



**The role of New Information and
Communication Technologies (NICT) in
mass mobilization and urban violence:
A tool for instigators?**

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The role of digital media in mass mobilization and urban violence: A tool for instigators?

- **Introduction**
- **Digital media and political mobilization**
- **Levels of analysis**
- **Conclusion**

Potential for political mobilization

- **Change from one-to-many communication to many-to-many communication**
- **interactivity and user-generated content**
- **Rapid exchange of information, real-time news on events around the world**
- **“Internet enthusiasts” vs. “Internet sceptics”**
- **Same opportunities for peaceful collective action as for instigators of violence**

Political Effects of New Social Media

- **Promoting individual learning processes**
- **Changing relations between different groups**
- **Impact on collective action**
- **Creating external attention**
- **Changing policies of authorities and regimes under pressure**

Individual Learning Processes

- **Development of new competencies**
- **More participation in the political process**
- **Overcoming information barriers**
- **Variety of information may lead to the reflexion of one's own position**
- **broad range of information may also lead to the consolidation of existing orientations**
- **Potential radicalization**

Changing Intergroup Relations

- **Crossing boundaries between groups**
- **„bridging capital“**
- **Potentially only communication between like-minded people; polarization**
- **Radicalization; confirming/creating enemy images**
- **Connections to conflicts abroad**

Collective Action

- **Reducing transaction costs**
- **Easy mobilization**
- **Overcoming of isolation**
- **Flat social movements**
- **Information cascades**
- **Content can be positive or negative (e.g. hate speech, pro-violence campaigns)**

Collective Action (on the ground)

- **Rapid exchange of information**
- **Coordination of different groups**
- **Finding targets, warning others**
- **Fueling conflicts on the ground**
- **Disseminating misinformation**

Creating External Attention

- **Circumventing authorities**
- **target groups outside a country**
- **mobilization abroad**
- **inter-relations between local activists and international media**
- **documentation of misconduct (e.g. police violence, overreactions)**

Conclusion

- New ways of mobilization
- Politicization and radicalization in a virtual sphere
- Gap between virtual sphere and collective action on the street
- Options for coordinating protests and instigating violence
- Same opportunities for peaceful protestors as for instigators of violence
- Digital media one factor amongst others



Thank you!

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