COLONY VS. METROPOLIS: OPPOSING DISCURSIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF A COLONY'S NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE PRINTED PRESS[1]

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Abstract: Theoretically based on the paradigm known as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this paper explores the discursive representation of Gibraltar's identity as it was perceived both from inside –Gibraltar itself- and from its metropolis –Britain, during two crucial moments for this community: the referendums held in the colony in 2002 and 1967. The textual corpus consists of editorial articles drawn from Gibraltarian and British newspapers. Analysis shows how Gibraltar strongly builds its identity on the expression of its inner self, hence as a victim and passive entity, while the British press constructs Gibraltar as a political entity with little interest on the human side of the issue.

Key words: Discourse analysis, CDA, national identity, media discourse, transitivity system, editorial articles.

Resumen: Basado en el paradigma lingüístico conocido como Análisis Crítico del Discurso (CDA), este artículo explora la identidad Gibraltareña a través de la representación discursiva construida tanto desde dentro de la colonia como desde fuera, su metrópolis, durante los dos referendums que se celebraron en 2002 y 1967. El trabajo analiza artículos editoriales extraídos de la prensa gibraltareña y británica. Los resultados han mostrado cómo Gibraltar construye su representación discursiva como una víctima, mientras que la prensa británica refuerza su identidad política con escaso interés por el lado humano del asunto.

Palabras clave: Análisis del discurso, CDA, identidad nacional, discurso mediático, sistema de transitividad, editoriales.

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a tiny colony in the southernmost tip of Europe which could have passed over ignored to history and scholars were it not for its peculiar shape and location, and its particular historical evolution. Indeed, the Rock of Gibraltar is the rich result of the variety of social, geographical and historical factors that have brought about a very interesting and attractive community which is worthy of study. Moreover, Gibraltar deserves scholarly attention because of the political consequences that, despite its tiny size, the colony produces internationally. The issue of Gibraltar influences the political relationship between two European countries –the United Kingdom and Spain–, and even Europe as a whole, as it may affect the decisions of these two powers in European matters. In the present study,

this interesting community is approached from an interdisciplinary perspective, since, though mainly based on discursive evidence, it necessarily connects with social, political and historical aspects to build up a complete and coherent picture of the situation. The aim of the investigation is to analyse the discursive representation of this colony's identity, as it was perceived both from inside –Gibraltar itself- and from its metropolis– Britain, during a definite and crucial moment of its recent history: the November 2002 referendum on the future of the Rock. The analysis is complemented with a diachronic perspective that offers the discursive representation of the issue during the first referendum held in Gibraltar in 1967. These two referendums were critical moments for the community on the Rock since they were considered as vindications of the distinctive Gibraltarian identity as these people expressed their wishes and feelings on the future of the territory they live in.

Hence, the aim of the present research is two-fold:

1. to analyse how the Gibraltarian community presented itself to the world at the time of the last referendum held in the colony and,

2. at the same time, how the Gibraltarian community was perceived and represented from the outside.

The study is theoretically based on the paradigm named Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as it analyses language in relation to the social context in which it appears, aiming at making certain social situations more transparent based on linguistic evidence. The textual corpus consists of editorial articles taken from Gibraltarian and British newspapers.

2. THE GIBRALTAR ISSUE: BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

The best known historical event in the history of Gibraltar and the one with greatest consequences for the present was the British invasion in 1704. Spanish forces, however, never renounced to their claim over the Rock and attempts to recover it –sometimes violent, more recently through diplomacy– have not ceased: since the so-called Great Siege which lasted for about four years (1779-1783), through the closing of the border from 1969-1982, to the more recent negotiations between the Foreign Affairs Ministers of Britain and Spain.

By the second half of the twentieth century, talks between the United Kingdom and Spain on the future of Gibraltar became especially tense. The Spanish position –arguing for its territorial integrity– was gaining support at the United Nations. However, Britain ignored UN resolutions for decolonisation and, instead, granted Gibraltar with greater self-government. In this atmosphere, a referendum was held in Gibraltar on 10 September 1967. It was the first one in the history of the colony. The outcome showed the unanimity of the Gibraltarian population to retain their link with Britain and their rejection to Spanish claims for sovereignty. Both Spain and the United Nations regarded the referendum as illegal. Shortly after, in 1969, Gibraltar was granted a Constitution. The Spanish reaction was the imposition of restrictions on the colony and the cease of contact across the border. Communications between the United Kingdom and Spain regarding the issue of Gibraltar were relaunched in 1980 during a meeting in which the Foreign Affairs ministers of both countries signed what is known as the Lisbon Agreement. As a result and manifestation of

