

PATHOLOGIES AND DYSFUNCTIONS OF DEMOCRACY IN THE MEDIA CONTEXT

2ND VOLUME

JOÃO CARLOS CORREIA
ANABELA GRADIM
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Part 2

**LEADERSHIP,
TRANSGRESSION,
MANIPULATION
AND NEW POLITICAL
CAMPAIGNS**

DELIBERATIVE FRAMINGS AND THE CONSTITUTION OF “GERINGONÇA”: FROM MEDIA FRAMES TO READERS’ COMMENTS. THE CASE OF “OBSERVADOR”¹

João Carlos Correia²

Ricardo Morais³

Abstract: This article analyses how the formation of the XXIst Portuguese Constitutional Government, supported by the Parliamentarian Left (Socialist Party, Communist Party and the far-left organization Left Block that holds together fringes from ecologists movements, Trotskyists groups, and ex-Maoists organizations) was framed by “Observador”, a right-wing online newspaper, ideologically opposed, from the editorial point of view, to the new Government. Simultaneously, we aim to understand if this framing process was followed by the audience. The comments posted by the newsreaders on the website but also on Facebook were analyzed during the formation of the new political solution. The goal was to determine whether there was a relationship between the frames used by the medium, and the opinion expressed by its readers. The results show a higher presence of the game-strategy frame in the media coverage of XXIst Constitutional Government formation process, but a closer look reveals that the most common employed narrative

1. This research results from the Ph.D. thesis titled “Participação e deliberação online: o enquadramento mediático e os comentários dos leitores no debate sobre a formação do XXI Governo Constitucional” (Online participation and deliberation: media framing and readers’ comments about the debate on the XXIst Constitutional), by Ricardo Morais, with the supervision of his tutor, João Carlos Correia.

2. Labcom.IFP/Universidade da Beira Interior

3. Labcom.IFP/Universidade da Beira Interior

frames were on political impacts and conflict stories, resulting from an accentuated political turn to the left. Our analysis shows that the “Observador”’s audience triggered different interpretative frameworks always sharing an opposition to the formation of the left Government.

Keywords: Framing; online deliberation; readers’ comments; XXIst Constitutional Government

1. Introduction

The context that led to the XXIst Constitutional Government is one of the most striking moments of the recent Portuguese political history. The circumstances leading to the successive formation of two Governments during the short period of one month, following the electoral event on October 4th, 2015, cannot be ignored. Therefore, this work analyzes how the formation process of the XXIst Government (also known as “Geringonça”) was framed by a particular medium of communication, the only national digital native, that seemed to position itself in an adversarial position to the establishment of the new Government solution. Bearing in mind to the characteristics of the newspaper, and in particular of its public, positioned on the right side of the political spectrum (according to Digital News Report 2017 from Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism) we wanted to understand if this positioning could represent an increase of deliberative quality in the dialogue boxes and contribute to the formation of a counter-agenda against the new political solution.

Following the studies on framing, and the distinction between media and audience frames (Entman, 1993), we tried to understand how the news frames affect the discussions that may happen in the reader’s comments spaces and what if media frames influence online deliberation. The analysis of the comments comes in the line of studies on online deliberation, considering the set of potential deliberative arenas that emerged within the Internet (Mendonça, Sampaio & Barros, 2016, p. 17). Configuring itself as a case study, this work points to the need to deepen the cross research between media and audience frames, in a line of research that considers

deliberative framing as a determinant in the construction of public opinion on different subjects

2. Literature review

2.1. The framing theory

In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of studies on framing (Gradim, 2016, p. 17). Even though this is still a concept to be explored (Correia, 2016; Cacciatore, Scheufele & Iyengar, 2016), its use has become heavily widespread, particularly in the Communication Sciences domain.

In this field of research, framing started to be used alongside other theories, such as agenda-setting or priming (McCombs, Shaw & Weaver, 1999), making their comprehension difficult (Kim, Scheufele & Shanahan, 2002, Correia, 2016). One of the main problems related to framing was and still is, the definition of the frames themselves. The oscillation between different “conceptualizations” is precisely emphasized by Correia (2016), since frames are understood either as “principles of organization” (Goffman, 1974, p. 10), either as “principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation” (Gitlin, 1980, p. 6) and, in the specific context of journalism, as models to the news writing production” (Capella & Jamieson, 1997, p. 39).

This semantic ambiguity is linked to the interdisciplinary roots of the concept (it is not by chance that Entman calls it a “fractured paradigm”), and its progressive development, but in fact, it is one of the aspects that has preoccupied theorists of the field. In this context, one of the answers found by the researchers is the creation of a typology of frames that helps to the affirmation of the framework analysis in the scope of communication studies (Correia, 2016, p. 10).

Robert Entman’s worked on the clarification of this paradigm, being particularly relevant in suggesting a division between media frames and audience frames (1993, p. 74). Many of the following studies started to adopt this influent division in their analysis. It appears, therefore, a research line

that identifies the “frames” in the journalistic content, i.e., that’s to say the way how media made the coverage of certain problems (Patterson, 1994; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). At the same time, there is another line of studies concerned with the way individuals perceive, organize and interpret the information transmitted in journalistic pieces (Valkenburg, Semetko, & de Vreese, 1999).

This separation, however, also opened a space “for new works on the intersection between audience and media frames”, analyzing the frames in the news and the effects of these frames on the public (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Iyengar, 1991). Our work is precisely interested in this intersection. Additionally, to the analysis of the news frames, one intends to watch if they influence the formation of public opinions, here represented by the reader’s comments.

In journalistic studies, a frame is characterized by the selection, organization and emphasis of certain aspects of reality and exclusion of others (Gitlin, 1980, p. 7). According to the authors, we can also distinguish specific and generic frames. Specific frameworks handle subjects, while generic ones apply to a wide range of public issues. A more specific analysis allows collecting data on the selection, organization, and elaboration of a well-defined question, presenting advantages in detail, but, simultaneously, raising problems of generalization and comparison. That is why more generic frames are used more frequently, in order to allow comparative studies, for instance, the coverage of the same event in different countries.

The work of Iyengar (1991) on generic news frames is one of the best where we can find a distinction between episodic and thematic frames with its own terminology. The episodic pictures would address the specific cases and situations, while the thematic ones tried to identify more generic frames, that transcend the questions confined to a specific time and space. Among the more generic frameworks, the “strategy” or the “conflict” (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997) stand out as some of the most used frames, for example,

in the analysis of electoral campaign coverage. Thus, generic frames are addressed to broader issues and not an episodic event.

The frameworks used to cover elections are particularly relevant. Over the years, several authors have focused their analysis on electoral campaigns (Patterson, 1994, Cappella & Jamieson, 1997, Wilke & Reinemann, 2001, Lakoff, 2004, among others). Cappella & Jamieson analyzed three categories of frames: those “issue-oriented”, those related to “leadership/personality qualities” and those that focus on “horse race”, a metaphor of the competitive fight among leaders.

In the first category, are considered the “frames” that address issues related to the type of policies to be implemented, such as the policies and measures included in the electoral program, but also opinions on issues such as economics, education, and health. In “leadership/personality qualities”, the authors focused their analysis on the aspects related to the qualities of the candidate and the personal and professional characteristics that can make a good or bad leader. Finally, in the category “game/strategy”, the strategic and tactical aspects of the campaign are considered, in a real logic of electoral race (hence the designation “horse race”), that is, in which one only one can come out as the winner. The language used, namely the metaphors that refer to expressions of competition or war are particularly important for the identification of the framework.

We also consider how the study of the Project for Excellence in Journalism (2009) identified thirteen possible frames for news stories as the ones journalists use mostly. The frames were: “a) straight news account: no dominant narrative frame other than outlining the basic who, what, when, where, why and how; b) conflict story: focus on conflict inherent to the situation; c) consensus story: an emphasis on the points of agreement around an issue or event; d) conjecture story: a focus around conjecture or speculation of what is to come; e) story: an explanation how something works; f) outlook: how the current news fits into history; g) horse race: who is winning and who is losing; h) trend story: the news as an ongoing trend; i) policy explored:

a focus on exploring policy and its impact; j) reaction story: a response or reaction from one of the major players; k) reality check: a close look into the veracity of a statement made or information given; l) wrongdoing exposed: the uncovering of wrongdoing or injustice; m) personality profile: a profile of the newsmaker” (p. 4).

It is, therefore, from these categories that we proceeded to the analysis of the content of the journalistic texts, trying to identify the dominant frames and to evaluate how they are present in the comments of the readers.

2.2. Deliberative Frames in election times

Frames are constructed in an active context of processed information in which they are mobilized to an ideological struggle. Frameworks are cognitive occurrences that appear at various levels: in culture, in the elites’ minds and professional political communicators, in the texts and the minds of citizens, in social movements, public spheres, etc. (Entman, Matthes & Pellicano, 2009, p. 176).

At the beginning of the present decade, when the Governments were more aligned with the globalization policies, they emphasized as a structuring element of the key political framework “fiscal responsibility and the deficit control of public accounts”, while left and alternative critical movements classified those policies as “austerity policies” and alerted to a defense of social achievements.

Following Snow and Atheide, one may identify three kinds of frames, in what concerns with political mobilization: a) diagnostic frame, which implies the identification of the problem and an attribution of public responsibility; b) the prognostic frame, that implies an identification of the solution, the identification of the problem, for example, “reordering the forest to fight the fires” vs “contract spending to reduce the deficit”; c) the motivational frame implies a call to action and an identification of claims that justify a participation in an action to change a state of affairs; the motivational dimension of the framework includes building a vocabulary appropriately, for exam-

ple: “ask the population for sacrifices or call for a demonstration against austerity”.

At the time of the elections, there was a frame that can be identified: the horse racing frame. It corresponds to a situation that results from bipartisanship itself and contaminates, with efficacy, the western television language. The dominant framework in the electoral choices made so far in Portugal has insisted on the issue “Election of the Prime Minister”. For the dominant culture, there is a traditional constitutional interpretation of the elections that identify the Prime Minister as the leader of the winning party. This traditional understanding and this dominant framework have historical reasons. In the first place, we can verify the existence of a scarce policy difference between parties at the center of the political spectrum. Portugal lived what Gomes Canotilho called an “imperfect bipartisanship” with a rotation between PS (Socialist Party) and PSD/CDS (Social Democratic Party/ People’s Party), remaining the left-wing political forces confined to the local power (CDU [Unitary Democratic Coalition] and, more marginally, BE [Left Bloc]).

The 2008 crisis reflected the collapse of this ideological framework. Among the profound causes is the erosion of the welfare state, the sudden impoverishment of the middle class, the flexibilization of labor relations and the breakdown of the aspiration to social mobility.

Facing the imminent bankruptcies of social democracy, the current leader of the PS considered the possibility to explore constitutional routes, admitting a paradigm shift in the Government formation, with a Government based on the parliamentary majority. This shift of political habitus nevertheless implied a change of frame. Diagnostic frame questioned the dilemma: “economic growth and debt contention” versus “the reposition of labor incomes”, severely cut during Troika’s intervention. In the framing of prognosis came a new question: “what to do?”. According to the framework of the Socialist Party, it was possible to reconcile domestic consumption with economic growth. The prognosis frame supported by its opponents

was to reduce debt, increase growth through fiscal responsibility income and contain social spending. The motivational frame suggests the greatest difficulties: “How to mobilize the PS, one of the protagonists of one of the last episodes of the Cold War in the direct confrontation against the PCP and the extreme left as opponents?; How to mobilize a social base of support from CDU and BE that saw in the PS a traditional adversary?”

In turn, the conservative block had another dilemma, to mobilize legitimacy based on the victory of the elections against the legitimacy resulting from the formation of a majority in Parliament, to accentuate the differences between the supporters of the left Government. It has mobilized one of the oldest rhetoric commonplaces: “we got here; we cannot go back. If something started, it’s natural to end”.

2.3. Internet, readers’ comments spaces and deliberative framing

After reviewing the main aspects of framing theory, we highlighted how the Internet has changed many aspects of current societies, but especially how participation and deliberation can take advantage of the potential of this technology.

Without the euphoria of the 90s studies that searched inside the Internet for a new public sphere, one must admit that the digital networks have changed older communication models and provided new channels for the exchange of opinions and ideas (Mendonça & Amaral, 2016, p. 51). “The internet represents an extremely diverse environment for social interaction, whose characteristics transform and reorganize social practices. Communication between individuals and groups, as well as the organization of communities of interest and environments for discussion, are inherent characteristics of the evolution of the Internet” (Maia, Rossini, Oliveira & Oliveira, 2016, p. 236 [translated to English from the original in Portuguese]).

Today there are unlimited spaces, like forums, blogs, sections for comments in news web pages, social network sites, where one can participate in discussions about different issues. In this particular study, we focused

on comments sections in digital newspapers, because this was for a long time one of the most used spaces by readers to post comments and debate about public matters, regarding their accessibility, absence of costs, possibility of anonymity and the immediacy in exchanging messages (cf. Silva, 2013). However, in the last years, the number of users commenting on digital newspapers comment spaces decreased, mainly because the debates made on those spaces, began to be seen as unproductive, with no presence of real discussion or rational dialogue, and full of “flaming”, “trolls” and insults (cf. Ruiz et al., 2011; Silva, 2013). Some sites even decided to end with these spaces to control what was becoming an image problem. In spite of that, no one can deny, the potential of these spaces to public deliberation. Today, “understanding the dynamics of online discussions is therefore to understand a fundamental dimension of today’s experience, in general, and of political practice in a more specific way” (Mendonça, Sampaio & Barros, 2016, p. 12 [translated to English from the original in Portuguese]).

Therefore, we analyzed the comment spaces as an environment with distinct opportunities and constraints for deliberation, considering “there is no discussion of the socially relevant issue that does not pass significantly through them (online arenas), crossing platforms as distinct as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs. The discussions between individuals, permeated by the content produced by newspapers or by bloggers, in texts, photos and videos, form a complex environment in which the main issues of public interest are approached by a multiplicity of actors” (Mendonça, Sampaio & Barros, 2016, p. 11 [translated to English from the original in Portuguese]).

It is in this sense, that we analyze the reader’s comments since we wanted to see how the news frames can affect the discussions that may take place in these deliberative arenas, following the idea of a deliberative framing (Barisione, 2012, pp. 4-5). We understand that this concept is what best represents the objectives of this work, considering on the one hand news frames and, on the other hand, deliberative comments. When the framing processes are applied in the context of deliberative practices it is of a deliberative framing that we speak of, as what is at issue is precisely the

interpretative “framework” in which deliberation can be made. Thus, meaning that the media, when selecting certain points of view, emphasize certain elements to the detriment of others, suggest certain interpretive frames that, possibly, will influence the process of opinion formation and, therefore, the outcome of a deliberation (Barisione, 2012, p. 4-5). In this sense we must think, when we analyze the opinion resulting from a journalistic text, on a set of elements that help us to understand the interpretative “framework” within which a deliberation is constructed. In addition to the initial diagnosis related to identifying what the problem is, the framework will also indicate a possible causal interpretation of the problem, i.e. where it comes from, as well as an assignment of responsibility and prognosis or solution to the problem. In the background, the entire context of interpretation can be defined by the primary frame or, in turn, be deconstructed by the participants, giving rise to a new interpretive framework.

3. Research strategy and methodological design

In methodological terms, this paper aligns with the case studies, since this is “the most appropriate research strategy when we want to know the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ of current events about which the researcher has little or no control” (Yin, 1994, p. 9). It is precisely in this situation that we find ourselves in this study, since we aim to understand how the process of formation of the XXIst Constitutional Government was framed by the news and its readers. At the same time, we also seek to understand if there is an influence of the news frames on the formation of public opinion, measured here by the readers’ comments.

The case study is also an approach “(...) that deals deliberately with a specific situation that is supposed to be unique or special, at least in certain aspects, trying to discover what is in it of most essential and characteristic and, thus, to contribute to the comprehension of a certain phenomenon of interest” (Ponte, 2006, p. 29 [translated to English from the original in Portuguese]). As the goal of a case study is always “holistic”, once it seeks to promote “understanding as a whole” and an “intensive and detailed”

study (Coutinho, 2015, p. 335 [translated to English from the original in Portuguese]), it seemed to us that this methodological strategy was that which best suited our work. Case studies may be: intrinsic, if the investigator seeks to understand a case because it provokes specific attention; instrumental, when the case study functions as a tool to understand another phenomenon (Coutinho, 2015, p. 338). In our work the case study it is simultaneously both intrinsic and instrumental.

In terms of data collection, in a case study “multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin, 1994, p. 13). In our particular case, we used the analysis of content and news, intending to identify news frames (in a frame analysis logic), but also the analysis of comments, identifying “frames” and assessing the quality of online deliberation.

3.1. Brief contextualization of the case under study: formation process of the XXIst Constitutional Government

The “case” under analysis here, is the debate surrounding the formation of the XXIst Portuguese Constitutional Government. To better understand this case, it is important to return to the day of October 4th, 2015, the date on which the Portuguese were, for the fourteenth time since April 25, called to choose the representatives for the parliament. The results of the electoral process gave victory to the coalition “Portugal à Frente” (PaF) (the result of the pre-electoral agreement between the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Popular Party (CDS/PP), although with a relative majority (38.5% of votes, corresponding to 107 members). The absence of an absolute majority and the percentage of votes of the remaining parties (PS - 32.3%, BE - 10.2%, CDU - 8.3%, PAN - 1.4%) let immediately forecast a difficult scenario for the winners. But the process around the establishment of the next Government was just beginning.

The lack of an absolute majority forced the coalition voted to establish agreements to ensure the largest number of seats in parliament and thus stable governance. The real debate about the formation of the Government begins then, with the coalition seeking to negotiate with the Socialist

Party, the only one available for this negotiation. Thus, it began a period of meetings between the two political forces, accompanied in detail by the media and leaving public opinion suspended to the formation of the XXIst Constitutional Government.

However, while meeting with the PaF coalition, the Socialist Party has initiated contacts with the Left Bloc (BE) and the Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU), given the negotiations for the formation of a Government of the left, with a parliamentary majority, which could make it impossible to form a new Government on the part of the coalition that had won the elections.

The electoral act, more than deciding the political situation of the country for the next four years, ended up throwing the country into a real debate between parties but also forced the public opinion to argue on which was the best Government solution. The hypotheses of a central bloc Government (PaF [PSD + CSD/PP] + PS) were put on the table; a management or interim Government (the winning coalition would govern until it was possible to call new elections, never in less than six months); a presidential initiative Government (elements of Government would be indicated by the President of the Republic); but also, the possibility that gradually gained strength: a leftist Government with parliamentary majority. Tight deadlines, presidential elections were at the door, forcing daily meetings, multiple political-party discussions and raised great uncertainty in the public opinion, with voices against and in favor of each of the options previously described

António Costa, Socialist Party's secretary-general did not agree to form a bloc with the winning coalition nor to support it in the assembly, rejections that gradually began to help define the future. Especially because on October 20th, Costa assured the President of the Republic of having the conditions to form a Government-supported in the parliament by the Left Bloc and by the Portuguese Communist Party. The facts exposed so far would be more than enough to make this case a study, but the chronology of events makes it even more interesting, since, after an electoral act, the Portuguese would get to know two Constitutional Governments.

The first, which was the XXth Constitutional Government, would end to being formed with the winners of the elections. Not having reached an agreement with any party with a parliamentary seat, the PaF coalition met with the President of the Republic, Aníbal Cavaco Silva, who after listening to all parties with representation in parliament, choose to nominate Pedro Passos Coelho (22 October 2015) as Prime Minister and lead him to form a Government. Five days later, on October 27th, 2015, the Prime Minister-nominee presented to the President of the Republic his proposal for the constitution of the XX Constitutional Government, which took office on October 30th, 2015. The leftist parties already had asserted that they will reject a new right-wing Government and even with the Government formed, guaranteed that it would not pass in parliament.

The XXth Constitutional Government would thus, be remembered historically as the shortest executive administration of the Portuguese democracy, as it would take only 27 days for the country to be introduced to a new political configuration. The meetings on the left pointed increasingly to an understanding no one believed to be possible. The news headlines expressed the doubts that many had (national digital native “Observador” questioned on October 7th: “What if Costa is not bluffing when he speaks of Government on the left?”), about the real possibility for the first time since the Constitution of 1976, Portugal had a coalition of left-wing parties, although post-electoral.

The month of November proved to be decisive. On the day that the new Government led by Pedro Passos Coelho had scheduled the debate on the Government program, the left parties signed the agreements that would later support the first left Government in history (PS minority Government supported in the assembly by BE, PCP, PEV and PAN). The XX Government would end on the same day, on November 10, after the rejection from the Socialist Party of the Government program.

Resulting from that, began the process of nomination of António Costa, on November 24th, 2015, and the inauguration of the XXIst Constitutional

Government on November 26th, the second Government based on the results of the legislative elections of October 4th, 2015.

Briefly summarizing the chronology of the facts, this situation provided a unique opportunity to investigate a public discussion process carried out around an unprecedented political solution in the country. After all the meetings and decisions taken, what is not known is the opinion of the citizens who, after the elections, did not have an opportunity to express themselves again. Far from imagining that it is possible to know how the public opinion has positioned itself concerning the development of the two Governments, we believe that the analysis of spaces where citizens' opinions are represented deserves at least to be considered.

3.1.1. Data collection and sample definition

Among the various spaces of participation placed today at the disposal of the citizens, we have opted to analyze those dedicated to the comments of the readers, as they correspond to private arenas of participation, where different opinions may occur. Considering the spaces made available to citizens by the media, we understand that more participation is generated on newspapers' websites. We then began to consider these spaces, however restricting the analysis to a particular medium, the only national digital native of Portugal and also the one more ideologically tuned with the right-wing block. What drove us to choose this particular news organization resides in the fact that according to the Digital News Report of 2017 from Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, this medium is the one which possesses a more right-wing audience, but also has an ideological alignment and editorial positioning very divergent of the new Government. In this context, we also remember the work of Hallin and Mancini (2004), which emphasizes that the Portuguese media system is part of the "Polarized Pluralist Model" which is characterized by "an elite-oriented press with relatively small circulation" and an "instrumentalization of the media by the government, by political parties, and by industrialists with political ties is common" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 73). It is by considering these two aspects, the type of audience and the characteristics of the media system,

that we justify our choice since one of the hypotheses that we put in this research has to do with the possibility of the media news to influence potential debates generated in the spaces for readers' comments. As we have needed to explain in a brief contextualization, the process of creation of the XXIst Constitutional Government had many particularities, and above all, developments occurring almost daily.

For the collection of data, we considered the period that began on October 4th, the date of the electoral process, and lasted until the end of November, four days after the inauguration of the Government. From the definition of the period, we advanced to the research of the news and its comments. In the search system of the online newspaper "Observador" the search was made from two key terms: "legislative 2015" and "Government". The result was composed of 281 journalistic items. From this selection, opinion pieces were left out, since these are the result of opinion makers, who are mostly linked to political parties and therefore defend their positions. As Márcia Galvão and Rita Tavares remember, these texts intend above all to "make 'noise' in the public opinion, or more importantly, in published opinion" (Galvão & Tavares, 2016, p. 52 [translated to English from the original in Portuguese]).

The 281 pieces are distributed from a heterogeneous outside for the period under analysis, which reveals well the need to look at each day, as it is important to remember that it was through the media that the country itself was "almost watching the construction of a new political landscape" (ibid., 21).

Considering the 281 journalistic texts, we then looked at the number of comments for each piece, and to operationalize the analysis we chose the most commented news on each of the days of the referred period, which resulted in a total of 58 pieces and 2944 comments. Because one of the purposes of the work was also to confront the differences of opinions between the comments made on the website of the newspaper and the Facebook page, to this

number, we added 5885 comments that this same news generated in the profile of the newspaper on Facebook, reaching a total of 8829 comments.

3.1.2. News and readers' comments content analysis

As we have previously mentioned, we have opted to study news and comments through content analysis, since it “encompasses a set of communication analysis techniques that aim to obtain, by systematic and objective procedures for describing the content of the messages (quantitative indicators or not) that allow the inference of knowledge regarding the conditions of production/reception of these messages” (Bardin, 1979, p. 42).

The option for content analysis also appears in the line of Tankard (2009) that suggests the adoption of a model that allows the quantification of the frames. “The reason is that individual frame identification runs the risk of being accused of being arbitrary, so it advocates an ‘empirical’ and ‘systematic’ approach that calls ‘the list of frames’”(cit. in Gradim, 2016 pp. 74-75).

Within the variants of this technique we choose a direct quantitative analysis, that is, the count of the answers as they appear according to the previously established categories. It is therefore important to explain how the analysis was operationalized, specifying, in particular, the categories of analysis and the indicators used.

3.1.3. Data and coding procedure for news frames and readers' comments

Taking into account that “the very techniques of the news building – title, lead, inverted pyramid –, all presupposing opinion and selection, constitute framing devices designed to cut the ‘news’ of the amalgam informing elements that make up the event” (Gradim, 2016, p. 25 [translated to English from the original in Portuguese]), we began by considering these elements for the generic identification of the news theme.

Then, following the works of Iyengar (1991) and Cappela and Jamieson (1997), we considered, respectively, two types of framing (thematic or episodic) and three categories of frames: those concerning “substance”, those relating to “qualities of leadership/personality” and those that focus on

“game/strategy (horse race)”. By “substance” we mean matters relating to the electoral program and measures that the candidates intend to implement; by “qualities of leadership/personality” the particular characteristics of the candidates, in a logic of creating a profile; and in the category “game/strategy” we considered candidates’ positions and actions aimed at the conquest of power, in a competitive logic. Then, following the Study of the Project for Excellence in Journalism, we tried to capture other elements related to the presentation of news, namely: the trigger, considering what triggered the news organization to cover the story; and a more profound analysis of frames, considering narrative devices and approaches used by journalists in composing the story.

Table 1. Operationalization of variables and categories in news analysis

Variable	Category	
Trigger	Statement by government news maker	
	News organization enterprise	
	Analysis or interpretation	
	Preview of event	
	Release of report or poll Press release	
Frames	Issue	
	Qualities of leadership/personality	
	Game/Strategy (horse race)	
Types of frames	Straight news account	<i>No dominant narrative frame</i>
	Conflict Story	<i>Focus on conflict inherent to the situation or between players</i>
	Consensus Story	<i>Emphasis on the points of agreement around an issue or event</i>
	Conjecture Story	<i>Focus around conjecture or speculation of what is to come</i>
	Story	<i>Historical explanation of the process or something</i>
	Outlook	<i>How the current news fits into history</i>
	Horse Race	<i>Who is winning and who is losing</i>
	Trend Story	<i>The news as an ongoing trend</i>
	Policy Explored	<i>A focus on exploring policy and its impact</i>
	Reaction Story	<i>A response or reaction from one of the major players</i>
	Reality Check	<i>A close look into the veracity of a statement or information</i>
	Wrongdoing Exposed	<i>The uncovering of wrongdoing or injustice</i>
Personality Profile	<i>A profile of the newsmaker</i>	

Table made by the authors from the referred theoretical references.

In addition to the framing of news, the presence of frames in comments was also measured with the same variables for each type of frame. On the other hand, we consider that “the definition and construction of the deliberation context (i.e., the deliberative frame)” (Barisione, 2012, p. 6), generates some categories we need to consider on the analysis of reader’s comments, because “the deliberative frame is a construct existing at a more implicit level, and for this reason, it may govern the procedure and even determine the outcome of a deliberation” (p. 7).

Table 2. Operationalization of deliberative frame analysis on readers’ comments

Variable	Category	Explanation
Deliberative frame analysis	Diagnosis	<i>This is the problem</i>
	Causal interpretation	<i>Where the problem comes from</i>
	Responsibility	<i>Collective or individual actor responsible for the problem</i>
	Moral evaluation	<i>Such an actor is blameworthy</i>
	Prognosis	<i>How to resolve the problem</i>

Table made by the authors from the referred theoretical references.

To analyze the frames, present in both the news and comments together, all comments derived from the 58 news stories selected and were included in a database along with these news stories. The database with the information derived from the comments was merged with the news stories database to examine the relationship between the types of frames in news and the reader’s comments.

4. Results

Looking first at the news, we noticed that the most common trigger, what motivated the news organization to cover the story in the first place, was the news organization itself. This particular trigger, with journalists actively going out and getting the story, represents almost half (48%) of all triggers. It is interesting to note that the trigger was in most cases the news organization although the statements by the Government were the second motive that justifies the news organization to cover the story (31%).

Considering the general framing of the text we realize that the most commonly employed narrative frame was game-strategy (60%), which highlights the modern tendency to explore disputes between candidates in a political game approach, as a kind of chess game. According to Capella & Jamieson (1997), this focus on political competition turns out to be normal, in that it represents the opportunity for a new story with winners and losers.

Table 3. Most common frames in news

Types of frames	%
Conflict Story	21%
Consensus Story	11%
Conjecture Story	15%
Story	2%
Outlook	1%
Horse Race	11%
Trend Story	2%
Policy Explored	23%
Reaction Story	12%
Personality/profile	2%

However, in a more detailed analysis of the frames, we observed that in fact, the most commonly used frame was related to policies and their impact on society. The focus on exploring the political dimension and its impact was the narrative frame employed in 23% of news stories. We also realized that the focus on conflict inherent to the situation or among players, known as the conflict story frame, appears in 21% of the news. Similarly, the conjecture story, the focus around speculation of what is to come, was a frame used in 15% of stories. Therefore, we perceived that, despite the game-strategy being the dominant framework, in a more detailed analysis, we identified as main frames the political measures and their impacts, in a logic of who wins and who loses with the presentation of a proposal, but also the conflicts between individuals and speculation about what will happen as the most used frames.

Considering both the triggers and the frames of the news, it is interesting to note a considerable difference in the frames used to compose the story taking into account what was the trigger. When the stories were initiated by the news organization, the most common frame was reaction story (32%), what means a response or reaction from one of the major players, closely followed by a focus on conflict inherent to the situation or brewing among the players (28%). On the other hand, when it was a news organization that triggered the story to become news, the predominant frame focused on policy and its impacts (42%) or in consensus stories, an emphasis was made on the points of agreement around certain issues (15%).

In the analysis of the comments, a set of topics were identified that constitute what we can call the frames of the readers, as they represent how they think, interpret, and assess the issue in their terms.

Table 4. Most common readers' frames and interpretation of the issue under deliberation

Readers' frames	%
PS did not win elections therefore cannot govern	4%
Left must govern since it was majority	2%
There must be anticipated elections	2%
PS/António Costa just want to lead	6%
Right-wing parties destroyed the country	2%
The people will pay	2%
Trick from left parties	3%
Troika is coming back	2%
António Costa (PS) breaks the principles of the party	1%
Management or interim government	1%

Note: n = 2248. Considering that 75% of the comments don't have a dominant frame.

