, elections, information and legal manipulations. One manipulation may belong to more than one type, and their classifications are not disjoint[10]. Psychological manipulation also occurs on a larger scale, especially in politics or marketing. Manipulation is often used in totalitarian states as an open way of managing society. In democratic countries, we are manipulated in a more sophisticated way - often with the use of media intended to show only what is beneficial to the authorities, or during presidential campaigns, where candidates often speak and do what will allow them to gain the highest support and what it is not necessarily true.

Informational manipulation campaigns are based on a set of coordinated yet dispersed activities that give an impression of spontaneous action. They are launched on various mediums, both online and offline, at different moments in time and rely on a combination of 'natural reach' (enabled by humans and traditional media) and automation (enabled by bots and advertising). This makes it difficult to trace the origins of the story and determine the culpable parties.[11] Modern-day informational manipulation campaigns rely on the digital tools widely used by the industry. In fact, the tools and systems behind online informational manipulation (e.g. real-time bidding) are no different from those employed to convince us to buy a fridge or a pair of new shoes.[12]

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[8] Balázs M. Mezei, "The Migration Crisis & the Culture of Europe," *The European Conservative*, No. 15 (Summer/Fall 2018), p. 11.

[9] E. Sobol, "Nowy Słownik Języka Polskiego", Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2002, s. 435–436.

[10] K. Daniel, "Manipulacje polityczne a jakość demokracji – na przykładzie Polski po 1989 roku", 9 VII 2010, http://www.racjonalista.pl/kk.php/s,7394, 25 XII 2017.

[11] J-B.Vilmer et al., "Information Manipulation: A Challenge for Our Democracies", p. 77.

[12] J. Tucker et al., "Social media, political polarization and political disinformation: a review of the scientific literature", Hewlett Foundation, March 2018, p. 46.

The informational manipulation campaigns include messages in different formats to reach the target audiences, including news pieces, blog posts, comments on articles or under social media posts, 'memes', fake profiles of influencers, TV reports, documentaries, YouTube videos, Facebook event pages and hashtags.[13] Their content may be entirely fabricated or slightly manipulated; they may feature false connections (e.g. subtitles do not support the original footage) or be entirely genuine but provided in the wrong context (e.g. historical information featured as news). In some cases, as explained above, the format of the message may not include verifiable facts at all but aggressively promote value judgment-like statements.

An informational manipulation campaign can be launched by a state or a non-state actor or their proxies. There are no precise estimates as to what proportion of disinformation in the EU originates from foreign actors (e.g. Kremlin, Beijing, Iran) and what is authored domestically (e.g. by government representatives, political parties, populist politicians, interest groups, profit-seeking individuals, independent trolls or conspiracy theorists).[14] For instance, a piece by the New York Times has asserted that based on Facebook's data, the majority of the accounts behind false and misleading content in the US were domestic. No comparable conclusions can be drawn about the EU in the absence of reliable data, but there is evidence of domestic actors, for instance, referendum campaigners, using digital platforms to advertise factually misleading messages as part of the campaign.

The tactics of Kremlin informational manipulation are so far the most researched ones, also because their manifestation during recent democratic processes in the EU and overseas has been particularly prominent. Its distinct features are organisation and a wide network of allies aiding in the distribution of the messages. RAND Corporation has identified four types of such allies: government bodies (e.g. ministries, embassies); fake NGOs (financed or working closely with the state), other seemingly unrelated organisations that, in reality, are close to the governing authorities (e.g. motorcycle clubs) and religious, political and economic relays (political parties of other sovereign states, religious groups). These allies can act as both initiators of a campaign and distribution mediums. For example, an embassy can 'produce' a report making false claims or post a report already produced by a false NGO on its website.[15]

## 4. THE POWER OF DISINFORMATION AND MISINFORMATION

The term "disinformation" is often used alongside "misinformation", but it should be stressed that their usage suffers from a lack of consistency. Some scholars use it interchangeably, whereas others consider one a variation of the other. The Oxford Dictionary and the Collins English Dictionary list "misinformation" as a synonym for "disinformation"; the Merriam–Webster and Oxford Living Dictionaries make subtle distinctions between the two

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[13] Ibidem, p. 76.

[14] J-B.Vilmer et al., "Information Manipulation: A Challenge for Our Democracies", p. 20.

