Agora on the Internet: Can X's Spaces be interpreted as a Digital Platform for Democracy?[1]

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Abstract

This paper aims to determine to what extent can X's Spaces be considered an evolution of the Athenian Agora. Through a comparative analysis, the key characteristics of these spaces were compared, including mobility, information transfer, democracy, freedom of speech, participation, and audience. Mobility represents a remarkable difference, where the agora was physically dependent, while Spaces could be used anywhere with a smart device and Internet access. Both cases provide real-time information transfer but differ in the context of a physical and virtual presence. Agora expressed direct democracy, while Spaces could only express indirect democracy. Freedom of speech at the agora was absolute, while Spaces were limited to X's terms of service. Participation was limited in both cases – to the slaves, women, and non-Athenian citizens at the agora, while on Spaces it depended on the host, who had absolute control. At the agora and Spaces, everyone could be part of the audience. The agora's audience used shouting and disruption as a form of expression, while the audience on Spaces could only react through emoticons. Although there were significant differences between these platforms, such as technological and regulatory aspects, both spaces provided an environment for public debate, expression of views, and communication. However, the lack of adequate regulation of X provides additional challenges such as polarization and hate speech. The research indicates the importance of understanding the evolution of democratic spaces and their impact on society in the digital age.

Keywords: Twitter, X, agora, democracy, freedom of speech, social media

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Introduction

Democracy, as an essential concept, represents the rule of the people, ensuring the equality of every citizen and enabling them to actively participate in deciding

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public and state affairs (Vujaklija, 1980: 200-201). Within this framework, democracy is divided into two basic types: *indirect*, where citizens elect representatives who represent them in parliament; and *direct*, also known as "pure" democracy, which allows citizens to directly influence decisions within the state itself (Vujaklija, 1980: 200-201). The earliest traces of direct democracy date back to the 5th century B.C. in Athens, where the assembly used the boule (a council of over 500 citizens) and dicastery (judicial bodies) to shape policies (Raaflaub, 2007; Patriquin, 2015). The Assembly carefully supervised the implementation of its ideas, by monitoring the activities and responsibilities of officials (Raaflaub, 2007). Although several thousand citizens actively participated in politics, they were mostly men in ancient Athens, a certain number of whom served at least a one-year term in the boule (Raaflaub, 2007). Modern democratic systems mostly rely on a *representative model*, where other individuals act as mediators between the people and the government, and differ significantly from the ancient system that relied on the direct participation of citizens.

According to Macintosh (2004), electronic democracy, also known as e-democracy, digital democracy, or Internet democracy, involves the application of information and communication technologies to enable the engagement of citizens, support democratic processes, influence decision-makers, and strengthen representative democracy. He also states that in certain countries e-democracy is immediately associated with e-voting, which is not necessarily the only democratic way in which citizens can influence decision-makers (Macintosh, 2004). In addition to e-voting, there is also the concept of e-participation, which consists of dialogue and engagement between a country's government and its citizens, with the help of technology. In Great Britain, the application of technological innovation has enabled citizens to inform themselves about decisions on old or forthcoming policies and allows them to give feedback (Macintosh, 2004).

Social media platforms also play an important role in realizing e-democracy and e-participation, enabling citizens to be informed, express their opinions, and participate in decision-making. Through platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook, citizens can express their views on political proposals and communicate with relevant politicians through comments and direct messages. To push certain policies, decision-makers need to adequately present their intentions through social media channels and allow citizens to express their opinions and ideas, as a way of strengthening citizens' need for participation. Ultimately, this reinforced need for participation can later put pressure on the authorities in their process of implementing certain ideas and decisions (Pflughoeft & Schneider, 2020). On the other hand, social theorists such as Habermas (2023) argue that even if the digital age has contributed toward the integration of boundaries through the use of social media, it has significantly advanced the "fragmentation of the public sphere" (Habermas, 2023: 8), which can be harmful to democracy itself.

