CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RESEARCH

SU SO

Edited by Laura Peja, Nico Carpentier,
Fausto Colombo, Maria Francesca Murru,
Simone Tosoni, Richard Kilborn, Leif Kramp,
Risto Kunelius, Anthony McNicholas,
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PART II

Abstracts

Introduction: Current perspectives on communication and media research

Laura Peja, Maria Francesca Murru, Simone Tosoni, and Nico Carpentier

1.   About the book

This book, the thirteenth in the Researching and Teaching Communication Book Series launched in 2006, stems from the communal intellectual work of the lecturers, students and alumni of the 2017 edition of the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School (SuSo). The first part of this collective endeavour aims to shed light on key issues of the present scenarios of media engagement, and in particular on the transformations and dynamics of the public sphere (section I); on the current, multidirectional and diversified trajectories of participation and engagement (section II); and on the present passage from traditional media to networks (section III).

At the same time, the book gives an account of the work done at the summer school, and in particular the plurality of research interests and analytical perspectives that the SuSo community values as its main asset. The European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School is in fact run by a consortium of 21 European universities, it brings together PhD students who come every year from more than 30 different European and extra-European institutions: it therefore represents an arena where different disciplinary traditions and methodological backgrounds within media studies can get in touch, debate and cooperate in order to advance our understanding of media systems and communication processes. The reader can get an insight into the richness and variety of the different perspectives on dialogue within SuSo from the second part of the book, dedicated – as is customary in the series – to the PhD projects' abstracts of the students participating in the summer school. Taken together, these abstracts represent a good sample of the ongoing research of the next generation of media scholars, and an overview of the current trends in media and communication studies.

From among the students, six (Kristian Jeff Cortez Agustin, Lorleen Farrugia, Reinhard Anton Handler, Zsofia Nagy, Alvaro Oleart, Erika Theissen Walukiewicz) have been selected to develop their research into a full paper: together with nine lectures' chapters, and three chapters from SuSo's alumni (Victor Navarro-Remesal and Ignacio Bergillos, Binakuromo Ogbebor, Aida Martori Muntsant), selected through an open call, their works comprise the first part of the book, divided into three thematic sections.

The first thematic section is dedicated to the media and the public sphere. **Fausto Colombo** opens the section, focusing on the case of an epoch-making image: photos of the three-year-old Alan Kurdi dead on the shore, to clarify the steps of cultural elaboration and a model of spreading and sharing images (photographs in particular) via the Web, underlining the differences between the circulation of images through traditional media and the circulation typical of the digital media environment. The second chapter, by **François Heinderyckx**, moves the focus of the section to the question of the European public sphere. The articulation between regional, national and European public and media spheres forms a range of complex configurations that add to the complexity of a matter which remains crucial. The subsequent two chapters are also dedicated to the European public sphere, from the perspective of European academia and university policies. **Victor Navarro-Remesal** and **Ignacio Bergillos** propose the idea that academic-related spaces, such as the Erasmus programme, can serve as success stories for recouping the European ideal and present Suso itself as a facilitator that shapes the professional identities of communication researchers in a shared European space. As such, this kind of initiative can play a key role in the European endeavour itself. Along these lines, in his chapter, **Hannu Nieminen** launches a direct and vigorous call to European universities, inviting them to defend the crucial role and identity of academia against the transformations that, in the last 20 years, have turned the democratic and culture-oriented vocation of European higher education into an increasingly market-driven enterprise. The next contribution, by **Binakuromo Ogbebor,** explores, with content and discourse analyses, the paradigm repair strategy of minimization used in media policy debates, and underlines the implications of such coverage: promoting inequality and reducing the quality of debates, this weak media policy does not seem to be able to guarantee a democratic public sphere. **Alvaro Oleart** continues the debate about the lack of a single European public sphere, highlighting how the media reporting of political issues still remains largely based on the national level, despite the wide range of competences that have been transferred from the national to the European Union level. **Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt** and **Annalisa Pulga** close the section with a literature review study on the role of social media in shaping health-related social norms. The authors introduce a peculiar methodology of analysis called *Preferred*

Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA), probing its applicability in media and communication studies.

The second section of the book deals with the current trajectories of participation and engagement. In the first chapter, **Bart Cammaerts** presents an encompassing conceptual framework for the circuit of protest to study the role of media, communication and mediation in contentious politics, reflecting at the same time on the methodological implications and challenges of this approach. **Nico Carpentier** offers a theoretical reflection on antagonism and agonism. These concepts have in fact become popular in the field of media and communication studies, being seen as particularly apt to capture the logics of conflict, the construction of self and other, and the relationship between conflict and democracy. In the chapter that follows, **Kristian Jeff Cortez Agustin** turns his gaze to the Asian context with a visual essay that focuses on a pilot project of participatory photography done in Manila to promote and critically reflect on the recognition of an ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) identity. **Leif Kramp** presents a journalism project carried out in the city of Hamburg, Germany, to develop innovative location-aware storytelling formats for urban reporting. These formats aim to produce, distribute to and engage audiences with local news. **Zsofia Nagy**, in turn, move her focus to Hungary, where research in 2015–16 focused on three different activists' responses to government anti-refugee propaganda and politics: 1) a counter-billboard campaign criticising the government, 2) a grassroots humanitarian movement and 3) a local protest movement against a refugee camp. The findings show that the application of mediation theory to contentious action in illiberal democracies allows for a nuanced and multi-layered understanding of opportunities and constraints of such action. The last contribution to this second section, from **Erika Theissen Walukiewicz**, is based on in-depth interviews with documentary subjects and addresses participation in Swedish television documentaries, looking beyond professional ethical frameworks to propose a receptive and context-sensitive reflection on media ethics.

The third and last section of the book offers insights into the present paths from traditional media to networks, opening with research on pre-adolescents' understanding of risks in digital media, conducted by **Lorleen Farrugia**. The research is based on six focus groups with Maltese children aged 9 to 12. Using Social Representation Theory, the analysis shows evidence of cognitive biases in the way children situate themselves and others, and this helps to identify the digital literacy skills that children need to learn. In the second chapter of the section, **Reinhard Anton Handler** takes a critical look at networks as a research axiom. Focusing on the margins of networks and personal entry points, the author reflects on his own research practice using digital as well as ethnographic methods. **Aida Martori Muntsant** describes the situation of public local television in Catalonia

with regard to adaptation to the digital era, using a qualitative methodology based on the analysis of official documentation, interviews, non-participant observation and a focus group. The results demonstrate that local media have less capability to respond to current social and political challenges, especially due to the lack of funding to develop new technologies and strategies. In the following chapter, **Michael Skey** investigates the 2014 Eurovision Song Contest, held in Copenhagen, drawing on ethnographic materials and focusing on the production of an event as a specific type of TV format. Moving beyond textual analyses, the author pays particular attention to the struggles that take place between different interest groups (organisers, producers, participants, fans) and expands the understanding of the significance that media events have today. **Simone Tosoni** and **Valentina Turrini** close the section and the first part of the book, presenting preliminary findings of an ongoing case study of female solo-travelling in Italy. Proposing some methodological considerations vis-à-vis addressing media activities in social practices, the chapter seeks to contribute to the attempt to decentre media studies advocated by authors like David Morley, Shaun Moores or Nick Couldry.

The second part of the book opens with the lyrics of a song composed by Yellow flow students for a joint-flow presentation on the score of Abba's famous *Mamma mia*. The song is published here to give a taste of the creativity, camaraderie and intellectual fun that Suso always stimulates, creating an ideal environment for networking among and between students and lecturers.

The book includes a series of photographs taken during different activities at the summer school. Our special thanks go to François Heinderyckx for the photographic material.

2. Background of the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School

The summer school was established in the early 1990s by a consortium of ten (Western) European universities, being initiated by the Universities of Stendhal-Grenoble III (Grenoble, France) and Westminster (UK). From then on, these participating universities have organised annual summer schools for PhD students in the field of media and communication studies, lasting for one or two weeks and taking place in a wide range of locations, including Grenoble, Lund, Barcelona, London, Helsinki, Tartu, Ljubljana and Bremen. In 2016, the summer school moved to the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, where it was also held in 2017, from 24 July to 5 August.

Including the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan (IT), 21 universities participate in the consortium: Ankara Üniversitesi (TR), Universitat Autònoma

de Barcelona (ES), Universitetet I Bergen – UiB (NO), Universität Bremen (DE), Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem – ELTE, Budapest (HU), Helsingin Yliopisto (FI), Jönköping University – JU (SE), Univerzita Karlova, Prague (CZ), Univerza v Ljubljani (SI), London School of Economics & Political Science – LSE (UK), Loughborough University (UK), Lunds Universitet (SE), Roskilde Universitet (DK), Université Stendhal-Grenoble III (FR), University of Stirling (UK), Tampereen Yliopisto (FI), Tartu Ülikool (EE), Vrije Universiteit Brussel – VUB (BE), Vytauto Didžiojo Universitetas – VMU, Kaunas (LT) and University of Westminster (UK). In 2017, the affiliated partner of the programme was again the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA). ECREA also supported participation in the summer school with the award of two grants for students.

The central goals of the summer school are:

a.   to provide innovative mutual support for doctoral studies in the field of media and communication, with additional support from the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA);

b.   to stimulate bilateral and multilateral cooperation between consortium partner universities in the areas of doctoral studies, teaching and research;

c.   to provide a forum for critical dialogue between academics on the cultural and technological challenges posed by media globalisation and convergence, focusing on the sociopolitical as well as the cultural implications of these challenges;

d.   to promote a respectful but critical dialogue between academic researchers and representatives of civilian society, the media industry and government institutions.

The summer school adheres to a number of principles: student-orientedness is the most important one. The PhD projects of participating students are the kernel of the summer school, and its main aim is to enhance the academic quality of each individual project. In contrast to many other summer schools, the main task of instructional staff is not to lecture, but to provide support to the participants on their PhD trajectories.