good will, the frontier with Spain was first reopened in 1982. It had been more than a decade of isolation. Since then, Britain and Spain have periodically dealt with the issue of Gibraltar urged by the United Nations which regards the situation of Gibraltar as contrary to the UN Charter. In this line, it was in 1984 that a new round of talks, known as the Brussels Process, was initiated with the direct objective of reaching a definite solution. After several years of non-successful talks, the English and Spanish authorities finally committed themselves to reaching an agreement before the summer 2002. For the first time in history the idea of British-Spanish co-sovereignty was on the agenda. This led to a reaction in the Gibraltarian community, which included massive demonstrations, letters to the press and public events in which Gibraltarians showed their opposition to a solution of that kind. And above all, the calling of a new referendum which was eventually held on 7th November 2002. Once again, the outcome of the referendum was overwhelmingly against any form of Spanish sovereignty: 99 per cent of Gibraltarians voted against the principle of Joint Sovereignty. The press and other media described the event as probably one of the most important days in their recent history, because this referendum was seen as a new claim for the recognition of the Gibraltarian independent identity. The effect of the referendum was that once again negotiations between Spain and Britain suffered a new cooling process.

Finally, it is relevant to comment on an event that took place shortly after the 2002 referendum and which had consequences for Gibraltar, and consequently for the present study. On 13th November 2002 the oil tanker Prestige sank in the Atlantic Ocean to the north-west coast of Spain causing a huge environmental disaster. The relevance for the present research is that the ship, which did not comply with many maritime regulations, had previously been allowed to stop at Gibraltar. This caused a series of accusations and reactions between the Spanish, Gibraltarian and British governments regarding the lack of legislation in the colony that favoured such illegal and detrimental situations. This event was obviously echoed in the press and its analysis is also significant in relation to the representation of the Gibraltar issue. It is also relevant because it was not an isolated event. Ships of this kind stopping at Gibraltar are a common source of tension between the Spanish and Gibraltarian authorities.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

The analysis of the textual corpus will make use of the tools provided by critical discourse analysis (CDA) as developed by Fairclough (1995), Van Dijk (1993) and Wodak (1999), among others. This paradigm is based on the view that language, as social practices, is a central element in social life and, hence, it analyses discourse in relation to the social context in which it occurs. CDA is mainly aimed at making certain social situations more transparent based on linguistic evidence. Thus, analysts are not concerned with the study of linguistic structures "per se", but only as far as their analysis helps in the understanding of a certain social situation (Wodak 2001: 2). Therefore, critical discourse analysts usually go beyond the description and interpretation of discourse and they enter into debates on political issues or social problems in order to try to contribute to society (Fairclough 2003:

209). Bearing that in mind, it is worth emphasizing that CDA is problem-oriented (Meyer 2001: 29), i.e. its practitioners turn attention to a social problem, instead of straightforwardly focusing on linguistic units or structures. Once a critical situation has been identified, the aim is to unfold/clarify/reveal, through critical discourse analysis, the tensions underlying such a situation in order to raise consciousness and make it more transparent, thus understandable. Then, what distinguishes CDA from mainstream discourse analysis is the critical analyst's special concern with the disclosing and expression of certain social situations: those which are characterised by inequalities, crisis, power abuse or discrimination. Nowadays, and due to its peculiar historical evolution and present socio-political status, Gibraltar is indeed a critical situation. That is, it is a community where conflicting forces are at play: the United Kingdom, Spain and the Gibraltarians themselves, in trying to decide on the future of this territory. In the context of the present investigation, a critical discourse analysis has helped to identify which are the discursive strategies around which the identity of this community is articulated and has also served to understand how the media spread and impose a certain identity construct shaping society's perception of Gibraltar and the Gibraltar issue. In addition, the body of editorial articles that constitute the data for analysis, taken from Gibraltarian and British sources, has allowed us to show and compare how Gibraltarian identity is discursively constructed both for those who identify with it (Gibraltarians themselves) and for those who view it from outside (Britain).