[15] Linda Robinson et al, Modern Political Warfare. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2018, p. 56.

definitions. While the European Union's interinstitutional terminology database notes that "disinformation" should not be confused with "misinformation", defined as "information which is wrong or misleading but not deliberately so". Yet, the European Parliament resolutions use 'misinformation' and 'disinformation' interchangeably.[16] In the suggested typology, the determination about the nature of information is not objective but relative – the information shared with malicious intent is recognised as disinformation, whereas the same information shared by a poorly informed party is considered as misinformation. This subtle but important distinction may contribute to a better understanding of whether to assign responsibility to those involved in the dissemination of disinformation[17].

Disinformation and misinformation are also a part of the decentralised war associated with global mass media activities on a national scale and with an international potential of growing threats related to public perceptions of security and power.[18] Due to the full availability of unverified information presented by individual entities or organisations and institutions under freedom of expression, more and more advanced social changes with their economic and administrative consequences occur.[19] The digitalisation of disinformation is a cause of erroneous action based on false data.[20] The impulse to imitate disinformation increases the range of cybercrimes, hate speech, and terrorism.

Disinformation is generated not only by civils.[21] As a political strategy, disinformation is designed to manipulate and control communities. Technological manipulation propaganda-based became a strategy for organisations, individuals, institutions, and politicians.[22] This

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[16] European Parliament, Understanding propaganda and disinformation, November 2015.

[17] Karlova, N. and Lee, J., Notes from the underground city of disinformation: A conceptual investigation. Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology 48(1), 2012, p. 1.

[18] Maria Bada, Jason RC Nurse, "The Social and Psychological Impact of Cyberattacks," in Vladlena Benson, John Mcalaney, eds., Emerging Cyber Threats and Cognitive Vulnerabilities (London: Academic Press, 2020), pp. 73-92, https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-816203-3.00004-6.

[19] Aarsh Barfar, "Cognitive and affective responses to political disinformation in Facebook," *Computers in Human Behavior,* Vol. 101 (December 2019), pp. 173-179, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.07.026, Camille D. Ryan, Andrew J. Schaul, Ryan Butner, John T. Swarthout, "Monetizing disinformation in the attention economy: The case of genetically modified organism (GMO)," *European Management Journal* Vol. 38, No. 1 (February 2020), pp. 7-18, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2019.11.002, Stuart J. Kaufman, "Symbolic Politics or Rational Choice? Testing Theories of Extreme Ethnic Violence," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Spring 2006), pp. 45-86, https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2006.30.4.45.

[20] See, for example, Vincent. F. Hendricks, Mads Vestergaard, *Reality Lost. Markets of Attention, Misinformation and Manipulation* (Cham: Springer Nature, 2019), Calin O'Connor, James O. Weatherall, *The Misinformation Age. How False Beliefs Spread* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2019), Ladislav Bittman, *The KGB and Soviet Disinformation. An Insider View* (Washington, New York, Oxford, London, Toronto, Sydney, Frankfurt: Pergamon – Brassey's, 1985), Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris, Hal Roberts, *Network Propaganda. Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[21] O'Connor, Weatherall, *The Misinformation Age. How False Beliefs Spread,* p. 9-17, 97-98.

[22] Mika Ojakangas, „A Terryfing World Without an Exterior: Carl Smith and the Metaphysics of International (dis)order," in Louiza Odysseos, Fabio Petito, eds., *The International Political Thought of Carl Smith.*

situation can be observed in coronavirus information samples around the world. In European countries, one of the necessary information about COVID provides proof of opportunities and restrictions that guarantee civil security.[23] Much information about the pandemic situation was unclear, and many of them had a political context. The social moods of citizens related to the presidential election about the status of an epidemic threat contributed to widespread misinformation in both social media and mass media. The information available to a broad audience creates a domino effect by reaching an increasing number of recipients susceptible to emotional reactions and reproducing erroneous patterns in misinformation messages.[24]

Political disinformation, related to the post-truth era, has epidemic status on the Internet and mass media because of the impact of emotional and ideological appeals on the political decision-making process.[25] If the war is physical and terrorism – mental, manipulation and hateful propaganda are a part of terrorism, and one of its consequences is civil war.[26] Ignorance of politician terrorism and impunity for the actions of the ruling elites is causing changes in the current global order.

## 5. THE POWER OF HATE SPEECH

What is the difference between crime and hate crime motivated by political views? Who is responsible for the language of hate, and why do political perpetrators remain unpunished? Who is the common enemy?