The summer school provides this support through structured, high-quality and multi-voiced feedback on the work of each individual PhD student, combined with numerous opportunities for informal dialogue. The feedback consists of a series of extensively elaborated analyses of the strengths and weaknesses of PhD projects, which allows PhD students to structurally improve the quality of their academic work. Although the feedback is provided by experts in the field of media and communication studies, these authoritative voices never become authoritarian, and the autonomy of the participants is never ignored. Moreover, feedback is always multi-voiced: different lecturers and participants contribute to the analysis of each

individual PhD project, enhancing the richness of the feedback and allowing a diversity of perspectives to be articulated.

The summer school combines a constructive-supportive nature with a critical perspective. During feedback sessions, the evaluation consists of a balanced overview of the qualities and problems of a doctoral research and publication project, in combination with options that can be used to overcome these problems. Moreover, the workshops and lectures are intended to support the future academic careers of participants by allowing them to acquire the necessary academic and self-management skills. The atmosphere of the summer school is fundamentally non-competitive, as the talents of all participants are acknowledged, and participants and lecturers act as peers, cherishing academic collegiality and collaborative work.

The summer school also expresses the utmost respect for academic diversity. It recognizes the existence of a plurality of schools, approaches, theories, paradigms, methods and cultures within academia, which makes it suitable for conversation and dialogue, not conversion and conflict. Its commitment to diversity in approaches can only be made possible through an equally strong commitment to academic rigour, thoroughness, responsibility, honesty and quality.

Finally, the summer school aims to stimulate connectedness. First of all, it looks to build long-term academic networks, enabling future collaborations at an international/ European level. The need for intellectual exchange within academia and the importance of transcending frontiers are widely acknowledged. The summer school also cultivates a deep respect for the localized context in which it operates, at the urban and national level of the hosting city, thus avoiding disconnection from civil society, business and the state.

In order to uphold these principles, the 14-day 2017 SuSo was based on a combination of lectures, training workshops, student workshops and working visits.

The core format of the summer school is based on so-called feedback-workshops, which are oriented towards providing doctoral students with structured, high-quality and multi-voiced feedback as aforementioned. To this end, the following specific procedure was followed:

After their applications are approved, participating doctoral students upload their 10-page papers to the intranet of the summer school website. On the basis of these papers, doctoral students are then divided into three groups ('flows'), and each student is assigned a lecturer-respondent and a fellow participant-respondent. Moreover, a so-called 'flow-manager' (a member of the academic summer school staff) is also assigned to each of the flows. These flow-managers coordinate the activities of the feedback-workshop flows for the duration of the summer school.

During the feedback workshops, each doctoral student presents his or her project, which is then commented upon by a fellow participant-respondent, a lecturer-respondent and a flow-manager, and finally discussed by all participants. At the

end of the series of feedback workshops, a joint workshop is organised, where the diversity of paradigmatic, theoretical and methodological approaches is discussed, combined with intellectual lessons given at the summer school.

In addition, the training workshops are a crucial pedagogical tool. These workshops provide the doctoral students with practical training on issues related to making posters, publishing, abstract-writing, comparative research, literature reviews, oral presentation skills, communication of scientific topics to lay audiences, interactive teaching to larger groups, interrogating sources and creative online writing. They are combined with a number of lectures related to specific content, focusing on set theories or concepts. Finally, the customary field excursions give the participants more insights into the hosting country's media structures, politics, culture and history.

3.   The scholars involved in the summer school

In 2017, 42 doctoral students participated in the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School, originating from 23 countries: Belgium (3), Bulgaria (1), Canada (1), Cyprus (1), Czech Republic (1), Estonia (1), Finland (3), France (1), Germany (1), Hong Kong (2), Hungary (1), Ireland (1), Italy (2), Kenya (1), Latvia (1), Malta (1), Norway (1), Portugal (1), Slovenia (1), Spain (4), Sweden (6), Turkey (1), UK (6). All of their abstracts, and a selection of six chapters based on their work, are included in this book.

The blue flow was joined by Yazan Badran, Dennis Braunsdorf, Federica Cavaletti, Zaki Habibi, Martin Hall, Reinhard Handler, Kira Janina Hußing, Francesca Moretti, Annaliina Niitamo, Filipa Oliveira, Gianfranco Polizzi, Myriam Rafla, Liisa Sömersalu, Erika Theissen Walukiewicz.

The yellow flow consisted of Kristian Jeff Agustin, Baiba Baikovska, Niki Cheong, Xavier Andrés Cortell, John Magnus R. Dahl, Kate Gilchrist, David Katiambo, Alessandro Nanì, Alvaro Oleart, Elisa Paz Pérez, Marko Ribać, Maria Sjögren, Guillem Suau.

The green flow grouped together Marine Aznar, Yi Ding, Martina Dobosiová, Lorleen Farrugia, Pau Lluis Gumiel, Ilmari Hiltunen, Zsofia Nagy, Thais de Oliveira Sardá, Alla Rybina, Markos Souropetsis, Theodore Spassov, Jeannine Teichert, Salla Tuomola, Uğur Yağan, Derya Yüksek.

The summer school hosted 20 lecturers from partner universities all over Europe: Montse Bonet, Michael Bruun Andersen, Bart Cammaerts, Roberta Carpani, Nico Carpentier, Fausto Colombo, Maria Heller, Richard Kilborn, Risto Kunelius,

Anthony McNicholas, Hannu Nieminen, Tobias Olsson, Dominique Pasquier, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Irena Reifová, Michael Skey, Burcu Sümer, Ilija Tomanić Trivundža, Karsten Wolf. François Heinderyckx was also present, as a lecturer and ECREA representative.

In addition to the activities of the summer school lecturers and workshops, the programme included a visit to *OpenKnowledge*, an international consulting company focused on digital transformation, based in Milan. The organisers would like to thank Rosario Sica and Chiara Colombo for making it possible.

This year, Fausto Colombo was the local director of the summer school, and Simone Tosoni, Maria Francesca Murru and Laura Peja were the local organisers. The local team was supported by an international director, Nico Carpentier. In addition, François Heinderyckx handled ECREA liaison.

4.   Assessment and perspectives

The evaluation was conducted in the form of a workshop including a half-standard-ized, anonymous survey. All participants completed an evaluation form to rate, and comment on, the lectures and workshops held during the two weeks of the summer school. Additionally, the participants formed four evaluation groups and discussed feedback on: lectures, workshops and student workshops; individual discussions with lecturers, discussions and networking opportunities with other students; the scheduling and composition of the programme; accommodation, food and coffee (during breaks), social activities; website, pre-summer school communication, the summer-school book; and the flow-managers/ summer-school staff.

The evaluation generated positive feedback and constructive suggestions for further improvements to some of the conceptual and scheduling aspects for future summer schools. The reputation, experience and teaching qualities of the lecturers present at the summer school 2017, as well as their approachability, were appreciated by the participants who, for their part, suggested adding some other more formalised occasions to speak with lecturers: discussion time after lectures was not always considered enough.

The average ratings for the lectures and workshops (1 = poor to 5 = very good) were 3.4 points for lectures and 3.8 points for workshops. In the view of the participants, the mixture of workshops and lectures in the summer school pro-gramme was very well-balanced. The balance between theoretical and practical lectures was similarly evaluated highly. The interactivity and split workshops with half of the groups were appreciated.

The overall positive and encouraging feedback was complemented by numer-ous comments on the social-network platforms that were used together with the

summer school website as discussion spaces and networking tools. Thanks are due here to the social-media editor of this year's edition: Valentina Turrini.

5.   Final acknowledgments

The summer school is supported by a wide range of individuals and institutions. The consortium partners and ECREA all provided invaluable support to this long-standing initiative. Over past years, lecturers and flow managers have invested a lot of energy in lecturing and providing support. The doctoral students themselves have shown tremendous eagerness, which can only be admired and applauded.

The success of Suso 2017 was possible thanks to the organizational and financial support of many institutions. The organisers want to express their gratitude to: the Department of Communication and Performing Arts of Università Cattolica; Almed – graduate School in Media, Communication and Performing Arts and his director Ruggero Eugeni; Lifelong learning office and Educatt – Student Services of the same university; Sky Italy.