The agora, within the ancient Greek city-states, was the central square and gathering place of the national assembly (Vujaklija, 1980: 8), of which the Athenian Agora is most famous for (Wycherley, 1957). In the beginning, it served as a track for annual religious games, and later it evolved into a market and a space for public

political discussions (Bancroft-Hunt, 2008). The agora had merchants selling their wares, artisans holding their workshops, and groups of people looking for work (Bancroft-Hunt, 2008), but to the public sphere of ancient Greek society, it represented a space where freedom of speech reigns. Citizens came to the agora to hear the latest news, and exchange rumors and information, where not only formal topics were discussed, which included the judiciary and magistracy, but also informal, everyday political issues (Forsdyke, 2013). Even if some authors suggest that the Athenian Agora shaped democracy through its initially direct system (Raaflaub, 2007; Patriquin, 2015), others argued that the political activities on the agora were more akin to legends or propaganda rather than factual history (Wycherley, 1957). Nevertheless, Benkler (2006) provides insight on how this idealized version of the agora gives perspective on how important the public sphere is, in the context of the expression of ideas, where our concerns are evaluated by others, argued for or against, and, finally, become acted upon if the potential is reached.

Spaces (formerly known as Twitter Spaces) represent special micro-platforms integrated with the social media X (formerly known as Twitter)[4], where users can gather and conduct conversations through auditory means in real time (X 1, n.d.). These conversations can be started anytime and anywhere, or scheduled in advance (X 1, n.d.), as long as the user has an Android, iOS, or desktop device (X 2, n.d.) The host of the Space decides who can speak and when (X 2, n.d.), and can select up to three relevant topics (X 1, n.d.), to create a more specified audience. Because conversations on Spaces occur in real-time and can be missed, X has given hosts and other users two useful tools to immortalize certain conversations fully or in parts, through recording fully or "clipping" certain parts of the conversation on a Space (X 1, n.d.). The host can still delete a recorded Space after it ends, but it may be kept up to 30 days to review for violations of X's terms of service, or even up to 120 days if a violation is found (X 1, n.d.).

Can the agora be brought online? The owner of X, Elon Musk, deeply believes in the feasibility of this concept, declaring that the platform is a "de facto town square" (Elliot, 2022). While analyzing X, certain parallels can be noticed, since freedom of speech tends to be more pronounced on the platform. However, it should be noted that the platform strictly enforces its content policy, which does not allow all forms of freedom of speech, especially those that directly incite violence, harassment, or harassment of users based on race, national, ethnic, or religious origin, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability or serious illness (X 3, n.d.; X 4, 2023). By viewing the Athenian Agora through a simplistic lens – as a place of political communication, where influential people are gathered, and ideas are exchanged to push certain policies – these aspects can be attributed to social media platforms, i.e., X, which has shown to include democratic actors, such as journalists and politicians, that can influence public trust of government affairs (Gil de Zúñiga,

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[4] The social media known as Twitter has rebranded itself to X, after the takeover of Elon Musk, who has described the rebrand as a way to make Twitter not just a platform but "everything". (Brodkin, 2023; Napolitano, 2023; Sheth & Sundar, 2023). The platform will be referred to as X from this point on, if the Twitter brand is used through certain articles, URLs and names of certain pages.

Goyanes, & Mateos, 2024). Both the agora and X are environments that tend to promote open communication and interaction between individuals, with the addition that digital platforms are adaptable and allow access anywhere and at any time. Even if Spaces and X are compared, the former has less input delay, i.e., time between the back-and-forth of a post and comment, as the conversation is happening in real-time.

The politicization of these micro-platforms was inevitable, especially after the steps of the new owner of X, Elon Musk, announced that after four years (X, 2019), X will relax its rules around cause-based marketing in the US, to harmonize their advertising policy with television and other social media platforms (Dang, 2023). Another example can be seen in the governor of Florida, Ronald DeSantis' 2024 presidential bid with Elon Musk on Spaces (Datta, 2023). X's experimental step to give politicians and decision-makers a platform (Spaces) to communicate directly with users, provides a powerful tool and key mechanism in order to reach and address the audience that is not active on traditional channels. Piatak and Mikkelsen (2021) point out that with the increase in the number of politically engaged people on social media, their participation in offline activities, such as volunteering, donations, political campaigns, and voting, also increases. However, this should not be the only form of promoting civic participation. However, Lee (2022) explains that the social capital of X and Facebook has a significant impact on political engagement – X's social capital often correlates with activities within political organizations, while Facebook's social capital often correlates with activities outside of politics, in charitable organizations.