If we cross these frames from readers with news frames that we saw earlier, we realized how we can establish a relationship between those who are the most common news frames and the way readers reinterpret the issues. Considering policy and its impacts, the most common frame used on news, we realize that the audience interprets it saying "Troika is coming back" (53% of comments). Conflict story was the second most employed frame

on the news what in the comments appears in the sense that “PS/António Costa just want to be in power” (20%). The third most used frame on the news was a conjecture story, that readers express in comments through “PS/António Costa just wants to lead” (35%). This is, in fact, the frame that stands out most in the readers’ comments. Horse race frames on news were also commonly used, and in comments, it appears in the form of “PS did not win elections, therefore, cannot govern” (25%).

We perceive therefore that in the comments of the readers there is effective, although not in a direct way, a connection with the dominant frames in the news. On the other hand, considering that “deliberative frames suggest how an issue should be understood, read, and judged in some terms rather than in others, according to a given perspective, in a determinate light” (Barisione, 2012, p. 7), we realized that the identified reader’s frames represented a form of organization of the deliberation, that may suggest categories such as the attribution of responsibility, but also a prognosis for the problem.

Table 5. Relation between readers’ frames and deliberative frames

Readers’ frames	Deliberative frames
PS did not win elections therefore cannot govern	Causal interpretation
Left must govern since it was majority	Causal interpretation
There must be anticipated elections	Prognosis
PS/António Costa just want to lead	A moral evaluation
Right-wing parties destroyed the country	Attribution of responsibility
The people will pay	Prognosis
Trick from left parties	Attribution of responsibility
Troika is coming back	Attribution of responsibility
António Costa (PS) breaks the principles of the party	Attribution of responsibility
Management or interim government	Prognosis
Centre-party government	Prognosis
PSD/CDS must fall	Prognosis
PaF must govern	Prognosis

In this way, we realize that in fact, deliberative frames were constructed by the readers at an implicit level, ultimately determining the course of the discussion, even if any participant in the deliberation was aware of it. We

consider that in some ways the news frames were deconstructed by the readers, giving rise to a new interpretive framework.

5. Conclusions

The main purpose of this work was to analyze the news coverage of the formation process of the XXIst Constitutional Government by an ideologically oriented medium, as well as to understand how the frames that gain visibility in the news, can affect the discussions that may take place in the reader's comments space.

The results obtained from the analysis show no direct relationships between the media frames and the audience interpretative frames. We noticed the presence of deliberative frames related to the attribution of responsibility for the situation and the presentation of a resolution of the problem. These deliberative frames show that the "Observador" audience created new interpretive frameworks but always in opposition to the formation of the left Government. Therefore, even if the general coverage of "Observador" seemingly did not produce the effect of setting the media frames in the opinions of the readers, the analysis of deliberative frames shows some reframing, with the participants critically reflecting on the media frames in their own terms.

An interesting finding was the significant relationship observed between the media frame related to policies and their impact, and the readers' idea of "Troika coming back to the country" for one more rescue. Hence, if we can say that news stories have no power to set the ways for a public debate, they contribute at least with information for a deliberative reframing.

The debate that emerged about the influence of the media's coverage on the public needs further studies to understand how this reinterpretation works, but above all, in understanding the relationship between framing and deliberation, analyzing how deliberative frames, resulting from the interaction between actors in comment spaces, could dominate the group discussion.

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POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND ELECTORAL STRATEGY IN DONALD TRUMP'S CAMPAIGN

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Abstract: In the political and media landscape many changes and profound structural alterations are taking place throughout the world. Specifically in the case of the United States, all the socio-political and socio-communicative phenomena anticipate what will be a trend in the coming years in a general way. The transition to the digital plane is causing an intense transformation of communication methodologies and has led to a phase of experimentation of electoral strategies since the late 1990s. Control and instrumentalization of the media have always been proposed as a first-rate political weapon in the United States, but in the last decades these attempts at control and instrumentalization have become a permanent industry of intellectual production, advertising creation and dissemination of propaganda.

In the specific case of 2016, with the Republican primaries and with the electoral process for the White House, Donald Trump launched a series of strategic initiatives that represent a true communicative revolution for all purposes. The campaign strategy incorporated elements of innovation into a basic structure of political tradition, which has generated a very effective synergy between traditional values and techniques of circumstantial experimentation. The result has been a very complex and effective product to communicate and disseminate political content. A product projected

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through advertising media, social networks, programming formats and corporate links, both analogue and digital, which achieved a calculated electoral victory over the Democratic Party candidate.

This presentation will address key issues of the electoral process, such as the triumph of Republican political rhetoric, the charismatic leadership of Donald Trump, the symbolism and iconographic significance of the advertising material, the management of the demographic studies and the epistemological dosage of the Political language: clear, concise and repetitive. As an indirect consequence of the Republican Party campaign, some issues of the Democratic strategy and the leadership of Hillary Clinton will be addressed: the absence of strategic initiative throughout the campaign, the inability to exploit the personal and political scandals of the opponent, the lack of foresight in the management of campaign financing resources in key states and the absence of real social debate in the big issues of the presidential campaign. All these issues will be seen from the prism of political communication in traditional media and in new digital media of information.

Key words: Presidential election 2016; mass media; social network; Republican Party; Donald John Trump.

1. Introduction

Political analysts and journalists specializing in political communication have always believed that they are living a key moment in the course of current events. Possibly, this belief is determined by the socio-political uncertainties and by the permanent interest in trying to intuit the future consequences of the events of the present moment. As a constant, in the case of US electoral campaigns it is very common to find, among the information produced by the media, terms such as “historic” or “transcendent,” but in the case of the 2016 presidential elections, such terms are correct. Republican primaries and Trump’s race to the White House will be studied in universities around the world for very different reasons, as the campaigns of the years 1980 and 2000 were studied in his day.

From the initial moment of the election campaign of Donald Trump, there was a flood of bibliographical publications, journalistic reports and audio-

visual documentaries about the life and work of the businessman and about the political motivations of the controversial and inexperienced Republican candidate. All this informative and scientific production lacks absolute consensus, making the research work of the social sciences more difficult due above all, to an excess of information and a great amount of elements of distortion. This difficulty is clearly perceived in the process of classification of sources and in the delimitation of a theoretical framework (that takes into consideration the most outstanding and recognized positions on the subject). However, this present investigation will try to address the preconditions to Trump's candidacy, the formation of working groups during the celebration of primaries and the promotion and design of the main strategic lines to weaken the 2016 Democratic candidacy. That said, this present investigation will avoid trying to assess the immense quantity of surveys and the possible repercussions of these on the public opinion.

The businessman Trump, like several members of his family, has had a very close relationship with the world of media since the 1980s. Trump's hectic and popular social life, as a family man, real estate entrepreneur, financial investor, advertising agent and audiovisual producer, has led him to become an icon of pop culture and a consolidated commercial brand. Thus, the path to become a conservative political reference has been much shorter than in other cases of presidential candidates close to the power structures of the Republican Party. Much has been said about the good management of new information technologies and the effectiveness of their pre-campaign messages, but we must not forget the popularity factors and media presence prior to the beginning of the electoral race.

All the eccentricities and rhetorical qualities of Donald Trump were acquired over decades through the relationship with the media and their production projects. Trump's career had been very diverse; diverse in the world of entertainment and advertising (Fitzduff, 2017, pp. 13-20, Kellner, 2017, pp. 1-15). This includes appearances in television interviews, advertisements and cinematographic "cameos," to collaboration in wrestling programs (WWE) and the production of his own contest ("The Apprentice").

This explains the ability to interpret different roles and improvisation in his political staging, script reading skills (teleprinter) and mastering the technical elements of recording (regardless of the scenario) when competing with his party mates in the primary and with his Democratic opponent in the presidential campaign.

In the recording of “The Apprentice,” Donald Trump had the opportunity to publicize his personal charisma and his entrepreneurial idiosyncrasy, awakening conflicting positions among the audience, which transcended ideologically. Loved and hated, as a celebrity of the first rank, Trump was determined to enter politics, surrounded by his family and his closest associates, as he had undertaken by challenge throughout his professional life. The last season of his contest ended in December 2014, and a few weeks later, at the same facilities of “Trump Productions” in New York, in January 2015, Jared Kushner began to prepare the announcement of the nomination of Trump¹⁶ to design the strategic lines in advertising and communication and to configure the logistics and financial structure of the pre-campaign (Trump, 2015, pp. 1-5 and 7-18). From the very moment that the White House bid was announced in June 2015, all sorts of speculation about the true intentions of the candidate come out, which would be very beneficial for the interests of the Trump family and all its companies structure and organizations.

2. The republican primaries and the organizational structure

Since the repeated failures of the “Tea Party” against Obama, presidentially and legislatively, the Republican Party had not marked a clear leadership position. Before the emergence of the candidacy of Donald Trump, the big power groups within the party apparatus did not like the presence of an incendiary and controversial candidate (Rapoport and Stone, 2017, pp. 136-147 and Kates, 2017, pp. 8-18). Moreover, many important leaders were openly opposed to the figure of Trump in the primaries. The truth is that, step by step, the rhetoric of “Make America Great Again” was gaining popularity among the social mass of Republicans, to the point that Trump, with everything against him, won acclaim among his and one of the most

overwhelming victories in the history of the primary consultations of the “Grand Old Party.”

Table 1. The results of the primary in the Republican Party in 2016 by state

Date	State	Trump %	*Others %
February 9	New Hampshire	35.2	37.8
February 20	South Carolina	32.5	52.4
March 1	Alabama	43.4	44.2
March 1	Arkansas	32.8	59.0
March 1	Georgia	38.8	53.6
March 1	Massachusetts	49.0	45.1
March 1	Oklahoma	28.3	64.0
March 1	Tennessee	38.9	51.2
March 1	Texas	26.8	65.7
March 1	Vermont	32.3	58.7
March 1	Virginia	34.8	58.2
March 5	Louisiana	41.4	55.4
March 8	Idaho	28.1	68.7
March 8	Michigan	36.5	58.3
March 8	Mississippi	47.2	50.2
March 15	Florida	45.7	50.9
March 15	Illinois	38.8	58.6
March 15	Missouri	40.8	56.8
March 15	North Carolina	40.2	57.2
March 15	Ohio	35.9	62.6
March 22	Arizona	45.8	49.6
April 5	Wisconsin	35.0	63.3
April 19	New York	60.2	39.9
April 26	Connecticut	57.9	40.0
April 26	Delaware	60.8	37.2
April 26	Maryland	54.1	42.9
April 26	Pennsylvania	56.6	41.8
April 26	Rhode Island	62.9	34.9
May 3	Indiana	53.3	44.7
May 10	Nebraska	61.5	33.4

May 10	West Virginia	77.1	17.1
May 17	Oregon	64.2	32.4
May 24	Washington	75.5	20.6
June 7	California	74.8	20.8
June 7	Montana	73.7	19.6
June 7	New Jersey	80.4	19.6
June 7	New Mexico	70.6	20.9
June 7	South Dakota	67.1	32.9

* The rest of the candidates in the primary elections: Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and John Kasich. Source: own elaboration, according to Nelson, M. (2018). *The Elections of 2016*. Los Angeles: SAGE and CQPRES, pp.51-52.

Table 2. The overall results of the primary in the Republican Party in 2016

	Trump	*Others
Total vote	13,757,244	14,974,447
Percent	45.6%	49.6%
Number of primaries won	33	4

* The rest of the candidates in the primary elections: Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and John Kasich. Source: own elaboration, according to Nelson, M. (2018). *The Elections of 2016*. Los Angeles: SAGE and CQPRES, p.52.

Table 3. The results of caucuses in the Republican Party in 2016 by state

Date	State	Trump %	*Others %
February 1	Iowa	24.3	52.6
February 23	Nevada	45.9	48.8
March 1	Alaska	33.6	55.6
March 1	Minnesota	21.4	71.0
March 5	Kansas	23.4	75.4
March 5	Kentucky	35.9	62.4
March 5	Maine	32.9	66.1
March 8	Hawaii	43.4	55.5
March 12	District of Columbia	13.8	85.2
March 12	Wyoming	7.4	85.4
March 22	Utah	13.8	86.2

* The rest of the candidates in the primary elections: Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and John Kasich. Source: own elaboration, according to Nelson, M. (2018). *The Elections of 2016*. Los Angeles: SAGE and CQPRES, p.53.

Table 4. The overall results of the caucuses in the Republican Party in 2016

	Trump	*Others
Percent	26.9%	67.7%
Number of caucuses won	3	8

* The rest of the candidates in the primary elections: Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and John Kasich. Source: own elaboration, according to Nelson, M. (2018). *The Elections of 2016*. Los Angeles: SAGE and CQPRES, p.53.

As Trump cornered his Republican opponents in the primaries, progressively, he reached tactical and formal agreements on joint collaboration and cooperation (Sabato, 2016, pp. 3-6). The great element of opposition in the interior in the organizational structure of the Republican Party focused on the set of organizations of the Christian Right.² Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio, had the personal support and budgetary support of many Christian activist groups close to the confessional Protestant reformed block. These groups considered a life full of excesses, several marriages (and their successive divorces) and a multitude of sexual scandals were not the most appropriate elements to build an image of a conservative political leader. The second major element of opposition against candidate Trump was the Republican ruling party; many leaders and relevant members of the party considered that the experience had always been one of the electoral guarantees. From their perspective, a candidate like Trump would not only lead to an electoral defeat, but would destroy the image of seriousness and confidence of the Republicans before the voters of the conservative “America.” George W. Bush mentioned the primaries³:

“[...] ‘I’m worried,’ Bush recently told a group of Republican operatives in Dallas, according to Politico, [Magazine] ‘that I will be the last Republican president’ [...] Members of the Bush family have long opposed Trump [...]” (*Business Insider*)

2. The first relevant personality of the Christian Right in approaching Trump’s candidacy was Jerry Falwell Junior, through the communicative platforms of Liberty University, he covered the messages of the Republican candidate and paved the way for cooperation with other American religious leaders.

3. However, when Donald Trump won his presidential victory in November 2016, a state of euphoria broke out among the Republican ranks. Even the most critical voices surrendered to the unlikely winner. The animosity of the Bush family for Donald Trump was not new.

Many Republicans prepared for a possible Trump defeat. At the same time they were trying to create firewalls, to prevent Trump's political actions from damaging the traditional image of the Republican Party:

“More than 70 Republicans have asked by letter to the party not to dedicate their economic efforts to the Trump candidacy to the White House [...]” (*El País*)

Surprisingly, the closest candidates to the conservative Christian movements, such as Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz, did not know or could not exploit the sex scandals, the accusations of illegitimate children and adultery and the verbal excesses of a sexual component that leapt in the process of primaries around the figure of Trump. They could not assemble a moral discourse and presidential suitability, as other times it had been done against Democratic and Republican candidates.

“[...] Trump, downplaying his remarks as ‘locker room talk,’ denied he had ever kissed or groped women without consent. [...] ‘No one has more respect for women than I do,’ he said. [...]” (*CNNpolitics*)

As the weeks and elections of the Republican primaries progressed, candidate Trump was becoming more popular and his message of regeneration was becoming more widespread and impactful. The staging, gesticulation and aesthetic and linguistic symbols of Trump stole all the attention from the rest of the candidates, converting the pre-campaign debates into an improvised amplifier of his political message, favoring his aspirations of confrontation with the Democratic candidate and his pro-government stance. The simplification of language, theoretical reductionism and everyday exemplification were all the rage among a mass of conservative voters: very disoriented by the previous Democratic victories, very disenchanted with the previous government alternatives and absolutely outraged by the drift of the socio-economic reality of the country.

“[...] Once the Republican primary season began in February, Trump continued to ride right, with his success achieved against a backdrop of large Republican turnouts. Trump won three of the opening four events in February (losing only Iowa), and in three of the four states more votes were cast on the Republican side than the Democratic. [...] Trump continued to dominate the Republican race until the abrupt end of the contest in Indiana on May 3 [...]” (Cook, 2017, p. 86)

In the face of this explosion of popularity (see Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4), progressively, virtually all of the positions contrary to Trump’s project turned into energetic support when they verified its effect of electoral revulsion throughout the whole country. The overwhelming dominance of Trump in the primary and the Republican Congress of 2016 hardly allows for comparison from the historical point of view.

3. The key strategy of the 2016 campaign

All the electoral defeats are painful, but the defeat of John McCain in 2008 was practically assimilated among the Republican ranks, in spite of all the efforts made to contain the political project of candidate Obama. In 2012, despite the popularity of Obama and the profound transformation of political scenarios and channels of communication with the electorate, Republicans continued to bet on old formulas and hoaxes that had worked in the past. However Mitt Romney was unable to take the initiative in the electoral campaign and the re-election of Obama was inevitable. The idea of having controlled the White House for only eight of the last twenty-four years (1992-2016) made many Republican leaders consider the possibility of exploring new strategies for the study and design of electoral objectives. For this reason, the Republican Party made a large investment to investigate the counties and regions where they would have a greater chance of winning, beyond their traditional fiefdoms. This strategy sought the incorporation of new voters, the exploration of new issues of public interest and the demobilization of groups close to the Democratic Party (Konkik, 2017,

pp. 70-81, Stone, 2017, pp. 150-166). That structure of work, which began to be forged in 2012, found its best ally in the charismatic leadership of Donald Trump, despite the fact that all the original strategies had been proposed to have assist development within the ruling party of the large groups of the Republican Party.

If the great support of the party infrastructure was one of the main assets that facilitated the electoral victory against Clinton, there is no doubt that the personality and strategic approaches of candidate Trump and his direct surroundings were the most explainable cause of that surprise electoral victory in the fall of 2016 (Kates, 2017, pp. 285-288). Of all the factors and key issues that intervened in that electoral process (Trump, 2015, pp. 19 28, 31-45, 77-88, 101-107, 127-133 and 159-169), taking the public speech of Trump as point of reference, can be observed the following thematic classification of the Republican campaign.

1. The constant evocation with the greatness of “America.” Candidate Trump appears before the public in general as an admirer of the best country in the world, as a winner and a defender of the “American dream.” In short, he is a citizen who is not willing to see how the values and ideals that made the United States great have been diminished or are eliminated by spurious and corrupt interests. Of course, the Democratic Party and its historical leaders are the main culprit for this national degeneration.
2. The defense of the existence of a media conspiracy against Trump and his political project by the Democratic Party and the economic and financial elites of the United States. In this case, Trump appeared before public opinion as a defender of truth and justice, in front of the media of a liberal nature, which does nothing but distort the political and social reality, against the interests of millions of Americans. For this reason, confrontation with the media is justified as a need to defend traditional values, as a matter of honor and as a circumstance of political survival. All freedoms and all individual rights would be guaranteed with the arrival of Trump to the Oval Office.

3. The identification of the major political problems of the United States.

- Internally. The corruption of institutional powers should not have a place in the most important democratic and free nation in the world. In this sense, candidate Trump and his entire team present themselves as self-sacrificing men and women who fight against social injustice and against the abuses of power focused on Capitol Hill. It was very common among those attending the political campaign events to shout “Drain the Swamp”, while Trump proclaimed himself a candidate with no political background, as an “Anti-establishment” candidate.

- Externally. The great international organizations and the governmental commitments with allied countries represent a heavy burden for the taxpayers. The panorama of the international community is not beneficial for the whole of the United States, and for this reason, isolationism has to be a pragmatic objective, except in cases where there is a tangible national security problem⁴. According to Trump, everyone takes advantage of the enormous economic and financial generosity of the United States, and for this reason, the allied countries have to take charge of the costs of their defense. After the idealistic globalism of the Obama administration, the opinion of Americans would be taken into account to design the presence of “America” in the world. Islamic terrorism, which threatens US interests at the global level, is the result of a succession of nefarious interventionist policies and a misinterpretation of the international situation by liberal ideology.

4. The identification of the great economic problems of the United States.

- Internally. A nation can be governed as a multinational company or a family business: effort, perseverance and talent. The deindustrialization and relocation process has ruined entire regions and ruined the lifelong projects of millions of Americans. The industrial decline of the

4. The presentation of the isolationist “plan” was very controversial, because Trump, from one day to the next, defended the direct intervention on the instability foci and the increase of the defense programs. At this point he took many accusations of populist and irresponsible, inside and outside his party.

United States must be reversed or it will drag the other sectors into a permanent crisis situation. The country and its economic circuits can not accept more immigration, and therefore it is necessary to combat illegal immigration for the normal functioning of the country and its institutions.

· Externally. China's unfair competition must be combated from the institutions. Likewise, new trade agreements must be signed bilaterally with trading partners and jointly with neighboring states. In the latter case, the reconsideration of NAFTA was inevitably linked to the construction of the border wall with Mexico. In the same line of argument, Europe, Japan and Korea would have to position themselves clearly before the economic and commercial interests of the United States.

5. The social and cultural preservation of the United States must be present in the next legislative agenda. The government has the obligation and the right to defend the social order, to restore security and to value the cultural elements that have made "America" great throughout its historical trajectory. Here issues like immigration re-emerge, because, according to the conservative interpretation, immigrants are incapable of "adapting" to the American way of life and are closely linked with criminality, tax fraud and inactivity.
6. Permanent interpellation to citizens about their right to prosperity and their right to safety. These issues are interrelated, through Trump candidate's argumentation processes, through factors such as delinquency, lack of opportunities, loss of purchasing power and lack of institutional support (companies and individuals) over the most depressed regions of the country. This grouping of topics includes allusions to illegal immigration, the disappearance of "Made in USA" records, wages and the price of "old time" fuel, the right to own a home, the right to carry weapons, etc.

Table 6. The results of the presidential elections of the United States in 2016

	Trump	Clinton
Total vote	62,985,106	65,853,625
Percent	45.9%	48.0%
Electoral college vote	306	232

Source: own elaboration, according to *The New York Times*. (2018) “Presidential Election Results: Donald J. Trump Wins”. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/president>

The master column of the presidential campaign, on which all strategic structure is based, was to propose a search model of potential Republican voters, in two planes: geographical and sociological. In this case, the media and social networks were decisive for the study of the electoral mass, through the ebbs and flows of direct and indirect information (feed-back, big data). The media, in its analogue and digital version, was not only used for the dissemination of advertising and information content, but also provided invaluable information for selecting message rejection objectives (Dunn and Tedesco, 2017, pp. 99-115 ; Holloway, 2017, pp. 27-46).

Table 7. State victories in the presidential elections of the United States in 2016

Trump	Clinton
Alaska: 163,387 (51.3%) E.V. 3	Hawaii: 266,891 (62.2%) E.V. 4
Arizona: 1,252,401 (48.1%) E.V. 11	Washington: 1,742,718 (52.2%) E.V. 12
Utah: 515,231 (45.1%) E.V. 6	Oregón: 1,002,106 (50.1%) E.V. 7
Idaho: 409,055 (59.2%) E.V. 4	California: 8,753,788 (61.5%) E.V. 55
Montana: 279,240 (55.6%) E.V. 3	Nevada: 539,260 (47.9%) E.V. 6
Wyoming: 174,419 (68.2%) E.V. 3	Colorado: 1,338,870 (48.2%) E.V. 9
North Dakota: 216,794 (63.0%) E.V. 3	New Mexico: 385,234 (48.3%) E.V. 5
South Dakota: 227,721 (61.5%) E.V. 3	Minnesota: 1,367,825 (46.4%) E.V. 10
Nebraska: 495,961 (58.7%) E.V. 5	Illinois: 3,090,729 (52.2%) E.V. 20
Kansas: 671,018 (56.2%) E.V. 6	Virginia: 1,981,473 (49.8%) E.V. 13
Oklahoma: 949,136 (65.3%) E.V. 7	Maryland: 1,677,928 (60.3%) E.V. 10
Texas: 4,685,047 (52.2%) E.V. 38	Delaware: 235,603 (53.1%) E.V. 3
Iowa: 800,983 (51.1%) E.V. 6	New Jersey: 2,148,278 (55.0%) E.V. 14
Missouri: 1,594,511 (56.4%) E.V. 10	New York: 4,556,124 (59.0%) E.V. 29

Arkansas: 684,872 (60.6%) E.V. 6	Connecticut: 897,572 (54.6%) E.V. 7
Louisiana: 1,178,638 (58.1%) E.V. 8	Rhode Island: 252,525 (54.4%) E.V. 4
Wisconsin: 1,405,284 (47.2%) E.V. 10	Massachusetts: 1,995,196 (60.0%) E.V. 11
Michigan: 2,279,543 (47.3%) E.V. 16	Vermont: 178,573 (56.7%) E.V. 3
Indiana: 1,557,286 (56.5%) E.V. 11	New Hampshire: 348,536 (46.8%) E.V. 4
Ohio: 2,841,005 (51.3%) E.V. 18	Maine: 357,735 (47.8%) E.V. 3
Pennsylvania: 2,970,733 (48.2%) E.V. 20	
Kentucky: 1,202,971 (62.5%) E.V. 8	
West Virginia: 489,371 (67.9%) E.V. 5	
Tennessee: 1,522,925 (60.7%) E.V. 11	
Mississippi: 700,714 (57.9%) E.V. 6	
Alabama: 1,318,255 (62.1%) E.V. 9	
Georgia: 2,362,631 (50.4%) E.V. 16	
North Carolina: 2,362,631 (49.8%) E.V. 15	
South Carolina: 1,155,389 (54.9%) E.V. 9	
Florida: 4,617,886 (48.6%) E.V. 29	
Maine: 335,593 (44.9%) E.V. 1	

Source: own elaboration, according to *The New York Times*. (2018) "Presidential Election Results: Donald J. Trump Wins". Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/president>.

From the strategic point of view, the key issues of the campaign could be synthesized in the following points:

1. The great impact of the Trump phenomenon lies in the abrupt disappearance of objectivity in the presentation of data and information in the political debate. The theoretical, ideological and rhetorical correction disappear, to make way for the political messages raised from the psychological impact, theoretical reduction, empirical exemplification, grammatical simplification and linguistic vulgarization. In this way, messages of great impact were projected with three main purposes: to mobilize the traditional Republican voter, to try to attract undecided or disenchanted voters with other political options and to demobilize the traditional Democratic voter.

2. The designers of the campaign made a great effort to become aware of the big issues of concern of the population. For this reason, Trump's speech was so changeable and adapted according to the target audience. This is not a new circumstance in the American political strategy, but it does have a very obvious distinctive feature: the incorporation of marketing techniques and advertising consumption. In this way, messages that the audience expected to hear were projected, generating a psychological link with the political discourse and a common identity bond between the voters.
3. Although many of the arguments and exemplifications during Trump's campaign caused explosions of hilarity among many communication professionals and many Democratic voices, and Hillary Clinton could not manage its apparent advantage. Despite having a larger campaign budget, the Democratic candidate failed to take the initiative in presenting original proposals and was not able to break the emotional link between the Republican proposals and the people who had undergone the transformations of globalization, the disasters of the 2008 financial crisis and the lack of budget coverage during the Obama administration.

Once these two classifications (thematic and strategic) of key issues are raised, it is necessary to talk about the most decisive states in the 2016 presidential elections. Despite having obtained the popular vote, with an advantage of more than two million, candidate Clinton had to see how the Republicans won with a difference of seventy-four electoral votes (see tables 6 and 7). While Trump worked uniformly to preserve all the states of the central part of the country, mostly rural areas and very much linked with the Republican Party, he also launched to recover more fickle states (Florida, Ohio, West Virginia or Iowa) and with a long connection to the Democratic Party (Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania). The twenty electoral votes of the state of Pennsylvania raised many questions among the Democratic analysts, who were perplexed to see how deep the economic softness of Trump had been (Bradlee, 2018, pp. 13-27, Pollak and Schweikart, 2017, pp. 103-126).

The state of California deserves a special mention, as the Republicans made a very strong investment in advertising, apparently to try to get their fifty-five electoral votes, but the reality turned out to be different. Clinton made the mistake of spending time, campaign team personnel, and economic and advertising resources in a state that heavily favored the Democratic Party. In this way, Trump could turn to the states located on the East Coast and the Great Lakes region⁵, with the intention of pointing out the deepening economic issues, which very high percentages of the population had been experiencing.

“[...] Trump keeps saying he’s going to spend \$ 100 million on his campaign [...]” (*The Washington Post*)

3. Symbiosis of the new and the old: communication, publicity, message and leadership

One of the main causes of the scarce impact of campaign advertising of the Democratic Party in 2016 was the obsession with digital media and the purchase of minutes in the mainstream media. With more than twice as much money spent on advertising as her opponent, candidate Clinton could not capitalize on her supposed initial advantage, as opposed to a Republican discourse anchored on an advertising strategy based on a mixture of traditional elements and experimental elements (Myers, 2017, pp. 267-278; Rapoport et al., 2017, pp. 147-151). The Democrats came to the election divided, with a presidential candidate who did not work on the consensus and the appeasement of the opposing sectors, with a triumphalist political discourse and an exhausted economic agenda, and with an important part of its electoral mass still suffering the consequences of the financial crisis of 2008.

5. The most economically degraded region after the implementation of neoliberal policies: offshoring and deindustrialization. States renamed journalistic information as “Rust Belt”.

“How Trump won by spending half as much money as Clinton [...] ‘We had enough money and the right candidate. It’s as simple as that’, said Lewis Eisenberg, the Republican National Committee’s finance chairman. [...]” (*USAToday*)

Trump announced his intention to appear in the Republican primaries with very clear ideas and predesigned messages. As already mentioned in the first section, his experience in the sales and advertising sector guaranteed him a good understanding and ability to work with the specialists of his political team. The speech for his first appearance in New York, on June 16, 2015, was not only a declaration of intentions, but a kind of extract of slogans, promises and affirmations, which would be very present throughout the electoral campaign (2016) and in his speech of his inauguration as president (2017). The poster with the motto “Make America Great Again” was present on candidate Trump’s stage, flanking the lectern and eight American flags, and with the song “Rocking in the Free World” (Neil Young) at full volume.

The dichotomy between the new and the old reflects the immense effort made by the team of candidate Trump in his attempt to fight for the youngest electorate. It was intended to convey the message that in a large country all citizens had a place, regardless of their age or situation. Campaign advertising and the dissemination of information and political messages were a mixture of detailed programming and improvisation of the candidate at specific moments (Corder, 2016, pp. 13-20, Hendricks and Schill, 2017, pp. 121-130). This conjunction of factors could be compiled in the following classification:

1. The implementation of advertising objectives is established on a previous segmentation and a selection process based on the chances of success. The objectives close to the Republican Party are propped up, the objectives close to the Democratic Party are ignored and the possibility of approaching the peripheral elements of all the political options is worked in depth.