The textual analysis is based on a functional view of language, particularly M.A.K. Halliday's (1994). The main reason is that Halliday and functional linguistics in general regard language as a societal phenomenon and thus study it in relation to its function in society. As such, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) establishes the relationship between grammatical structures of language and their social context. With such a conception of language, functional grammar has traditionally provided the appropriate tools for the kind of linguistic analysis that critical discourse analysis needs to carry out, though there are many other analytical tools upon which critical discourse analysts rely on, different from SFL. Hence, such an approach to discourse on the Gibraltar issue can help us uncover the ideological effects in the texts which are not obvious at first reading. Furthermore, Renkema (2004) has suggested that a Hallidayan approach to CDA is an attempt to carry it out in a more systematic way, so as to counter the criticism of vagueness and lack of objectivity that this discipline has encountered (2004: 284). Hence, one of the strengths of applying a SFL analysis to CDA is that its detailed and rigorous analysis of texts helps to preserve the interpretation from ideological bias.

Within CDA tradition, the present study focuses on the analysis of referential and representational discursive strategies. As described by Reisigl and Wodak (2001), the former refers to the linguistic devices through which social actors are referred to, and the latter refers to the qualities assigned to those actors. In addition, Halliday's Transitivity model (1994) will be used to analyse the verbal processes (material, mental, verbal, relational) depicted in relation to the participants, so as to discover the emphasis, absence or prominence of a participant or role, and any social or political implications.

3.2. The discursive construction of national identity

Though it is not free from controversy, the most influential definition of *nation* has been provided by Benedict Anderson (1983) who described it as an "imagined community". According to this author, a nation is a mental construct that resides in the minds of those who identify with it. National identities are, thus, understood as the feeling of belonging to a certain imagined community. A community which is felt by its members as having a national uniqueness which differentiates it from other nations. The present article analyses Gibraltarian identity from a discursive perspective. However, what is the connection between the social notion of national identity and discourse? The first glimpse of answer is provided by Martin (1995) who suggests that it is language that makes it possible for members of a community to enter into relation with one another and it is precisely through the use of language in narratives that the differences and values of a collectivity are expressed. Thus, following Wodak *et al*. (1999) we assume that national identity "is constructed and conveyed in discourse, predominantly in narratives of national culture. National identity is thus the product of discourse" (1999: 22). Hence, national identities are discursively constructed. It is through discourse as social practice that national uniqueness and inter-national diffe-rences are expressed. Hence, through discursive practices a certain national identity can be constructed, perpetuated, transformed or dismantled (Wodak *et al*. 1999: 33).

In addition, the discursive construction of the "self" and the "other" is said to become especially accentuated in the case of conflicts, or, as Fishman (1999: 447) pointed out, in the face of threatening forces, which is when people more especially need to defend themselves reaffirming who they are. This is backed up by Tajfel and Turner's (1983) statement that conflicts "do not only create antagonistic intergroup relations but also heighten identification with, and positive attachment to, the in-group" (1983: 8). This comment becomes particularly significant for the study of the Gibraltarian community since they are going through a crucial moment in their history, striving to defend their status and integrity. In such a situation, the question of identity has certainly achieved greater prominence for them.

Thus, identities in general and national identities in particular can rightly be the object of study of the broad discipline of discourse analysis, from which identity is viewed as an ongoing process constructed through language and communication. Discourse and iden-tity are intimately connected. CDA's critical perspective allows the researcher to examine and understand the broader social and cultural context in which identities are constructed through language as social practice.

4. DATA

The textual corpus for the present study consists of editorial articles taken from Gi-braltarian and British newspapers, and covering the months previous and after the two referendums in Gibraltar, namely 10th September 1967 and 7th November 2002. Hence, the selected articles date from August and September 1967 and October and November 2002, crucial moments for the community on the Rock.

The main motivation for the selection of editorial articles is that this genre reflects the reactions, attitudes and feelings of the newspaper towards current events, situations, peoples

and conflicts. Thus, these articles constitute representative portraits of the community. At the same time, being the *voice* of the newspaper on a relevant topic, editorial articles intend to indoctrinate and instruct society on that topic. Hence, because of the great influence of mass media on the public, no doubt the newspapers' representation of the Gibraltar issue influences society's perception of it. The body of editorial articles that form the corpus of the present study has been taken from 4 newspapers: *The Gibraltar Chronicle* (GC) from Gibraltar, and *The Guardian* (GD), *The Daily Telegraph* (TG) and *The Times* (TM) from Britain. All of them are quality papers.