With its diverse sections and chapters, this edited volume shows that the profoundly changing social and cultural environment poses new challenges to media scholars. The continuous effort to analyze these transformations should be combined with an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of what is ahead of us in its variety and entirety. This is what the summer school proves year after year: strong European media and communication research is about diversity and creativeness, and about cooperation and networking, especially among young scholars who contribute fresh enquiries to the research discourse. This is what makes the summer school a unique learning and networking experience, bringing together the less experienced and more experienced from all over the world to promote a constructive dialogue from which new research horizons emerge.
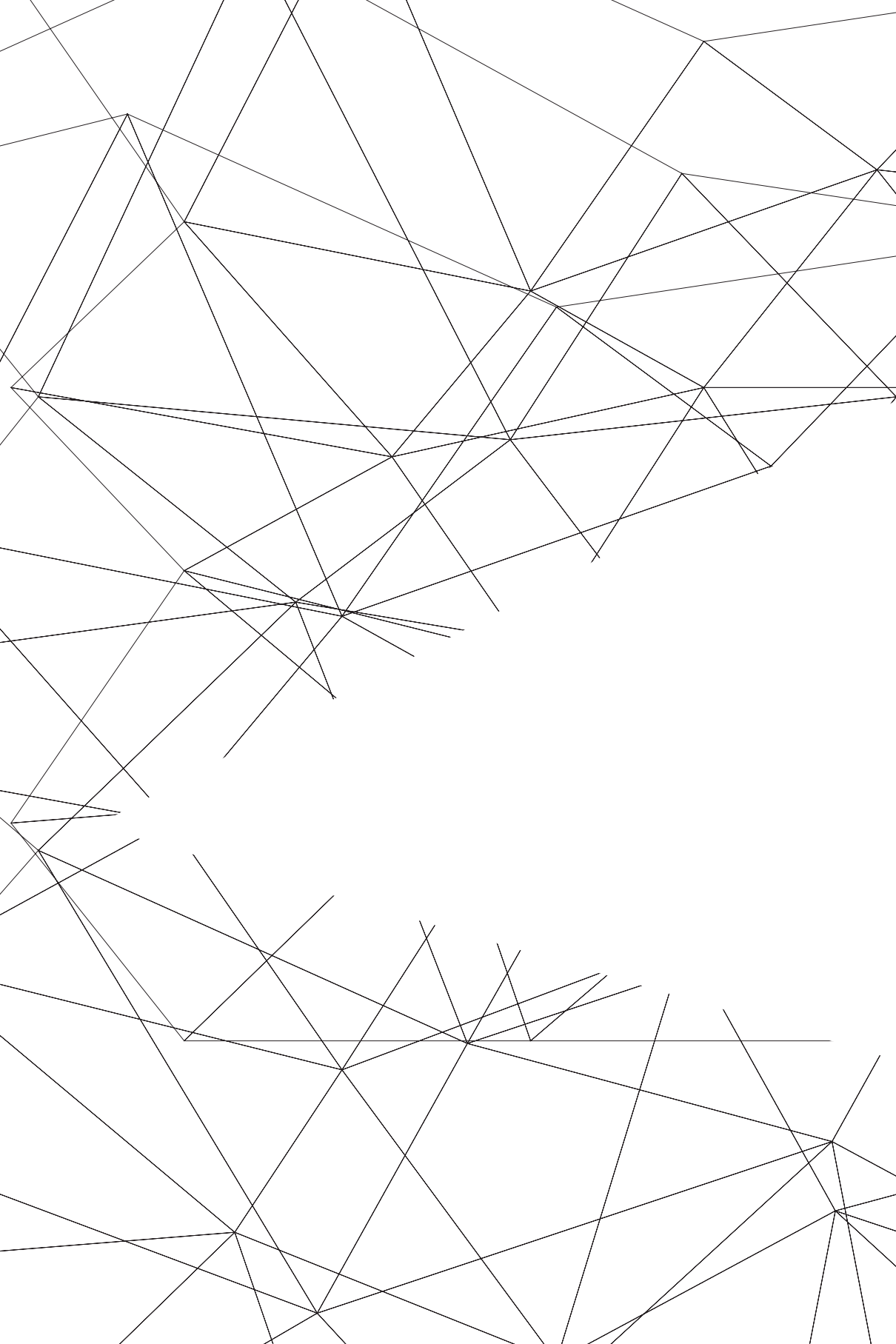
PART I

INTERTWINING PUBLIC SPHERES

Grief and pity. Investigation of the social impact of photography

Fausto Colombo

Abstract

The content presented in this paper is part of a larger work, aimed at describing, formalising and interpreting the model of spreading and sharing images (photographs in particular) via the Web. Starting with the story of the photos of the little Alan Kurdi, a boy who drowned in the Mediterranean Sea in September 2015, I will describe first of all the circulation of the photos through legacy and social media, recognizing five different moments typical of so-called digital firestorms: a spark, small fires, an explosion, contagion and normalization. I then try to describe the forms of memeing the photos, transforming them into motifs shared in order to express, or provoke, passions and emotions. I will then point out the steps of cultural elaboration, through which a significant number of media users are allowed to learn Alan's story, to make sense of it in a wider context (and thus extend their knowledge of certain phenomena) and to remember the story of the child, finding a place in their personal and collective memory. Eventually, I interpret the effects of images on political choices and public opinion, in both the short and medium-to-long term.

In my conclusion, I try to explain differences and analogies between the circulation of epoch-making images through legacy media and that typical of the digital media environment.

Keywords: photography, social media, digital firestorms, social emotions

1.   Premise

The little boy is lying face down. His left arm, the only one visible in the photograph, rests on the sand, the palm of the hand turned up. The left side of his face is visible and we can see his hair is clipped short. The ear is clearly visible. It is hard to decide whether his eye is open or closed in deep sleep. He is wearing a red T-shirt, rucked up above his midriff, a pair of blue shorts with a small pattern or embroidery on the leg. His shoes look black and you can see the soles clearly.

From the waves lapping around him we realize that the child's position is such that the lower part of his body is almost dry, while his face is caressed by the waves. He could be sleeping, as we see him, but he will never wake.

The photo is one of many images (around 50) that make up a journalistic feature about the shipwreck of a boatload of migrants.

The photos have different subjects. Adults, children. Scenes of despair and moments of rescue. Some of the images are terrible, without showing corpses: dresses are seen piled on the sand, or survivors are weeping.

By contrast, the child appeared in a small photo gallery, destined to have a separate history. His body abandoned on the beach, alone, is portrayed in another image, a reverse view of the first: the body is horizontal, the feet on the left and the head on the right, the nape of his neck exposed to the viewer.

Image 1: Source DHA

In another picture two policemen are close to the body, no more than two metres away. They are standing. The one on the left side turns his back to the camera filming him; the other is holding a camera and seems to be moving away from the waterline.

In a further image (actually two, very similar to each other) one of the policemen is holding the child's body. He is bowed slightly forward and wearing rubber gloves. His gestures are full of delicacy and respect.

Image 2: Source DHA

The child was named Alan Kurdi (although his name was reported in the early days as Aylan), and he had drowned during the night, after the sinking of the rubber dinghy that was to take him and his family from Bodrum, Turkey, to the Greek island of Kos.

The photos of him travelled around the world and the Web. They had consequences, elicited statements and led to political decisions. A wave of reworkings of the photo and comments took over Twitter and other social media. There were reconstructions and controversies about the child's family, his father's decision to undertake the fatal journey, immigration and its risks. Artists in every country reworked the image of the abandoned little body in various ways, submitting it to the consciences of millions of inhabitants of the planet.

This paper is part of a larger work, ongoing for over two years, in which I try to reconstruct the story of the photos of Alan from a broader perspective, ranging from philosophy to politics, from the history of photography to that form of action and communication that we could call "humanitarian ideology". Here, I will give a brief account of the circulation and assimilation of the images, in four steps:

1. **Journey of a photo,** in which I explain how the photos of Alan circulate through various legacy and social media;
2. **Online practices,** in which I analyse how the photos of Alan were used by their first viewers through symbolic-material actions[1] as a form of reaction to the visual and emotional impact of the whole story;
3. **Cultural elaboration,** in which I reconstruct the steps that allowed a significant number of media users to *learn* Alan's story, to *make sense of it* in a wider context (and thus extend their knowledge of certain phenomena) and

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1   On this theme, in general, see the first two parts of Carpentier, 2017.

then to *remember* the story of the child, finding a place in their memory – personal and collective;

4. **The consequences,** in which I investigate the effects of images on political choices and public opinion, both in the short and medium-to-long term.

I have almost always used rich literature on the subject, and I have largely cited research conducted by others. But I have tried to give an original reading, and to systematize the knowledge in a form useful for other future investigations into the role of the media today, the circulation of news and the effects of information.

2.   Journey of a photo

It was 2 September 2015 when two Turkish agencies, DHA (Dogan Haber Ajansi) and Diken, published online, between 8.42 and 9.10 a. m., news of the collapse of a rubber dinghy which had capsized in an attempt to reach the island of Kos. The consequences were dramatic, although not comparable in numerical terms to other catastrophic shipwrecks in the Mediterranean in previous months (and unfortunately also the following ones): 12 Syrian refugees drowned, their bodies were carried ashore by the waves, onto the beach at Bodrum. In particular, the DHA published 50 shots by a photographer, Nilüfer Demir, showing the remains of the dinghy, including some corpses and in particular the photos of Alan Kurdi (whose name was initially altered to Aylan), which I have described in the Premise.[2]

The Web was rapidly activated, with a fairly characteristic explosion, of the type that the literature terms a 'digital firestorm' (Rost, Stahel, Frey, 2016). Here I will sum up the main steps, seeking to highlight the features of each:

a) The spark
In the first place the news was posted on Twitter by a Turkish journalist and activist, Michelle Demishevich, but it did not spread widely. However, his tweet was the first to report Alan's image. It was the first mention – in that avatar of public opinion that is the platform – of the reception of the event.

b) Small fires
The news was picked up by some agencies, and above all by Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian sources. On Twitter there began to be an observable movement of modest local circulation, clearly shown in Figure 1.

2   For a reconstruction of the spread of the photographs on the Web, I have drawn on a report by the Visual Social Media Lab (Vis 2015). About the social role of photographic journalism that lies in the *sfondo* of this paper, see: Tomanić Trivundža 2015.
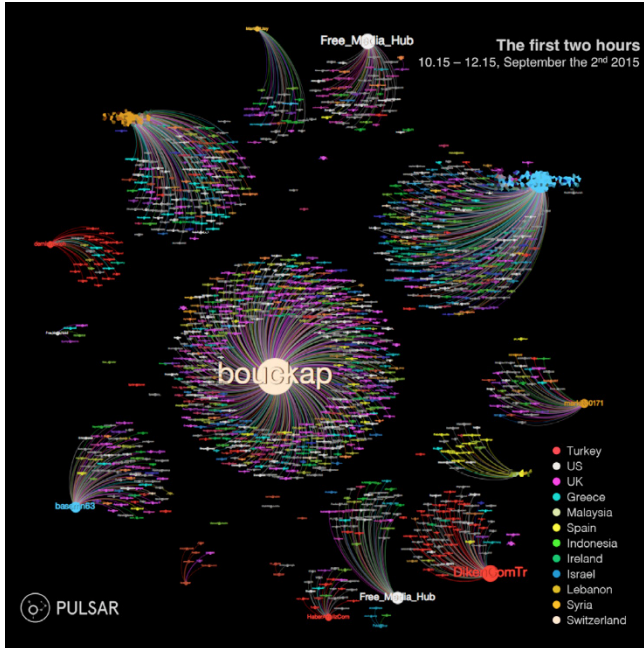
As can be seen, at this point we can observe the "directive" ability of some nodes, evidently already configured by their own system of relations to carry out the function that the theory of the two-step flow of communication[3] assigns to opinion leaders. The Web is potentially always democratic, but in reality it rarely is: there is (even in this case) a rigid power law (Réka, Hawoong, Barabási, 1999), so that the most established nodes, or the largest ones, or those capable of attracting links, tend to become increasingly powerful. Even Twitter is a great field of communication in which many compete but few win, earning visibility and ability to spread themselves and their content.

c) The explosion

At 12.45 Liz Sly, Bureau Chief of the Washington Post, Beirut, repeated the news on her account @Lizsly, and her tweet was retweeted over 7,000 times. This was a small detonation that whipped the fire into a blaze, not surprisingly the work of a journalist affiliated to an internationally important newspaper. Figure 2 gives a clear image of the metaphor of the explosion, and it shows how much the staff member of a credible and famous newspaper can do to gain increased visibility.