2. The construction of the concepts of empty meaning, flexible meaning and the open meaning. Simple and assimilable slogans are proclaimed, which the electors interpret and decode according to their ideological predilections and personal beliefs. In this sense, the phrases “Make America Great Again” and “America First” have multiple meanings and multiple interpretations. Trump supporters consider that making a big country again could mean: good jobs, high salaries, open factories, vacations as in previous decades, a country without immigration, fully English-speaking, the ability to go out to dinner on weekends, medical insurance in the company, the possibility of changing cars, owning a house, having solvency in a rural area, safe streets, being able to fly home for family celebrations, having access to higher education, etc.
3. The use of fear, despair and distrust, through vagueness, exaggerations, inaccuracies, popular myths, urban legends and false news, incorporated into the official campaign, in the front line of the political debate. The purpose of this use of ineffable and irrational elements is related to the gradual elimination of the theoretical and deontological components of the political debate and the media. This strategy was proposed for both mobilization and demobilization.
4. The thematic assault of the media and the news coverage of journalism professionals. When the journalistic approach is not appropriate for the interests of projection of favorable messages, candidate Trump always redirected the debates, the press conferences, the interviews and the interpellations by means of exaggerations, outbursts, controversial statements, falsehoods, victimizations, organizational resources, etc. It is what has been known journalistically as “taking the initiative in the debate,” at the price of skipping all tactical agreements and cordiality frames for public debate between Republicans and Democrats.
5. The permanent contact with the people throughout the Republican primaries and the whole presidential campaign was an element of enormous impact among the public opinion. This process of approaching people

was carried out through causal encounters in the street, in political party events, in sudden visits to work places, in photographic meetings (selfies) with thousands of people, with the incorporation of the public in political scenarios and with the call of the campaign volunteers to take the initiative. In this sense, candidate Trump presumed to be an ordinary man, a politician who listens to people and who knows the social reality. He boasted about having the most loyal followers and the most transversal and patriotic electorate.

6. The permanent evocation of the greatness of the United States, adapting messages and historical icons of the American culture to the point of mythologizing the socio-economic past. Under this premise, Trump did not miss the opportunity to be photographed under an old advertising poster, to be wrapped in retro stylistic elements, to have meetings with veterans, to participate in outdated cultural activities, to quote letters and dialogues of great musical and cinematographic successes, synthesize the great political issues of Republican rhetoric, etc. The denunciation of the negative drift of the country, also deserves a mention, as in the placement of posters and campaign stickers in closed factories, in evicted buildings, activist seats, deteriorated infrastructures, entrances to ghettos, depopulated areas, etc. The projected image of the second half of the 20th century is an authentic historical distortion, but with a great sentimental component. The messages and products linked to the idea that any past time was better are very captivating for a large part of the population.
7. The creation of a common working framework between analogue communication media and digital communication platforms. The foundation of media for the campaign (a paradigmatic example would be Breitbart) and the use of social networks (the most symbolic case would be Twitter) of all kinds to generate debates among citizens, was another step in the peculiar battle of Trump with the established journalistic channels. The need to disseminate marathon days of political activity, in three, four and five states or cities a day, was very well covered. In the same way, this

action reinforced candidate Trump's attempt to convey an image of being an unconventional politician and victim of the intransigent liberal press.

8. The permanent affirmation that the excess of ideological planning had placed the economy and political institutions in a catastrophic situation throughout the country. Of course, in all this rhetorical dramatization, the Democratic Party, and its progressive approaches and the influence of its peripheral sectors had placed the country in this critical situation. In the crucial moment of 2016, candidate Trump came forward to solve all these problems, falsely arguing that he had no ideology, simply asserted that he was gifted with talent for the economy and concerned about the suffering of the American citizenry.

4. Conclusion

Taking stock of research on electoral issues, on political messages and on audiences, it is possible to verify the existence of a general tendency to use quantitative methods and mixed methods. There are research topics that match very well with statistical abstraction, but there are other research objects that can not be considered within a rigorous statistical study. This is the case of many of the communicative and sociological phenomena derived from the electoral campaign of Donald Trump. In a global investigation of the campaign so many variables emerge of a psychological, intangible and ineffable nature, which can not be addressed without multiple methodological interconnections and without a final qualitative assessment.

All the elections are conditioned by a fundamental issue, and this topic usually has a great impact among the media and among the electorate. The theme "star" of the 2016 presidential campaign was the approach of the socio-economic degradation of the United States and the serious consequences of the financial collapse of 2008. Candidate Trump knew very well how to transmit his message through multiple media and channels, coordinating their different strategies very well. On the contrary, candidate Clinton could not counteract the rhetorical effect of the popular slogans "Make America

Great Again” and “America First”. The approaches of political logic and macro-economic reality of the Democrats were always in the shade.

The political justifications facilitated the impulse of hate speech and simplification of candidate Trump. Trump’s communication strategies broke the Democratic normality and undermined the pre-established electoral ethic in the United States, contributing to the creation of a highly polarized social scenario. There is a very clear tendency among the world press to describe Trump as “populist”. In a sense, there are some many elements close to populism, but they have been exaggerated by information professionals, because those same elements have not been emphasized in other American historical leaders. We must bear in mind that Donald Trump’s speeches have been a selective synthesis of the different programs and ideological positions of the Republican Party over time. In this sense, it can be said that the war started by Donald Trump against the liberal and progressive press had consequences on the criteria for the production of political content throughout the campaign.

The combined use of traditional media and new digital platforms are undoubtedly a key issue in the wide dissemination of political messages and programmatic content of the Republican Party. In recent years terms such as “post-truth” or “false news” have been generalized as elements of disruption at the present time, but they are exaggerated, because falsehoods and hoaxes have always existed. The Digital Revolution has given greater diffusion to the “dirty game” in the field of American politics and come about the foundations have also been laid for a new code of conduct and a new cultural identity between the different parts of conservative “America”.

Trump’s electoral victory would not have without his political communication strategy. This strategy included three objectives to seek an electoral victory: keep the traditional Republican voter, intensify the approach to less ideologized voters in areas with the possibility of Republican victory and seek electoral demobilization of the traditional Democratic voter in the most economically depressed areas. In relation to the communicative strategy,

the campaign of electoral publicity of the Republican Party was very well interconnected with the political messages and supposed a true invasion of the public spaces and of the communicative structures throughout the entire country.

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THE PERFORMANCE OF POWER AND CITIZENSHIP: DAVID CAMERON MEETS THE PEOPLE IN THE 2016 BREXIT CAMPAIGN

Peter Lunt

Introduction

In this paper, I examine the mediated juxtaposition and interrelation of the performance of power and of citizenship in the context of two TV programmes aired as part of the UK Brexit referendum campaign of 2016. The UK Prime Minister of the day, David Cameron, head of the campaign to remain in the European Union (EU) appeared on the shows, one at the launch of the campaign and one days before the referendum. The shows were adaptations of the popular BBC current affairs panel discussion programme *Question Time* on which Cameron fielded questions from members of the public moderated by a programme host. In the first programme, he was also interviewed by a political journalist in front of the TV audience before taking questions. There are several reasons why these shows are significant in relation to political communication and the theme of this special issue “citizenship and performance”. First, the programmes are examples of the diversity of forms of political communication ranging from set piece party political broadcasts, political interviews, televised debates, talk shows, and appearances by politicians on current affairs and popular programmes on daytime TV. Second, the direct engagement between the Prime Minister of the country and members of the public in a mediated exchange of views and ideas raises questions

about the role of the media in the public sphere and contemporary arguments about the role of disruption, dissent, activism and populism. Third, as relatively unscripted public exchanges the programmes are performed by representatives of power and citizenship. I will argue that power is performed by the PM as a construction of personal authenticity and political authority and by citizens as a disruption of the performance of power in the form of individualized dissent (Ruiz, ref). The context of the referendum was also important as a major political event that stood in a complex relation to traditional party political affiliation and engaged the public in a relatively open debate between sides representing the answer to a single question; whether to remain in the EU or leave.

Cameron, it has been widely acknowledged, as an ex-PR man, was a consummate political performer across a range of media contexts (Craig, 2016). In a similar way to ex US president Obama he developed a style of political leadership that sought to overcome the excesses of spin and media management characteristic of the Clinton and Blair years by sustaining a skilled and reflective approach to the mediated performance of power that combined accessible personal authenticity combined with political authority (Craig, 2016). Up to the point of the EU referendum campaign, Cameron appeared as a highly skilled media performer accomplished at managing standard political communication contexts such as press conferences, interrogative interviews with political journalists and set piece speeches such as the annual party conference. In addition, he was equally at home meeting the people in mediated town hall meetings (PM Direct), or sitting on the sofa of a current affairs TV show as he was when debating in the chamber of the House of Commons. Craig (2016) argues that such multiply skilled performances across such varied contexts aim to manage, if not resolve, tensions between authenticity and performance, between the public politician and the private individual, between factual broadcasting and entertainment and between legitimacy based on expertise and public popularity. Such a leadership style also aims to avoid or overcome the public cynicism that potentially results from the visibility of media management and spin which draws attention

to the strategies of political communication rather than substantive claims and policy commitments (Capella and Jamieson, 1997). These diverse media practices adopted by Cameron aimed to establish popular appeal through the performance of personal authenticity thereby meeting the demands for personal information from social media and infotainment genres without sacrificing political authority.

In the three weeks of campaigning between June 2nd and June 22nd 2016 fifteen mainstream TV programmes were aired across several genres. These included political interviews conducted by well-known political journalists, debates between leading representatives of the remain and leave campaigns, audience discussion programmes with members of the public and, the programmes examined here, variants of *Question Time* in which key campaigners faced questions from members of the public. The BBC played a central role in staging ten of the sixteen TV (and one radio) programmes during the campaign. ITV held three events, Sky News 2 and Channel 4 one. Recent commentators (Chadwick, ref; Craig, 2016) have suggested that TV is finding its place in contemporary campaigns partly through innovations in programme forms and by complementing and intersecting with online and social media campaigns and public reactions.

This paper focuses on two TV programmes aired during the Brexit campaign in which Cameron came face to face with members of the public to answer their questions. Cameron aimed to disseminate his campaign agenda through this mediated public engagement, inviting the audience to watch him in interaction with the studio audience who, however, attempted to disrupt his skilled practice of the performance of power. They exerted pressure on Cameron by disrupting his performance and by pressing home political questions and social concerns that went beyond the agenda he was aiming to disseminate (Isin, 2002). As social practices these interactions involve performative skills, traditions and the constitution of political subjectivities (MacIntyre, 1981). The approach to analysis in this paper, therefore, focuses on the analysis of the mediated performance of a social practice taking as its starting point the centrality of argument and disputation in mediat-

ed public spaces, analysing the genre conventions adopted in these hybrid programmes as a *mis-en-scène*. The paper starts with a discussion of key themes and questions at stake in thinking about the mediated performances of power and citizenship both in terms of thinking about the role of differentiation between politics and the political and in terms of the genealogy of both performance of power grounded in authenticity and authority and the background to public acts of dissent and activism. These discussions are followed by an analysis of the two television shows and the paper concludes with reflections on the performance of power and citizenship.

Political culture, Media and de-differentiation – the blurring of boundaries

These programmes stage an encounter between performances of power and citizenship (Goffman, 1961), that instantiates the blurring of boundaries in political culture and society partly enabled by digital media (Isin and Rupert, 2015). Such encounters reflect the de-differentiation of politics and the political (Mouffe, 2005), system and lifeworld (Habermas, 1987) and questions of equality and freedom and social and cultural values (Rawls, 1993). Isin and Ruppert (2015) demonstrate the affordances of digital media create new potentials for the performance of digital citizenship as acts that make claims to rights. Here I explore the way that these trends spill over into linear media in the way that citizens occupy the spaces of linear media to disrupt the performance of power a staged encounter as autonomous individuals in which citizenship is enacted (Gray, 2000). The ideas of rights claiming and politically autonomous acts of citizenship raise critical challenges to the liberal tradition that understand citizenship as a legal category of rights bearing individuals and suggests a process conception of both governance and forms of life in liberal democracies (Gray, 2000). Differentiations between the state and the body politic, between questions of politics and values, and between civil and uncivil discourses and actions are all potentially blurred in the current conjuncture.

These engagements are performative in the way suggested by Alexander et al (ref): “individuals, organizations, and parties moved “instinctively”

to hook their actions into the background culture in a lively and compelling manner, working to create an impression of sincerity and authenticity rather than one of calculation and artificiality, to achieve verisimilitude” (Alexander, Giessen and Mast, ref, 1)

In the context of a political campaign, television offers a key site for performative embedding and engagement. The communication styles of political leaders have adapted to make use of the diverse forms and contexts of communication balanced by disciplined campaigning and media management strategies. In this paper, I argue that alongside the varied forms of performative engagement by politicians, the affordances of staged performance create opportunities for citizens to occupy mediated spaces and realise their political interests and aims through the disruption of the performance of power. Activist movements, civil society bodies, and individual citizens exercising their rights to communicate taking advantage of these opportunities. In contrast to seeking compromise or consent (Mouffe, ref), participating in the public sphere (Habermas, ref) or civil disobedience (Rawls, ref), contemporary forms of activism and dissent innovate in various ways including varieties of performative disruption (Isin and Ruppert, 2015; Ruiz, 2014; Lekakis, ref). In this paper, I consider the idea that individualized forms of dissent make their way into the mainstream by tactically occupying positions provided for the expression of views and opinions in order to disrupt the performance of power.

The Background to the EU Referendum

The campaign for Remain was modelled on the conservative party campaign at the 2015 general election. Having governed as part of a coalition with the Liberal Democrats since 2010, the conservatives won an unexpected parliamentary majority in 2015. There was an increase in support for conservatives and labour, the collapse of the liberal vote and, notably, a radical increase in the nationalist vote as both the SNP in Scotland and UKIP in England dramatically increasing their vote. The *Daily Telegraph* offered an insightful analysis of the election campaign organized by Lynton

Crosby that demanded discipline from members of the conservative party, a campaign agenda that focused on economic policy, negative campaigning against their main rivals Labour and the Lib Dems focused on the party leaders (Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg), and David Cameron fronting the campaign in presidential style.¹

The use of Cameron 'front and centre' was partly justified by his high personal opinion poll ratings although these were moderated by perceptions of him as uncommitted and unemotional and negative reactions to his upper class social background. Craig (2016) discusses the strategy adopted to overcome these public perceptions by deploying Cameron's high-level media skills to make a direct appeal to the broader electorate. For example, Craig (2016) provides a detailed analysis of the way in which Cameron handled an interview on the BBC's Andrew Marr Show by skilfully challenging the host's framing of conservative policy, answering only the questions he wanted to answer and refusing to be drawn into areas that might be problematic.

The challenge facing Cameron and his advisors was to find ways of bringing his undoubted rhetorical and presentational skills into contact with a broader public, to popularise his leadership. Consequently, skilful performance in political interviews was supplemented by a mixed communication strategy that kept Cameron in the public eye and aimed to soften his public image. This included a strategy that sought to use Cameron's communication skills as a way of closing the gap between him and the public in the form of direct communication in Town Hall style meetings called *PM Direct*, transcripts of which were made available on the No 10 website and recordings loaded on YouTube. These 'meetings' were often held in places workplace (e.g. Caterpillar, Easyjet., Rolls Royce) or in the meeting spaces of NGOs, in which Cameron stood, often shirt sleeved, amongst the employees or members who were seated at floor level with a bank of chairs behind him from the perspective of a single camera. This production format created a discursive space in which Cameron was locating in the body of the audience.

1. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/general-election-2015/11592230/Election-2015-How-David-Camerons-Conservatives-won.html>

The shows were unmoderated so Cameron hosted the show, explaining, for example, to questioners that they should wait for the roving mike to reach them before speaking and he was, of course, also the 'guest' of the show, answering questions asked by the audience. An important feature of such encounters was that the questions were preselected and there was no follow-up or supplementary questions by members of the audience. This lack of interactivity between questioner and answerer allowed Cameron the opportunity to treat questions as cues to which he responded by delivering well-rehearsed accounts of conservative policy.

The *PM Direct* format was adopted for the general election campaign of 2015. These occasions were constructed in private spaces (for example an aircraft hangar) and constructed creating the impression of a public meeting but with control over who was present and limiting the communication of participants to asking pre-selected questions and applauding. The audience gave a performance of being members of the public but in fact are conservative supporters. Cameron's performances focused on presenting the election agenda in the form of popular versions of campaign speeches and the 'audience' reacted positively and emotionally; he was fired up and they were fired up. This was a simulation of the traditional campaign stump, but in a highly controlled and disciplined occasion in which enthusiastic party members created a sense of spontaneity as a background to Cameron's campaign speeches. Perhaps, in the context of a general election campaign it is understandable to create what looks like a naturally occurring interaction as a managed show (Thompson, ref), but this stands in potential contradiction to the performance of power as authentic political authority.

The Programmes

Sky News

Cameron kick started the remain campaign with an appearance on a Sky News special on the 2nd of June 2016. The show began with an interview conducted by Faisal Ali, a political journalist, in front of a live TV audience and was followed by a moderated Q&A session with members of the studio

audience hosted by Kay Burley, a Sky newsreader and presenter. In the context of a campaign in which the factual basis of claims made by both sides and the growing awareness of the idea post-truth, Islam opened his questioning by asking the PM to stick to the facts about migration by outlining the figures for net migration during his leadership. This was challenging ground for Cameron given his claims that the leave camp had adopted post-truth campaigning and also questions his political authority because of the promise in the 2015 election campaign to reduce migration to the tens of thousands a year. Cameron gave a straight answer by admitting that 600,000 more people had entering the UK than had moved to other countries since he came to power. When pressed whether he had broken a manifesto promise (challenging political authority) Cameron provided an intriguing justification shifting the ground from a manifesto ‘promise’ to an ‘ambition’ and suggesting that the relatively better performance of the UK economy during his period of office compared to continental Europe had led to the creation of many new jobs which had attracted workers from across Europe:

When I made that ambition for Britain, at that time net migration between people leaving and people coming from Europe was broadly in balance. It was about trying to reduce migration from outside. But we have been living in extraordinary times when the British economy was growing strongly and we've created 2m jobs. There was a time when we were creating more jobs than other European countries put together. That won't continue for ever.

Another important strategic element of this answer is that it shifts the focus onto Cameron’s central campaigning agenda, the economic benefits of membership of the EU and the risks of leaving. He argues that the target “remains the right ambition for Britain” and that trying to cut immigration by leaving the EU and pulling out of the single market would be “madness”, because of the economic damage it would cause.

A number of further questions followed from Islam, most significantly challenging Cameron’s references to the first world war to illustrate the potential

security dangers of Brexit, which Islam suggests is an example of fearmongering by the remain campaign. After further questions which are less challenging, the show changes gear (and genre) and morphs into a mediated popular press conference or political talk show (Craig, 2016). Faisal Islam is replaced by a Kay Burley who moderates the subsequent Q & A question session with members of the audience asking questions of Cameron. This combination of production formats was a challenge to Cameron not least because the robust exchange with a professional journalist are followed immediately by a context which required softer skills to engage members of the public; which are usually kept separate in different generic media. What becomes evident is that Cameron's view of the exchanges with members of the public was to treat their questions as symptomatic of public concerns and triggers or cues for campaign soundbites as he had in *PM Direct*.

For example, one participant, identified as a businessman, asked the PM to reflect on the *personal damage the scaremongering has done to your legacy*. Cameron's reply is interesting and reflects an appeal to personal authority as the core of his political commitments: *I don't accept it is scaremongering. I am genuinely worried about Britain leaving the single market*. Cameron also links his campaign focus on the economic risks of leaving the EU to his political authority: *Frankly, I think the job of the prime minister is to warn about potential dangers as well as to talk about the upsides and the opportunities there are by being a member of this organisation*. In addition, Cameron articulated his opposition to post-truth by emphasising his reliance on and trust in a variety of experts who support the claim that leaving the EU will be to the economic detriment of the UK and linking this to his political authority: *But if I didn't listen to the IMF, to the OECD, to the TUC, to the CBI, to the governor of the Bank of England – if I didn't listen to any of these people, I would not be doing my job and I would not be serving this country*.

Another questioner expressed concerns that during the Brexit campaign, the PM shared a platform with the Mayor of London who he had strongly opposed as the Labour candidate in the mayoral election of the previous year. In response, Cameron said:

We had a lively election campaign in London, I didn't think it was the right choice some of the people he shared a platform with. The right thing for the PM to do is to work together. Sadiq and I disagree about many things, we'll try and work together and on this issue of Europe we agree. We buried our disagreements and appeared on a platform.

From Cameron's perspective, the contingencies of a referendum necessarily realign politics across party lines and as leader of the conservative party and prime minister he would now find himself opposing the arguments and positions of some of his party colleagues and working for the remain campaign which included many liberal or left-leaning organizations, public figures and politicians. From the perspective of members of the public, however, the dissociation of Cameron from his role as leader of the conservative party and PM is not taken lightly. For example, one participant suggested that it was time to change the government reflecting the idea that the referendum was a vote of confidence in the government and in Cameron. Intriguingly, some political commentators ridiculed participants for such questions, but the difficulty of separating political commitments and allegiances from the question of membership of the EU is non-trivial as the ruling conservative party knew well.

Another reason Cameron adapted Town Hall meetings as part of the remain campaign, especially in the context of not agreeing to take part in a televised debate in the 2015 general election and the Brexit campaign, was as a response to the public perception of the lack of passion and authenticity. Town Hall meetings create a sense of Cameron among the people and of spontaneity through performance allowing Cameron to concentrate on delivering his campaign messages rather than engaging in discussion or debate with the audience. All this is well illustrated by his exchange with a literature student on the Sky News programme. The student, identified as Soraya Bouazzaoui made a statement of her concerns: "the entire campaign was nothing but scare mongering; no valid facts; no pros and cons" and that "everything I've seen makes voting into the EU look worse". The campaign, in other words was high on persuasion and low on fact and argument and,

significantly, this intelligent, informed, articulate member of the public is thinking of the referendum as a choice between “voting in” in her terms and “voting out”. Referenda are usually deployed following parliamentary agreement on legislation for which there is parliamentary approval of legislation that has significant constitutional implications and so is put to the public for their assent. Cameron’s original strategy was to make significant changes to the UK’s position in Europe through negotiation and then put these new conditions to the referendum in which case the question put to the public would have been do you agree/disagree with the new conditions for membership of the EU. However, Cameron was only able to negotiate adjustments to the UK’s conditions of membership and in this context, the referendum was drafted as an in/out vote giving equal weight to both sides and triggering more existential questions about membership of the EU than Cameron initially intended. Instead of approval for new relations with the EU, Pandora’s box was opened and with it a platform for conservatives who had always questioned the UK’s membership of the EU and nationalists who had always questioned the legitimacy of European political institutions.

Having expressed her concerns about the conduct of the Brexit campaigns, Bouazzaoui did not give way to cynicism but questioned the reassurances that Cameron had repeatedly made that remaining in the EU would make the UK safer in foreign affairs and specifically in response to terrorist threats. Using the concerns raised by middle East states concerning Turkey’s relations to terrorist groups, she questions whether being in the EU meant that there were no risks in foreign policy. Cameron’s response was interesting, saying that he would address the two issues that Bouazzaoui had raised: *First, the positive case for staying. I think there is a positive case. I think we’ll be better off as a country, with more jobs. I think we’ll keep our country moving forward, we’ll get things done in the world, whether its tackling climate change or indeed standing up to Islamic terrorism ... and also we’ll be safer; strength in numbers.* At this point, Bouazzaoui interrupts Cameron:

“That’s not answering my question. Let me finish now, because I’ve seen you interrupt many people before. Let me finish. I’m an English Literature student, I know waffling when I see it, OK. I’m sorry, but you’re not answering my question – how can you reassure people who want to vote out that we notare safe from extremism when we are willing to work with a government like Turkey who want to be part of the EU when they are under heavy accusation?”

Cameron’s discomfort was evident and he tried to get back on track by saying that he had ‘got it’ and addressed the question of Turkey’s potential accession to the EU –

There is no prospect of Turkey joining the EU in decades. They applied in 1987, they have to complete 35 chapters. One has been completed so far. At this rate they will join in the year 3000. There are lots of reasons to vote one way or vote the other way. Turkey is not going to join the EU any time soon, every country, every parliament, has a veto. There are lots of things to worry about in this referendum campaign. I absolutely think that is not a prospect, it’s not going to happen.

This exchange illustrates a number of aspects of the interaction between the performance of power and of citizenship in this programme. It demonstrates Cameron’s strategy of taking questions as cues to which he responds with rehearsed campaign speeches. The passage also demonstrates that an important aspect of the performance of citizenship in this context is refusing the audience subject position, to bring power to account by insisting on the relevance of answers and of disrupting the performance of power. We can make sense of Cameron’s strategy as treating substantive political questions as expressions of concern which he takes as needing reassurance, information or contradiction. However, on this occasion, the student questioner was on the evening news.

At the end of the programme Cameron was given space to make a short summary statement:

I would just say to everybody: as we go home and wake up in the morning and look our children and our grandchildren in the eye and we think who we are responsible for through our pay packet, let us not roll the dice on their future. Britain doesn't succeed when we quit, we succeed when we get stuck in and we work to improve these organisations and we safeguard the prosperity and the security of this great country. To me, that's what it's all about.

This pre-rehearsed set-piece ending does not address the studio audience or reflect on the discussions that have taken place in the programme. Instead it is another attempt to provide a newsworthy headline.

In contrast, anyone who had watched this programme would most likely come to the view that the programme had demonstrated precisely that the public were not in agreement with the remain campaign's focus on the economic consequences of leaving the EU and that a combination of substantive political questions related to immigration, the legal framework of the EU, the impact of migration on public services, and the efficacy of the government's austerity policies were all implicated in the vote in the referendum . Furthermore, Cameron's deflection of such questions and his very skilled practice of turning to his own agenda raised serious questions about both his authenticity authority on which his enviable popularity ratings had been based up to this point.

Press reaction to the programme was interestingly split. Those who evaluated the programme in terms of how well Cameron got his agenda and points across were broadly positive reckoning that he had managed well despite the distraction of the hostile interview and having to manage the relationship with members of the public. Those who focused on the interaction with members of the public were less convinced. The consensus was summed up by Michael Deacon, writing in the *Telegraph: The studio audience didn't think much of him, and he knew it. It was no disaster. But if you wondered why Mr Cameron didn't fancy a proper debate: now you know.*²

2. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/02/i-know-waffling-when-i-see-it-david-cameron-takes-a-brexite-roast/>

The BBC Programme

Shortly before the referendum Cameron appeared on a BBC programme to meet the people in an adaptation of the *Question Time* format, moderated by resident host David Dimbleby. This version of the programme also differed in significant ways from the standard version of *Question Time*. On the standard version of *Question Time* members of the studio audience are selected by the host, guided by the production team, to ask questions to a panel representing the main political parties plus celebrity guests. In the programme commissioned for the referendum there was no panel and instead David Cameron fielded all the questions. The host invited questions, offering clarification when required, gave space for the PM to answer, pressing for clarification or bringing him back to the question if necessary, then invited the next question. The shift from a panel to a single individual changed the mis-en-scene for the performance of power and citizenship.

The producers and the host learnt from the first *Sky News* programme and dealt with Cameron's tendency to not address questions and shift the topic onto his campaign agenda by clustering questions thematically. In contrast to the fragmented nature of questioning on the *Sky News* programme, on this occasion a number of questions on the same theme would follow one after the other. Consequently, although Cameron shifted topic in response to questions, he found himself back on the same ground in the next question. The effect of this returning to the topic was exacerbated by the programme format because, unlike in the panel version of the programme, in which different members of the panel get to give alternative responses to audience questions and to contest these among each other before the host turns back to the audience for supplementary questions and comments. In contrast, in this version of the programme one question to the PM followed another. In addition, the host was aware of the concern about Cameron not answering the question and hijacking the agenda and so sometimes brought the PM back to the question asked and explained that he understood that Cameron wanted to talk about the economy and that he would get an opportunity later.

The first cluster of questions addressed the impact on political culture of the Brexit campaign suggesting that it had “soured the political climate in the UK”, by amplifying antagonism and linking this to the tragic death of MP Jo Cox. In an interesting answer, Cameron attempted to draw a line between political commitment or passion and aggression and to distinguish the use of reason and argument from rhetoric. He invites the audience to contemplate good and bad versions of political commitment and argument, implicitly claiming that he is on the right side of both oppositions because his politics are authentic and that his claims are backed by evidence. His opponents, by implication, are political opportunists and prepared to say anything to win.

Once again, however, Cameron has missed the point of the question, which made a subtler point that the contemporary media juncture amplifies authenticity and authority claims. Furthermore, the robustness of political argument and the use of negative campaigning to discredit opponents (decapitation) thereby amplifying antagonism in the public realm. In his reply, Cameron presses ahead, aiming to justify the comparison between himself and his political opponents. He focusses on Nigel Farage, the leader of the populist United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) and key figure in the campaign to leave the EU although not part of the official ‘leave’ group. Cameron refers to a Brexit campaign poster by UKIP which used a photograph of refugees crossing the border into Bosnia-Herzegovina with the headline *Breaking Point*. Cameron argues that Farage is ‘wrong in fact and wrong in motivation’ and that the Brexit campaigners “attempt to frighten and divide people”. In the campaign, the Brexiteers, particularly Boris Johnson, were able to turn this argument against Cameron by pointing to inconsistencies in his position on Europe challenging the authenticity of his position and to characterise his focus on the potential economic ills of leaving the EU as “project fear”. At this point the host intervenes to ask, “has your side been guilty of that”? articulating a commitment to impartiality in an interesting form; as a referee in broader public debate/disputes. The theme continues including a question that challenges Cameron on the

‘Brexit budget’ prepared by the Chancellor to demonstrate the effects of leaving Europe on taxation and public spending. Cameron’s reply suggests that his concerns are authentic, expressing his *genuine concern for the economic impact of leaving the EU* and citing the support of independent experts (OECD, IMF BoE, IFS).