From Gibraltar, only one newspaper has been selected. It is the oldest and most widely read newspaper in the community. Moreover, it was Gibraltar's only daily newspaper until April 2002 and, particularly relevant for the present investigation, the only one which included editorial comments. Being the newspaper of a small area, *The Gibraltar Chronicle* necessarily has a small circulation (about 3,000 according to Kellermann 2001: 232), but it covers a necessary intermediary role between a national newspaper and a community newspaper. Indeed, today, The Gibraltar Chronicle has become an institution on the Rock. Since 1995, *The Gibraltar Chronicle* has also been available on the internet (www.chronicle.gi). The printed version is distributed and sold within Gibraltar, while the internet version is available worldwide. Thus, the printed version helps to shape Gibraltar's own view of the community, while the electronic version helps to make Gibraltar known beyond its border and influences opinions around the world.

Both the Gibraltarian and the British newspapers contained leading articles concerning the 2002 referendum. However, the Gibraltar newspaper did not offer editorial comments for the 1967 referendum. In fact, the editor of the *Chronicle* had been given instructions to withdraw the leader column on the grounds of the negotiations that were taking place between Britain and Spain on the future of the colony (Mascarenhas and Searle 2001: 29). Thus, the motivation seems to be the desire to avoid conflicts at that controversial moment for the Gibraltarian community. It is for this reason that only the British representation of the Gibraltar issue at the time of the first referendum can be offered. At this point, it is also relevant to emphasise that the aim of this research is far from disclosing the political or ideological tendencies of each of these newspapers as far as the Gibraltar issue is concerned, nor to evaluate whether their reports are true or false, but to discover how these newspapers discursively represented the community of Gibraltar so as to get the two different views of it. Thus, results of the analysis of each separate newspaper are not considered independently, but as part of the community, that is, the angle of the issue they belong to. A total number of 14 editorials have been analysed. The table below offers a summary of the coverage of the Gibraltar issue in the newspapers analysed:

NEWSPAPERS		GIBRALTAR ISSUE (number of editorial articles)			
		2002 Referendum	1967 Referendum	TOTAL	
GIBRALTAR	*Gibraltar Chronicle*	5	-	5	
BRITAIN	*Daily Telegraph*	2	1	3	9
	The Guardian	2	1	3	
	The Times	1	2	3	
TOTAL	4	10	4	14	

Table 1: Coverage of the Gibraltar issue in the Gibraltarian and British press during the 1967 and 2002 referendums.

The following sections offer the analysis of the discursive representation of the Gibraltar issue during the two crucial moments of the 1967 and 2002 referendums in the community. First, the view from inside, that is, how the Gibraltarians presented themselves and their situation to the world. And second, the view from the British side, that is, how Gibraltar was perceived and represented from this outside perspective.

5. GIBRALTAR FROM INSIDE: ANALYSIS OF THE GIBRALTARIAN PRESS

To begin with, an initial statistical analysis shows that the topic of the socio-political situation of Gibraltar is the most frequent one in the editorial section. In all, editorial articles on this topic constitute 93% out of the total number of editorials.

Content analysis shows that the Gibraltar issue is dealt with in relation to two topics. First, and most prominent in the period analysed, the November referendum with its connections to past historical events and the future of the territory. And second, the Gibraltar issue is addressed in editorial articles dealing with the Prestige event, the oil tanker that sank in the Atlantic Ocean and which was said to have previously been allowed to stop at Gibraltar. These articles highlight the particular status of the Rock in relation to maritime regulations and other international laws (its financial status, its relation to the European Union, the European market, and the like).

DATE	CONTENTS (number of leading articles)	
	Referendum	Prestige event
2002	3	2

Table 2: Content analysis of the Gibraltar press in relation to the 2002 referendum.

In order to examine the context-dependent representation of Gibraltar, I first separate and then compare how it is presented in relation to these two events portrayed in the press, namely, the Gibraltar referendum and the Prestige event:

In the editorials on the referendum, Gibraltar is represented as an official institution and quite "passive" in its attitude. The term "Gibraltar" (or "the Rock") occurs 17 times.

GIBRALTAR AS POLITI-CAL INSTITUTION		GIBRALTAR AS PEO-PLE		AMBIGUOUS (both references)	
"Gibraltar"	11	"Gibraltarians"	0	"Gibraltar"	4
"Rock"	2	"we"	0		
TOTAL	**13**		**0**		**4**

Table 3: Representation of Gibraltar as political institution and as a community in the Gibraltar press in relation to the referendum.