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3   Katz, Lazarsfeld, 1955.

And the same figure tells us how specious the contrast between old and new media is when it comes to information. In reality, Twitter and the mainstream media ricochet news off each other in a big pinball game where everyone wins, thanks to the accounts of journalists and newspapers, which constitute a world of continuous and sometimes circular relationships and references. On top of this is the positive feeling experienced by someone who is riding the wave of a mounting news story, as well as the fear of being excluded from the wave itself, or getting to it late. It is thanks to these tendencies that the image of a three-year-old can become a symbol that even hundreds of drowned people failed to become, because it matched that desire for emotion that viral news stories nurture and feed on.

Figure 2: Source Visual Social Media Lab, 2015 (D'Orazio, 2015)
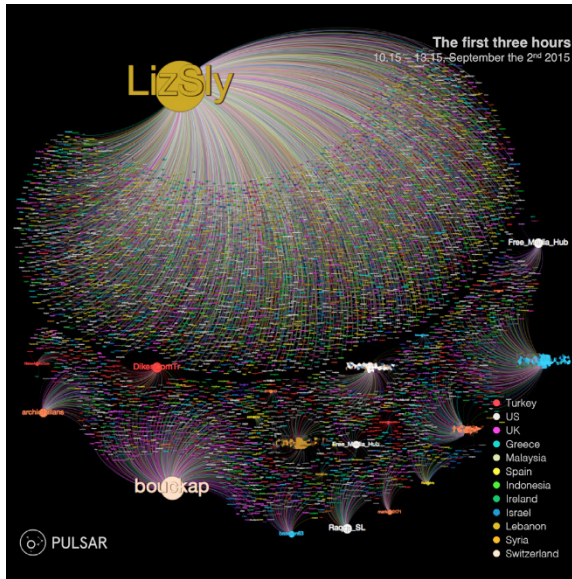
d) The contagion

At 1.10 p.m. the mainstream media appeared on the scene: first the Daily Mail, then followed about 500 articles published online on the sites of The Independent, The Huffington Post, The Guardian, The Mirror, Mashable, ITV, CBS, NBC, Al Jazeera, NBC, Metro, El Mundo and Reuters, all of course retweeted, and therefore with a strong power of dissemination. The flow ended at around 11 p.m. Table 3 gives a fairly complete idea of the dimensions of the 'digital firestorm''of the Alan story, as shown by the rebound of the news spread on Twitter (and taken from mainstream media) to a new version of the same news now accredited to the

mainstream media and relaunched by a galaxy of Twitter accounts: journalists on newspapers and freelancers, NGO workers, commentators and intellectuals, ordinary people and – no doubt – ordinary individuals looking for a moment of fame or self-invested with the task of circulating a news story deemed important and worth circulating.

Figure 3: Source Visual Social Media Lab, 2015 (D'Orazio, 2015)
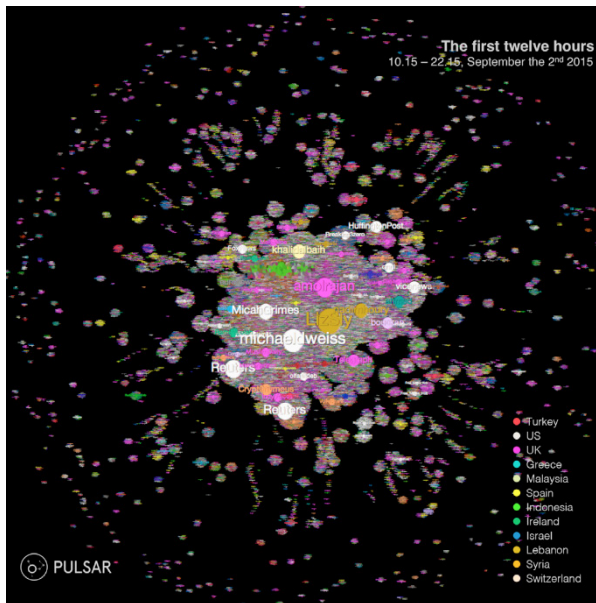
e) Normalization

The following day, 3 September, the trend of news on Twitter and news media was still significant. It began to decline towards 8 p.m., and then gradually dwindled over the following days. Also, in this, the microblogging platform reveals its consonance with the mainstream media, and their logic: the primacy of recent news, the value of storytelling, the hypothesis of the impact on the public. In fact, as we will see later, the decline on Twitter and mainstream media does not mean a collapse of the story, which glided onto other platforms, and more generally into what we might call public opinion. And yet, the process of normalization not only brings with it a decline in the occurrences of tweets, but also an important change of register: for example, agency photos, which accompanied most of the tweets and retweets, began to be replaced by less crude developments. Probably, as Francesco D'Orazio wrote, 'The need for sharing the impactful images and the concerns over hurting the sensibility of the audience have led, within the first 12 hours, to the

creation and diffusion of surrogate Aylan Kurdi images designed to mitigate the brutality of the original images in order to sustain the visual narrative of the story and its diffusion.' (D'Orazio, 2015)

3.   Online practices

Unlike the history of the long analogical phase of photography, in which an image produced by a professional photographer was simply circulated via traditional media, which repeated it unchanged and multiplied its viewings, in the age of social networks, or rather in the platform society,[4] this photo was complicated as it travelled via the actions of users.

Some of these actions consisted of sharing or retweeting images. Others, more highly articulated, were expressed as verbal comments. But the specific point, in our case, is naturally actions that affected the photographs. In fact, these are also very common on Twitter and on social media in general. Sam Gregory (2015) makes some interesting observations on the reasons why images so emotionally charged as these are shared on the Internet. Here, I would like to focus on some other aspects, particularly related to the practices to which the images were subjected during the sharing process (meaning cases in which it was not the original photos that were shared, but some of their elaborations).

The ease of digital editing and therefore the technical facility of what have been known since the 1930s as photomontages (let us only mention the anti-Nazi works by Heartfield[5]) now makes it possible for photos of great impact to be continually edited and relaunched through various practices that we can distinguish on the basis of two factors: the intensity of editing of the photo and the function attributed to the editing itself. We will start with intensity. The photograph of Alan was retransmitted in both its original version and in reworked versions, with alterations ranging from minimal to professional. In all cases the model followed by this form of virality is *meming*, or the transformation of an image into a repeatable object shared by a large public of network users, who contribute to its spread. Such phenomena are obviously widely studied in the sociology of culture: they include the mechanisms of mass success through word of mouth, the spread of jokes, urban legends or fake news.

There is a vast literature on memes on the Web. Usually they draw on Richard Dawkins' famous book *The Selfish Gene* (1976) which discusses the viral potential of images, ideas or other cultural objects, capable, so to speak, of working for their

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4   Van Dijk, 2013 and 2017.

5   During the '30s, John Hearthfield produced, in Germany, very strong satirical photomontages about Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. See, for instance, John Berger's analysis (2008).

own survival. The theory is variously accepted and challenged, but it has been applied to the Web with some success, particularly in certain studies of marketing (Marshall, 2012; Kempe, Kleinberg, Tardos 2003). Here I would like to put forward a different interpretational model, bound up with more traditional cultural forms, applied to the technological innovations brought about by the Web and platforms. This model is based on the concept of a 'motif', which is a recurrent visual element in the production of cultural objects. The concept is valid for a single artist, but also for a 'school' or even a culture. A 'motif' tends on the one hand to be repeated unchanged, while on the other it can act as a basis for very different meanings, adaptable to historical and social circumstances.

The novelty introduced by the Web in this case would essentially be a matter of time: viral models on the Web, as the example we are working on confirm, have very short spread times, and therefore motifs tend to proliferate almost instantly. In the case of the photos of Alan, the meming focused above all on photos of the child's solitary corpse, with the addition of elements of context or interpretation. This is the case with some of the basic productions put online by BoredPanda[6] in the early days of the spread of the photograph, as in the following two images, which essentially express feelings of sympathy and pity:

Images 3 and 4, by Steve Dennis and Khaled Yeslam, available at https:// www.boredpanda.com/syrian-boy-drowned-mediterranean-tragedy-artists-respond-aylan-kurdi/

As for the function attributed to the act of sharing, it can vary from a simple informative and socializing function (where what matters is that others see what I have seen) through an emotional function (sharing the emotions experienced in seeing the images, as evidenced by the photos already reported above), to a more prop-

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6   https://www.boredpanda.com/.

erly political-polemical function, as in the following two photos, published by the site BoredPanda and attributed, respectively, to Valeria Botte Coca and Umm Talha:

In these two cases, it is evident that the authors of the images and their followers who shared their images with others intended to stress the guilt of the institutional powers, and therefore an evident political purpose underlies the process of sharing.