Following the exchange on the conduct of the campaigns a series of questions and answers on Cameron’s own future; will he resign if the country votes to leave, would he call a general election if the vote is to leave the EU? These questions reflect the central role that Cameron played in the campaign and he tries to argue that it is not about him and shifts to his main agenda that we should remain for the sake of the economy, jobs, safety, security, and because being part of Europe strengthens the UK: “It comes down to a question of the economy and we need to work together – to grow the economy and beat terrorists”

The staging and performance of power and citizenship

Ironically, these potentialities arose in a reframing of the genre of public participation.

Conclusions

How did Cameron find himself in such a difficult, compromised performative context? In the language of the history of the present (Foucault refs; Garland, ref) then we can trace a line back to his previous ‘meetings’ with members of the public in *PM Direct* allied to a leadership style that aimed to combine personal authenticity with political authority and a disciplined approach to campaigning that included a presidential style with Cameron at the centre, negative campaigning against rivals and a focus on economic policy. The field of emergence for this configuration of leadership and campaigning styles being coalition government and the attempt to develop a political leadership style that averred spin and media management yet was media savvy. In contrast to previous meetings with the people that were ‘managed shows’ in which Cameron selected the place and audience and

set the rules of interaction the two shows in which he met the people in the Brexit campaign were managed by the broadcasters and gave opportunities for the performance of disruptive citizenship. Instead of a controlled context that afforded the illusion of public engagement while allowing Cameron to deliver his campaign message he found himself involved in a contested performative space.

The difficulties experienced by Cameron and the opportunity afforded to citizens were a function of the production format of the programme as a mis-en-scene for the performances of power and citizenship. The transformation of the programme format from its regular instantiation preserved many of the characteristics of the genre, but introduced a number of transformations that placed a greater focus on the PM as a single recipient of questions in comparison to the panel format usually adopted in *Question Time*. As a consequence, an important aspect of the dynamic of the programme was missing arising from the different perspectives that are represented by panel members in their responses. The programme usually proceeds in a sequence in which the host invites a question from the studio audience and then invites panel members, one after the other to answer questions *Question Time* is characterised by contestation, argument and often conflict between panel members as they debate alternative answers to the questions under the scrutiny of the programme host. The host then goes back to the audience for supplementary questions and reactions to the answers provided and the debates aired and finally the person who asked the question gives their reactions. In Cameron's managed show of *PM Direct* much of this was stripped away and questions were followed by a short campaign speech by Cameron before taking the next question. In the two Brexit programmes analysed here, elements of the original *Question Time* format were implemented as the host intervened, there were supplementary questions and interventions from the studio audience. However, the absence of the panel altered the dynamic of the programmes in significant ways. There was no variety of responses to questions, just Cameron's and also no display of divergent views or contestation in front of the audience.

The rhythm of exchanges and arguments and the emotional flow of the programmes were altered considerably by these changes, becoming a series of questions and answers rather than a question followed by a robust exchange and opportunity for further audience engagement. In terms of the flow of emotions also, instead of a dispersed exchange of feelings as well as views the direction of sentiment was always in the direction of Cameron.

The programmes therefore reflect the focus on Cameron in the Remain campaign and created a sense of contestation with the audience and tension between the performance of power and citizenship. In addition, the programmes became a meta-commentary on the Remain campaign in general and Cameron's role in particular. Cameron addressed the questions through two frames of reference; as cues to themes in his campaign themes rather than substantive questions and as concerns that required a combination of information (let me put you right) and reassurance. These features of his responses were seen as symptomatic of a government and a campaign that was not listening to public concerns and avoiding substantive political issues.

The analysis suggests that these are strategic performances of both power and citizenship reflecting Goffman's (1959, 1974) dramaturgy in which people act out social roles by adjusting their performance in relation to others in a social context constrained by rules. This account contrasts with accounts that argue that performance is the playing out of discursive scripts or interactional accomplishments. Here I suggest that the disruptive interventions and occupation of the television studio are examples of political agency in the form of individualized dissent.

In these examples, the mediated performance of disruptive citizenship presents itself as individuals disrupting power rather than forming or representing loosely bounded social movements or collectives (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012). These disruptive encounters appear to be the work of individuals asserting their rights to visibility in public and to communicate in a performative practice akin to Isin and Ruppert's (2015) account of digital cit-

izenship as rights claiming practices. However, the key to these disruptive practices is not the claiming of rights in and of itself but the disruption of the performance of power. These are political acts undertaken by individuals expressing their autonomy by occupying a space in which the performance of power is made visible and realised through the interaction with the performance of citizenship. In this citizenship is realized as a performative act rather than as a legal status in a context in which the performance of power and of citizenship are mutually constituted by players on the same stage (Goffman, 1959).

These individualised forms of dissent resonate the increasing visibility of and debate about new protest movements that have gained high levels of public visibility through digital and linear media and recent instances of activism and protest. The invasion of the TV studio and programme reflects the transgressions of space by protest movements (Rovisco and Ong, . The performative dimension of the occupy movement as a practice of disruptive invasion of privatised public spaces contrasts with social movements that aim to enter the mainstream by building support and membership (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012). New protest movements seek to galvanise media contexts and Along with occupation of space, the occupy movement experiments with but providing examples of opposition through dissent and the invocation of radical democratic practices in reclaiming the square (Ong and Rovisco, ref). Just as digital and social media provide social movements with new resources that ameliorate to some degree the lack of access to mainstream media resources of those challenging established power so too performative disruption and radical democratic practices seek to influence through their visibility and public impact and by providing models of alternative political practices.

What then, are the politics of individualised forms of performative visible dissent? One way of thinking about this may be as a combination of political autonomy and democracy as a *modus operandi* (Gray, 2000). In the examples discussed here dissent is performed as an expression of individual political autonomy as:

“social actors, embedded in collective representations and working through symbolic and material means, implicitly orient towards others as if they were actors on a stage seeking identification with their experiences and understandings from their audiences” (Alexander, Giessen and Mast, ref, p 2).

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HUNGARIAN MEDIA POLICY 2010 – 2018: THE ILLIBERAL SHIFT

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Viktor Orbán's political career was arguably spear-headed by a memorable speech delivered in Budapest's Heroes' Square on 16 June 1989. The then 26-year-old Orbán – a founding member of Fidesz (Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége, the Alliance of Young Democrats) that was established in March 1988 – spoke on the occasion of the reburial of Imre Nagy and other martyrs of the 1956 Revolution. Re-reading or re-watching his 1989 speech (for a transcript in Hungarian see e.g. Magyar Nemzet, 16 June 2014) makes one acutely aware of the transformation that Hungary's Prime Minister underwent since his youth as a liberal defiant of the governing Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party who demanded free elections and the withdrawal of Soviet troops and praised the virtues of European civic society. The change in Viktor Orbán's ideological leanings and his open embrace of so-called illiberal democracy has been discussed extensively. In this article I outline key developments in media policy making between 2010 and 2018 as these are symptomatic of and at the same time play a crucial role in legitimizing Hungary's shift to illiberalism. Hungary's case represents a major challenge for those studying media and democracy as the recently introduced and implemented media policies depart from normative ideals associated with media in democratic societies yet their originators have been democratical-

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ly elected with significant popular support and the laws have been passed following standard democratic legislative processes. Indeed, at the time of writing in April 2018 Orbán secured another two-third majority victory in national elections and there are already signs that he and his newly formed government will continue on the illiberal path.

Viktor Orbán first became Prime Minister of Hungary in 1998, his coalition government stayed in power till 2002. Following the 2010 parliamentary elections he took office again when the coalition of his party Fidesz and KDNP (Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt, Christian Democratic People's Party) gained a two-third majority (this has been referred to as supermajority and it is particularly important as with such a majority changes to the country's constitution can be introduced). Developments in Hungary attracted international attention (and even alarm) following the Orbán government's changes to media laws and to the Hungarian Constitution (re-named the Fundamental Law of Hungary) with some of these criticized as a departure from liberal democracy towards authoritarian rule. The European Commission (see e.g. EC 12 January 2012), the Council of Europe (see e.g. Venice Commission 20 June 2013) as well as a range of non-governmental organizations (see e.g. Human Rights Watch 18 September 2013) have voiced strong concerns about the changes undermining the rule of law, judicial independence, the independence of the country's Central Bank as well as restrictions on human rights. Orbán's 2014 supermajority victory brought the continuation of criticized policies, moreover, their development has been paired with strong anti-European Union rhetoric.

In July 2014 Viktor Orbán made a speech at the 25th Bálványos Free Summer University and Youth Camp² in the Romanian Băile Tușnad that has generated a lot of international interest. The Hungarian Prime Minister pointed out that western liberal democracy failed on a number of levels – the

2. The Summer University was established in 1990 and runs annually since then. The original declared aim was to bring Hungarian and Transylvanian politicians together and maintain a dialogue across the Hungarian Romanian border. Fidesz played a key role in establishing the University with prominent Fidesz politicians – including Orbán himself – acting as regular speakers. For more on the broader issue of diaspora politics in post-1989 Hungary see Waterbury 2006.

shortcomings were highlighted particularly following the 2008 financial crisis – and went on to state that Hungary needed to rebuild from scratch and the way in which to achieve the country’s renewal was to divert from the western liberal democratic model and instead build an illiberal nation state. “The most popular topic in thinking today is trying to understand how systems that are not Western, not liberal, not liberal democracies and perhaps not even democracies can nevertheless make their nations successful.” The non-liberal democracies that The Prime Minister referred to included Russia, China, Turkey, India and Singapore.³

Fareed Zakaria – who coined the term illiberal democracy in 1997 – responded to the speech arguing that “Orbán has enacted and implemented in Hungary a version of what can best be described as ‘Putinism’ [whose] crucial elements ... are nationalism, religion, social conservatism, state capitalism and government domination of the media. ... Orbán has followed in Putin’s footsteps, eroding judicial independence, limiting individual rights, speaking in nationalist terms about ethnic Hungarians and muzzling the press” (Zakaria, 2014). In contrast to Zakaria’s conclusion, Buzogány (2017: 1309) argues that the shift towards “authoritarian great powers” was not based on ideational proximity with Vladimir Putin/Russia.

Rather, it was preceded by growing alienation between the EU and Hungary that left little space for the Hungarian government to find other allies. Confronted with acute political criticism for its constitutional reforms by its Western allies, Hungary has increasingly become inclined to diversify its foreign policy. The economic crisis Hungary has faced since 2008 made the country’s opening towards Eastern interference a primarily economic interest-based strategy, helping to balance financial pressure from Western lenders. At the same time, while the Hungarian government provided rhetorical support for Russia in cases where its

3. For a Hungarian transcript of the speech see e.g. Farkas 2016; the official English translation is available at <http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-speech-at-the-25th-balvanyos-summer-free-university-and-student-camp>

interests were at stake (energy issues, EU sanctions), it never left the common Western line but tried to increase its bargaining position on both sides (2017: 1309).

Whether we share Zakaria's or Buzogány's standpoint or indeed agree with others writing on the topic (see e.g. Csillag and Szélényi 2015, Halmai 2014), there is no doubt about the intentional nature and impact of policies introduced by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's governments since 2010. Although – in the international context – changes at the national level characterized by a “powerful tendency toward centralization, extending political control over state apparatuses and other sectors of society” (Hajnal and Rosta 2016: 10) received most attention in mainstream media, it is also Orbán's sub-national governance reforms introduced between 2010 and 2014 that “fit in a new, broader, ‘illiberal’ tendency in Central and Eastern Europe” and represent an intentional manifestation of top-level political will (ibid.: 19). Such a manifestation of political will from the highest echelons of leadership is also evident in the sphere of media and communications and it is crucial to keep the significance of such influence in mind as

Media systems do not emerge spontaneously from the logic of communication technologies, or from the business plans of media corporations, or from the imaginations of creative individuals. ... Media systems are instead purposefully created, their characters shaped by competing political interests that seek to inscribe their own values and objectives on the possibilities facilitated by a complex combination of technological, economic and social factors (Freedman 2008: 1).

A lot of the criticism of Hungary's media laws introduced in 2010 has focussed on changes to public service media that seriously impacted on their independence from government, however, we should also keep in mind that government policies shape privately owned media, in Robert McChesney's words “all media systems are the result of explicit government policies, subsidies, grants of rights and regulations. ... Indeed, to have anything close to

competitive markets in media requires extensive government regulation in the form of ownership limits and myriad other policies” (2003: 126).

Hungary’s case is a stark reminder that the political and judicial arenas play a key role in deciding about normative issues, in this case about how the media should operate if particular goals (promoting – or de-legitimizing – certain social values among them) are to be attained. Policy making is far from being a neutral, largely administrative and technical process, it involves a range of stakeholders who

make claims within a political system on behalf of goals (favoured end-states) which are said, in the light of certain fundamental, or commonly held, values to be of general benefit to the whole society, community or public, over and above individual wants, satisfactions or utilities. These claims are specified in terms of preferences about a communication system or its performances which correspond to the advocated end-state (McQuail 1992: 27).

Orbán’s supermajority governments have implemented media policies (as discussed further in this article) that are in contrast with long established ideals of media policy in democratic societies, in Ellen Goodman’s words such policy “consists of regulatory interventions specifically designed to promote communicative opportunities” (2007: 1211). Such media policy can be characterized as universalistic, with the aim of ensuring the public interest in communication, “including the equality of access to the media for all. By contrast, some non-consolidated democracies such as Hungary have engaged in particularistic media policies in an effort to enhance private interests. A primary means of the latter practices is the favouritist distribution of media resources, as a result of which public assets are channelled into private pockets” (Bajomi Lázár 2017: 170-1). In addition, there is another issue with media policy making in contemporary Hungary: although policy making is not a neutral process, in depoliticized settings it is informed by expert knowledge, however, as we see – perhaps in a magnified manner – with Hungary’s shift to illiberalism, “in politicized settings, research

and expertise are much less likely to be used as an authoritative source of policymaking, as this could be interpreted as a threat to political primacy. When expertise itself becomes increasingly politicized, research–policy relations are more likely to vary over time with shifts in political power⁴ (Scholten and Verbeek 2015: 189).

Fareed Zakaria highlighted government control of the media as a characteristic of an “illiberal democracy.” For those following developments in Hungarian media regulation and ownership and the government’s broader interventions in the field of media, the shift away from established liberal democratic practices has been evident for at least the past ten years. The long-established democratic roles of media – the public sphere, the fourth estate, the watchdog etc. – have eroded in a number of so-called new democracies that emerged after the fall of the Berlin Wall, however, this trend may be specially marked in the case of Hungary. Between 2010 and 2018 Orbán’s governments developed a range of strategies and policy interventions that enhanced the government’s control of the media, the most widely discussed among these is the 2010 Media Law⁵ that brought about changes seen as restrictive of media pluralism and freedom among others by the OSCE, Council of Europe as well as the European Parliament. Evidence of direct and indirect interventions in public service media has surfaced regularly since Orbán’s victory in 2010 and by 2017 Hungarian public service broadcasters effectively became the government’s propaganda tools. Many of the special roles that the normative ideal of public service broadcasting has been associated with in liberal democracies – including the provision of

4. The broader issue of the questioning of expertise itself in relation to political decisions/policies is not restricted to Hungary, of course. The UK’s Brexit vote is a widely known example when politicians openly attacked expert knowledge. In the Hungarian government’s 2018 national election campaign investigative journalists, representatives of NGOs and academics were labelled mercenaries of the US financier and philanthropist George Soros, and in the aftermath of Viktor Orbán’s April 2018 victory, *Figyelő*, owned by an Orbán ally, published a list of individuals designated as such mercenaries, it is perhaps worth adding that the general public has been encouraged to supply further names for the list, see <http://figyelo.hu/itt-a-vegleges-lista>, for an article in English that explains the case see e.g. Gorondi 2018.

5. Due to restrictions of space, I am leaving aside changes to the Hungarian constitution that prompted Guy Verhofstadt, the leader of the liberal ALDE group in the European Parliament to call for a suspension of Hungary’s voting rights (enabled by Article 7 and often understood as the EU’s nuclear option), see e.g. <http://www.politics.hu/20120111/leader-of-liberals-in-europeanparliament-presses-for-sanctions-against-hungary>

impartial and balanced news, programming that represents a wide range of interests in society, contents that are deemed of high societal value etc. – have been eroded or outright eliminated and the changes implemented in connection with the 2010 Media Law have centralized control over different aspects of public service media.

Each of Hungary's public service media outlets – three national TV, three radio stations and one national news service – are now supervised by a single body headed by a chairperson appointed by the Media Council. The assets of these outlets have been transferred to a newly established public media fund, which is managed by the Media Council. News content for all public media stations is produced centrally by Hungary's national news service, MTI, which is headed by a new director who was nominated by the Media Council chairperson. Opponents claim the measures have eliminated the independence of Hungary's public service media, bringing all aspects – from programming to funding to regulatory supervision – under the Media Council's control (Center for Media and Communication Studies 2011).

Importantly, questions have been raised about the public service media's independence – which “has been elevated to the status of a principle of European human rights law” (Venice Commission 19-20 June 2015: Paragraph 81). The Council of Europe's Venice Commission concluded that the re-structured supervisory bodies potentially jeopardize the broadcasters' independence:

In sum, the Media Act does not secure pluralistic composition of the bodies supervising the PSM [public service media]; its provisions enable the ruling party/coalition to ensure the loyalty of the Media Council, of the MTVA [the cooperation of the four public service media organizations: Hungarian Radio (Magyar Rádió), Hungarian Television (Magyar Televízió), Duna Television (Duna Televízió) and Hungarian News Agency (Magyar Távirati Iroda)] and of the BoT [Board of Trustees], and, through them, to control finances and personnel of the public broadcast-

ers. This creates space for covert intrusion into the journalistic freedom in the public media sector – an intrusion which is not always possible to discern, because it does not manifest itself as formalised orders and sanctions, and which cannot therefore be prevented by means of judicial review (ibid.: paragraph 86).⁶

Similar concerns have been highlighted in a report by the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom on media pluralism in Europe, more precisely in 28 EU member states, and in two candidate countries – Montenegro and Turkey:

... four are at high risk when it comes to political influences over different dimensions of their media operations – two of which are EU member states (Hungary and Slovenia), and two candidate countries (Montenegro and Turkey). Hungary is the only EU country that scores high risks for all five indicators in this area [the extent of the politicisation of the media system, media organizations, newsrooms, media reporting and the public service media], with most concerns being related to the allocation of state subsidies and advertising, and independence of PSM governance and funding (Brogi et al. 2017: 4).

However, the impact of the new media policies was felt beyond public service media and in order to understand the broader context, Peter Bajomi Lázár's concept of the party colonisation of media provides a fitting framework as the phenomenon

may be defined as *a strategy aimed at extracting from the media resources such as airtime, frequencies, positions and money, and channelling them to party loyalists in order to reward them for various services*. It may target all media – public and private alike – but its primary targets are the

6. A few concrete examples can be provided to highlight some of the issues involved: the Media Council has five members and is chaired by the President of the Media Authority who is appointed by the Prime Minister for indefinitely renewable 9-year terms. The other members of the Authority are nominated by an ad-hoc committee composed of delegates of each parliamentary faction. A particularly worrying issue – in the context of Orbán's supermajority – is that the votes of the members of the nominating committee are weighted according to the proportion of each faction's representation in the Parliament.

regulatory authorities and public service broadcasters that parties may oversee more easily than private outlets, as the appointment mechanisms of their regulatory boards are designed in ways that enable them to delegate their supporters into these institutions (2013: 76, emphasis original).

Bajomi Lázár goes on to outline objectives of party colonisation of media and these are all applicable to the case of Hungary: parties can call on constituents that they would not reach otherwise; the colonised media enable parties to gain new resources for indirect party funding; colonised media become pawns in party patronage; parties can use colonised media to exclude rival parties from participating in these (ibid.: 84).

I have already outlined some of the issues related to the colonisation of public service media, in the following section I highlight some policy interventions in the commercial media sector that contributed to the colonisation of these media by Fidesz. In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis a number of foreign media owners left the Hungarian market and a radical re-structuring of ownership occurred with oligarchs loyal to Viktor Orbán not only gaining ownership of some of the media but also guaranteed income from government advertising (a particularly important Orbán ally, Lajos Simicska, ran a media empire supporting Fidesz until the two parted ways in 2014⁷; for an analysis of Simicska's media empire see Bátorfy 2015).

In the already mentioned report by the Council of Europe's Venice Commission concern is expressed about the "disproportionate distribution of discretionary advertising revenue by the State"⁸ and also about restrictions on political advertising that impacted on the April 2014 general

7. It has been argued that after the fallout, efforts were made to prevent Simicska from acquiring further media assets and "new" Orbán allies gained government backing for their media acquisitions. A major one involved Andy Vajna – Hollywood producer and since 2011 the Hungarian government's representative (kormánybiztos) for the film industry – who acquired the national commercial television channel TV2 after a legal battle with Simicska. It is perhaps worthwhile to mention here that Vajna secured the channel with a loan from state-owned Eximbank that was set up to support Hungarian exports and the government had to pass an amendment to a law to enable Vajna's loan (see Byrne 2016 and also Czinkóczi 2017).

8. In 2017 12% of the overall television advertising revenue originated from the Hungarian government and importantly there has been an eightfold increase in the government's television advertising spending between 2010 and 2017 (Szalay 2018).

elections and according to the OSCE/ODIHR Limited Election Observation Mission “in the current media environment, the absence of other political advertisements on nationwide commercial television, combined with a significant amount of government advertisements, undermined the equal and unimpeded access of contestants to the media, which is at odds with paragraph 7.8 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document” (Venice Commission 19-20 June 2015: paragraphs 93-99).

Following Orbán’s landslide victory in 2014 the government also introduced (or proposed) changes that have had a serious impact on the funding of media, among these was the 40% tax on advertising income (which disproportionately impacted on RTL Magyarország which forms part of the RTL Group) and the proposed tax on Internet services which was scrapped after large-scale protests. At the end of 2016 local and regional newspapers were also snapped up by those close to Orbán, “with the purchase of the local newspapers, it is estimated that some 90% of all media in Hungary is now directly or indirectly controlled by Fidesz. ... The only independent media still standing in Hungary are a few outlets, including the investigative reporting operations *Atlatszo* and *Direkt36* and the news server *444.hu*. Their audiences pale in comparison with the Orbán-aligned media” (Dragomir, 2017, see also *Reporters without Borders* 2017). More subtle ways of government interference involved, for example, the online news site *vs.hu* which received £1.5 million covert funding from the Hungarian Central Bank’s foundation (ten of its journalists resigned once the information about the funding surfaced but at the time of writing the website continued to function).

The Hungarian government’s grip on media – public service as well as commercial ones – is playing out in political discourses in a manner that can only be characterized as propaganda. Indeed, Bajomi Lázár and Horváth (2013: 220) argue convincingly that “in contrast to the period 1998–2010, the Peace Marches and other communication campaigns launched since Orbán’s government took office in 2010 have marked a paradigm shift in political communication, best described as the revival of old-school

propaganda,” keeping in mind that “political propaganda is intended to establish ideological hegemony, while political marketing is based on the acknowledgement of ideological pluralism” (ibid, p. 222). As part of public communication campaigns (including election campaigns) certain types of – often Christian – nationalistic discourses⁹ have been promoted by the government, these tend to focus on the “nation’s enemies”, including refugees, NGOs, the EU and the Hungarian-born US financier George Soros. In the 2018 election campaign the use of hate speech as part of political communication has increased markedly, with the U.N. Human Rights Committee voicing concerns at “the prevalence (in Hungary) of hate crimes and about hate speech in political discourse, the media and on the Internet targeting minorities, notably, Roma, Muslim, migrants and refugees, including in the context of government-sponsored campaigns” (Nebahay 2018, see also Article 19 2018).

The range of changes to Hungary’s media policies that were introduced between 2010 and 2018 and indeed their impact have been varied and complex and in order to gain a fuller picture further scholarly work is needed not only on the area of media and communications but also on education and cultural policies as these will help capture the “temperature” of Hungary’s current state. None of the developments – whether in policy or in ownership or indeed in the distribution of advertising revenue by the government – are illegal yet their impact – as I have outlined above – is already eroding the democratic roles of media. As Bajomi Lázár concludes in relation to Hungarian particularistic media policy making,

this practice is legal, by virtue of the current media regulation adopted by the same parliamentary majority that now enforces these measures. But not all that is legal is legitimate: the particularistic distribution of media resources is a form of institutionalised corruption and party

9. The scope of this article does not allow me to discuss cultural and educational policies but these have also played an important role in the promotion of Christian nationalist values and discourses, see e.g. Bajomi Lázár and Horváth 2013, Fekete 2016.

patronage, and has had a devastating impact on some of the key components of democracy, including media freedom and pluralism, as well as the equality of access to the media (2017: 171).

Also, as I suggested at the opening of this article, there are also issues with the current policy making process as such, the practice of using the government's supermajority to introduce a wide variety of policies is definitely of concern in terms of the health of Hungary's democracy, the Venice Commission "objected to the use of cardinal laws for issues that, in the normal course of affairs, should have been left to ordinary legislation: 'The more policy issues are transferred beyond the powers of simple majority, the less significance will future elections have and the more possibilities does a two-third majority have of cementing its political preferences and the country's legal order'" (2015: paragraph 17).

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THE AGRI IS TECH, THE AGRI IS POP, THE AGRI IS POLITICS: THE “RURAL WORLD” AND THE RISE OF THE AGRIPOLITICIAN IN BRAZIL

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Summary: The present work analyses the performance of a public persona that has been active in Brazil’s political landscape for at least two decades: the so-called “agripolitician”. He or she is characterized by its simultaneous actions in ‘both sides of the counter’, that is, in the world of politics and in the agribusiness. We begin by describing the utopia that presents the Rural World as a perfect place for economic power and market logics. It subsumes all the other relations in world of life to producing/profitting/living. With Philosophers Günther Anders (2011) and Michel Foucault (2016), we put in context this idea of “completeness”. As operator concepts, we used Erving Goffman’s (2004) notion of performance, as well as *Communicability*, which derives from Alfred Schultz’s (2005) Social Phenomenology and John Dewey’s (1929) Classic Pragmatism. We have selected an emblematic figure for this proposed analysis: Blairo Maggi, former Governor of Mato Grosso; Senator and Minister of Agriculture. He is known in the media as the “Soy King”, a hero to rural businesspersons, but also as the “Golden Chainsaw”, a villain for environmentalists and adversaries.

Keywords: Communication; Politics; Philosophy; Performance; Brazilian elections.

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Introduction

In the past 25 years, a new public persona category has arose in Brazil's political landscape, occupying substantial spaces in State and Federal legislatures, besides mayoral and State governor tenures. The 'agripolitician' is characterized by its simultaneous actions in 'both sides of the counter', that is, in their political tenures and in the agribusiness. Our study case is about an *agripolitician* that was emblematic in consolidating the participation of these public figures in Brazilian politics: Blairo Maggi, former Governor of Mato Gross for two terms; Senator and Ministry of the Agriculture during the Temer administration.

The Rural World is presented by these public figures as a utopia, a complete world where market logics organize life and imposes its own values: modern rural practices, top-notch technology for production, and the idea that the rural world sustain the urban world. The key statement on this intended superiority, in fact a slogan, has been repeated *ad nauseam* – “city people should thank countrymen for the food they are eating today”. This arrogance undermines appreciation from other groups of people, as put by Sidney Hook (2000), making it harder to put together empathy of the society as a whole with the issues related to the Rural World's modern men. To a certain extent, an institutional ad from TV Globo emphasizes this image of self-sufficiency and of prime efficiency. It is, in other words, a certain Brazil that worked out: The agri is tech, the agri is pop, the agri is everything”. The values portrayed in the piece are about the self-made rural men, and about an Urban World that depends on the rural superiority, as well as on the food it produces.

This is what normal is like in the modern Rural World: it is automatized and connected to variations in the price of commodities and in quotations worldwide. A complete world, according to Anders (2011): actions, opinions and sentiments in this universe are given as if they were an order though they are not perceived as an order. It is “natural” that they are like this. Small family agriculture producers complement this universe as part of a backward rural world that was overcome by a new power – the economic

power of Brazil's big and medium rural producers, which demands a share of political power.

As pointed out by Foucault, according to Brown (2016), there is a peculiarity of neoliberalism that, in the context of creating agripoliticians, generalizes the form of market economics and effectively generalizes the corporate form into the social fabric or the social theory. It gives an Economics shape to the entire social field. Neoliberalism means the instauration of strictly mercantile relations in society. The emphasis is placed in the entrepreneurial spirit, in entrepreneurship, in consumerism and in satisfaction.

Throughout this analysis, we will briefly present the character that represents this new category of public persona, acting simultaneously in politics and in the agribusiness: Blairo Maggi, a billionaire rural businessman that inspired dozens of agribusiness millionaires in Mato Grosso to go into partisan politics and run for office.

Our research is based on Communications' relational idea, with two operator analytic concepts: Performance, according to Erving Goffman's (2004) notions, and *Communicability*, a concept we developed since doctorate out of the communication ideas of Philosophers Alfred Schütz (2005) from Social Phenomenology and John Dewey (1929), from Classical Pragmatism.

Finally, we assess the first findings of the research: our main character speaking about himself, of his path in production until he entered into political affairs; about how the agripolitician is "cultivated" within the relation between weak parties and strong producers' associations, as well as the groups' initiatives as a non-partisan Front in Congress aimed at sectoral interests.

Blairo – from an ally of Lula, Dilma and Temer to a Bolsonaro campaigner

Blairo Borges Maggi was born in Torres, Rio Grande do Sul (RS) in 1956. He is an agronomic engineer, billionaire businessperson and is ahead of a family business group established by his father, André Maggi, initially based in the state of Paraná.

Like thousands of Brazilians from the South of the country, Blairo migrated in the 1970s with his family to Mato Grosso, in the Center-West region. Migrants from Rio Grande do Sul, Paraná and Santa Catarina were the ones who opened the lands of Cerrado for agriculture, mainly for soya production.

Before going into politics, Blairo Maggi was already a widely known public figure in Mato Grosso, as well as nationally on agribusiness specialized media outlets. He was known as the “King of Soya” due to his huge production areas, which are considered a success model to be followed. In his first term as Governor, Blairo was awarded with the title of “Golden Chainsaw”, an ironic laurel given by a TV comedy show. The alias stuck on him and would be used by adversaries for quite some time.

Blairo Maggi ran and won his first Mato Grosso Governor elections in 2002. He was reelected in 2006 and became a Senator in 2010. In the 2018 elections, he did not run for office.

During his political career, he was a member of three parties: PPS, PR and, now, PP. He coordinated in Mato Grosso the presidential campaign of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT) in 2002 and 2006, as well as Dilma Rousseff (PT) presidential campaign in 2010 and 2014. He would then support Dilma’s impeachment in 2016 and become the Minister of Agriculture in the Michel Temer (PMDB) administration since the beginning of Dilma’s Vice-President term. In the 2018 elections, though not running for office, he made a public declaration in support to Jair Bolsonaro (PSL) for President.