Language, as a means of communication used to communicate in the human environment, is, by definition, neutral. Still, its use can promote any ideology, serving hatred and violence and inciting criminal acts, crimes, and crimes. Political players worldwide use language to justify violence and to spread the ideology of its use as appropriate and necessary.[27] In political discourse, language is one of the tools to eliminate opposition and maintain power by publicly calling for violence. As one of the few means, human language gives the opportunity to exert pressure, manipulate and perpetuate erroneous and harmful stereotypes. In the civilised world, a language is a tool that enables the exchange of information and views, connects people of different nationalities, crosses religious and cultural barriers, allows knowledge, understanding, and helps build unity. In the same civilised world, there

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*Terror, Liberal War and the Crisis of Global Order* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2007), p. 207-209.

[23] Daniel A. Erku, Sewunet A. Belachew, Solomon Abrha, Mahipal Sinnollareddy, Jackson Thomas, Kathryn J. Stedman, Wubshet H. Tesfaye, "When fear and misinformation go viral: Pharmacists' role in deterring medication misinformation during the 'infodemic' surrounding COVID-19," *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy*, (May 2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sapharm.2020.04.032.

[24] David J. Helfland, *A Survival Guide to the Misinformation. Age Scientific Habits of Mind* New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 20-24.

[25] Arash Barfar, „Cognitive and affective responses to political disinformation in Facebook," *Computers in Human Behavior,* Vol. 101 (December 2019), pp. 173-179, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.07.026.

[26] Townshend, *Terrorism: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 26.

[27] See Townshend, *Terrorism: A Very Short Introduction,* p. 20, Richard Moon, *Putting Face in Hate. When Religion is the Source or Target of Hate Speech* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

are countries where politicians strive to create a divided state, a divided society, strengthen intolerance and disrespect, creating a new meaning of traditional concepts, following the principle of "divide and rule." In democratic countries, hate speech sets a new order, giving way to totalitarian autonomy, where there is no room for understanding, unity, joint decisions, respect, and responsibility.[28] Hateful propaganda, hate speech, and language manipulation are some of the leading causes of hate crimes.[29]

Hate speech is a relatively new term focused on emotional reactions related to presented communication. The main communication idea of hate speech is emotional and behavioural changes in the recipients of the address.[30] Individual differences include reinforcement of racist attitudes and disparate treatment of minorities, with the global reach of mass media becoming a serious threat to national and international security.[31] Racism and discrimination against minorities lead to ethnic conflicts and contribute to the destabilisation of a conflict-affected state. Without adequate prevention tools and an excellent crisis management system, an inequitable country can plunge into a civil war. Civil war created using mass media such as the Internet, radio, and television is becoming the best alternative to existing war strategies - it allows military operations to be carried out without the use of military forces. Hate speech is based on the *divide et impera* concept - artificial social divisions created by hate speech in national politics are intended to group society and turn individual groups against each other.

The natural consequence of the language of hatred used by the authorities of a given country and promoted by the media is the increase in hostility in society resulting in growing social divisions, oppression of minority groups and the promotion of hate in a culture that manifests itself in art became a part of cultural heritage.[32] The range of hate speech around the world has increased thanks to mass media. The phenomenon of growing social divisions using hate speech as political propaganda is becoming particularly noticeable in Poland, where hate speech and incitement to oppress LGBT minorities has become a point of political

[28] Lukin, *War and Its Ideologies. A Social Semiotic Theory and Description,* Alexander Brown, *Hate Speech Law. A Philosophical Examination* (New York, London: Routledge, 2015), Victoria Saker Woeste, *Henry Ford's War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012), Erica Howard, *Freedom of Expression and Religious Hate Speech in Europe* (London, New York: Routledge, 2018), Eric Heinze, *Hate Speech and Democratic Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), Jeremy Waldron, *The Harm in Hate Speech* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: Harvard University Press, 2012).

[29] Hassan, "Counter-Ideological Work: Singapore Experience", p. 150.

[30] Clay Calvert, "Hate Speech and Its Harms: A Communication Theory Perspective," *Journal of Communication,* Vol. 47, No. 1 (March 1997), pp. 4-19, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1997. tb02690.x.

[31] Polychronis Charitidis, Stavros Doropoulos, Stavros Vologiannidis, Ioannis Papastergiou, Sophia Kakakeva, "Towards countering hate speech against journalist on social media," *Online Social Networks Media,* Vol 17 (May 2020), article no. 100071, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.osnem.2020.100071.