4. Cultural elaboration

At the time of its spread, basically reproducing and rendering more complex the traditional circulation of news in the legacy media, a progressive cultural elaboration follows it (though we should rather say combines with it), in the sense of a set of strategies aimed at making the photos of Alan perform the traditional functions that we attribute to culture: a knowledge of the facts and laws that regulate reality, the relation with the past, a symbolic (artistic or popular) elaboration and correlated attribution of significance to events, a scansion of time through socially recognized and institutionalized moments.

a) In-depth information
Let's start with an account of the facts. What happened in the case of the photos of Alan followed the typical methods of in-depth information. It starts from a contact with the news, which – through its particular ability to arouse intellectual curiosity or emotions such as shock or empathy – leads the reader or the viewer to seek a deeper understanding. A good indicator of this dimension is offered by the intensification of Google searches related to the child, which was rapidly given greater depth: from the first queries, in which the name Aylan Kurdi was accompanied by more general terms such as Drowned Child, Drowned Syrian, Syrian Child and Syrian Boy, we pass in a little over a week to a more precise focus on the child's name, as shown in Figure 4:

Figure 4: Source Visual Social Media Lab (Rogers, S. 2015)
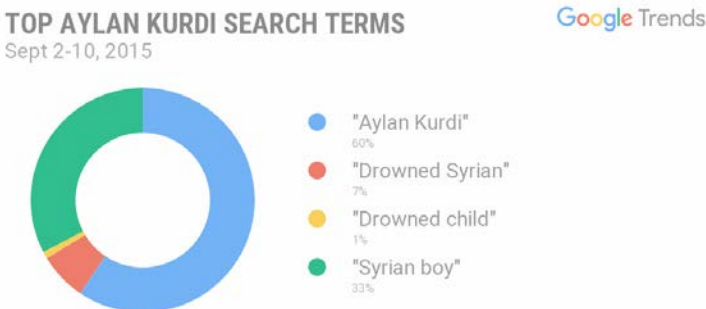
The results of the in-depth process lead to the development of different strategies of understanding. A first one, which strikes me as significant, was bound up with the request for framing: can Alan Kurdi's story be contextualized? What are its remote causes, which go beyond his individual story?

Simon Rogers (2015), for instance, brings out the link between queries on Google and two rather interesting phenomena. The first was the growth in searches about migrants in different countries of the world, with an interesting semantic shift between the term 'migrants' and the term 'refugees', as shown in Table 5.

Figure 5: Source Visual Social Media Lab (Rogers, S. 2015)
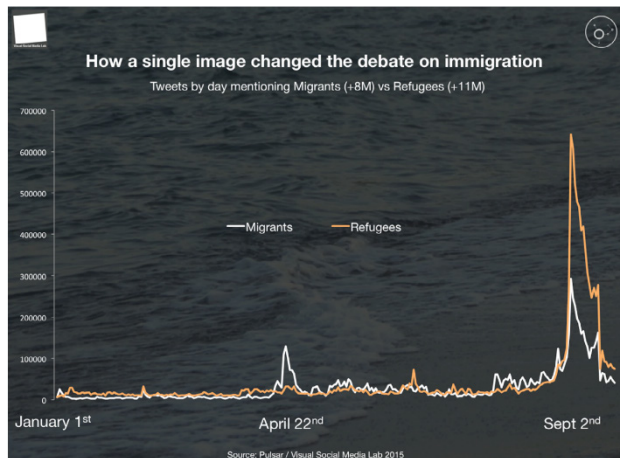
The second phenomenon emphasized by Rogers is what we might call the *geopolitical embedding* of queries, in the sense that the interest shown by the queries and the form itself of the queries depended on the involvement that individual countries had in the phenomenon of migration, as countries affected by either emigration or immigration. Furthermore, in different countries, different search terms were favoured, and they could also be referred to specific national cultural interests. In short, if observation of the spread reveals a global phenomenon, deeper study shows a close connection with national cultures and framing processes.

b) Storytelling

Another mode of cultural elaboration, aimed at attributing meaning (individual and collective) to the photos of Alan, is the construction of narratives that insert his story into codified and comprehensible scripts. Although the death of a child is, as Dostoevsky reminds us, a trauma impossible to justify or understand, it is inevitable that the reaction of those faced with such traumatic images is to seek to

construct significance, to set the victim in a story that accounts for it, even quite simply to enable them to remember it.

In the case in question, a first overview enables us to identify different scripts, and in all of them Alan is naturally a victim, but with contrasting interpretative consequences. For example, a first narrative script is that of the fate of the family, the Kurdis, of whom only two survivors are capable of recounting the event: Alan's father, Abdullah – who when the boat sank also lost his other son, Ghalib, slightly older, and his wife Rehana – and his aunt Tima, who had emigrated to Canada and had already tried unsuccessfully to enable her brother's family to join her there. In this case, the story is that of a united family, cut short by an adverse fate (the rough sea) and human responsibility (the Canadian authorities, who denied asylum, the suppliers of the raft, guilty of providing poor quality life-jackets).

But the journalists exploring the story also gathered the testimony of another (Iraqi) woman who survived the shipwreck, Zainab Abbas. She accused Alan's father of being the steersman of the boat, and therefore also the organizer of the crossing.[7] To this is added the news claiming that the main reason for the family crossing was the desire to move to Greece for dental treatment. The result is a completely different narrative, in which the father is responsible for the death of the other members of his family, with varying degrees of culpability (either for being careless or as a people trafficker).

Finally, a third script is a properly political one, which sees in the attitude of Western governments and in the weakness of the United Nations and the European Union the fundamental responsibility for all the victims of migration, hence also for little Alan. Acceptance of these scripts depends on several factors, which include the social and political opinions of the readers (a reader with a more humanitarian attitude will obviously embrace the first or third, while a reader frightened by the phenomenon or politically inclined towards a defence of national borders will mainly embrace the second). Here, however, I would like to focus on the issue of the narrator subjects and their influence on the selection of scripts.

Touching on this question means quickly dwelling on the concept of symbolic hegemony, namely that sort of warfare waged on the level of meanings by social subjects to make their own script prevail. Without going too deeply into this topic, which rests on Gramsci's ideas, and in itself would require lengthy discussion, I would like to point to the important role of some intermediate subjects[8] – con-

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7   C. Booker, Aylan Kurdi's father, is a people smuggler, woman claims, in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 September 2015. Available at http://www.smh.com.au/world/migrant-crisis/aylan-kurdis-father-is-a-people-smuggler-woman-claims-20150911-gjkt2m.html.

8   'As their name implies, NGOs also need to be viewed in the context of the government against which they seek to distinguish themselves. As "non-governmental" organizations,

stituted relatively recently in historical terms – such as NGOs, in accrediting the humanitarian narration as a potentially dominant storyline in public opinion with two main purposes: to show the ineptitude of governmental public intervention and stress the importance of their own role. I think that an analysis of this point would clarify concepts such as 'impromptu public of moral spectatorship', used for example by Mortensen and Trenz (2016) to illustrate the symbolic impact of the photos of Alan. It is a question, in short, of identifying who influences public discourse and manages to make their own scripts prevail, rather than imagining the spontaneous birth of a humanitarian *Weltanschauung* (which Mortensen and Trenz term a 'transnational politics of pity').

Kurosawa (2015) underlines precisely the link between a narrative of suffering and the discourse of NGOs, summing it up in the following table:

Figure 6. Source: Kurosawa, 2015
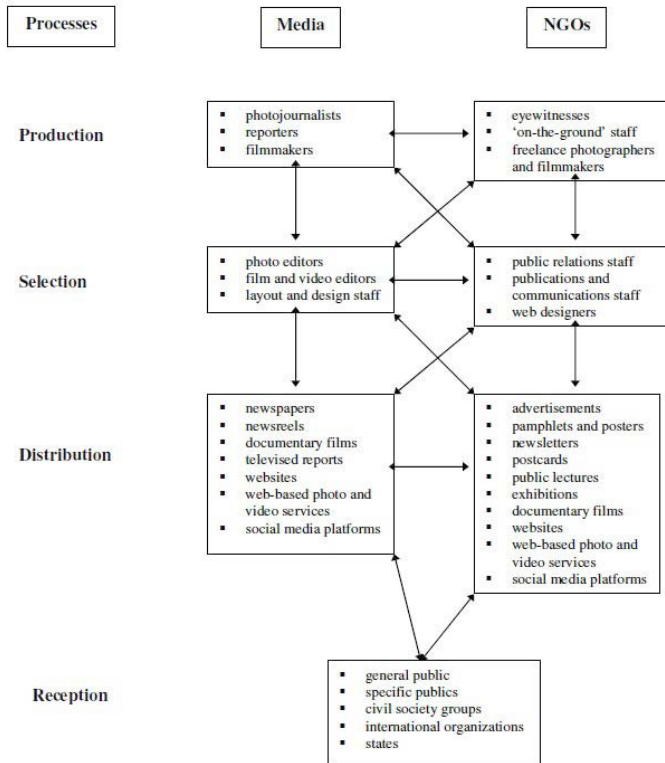
NGOs are conditioned by, and gain much of their legitimacy from, their relationships with government' (Lewis, 2009).

I would like to point out that I do not intend to equate the NGOs' struggle for symbolic hegemony with the ideological forms which it opposes (for instance the retrograde and egoistic narratives of states fiercely averse to the reception of migrants or those expressed in the Australian media and analysed in Bleiker, Campbell, Hutchinson and Nicholson, 2013), but only to remind the reader that public discourses cannot be produced without blocs and social subjects belonging to them, and it is therefore impossible to accept them.

c) Symbolization

While storytelling takes the news and inserts it in a narrative sequence that transcends it, the process of symbolization condenses an entire vision of the world or an aspect of it into an image: in this case a child suffering as a synecdoche of the suffering of part of the world's population.

Kurosawa (2015) has recently argued that 'the socio-historical analysis of the constitution of Euro-American visual regimes of representation of humanitarian crises, and of the social actors participating in the creation of these modes of representation (…) can contribute to a more analytically precise and less normatively sweeping treatment of the topic of depicting distant suffering'.

In his essay, Kurosawa identifies four decisive icons, linked to pictorial masterpieces that he identifies as Ur-Icons, which recur in every symbolization of humanitarian suffering: *Personification*, *Massification*, *Rescue*, *Care*. Kurosawa's analysis is highly complex and deserves a study which goes beyond our scope here. But I would like to focus on the photos of Alan to bring out an aspect not emphasized by studies of the case: the dialectic between the photos of the child's body (an example of *Personification*) and those of its removal from the beach by a Turkish policeman (corresponding to the icon of *Care*).

The former elicits, first of all, inexpressible grief. The dead child seems to be sleeping. He is wearing Western clothes. The starkness of the image contains a vein of respectful pity associated with the fact that the face is concealed, but the image itself is intolerable. It is significant that professional and/or amateur artistic practices concentrated principally on this image, as shown in the previous point. But it is the photos of the policeman carrying away the body that perfectly represent the humanitarian iconography to which Kurosawa refers. Hence, the loneliness of the dead body is contrasted with care and pity, found in many representations of humanitarian catastrophes, such as the very famous ones with which James Nachtwey revealed the consequences of famine in Somalia in 1992.