Given that in today's digital age, social media contributes toward free expression and exchange of ideas, as well as social engagement and political communication, the question arises: Do the X's Spaces have the inherent potential to evolve into a form of a digital agora, where users can freely share political discourse and directly communicate with decision makers? Spaces, as an auditory space, where topics can vary from typical to socio-political depending on the way of organization and subject matter, share certain analogies with the ancient Greek agora in Athens, as a place of democratic dialogue and political participation. Changes brought by X's Spaces, such as mobility, i.e., the possibility of freely moving these spaces, participation regardless of social status, nationality, or gender, as well as long-distance information transmission, can significantly influence the shaping of political communication and the encouragement of civic engagement in the realization of social change. However, potential challenges and dangers should also be taken into account when talking about X's Spaces, such as changes in the basic principles of democracy and the democratic transition from a direct to an indirect model, dilemmas in defining freedom of speech in the contemporary context, as well as limitations regarding the number of simultaneously present participants. For this reason, this paper aims to analyze these essential features more deeply, presenting the similarities and differences between these two platforms, as well as how Spaces can be seen as a potential digital incarnation of the Athenian Agora.

Methodology

The research tends to indicate the importance of understanding the evolution of democratic spaces and their impact on society in the digital age, especially social media, which have become a platform for expressing and presenting one's ideas. The subject of this research is focused on the analysis and comparison of information exchange, democratic principles, the role of the audience, and the level of freedom of speech and participation through a theoretical lens, within the context of the Athenian Agora and X's Spaces.

The paper aims to answer the following research question: ***In what context can X's Spaces be considered a digital evolution of the Athenian Agora?***
Based on the research question, two research goals were defined:

1. To take a closer look at the differences between the functionality of the Athenian Agora and X's Spaces.
2. To identify the key similarities between the essential characteristics of the Athenian Agora and X's Spaces.

To answer the research question and achieve the stated research goals, a **case study** will be used to analyze the differences between these two spaces in depth. Special focus will be placed on the dynamics of democracy and the evolution of digital spaces compared to traditional, static formats. The comparative analysis between the Athenian Agora and X's Spaces will include parameters such as mobility of participants, methods of information transfer, types of democracy used, level of freedom of speech, rights to participate, and audience roles. Such an analysis will enable a deeper understanding of the evolution of democratic values and mechanisms throughout history, providing insight into how digital micro-platforms, such as X's Spaces, can later shape and transform the way we observe democratic processes and interactions with decision-makers in contemporary society.

Results

As part of the comparative analysis, we will consider the similarities and differences between the Athenian Agora and X's Spaces based on the following parameters: *mobility*, *transfer of information*, *type of democracy*, *freedom of speech*, *participation,* and *audience*.

Mobility. Ancient Greek agoras were the squares of the main and influential city-states, meaning this space is static and established in that specific place. On the other hand, on X's Spaces, due to the Internet and smart devices, users can transmit their "mini agoras" anywhere and anytime, as they are not tied to a physical space, but to portable devices with Internet access.

Transfer of information. Both the agora and Spaces share and transmit information in real-time, however, the aforementioned mobility parameter creates a difference in the context of transfer. On the Athenian Agora, people spoke live