[32] Jo Fox, „The Propaganda War" in Richard J. B. Bosworth, Joseph A. Maiolo, eds., *The Cambridge History of The Second World War. Volume II: Politics and Ideology* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 102-106.

media discourse since the begging the 2020 year.[33] Politics needs a common enemy to steer the public's attention to the possibility of creating a division of citizens for easier management of smaller groups. Still, around the world, incitement to hatred is criminalised and analysed as a crime against humanity.[34]

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The digital revolution, also known as the fourth industrial revolution, is a new era shaped by modern technologies. It is characterised by rapid technological progress, widespread digitisation and its impact on all areas of human lives. Due to the changes brought about by the digital revolution, a new social formation has emerged, known as the information society, for which knowledge has become a strategic resource instead of capital and labour. However, it must be stressed that the information continuously provided via the Internet and other media shapes the views, mentalities and the false image of the world. The news and messages that reach users are profiled according to their expectations, but they are also effective tools and carriers of ignorance, disinformation and manipulation. As a consequence, web users seem to live in a distorted, homogeneous world in which everyone seems to have the same views. They assimilate the news and treat them as true without verifying the facts.

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[33] See Krzysztof Sobczak, UE: Komisarz Upomina Polskich Polityków za Wypowiedzi o LGBT, online [12.07.2020] https://www.prawo.pl/prawo/wypowiedzi-politykow-pis-o-lgbt-komisarz-ue-przypomina-o-prawach,501003.html?_ga=2.39516455.563185778.1594850808-343828442.1594850808.

[34] See, for example, Andy Harvey, "Regulating Homophobic Hate Speech: Back to Basics About Language and Politics? *Sexualities,* Vol. 15, No. 2 (March 2012), pp. 191-206, https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460712436539, Kay Goodall, "Challenging Hate Speech: Incitement to Hatred on Grounds of Sexual Orientation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland," *The International Journal of Human Rights,* Vol. 13, No. 2-3, 2009, pp. 211-232, https://doi.org/10.1080/13642980902758127, Anthony Dickey, "The Law on Incitement to Racial Hatred," *Patterns of Prejudice,* Vol.7, No. 4, 1973, pp. 6-10, https://doi.org/10.1080/0031322X.1973.9969134, Mohamed Badar, Polona Florijančič, „Assessing incitement to Hatred as a Crime Against Humanity of Prosecution," *The International Journal of Human Rights,* Vol. 24, No. 5 (26 September 2019), pp. 656-687, https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2019.1671356.

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**Sažetak**

**Marcin Konieczny**

**Neznanje, dezinformacije, manipulacija i govor mržnje kao učinkovito oruđe političke moći**

Izbijanje pandemije, vojni sukobi i politički vrtlozi promijenili su konstelaciju informacijskog okruženja, uzrokujući primjetan porast neznanja, dezinformacija i manipulacija koji generiraju lažne vijesti, teorije zavjere i govor mržnje.

Brz tehnološki napredak, širenje digitalizacije i njezin učinak na sva područja života, posebice političko djelovanje, doveli su do eskalacije i jačanja intenziteta tih fenomena. Promjene uslijed digitalne revolucije stvorile su društvenu formaciju, poznatu kao informacijsko društvo, koju ne predstavljaju samo političari i društveni aktivisti. Preinačena arhitektura digitalnog prostora uzrokuje formiranje novih instrumenata, čimbenika utjecaja i štetnih društvenih pojava – dosad prisutnih i prepoznatih, ali nikada tako intenzivnih. Članak opisuje i analizira problematiku neznanja, dezinformacija i manipulacija kao potencijalne i stvarne alate političke moći i terorizma. Studija procjenjuje učinak dezinformacija, manipulacije i govora mržnje koji se šire društvenim mrežama i koje političare zloupotrebljavaju kako bi izgradili i širili političku moć. Također, razmatra utjecaj tih opasnih i štetnih pojava na funkcioniranje vladavine prava, demokracije i temeljnih ljudskih prava. U članku se definiraju pojmovi neznanja, dezinformiranja i manipulacije, dokazujući da se jezik, kao sredstvo komunikacije koje bi trebalo biti neutralno, zapravo koristi za promicanje ideologije, dolazak na vlast, serviranje mržnje i nasilja te poticanje na kaznena djela i kriminal. Zaključuje sa da politički igrači diljem svijeta koriste jezik i medije za opravdavanje nasilja, širenje lažne ideologije i poboljšavanje vlastite slike u javnosti.

**Ključne riječi:** neznanje, pogrešne informacije, dezinformacije, manipulacija, teorije rata, govor mržnje, zločini iz mržnje, politička moć, politički terorizam.