This dialectic seems to me an essential key to understanding the emotional impact of the series of photos of Alan, because the reverential act represented by the policeman's humane gesture does not console or correct, but rather heightens the sense of the tragedy that has just happened, and makes it possible for viewers

to imagine they are involved in that unavailing, yet deeply human, gesture that consists in caring for the dead.

d) The memory

A photographic analysis can hardly ignore the question of time. Not only -as John Berger points out in a famous essay (2013)- does every photo interpret an event by condensing a portion of it into the shot, but it is itself an object in turn available for processes of memorization, individual and/or collective .

Here, I would like to focus on two aspects of the public memorization of Alan's death: its legitimacy as artistic content and its configuration as a *public event*. On the first point – apart from the artistic practices immediately devised on the Web, which I will deal with in the next section – I would like to mention the works by Oguz Sen and Justus Becker in Frankfurt and the celebrated photo by Ai Weiwei, both reproduced below,

Images 5 and 6: Justus Becker and Oguz Sen; Ai Weiwei

without forgetting the statue of Alan by an Italian artist (Luigi Prevedel), which Pope Francis donated to the FAO in 2017.

In all the cases mentioned (and in others that could be cited), works of art use the image of Alan as a 'motif' that enables us to allude to the photos that made known his tragedy and through them the event of Alan's death, both by turning it into a public event and by bringing out its character as a shared memory. As we saw above, the social construction of this motif also took place immediately through a series of online practices.

We can now pass to the more properly public media memorization, manifested first of all in the process of 'anniversarization' generated by the media, which – like thematization by artists – institutionalizes the event precisely by remembering it, transforming it into an event capable of marking an epoch, using the strength of those photographs that Umberto Eco, in the '70s, termed *epoch-making images.*(Eco 1977). Perhaps, however, the exemplary process of constructing a public memory is provided by the Wikipedia page in which the headword is not 'Alan Kurdi', but 'Alan Kurdi's Death' (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Alan_Kurdi), in an exemplary reconstruction of the specific nature of an event that became public precisely because of its intrinsic symbolic power (a child's death) and the surge of indignation that shook public opinion when it happened:

Image 7: Source Wikipedia.en

5.   The consequences

The last point I would like to discuss is the effects that the circulation of the photos of Alan have had on political choices and public opinion.[9] Since they first spread, it was clear, as Lucy Mayblin (2015) points out, that the potential political impact of the photos was potentially very high. In fact, many political statements (for ex-

9   The subject in general is discussed for example in Schill, 2012.

ample in Canada, England, Scotland; see Burns, 2015) undercored the atrocity of the fact and the shock caused by the images of Alan. Lin Prøitz (2015) showed the short-term effects on Norwegian politics and elections in the period immediately following the events.

However, I believe that a deeper assessment needs to be made of the movements of public opinion. For example, research by YouGov, cited by The Independent,[10] reveals the rapid waning of the effects on public opinion, and a backlash (withdrawal after an emotional surge capable of modifying public opinion) has even been observed in some European countries in a series of research projects:

'A change of opinion (...) can be made to coincide with a single event and a single image: the photo of the body of Aylan, a small Syrian migrant fleeing his country, lying on a Turkish beach. Within a few days, public opinion changed. The percentage of people concerned about immigration fell to 35% in September. Faced with the straightforward alternative between acceptance and rejection (Fig. 3), 61% of Italians preferred the logic of solidarity, even though a few months earlier the majority had closed their doors to possible entry by sea (51%). The attitude towards working together in dealing with the refugee emergency in Europe, or at least a part of it, also changed, even in the leading country, Germany, which until then had not been responsive towards the demands of the Mediterranean countries." (Bordignon, Ceccarini, Turato, 2015: 198).

This change, however, precisely because it is emotional, was modified by other events with contrasting implications in the following months (e.g. the Bataclan massacre), and over time feelings of insecurity seem to have prevailed. For example, a recent Demos report on immigration and security in Italy saw the percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement 'Immigrants are a danger to public order and people's safety' rising from 33 per cent in 2015 to 46 per cent in 2017.

It can be deduced that the political effect of Alan's images, though intense in the early stages, has faded with time.

From another point of view, the consequences of the wide diffusion of Alan's photo can be considered stronger. I am thinking here about the role played by the images in order to reinforce what we could call the 'humanitarian imaginary' (Kurosawa, 2015). It calls sensitive people (individuals or groups) to make a concrete commitment to helping refugees (by funding NGOs, creating new associations, changing their own opinions about migrants and so on). Those kinds of consequences could be considered pre-political factors of impact or change, and they obviously allow a more general and more complex evaluation of the real effects of the diffusion of the photographs over time.

10 http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/refugee-crisis-surge-of-sympathy-for-refugees-in-britain-likely-to-be-fleeting-study-says-a6689316.html.

6.   Conclusion

My analysis (which still needs further analysis of numerous points) reveals the complexity of the phenomenon of the 'photo of Alan Kurdi'. I have gradually reconstructed its spread online through some of the characteristic phases of a typical digital firestorm: the role of practices of sharing photos in themselves and their variants; the slow and multiform process of cultural elaboration, with the emergence of perspectives of institutionalization in the media discourse and the attempt at symbolic hegemony of the humanitarian discourse; finally, the ambiguity of political effects, intense in the first period but destined to fade over the medium to long term.

My final opinion can be summed up in some simple statements.

First of all, the photos of Akan Kurdi are certainly an example of what Umberto Eco in the '70s termed 'epoch-making images': somehow they are anchored in the collective imagination and become an essential landmark in the representation of refugees in the opening years of this century.

Second, the strength of the images is due to three main factors: their structural power, among other things brought out by the dialectic between the violence of the display of the child's body and the reverential gesture of the policeman who holds it; their ties with an iconography of the child victim, which is typically affirmed in the humanitarian discourse and in particular supported by the communication strategies of the NGOs; the initial force of the media coverage, both in the legacy media and social media, with a distinctive intertwining of strategies.

Third, if the impact on general public opinion was largely short-term, those photos and through them Alan Kurdi's story have undergone a profound cultural assimilation, guaranteeing a considerable memory of it (through artistic celebration, anniversarization by mainstream media and the eventization brought about, for instance, by Wikipedia), and making them capable of being active over time for the whole humanitarian *Weltanshauung*, which is reflected in them and thus reinforces their symbolic value through their own discourses.

In conclusion we can say that, if Alan Kurdi is still a symbol in refugees crises, despite the apparently minor dimension and casual nature of his death (against the thousands of victims, and hundreds of child victims, the phenomenon has seen caused in recent years), it depends on the particular circumstances of the diffusion of his images, and on the peculiar role played by legacy and social media in making them visible, interpreting them, and entrenching them in the collective memory.

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Biography

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Transnational news media and
the elusive European public sphere[1]

François Heinderyckx

Abstract

Various initiatives to unite the people and the nations of Europe have often met resistance when trying to reach a level of integration that would comprise significant political and cultural components. European authorities have nurtured high hopes that mass media could play a decisive role in creating and securing a form of European public sphere driven by the development of a European media sphere. Despite daring and resolute initiatives, any significant European media sphere has remained as elusive as a comprehensive Europe-wide public sphere. Adding to the complexity of the matter, the articulation between regional, national, and European public and media spheres forms a range of complex configurations. Ultimately, while preserving the budding of transnational media spheres, attention should be shifted toward making existing public spheres more porous while interconnecting them to enhance mutual understanding and empathy among the peoples of Europe.

Keywords: public sphere, media sphere, news media, television news, European Commission, transnational media, Eurikon, Europa-TV, Arte, 3-SAT, TV5, CNN, Euronews

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Decades of relentless efforts toward European integration did not bring about the shared sense of community among the peoples of Europe that could have resulted from pacification and increased economic exchanges. The European public sphere has eluded the European Union. This article discusses the role played by news media in trying to facilitate a public sphere that transcends national boundaries.

Initially, an integrated public sphere (the notion was hardly theorized at the time) was not seen as an aim in itself. After World War II, a core of European nations was, above all, determined to end the recurring cycles of devastating wars among European nations. Exacerbated nationalisms had for too long been feeding competing and conflicting national public spheres. Their strategy was pragmatic: Nations would stop fighting if it was in their mutual interest. And the best way to put nations in that configuration was to make them economic partners. Economic interdependence was thought to be an efficient pacification strategy. Of course, money is also the source of most conflicts among humanity, but if the absence of large-scale war in the past 60 years is any indication, it can be reasonably assumed that the strategy was appropriate.

Ever since the initial Treaty of Rome in 1957, Europe has consistently been a union in the making, a work in progress.[2] The idea that economics was a clever entry point, but was only a stepping-stone toward a broader, more durable, and thorough alliance, was widely accepted early in the process. "European construction" was not just a temporary state of affairs; it was a process leading to a receding horizon.

1.   Toward a political union

The ultimate goal is, and always has been, to achieve a *political* union. After the Union went a long way to harmonize financial and business practices, lift trade barriers, and develop a common currency, it seemed only natural to give people more of a sense of community, shared values and principles, and compatible ethics—a "post-national, de-territorialized, civic conceptualization" (Michalis, 2007: 170). It was time for a "Europeanization of national societies" (Statham, 2010: 3).

The sense of affinity should find itself enhanced by the ever more integrated economic union, while it is also required to legitimize and operationalize that same economic union. In other words, all efforts to harmonize the economy should

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2   The Treaty of Rome, or the "Treaty establishing the European Economic Community," is the founding convention signed in 1957 (taking effect on January 1, 1958) by the six founding nations of what has now become the European Union.

create, mechanically, an increased sense of community among Europeans, and this sense of community is, in turn, necessary to make the economic union (and the accompanying constraints) acceptable to the European citizens. People are more likely to accept the free trade among European nations, the forced limitations to public deficits, and the harmonized regulations if they feel they share values, principles, and strong ties with Europeans from other countries, and this is more likely to happen in the context of integrated markets. The sense of community is both the by-product and driver of economic integration, which makes European integration an unstable and vulnerable process.