with the assembly, boule, and dicastery, as well as numerous citizens (with no right to speak) physically present. On X's Spaces, the participants communicated with each other, while the audience listened to the discussions, both virtually present. Regardless of the platform, communication noise can form, which may affect the context of the transferred information. Communication noise on the agora can arise during heated discussions between decision-makers themselves, while the audience can drown out the debate by shouting and taunting. Technical problems on Spaces, including unstable Internet connection or poor-quality audio equipment, can disturb participants and affect the context of information, while the participants themselves may try to usurp the conversation to diminish the value of the opponent's position. Unlike the agora, the audience cannot affect the conversation directly in any way. Other technical problems, such as high Internet traffic and cyber-attacks, can affect important events, as was shown in Musk's conversations with DeSantis and Trump. Even if DeSantis' presidential bid was executed rather well on Spaces, technical difficulties were present due to the keen interest of users (Oliphant, 2023). High Internet traffic should have prepared X for future events with major socio-political figures. However, this was not the case. Similar technical difficulties arose with Musk's conversation with Donald Trump in 2024, which delayed the conversation. Trump took advantage of the problem, by praising Musk's platform for garnering such keen interest (Cowan & Sullivan, 2024). Musk claimed that a cyber-attack caused the problems, specifically a DDoS attack (distributed denial-of-service), in which servers and networks are overloaded with Internet traffic in an attempt to bring the system down, these claims were not proven (Cowan & Sullivan, 2024). Nevertheless, even with an extremely large number of technical problems, the event was listened to by 1.3 million people (Cowan & Sullivan, 2024), which proves that there is interest and potential for this platform to use Spaces as a form of digital agora for political discourse.

Types of democracy. As we mentioned previously, direct democracy ruled in Athens, where citizens had a direct influence on decision-makers. Although during the reign of Solon, the aristocrats had much more power, Cleisthenes reformed their roles by creating the boule, the dicastery, and the assembly, allowing the free citizens to have more influence (Patriquin, 2015). Important democratic tools were implemented in that period, such as ostracism (exiling). It was often used as a preventive measure against people who were considered dangerous, potential tyrants, or subversive - whose aim was to avoid quarrels, violence, or intense political conflicts in the form of civil wars (Patriquin, 2015). Although ostracism was rare, it served as a reminder to aristocrats to be mindful of their actions (Patriquin, 2015). Flaig (2013) claims that we are used to modern and slow democratic procedures, while problems arise when certain representative systems do not have a majority in parliament. Direct democracy does not suffer from these shortcomings (Flaig, 2013). In modern times, democracy is mostly indirect, both in individual states and through the Internet and social media. Although it seems that a globalized Internet system would allow more space for direct democracy and direct influence on decision-makers, this is only the case when controversial situations arise that force a certain

degree of accountability. Wagner (2013) explains that democracy has been through many transformations throughout history, but certain changes and needs in society have significantly influenced the way it is interpreted. Among the important changes, there is a greater need for representation as opposed to direct participation in political life; the need to stabilize the political order against the ideal of permanent openness to constant changes; and the most important fact – the possibility of every citizen being equal in political life in contrast to the ancient Greek norms in which women and slaves remained without the right to speak (Wagner, 2013). Trottier and Fuchs (2015) add the age of social networks, i.e., Facebook has three integrated elements: integrated sociality, i.e., the possibility of posting multimedia content to interact with other users; integrated roles, i.e., to represent our digital id through social networks; integrated and convergent communication on social networks, which will depend on our economic status, well-being and similar parameters that are mapped to individual profiles. Unfortunately, social media platforms such as Facebook and X have proven to contribute to political polarization by creating echo chambers and bubbles (Flaxman, Goel, & Rao, 2016; Yonghwan & Youngju, 2019), where users isolate themselves from ideas and attitudes with which they would disagree (Bail, Argyle, Brown, & Volfovsky, 2018).

Freedom of speech. Before discussing the modern interpretation of freedom of speech as one of the basic human rights today, two important concepts must be provided, as they are often associated with this idea. In Ancient Greece, isegoria (grc. ἰσηγορία or *isēgoría*) was defined as the freedom of citizens to address the assembly (Lewis, 1971; Nakategawa, 1988). This meant that every male Athenian, who was not in exile or a slave, could participate in public debates and convince other citizens of his arguments and beliefs. Werhan (2008) describes isegoria as a forerunner of the First Amendment of the American Constitution, because of the similarities of the concept that helped shape the idea of democracy. On the other hand, the word *parrhesia* (grc. παρρησία *or parrēsia*) meant permission for anyone to say whatever they wanted, how and whenever they wanted, and to whomever they wanted (Foucault & Burchell, 2015; Walzer, 2013). Foucault (Foucault & Burchell, 2015; Walzer, 2013) said that parrhesia requires that the truth be expressed through it, defining its three key factors: the practice of parrhesia requires knowing oneself; parrhesia is devoid of any restrictions, having complete freedom of form; and parrhesia is a technique, that is, a virtue, in the sense that it strives beyond flattery, but toward the truth. Foucault further explained that a person who practices parrhesia over a subject, be it an individual or group, must pertain to a certain level of respect. This subject of parrhesia must tolerate the truth, even if it is offensive, while the practitioner of parrhesia must always speak the truth, even if it is subject to certain consequences (Foucault & Burchell, 2015; Walzer, 2013).