From table 3, we can observe that quite surprisingly there are no direct references to the people through the use of de-toponymic anthroponyms such as "Gibraltarians", "Yani-tos", collectives such as "population", or other words referring to people living in a place ("inhabitants", etc.), who were the ones that actually voted on the future of the colony and the ones for which the outcome of the referendum had direct implications. Nevertheless, there are some instances of the word "Gibraltar" that can refer both to Gibraltar as political institution or to the people of the community. These are: "Spain should not be surprised that Gibraltar has reacted the way it has" (*GC*, 8.10.02), "level of response and campaign from Gibraltar" (*GC*, 8.10.02), "offer Gibraltar a referendum that would result in a 'no'" (*GC*, 25.10.02) and "Gibraltar rejection of their dealings in the pending referendum" (*GC*, 5.11.02). In these instances, "Gibraltar" is used as a metonymy –the place for the people.

"Gibraltar" most frequently appears within a circumstantial phrase (location, place) –7 occurrences– as in "we welcome the distinguished observers to the Rock" (*GC*, 05.11.02) or as a matter or topic of discussion –3 occurrences–, as in "all the indicators are that the whole Gibraltar issue is, in practical terms, on ice" (*GC*, 8.10.02). Thus, Gibraltar is mainly represented through spatialisation and politicisation strategies, which portray a political and dehumanised Gibraltar.

As a participant, Gibraltar is represented as a "passive entity", being assigned participant roles that are not dynamic or active but rather tend towards the more passive ones in the cline of dynamism (Hassan 1989), such as goal, carrier and senser. Following Halliday's categorisation, it is goal in "Why do a deal with Spain and offer Gibraltar a referendum that would result in a 'no'?" (GC, 5.11.02), and carrier in the relational process "Dialogue with Spain with which Gibraltar can be comfortable" (GC, 25.10.02). In addition, Gibraltar is assigned the participant role of senser in "Spain should not be surprised that Gibraltar has reacted the way it has" (GC, 8.10.02) which has connotations of a response to an action suffered. This kind of processes is described by Van Leeuwen (1995: 87) as "reactions", and, thus, reinforce the discursive representation of Gibraltar as passive victim affected by the actions of others.

Furthermore, whenever Gibraltar is responsible for certain actions, these are realized through nominalizations. In these linguistic transformations, the action is transformed into a process, attenuating the sense of activity and agency, as in "As a result of the level of response and campaign from Gibraltar" (*GC*, 8.10.02), "Faced with the reiteration of the Gibraltar rejection to their dealings" (*GC*, 25.10.02) and "Workable approaches to creating understanding between Britain and Gibraltar" (*GC*, 25.10.02). This implies that Gibraltar made a response to the situation and campaigned for its status; rejected the Anglo-Spanish dealings; and finally, it is both Britain and Gibraltar that need to understand each other. The effect of such nominalizations, according to Fowler (1991: 80), is one of generality, abstraction and distance. The agency of Gibraltar is omitted or concealed. Hence, for instance, the campaign in Gibraltar and the rejection of Anglo-Spanish dealings is presented as an impersonal action, and Gibraltar cannot be blamed for the consequences of those actions. Similarly, agency is concealed in other instances in which Gibraltar appears as circumstance. These are "Policy has changed on Gibraltar (...) Where policy stands today on the Rock is more (...) Where policy is going on Gibraltar" (GC, 25.10.02).

In relation to the Prestige event, Gibraltar is represented in a quite different way, i.e., more active and personalized. Out of 14 occurrences of the term "Gibraltar", 6 of them present Gibraltar as agent of actions, as in "To ensure that the standards we apply are accepted by authorities" (*GC*, 20.11.02). In this example, the first person plural personal pronoun "we" is used to refer to Gibraltar. Its most frequent verbal collocates are modal verbs, suggesting and encouraging the kind of actions that Gibraltar has to take. For instance, "Gibraltar must continue to ensure that it meets proper standards" (GC, 15.11.02) and "We should just continue to keep our nose clean and get on with our business" (GC, 15.11.02). Fairclough terms these structures *modalised demands* (2003: 170). Editorial articles characteristically include this kind of evaluation of events and the corresponding recommendations. Thus, it is in relation to the Prestige event, as opposed to the casting of votes for Gibraltar's future, that these instigations for action are included. These modalised demands are also related to discursive strategies aiming at perpetuating the national identity, which are common when that identity is threatened (Wodak *et al*. 1999: 33).

In addition, the representation of Gibraltar changes from a political institution with a name to a collective. In 4 out of 6 occurrences of Gibraltar as agent, it is referred to with the pronoun "we", as in "How sensitive we have become over that hysteria" (GC, 20.11.02) and "We must strive to ensure that (...)" (GC, 20.11.02). This use of the pronoun "we" is, according to Wodak *et al* (1999: 37) one of the linguistic devices to construct national identities in specific contexts. It reinforces the sense of group and more particularly the in-group identity, as well as the idea of a common people. So that Gibraltar now becomes a community of people tied together, not just a political entity or a territory, as can be observed in table 4.