Therefore, to foster European integration, the leadership of the European construction has clearly identified the need to create, promote, and bolster a shared public sphere; a space where citizens of the Union can exchange, debate, engage, agree, disagree, and mobilize; a space where they belong and feel a sense of unity and common values. And, most importantly, a configuration where nationalism is kept in check so that it can never again be used to feed nation-based conflicts that have consistently turned Europe into a murderous battlefield in the past.

The means to achieve those ambitious goals have been subject to much debate and attention. The role of the media, and the news media in particular, is consistently center stage, though without consensus as to how news media might hinder or contribute to building a sense of European identity in a compelling way. This is not just a function of how much Europe is present in the news and how it is framed, given that "a sense of European belonging is probably not only incited by frequent news reports about the EU in national news media but also by 'hidden' and naturalized identity constructions in everyday news reporting" (Olausson, 2010: 139).

2.   Competing public spheres

The European Union doesn't replace its member nations, but merely federates them and adds an overarching layer of political coordination above them. Likewise, no European identity is likely to replace national or regional identities. At most, it might add a significant component of shared identity to help people acquire "a sense of themselves as *also* Europeans" (Gripsrud, 2007: 490). Olausson (2010) even argues that "identity positions do not inevitably destroy each other but function both interactively and side by side" (p. 149).

In fact, only 12% of Europeans feel that the European Union means a loss in their identity (European Commission, 2013c: T38) and 8% of Europeans even expect "European values" from the European Union (European Commission, 2013a: 6–7).

In any case, it can be assumed that any significant foundation of a European identity should symbiotically feed and be fed by a European public sphere, defined as "a truly inter- or transnational shared space where those holding political and bureaucratic power confront a well-informed, critical public" (Gripsrud, 2007: 480).

Whatever European public sphere is contemplated, it will be competing with the existing public spheres. Worse, the advent of the Union has revived interest in regions and regional identities and hopes among their supporters. The notion of a "Europe of the regions" has become popular, with the blessing of the European authorities that saw the rise or return of *regional* identities as a welcome adjuvant to weaken *national* claims and identities.

Public spheres are not, at their essence, exclusive, although it can be seen as a zero-sum game whereby engagement in or prompting by one particular public sphere will happen to the detriment of the others. A Europe-wide public sphere can cohabit with 28 national and any number of regional spheres. From the point of view of citizens, only two to three public spheres will be competing for attention: the European, their country's, and possibly their region's or city's. In most cases, the national public spheres are still dominant and show no sign of weakening. This is reflected in surveys organized by the European Commission (European Commission, 2013a) showing that 9 Europeans in 10 are fairly or very attached to their country; slightly less (87%) to their city, town, or village; and less than half (46%) to the European Union. The situation is far from homogeneous across Europe. Attachment to the European Union ranges from less than 30% in the United Kingdom, Greece, and Cyprus to over two-thirds in Luxembourg; attachment to the country increases with age (European Commission, 2013a: 9), which might indicate a potential generational effect.

The (news) media have always been seen as a major agent in structuring, asserting, and sustaining public spheres (Dahlgren, 1995; Dahlgren & Sparks, 1991; Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007; Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012; Koopmans & Statham, 2010; Schlesinger, 1993). This largely explains why the media have been the object of so much attention from public authorities and various stakeholders since the very first newspapers. In the second half of the 20th century, efforts to build a unified Europe identified, early on, the importance of the media. Europeans were primarily informed about the European construction and its institutions and dynamics through their national media, in a context where Europe suffered from an enduring "communication deficit," meaning that European citizens had lost touch with the European construction and its governance. It then became fashionable to claim that overcoming the communication deficit required the development of a

European public sphere. Still today, nearly three Europeans in four consider that people in their country are not well informed about European matters (European Commission, 2013b: 33–36).

Television is still seen as a particularly influential medium; for some, the most important institution in national public spheres after parliaments (Gripsrud, 2007: 483). To this day, television remains the medium where Europeans get most of their news on national as well as European politics (European Commission, 2013b: 33–34).

3. Pan-European media

At some point, it became apparent that it was technically possible to set up transnational media outlets (i.e., aimed at audiences that transcend national media markets and national borders) that could reach a large section of European citizens simultaneously. The European Broadcasting Union (EBU), a group of public-service broadcasters, has consistently, since its creation in 1950, innovated in technologies and formats offering shared experiences across Europe, starting with Eurovision, which allows the simultaneous live broadcast of major events across the continent. But sharing an experience among television viewers across countries does not necessarily contribute to a sense of shared identity. In fact, some of the most successful pan-European broadcasts (i.e., those made available simultaneously to audiences throughout Europe) are sports competitions or the famous Eurovision Song Contest, which emphasize differences and competition among nations rather than shared values or culture. In 1959, the EBU launched the Eurovision News Exchange to allow public broadcasters to exchange footage for their television news programs. By encouraging the circulation of news content (if only in the form of images), the exchange could have contributed to a better understanding across nations, but there is no evidence that it has, even when truly multilateral stories were developed, as in the case of the European elections (Bourdon, 2007: 267).

In the 1980s, media went beyond sharing content to enter a golden age of *transnational media* (see Figure 1)—particularly in television, where this new age coincided with the advent of the "all news channels" (CNN and the copycats that followed). The possibility to launch a Europe-wide news channel was attainable and worth trying. It seemed to some as if satellites were "the ultimate tool . . . for television-engineered identity politics" (Bourdon, 2007: 271).

Following a 1980 resolution by the European parliament calling for the creation of a European radio and television broadcaster, a five-week experiment was undertaken in 1982 under the code name Eurikon, involving public-service broadcasters from Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The lessons learned from this prototype were not very encouraging. If anything, Eurikon demonstrated how difficult it would be to reach out and appeal to a transnational audience whose expectations were wide ranging.

Based on that experience, a fully fledged television station was nonetheless launched in 1985 under the name Europa-TV, this time involving public broadcasters from Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Portugal. The content offered various formats with particular attention to avoiding national perspectives. For news segments, events in a particular country were reported upon by a journalist from another country (Theiler, 1999). But things did not work out as planned, and the station was terminated the next year after spending the entire budget that had been provisioned for its first three years. The demise of Europa-TV cannot be explained just by budgetary and political struggles. Fundamentally, the program failed to appeal to its (meager) potential audience and advertisers.

Documents produced by the European Commission at the time are telling of how the European authorities were already embarked on a hard-core techno-deterministic path. Direct broadcasting satellites were newly operational and "Pan-European satellite was *Deus ex machina*, the perfect medium to awaken and affirm dormant feelings of European consciousness and identification" (Michalis, 2007: 127). One report published in 1986 reads:

> At the end of 1986 the whole European television scene will be transformed by the appearance of Europe's first direct television satellites. . . . The choice is clear either a strengthening of exchanges within Europe and a deepening of Community cooperation to promote the identity of our continent in all its diversity, or a surrender to powerful competitors and their cultural models, be it the Americans today, or the Japanese tomorrow. (Commission of the European Communities, 1986: 3)

In a press release in November 1986 about the financial difficulties of Europa-TV, the European Commission emphasized that the experiments under way aimed at "overcoming language barriers and the difficulties that have always prevented the people of Europe from learning about each other" (Ripa Di Meana, 1986: 1). So, in essence, the advent of direct satellite broadcasting and the possibility to beam down multilingual television signals would at last help the people of Europe to better know one another, which would presumably prevent and appease tensions, concerns, and distrust among nations as a result.

Interestingly, the next significant attempt at a Europe-wide news medium was a newspaper, *The European*, launched in 1990 by one of the big press magnates of the time, Robert Maxwell. The paper failed to reach a significant audience (with a rather elitist positioning), yet it was published until 1998.

Figure 1. Transnational news media in Europe, a chronology.
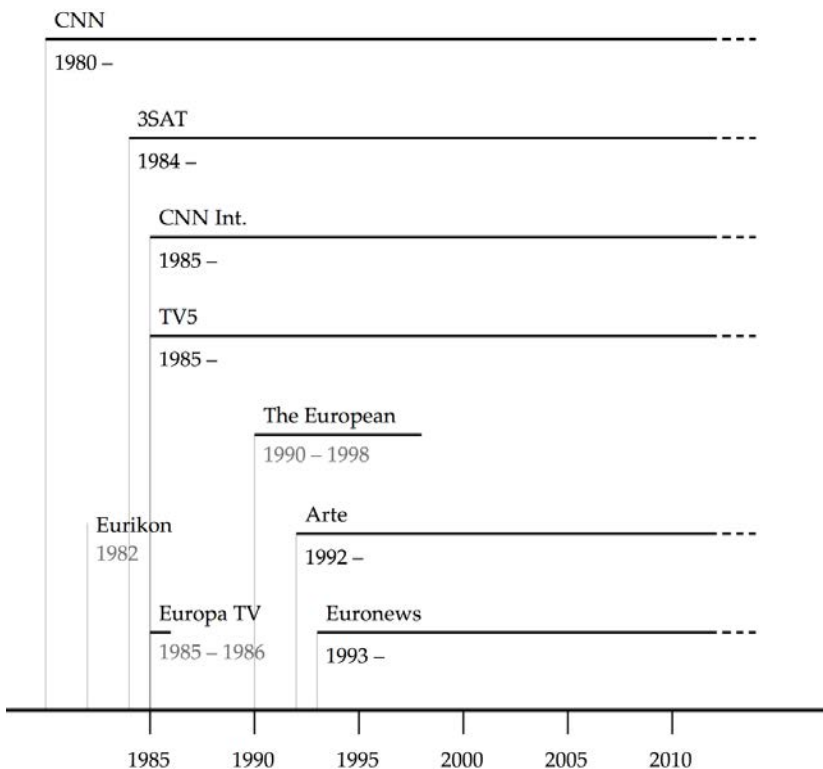
Then in 1993 came Euronews, a pan-European television news channel based in Lyon, France, once again put together by of a group of public broadcasters (though it later benefited from important public and private investments). Allegedly, this particular initiative was taken after European leaders felt uncomfortable with the quasi-monopoly enjoyed by CNN International, widely distributed across Europe, in covering the first Iraq War in 1991.