These two terms could co-exist on X if isegoria and parrhesia are protected by basic human rights that are defined through X's terms of service. Isegoria is made possible through communication with decision-makers directly, where every citizen, regardless of sex, class, or nationality can present their dissatisfactions or ideas to politicians online. Parrhesia as absolute freedom of speech, devoid of consequences,

could not exist on X., because of the platform's rules against discrimination and offensive content in any sense (X 4, 2023). Certain violations may warrant temporary or permanent suspensions on X. On the other hand, Bejan (2017; 2019) defined parrhesia as an unstable privilege enjoyed by powerful people, or an ancient version of deplatforming, or no-platforming. Additionally, parrhesia today is mostly used by conservatives, who tend to reduce the idea of free speech to a simple license to offend (Bejan, 2017). Musk, after his takeover of X, has given certain controversial individuals the "license to offend", even briefly, by pardoning users that he felt should be reinstated. Musk pushed the idea that users would be able to post anything they wanted, as long as it was within legal bounds. In 2022, musician Ye (formerly known as Kanye West), continued creating anti-Semitic content, even after Musk's pardon, for which he was suspended once again (Klepper & O'Brien, 2022). However, Ye's posts would only be subjected to American law, and protected by the First Amendment (Klepper & O'Brien, 2022). Even if European law cannot affect X's policies yet, European legislators aim to universalize the law, by requiring tech giants to introduce regulations against disinformation and hate speech (Chan & Casert, 2022), if they want to be available in Europe. In another situation, the private X account of Donald Trump, former US president, was reinstated through a poll (Milmo, 2022), after being suspended in 2021 for undermining the election and inciting violence on the US Capitol (X, 2021). Initially, Trump was disinterested in X, focusing on his own platform, Truth Social (Dang & Coster, 2022), but has later collaborated with Musk (explained in the Audience section). Even if the reinstated accounts were reinstated through a poll, no individual should possess the power to decide who stays on X, let alone the owner of the platform.

By viewing parrhesia through Foucault's idea of "speaking the truth", its use on X can be challenged depending on the way that truth itself is interpreted. Musk's idea to transform X into a paradise for free speech is sabotaged by his own actions, as he selectively determines how the information is shared on the platform. In 2022, X suspended ten journalists for covering news about Musk and the platform itself (Abbruzzese, Collier, & Helsel, 2022), while introducing a new policy for accounts that follow private planes of famous individuals, including Musk himself (Wile, Collier, & Helsel, 2022). Mastodon's (social media competitor) X account was also suspended due to other Mastodon users sharing information regarding Musk's plane (Wile, Collier, & Helsel, 2022). These moves drew sharp criticism from government officials, free speech advocacy groups, and numerous journalistic organizations. The accounts were restored to certain journalists after other users voted on Musk's poll (Dang, 2022). Another democratic problem arose when X planned to ban users who promoted other social media platforms, which was hastily withdrawn (McShane, Abbruzzese, & Kaplan, 2022). X has clearly defined how it treats content that promotes hate speech (X 4, 2023), but Musk's takeover of the platform has proven that rules that are enforced are subjected to his own views. In 2024, X introduced restrictions for users who used the term "cisgender" (Cuthbertson, 2024) which Musk referred to as a slur before (Elsesser, 2023). However, the use of this word would not directly infringe X's terms of service, but the use of the term does not

correspond to the ideology that Musk stands for, which, again, shows that he tends to abuse the power he holds.