GIBRALTAR AS POLITICAL INSTITU-TION		GIBRALTAR AS PEOPLE	
"Gibraltar"	8	"Gibraltarians"	0
"Rock"	2	"we"	4
TOTAL	**10**		**4**

Table 4: Representation of Gibraltar as political institution and as a community in Gibraltar press in relation to the Prestige event.

This change in the discursive strategies in which Gibraltar is presented and characterised in the two events shows that in relation to the referendum, Gibraltar is represented as a political entity which is not worried about the outcome, since it was known before hand to be against any form of change in the sovereignty of the territory. That is, as an institution its political status was not threatened. The lack of agency conveys the idea that the results of the referendum are something "natural", not forced or motivated. This is the image Gibraltar intends to present of their situation. That is why Gibraltar is mainly presented as passive and *de-agentialised*. However, the accusations in relation to the Prestige event made "Gibraltar" to become active in its self-presentation in order to defend itself. The community appears as more tied together. Hence, there is a change from some sort of neutrality in the presentation of Gibraltar to implication.

Finally, lexical relations also reinforce the representation of the Gibraltar issue as a situation caused by the actions of others. Its most frequent collocates are words with negative connotations which denote victimization, such as "hysteria", "storms", "reprisals", "political obsession" and "unfair criticism". All these words are always connected to Spain as the source or agent, as in "Spain... appears to be stepping up its focus on Gibraltar by creating storms in the EU" (GC, 15.11.02) and "also to ensure that Spain's unfair criticisms of Gibraltar are not being adopted in Brussels too" (*GC*, 20.11.02).

6. GIBRALTAR FROM OUTSIDE: ANALYSIS OF THE BRITISH PRESS

A first initial and statistical analysis shows that the Gibraltar issue had a quite balanced coverage in the selected months of 1967 and 2002, with 4 and 5 editorials respectively (see table 1). However, a content analysis of the leading articles reveals that it was most frequently not the Gibraltar issue itself that was the focus of attention for the editors but rather other related events. Indeed, there are only 3 articles that directly deal with the Gibraltar referendums (*TM*, 11.09.67; *TG*, 9.11.02; *TG*, 10.11.02). The remaining 6 editorials comment on the Gibraltar issue as part of wider discussions in relation to two main topics: the United Kingdom political situation (TM, 16.09.67; GD, 27.09.67; TG, 28.09.67 GD, 11.10.02) and the 2002 Prestige event (GD, 20.11.02; TM, 20.11.02). The latter is in turn related to the previous topic since the connection of the shipwreck with Gibraltar obstructed the international relations between Britain and Spain. Since there are proportionally fewer articles on Gibraltar in relation to the referendums and the situation of the colony, it seems that for the British side, the Gibraltar problem becomes more prominent only as

far as it affects British foreign policy, instead of a concern for the future of these people themselves.

DATES	CONTENTS (number of leading articles)		
	Referendums	British policy	Prestige event
1967	1	3	-
2002	2	1	2
TOTAL	3	6	

Table 5: Content analysis of the leading articles in relation to the 1967 and 2002 referendums in the British press.

In addition, following Van Leeuwen (1996: 38), this scarce reference to the Gibraltar issue in the British press is a form of linguistic exclusion. Since what is *absent* from a text can be as meaningful as what is actually there, the issue of Gibraltar does not seem to be one that concerns this country despite its political connections. This scarce reference to the Gibraltar issue is more striking in relation to the 1967 editorials since at that time the British press showed a wider coverage of the situation in other British dependencies (or former dependencies) overseas, with frequent leading articles on the situation of territories such as Rhodesia, Aden, Nigeria or Palestine in the months analysed.

In the British press, Gibraltar is represented as the somehow illegitimate result of history and political developments. The references to Gibraltar, though scarce as they are except for the three editorials focused on the referendums, present Gibraltar as a territory; moreover, a territory that happens to be their own and that might cause problems, not only in relation to the environmental disaster of the Prestige event, but in international politics. The analysis of lexical units shows the use of diverse discursive strategies of reference and representation of Gibraltar. The most frequent strategy to refer to Gibraltar is *spatialization*, either through the use of toponyms ("Gibraltar", "the Rock") or de-toponymic anthroponyms ("Gibraltarians") and collectives ("the people of Gibraltar"), the latter two referring to the people in terms of living in a place. In addition, the references to Gibraltar as people are scarce as compared to the references of Gibraltar as a political entity, as the table below shows:

GIBRALTAR AS PEOPLE		GIBRALTAR AS POLITICIAL INSTITUTION	
Gibraltarians	9	Gibraltar	15
People of Gibraltar	2	The Rock	6
The voters / They	2	The colony	1
Those consulted	1	The chief minister of Gibraltar	1
14		23	

Table 6: References to Gibraltar as people and as political entity in the British press.