This feature of backing candidates with bigger chances to win in the elections and of siding with their governments is common in the agribusiness sector. This feature is actually inscribed in the business logics, as it was further described in the own accounts by this public figure: to back and be part of the administration, any administration, is a form of controlling the actions of the sector’s interest in Congress and in the Executive branch, which demonstrates the sheer frailty of Brazil’s partisan system. Partisan fronts are secondary. In fact, interest-based fronts, like the Agriculture Parliamentary Front, are the ones with an influence in the Parliament. They

position the political relationship with the Executive branch in issues related to the economy.

The seed and the agripolitician's "planting machine"

Blairo Maggi can be considered the "seed" of this new category of public persona in regional politics. He is an emblematic figure of a model that resembles other state's models in which the economic profile relates to big agriculture production and is led by millionaire rural businesspersons, who hence became active in politics.

We can describe, then, the agripolitician as someone who operates, simultaneously, in "two sides of the counter": he or she holds a political mandate and is a rural businessmen, taking care of their private business and businesses of interest to their sector to a certain extent – be it of median or big producers.

These rural businesspersons' entry into politics is motivated by the prestige they harness among their entities and, mainly, by their own economic power. According to data from Mato Grosso's Electoral Justice, the biggest amounts of resources invested in elections along this century came from candidates related to agribusiness. Even in the 2018 elections, when the Party Funding was approved, candidates that either donated or received donations in bigger amounts were agripoliticians. The most important projects, either in city or state elections, are led by the richest agripoliticians or those backed by the richest rural businesspersons. Other candidates connected to the sector have a secondary role, running for proportional positions.

Other than this economic-related aspect, the agripoliticians' rise reveals frailties in Brazil's partisan system. These candidates move from one party to another with no moral constraint. There are no programmatic differences or order issues that get in the way of initiatives, for instance, led by the Front in the sector's economic interests. Thus, parties serve as a legal and

electoral disguise for the agripolitician's initiatives, and it is very common along their career to include multiple and occasional party changes.

The agripolitician subverts the electoral market in a similar way described by Norris (2009) on the ideological spectrum of the right in Europe – a regulated political market that distinguishes voters' "demand" from the parties' "supply". In both cases, they operate in the context of electoral laws.

Parties controlled by agribusiness' leaders articulate to organize an electoral market with no concern to offer some party ideal, social values or an agenda that exceeds the interests of rural businesspersons. Their agenda comes down to maintaining both continued economic gains and specific advantages for median and big producers, as well as companies related to agribusiness.

Agribusiness-focused initiatives despises any partisan politics' logics of an electoral market that, in Brazil, does not quite fit the model established by Norris. For agribusiness, parties are merely "planting machines" of their candidates. In practical terms, major political debates, the definition of public policies, and the exercise of organized power are carried out in class associations: a locum where personal aspirations arise and where agripoliticians are nurtured.

In Norris' terms, it is also important to analyze the impact of their leaders, as well as their rhetoric and style, because it gives inputs on how they build their popularity, especially when it comes to adjusting their speeches to demands from urban populations from bigger cities around agribusiness areas. These cities do not rely so much on agribusiness, but see agripoliticians as "natural" leaders of the political process and elections.

From their leaders' performance, it is also possible to assess how communication networks are organized to connect their "parties" with their class entities, social movements and other organized groups and institutions. Particularly, relations built on mediatized processes seek to occupy media spaces for their leaders and speeches.

Therefore, we incorporate the notions of performance and values that cross-cut these interactions between the agripoliticians and the public. Eventually, they start using media and places of confrontation, where tensions arise between the economic power, a market logic that celebrates entrepreneurial success, other social interests of urban citizens, and their demands. They become subject to the frequent scrutiny of their public personas.

Performance and values of the new public persona

Media visibility is, in the political sphere, the way in which political personalities attempt to ensure the acknowledgement of their existence, to project their public identity and insert themselves in the public's daily life. For nowadays' politician, it is their main arena and practically the only stage before the audience. Not being in this arena means not existing; and seeming like a bad person is actually being bad in the audience's eyes in the political theater.

We agree that the "theatrical" metaphor is useful for explaining this kind of social interaction that politics is, which adds up to the exam of ethical responsibilities that, in the case of our study, entail the agripolitician's actions.

Goffman's assumption is that social interaction can be well understood through the principles of drama. In social interaction, there is not only pretending, there is no audience as a third element of representation, and the other are at the same time actors representing roles for us and the audience for our scene.

In this drama context, as Gomes (2004) argues, we have then an objective, an occasion, an argument and an instrument to achieve it. The objective is to direct and regulate the others' impression over us. In order to achieve it, we must control our expressions during interactions. Our expressions' control over others could be correctly described if we understand it through an analogy with theatrical representation.

It is clear that the impressions' social management as put by Goffman (2004) is not a complete theory of political dramaturgy. On the other hand,

it is evident that the understanding of the impressions' management in social interactions, translated into a theory of political dramaturgy, seems conveniently tailor-made for a theory of opinion and public image management through the political spectacle. Precisely identifying the elements and aspects of political activity and democratic means of life that have been changed, scaled and invented for mass communication and culture, its media, resources and languages. This attention to transformation can be also explained because this phenomenon of interactions between communication and politics are not yet stabilized. New phenomena arose, trends hitherto evident did not become reality, and other, which seemed of no importance, became important alternatives (GOMES, 2004, p. 13).

The issue concerning the configuration of political personality is part of communication strategies in this new era of media visibility: it is not only about being seen, but mainly about being recognized as a well-reputed, reliable politician. As in everything in this negotiation of senses, political personality is subject to the risks of tensions and mutual affectations opened up by interaction.

Subject to public scrutiny, political personalities make an effort to emphasize aspects of common individuals, with values like sincerity and honesty, which are highly valued by society. However, while seeking to seem sincere and honest, political personalities call attention to these values as virtues that will be demanded by the public when it evaluates their performance in the public arena. Integrity in the public life is a moral value in the eyes of the public.

This way, social values determine that the political capital to be accumulated be not only fame, but rather fame with credibility. For the political personality, thus, being inside the spectrum of media visibility is also seeking to integrate to their personality the value of reliability and reputation in the eyes of public scrutiny. It must be part of a group of features that are publicly acknowledged as belonging to a certain personality.

The politician's credibility, which is a value to be achieved, is balanced in a permanently tense axe in the relational dynamics. What the politician says is always under scrutiny and is confronted with their experience in life, as well as articulated with other sources of information. These are frequently concurring in different contemporary media, such as social media, and in beliefs shaped in other relations and associations connected to the public's daily life, such as family, education and religion.

The aspiration of being accepted and recognized by the political personality, on the other hand, gives the public a sort of "judgmental" authority. This "judge" position is, according to Dewey (1929) what "excites the human heart". It is the desire of authority, of being an authority. Much of our existence, in the Deweyan line of thought, is in tune with its share of praise and censorship, absolution and condemnation. From this conscience of the public's judgmental role, given by reflexive action, the political personality projects his or her model of performance in the spectrum of media visibility, and keeps his or her communicability efforts in managing the social role.

As any other public figure, the agripolitician is subject to public scrutiny in the media. He or she is subject to the very characteristics of the media process, like the speed and intensity of affectations, as verified in Social Networks with instantaneous evaluations by the audience in the interaction, like responses resulting from an action or a speech in a certain public personality. This comes through as more complications for those who are scrutinized in the dimension of construed judgments based on beliefs and prejudices.

The biography, the past and the "rural roots" are strategic conditions in the construction of a successful personality, particularly for the modern political personality that makes an effort to seem like one of us, an ordinary person. A modest background and a struggling past, like that of the small rural producer turned successful businessperson, are intrinsic parts of the acknowledgement of a "person like us" or of "rural man".

Communicability

In the analysis of Blairo Maggi's performance, we used the relational notion of *communicability* as a complement. The concept of *communicability* has communication's relational paradigm as theoretical axe. Our efforts focus in the connection between relational instances for reflecting the communicative process globally, from John Dewey's idea of communication in which communication is instrumental and final.

Thus, communicability is seen as the individual's common "effort" in relation for a certain reciprocal understanding. Communicability here can be understood as a quality of interaction and of speeches in order to be made understood. This would be final sense of communication in a joint action.

Communicability is not given a priori. It is elaborated in the very interaction (transaction) process with the other and with the world. It is this relation between understanding efforts and the interaction process among subjects that borrows a pragmatic nature to communicability.

Communicability is part of the configuration of sociability modalities in the communication process, as well as in terms of context. Each moment, activated communicability efforts depend on how the available forms of communication work and are used along the transaction.

The results of the efforts applied in communication are subject to the subjects' intentions engaged in their objectives. It goes beyond the mere knowledge of used codes, as it comprehends, especially, variations in the context it is inserted and the nature of the very course of action. These conditions influence different quality degrees in the experience's consummation.

The idea we present here of a gradient in the communication processes is aimed at highlighting variation in these processes in relation to different contexts regardless of a "standard model" defining quality degrees. Communicability's nature in this context is related to gradiency: variations in divergence or consensus in the communication efforts.

The concept of communicability allows for an analysis of values that are activated in a relation that comprehends both the aspect of transmission, as shapes communication strategies take, and finalities put in action by the subjects.

The notion of communicability out of the relational paradigm places the thought on social interactions in the realm of uncertainties, of the plurality of intentions and gestures, in different shapes and contents that characterize communication processes as something peculiar of the human nature. In this sense, we must understand the different communication *efforts*: making something common may not necessarily be a *common purpose* or the purpose of at least one of the parties in the process. In the communication efforts, people reverberate one another and are able to *listen* to each other mutually. By incremental processes, they can *modify* themselves out of multiple and intertwined inputs. In the same way, historically, they can modify institutions. However, these changes can come about independently from the interaction's initial efforts. These purposes change during the communicative action process.

In the following section, we present some excerpts from our character's speech, the agripolitician Blairo Maggi. They highlight both the values that emphasize this idea of the superiority of a perfect Rural World in relation to the Urban World and values that activate his performance in a political and agribusiness context, acting in both sides of the counter.

Southern migrants and the occupation of the political space by rural businessmen

In an interview in March 2018 in Cuiabá for this research, Blairo Maggi describes the roots of how this new category of political personality was formulated from the Rural World. The hands-on migrant condition of an entrepreneur in the agribusiness, is highlighted as a distinctive value:

“We, who came from other parts of Brazil, understood the following...

Listen, at that point we were the main motor of the state's economy, as the state was living off agricultural incomes, its derivatives and its things. But we didn't have a political representation in this. I mean... Politics was made up by a group of people and the economy was made up by another group of people... There was no communication.

We created a political group that was called GAR, Rondonopolis Support Group, because then the city politics was also difficult. Agribusiness leaders were all there in Rondonopolis. After we established the group, we started to discuss politics and we came to the conclusion that we would eventually have to be available to work in politics.”

Politics and agribusiness

The reason for entering into politics was to gain control of the initiatives of interest to the Rural World:

“I started to travel a bit around the state of Mato Grosso in order to create a political project, to try and influence politics. It was not only me, but also other leaders here in Mato Grosso. The idea was running for an election to get a grip on what it was, because, once again, that old story of working in politics with a glass of whiskey in your hands seems very easy. But actually sitting on the Executive Branch or having to be ahead of a state is entirely different. We wanted to give it a go and, in case we made it, to make the state's economy and politics walk side-by-side in the definition projects for the state of Mato Grosso.”

Agribusinessmen Associations: true planting machines of agripoliticians

Blairo emphasizes that developing rural leaders to run as agripoliticians did not take place in political parties, but rather in class associations:

“The factories of political leaders in our state are located in our associations. He goes there, completes his term, moves on to a second term, and then leaves. He will do other things, among them, politics. So, it's

a very open-minded state, and this is different from many other states, where entities are perpetuated for decades, are occupied by one person and there is no space for new faces in politics.”

Agripolitics as a project of power

The current Minister of Agriculture says that agripoliticians may be in different parties, but what is important is their struggle for the common interests of the Rural World:

“Yes, I recognize that it was an important moment for the state, and it left important landmarks, I would say. We were known at that time as the “group of the boots”, because our campaign slogans was that the group of the boots, the group of countrymen, the group of the “agri” was coming to politics... and I think it worked. It was an interesting movement that nowadays continues on its own feet. There are already other leaders, too, and it is completely natural that some today’s running mates compete against each other tomorrow.”

The environment seen as a business environment

Blairo goes against a petition in Congress to transform the Cerrado biome into Natural Heritage. His logics are mercantile:

“Well, I... I even asked EMBRAPA and I still don’t have this data... But in EMBRAPA, we have a territorial monitoring center that is able to check each property what’s inside and what’s not there, which reserves are part of it. In my opinion, when you transform it into a World Heritage Site and things like that, you create bureaucracies and a bad market landscape. So, I am against it.

Final Remarks

As in any political movement, the lack of a leader has consequences in the electoral process. When Blairo Maggi gave up running to reelection in the Senate, it broke a dispute among agripoliticians. Out of the 11 candidates running for Mato Grosso’s two seats in the Senate, three were agripoliticians

with economic means that went beyond public funding. The three of them did not succeed, but one of them, Senator Judge Selma Arruda (PSL) has as first alternate an agribusiness millionaire. She has already formally entered the Agriculture Parliamentary Front (FPA), claiming to be a defender of the interests of agribusiness. Another elected Senator, Jayme Campos (DEM), a rich agribusinessman and former Governor of Mato Grosso, started with an open opposition to the interests of agribusiness, demanding taxation on the profits of agribusiness tycoons. This was part of a media confrontation that gained momentum and, now, agripoliticians do not count of a leader in an upper term, so they are facing it for the first time.

There is another important aspect that should be highlighted: the “new political order” inaugurated by agribusiness has resulted in a weakening opposition in the countryside and in a lack of public figures from popular movements. In a strong position during the 1970s and 1980s, these movements were led by, for instance, Bishop Don Pedro Casaldáliga, a public figure from the Catholic Church. They lost internal political strength within leftist parties, as PT and PC do B became first-minute allies of Blairo Maggi, participating in his two administrations in State and in City Halls led by agripoliticians.

In this period, leftist parties did not prepare nor had a expressive candidate for office, one that could represent small rural producers and establish an opposition to the agribusiness. Candidates from this ideological field in the past two decades came from urban movements, such as teachers’ unions or from the public health sector.

As long as it cannot be pointed out as the single cause, it is not a minor thing that leftist parties in the case of Mato Grosso have a substantial share of responsibility in this hegemonic position of the agribusiness. In fact, the same responsibility can be attributed to right-wing parties, particularly PSDB. Ahead of the State Government from 1994 to 2002, the party was the first to be engulfed by the power of millionaire businessmen from this “perfect” Rural World.

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Part 3

**IDENTITIES
AND LIFE POLITICS
IN A HYPER-MEDIATED
SOCIETY**

DYSTOPIA AS A WAY TO IMPACT REALITY AND CREATE FANS CIVIC COMMITMENT: “THE HANDMAID’S TALE” SERIES CASE

Marine Malet¹

Abstract: This article offers a consideration about dystopian fiction capacity to impact the real life. Based on the analysis of two media objects, the goal is to study and enlighten the various levers at the disposal of “The Handmaid’s Tale” series to catalyze viewers’ civic engagement and raise fans’ awareness to the women cause. By portraying an imaginary dystopian society where women lost their benefits and their most essential rights, this series allows leaving viewers facing tangible situation and effects, permitting to produce in reverse reflection about our society. In order to shine a light on reception mechanisms, this paper constitutes an analysis of two media objects responding to different logics. The first object responds to an institutional initiative and is the product of a collaboration between a militant association for women’ rights and “The Handmaid’s Tale” television series. The second object corresponds to the exchanges between series fans inside the official Facebook discussion group dedicated to the series. These two objects are a testament, as we will highlight, to the dystopian narrative capacity to present itself as a lever of consciousness sociological awaken as well as the active reception of fans.

Keywords: dystopia; feminism; awareness; fandoms; the handmaid’s tale

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“The Handmaid’s Tale” is a dystopian American television series created by Bruce Miller and produced by the VoD platform Hulu. The first season broadcasted in 2017 is a faithful adaptation of Margaret Atwood’s novel published in 1985. The second season, in turn, is a free creation released in the spring of 2018. The series plot takes place in a dystopian and totalitarian society called “The Republic of Gilead”. In a near future, pollutants and STDs have increased infertility which caused a drastic fall of the birth rate. An extremist politico-religious sect took advantage of the strained political climate to seize power, eliminating all dissidents and those they considered as a pariah – to wit homosexuals, Catholic priests, Muslims, etc. The society has been reorganized according to a religious and patriarchal project: women have been disposed of their citizen status and rights first and then allocated according to their duties. Actually, there are five different women kinds: Wives – sterile women married to politic leaders and wealthy men; Econowives – fertile women married to poor men; Marthas – assigned to governing families, they perform all household chores, Aunts – religious women who train and supervise handmaids; Handmaids – fertile women dedicated to reproduction, they are assigned to a high-ranking families to give them a child. The series relates the story of a handmaid, June, renamed Offred. Because in Gilead, each handmaid has to adopt the first name of whichever man she is assigned to, along with the prefix “Of”. Here, the commander of Offred’s family is named Fred Waterford, so his handmaid will be necessarily named “Offred”. A way to reinforce the women objectification: they are nothing more than a men’ property, a “disembodied womb on legs”.

If the second season, broadcasted in the spring of this year, has not been to everybody’s liking, the first season has for its part won unanimous support. Often described as a masterpiece, it already nourishes press articles and current research works, owing to its sociological contribution – especially about the United States circumstances since the season has been broadcasted in the wake of Donald Trump’s election. The Handmaid’s figure has become a symbol, used by some feminist movements in their mobilizations

like those against the Obamacare repeal project or *MeToo*² movement for example.

This article emphasizes how, in the case of “The Handmaid’s Tale” television series, a dystopian fiction set itself up as a new symbol of feminist activism and powers awareness discourses about women rights. The analysis of two very different media object will demonstrate the boundaries porosity between fiction and real life, as well as the societal impact of this dystopia.

1. “Hope Live in Every Name” – Awareness campaign created by activist association for women’s rights in collaboration with “The Handmaid’s Tale” TV series

“Hope Live in Every Name” is an awareness campaign and a call to mobilization, launched by the international association *Equality Now* in partnership with “The Handmaid’s Tale series”. The campaign has been launched during the second season broadcast. Available on the association’s website³, it consists of a video showing the main actors of the series wearing daily life clothes and reading in turns testimonies of women who have endured violence and abuses. On the website, the video is introduced by the following text:

“This is not a fiction. This is not “The Handmaid’s Tale”. Equality Now has partnered with season two of the Emmy-award winning Hulu series “The Handmaid’s Tale” to show how Hope Lives in Every Name.”

Since then, we can guess that this campaign movie is a hybrid object. It’s the product of two different spheres – entertainment and activism, which reinforces its significance. The analysis of this campaign movie and more specifically the speech analysis emphasized the backs and forth between fiction and reality. It’s also from the blurry boundary between these two

2. Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale* novel author, voiced concerns about #MeToo movement and called for due process in the case of a former university professor accused of sexual misconduct in an essay published in the *Globe and Mail* on January 13, 2018.

3. Campaign website: https://www.equalitynow.org/hope_lives_in_every_name?locale=en

spheres that the video draws its power. Here is an extract of some texts read by series actors:

“My teacher got wind that I was pregnant and told me to leave school.”;
“Because I would infect my classmates with my bad character”; “The men knew I was I child, but they didn’t care. They bought me anyway”;
“One day I had a headache. He gave me two pills.”; “I woke up, and find myself violated. My family forced me to marry him to save the family honor.”; “I had a ceremony. I didn’t understand what it was, but I knew it hurt.”; “After female genital mutilation, they give you a new dress”;
“The color cloth you wear goes from purple to red.”; “My culture encouraged it.”; “My government let it happen.”; “They do not see you as human.”; “They do not see that I have rights.”; “And I deserve justice.”;
“My battle continues. I will not give up.”; “To make a change, we must resist together.”

In the first seconds of the video, nothing clarifies the reality of these testimonies. But the terms used echo some scenes of the series. It talks about “ceremony”⁴, “red clothes”, “bad character”, governments that legitimize and encourage violence against women... so many expressions and situations related by the series. It’s only at the end of the video that women’s names are quoted and one of the actors says clearly: “this is not a fiction, this is not “The Handmaid’s Tale”. All long the video, the doubt persists: what are these stories; are they from the series? This process enables to shows the violence of these testimonies and the fact that dystopia is finally more than fiction.

Also, even if the actors don’t wear their series costume, the video esthetics is similar to the one in the series. The colors desaturation and the dominance of grey tones which create a cold atmosphere without empathy, the same which makes the series oppressive and freezing. The difference is in the clothes colors: in the series, colors are primary and brutal while in the

4. In the series, the Ceremony is a highly ritualizes sexual act that high-ranking men, their wives and their handmaids undergo to conceive children. Handmaids having no choice in taking part, it’s a form of ritualized rape.

video, they are smoother and various. They enlighten the actors and the words they relay. The way that the video is built allows capturing the attention of the series fans, especially during the second season broadcast period. If the movie campaign origin isn't immediately identified, as it's often the case when it's shared on social media, the video could pretend to be a series appendix promoting or giving new information. Viewed out of its context, this video could belong to fiction register, or anyway seems to be linked to the fiction.

The process is particularly clever as it allows to root this dystopia in some sort of reality. By suggesting that the testimonies described belong to the dystopian tale, this video gets the public to realize that fiction is finally very realistic. It echoes Margaret Atwood's words about her novel: "my rule for it was, nothing goes in that didn't have a precedent in real life – somewhere, sometime"⁵. Shared on the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the series, the channel, the actors the author, this video uses the series popularity to awareness. The speech analysis highlights the link between testimonies read and fiction scenes. So, if "The Handmaid's Tale" series is watched and decoded by some people as a simple entertainment, the series lovers can still find this militant content on various platforms and social media due to multiple sharings. Then thinking of watching a video related to entertainment, it will finally go through a militant and awareness content.

In other words, being broadcasted this way, such a media object manages to aware people who are unfamiliar to violence endured by women. Viewers are confronted with real testimonies yet so close to fiction, from distant cultures and countries but also from western countries like the United States or the United Kingdom. Dystopia is no longer a futurist and remoted world and viewer is no more necessarily safe. Obviously, the dystopia with its strong and violent images did upset the public. But, how to extract the present thematics from the entertainment sphere? This first element shows us

5. Settoodeh, Ramin. "Margaret Atwood on How Donald Trump Helped The Handmaid's Tale". *Variety*, 10 April 2018 [online: <https://variety.com/2018/tv/news/margaret-atwood-handmaids-tale-trump-feminism-1202748535/>]

how an institution, in this case, an association involved for the women's rights, benefits from the series popularity and used the present thematics to raise awareness and earn commitment to its cause. Such a campaign is an opportunity to highlight the dystopia acuity, proving that what is shown on the screen and read through fiction prism is already a reality for some people. Extending the fiction is a way to trigger a reflection on our reality and bring about commitment or other activist behaviors.

Here, it's a proposition to join an association by signing our name or making a donation, but the series also has motivated other sorts of commitment on fans' initiative as the second object analysis will demonstrate.

2. #MAIDEZ – The official Handmaid's Tale Discussion Group on Facebook (now titled: The Handmaid's Tale – Official Fan Group)

The series official discussion Facebook group was created by the HULU communication services in an entertainment logic. It's managed by the official Facebook page "The Handmaid's Tale" and so by the community managers of the channel. Group moderators are in the meantime the community managers.

Since April 2018 and the second season broadcast, the group structuration has been modified. Moderators have changed the policy settings and the name of the group, now titled "The Handmaid's Tale – Official Fan Group". These elements can be understood as a marketing and business strategy⁶. But when the survey research started, the group discussion was "private", encouraging contributors to speak frankly, and was titled "#MAIDEZ – The Official Handmaid's Tale Discussion Group". To quote David Peyron, the title given to a fandom could be considered as a founding act of the community and contributes to update and impact the group existence: "the name

6. To learn more about how Hulu built this social community, consult the web page: <https://www.facebook.com/community/education/stories/hulu-the-handmaids-tale/>

can be a symbol of this group of shared traits and values, and affirm it is like to join it”⁷.

Here, we have to focus on the #MAIDEZ. In the series, *Mayday* is the secret resistance group that works to destroy Gilead from the inside out. In real life, Mayday is the universal expression to call for help, a distortion of the French sentence “Venez m’aider”. The Hulu services chose to pick the French etymology, pulling the group in some reality as shown in the description text: “What if we were to bring Mayday to life, here in our own world, together?”. The presentation speech of the group is lively and offers the fans to take fiction as a starting point to think over our reality, extending the enthusiasm and the indignation aroused by the series. But this group, created by an economic actor of the cultural industry, has been also very quickly invested by the fans: they seize and appropriate it, turning it into a hybrid object.

To understand better the reception practices which are playing out here, the Internet as an analysis tool has to be taken on and used. The study must be about virtual practices on digital fandoms, thanks to the analysis of numerical and socio-numerical marks. A digital fandom can be defined as a “social group of people sharing common interests, gathered by membership”⁸.

The corpus of this survey is constituted of the whole of publications and comments shared on the group through November 2017. All posts are in English and the majority of contributors are American. There are some profiles identified as men, but they are a minority.

A sum of 98 publications was posted during this month including texts, images, videos, and articles sharing. They have generated more than 1446

7. Translated by author. David Peyron, “Enjeux identitaires et communautaires des noms de fandoms”, *Revue française des sciences de l’information et de la communication* [En ligne], 7 | 2015. Original quote: “Le nom peut ainsi être un symbole de cet ensemble de traits et de valeurs partagés et l’affirmer c’est y adhérer”.

8. Paul Booth, *Digital fandom*. *New Media Studies*, Peter Lang Publishing, 2010, p.22.

comments, which shows a real activity and exchange inside this fandom. Publications can be split into five categories:

- News about linked to the series: 9 posts
- Creative practices and community animation: 33 posts
- Trading about the series (request for opinions, information or theories): 14 posts
- Relay of societal and political news: 40 posts
- Civic and militant commitment: 2 posts

Those productions match with the typology of fan activities⁹ defined by Melanie Bourdaa: they testify of collective intelligence in the fandom, creative process or even creation of social links. Moreover, it appears clearly that civic commitment and awareness of the politic news hold a very important place in exchanges.

A lot of the publications are part of this category and bring about many comments, giving rise to arguments based on personal experiences, political and/or religious opinions or even scientific sources quotes. For example, a user posted a video about women voluntary sterilization and added the caption “I am for birth control and a women’s right to choose, but I had to step back and think about this one. Any thoughts?”. This publication generated more than 390 comments and was the most commented of all analyzed posts. The analysis of this fandom shows an absolute content hybridization. Entertainment stands alongside reality, fiction mingles with real life and one becomes a reading grid of the other, and vice versa.

Political publications focus mainly on women condition in the world and the restriction of their rights in the United States, on Donald Trump and on other political outrages. On November 2017, many publications were about the Roy Moore case while more recently, publications were about the Brett Kavanaugh case. Indeed we can notice a calendar effect: publications issues

9. Mélanie Bourdaa, “Les fans de Hunger Games : de la fiction à l’engagement”, InaGlobal, 2015, <http://www.inaglobal.fr/cinema/article/les-fans-de-hunger-games-de-la-fiction-lengagement-8191?rq=3>

are linked to political current affairs. In the discussion group, many news were relayed and we can notice debates increase regarding those subjects. This fandom could be as a political news relay, a source of information allowing awareness of fans by other fans. Far from violent and instinctual reactions, reading comments also reveals that ideas expounded are neatly argued and developed, leading to long debates. Personal experiences and scientific articles often support the remarks. Finally, to understand interactions in this fandom, users can't be only a fan of the series. It's essential to be up with political news topic of the United States, by way of example understanding debates or publications significance requires to have taken note of Roy Moore or Brett Kavanaugh cases.

This activism is mainly virtual, but data survey shows this virtual fandom also relays real mobilizations where dystopia is central. For example, one of those publications show photographs of a student demonstration in the United Kingdom. It reveals a placard with the following slogan: "*Nolite Te Bastardes Carborundum*" translated by "Don't let the bastards grind you down". Like so it's clear that fiction is a reading grid of reality and vice versa. By exacerbating some disturbing facets of our society, plausible dystopia allows arousing interest and supply activist initiatives. It also makes audience mindful of societal problems linked to the fiction, here the women cause.

Conclusion

This case study highlights the porous nature of boundaries between fiction and real life. It also emphasizes the fiction ability to impact reality. The activist campaign informs us that *The Handmaid's Tale* series has firmly assumed its feminist vocation and its politicization. It could be understood as a will to awake viewers' sociological consciousness via dystopia.

On the other hand, the fandom brings to light a specific decoding of this dystopia by fans. According to them, "*The Handmaid's Tale*" enlightens real situations and reinforce the idea that women's rights are uncertain.

It also legitimates worries about Donald Trump's or more recently Jair Bolsonaro's politics and justifies feminist mobilizations. In the novel as in the series, Offred speaks in this way: "I was asleep before, that's how we let it happen. When they slaughtered Congress, we didn't wake up. When they blamed terrorists and suspended the constitution, we didn't wake up either. Nothing changes instantaneously". Her speech is biting and topical, received by many viewers as a warning signal. This dystopia designed an imaginary but credible society. Making use of anguishes and fantasms of our time, "The Handmaid's Tale" holds the keys to awake viewers' "sociological consciousness"¹⁰ and to prompt a backward consideration on their condition. As Yannick Rumpala wrote, "In a fictionalized form, they [science-fiction works] can test the swaying into another technical system and arrange situations allowing to glimpse induced effects"¹¹.

Finally, these elements show that as fables or philosophical tales, dystopia triggers reflection about our reality. Even if it's a distorting mirror of our society, it's still a mirror and it makes the period anguishes concrete. The power of "The Handmaid's" Tale lies in its timelessness: written in 1985, the current situation makes it prophetic, reinforcing its ability to aware. A power used by feminist movements which they make the Handmaid a figurehead of the struggle. To conclude, showing concretely what could be extreme effects of totalitarianism and women enslavement, the "Handmaid's Tale" dystopia have exceeded the fiction: it has become a way to start a common reflection about what future we want for our society.