Participation. When we talk about the possibility of participation, at the agora there were restrictions on who has the right to speak. On the Athenian Agora, only free male Athenians could participate, while women, slaves, and citizens of other city-states were devoid of the right to speak or participate (Forsdyke, 2013). On the other hand, while X's Spaces did not employ these discriminatory practices by default, the host of a Space has the power to set restrictions that can be deemed discriminatory. Biased hosts can intentionally prevent other users from speaking, especially if it is not in their favor. The host and co-host can mute or permanently remove certain participants from their Space (X 1, n.d.), if they choose to. While muting or blocking can be a useful tactic to remove disruptive users, this tool can be abused when opinions clash. For this reason, certain hosts, in order to facilitate the conversation adequately, hire neutral moderators or mediators, who regulate the flow of communication between interlocutors as needed, thereby not jeopardizing anyone's right to speak. The agora has allowed citizens to know who the decision-makers are, and X has followed this ideal by great policy, by labeling user accounts of politicians and decision-makers as government or state-affiliated, and in that way, making it easier for other users to know who the people that represent their country are and giving them the option to talk to them through comments or any other means directly (X 5, n.d.). While there was no data to confirm if Athenians employed a limit on the number of participants that could speak simultaneously on the agora, each Space was limited to 13 users, including the host and up to 2 co-hosts (X 1, n.d.). For other users to become an interlocutor, an existing participant must be removed, meaning that they lose their right to speak, unless reinstated by the host (X 1, n.d.). Habermas (1991) explains that the "refeudalization" (Habermas, 1991: 158) of the public sphere includes the erasure of barriers between the public and private sphere, where a state adapts certain feudal aspects, but not all, while "representative publicity" (Habermas, 1991: 137) (i.e., a king or a small number of people) embody the state itself. If each Space is interpreted as a public sphere in itself, the hosts and participants become representative publicity, while the audience is there only to watch, or in this case, listen to them. This is why Habermas' (1991) standards, which include equal participation for everyone, form an ideal that, in itself, has utopian inclinations.

Audience. Women, slaves, and citizens from other city-states were denied the right to speak on the Athenian Agora. Even if they could not directly influence decision-makers, they had the opportunity to observe and potentially express their views, ideas, and disagreements by shouting or through violence (Forsdyke, 2013). Unlike the agora, the audience on Spaces could only silently react with emoticons, unless the host and co-host permitted them to participate (X 2, n.d.; X 1, n.d.). Democratic spheres, such as the agora, allowed the audience to gather information passively, but not participate in debates on the specific space. In contrast, there have been attempts to modernize said spheres through X's Spaces, which are, in theory, open to all, but have kept the constraint of passivizing the public, who can,

in this case, only interact through the use of emoticons. A passivized public does not enable a healthy public sphere to be formed, which to Habermas (1991), represents a principle of democracy. Only if personal opinions evolve through rational and critical debates can the public sphere evolve and have the opportunity to express and/or debate different views. Comments can be a useful workaround in order to allow the audience to chat with participants, as seen on live podcasts. Users can also be denied access to a Space or other content if the host and co-host block them (X 1, n.d.). However, the audience lacks the responsibility they had in the pre-digital age, as they can (ab)use anonymity for different goals (Habermas, 2023), i.e., by creating multiple accounts to disrupt conversations, even if they have been banned for a valid reason. Recorded Spaces can be listened to indefinitely after they end, but the host can choose to delete them, after which they are kept to 30 days to review for violations of X's terms of service, or up to 120 days in case a violation is found (X 1, n.d.). This means that the only way to adequately preserve certain Spaces is to employ the use of archival tools and/or recording applications outside of X. Spaces also show potential to attract wide audiences when high-profile political figures are involved, as was the case with Donald Trump (Cowan & Sullivan, 2024).