It is worth pointing out that those references to Gibraltar as people appear in the editorials on the referendums, while the articles that deal with the Gibraltar issue as part of a wider discussion on British foreign policy do not make any reference to the people, except for the expression "the voters" and its pronoun "they" (*GD*, 27.09.67). This, together with "those consulted" (*TM*, 11.09.02) deserve some comment: even though there is a human trace in these lexical items, they are above all references to the Gibraltar people through the discursive strategy of *actionalization* or *politicization*, i.e., the emphasis is not on their humanity but on their performing of a certain political action. The fact that it is only in relation to the referendums that references to the people appear represents those events as in the hands of the Gibraltarians, but they are excluded from the decisive political decisions of those above and in power. This representation of Gibraltar is also reinforced by the references to Gibraltar as a simple matter of discussion as in "the subject" (*TM*, 11.09.67) or "thing" to be talked about in "the UN has many more exciting things to worry about than Gibraltar" (*TM*, 11.09.1967). In addition, this "subject" is characterized as an unimportant one through predicational strategies that downgrade it, as in "(discussion over) things that are not quite the main point" (*GD*, 11.10.2002) and "Gibraltar seemed a stumbling block –and a minor one at that" (*TG*, 09.11.2002). Thus, Gibraltar is mainly represented through spatialization and politicization strategies, which portray a political and dehumanized Gibraltar, and showing a lack of concern for the community, the people.

In addition, while the Spanish press is rich in the representation of Gibraltar as an illegal entity through the use of metaphors and evaluative terms (Alameda Hernández 2006), the British press puts the emphasis on the fact that such controversial situation becomes a real problem when it interferes in European matters. The following quote illustrates this point "The Spanish Government has blamed Gibraltar, *and by implication the United Kingdom*" (*TM*, 20.11.02) [my own italics]. Thus, it is because the United Kingdom and Spain are going into problems that the "anomalous" situation of the colony becomes prominent.

The analysis of verbal processes shows that Gibraltar is mainly represented as a passive entity. Following Halliday's categorization of transitivity structures, it most frequently appears as goal and carrier in attributive processes. The former is illustrated in: "The committee should have ignored the Gibraltar referendum" (*GD*, 27.09.1967), "The Prestige visited the Rock in June" (*TM*, 20.11.02), and "The Spanish Government has blamed Gibraltar" (*TM*, 20.11.02); and some examples for the latter are: "Gibraltar seemed a stumbling block –and a minor one at that" (*TG*, 09.11.2002), "The Gibraltarians' instincts were probably right" (*TM*, 11.09.1967), and "the notion that Gibraltar is somehow uniquely at fault is ludicrous" (*TM*, 20.11.2002). Thus, Gibraltar is represented as affected by the actions of others or it is ascribed qualities either real or possible. Gibraltar is also represented as a circumstance, a place, as in "defending the rights of a united local population, as in Gibraltar" (*TM*, 16.09.1967) or "when it dropped anchor off Gibraltar's harbour" (*GD*, 20.11.02). These participant roles typically represent social actors as passive (Van Leeuwen 1996: 45). A further example that supports this analysis is "to make sure that Gibraltar does not run down", in which though Gibraltar is the subject of the clause, the agency for the process really derives from a different participant, which can be inferred as the British Government. Other linguistic structures that reinforce this passivated representation of Gibraltar and which are also significant in the texts analysed are prepositional phrases: "a

little bit of TLC on the part of Madrid towards Gibraltar" (*TG*, 09.11.2002), "pleaded with Spain to be nicer to Gibraltar" (*TG*, 10.11.2002) and "there may be a mounting demand on the Rock for political integration with Britain" (*TM*, 11.09.1967); and the passive voice "they (Gibraltarians) are not to be heard" (*GD*, 27.09.1967).