10. Antoine Faure, Emmanuel Taieb, "Les "esthétiques narratives" : l'autre réel des séries", *Quaderni*, vol. 88, no. 3, 2015, pp. 5-20.

11. Translated by author. Yannick Rumpala, "Ce que la science-fiction pourrait apporter à la pensée politique", *Raisons politiques*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2010, pp. 97-113. Original quote: "Sous une forme romancée, elles [les œuvres de science-fiction] peuvent tester le basculement dans un autre système technique, agencer des situations permettant d'entrevoir quels pourraient être les effets induits".

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AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION POLICY AND THE SCAPEGOATING OF LEBANESE MIGRANTS

Mehal Krayem & Judith Betts

Abstract: This paper examines the degree to which the Australian media draws on independent documentation to build understanding and challenge the government's framing of a complex and multi-dimensional issue. Late last year, the Australian Minister for Immigration and Border Control, Peter Dutton, provoked controversy when he referred to migrants who had escaped Lebanon's civil war and came to Australia in the mid-1970s as the then Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's 'mistakes'. Dutton pointed to the representation of second and third generation Lebanese Muslims amongst those charged with terrorism offences to support his argument. Media coverage was sharply divided between those who saw Dutton's comments as 'truthful' and a necessary contribution to debate and those who saw them as 'scapegoating' Lebanese Muslims and stoking Islamophobic fears within the community. The media's response to Dutton's comments provides a case study to explore the media's ability (or preparedness) to examine complex issues, drawing on independent documentation. A content analysis of Murdoch's *Australian* and *Daily Telegraph* and Fairfax's *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*, suggests that media coverage conformed with the predictions of Bennett's 'indexing' model. Independent documentation when cited, tended to be in support of an already established frame, rather than to reveal the complexities of the situation faced by the newly-arrived refugees in the 1970s or the exact nature of the public policy failure.

Introduction

The Australian Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Peter Dutton, provoked controversy with his assertion that the then Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, made a mistake in admitting Lebanese-Muslim immigrants affected by the Lebanese civil war during 1976-1977. In support of his position, Dutton claimed that ‘out of the last 33 people who have been charged with terrorist related offences in this country, 22 are from second and third generation Lebanese Muslim backgrounds’ (Hansard, 21 November 2016). The Minister’s singling out of a particular ethnic community marked a departure from past practice, when the person occupying that position saw themselves as an advocate for both the immigration program and for multiculturalism.

The media’s response to Dutton’s comments provides a case study through which the media’s ability (or preparedness) to examine complex issues, drawing on independent documentation, can be explored. A content analysis of Murdoch’s *Australian* and *Daily Telegraph* and Fairfax’s *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) and *The Age*, suggests that media coverage conformed with the predictions of Bennett’s ‘indexing’ model, failing to reveal the complexities of the situation faced by the newly-arrived refugees in the 1970s and the exact nature of the public policy failure.

The bifurcated media debate directly reflected the debate that was taking place in Parliament between the Government and the Opposition. Media coverage was sharply divided between those who saw Dutton’s comments as ‘truthful’, and a necessary contribution to an honest and open debate, and those who saw Dutton as ‘scapegoating’ Lebanese Muslims and stoking Islamophobic fears within the community for his own political ends. The ‘facts’ were constructed as incontestable, in *The Australian* and the *Daily Telegraph*, while the Fairfax papers, SMH and *Age* argued that Dutton’s remarks unfairly labelled a whole community as culturally incompatible with Australian society and values.

This article examines the degree to which the Australian media drew on independent documentation to build understanding and challenge the Government's framing of what is a complex and multi-dimensional social issue. It draws on Bennett's *indexing model* of agenda formation (2007). The paper is structured in three parts: Firstly, it looks at models of agenda formation and framing with a view to identifying which best describes the Australian media's coverage of Dutton's remarks. Secondly it examines the context, origins and impact of Dutton's remarks, including the threads of the different media narratives in the subsequent debate. Finally, this paper examines the evidence on which Dutton's assertions were based and points to the inconsistencies of that evidence, whilst also examining the nature of Fraser's 'mistake' (if indeed there was one), and the degree to which the media cited independent documentation to support rather than challenge government frames or facilitate informed debate about the public policy lessons to be learned from the Lebanese experience.

Models of agenda formation

Journalists use frames and framing to make sense of a story and to engage the reader. Cultural theorist, Stuart Hall, suggested that frames were organising principles that "call our attention to the dominant perspectives... (to) suggest what is relevant and irrelevant" (McCombs, 2004, p.89). We rely on journalists to explain not just what is happening, but its significance in context. Framing has the "power to structure thought, to shape how we think about public issues, political candidates or other objects in the news. Frames have been described as 'schemata of interpretation'" (McCombs, 2004, p89). Journalism professor, Kirk Hallahan, explained that "framing operates by biasing the cognitive processing of information by individuals" in at least two ways: through *priming* and "by providing *contextual cues* that guide decision-making and inferences" (1999, p208). For example, presenting an occurrence as negative is more likely to attract attention because our fear of loss or risk means that "negative information is weighted more heavily than positive information" (p208). *Priming* uses our cognitive structures or schemas by "association and expectation to make inferences

about events and to impute meaning not manifested in the message itself” (Hallahan, 1999, p208).

Frequently journalists will get their clues about what is going on from the positions that elites or experts take. Bennett identified a practice known as *indexing* which he described as the “journalistic practice of opening or closing the news gates to citizen-activists (and more generally a broader range of views) according to level of conflict among public officials and established interests involved in making decisions about an issue” (2007, p6). This model focuses on the power of already influential voices in influencing the media agenda. Indexing points to a tendency in the media to give voice to the already powerful. The result is that when there is open disagreement amongst political elites in a democracy and public officials are debating issues openly, the news tends to index the range of views expressed by elites. The media adopt the frames the elites use in their debate and when issues are complex, for example in discussion of economics and foreign policy, media coverage often tends to reflect the official line (Bennett, 2007).

Context and Impact of Dutton’s remarks

In November 2016, Australian Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Peter Dutton, sparked a heated public debate when, in an interview on Sky News, he agreed with conservative, right wing journalist, Andrew Bolt, that the then Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser had made a mistake in ‘bringing some people in [as migrants], in the 1970s’ (Dutton, 2016a). Bolt was seeking to make a point about crime and ‘young men of African descent, many of them Sudanese’ (Bolt, 2016). He suggested that the Fraser Government had ‘got the Lebanese refugee programme wrong...Did we make another mistake with the Sudanese refugee programme?’ (Bolt cited in Dutton, 2016a). Dutton responded by suggesting that it was ‘still an open question in terms of what percentage of a particular community...[was] doing the wrong thing’ and then raised the issue of foreign fighters (Dutton, 2016a).

The other interesting aspect – and we see this from foreign fighters – we end up looking at people from second and third generations. So the original people that have arrived here, that have sought refuge for example have done well, they've worked hard, they've educated their children, and it's the second or third generation that's going off to fight and so we need to have a proper look at what has gone wrong (Dutton, 2016a).

On the first parliamentary sitting day after the Bolt interview, Bill Shorten, Leader of the Opposition, used question time to push the Minister on the subject: 'Which people, from which country, does the minister believe should not have been allowed into Australia when Mr Fraser was Prime Minister?' (Hansard, 21 November, 2016). Dutton replied: 'The advice that I have is that, out of the last 33 people who have been charged with terrorist-related offences in this country, 22 are from second and third-generation Lebanese Muslim backgrounds' (Hansard, 2016).

His words sparked an intense media and community debate which continued for weeks and left many speculating about Dutton's motives in generating such a controversy, seen by many to undermine both the immigration program for which he is responsible and counter-terrorism efforts which rely on the assistance and goodwill of communities in addressing youth marginalisation. The following section examines the print media coverage of the ensuing debate.

Media Content

The heated debate sparked by Dutton's remarks played out in the major print dailies – Fairfax's *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)* and News Ltd's *Australian*, and the *Daily*. This analysis draws on coverage in these papers between November and December 2016, the period which followed the minister's statements. A total of 54 articles were analysed for this study: 10 from the *SMH*, 14 from the *Age*, 22 from the *Australian* and eight from the *Daily Telegraph*. Articles were analysed with a view to identifying dominant themes, narratives and lines of argument.

While each media title published articles representing more than one view, there were recurring themes and publications tended to fall into one of two categories. *The Australian* and the *Daily Telegraph*, both Murdoch papers, supported Minister Dutton's right to 'tell the truth'. We have called this the 'truth-telling' frame. This frame presents Dutton's comments as incontestable facts that the 'left' is refusing to acknowledge in a desire to maintain political correctness. On the other hand, Fairfax media publications, the *SMH* and the *Age*, expressed discomfort with the social implications of Dutton's remarks and at the public labelling of Lebanese as somehow culturally prone to terrorism. We have called this the 'scapegoating' frame and argue that articles framing the debate in this way 'call out' the minister for his remarks, but do not necessarily interrogate what Dutton has presented as 'fact'. With just one exception (see discussion of Gordon article of 26 November 2016), it is this lack of interrogation that we believe leads even 'sympathetic' media to inadvertently perpetuate an inaccurate understanding of the nature of Fraser's 'mistakes'.

The 'truth-telling' frame

Twenty four of the 30 articles in *The Australian* and the *Daily Telegraph* defended Dutton's comments, mostly on the grounds that he was 'being honest' and that it was to the benefit of society to have an open and honest conversation about the "preponderance" of that community in terror-related activity' (Wallace and Lewis, 24 December 2016, p4). This perspective was framed as a matter of 'fact', as uncomfortable as those facts might be. Articles of this persuasion offer two stances which contribute to the framing of Lebanese and Muslim cultures as 'incompatible' with Australianness. The first, taken primarily by Gerard Henderson and Miranda Devine, 'exposes' the migration scheme under which Lebanese Australians were allowed entry into Australia in the 1970s. Henderson and Devine refer to the 1976 cabinet submission prepared by the Immigration minister at the time, Michael Mackellar, but cherry-pick the document in a misleading way to support their case. The second stance is reflected in a series of articles which urge us to face the 'facts' about the problems within the Lebanese

Muslim community, relating primarily to terrorism. These articles draw on a more recent document prepared by terrorism scholar Andrew Zammit (2011), who has protested that his position has been misrepresented in the debate.

In 'Fraser's Lebanese concession became a disaster', Gerard Henderson (2016) described how, at the behest of the Maronite Christian Lebanese community in 1975, Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, agreed to accept Lebanese fleeing from the civil war. Henderson points out, 'they were not refugees in the strict definition of the term, since they were not fleeing persecution. Rather they were caught up in armed conflict' (2016). Henderson refers to this policy as 'the Lebanon concession' and suggests that:

...few Maronites wanted to take advantage of the Lebanon concession... [and] under the relaxed selection criteria, to enter Australia...a person only had to state that they were fleeing civil war and that they had a relative in Australia. Few, if any, applicants were rejected. Immigration Department staff sent to the region to administer the program had no way of checking whether the applicants had a relative in Australia' (2016).

In an attempt to explain how a cohort of 'undesirable' migrants set down roots in Australia, Henderson frames the migration scheme as 'lax' to the point of being 'out of control'. Henderson suggests that there had been 'no way of checking whether the applicants had a relative in Australia' (2016). In fact, Australian-based relatives (sponsors) were required to complete nomination forms – and sign maintenance guarantees which made family members ineligible for social security benefits or their sponsors liable for repayment (NAA 1976).

Henderson argues, as does Miranda Devine in the *Daily Telegraph*, that 90% of those who entered Australia under the relaxed immigration provisions were Muslim (2016). By virtue of discontinuing the special program, Henderson argued, 'the person who first realised the Lebanon concession

was a mistake was Fraser himself – four decades ago’ (2016). Both the 90% figure and Fraser’s admission of a mistake are misleading.

The “scapegoating” frame

Nineteen articles, primarily from *The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)* and the *Age* criticised Dutton’s linking of terrorism with past levels of Lebanese Muslim immigration, suggesting he was doing immense damage with his remarks. The issue with the articles that did engage in a critique of Dutton’s comments was that they did not interrogate the so-called ‘facts’ but rather, suggested that given the largely anti-immigration and anti-refugee sentiment currently prevalent in the electorate, pointing to these links were not helpful.

John Hewson, former Liberal leader, suggested that the Coalition was engaging in ‘cheap political arse-covering’ (McIlroy, 2016). Hewson called on Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to show leadership. ‘I am sure that successive governments have made similar “mistakes”...and probably so too with the present government, that will emerge in the future...but why make this point now? Is this a cheap attempt to appeal to the anti-immigration, anti-refugee movement?’ (McIlroy, 2016).

Jacinta Carroll, head of the Counter Terrorism Policy Centre at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, sought to challenge the significance of Dutton’s numbers. While Carroll acknowledged that Dutton’s figures were correct, in the *SMH* and the *Age* (23 and 24 November), she wrote that they were very low and as a result ‘don’t tell us much that is helpful’ (2016a). ‘The figure of 22 represents less than 0.01 per cent of the about 180,000 Australians of Lebanese background...That this group is overrepresented among terrorism offenders...is concerning. But it is not surprising given the global trend of Islamist extremism, which has identity politics at its core’ (Carroll, 2016b).

Carroll and Brendan Nicholson, defence editor of *The Australian*, were concerned that Dutton’s comments would make it tougher for counter-terrorism

forces who were ‘dependent on the goodwill of the Muslim community for warning timely enough to save lives’ (Carroll, 2016a, Nicholson, 24 November 2016, p11). Nicholson suggested that counter-terrorism forces ‘face a tougher job when whole communities are branded for the actions of a minority’. Both defences however imply that the minister’s comments were irresponsible rather than inaccurate. This paper argues that the lack of interrogation of the discourse perpetuated by Dutton may have inadvertently contributed to a belief that his claims were based in fact.

The Media’s Use of Independent Documentation

In a debate with two clear positions – the ‘truth-telling’ frame and the ‘scape-goating’ frame – this study found that it was the journalists supporting the former rather than the latter frame who quoted from independent documentation. Furthermore, the independent documents referred to by journalists including Henderson and Devine – namely the 1976 cabinet submission on Lebanese Migration (calling for a halt to the special arrangements for war-affected Lebanese) and Andrew Zammit’s 2011 paper ‘Explaining the Australia-Lebanon Jihadist Connections’ – were ‘cherry-picked’ for evidence to support a pre-determined position, rather than a balanced interrogation of the facts. Journalists putting the ‘scapegoating’ frame did not revisit or challenge the way that original documents were being cited, perhaps assuming that a re-examination of the documents would do little for their own positions in the debate. Alternatively, journalists may have feared that to acknowledge any mistake on Fraser’s behalf risked being misconstrued as a slur on the Lebanese community, rather than an acknowledgment of a past wrong.

Misrepresenting the numbers

In support of their ‘truth-telling’ argument, Devine and Henderson exaggerated the numbers of Lebanese Muslims admitted under the special program. Devine suggested that 12,000 people were admitted under the more relaxed criteria, when archival records (NAA, 1976, folio 23) and Malcolm Fraser’s memoir (Fraser and Simons, 2010) suggest that only around 4,000 Lebanese

entered Australia under the relaxed criteria. The 12,000 figure appears to have been taken from immigration statistics and relates to total migration from Lebanon in the 1976-77 year: a figure which includes those who met normal migration criteria.

Devine (2016) chose to represent the program as having been 'rorted by 90 per cent Muslims' and Henderson (2016) said that the government had 'lost control of the program'. 'Rorted' and references to 'lost control' suggest widespread corruption of the process, when the only reference in the Cabinet submission that might support this assertion is to 'misrepresentation and deliberate attempts to conceal vital information [that] are prolonging interviews' (NAA, 1976, p3)). The 90% figure is also a mis-reading of the cabinet submission. An applicant's religion is not disclosed (and was not disclosed then) on the application form, the nomination form or at interview and, as a result, the immigration department does not have details of the religious breakdown of Lebanese who migrated at the time. The 90% reference in the cabinet submission is instead an estimate on the part of a visiting chief migration officer (CMO), of the composition of applicants waiting in displaced persons camps in Nicosia. As the fortunes of each side waxed and waned in the civil war, so did the mix of Christians and Muslims fleeing the country. Seven months into the nine-month-long special program, and after the program office had moved first from Beirut to Damascus and then Damascus to Nicosia, the CMO estimated that 'the balance between Muslim and Christian applicants *had risen* [authors' emphasis] to 90% Muslim' (NAA, 1976, folio 28). This was not a statement about the composition of the entire program.

In the absence of immigration data about religious affiliation, census data provides a picture of the change in the composition of the Lebanese community in Australia during that period. In the five years between the 1976 and 1981, according to the census, the Lebanese-born population in Australia grew from 33,400 to 49,600 or by 16,200 (ABS, 1981). During that time, the Muslim Lebanese population grew from just 7,000 (around 21% of the Lebanese-born population in Australia) in 1976 to 15,600 or 31% in

1981. Immigration statistics show that around 18,500 visas were issued to Lebanese migrants between 1976 and 1981, which resulted in a net migration rate of around 16,200, of which an estimated 53% would have been Muslim (based on figures from ABS, DIBP and Betts and Healy, 2006). Henderson's and Devine's reference to '90% Muslim' appears to be a grave overstatement in support of their suggestion that the immigration program had been 'rorted' (Devine, 2016).

The nature of Fraser's 'mistakes'

The second document that was referred to by the 'truth-telling' journalists was a 2011 paper written by Andrew Zammit, at the time a researcher at Monash University's Global Terrorism Research Centre. Devine says:

We are unique among Western countries, (in that) individuals involved in jihadism in Australia have predominantly been of Lebanese descent, and several Australians have been arrested in Lebanon for alleged jihadist activity...While the activities of at most a few dozen people do not reflect on the roughly 70,000 Lebanese-descendant Muslims in Australia, they do highlight a phenomenon... in jihadist militancy'. Zammit points out, that 20 of 33 people prosecuted in Australian courts as of 2012 over alleged terrorism offences 'motivated by jihadist ideology', were of Lebanese descent (Devine, 2016).

Devine's argument was that we needed to learn from Fraser's 'mistakes', but she presented those 'mistakes' as being related to a flawed migration selection process. She concluded that:

The vast majority of Lebanese-Muslim Australians are law abiding and non-violent. But in order to keep all of us safe from more homegrown terrorist attacks and to ensure future social cohesion, the government needs to be transparent and rigorous about our immigration program, and avoid the mistakes of the Fraser government in 1976 (Devine, 2016).

Malcolm Fraser has admitted that mistakes were made regarding the entry of Lebanese affected by the civil war, but not in relation to the decisions

about who entered Australia, rather about the lack of settlement support provided on arrival.

...if there was a failure of government in those early months it was in re-settlement programs and planning. The proper approach to problems of integration is to find out what the problems were and what can be done about them, rather than to conclude that 'bad' people have been allowed in, or that it was wrong to show compassion (Fraser and Simons, 2010).

The irony of Devine's position is that in her selective quotation from Zammit's paper, she missed the point he was making. While not all experts agree on the role played by social disadvantage in radicalisation (Hegghammer, 2016), Zammit argued that, in the case of Australian-Lebanese jihadis, the evidence suggests that social disadvantage and marginalisation both appear to have played a role in their radicalisation: a pattern that appears to be unique to Australia and is not repeated in other countries with large Lebanese communities (2011). Zammit linked social disadvantage to their (parents' and grandparents') arrival as refugees from civil war, at a time of a downturn in low-skilled manufacturing jobs, which happened as tariffs were being dismantled in Australia (Fraser and Simons, 2010). But Zammit also explained that their experiences, and unemployment rate, were similar to those of Vietnamese-Australians who arrived at the same time, also escaping war (Zammit 2011, Betts and Healy, 2006, Fraser, 2010).

Archival documents show clearly that the Government at the time decided that Lebanese affected by civil conflict would not be eligible for the settlement support that other humanitarian and refugee groups received: that their relatives in Australia would have to bear that burden. The Cabinet decided, *inter alia*, that:

g) The Government [would] not take responsibility for the cost of transportation and transportation arrangements for Lebanese migrants; [and]

h) action [would] be taken to promote greater responsibility within the Lebanese communities for the post-arrival settlement in Australia of Lebanese migrants (NAA, 1976).

Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, appears also to believe that the issue was related to the lack of settlement assistance. She stated in media interviews that all Dutton was saying was that ‘many years ago there were not the support services available for those who were brought to Australia under refugee humanitarian visas’ (Gordon, 2016). Despite her assertion, we were unable to find any public acknowledgement on Dutton’s part of the lack of settlement assistance provided to Lebanese in the mid-70s, although as minister it is safe to assume he would have been briefed on this.

In their 1985 book, *The Lebanese in Australia*, Andrew and Trevor Batrouney highlighted the lack of government settlement support given to Lebanese arriving from war-torn Lebanon at that time. ‘Since 1976, the sheer weight of numbers and the nature of the assistance required exceeded the capacity of informal welfare structures to assist these people’ (p101). They noted that the Australian government, ‘despite protestations from the community, did not accord Lebanese immigrants refugee status and the benefits that entailed’ (1985, p101). Only in the early 1980s was this problem officially recognised’ (1985, p101).

In 2012, Gerard Henderson drew on Zammit’s paper in an article for the *SMH* entitled ‘Threat from enemy within makes anti-terrorism laws indispensable’ (*SMH*, 2012). Zammit responded with a letter to the editor in which he rejected the suggestion that Australia ‘should not have given refuge to thousands of people fleeing a brutal civil war because of a couple of failed terrorist attempts decades later’ (2012). He also disputed that the activities of so few people could be used to make generalisations about Lebanese-Australian Muslims as a whole (Zammit, 2012).

Henderson is correct to point out that the ‘Lebanon concession’ – the Fraser government’s expanded intake of Lebanese civil war refugees in 1976 – was poorly implemented and that Lebanese Muslims often had

little support on arrival. However, the findings in my paper do not support Henderson's argument that the 'Lebanon concession' was wrong altogether. The paper did examine Lebanese immigration during the civil war period and consequent social disadvantage; it did not state that convicted terrorists were necessarily children of those who arrived during the 'concession', which was only a short-lived episode in a large-scale immigration intake.

The greatest irony is that Zammit's paper pointed to the role that stigmatising and marginalising Lebanese-Australian Muslims, by 'sections of the public, media and some politicians', played in their radicalisation (2011, p9). In his research into the criminal cases of prosecuted jihadis, Zammit found evidence of radicalised young men feeling that 'Muslims were discriminated against in Australia' (2011). He quoted Justice Whealy's judgement when sentencing a member of the Sydney Pendennis cell:

It appears that the events of September 11, 2001 changed things radically for the offender... He himself was abused and called 'Osama bin Laden' and a 'terrorist' by non-Muslim workers he encountered. At a more abstract level, the offender perceived the threat in terms of all Muslim people being under attack, where the 'war against terror', as it was described, was translated by some Muslims into meaning a 'war' against all Muslims. This notion, so far as the offender was concerned, was then reinforced by the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. He was an uncritical user of the Internet and other news sources, and this served to reinforce his attitudes concerning the threat and the need for action (R v Touma, 2008: 91, cited in Zammit, 2011).

While the Lebanese community is over-represented amongst Australian jihadis, the numbers are statistically too small to tell us anything (Carroll, 2016, Zammit, 2012) and there is no direct proven link between the young men arrested recently and those admitted in 1976-77 on humanitarian grounds. Zammit's research suggests that stigmatising and marginalising Lebanese-Australians may have played a role in their radicalisation. This

may be the only tenuous link between Jihadis and the Lebanese who came in the mid-1970s: the lack of settlement support having forced families into high density living and social disadvantage as they relied on each other for support.

Conclusion

Dutton's comments fuelled a heated debate in the parliament which was then picked up and elaborated on in the media. The media were quick to take sides, indexing the debate in the media along the lines of the parliamentary debate: with the Murdoch press supporting the minister's right to 'tell the truth' and the Fairfax media criticising the minister's inflammatory remarks as racist, demonising and 'scapegoating' the Lebanese community by association with radical jihadism. Once the papers had taken sides, however, there was little indication that journalists taking the 'scapegoating' frame went back to interrogate either of the two independent documents quoted by those on the other side of the debate. Only one Fairfax journalist, Michael Gordon of *The Age*, raised questions about the exact nature of Fraser's 'mistakes' (2016). This may have been because he had been leaked a departmental document some months before that raised questions about the link between the lack of settlement support for the 1976-77 Lebanese and inter-generational disadvantage (Gordon, 2016)

The failure to interrogate the two independent documents cited in the debate, and the subsequent failure to challenge both the minister's 'facts' and those in the media arguing the 'truth-telling' frame, suggests time pressure and the limitations of mainstream journalistic practices and culture. Fairfax and News Limited have gone through several down-sizing exercises in recent years, 'letting go' a number of more experienced journalists. Many attributes of this case study, of a media bifurcated along the lines of the parliamentary debate fit with Bennet's model of indexing where elite debates tend to be replicated rather than challenged by the mainstream media.

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMININE, TECHNOFEMINISM AND TECHNOLOGICAL PARADOX

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Abstract: The Web and the technological revolution from the network society allowed women an unprecedented access to technology. Among the Information and Communication Technologies (ITs), online communities enabled a new feminine activism. Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) of empowered and entrepreneurial women emerged to inspire and lead women to study and work in technology. These groups have expanded significantly in Portugal and Brazil in the last decade. Technology became a way for women to establish new relations of gender (Judy Wajcman's sociological technofeminism) and power at NGOs against an emblematic patriarchy. Groups of Brazilian and Portuguese women in Information Technology (IT) build and spread storytelling throughout e-infocommunicational platforms with a discourse of engagement that transits between leaders and target audience in a transmedia perspective. However, the reinforcement of this feminine empowerment discourse bumps into technologies such as online content suggestion algorithms: their function is to choose the content presented to each user of these media according to individual interests that the algorithm can deduce and predict. Hence, as story-

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telling may take long or not be presented to women who belong to hard social contexts, the lack of contact with different perspectives and concepts weakens the transformation capacity of these discourses as Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception defends. This article explores the notion of technofeminism, the construction and diffusion of a feminine empowerment discourse, the idea of e-infocommunication technologies for this reality transformation and the collision of this feminist will in barriers of this same technology that should come in their favor.

Keywords: Technofeminism; Information technologies; Phenomenology of perception; E-infocommunication; Gender.

Technology (daily use objects, industrial machines, computers, smartphones, tablets, computer programs etc.) has been conceived and consumed by men since time immemorial. Recently, the democratization of the Internet and the emergence of a networked society from the end of the twentieth century have brought about an unprecedented technological and communications revolution. The first two books of the trilogy *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture* (Castells, 2002, 2013, 2018) highlights historical facts related to gender issues that marked, in a profound way, the evolution of feminism, the presence of women in universities and in the labor market, in addition to the close relationship established with digital platforms and information technologies (IT). According to Castells, the struggles of women have always been present in all stages of human experience, especially the suffragist movement in the United States. However, in the last 25 years of the twentieth century, there has been a global intensification of the feminist cause against oppression, in the quest for greater social and professional representation, reflected in the private sphere in different degrees of intensity in Western and Eastern countries.

The increase of awareness and struggle of women for equal rights and for control of their bodies and lives, especially in developed and industrialized countries, is an inexorable process due to four factors: the transformation of

the economy and the labor market related to opportunities for women in the field of education; the overthrow of patriarchy resulting from economic and technological transformations; the extraordinary increase in the number of popular grassroots organizations, mostly created and led by women, in the metropolitan areas of developing countries, impacting on policies and institutions, but also on the emergence of a new collective identity through empowered women; and the fact that self-construction of identity is not the expression of an essence, but an affirmation of power by which women mobilize to change from how they are to what they want to be. Claiming an identity is building power (Castells, 2002, 2013, 2018).

According to Castells (2002, 2013, 2018), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and women tend to express themselves more openly in digital networks because they feel more protected in the electronic media. The sum of these virtual expressions would represent a great opportunity to reverse traditional power games in communication processes. These groups are examples of these new forms of power and political engagement in Gender and Feminism, which seek, above all, greater female representation in the labor market and in academic research in IT.

These networks do more than simply organize activities and share information. They represent the true producers and distributors of cultural codes. Not only for the network, but in its multiple forms of exchange and interaction. Its impact on society rarely comes from a highly articulated strategy, commanded by a particular nucleus. Its most successful campaigns, its most surprising initiatives are often the result of “disturbances” in the multi-level interactive communication network (Castells, 2018, Location 13083)

It is not possible to define a specific point on the Web where these communication systems of women activist groups in technology have emerged. Leaders and volunteers are geographically dispersed, but it is common to belong to the same country. They have grouped and organized themselves in online communities moved by the primordial desire of profession-

al and technological academic inclusion. The strength of corporate and e-infocommunicational flow is a catalyst for the personal development in IT for each member. There are operational and communicational rules of operation, common or not, for each group. Defined by leaders, they are disseminated by volunteers. Impacted women who agree to these organizational guidelines are accepted to participate as students and members of campaigns, events and courses, for example, online and in person. These online IT activist communities share similar and specific characteristics in a sea of knots of other natures in this space of complex and multidimensional cybernetic flow. Information (tangible as statistical data and courses, and intangible as narratives / witness stories of engagement and empowerment) is produced by leaders and shared by them and the groups' volunteers, via digital platforms, to the target audiences (new members and opinion makers).

Sharing the optimism of cyber-gurus from Manuel Castells (1996) to Nicholas Negroponte (1995), feminist approaches of the 1990s and today are positive about the possibilities of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to empower women and transform gender relations (Green and Adam, 1999; Kemp and Squires, 1998; Kirkup et al., 2000).

A common argument in this literature is that the virtuality of cyberspace and the internet spell the end of the embodied basis for sex difference (Millar, 1998; Plant, 1998). (Wajcman, 2010, p. 147)

Wajcman (2010) points that over time the theories in technofeminism have been approaching the role technology plays to build the gender concepts, which can be correlated with the phenomenology ideas alluded later in this article:

Over the last two decades, feminist writing within the field of STS [studies of technology science] has theorized the relationship between gender and technology as one of mutual shaping. A shared idea in this tradition is that technological innovation is itself shaped by the social circumstances within which it takes place. (p. 148-149)

The biggest complexity of this e-infocommunicational flow is presented in the analysis of the impact and the reuse of the information of the target groups of the women activist groups in IT. Engagement and empowerment should be considered beyond the mere sharing of information across digital platforms. Online communities of women's IT activism produce and communicate information to their target audience on their digital platforms. However, when its impact is positive or negative, it is reused with greater unpredictability by women who should be empowered, because information sharing is not always shared by the same digital platforms of the target audiences in their networks. The individual on the Web today occupies an active position as a content producer. Therefore, the information is shared with new aggregated information, which is beyond the control of the leaders and volunteers of these groups and can be accompanied by the propagation of new tangible and intangible data created by the impacted ones. Storytelling is the information with the greatest engagement potential for the leaders. The success of infocommunicational actions of the groups can also be gauged when this storytelling gains new stories from the sharing in a transmedia chain of convergent media of online communities with additional digital platforms used by the target audience.