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and comparison, we can conclude that X's Spaces have the potential to represent an evolution of the agora, or in the case of this research, a version of the Athenian Agora in the digital world, but only in the case of transfer of information and participation. The audience itself proves to be a challenge for X, as giving it an active form on Spaces could create a disruptive environment, while not implementing a more sophisticated form of reactions, i.e., comments, turns users into mute, passive recipients, as the communication between the audience and participants becomes one-sided. Spaces are only at the beginning of a long path of updates to achieve the status of a digital agora, including the parameters that have clashed with the original concept of the agora, due to polarization, selective control of content, and suspensions of users who disagree with the current owner of X. The platform must make an effort to decide on the way it features, implements, and enforces its terms of service so that there is no ambiguity. The concept of freedom of speech, whose roots are based on isegoria and parrhesia, could be practiced on X, but abused as well. While the agora represents a classic model of direct democracy, which is not practiced in most countries, Spaces can be used in the future as a modern way to practice indirect democracy. Participants can actively practice isegoria, i.e., direct communication with decision-makers on Spaces, but the users from the audience must be given the right to speak by the host. Although communication can be challenging due to potential communication noise or the undermining of dissenters, it still presents a very meaningful way for political figures to create an adequate relationship with their audience. Parrhesia in the context of absolute freedom of speech is impossible on X because of its terms of service, although there have been

attempts by X's owner, Elon Musk, to change this. However, by taking into account freedom of speech in the context of "speaking the truth" without infringing on the rights of others, X has adequately defined this in its terms of service but has yet to enforce it to its full potential. The way truth is interpreted on the platform can vary, as X has controversially silenced users and journalists for expressing their freedom of speech, even if X's terms of service were not infringed upon. This only proves that regulators can abuse their power to prevent users from expressing their views, while other users are given "the right to offend" if they align politically with said regulators. Additionally, regulation must not depend on an individual, especially not on the owner who may have a certain level of self-affirming bias. However, Spaces can become a potential marketplace for political communication, especially considering Musk's conversations with DeSantis and Trump, but this requires preparation and advancements in X's infrastructure in order to eliminate potential communication noise. This research provides insight into changes in the types of democracy currently present and the evolution of static and traditional spaces into virtual and mobile spaces. However, it is important to point out that findings in research based on existing theoretical standpoints may be subject to changes in the future, while the potential of this auditory platform in the digital world may be realized after a series of updates and revisions in order to better certain elements.

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Agora na internetu: Da li se Iksovi Prostori mogu tumačiti kao digitalna platforma za demokratiju?

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Apstrakt

Ovaj rad teži da utvrdi u kojoj meri se Iksovi Prostori (*X's Spaces*) mogu smatrati evolucijom atinske agore. Komparativnom analizom, upoređene su ključne karakteristike ovih prostora, uključujući mobilnost, transfer informacija, vrstu demokratije, slobodu govora, učešće i publiku. Mobilnost predstavlja izuzetnu razliku, gde je agora bila fizički zavisna, dok se Prostorima moglo pristupiti bilo gde sa pametnim uređajem i internetom. Oba slučaja obezbeđuju prenos informacija u realnom vremenu, ali se razlikuju u kontekstu fizičkog i virtuelnog prisustva. Na agori je izražavana neposredna demokratija, dok se na Prostorima mogla izraziti samo posredna demokratiju. Sloboda govora na agori je bila apsolutna, dok su prostori bili ograničeni pravilima i uslovima korišćenja platforme Iks. Učešće je bilo ograničeno u oba slučaja – na robove, žene i ne-atinske građane na agori, dok je na prostorima zavisilo od domaćina, koji je imao apsolutnu kontrolu. Na agori i Prostorima je svako mogao biti deo publike. Publika agore je koristila vikanje i ometanje kao oblik izražavanja, dok je publika na Prostima mogla reagovati samo pomoću emotikona. Iako su postojale značajne razlike između ovih platformi, poput tehnoloških i regulatornih aspekata, oba prostora su predstavljala okruženja za javnu debatu, izražavanje stavova i komunikaciju. Međutim, nedostatak adekvatne regulacije Iks platforme predstavlja dodatne izazove kao što su polarizacija i govor mržnje. Istraživanje ukazuje na važnost razumevanja evolucije demokratskih prostora i njihovog uticaja na društvo u digitalnom dobu.

Ključne reči: Tviter, Iks, agora, demokratija, sloboda govora, društvene mreže