In the few instances in which Gibraltar is activated, it is so in relation to mental processes, either being the senser of those processes or through prepositional phrases. Some illustrative examples are: "the Gibraltarians do not want to become Spaniards" (*TM*, 11.09.1967), "the voters prefer colonial status" (*GD*, 27.09.1967), "Gibraltarians, who want nothing more than to be British", and "discussing with the Gibraltarians appropriate constitutional changes" (*TM*, 11.09.1967). Thus, Gibraltar is activated in order to express its wishes (want, prefer). This is reinforced by the only instance in which Gibraltar appears as actor of a material process: "Gibraltarians have held a referendum". Here they are responsible for the holding of the referendum, but this action is again a mere expression of their wishes. To put it in a nutshell, this representation of the Gibraltar issue from the British side is mainly as a place, a political entity that happens to be British, and whose actions do not go beyond the expression of its wishes.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The critical discourse analysis of editorial articles from the Gibraltarian and British press in relation to the two referendums held in Gibraltar allows us to draw some social and political conclusions on the representation of the Gibraltar issue. On the one hand, the analysis of the Gibraltar newspaper allows us to understand how Gibraltar presents itself to the world, the self-image it portrays; while on the other hand, the analysis of the British newspapers allows us to understand how this issue and the community of Gibraltar are perceived and represented from the outside, from one of the relevant angles involved in the situation of this territory.

Gibraltar shelters under its roof a variety of cultures and peoples from many different backgrounds. However, despite the differences, they present themselves as a compact group that defends itself from outside forces. The analysis of the 2002 editorial articles –in relation to the last referendum and the Prestige issue– shows that in spite of the ethnic diversity, Gibraltarians come together and react whenever their interests or territorial status are threatened. A change in the discursive strategies employed has been identified in the self-representation of Gibraltar in the two situations reported: from a politicised and de-agentialised entity when dealing with the referendum, to an active collective in relation to the Prestige event. Consequently, the analysis of lexical relations together with the transitivity system also illustrates how Gibraltar, as this product of history, presents itself as a victim. Moreover, in this victimization representation, it is Spain that most frequently is identified as the cause of distress. In addition, agency-deletion reveals that Gibraltar presents its situation and its desire to self-determination as something natural, which should be accepted. Self-determination and no co-sovereignty should be natural outcomes of the present situation.

The issue of Gibraltar does not seem to be a matter of concern for the British side. The situation of this British territory is not relevant enough to make its way more often to the

opinion pages of the newspapers analysed, which show a scarce coverage of the issue in the form of editorial articles. Because of the scarce attention given to the two referendums in the British press, as opposed to other colonial situations associated to Britain or to the later event of the oil tanker Prestige in 2002, the Gibraltar issue is only relevant when it affects the political international relations of Britain. Thus, Gibraltar is mainly represented from its metropolis as a political burden and there is a lack of interest for the present and future of the community that lives on the Rock. The British view does not show a concern for the community itself. Most of the references to Gibraltar refer to it as a political entity, as a piece of land, and not as a people, which provide a political and dehumanized representation of Gibraltar.

From a diachronic perspective, the discursive representation of the Gibraltar issue follows a similar line in the reporting of the 1967 and 2002 referendums, even though more coverage and attention would have been expected in relation to the first one since it took place at a period when Britain was more concerned with its colonial empire and the developments within it. Gibraltar was discursively represented as a passive political entity, which is only activated for the expression of its feelings and wishes. These are actions that cannot change the state of things, hence, the situation and future of Gibraltar is represented as not in the hands of its people.

Hence, the analysis of the discursive representation of Gibraltar has confirmed that the Gibraltar issue is indeed a controversial situation which intermingles opposing political, territorial and historical interests. Indeed, previous research on the topic but from the Spanish side, i.e., analysing editorial articles from the Spanish press, which was carried out by Alameda Hernández (2006), also showed a discursive representation of Gibraltarian identity in line with Spanish policy. The author demonstrated that Gibraltar was discursively represented as a passive political entity, as a burden for international Spanish policy, and with little role in the negotiations about their future. Thus, each of the sides involved in the conflict constructs a Gibraltar that reflects its own view of the situation, its own interests, and, thus, supports its own proposals for the future of the colony. The linguistic analysis has proved very useful in helping to understand how the particular linguistic structures analysed are ideologically, socially and politically significant.

Future studies could offer more insight into the construction and representation of the Gibraltarian community in the printed press. Analysis of different or the same linguistic structures and historical moments can enlighten relevant aspects of this community's sociolinguistic identity. Research in this line can also contribute to achieve a better understanding of these people creating interest in the situation of this remarkable and attractive community which has sometimes not been given the attention it deserves by scholars.

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