Leaders of technology activist women groups are experienced in the job market or academic research in IT. The success of this activism can be measured in face-to-face events, articulated internally by the organizations in their virtual communities and communicated to the external public on digital platforms. The IT women groups have emerged and developed quite expressively in the last decade, especially in Europe and Brazil, as a phenomenon resulting from the technological revolution, from the emergence and expansion of the Web on a planetary level. There are some common purposes for the groups of women activists in Portuguese and Brazilian IT, which have arisen and developed especially in the last ten years with common organizational and communication characteristics:

1. Culture Maker Training: teaching and training women to use different languages and computer programs in the creation of their own technological products (initiation of young people and deepening knowledge to those already acting at academic and professional level);
2. Educational: guiding and instructing adolescents in schools, namely in the transition phase from secondary to university, with the aim of considering IT as a career to be embraced, as scientists or professionals;
3. Entrepreneurship: network promotion, with a view to creating business, startups, as well as innovative and competitive IT projects;
4. Political / Social: collective articulation in the search for the creation and consolidation of labor inclusion laws for women in IT; the perspective of Information Technology to be a field of affirmation of identities (Feminist and of Gender).

Examples of groups that emerged from this configuration of the context of action are Geek Girls Portugal, Portuguese Women in Tech, IAMCP / Women in Technology; Chicas Poderosas Portugal and Girls Lean In (in Portugal); and Minas Programam, WoMakers Code, Mulheres na Tecnologia and Girls in Tech Brazil (in Brazil). In all groups, the women's empowerment message is more than reinforced, being a motto for and purpose of all the women involved: leaders of the groups (information and narrative, project creators and actions), volunteers (women who are not leaders but become agents of support and support to leaders in programming and developing events and campaigns agenda), and members in general (recipients of the messages conveyed by digital platforms and taking part in face-to-face actions).

Technology is accessible to digitally literate women and, above all, to those with a degree of information which allows leaders and volunteers to align tangible and intangible objectives and information (such as statistical data and programming knowledge) of their choice of digital platforms whose operational functions fulfil the role of efficient and broad dissemination of technological, ideological, professional and educational information in a

complex, multiple communication chain connected to the digital platforms of women impacted. These groups are living multidimensional communication systems, which are flexible to the emergence of new technologies, digital platforms and social dynamics in a macro perspective.

Technofeminism conceives of technology as mutually shaping relationship between gender and technology, in which technology is both a source and a consequence of gender relations. For me, the distinguishing insight of feminist STS or technofeminism is that gender is integral to this sociotechnical process: that the materiality of technology affords or inhibits the doing of particular gender power relations. Women's identities, needs and priorities are configured together with digital technologies. For all the diversity of feminist voices, feminist scholars share a concern with the hierarchical divisions marking relations between men and women. (Wajcman, 2010, p. 149-150)

As mentioned above, it is appropriate to link Wajcman's idea that digital technologies are part of the configuration of identities, needs and priorities to women and the phenomenology of perception as proposed by Merleau-Ponty (2005). This is possible because his idea of phenomenal field, in which subject and object lie, takes into consideration the self, the other and the things to the interpretation of the world having history and culture as a basis for understanding and classifying sensations. The being and the world are inseparable and perception is a bodily experience that is more subjective than objective.

Therefore, perception is not an exhaustive and complete knowledge of the object, but an always provisory and incomplete interpretation. (...) Under the embodied subject, we correlate body, time, the other, affection, the world of culture and social relations. (Nóbrega, 2008, p. 141)

In turn, each encounter of subjects or of them with objects claim and build concepts to individuals and societies. Thus, when in contact with a discourse of feminine empowerment or even with different concepts of what women can be and do, getting to know even slight differences between the

observer and the one who is observed will change the perception of the former and of the world around her/him, changing also the personal concept of women. Hence, the storytelling produced by these NGOs is not ineffective, although it might not be consciously noticed, just as “the pure impression is (...) not only undiscoverable, but also imperceptible and so inconceivable as an instant of perception” (Merleau-Ponty, 2005, p. 4), which means that the idea of being a woman depends on information acquired, but the concept to each individual will change without a conscious awareness of it.

Therefore, if according to Merleau-Ponty (2005) the subject is a living body, that is, not composed by a soul *and* a body, but a soul *in* a body, this subject is experiencing the world always based on what is already known but also building new ideas. Because the information technologies are so present in the lives of subjects, they necessarily alter the perception of the world and of the subject in the world. As Wajcman (2010) observes,

the notion that technology is simply the product of rational technical imperatives has been dislodged. Objects and artefacts are no longer seen as separate from society, but as part of the social fabric that holds society together; they are never merely technical or social” (p. 149).

Also, the infinite points of view that the Web stores change the known field that involves subject and objects when they are shared. Thus the work of the NGOs here mentioned are capable of expanding the concept of women as they mediatize ideas and experiences of and to many cultures (even within a society) transforming the field from which the living body will dive into the world to build it as is inherent to all individuals.

Nevertheless, the storytelling shared by the mentioned feminist groups is among an infinitude of content that each platform—such as social network and video and text sharing websites or research engines—host. This general quantity of data hosted is so great that it would be impossible to deliver it all to users without a rank. To that end, suggestion algorithms are used to

calculate what is shown to whom based on usage data but also on the result of inference about psychological traits from users.

These algorithms use data collected from cookies and usage data (from one website or from a network that shares this type of data), demographic information and even psychographics. A recent and well-known example of the latter was the Cambridge Analytica case for Donald Trump's election as United States's president. In 2016, Alexander Nix, Chief Executive Officer of Cambridge Analytica (the company responsible for Donald Trump's online presidential campaign in the United States) explained, in a talk for the Concordia Summit, how they use psychographics to target specific groups of people. He says: "Today communication is becoming ever increasingly targeted. It's being individualized for every single person in this room" (Concordia, 2016, excerpt 8:35 – 8:46). To arbitrate, they consider geographic data such as age, gender, religion or education but also consumption habits and lifestyle, what users read and watch, "what car you drive (...) what golf club you belong to, what churches you attend, and, of course, personality or behavior data (...), how you see the world, what actually drives you" (Concordia, 2016, excerpt 6:02 – 6:22).

Thereby it is possible to see that some women will not be reached by the storytelling that drive and urge women's empowerment: the way they conduct their life is much different from the message of the feminist NGOs mentioned, their beliefs do not comprehend the idea of empowered and entrepreneurial women so suggestion algorithms would show them content that has the most proximity to their habits and ways of acting and thinking, excluding what they still ignore and that could—at least start to—change their points of view.

Considering this, it is possible to say that there is a technological paradox: even though information technologies were meant to and could work for sharing information and therefore expand the phenomenal field, its platforms are designed to limit information and not show contradictions. Wacjman (2010) mentions that "technofeminism exposes how the concrete

practices of design and innovation lead to the absence of specific users, such as women” (p. 150), but it is important to notice that, even among women who do have access to IT, there is also alienation of a part of this group from the feminist storytelling produced by these NGOs, regardless of the granted access they are having.

Another inconsistency in the use of IT to spread an empowerment storytelling to women in general is that the groups of women who work for empowering females are themselves wielding power, for the women in tech activist groups are still a social, political, economic, cultural product of an era, or result of the expansion of the creation of everyday computer apparatus and programs. Each online community sets up a communication and information system that goes beyond its intended purpose. In a macro plan there are rules on how and for what purposes their platforms can be used or their actions will be taken; the leaders are also guided by the logic of capital when they consider entrepreneurship as power, and there is also a false idea of autonomy when a platform is chosen, because each platform has a policy with restrictions by design.

For this reason, technology policies call for renegotiation of gender relations and generates new information in the phenomenal field:

While it is not always possible to specify in advance the characteristics of artefacts and information systems that would guarantee more inclusiveness, it is imperative that women are involved throughout the processes and practices of technological innovation. (...) Drawing more women into design—the configuration of artefacts—is not only an equal employment opportunity issue, but is also crucially about how the world we live in is shaped, and for whom. We live in a technological culture, a society that is constituted by science and technology, and so the politics of technology is integral to the renegotiation of gender power relations. (Wajcman, 2010, p. 150).

This means that a storytelling that aims to promote empowerment to women and change the patriarchal thought should think of freedom in a way that everyone should participate to build the concept of women. As follows, Wajeman's idea of participation can be related to Merleau-Ponty's notion of freedom. To him, no one can be completely free, seeing that, as mentioned above, one depends on the interaction with other subjects and objects to give meaning to the world and to recognize oneself in it and as an individual part of a community. In addition, a subject is always limited by the field and the historical phenomenality of it. As raised above, the NGO leaders are under the perspective of a structure of power themselves, since they cannot be apart from the perspectives that surround them. However, paradoxically there is space for creation: if the subject is constantly making the field that limits him/her, the boundaries of subject's freedom are given by the free subject, so

There is, then, ultimately nothing that can set limits to freedom, except those limits that freedom itself has set in the form of its various initiatives, so that the subject has simply the external world that he gives himself. Since it is the latter who, on coming into being, brings to light significance and value in things, and since no thing can impinge upon it except through acquiring, thanks to it, significance and value, there is no action of things on the subject, but merely a signification (in the active sense), a centrifugal *Sinngebung*". (Merleau-Ponty, 2005, p. 507)

Therefore, if the subject recognizes that the world is a collective construction and that the phenomena are stated views among infinite shared conceptions (that are themselves among infinite unknown and never to be known meanings), there is always the possibility of creating or of maintaining. Freedom is a matter of engagement with itself under the knowledge that one's body in its way to living—that is, one's actions, including one's body, intentions and movement—will bring consequences to all the field, which contains other objects and subjects that influence each other permanently, or, in Merleau-Ponty's words: "the parts of my body together compromise a system, so my

body and the other's are one whole, two sides of one and the same phenomenon, and the anonymous existence of which my body is the ever-renewed trace henceforth inhabits both bodies simultaneously" (p. 412).

If "there is free choice only if freedom comes into play in its decision, and posits the situation chosen as a situation of freedom" (Merleau-Ponty, 2005, p. 508), then even though the discourse of empowerment and entrepreneurship that aims to encourage women to change their perceptions about themselves is under the influence of design, of suggestion algorithms and of power within the group that promotes it, it will empower and help unleash women from patriarchal views if the work of the NGOs presented above pursues freedom.

Some paradoxes were mentioned here, freedom in IT is another. Using online media to spread a storytelling of empowerment claims the commitment/freedom paradox Merleau-Ponty (2005) reasons by saying:

A freedom which has no need to be exercised because it is already acquired could not commit itself in this way: it knows that the following instant will find it, come what may, just as free and just as indeterminate. The very notion of freedom demands that our decision should plunge into the future, that something should have been *done* by it, that the subsequent instant should benefit from its predecessor and, though not necessitated, should be at least required by it. If freedom is doing, it is necessary that what it does should not be immediately undone by a new freedom. Each instant, therefore, must not be a closed world; one instant must be able to commit its successors and, a decision once taken and action once begun, I must have something acquired at my disposal, I must benefit from my impetus, I must be inclined to carry on, and there must be a bent or propensity of the mind. (p. 508)

On this wise, empowerment as freedom is in the possibility of transformation, on choices determined by what is given, the influences of the subject, but of a subject that chose and acted with a commitment with the future.

Even in face of limited information, individuals are free. Freedom is in the moral decision, in the option between maintenance or creation. Thus the effort to expand the concept of women to of empowered and entrepreneur women is in the actions taken to grant different possibilities to create, and is not in vain, although it will come across with barriers. The paradox will always be present, but that should not nullify the struggle to accredit power to a historically less empowered gender when it is committed to contest and change the phenomenal field.

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EDUCATIONAL SUPERAVIT: HUMAN RIGHTS VERSUS EDUCATION POLICIES¹

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Abstract: Education methodologies have always been subject of discussion and controversy, which increased with the advent of massive public educational systems and its relationship with the concept of ‘qualified’ workforce. Simultaneously, societal changes and the relationship between Education actors, namely teachers and students, demanded solutions in addressing the latter’s bad behavior, which seems to be an interstitial problem in Western culture. The use of medical drugs, such a Ritalin, to address this issue not only raises ethical questions regarding present students but also of human and social consequences in the future taskforce. Simply put, does the price of Ritalin use not only are the Child’s rights but also the full potential of the future adult, as a worker and citizen? This work explores how the current *status quo* in Educational policies regarding the use of Ritalin or other drugs can be assessed through dystopias on the subject, and investigates how the present Educational

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policies affect the human identity in the name of both economy and school place behavioral conformity and personality formatting. Research methodology encompasses two approaches: (a) transversal analysis of selected dystopian narratives; and (b) inclusion of an organizational/social quantum-based model, adapted through mathematical inspired tool *Reductio ad dystopia*. The use of speculative fiction on quantum-based models regarding societal dynamics is, to our knowledge, pioneer and it can be a feasible methodology feasible to explore social concerns and ethical issues, as the dystopias provide enough details that not only suffice as variables but can be juxtaposed with real and present ones.

Keywords: Education Policies; Children Rights; Educational dystopia; Social Quantum based model; Reductio ad dystopia

1. Introduction

Ritalin, a three syllable word used to explain mass shooting in the USA, according to NRA president Oliver North [1]. Any average attentive person nowadays has heard the term and locates easily the context where it is most used: education. Ritalin is one common prescription for attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), which can cause problems in the social interaction of the child or teen, as it may generate, for example, hyperactivity or inability to control impulses. And the school, or pedagogical environment, is part of the social space of the child, prompting the concern of how that affects the child, the peers and the teachers or pedagogical supervisors. Ideally, the students should be attentive and motivated and focused, not to mention well-behaved, and as the obvious effects of Ritalin were becoming common knowledge, *i.e.*, how its prescription can help control impulses and, as side effect, prompt a tone down in misbehavior, the scenario softly changed from using it adequately for diagnosed ADHD children to more widespread application in cases of disorderly conduct [2].

In fact, and according to recent media investigation, there is a tacit agreement among many parents that the use of certain prescribed drugs can solve many educational situations [2]. Other than the ubiquitous Ritalin, there are

mention of the use of Melatonin as aid for children to sleep more easily or even Rivotril as solution for a child's whining and throwing tantrums. In the latter, the child became 'almost a zombie', in the words of the pediatrician which took over the case and ordered the stop of the medication. After withdraw, the child become lively normal again. And this is one of the key ethical issues of the use of these and other drugs on children for behavioral reasons other than certified diagnosed cases: the side effects.

Apathy, growth disturbances, addiction, glandular alterations, and so on and so forth, the list is as endless as are the possibilities for side effects of the drugs. And questions can and should be made: do any of us, as a parent, a teacher or doctor, has the right to risk these side effects in the name of the normative of classroom or the social/parental peace of mind? Does this presents an attempt to the integrity of the child, that though not yet a full citizen is a person and has unquestionable rights as such? And can you answer these questions in an objective and yet humane manner? Moreover, can you, in face of those answers, propose and apply harmonious measures where all the players, *i.e.*, children parents, teachers, all citizens of the social body, can have a maximum of benefit *versus* a minimal of detriment?

We address this questions and context assuming several postulates and building from them. We propose that imagination and art can be the departing material for answering some of these questions in an objective and humane manner, for the humanity cannot be lost when the issue stands at both its roots and fringes. Imagination is being considered more and more as a serious subject, as a neurocognitive talent to speculate, allowing to prevent and correct real and virtual scenarios [3].

Taking that in consideration along with the premise that literature, and speculative literature in particular, weave imagination with storytelling and storytelling with hypothetical scenarios, which allow to explore variables in social controlled context, we collect our data from selected dystopias and apply it to a social quantum based model. The model is based on an educational proposal to evaluate the prospective future of distance learning in

Higher Education systems [4, 5]. We adjust and elaborate further the model, not only to meet the demands of the specifics of our work but also to accommodate the speculative data, and develop a new tool, *Reductio ad dystopia*, to evaluate such data.

In short, what we developed is a synergetic model to evaluate the present and predict the future through speculative data, as seen by the scheme presented in Figure 1. The model is dynamic enough to accommodate ethic and mathematics, either from the most empathic point of view to the coldest economic spectrum. For only within the full realm of complexity can answers for human problems be thoroughly addressed with integrity.

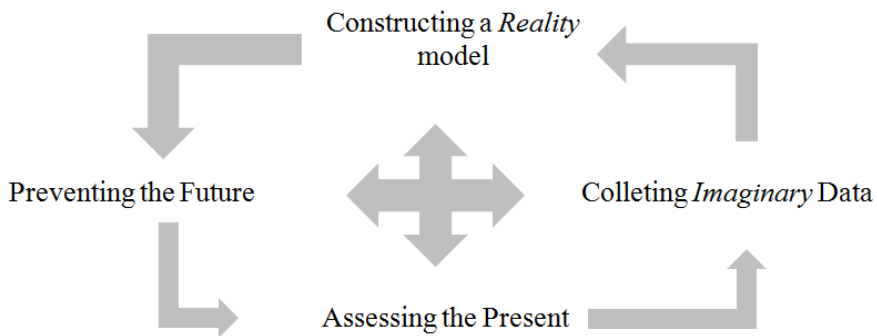


Figure 1: Dynamics of the proposed *Reductio ad dystopia* social quantum model.

2. Selected dystopias: how education versis human rights is presented in Science Fiction

The scope of the body of speculative literature which approaches the themes of drug use for affecting behavior in society and in educational context in particular is vast and three narratives were chosen: *Beyond Beldlam*, by Wyman Guin; *Metaquine*, by François Rouiller; and *Fast Times at Fairmont High*, by Vernon Vinge [6-8]. In this section we briefly summarize the main aspects of these stories, whose some of front cover editions are displayed on Figure 2.

Beyond Bedlam was first published in 1951, and depicts a society in the 29th Century where war is inexistent, as aggressiveness and all negative uncon-

scious impulses have been eradicated from all human beings through the use of drugs. As consequence, all human beings are peaceful and schizophrenic. Each physical body shares two distinct personalities, a hyperalter and a hypoalter, democratically scheduled to assume prominence in five days shifts. As long as the hypo and hyper alter remain in harmony with each other, world peace and ordered society is preserved. In similar was as to the *Brave New World*, by Aldous Huxley, extramarital sex is bleached from any guilt and encouraged [9]. The story focus on a couple, Bill Walden/Conrad Manz and Helen Walden/Clara Manz, where the Waldens are the hyperalters and the Manzs, the hypoalters. Two bodies, four persons. And two of the personalities engage in an affair. Bill Walden betrays his wife with her own alter ego and with this the narrative explores a story with humor and controversy.



Figure 2: Front cover of some editions of the selected speculative stories

Metaquine is more recent, having been published in 2016, in full online social network era. As such, cybernetics underlines the context. The **Simdom** is a virtual reality cyber world which allows a full immersive experience to users through direct neuronal interface. In this world, *Metaquine* is drug used at first to treat mental issues such as problems in concentration and attention deficit but which is becoming attractive to a pharmaceutical company, Globantis, as it can increment the daily productivity while it inhibits

emotions and turns brain into a more lenient state. A more obedient state, at the cost of individual personality. And one way to apply it is to students.

Fast Times at Fairmon High is the third and final selected narrative. Published at the turn of the century, is set on a bear-future American high school where pressure for success pushes the students to use cognition enhancing drugs. The main protagonist, Juan, is only an eight-grader and feels the need to use the drug as he cannot absorb the information in the steady fast pace the society demands. Information access and assimilation in the shortest time period possible is cornerstone and keeping that pace has such prominence that not only is information downloaded in computers but also into the student's networked brains. Those unable to do so or maintain the absorbing rhythm are the new social outcasts, if they are of young age, or simply obsolete, if they are elders. Though the drugs are not legal, as considered cheating, the protagonist, as many others, choses them over this fate.

The stories were read, analyzed and several descriptors extracted as speculative data. They were discriminated in substance effect, individual effect and social effects, *i.e.*, the physiological effect on the individual, the individual consequences and the overall changes in society as result of widespread use of the drug. The summary of the descriptors is displayed on Table 1, per horizontal entry of each story. The data will be used on the reduction ad dystopia social quantum model presented on section 3.

Table 1: Summary of main data collected from the selected narratives

Story	Substance Effect	Individual Effects	Social Effects
Beyond Bedlam	Elimination of aggressiveness	Schizophrenia	Absolute conformity to ruling institution
Metaquine	Emotional inhibition vs. brain performance	Deterioration of individual personality	Cyberaddiction, refusal for physical existence
Fast Time at Fairmont High	Cognition enhancers	Addition	Creation of new social outcasts

One can reduce the speculative data to three types of substance effect (elimination of aggressiveness, emotional inhibition + brain performance, and cognitive enhancers), with three types of individual effects (schizophrenia, individual personality deterioration, and addition with its known consequences of the individual). However, there is a tendency underlining the social consequences as the paradigm of ‘conform or be held outside the gates’ emerges on the three stories. Being outcast as result of refusing the use of the drug (or of obtaining the consequences it gives) is smoothly weaving the column of social effects of the selected narratives on Table 1.

3. Model: predicting the future as the past becomes non-linear

Data per itself has as much meaning as enumerating in correct order the letters of the alphabet. The fact they are the correct letters and in proper order does not imply the action has meaning, not until they are used in words and sentences with proper syntax. So does data from the speculative narratives needs to have a formal syntax and form synergetic relations in order to gain meaning.

To develop the model, we departed from the Distance Learning Quantum Model from Marquez-Ramos and Mourelle [5]. The model groups the students options versus the higher education offers in order to understand how one can predict the most likely social scenarios of future Higher education. We adjusted the concept and add it an original systematic tool inspired by the mathematical tool of *reductio ad absurdum*. When presented with a math problem, one can conclude about the certainty of a solution by exploring the answer through an absurd counterpart hypothetical answer. If the absurd hypothesis is proven to be impossible, *i.e.*, absurd, then its counterpart is the answer.

In our case, we created the *reductio ad dystopia*, where you depart from an absurd (imaginary) hypothetical future, extract its premises and by applying logic and even mathematical operations, as statistical techniques, within the model, you meet a scenario that can be compared with reality.

The closest the juxtaposition of model versus reality, the nearer the ultimate consequences of the dystopia are of coming to be.

Indeed, there are other variables not being taken in account in this approach, as in all models, as reality, physical or social, has a complex nature ungraspable by approximations but the key is approximations can make reality perceivable and forecastable and that has been proven once and again. We propose this model can be one of such approximation, probing the avenue to come but also the present and even the past.

In this particular case, the situation is the drug use on children and students to obtain conformity of behavior and increment educational success. Since it would be impossible in the scope of this chapter to approach all situations, we focus on the case of Ritalin. In the present, parents have two options for altering their child conduct when presented with a scenario of a turbulent and/or misbehaved child in school context: one, to administer Ritalin, that is, to opt for a chemical solution; and two, to endeavor in a more long-term human intervention, such as dialogue, familiar intervention, that is a non chemical solution. The school can present two scenarios, one of conformity, where children are all expected to behave with no further do and comply with what is requested, or empathy, where it accepts as logic and inevitable that not all humans are equal and have different paths to become socially apt to behave without being normalized.

This choice for empathy as oppose to conformity in the model is not casual. Though all values can be questioned, it is accepted in democratic societies that though majorities may decide they cannot do so without acknowledging and respecting minorities. And it is empathy, not conformity, the human characteristic which allows for this democratic and political value to be assumed, integrated and lived.

Finally, the model is completed with determinants, which were also present in the Marquez-Ramos and Mourelle model [5]. In our case, the determinants can be familiar, social, economic or other parameters that are suited for analyzing the reasons for the choices on the parent's options and school

scenarios. For example, choosing the chemical solution could be motivated by economic reasons, as the non chemical solutions could delay the child's success and parents cannot cope with a long-term solution. Eventually, though not in absolute, this could lead to conformity and the school accepting the situation in order to maintain peace in the classroom. This type of situation is exemplified of Figure 3.

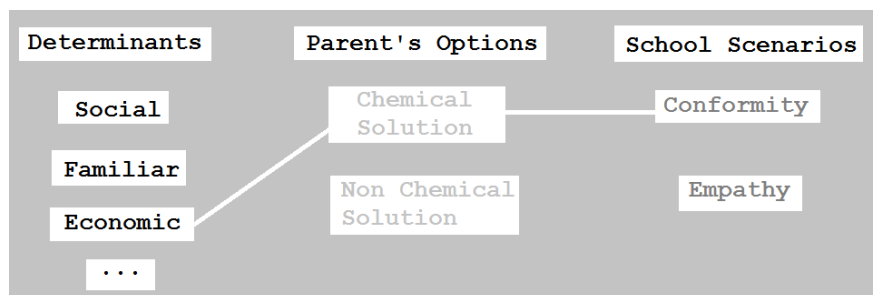


Figure 3: Proposed Social model to apply reduction ad dystopia, based on the Marquez-Ramos and Mourelle Model [5].

Nevertheless, that does not mean that Economy as determinant always imply the choice of the chemical solution. For example, the parents may consider that the future professional success of the child is dependent of the capacity to question and think outside the box, as many companies also consider as essential trait in their employees, and opt for a non- chemical solution that will not erase, even that temporarily, such characteristic of the child. As such, the model is not bias regarding the determinants and comprises the several possibilities.

To use the *reductio ad dystopia* in the model we shall use the data selected from the stories. As all approximations bear error, in minor or higher degree, so does collecting data from complex environment such as a literature piece. As scavengers, we probe the stories, aiming at reducing the creative and human elements into simple and mutually exclusive qualities. Despite the amazing questions raised at *Beyond Beldlam*, *Metaquine* and *Fast Times at Fairmont High*, focusing in the problem in are studying, the data suitable for the model and the use of Ritalin in children in the context of simple mis-

behavior, when obtained the data displayed in Figure 4, which is juxtapose to the model, without the determinants column.

Story	Individual Options	Individual Consequences	Social Scenarios
Beyond Bedlam	Aggressive	Schizophrenia	Conformity Acceptance
	Non-aggressive	Non schizophrenia	Freedom of thought Pariah
Metaquine	Emotional inhibition	Higher brain performance	Cyberaddition
	Emotions non inhibited	Higher integrity of personality	Non conformity
Fast Times at Fairmont High	Higher memory capacity	Addition/School success	Social status
	Normal memory capacity	Drug free/ School failure	Social outcast

Figure 4: Data collected from the selected stories within the model

The premise was that if the dystopian scenario came to a reasonable resemblance with the ‘reality’ scenarios, then the dystopian consequences would be an expected future. And that is happening clearly. Though the blunt result may not be schizophrenia, the abusive use of Ritalin in order to obtain conformity of behavior in the classroom or at home and overall acceptance by class peers, teachers and family, can lead to alterations in the mental state on the long term.

Further, when focusing in the third story, Fast Times at Fairmont High, the juxtaposition of using the drug to guarantee the expected student behavior is too close to comfort. One may point out that Ritalin is not meant to enhance brain capacity but the issue in the story can be broken down to a simple colloquial phrase: My way or the highway. Use it, behave, or get out of here.

The dystopian scenario that seems more far from the present is the one of Metaquine, as the cyberaddition is not yet a social consequence. But can we truly say, as the cybernetic experience becomes more immersive, through virtual and augmented reality, and as, and with good reasons, vid-

eogames are becoming a more educational and cultural tool, that is such a far off future?

In fact, what one can truly say is that many aspects of these dystopias are to close to our neighborhood, whether you consider time or space for vicinity. And if that is the case, what can we say about us as citizens, as parents, as teachers, if we condone or at least turn our eyes in other directions as the use of drugs to deal with misconduct are unofficially accepted?

Democracy lives through the health, mental, social and physical of its citizens, by acknowledging them as individual entities with multifacets. Democracy lives through the patterns it allows for the weakest of the weak to be treated. Democracy lives through the future, as it takes the present to ensure dignity and respect to all human beings. It comes to a sad irony that centuries of democratic fight to establish that children have rights would collapsed through some pills. Not in the name of freedom but in the name of quietness.

4. Conclusions and Future Perspectives

Disraeli said that there three types of lies: lies, damn lies and statistics. And numbers can lie, indeed, as much as words. But as words they can also speak the truth and sustain it with facts otherwise overlooked or unnoticed. And as such, the model should have a quantification attached. But how do you quantify the critical point of democracy become something else, and something else that is contrary to empathy?

Let us be quantic. The model for polielectronic atoms, that is atoms with more than one electron, could be an interesting approximation to include in the reduction ad dystopia social model [10]. In a very simplified manner they use several statistic tools and the inclusion of the spin moment of the electron that could be adjusted to social variables such as the ones of Figure 4.

For example, if one considers the most democratic stable for the use of Ritalin, the situation where only children with ADHD are prescribed with the drug, one has the lowest orbital of the quantic model filled, with an ar-

row downwards, as in Figure 5 a). If you have the exact number of students using the drug for misconduct, as the true number of ADHD children in need of Ritalin is very residual comparing with the overall student population, you will fill the least energetic state of the model and though far from ideal, the situation does not reach a critique platform. But as the number increases, so does the levels of energy where the arrows representing children using Ritalin without ADHD diagnosed and also the instability of the system increases.

Obviously it can be reached a point where the instability is so high the system loses integrity. If it was a molecule, one would say it was the moment it separated in its composing atoms. So in order to have a prominent model that can pin point the exact moment when a democracy collapses by overthrowing its citizens rights, only two aspects need to be addressed. First, can we adjust the statistic methodologies used in the quantic models for this reduction ad dystopia model? Second, which is the number of destroyed persons that qualifies for a democracy be no more?

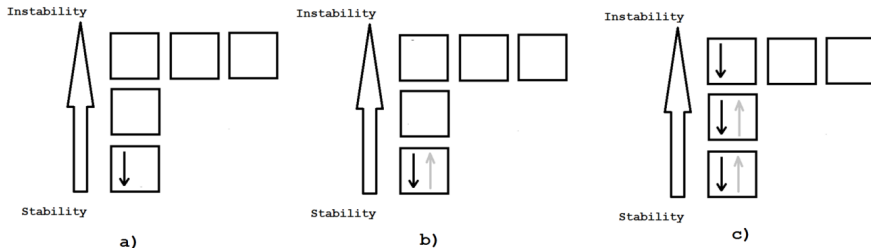


Figure 5: Example of juxtaposing by approximation the quantic model for polielectronic atoms and the reduction ad dystopia model. In a), the arrow stands for only ADHD children using Ritalin, while b) presents a situation where that number equals the number of children using Ritalin for misconduct problems, and c) represents an hypothetical situation where the number of children forced to use Ritalin for misconduct reaches a critical platform of democratic destruction.

