

Les nouveaux médias et la réactivation du politique*

Abstract. My paper focuses on a few key aspects of the contemporary relationship between politics and New Media. Since the beginning of the Internet – and the birth of the first virtual communities – both scholars and simple users have developed ample discussions concerning the *real* potential of New Media in producing relevant changes in the political processes. Some of the traits of this new technology – interactivity, lack of intermediation, reasonable cost, speed, digitization, hypertextuality, virtuality, emergence of distributed networks – encouraged people to have hopes and to believe in different forms of *digital democracy*, and also in the *digital citizen*, who would prove to be more socially and politically active and less disappointed by politics. In the same time, though, the old metaphor of *Panopticon* reappeared, and it guided the critics of digital democracy. I think that the metaphor of *Pharmakon* fits much better to what really happens in the New Media-politics relationship; it also allows us to have the right, Aristotelian attitude that keeps off both ungrounded optimism and pessimism.

Keywords: New Media, politics, public sphere, public space, digital democracy, cyberspace.

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