Because, as we said in the beginning of this section, numbers can lie but they can also speak too loud the truth. And the model can be invaluable to monitor situations, to prevent scenarios, to detect cracks on the system, but it cannot pin point the critical point without knowing its percentage. And if

you, with the logic of the democratic majority simply said that such number is $50 + 1$, as that is the percentage to achieve majority in democratic systems, maybe we should pause for a moment a be filled with the notion that such number could represent half of the small children of a country and to reach half would mean the whole was lost a long time ago.

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AYLAN KURDI AS THE AWAKENING IMAGE OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS: THE FRAMEWORK OF THE IBERIAN PRESS

Rafael Mangana¹

Abstract: Considering the background of the refugee crisis, September 2, 2015 unequivocally marks the media coverage given to this issue around the world. The appearance of a corpse of a three-year-old Syrian child on a Turkish beach has greatly contributed to a different framework of the crisis that has come to have a face and a name: Aylan Kurdi.

Without setting a comparison between the before and after this media event, the purpose is to analyze how this event influenced media coverage of the refugee crisis in subsequent moments.

Using a convenience sample will be analyzed four specific moments relying on the image of Aylan Kurdi that seem significant to us of what this photo came to signify, during the framing process. This paper aims to extract the analysis of the online version of two quality newspapers from Portugal and Spain, at a time of the refugees' crisis. Through the discourse analysis of the collected data related with framing and priming effects one tries to add a new concept to the many ones already existing in the field of effects theory: the concept of awakening-image, as an element that triggers a set of memories and latent knowledge associated with an issue, subject or protagonist.

Keywords: Framing; Priming; Awakening Image; Refugee Crisis; Migration; Media Representations

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Introduction

At the beginning of the 21st century, Europe faces an exponential increase in the number of migrants arriving from other countries. This trend has been accentuated since 2015, with the arrival of refugees coming from the Middle East and North Africa. These refugees have spread throughout the European continent, but their arrival has not been equally well-accepted by all the countries. The animosity towards refugees was boosted by terrorist acts perpetrated in cities representative of European political and economic power, such as Paris, London or Brussels. Thus, refugees have often been identified as terrorists. Using the effects theory, one finds useful and pertinent to understand how the media framed this crisis

Considering this background, we will try to answer to some questions related with the manner how the media construct social reality, framing and recreating contexts, presenting ideas often related with prejudices and latent cognitive processes, that become explicit through stimulus and typified references.

One intends to comparatively analyze the media coverage of the issue by the quality press from Portugal and Spain.

Bearing in mind the development of the refugee's crisis in Europe, it seems relevant to focus the analysis on a crucial moment, consisting on the appearance of the corps of one Syrian child, Aylan Kurdi in a Turkish beach in September 2015.

So, one will proceed to the analysis of some news contents from the *Publico* (Portugal) and *El Pais* (Spain). The choice of two newspapers from both countries is justified by the geographical and historical proximity between both, despite its also notorious cultural differences.

Framing: meaning and conceptual evolution

The relevance of framing theory is indisputable, particularly in Communication Sciences field.

Being a metacommunication, the frame is a set of rules and instructions that gives meaning to discourse, in the same manner as personal interactions are ruled by a order and meaning in shared behaviors and codes. The frame is what we call to this set of rules that gives a specific meaningful order either to a behavior or to a discourse

In one of his most important papers on the subject – Framing: Towards the Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm –, Robert Entman, summarizes this idea supporting that “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in communicative text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral valuation, and/or treatment recommendation. Typically, frames diagnose, evaluate and prescribe.” (Entman, 1993: 53).

According to McCombs and Ghanem (2001), “the origins of the term framing within the Communication refers to photography and to cinematography, where framing means variables such as the camera angle and the perspective in the style of a visual message” (p.71).

The anthropologist and epistemologist Gregory Bateson was, by the 1950s, one of the pioneers in using the notion of “frame” within the Social and Human Sciences. In one of his most important works, “The Theory of Play and Fantasy” (1954; 1972), Bateson focuses his analysis on what he calls the “paradoxes of abstraction of verbal communication” (Bateson 1972: 177), using the term frame as a psychological concept, relating it to the idea of “context”. That is, the author argues that to frame is to circumscribe a number of messages (or significant actions) that end up making sense, for having logic, in a certain situation that is shared by all the interlocutors.

In this essay on the psychology of perception, Bateson takes the frame as a psychological concept but underlines the importance of messages as relevant conditioners of the construction and definition of the concept itself. As the author points out: “Any message that implicitly or explicitly defines a framework, *ipso facto* gives instructions or helps to the receiver in his attempt to understand the messages contained in the framework” (1972: 188).

Bateson believes that framing is simply circumscribing a set of messages that make sense for interlocutors in a shared context. The framing process helps us, for example, to differentiate simulation from reality.

Previously, in a context of an epistemological debate on social sciences, the idea of latent mental schemes for the understanding of the surrounding environment by the social actor was used drawing in the concept of Alfred Schutz's typification (1979: 110). In the lifeworld analysis, these cognitive schemes were considered as based on *a priori* experimentation of the world and the objects that make up it. Schutz defended an observation of typical actions, coordinating them with models constructed by equally typical agents. The perception of the social and cultural lifeworld it is only made possible by the typification as a process of selecting situations, objects, contexts, based on past events, which give to the actors of future actions a social stock of knowledge, that Schutz classifies as "thinking as always".

Erving Goffman (1974, based on Schutz), is the author who, in the 70's, gives us a more specifically sociological idea on the concept. The author assumes the frame as a social framework and as a mental schema that allows organizing an experience.

With Goffman, there's a shift, in the original concept, from an individual to a collective point of view, from the psychological to the sociological, since the frame is taken as a social instrument that enables a shared interpretation of reality. Goffman emphasizes the relevance of knowing how reality is understood by individuals rather than considering "the reality" by itself, supporting the idea of an existing interaction between the social frameworks and the mental schemas of everyone.

Goffman tells us: "(The definition of) a situation is based on an agreement with organization principles, those governing events – at least the social ones – and our subjective involvement in them; "frame" It is a word that I use to refer to such basic principles ... "(1974: 10 and 11).

One must give the credits of the adaptation of the concept of “frame” to the journalism field to Gay Tuchman (1978). Using the concepts of Schutz and Goffman’s typification the American sociologist uses the concept as professional organizing principles, used to provide meaning to events.

According to his approach, in his daily routine, the journalist works bearing in mind organizational rules that condition his field of action. Considering that the sense of belonging to one professional group, is associated with the objectives of news organization, the news production works as part of the social construction of reality.

Tuchman stated that the news does not just reflect reality. They build it, acting dialectically. While sharing certain conceptions of social reality, news, simultaneously, contribute to change the perception of the reality. The social experience categories, the facts, and social meanings are determined by “natural attitude”, as Alfred Schutz theorized it. So in spite of being taken by a-historical and reified, those social facts and meanings are historically and socially settled by social interactions, social institutions, and, obviously, by the news making process. The news, in spite of being codified and restrained by social institutions, will go on, as Tuchman concluded, to reproduce itself as historical and indisputable facts ; “It not only defines and redefines , constitute and reconstitutes social meanings; it also but also defines and redefines , constitutes and reconstitutes ways of doing things,–existing processes in existing institutions” (1978: 182).

From priming to awakening image

Being a recent concept in the field of journalism, priming has been studied in the fields of social psychology and neuropsychology for about 50 years, focus on the manner as how an initial stimulus influence individual’s response to later stimulus. It is a mental process by which the individual search in the field of previous experiences for latent references in his memory to obtain an explanation for a specific issue, allowing the formation of opinions.

Shanto Iyengar and Donald Kinder (1987) were the first researchers that applied the concept of priming to the area of Communication. Both authors sustained that the priming effect refers to changes in the way people evaluate political phenomena in the broad sense. During the evaluation process of the behavior and the performance of the political player, the individual recurs to previous mental schemes, using his experience, overlapping the media information.

The theorization of the priming effect first began at the mid-80s following the media effects studies, initiated in the early 70s. It's a concept that tries to enlighten the media effects that go beyond agenda-setting process, using Psychology to clarify the memory activation during the political evaluation process.

Weaver (2007) already had previously supported some considerations on the evolution of the agenda and public evaluation that effectively took shape with the Iyengar and Kinder' study. These authors have used experimental methodologies to study the consumption of TV news broadcasts by ordinary American citizens, relating it to the analysis of the way as the public critically evaluated the president on some specific subjects.

In "News That Matters: television and American Opinion," Iyengar and Kinder defend that, "when calling the attention to some matters, ignoring the others, TV news broadcasts are influencing the standards by which governments, Presidents, and candidates are being judged. Priming refers to changes in the standards that people use to make the assessment. " (1987: 63)

The authors also verify through their experimentation that the priming effect is usually noticed "when the news frames a problem as if it as a matter of the president's life, when the viewers are prepared to consider the problem as important, and when they see the problem as entangled in the presidency's duties and obligations" (1987: 97). This process happens, precisely, by the stimulus of an awakening image.

The priming effect, to most of the authors engaged with the concept, come in the sequence of the agenda-setting effects, as it deals with a debate about how mental maps are activated in the information receivers minds by news contents and how does this influence the permanence or change of the public assessment on a certain issue, a political protagonist or a media event. It is, therefore, a mental procedure that goes beyond the simple processing of the received information, because of the concept attempt to explain the media effects through memory activation. That is, the priming process concerns with a set of processes of activating s mental associations in the receiver' mind from which one tries to identify a specific moment baptized as wakening image, which stands out for its intensity and its disruptive capacity. It is the way how these processes are activated, through specific contents, that will determine the assessment by the public or the information receiver.

On this aspect, Jo and Berkowitz (1996) refer to the notion of “associative networks” according to which the presentation of certain stimuli of a certain meaning favors other semantically related concepts, fueling the probability of invoking thoughts of meaning similar to those stimulated by the self presentation” (p.70).

The typification process addressed by Schutz is not effective without the presence of one or more reference points that are able to combine the present moment with an entire previous background.

However, often this previous background, precisely because of its latent and often unconscious nature, needs a strong stimulus. In our point of view, this arises when it is verified what Schutz (1972) once called “leap” or “shock”, a phenomenon that is provoked in the media field by the awakening image.

The awakening image intensifies the perception, originating a second phase of the cognitive process. It awakens latent memories grounded in the stock of knowledge and simultaneously it allows to develop a reference mark, a cognitive code of classification of situations, influencing the agenda-setting and framing mechanisms.

In this way, awakening a priming effect, intensifying the importance of the issue in the agenda-setting process, gives rise to new frames.

Framing can only happen when there is a strong mental association which demands an awakening -image, where the frame is a replica with respect to something that exists previously. In order to become possible, the appearance of a new frame, it lacks an element that allows the creation of associative networks with latent memories. Often, the priming effect occurs unconsciously and what makes it conscious is the awakening image.

The crossing of the Mediterranean: a context for the refugee crisis

On October 18, 2013, Italy implemented the operation “Mare Nostrum” after the sinking of a ship of clandestine migrants, where more than 360 people died, trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea. This operation ended a year later, after the exponential increase in the number of refugees and migrants arriving in southern Italy and the refusal of funding from several EU countries.

The European agency for the management of operational cooperation at the external borders of the EU Member States (Frontex) went forward with a search and rescue mission through the “Triton” assisted by three ships and two surveillance aircraft.

Of the 626,000 asylum applications in 2014, EU member states have accepted 185,000. During this year, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), more than three thousand people died or disappeared during the crossing of the Mediterranean. In total, more than 280,000 migrants entered the European Union.

But 2015 was the year that marked the refugee crisis decisively. Fleeing the Syrian war, many people have abandoned – often precariously – the country, trying to look for better living conditions and, above all, security, throughout all Europe.

During this year, about one million migrants arrived in Europe, mainly through the Mediterranean Sea, in what is the largest migratory flow since World War II. On the 19th April 2015, the sinking of a trawler in the Mediterranean killed at least 800 refugees.

In May, the European Union launched the US Navfor Med operation – based in Rome – with the mission to identify, capture and destroy vessels used to smuggle migrants. On the 22nd June the first phase of the operation was launched, with the main mission of marking traffickers and controlling routes and patterns of migrant smuggling, from Libya to Italy and Malta.

July marked the start of the construction – by order of the Hungarian government – of a barbed wire fence along the Hungarian border with Serbia, in order to halt the entry of refugees into Europe. On the 20th of this month the leaders of the European Union agreed to receive 32,256 refugees from Italy and Greece. In May, the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, had proposed 40 thousand. At the end of the month, British Prime Minister David Cameron warned of what he called “a multitude of people crossing the Mediterranean to go to the United Kingdom.”

In August, the bodies of 71 Syrians were found in a cold van in Austria. On the 22nd May, British interior minister Theresa May announced a joint United Kingdom and France border operation (Calais) to increase the safety of the English Channel after a number of attempts and dead of Syrian refugees trying to reach England.

On the first day of September, the Budapest railway station is closed after the massive influx of refugees, of which at least 2300 were reported to have been illegally entered, 353 of them minors. Hundreds of refugees pile up at the Keleti station, protesting against the Hungarian authorities and asking them permission to move on to Austria and Germany.

A day later, probably the most mediated event since the refugees began to emerge massively from their countries from North Africa and the Middle East to Europe took place: the appearance on the Turkish beach of the corpse

of Aylan Kurdi, a three-year-old boy who died drowned during the family's attempt to reach Greece through Turkey. Perhaps because it is a strong image of a child's corpse, this event triggered a wave of popular solidarity, alerting many Europeans to the refugee problem. The slogan "Welcome Refugees" becomes viral and David Cameron says that the UK will fulfill its "moral obligations".

September was also the month of the reopening of Budapest's main railway station after a two-day shutdown. Hundreds of refugees were now on trains to the Austrian border, others on foot to Germany.

At this stage, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said the crisis was a "German problem", and on September 4 the Hungarian parliament even passed a series of laws providing for sentences of up to three years in prison for the illegal passage of its borders. A day later, civil society mobilized itself and random acts of solidarity took place with the Finnish Prime Minister, Juha Sipilä, offering his villa to house refugees who came to Finland for asylum. President Mariano Rajoy promises that Spain will be solidary.

On September 7, David Cameron states the UK will receive another 20,000 refugees within five years, and France agrees to receive 24,000. Germany, whose Chancellor Angela Merkel had appealed to European partners to receive migrants, said it needed €6 billion in order to help 800,000 refugees, which the country hopes to host by the end of the year.

Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, called on the Member States on 9th September to welcome 120,000 more refugees, bringing the total up to 160,000, to be distributed on the basis of a quota system. Initial plans had foreseen that three fifths of the new refugees would be distributed between Germany, France and Spain.

On September 13, a record number of 5,809 people arrived in Hungary, when the border fence build by the government was almost completed. Germany imposed emergency controls at the Austrian border, temporarily suspending the Schengen agreement. Officials said the country had received

63,000 refugees since the end of August. A day later, Austria and Slovakia announced the reintroduction of border controls. Germany has warned that it could register up to one million entries this year and Hungary declared a state of emergency and threatened to arrest anyone who illegally entered the country. The 23rd marked the summit of the European Union, promoted to discuss the phenomenon of migration.

In November, Ankara and the European Union signed a three billion euros agreement of European aid for Turkey. In return, the Turkish authorities have committed themselves to improve the border control and to cooperate in the fight against human trafficking networks.

December was the month of the European Union's announcement of a project to control external borders. On the other hand, a mechanism has been set up to permanently move refugees with no number limits. This obligatory mechanism was not accepted unanswered across Europe, with Slovakia and Hungary expressing displeasure, while Austria closed the border with Slovenia. The 17th of last month of 2015 also marked the arrival of the first (24) refugees in Portugal under the European Union program.

Aylan Kurdi: the power of an image

The photo of Aylan Kurdi, the Syrian boy drowned on a Turkish beach and considered to be a turning point in the media's agenda setting of the refugee crisis, was taken by the Turkish photographer Nilüfer Demir of the Dogan agency and broadcasted by the Reuters Ankara / DHA agency on the 2nd September, 2015. The case of Aylan was one of millions of Syrians who fled their country at war. In the case of this three-year-old child, he fled from Kobane with his family heading to the Greek island of Kos.

According to Reuters, 23 people divided in two ships were shipwrecked. Aylan Kurdi was not even the youngest to drown in the Mediterranean waters. In the same boat were the Jafer twins, who were a year and a half old. The corpses were on the Turkish beach in Bodrum, Mugla Province.

Two thousand people passed through the Mediterranean in small rubber boats in the previous four weeks, but it was Aylan Kurdi who provoked a media boom in the refugee tragedy. Until the appearance and diffusion of the corpse of this Syrian child, the refugee crisis was reported as a whole, with a mass of people succumbing in the waters of the Mediterranean Sea. As of September 2, 2015, the world has come to recognize a face, a body, a name that personifies all this tragedy: Aylan Kurdi.



Image 1 – Aylan Kurdi’s fotografy, by Niliüfer Demir / Dogan Agency (Reuters, 2015).

It was broadcast by most of the major media around the world, in a remarkable amount of first pages and news. The leading newspapers in Portugal and Spain – Público and El País, respectively – have maintained this trend. But even before appearing in the newspapers, this image ends up being spread in a viral way through social networks. In such a scale that Reuters emphasized the very power of “viralization”, writing: “The disturbing image of a child captures the eye, horrifies” (Reuters, 2015).

Aylan Kurdi and the Iberian framework

On September 3, 2015, the day after the shipwreck that struck Aylan, Público tells the story behind the number, something that had not happened until then. “The drowning boy’s family would be trying to get to Canada – Journalists in Turkey, Canada and Syria report that little Aylan’s family was refused asylum in June. Only the father survived. “

Família do menino afogado estaria a tentar chegar ao Canadá

Jornalistas na Turquia, Canadá e Síria contam que a família do pequeno Aylan viu recusado um pedido de asilo em Junho. Só o pai sobreviveu



MARIA JOÃO GUIMARÃES · 3 de Setembro de 2015, 10:21 (actualizado a 3 de Setembro de 2015, 17:49)

6298
PARTILHAS



Image 2 - Printsreen from *Público*, September 3, 2015. Available at: <https://www.publico.pt/2015/09/03/mundo/noticia/familia-do-menino-afogado-da-imagem-estaria-a-tentar-chegar-ao-canada-1706729>. Consulted the 22th March, 2018.

Up to this point, refugees and their deaths were invariably counted in the thousands and refugees considered a mass of people, faceless, nameless. They were only known to flee the war, often confused and associated with the phenomenon of terrorism from which they fled. A day later, it's the Spanish *El País* to publish a story, featuring the father of Aylan Kurdi, who died with another brother (a fact that the media refer almost as additional information, which also helps us to perceive the force of the image of the dead boy).

“Las manos de mis dos niños se escaparon de las mías”

El niño de tres años y su hermano, también muerto en el naufragio, procedían de Kobane



ANDRÉS MOURENZA

Estambul · 4 SEP 2015 · 20:32 CEST

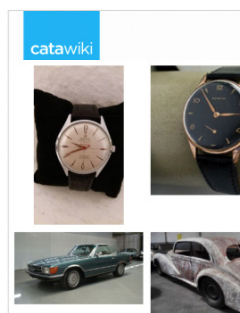
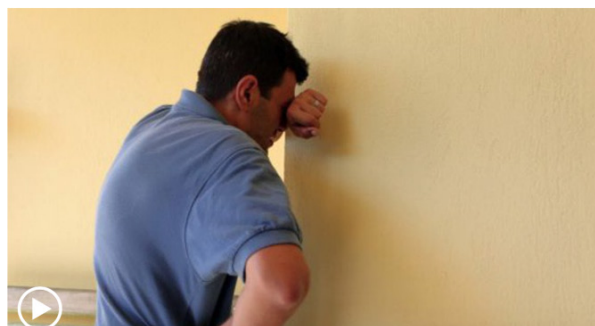
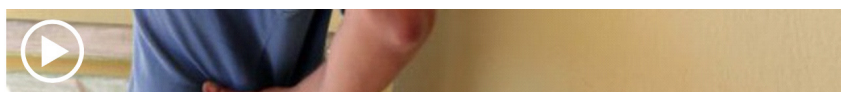


Image 3 - Printscreen from *El País*, September 4, 2015. Available at https://elpais.com/internacional/2015/09/03/actualidad/1441232434_109669.html. Consulted the 22nd March, 2018.

The proximity to the tragedy of a father who loses his two small children is given to us by the title: “The hands of my two children have escaped mine”; and reinforced in the first paragraph, descriptive and appealing to the sentiment and solidarity with a boy who “was only three years old.”



REUTERS LIVE

Sobrevivió a las bombas y a la guerra, pero no al mar ni a las barreras geográficas y legales que separan un Oriente Próximo en llamas de Europa. [El niño sirio cuya fotografía se ha convertido en el símbolo del drama de los refugiados](#) -con su diminuta camiseta roja y su pantalón azul, tendido sin vida en la turística playa turca de Ali Hoca Burnu, lamiéndole la cara las mismas olas del mar que lo mataron- ha sido identificado como Aylan Kurdi. Solo tenía tres años. Su familia había intentado pedir asilo en Canadá.

Image 4 - Printscreen from *El País*, September 4, 2015. Available at: https://elpais.com/internacional/2015/09/03/actualidad/1441232434_109669.html. Consulted the 22nd March, 2018.

“He survived the bombs and the war, but not the sea, nor the geographical and legal barriers separating a burning Middle East from Europe. The Syrian boy whose photograph has become the symbol of the refugee drama – in his little red sweater and blue shorts, stretched lifeless on the Turkish beach of Ali Horca Burnu, licking his face with the same waves of sea that killed him – was identified as Aylan Kurdi. He was only three years old. His family had tried to seek asylum in Canada. “

This paragraph alone summarizes, the media’s framing of this refugee crisis – and in this case, both by the Público newspaper and El País –, provided by the appearance and diffusion of the photograph of Aylan Kurdi, a boy who had survived to the harsh reality of a country at war, but who had not resisted geographical barriers – and (seems to be in between) policies – separating the Middle East from Europe. This is a boy who succumbs in the same waters, on the same beach where others – more fortunate – habitually bathe during the holidays.

Aylan Kurdi has become an icon for the refugee crisis and the need for a certain humanization of the problem and solidarity, something that seems clear on September 22, 2015, when the Público newspaper reported: “Caravan Aylan Kurdi has already arrived in Croatia with Portuguese help – With them traveled almost 60 tons of clothing, footwear, food, hygiene items, medicines and toys “;

Caravana Aylan Kurdi já chegou à Croácia com ajuda portuguesa

Viajaram quase 60 toneladas de roupa, calçado, comida, artigos de higiene, medicamentos e brinquedos.



ANA CRISTINA PEREIRA · 22 de Setembro de 2015, 15:58

1625
PARTILHAS



Image 5 - Printscreen from *Público*, September 22, 2015. Available at: <https://www.publico.pt/2015/09/22/sociedade/noticia/aylan-kurdi-caravan-ja-chegou-a-croacia-1708621>. Consulted the 22nd March, 2018.

and the day after, September 23: “Inatel prepares to give training and employment to 100 refugees – The Aylan program of the foundation includes development of professional courses in hospitality to provide refugees with skills. At the end, work contracts will be signed. Each one of the 12 units will be responsible for one family. “

Inatel prepara-se para dar formação e emprego a 100 refugiados

Programa Aylan da fundação inclui desenvolvimento de cursos profissionais em hotelaria para dotar refugiados de competências. No final, serão assinados contratos de trabalho. Cada uma de 12 unidades ficará responsável por uma família.

PEDRO SALES DIAS · 23 de Setembro de 2015, 21:11

818
PARTILHAS



Image 6 - Printscreen from *Público*, September 23, 2015. Available at: <https://www.publico.pt/2015/09/23/sociedade/noticia/inatel-preparase-para-dar-formacao-e-emprego-a-100-refugiados-1708821>. Consulted the 22nd March, 2018.

Therefore, it shows, on one hand, the humanitarian concern that exists around the refugees, but, above all, the strength and influence that Aylan Kurdi once again assumes in this crisis. In two days the news of the “Aylan Kurdi Caravan” and the “Aylan Program”, promoted by the Inatel Foundation, come up. About a year after the shipwreck, *Público* echoed the request for more humanity. The newspaper writes in its September 16, 2016 online version: “A year after Aylan, there are more and more walls to fight refugees – Deaths in the Mediterranean have increased, although fewer are trying to reach Europe. UN General Assembly kicks off with initiatives calling for more coordination and a “more humane” approach. There are more than 65 million refugees in the world, meaning one in each 113 people.”

REFUGIADOS

Um ano depois de Aylan, são cada vez mais os muros para travar refugiados

As mortes no Mediterrâneo aumentaram, apesar de serem menos os que tentam chegar à Europa. Assembleia-geral da ONU arranca com iniciativas que pedem mais coordenação e uma abordagem “mais humana”. Há mais de 65 milhões de refugiados no mundo, uma em cada 113 pessoas.



SOFIA LORENA · 19 de Setembro de 2016, 7:40

210
PARTILHAS



Image 7 - Printscreen from *Público*, September 19, 2016. Available at: <https://www.publico.pt/2016/09/19/mundo/noticia/um-ano-depois-de-aylan-refugiados-sao-mais-e-encontram-ainda-mais-muros-1744453>. Consulted the 22nd March, 2018.

Within the same logic of marking a date that was acknowledged to be a turning point in the refugee crisis, exactly one year after the appearance of the Syrian boy’s corpse, on September 2, 2016 an online edition of *El País* made Aylan Kurdi a kind of metonymy of the refugee children’s suffering: “A year later, more than 400 Aylan drowned in the Mediterranean,” it says. In the subtitle, a lament of the father of the Syrian boy, adds to the need to

do something more for the refugees: “Everyone wanted to do something. The photograph of my dead son touched the world, but we continue to die and nobody does anything. “

EL PAÍS DE MAMAS Y DE PAPAS

Un año después más de 400 ‘Aylan’ han muerto ahogados en el Mediterráneo

“Todo el mundo quería hacer algo. La foto de mi hijo muerto conmovió al mundo, pero la gente sigue muriendo y nadie hace nada”, dice el padre a la prensa alemana

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ALBA MORALEDA
2 SEP 2016 - 17:33 CEST



Aylan. Homenaje de Save the Children a las puertas del Congreso de los Diputados. EMILIO NARANJO

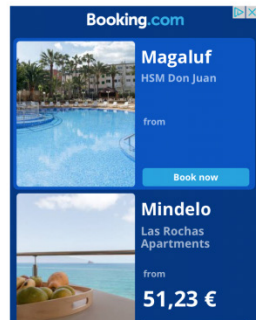


Image 8 – Printscreen from *El País*, September 2, 2016. Available at: https://elpais.com/el-pais/2016/09/02/mamas_papas/1472793420_323195.html. Consulted the 22nd March, 2018.

To note the image used of a child standing outside the door of the Congress of Deputies in Spain at a demonstration organized by Save The Children. Just like a year ago at the Turkish beach of Ali Horca Burnu, once again a face: “I survived. Other 423 boys, no”, can be read on a poster wielded by the child.

Conclusions

Over the last few years, the refugee crisis has made thousands of dead people, who succumb to the Mediterranean Sea and are caught up in the European dream of greater security and peace. However, Aylan Kurdi and the disclosure of the photograph of his corpse on a Turkish beach on September 2 came to give another media dimension to this tragedy. From

the analysis to the online versions of the main reference newspapers of Portugal and Spain – Público and El País, respectively – we perceive the transformative power of Aylan Kurdi's image, which even acquired a political dimension and became a collective manifestation banner around of the refugee problem.

This media event arises after several years of war in Syria, becoming the symbol of a social problem on a global scale and to which the media gave echo and form. Aylan Kurdi also promoted solidarity and in a context that is not new. The image of this child has also succeeded in framing the refugee crisis, considered as a whole, as a mass of people with no face or name. The frame, the angle, the vision of the problem was altered. We were moved to feel identified, close to this tragedy.

Embodying the entire refugee crisis, Aylan Kurdi's photography worked as what we may call of awakening image. The awakening image, created by the media, awakened associative networks that allowed the appearance of a priming effect and simultaneously the trigger of a framing. Because there is no framing without memory, without former references. In order for the framing process to take place, cognitive recognition must first occur, which does not arise spontaneously. It arises from something that is already latent in the subject's memory. Thus, framing is associated with priming – which, in turn, gives rise to a number of ideas – but it is thanks to the impact of a awakening image that causes the priming to be triggered, allowing the formation of a new media framing, in which the image of Aylan Kurdi's corpse on the beach is associated with the refugee crisis.

On the other hand, framing, individually considered, is a cognitive scheme, but lacks scheduling. And it needs the priming effect in order to accomplish the association of ideas that guarantee the survival of the framing. It is at this point that the importance of the awakening image emerges in the journalistic field. The awakening is what causes a startle in the consciousness. Aylan Kurdi was the awakening image of the refugee crisis, contributing decisively to an awareness of this problem. The image of Aylan Kurdi reconfigured the way in which the refugee crisis itself came to be spread by the

media and from which the world became aware of the one that has been the largest migratory flow since World War II and which has harvested thousands of lives.

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Democracy and political practices are suffering a major shift. Political participation and deliberation take place in the context of strategically manipulated information. Opportunities to mobilize data, in order to reinforce manifestations of panic or alarm, are becoming more evident. Concepts such as "information", "agenda-setting " and "participation" are being challenged today by an almost belligerent mobilization of media resources.

Recent developments on the recognition of women's rights and promotion of new affirmative policies intended to improve gender equality coincides with an ever-increasing controversy around the concept of "political correctness".

At the same time, while affirmations concerning human dignity appears to be progressively incorporated in political discourse, phenomena such as xenophobia, misogyny, racism, cultural, racial and ethnic confrontation, and, at the limit, the proliferation of genocides, rise to a previously unimaginable proportion and extent.

Emphasis was placed on empirical and theoretical works involving relatively recent political debates, such as the creation of the "left majority" (or "geringonça") in Portugal; the Brexit; the Brazilian process; the American elections; the debates on the political correctness, the emergence of illiberal democracies and the political impact of migratory fluxes.