The model is rather simple but ambitious and innovative: It offered one video feed accompanied by five distinct audio feeds in five different languages, a model that Europa-TV had already experimented with. Euronews has managed to maintain

itself, gain footing in satellite and cable distribution in Europe and the rest of the world, and grow as more partners joined and new language versions were offered for a total of 7 and up to 13 in 2014. The longevity of Euronews is remarkable given that it was launched on grounds that were rather uncertain, not just financially but also strategically when it promised to provide a European perspective on the news, which sounded fine, but was complicated to define, let alone achieve. The choice to focus exclusively on news-related programming was both challenging (news stories are highly sensitive to cultural and political domestication), but it helped finding a format that would be accepted across Europe as television news bulletins and news media in general share many features (Heinderyckx, 1993, 2004).

Three other cases of transnational television channels are worth mentioning. The first is 3SAT (Drei-Sat), a German-language channel launched in 1984, aimed at German-speaking audiences, primarily in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. The second is TV5 (TV cinq), launched the following year, aimed at a French-speaking audience, first in Europe (France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Switzerland), later around the world. Both these channels target a particular language community, which, in its own way, is a strong sign that language diversity is a major impediment to pan-European media endeavors. It is worth noting, however, that nearly one in four Europeans declare that they have watched television programs in a language other than their mother tongue on several occasions in the last 12 months (European Commission, 2013a: 55). That proportion falls to less than 15% for books, newspapers, and magazines.

The third example is a bit of an oddity. Arte was launched in 1992 as a joint initiative of French and German public-service broadcasters. Bilingual, bicultural, and specialized in highbrow culture and arts, it seemed rather counterintuitive and had to overcome all sorts of difficulties, not just language-wise. For example, debates were much harder to organize than originally thought, simply because what makes a good debate is significantly different on both sides of the Rhine: In France, the expectations are for lively and heated exchanges and debaters interrupting one another, features that are seen in Germany as rude blunders. Nevertheless, Arte lives on, now with more partners.

These rare but lasting examples of transnational and for some pan-European media outlets are encouraging for those who seek to foster any sign of an emerging European public sphere. It is worth noting, however, that they are confined in two specific and rather elitist segments of the audience: the highbrow, high-culture and the financial and business news (which is not just pan-European but essentially globalized).

Then came the Internet and the rest of the information and communication technologies. Once again, as when satellite television came to be, techno-utopians have prophesied the advent of a better world where national barriers would be lifted, allowing free flows of information and communication that would lead to a better understanding of the other, which would make tolerance and empathy triumph over fear, hate, and ignorance. Very innovative and constructive initiatives have been undertaken. Transnational Web outlets, virtual communities, and forums have blossomed. And yet, to this day, the national public spheres are as resilient as national identities and national media, and manifestations of a true European public sphere are sporadic at best.

One specific factor hindering pan-European media is often overlooked: the extreme heterogeneity of media uses across Europe. Exposure to television, radio, newspapers, and websites, as well as trust in these different media, show extreme variations across countries, but they also vary greatly among age groups, education levels, and professions. Regional diversity is often concealed by the predominance of nation-based statistics. Even such a basic variable as heavy viewing of television newscasts shows more variation among regions than among nations (Heinderyckx, 1996). These preconditions, by themselves, largely obliterate the possibility for sustainable pan-European media, other than media targeting specific groups who would show sufficient convergence in interest, trust, language, and media use.

4.   Resilient national perspectives on the news

With such a plethora of channels and means to access information, one would think that the tools that made the golden age of media-based propaganda during the Cold War would have become obsolete—absurd, in fact. And yet signs show that many national governments still believe that news media are a prime means to promote their views internationally. Public-service broadcasters were prompt to use satellite broadcasting to make an international version of their programs available beyond their borders. In 1991, 12 of these channels, national and transnational, decided to collaborate within the Bruges Group (Heinderyckx, 1996), which today gathers more than 20 partners.[3]

Some of these channels were strictly news channels, which seem to cultivate enduring fantasies of influence among nations struggling to matter on the international scene. An impressive number of countries have additionally set up their

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3   The 12 channels were Arte, BBC TV World, RAISAT, Deutsche Welle TV, RTVE Int., TRT Int., Euronews, RTP Int., 3SAT, TV5, DUNA TV, and TVP-TV Polonia.

own ad hoc government-sponsored (not to be confused with public-service media) news channels destined to provide an *appropriate* (or rather appropriated) account of the news. The dynamics of this profusion is, in part, self-inducing: Governments regularly upset by the framing of events promoted by other nations' news outlets feel compelled to start their own operation to restore some balance.

These government-sponsored outlets are intriguing. They are not primarily aimed at an audience of expatriates or nationals traveling abroad, as evidenced by their additional efforts (and expenses) to develop different language versions or even to aim at a specific language community and/or region (e.g., U.S.-funded Alhurra, whose mission is self-described as "to provide objective, accurate, and relevant news and information to the people of the Middle East"). As recently as 2006, the French government launched its own France24, an all-news television channel offered in three languages (French, English, and Arabic).

Of course, journalists working for these outlets are professionals and, in most cases, not less concerned with ethics and objectivity than other journalists. Only in times of international tensions do things get significantly out of hand, as seen in 2014 on RT (which people suddenly remembered stood for "Russia Today") when the coverage of the crisis in Ukraine prompted explicit pressure on journalists, resulting in at least one spectacular resignation.

Who watches these channels, and with what effect on their understanding of world events or of the views of the country controlling the channels, is extremely difficult to assess. In the absence of compelling evidence, it seems reasonable to assume that most of these state-sponsored news outlets do not have a massive effect on public opinion in their own country or abroad, despite the enduring fantasy that mass media can influence large segments of population. At best, it can, in times of crisis, provide valuable indications on the position and the framing of events promoted by the corresponding governments.

The Internet fed similar delusions when it was initially assumed that the free flow of information across national boundaries and the free and easy access to all kinds of content (and news in particular) from across the world would mechanically, organically even, make truth and understanding prevail. Yet, when browsing the Web, most users consult a limited number of sources, predominantly based on familiarity—that is, cultural and geographical proximity. In any given country, the most successful news websites are essentially online operations of leading newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations. Despite the fact that users can just as easily consult outlets in other countries, few are interested in doing so, even if the content is in their own language.

Television news is still today the main source of news for most European citizens, and news media still overwhelmingly cling to national, regional, and language borders. The fact that language, regulatory structures, distribution systems, national preference, and the retention of national identities by the media maintain the nation as the point of reference in structuring media markets (Heinderyckx, 2001) does not, by itself, explain the endurance of the nation-as-media-market paradigm. Audiences are endemically attached to a fair dose of domestication in their news. Not only is there a lot of interest for proximity news; viewers prefer that even world events be explained from a familiar point of view, with eyes that they can best identify with. For example, when an important event takes place in France that also interests Belgians (e.g., the results of a French presidential election), French-speaking Belgians will tend to follow the coverage of that event on Belgian media, even though they could just as easily turn to the readily available French media (particularly television that is available on all cable subscriptions) and would, presumably, offer more thorough and better-informed coverage.

As a result of (or perhaps because of) of the persistence of a national perspective on all events—including international events—journalists approach their reporting with a view to satiate audiences with a national outlook on the world. This presumption is likely to affect even journalists specializing in international (and not just foreign) events. Correspondents in Brussels, most of whom are present to cover predominantly or exclusively European institutions, are not immune to the domestication of their reporting. The Brussels press corps (i.e., the various correspondents present in Brussels to cover the international institutions from the European Commission to the European Parliament and NATO) is among the largest in the world (Terzis, 2014). The European institutions (Commission, Council, Parliament, and many smaller structures) spare no effort to build an echo chamber to explain what they try to achieve and how it benefits Europe and Europeans. Journalists are still today an essential link in any effort to reach the bulk of European citizens. But that link proves to be difficult to capitalize on. Under the pressure of their editors (who generally find European institutions to lack newsworthiness), and following their internalized propensity to domestication, foreign correspondents in Brussels are more like an army of picky gatekeepers looking for a national edge to European affairs. As a result, national political leaders often have a free ride to "blame it on Brussels" and "blame it on the other nations," thus defeating the very essence of the worldview developed and promoted by the European institutions.

5. Europe of the Regions

None of this is likely to facilitate a significant media-driven European public sphere. Efforts to maintain and nourish national public spheres by means of news media must be seen not just as interfering with attempts to a pan-European sphere. They must also be seen in the context of a strong resurgence of regional identities and claims. Catalonia, Scotland, Corsica, Basque country, Flanders, even Bavaria and Brittany, among others, see the revival or the blooming of claims of cultural and political specificity, distinct identity, and even institutional autonomy.

In many of these regions, citizens are engaged in both the public sphere of their region and the distinct public sphere of their country. Likewise, they are exposed to news media from their region and news media from their country. Yet the articulation between the regional and the national can take different forms that deviate considerably from the intuitive linear scheme of concentric circles (see Figure 2).

In Catalonia (in northeast Spain), a large portion of the population speaks Catalan and standard Spanish (Castilian) and can watch Catalan television (e.g., TV3) and read Catalan newspapers (e.g., *El Periódico*). Meanwhile, the same people will watch national, Spanish television (e.g., TVE or Telecinco) and read national newspapers (e.g., *ABC* or *El País*). One could choose to exclude oneself from one or the other of these public spheres and sets of media outlets, but chances are that a large portion of the population will enjoy cross-exposure to these intersecting, overlapping spheres. When it comes to any number of contentious issues between the national and the regional (e.g., autonomy, regional exceptions, taxes, and transfers of wealth), these public spheres will compete and will convey diverging or even conflicting messages. The optimist will see this as feeding a healthy democratic debate; the pessimist will see the potential for polarization driving public opinion toward the extremes.

Switzerland is not a member of the European Union, not even of the European Economic Area, and this is consistent with the public opinion as established by national referendums. The configuration of public and media spheres in Switzerland is quite peculiar. The media landscape is shaped by the four national languages (German, French, Italian, and Romansh), and the largest subnational administrative units are the 26 cantons that enjoy a fair level of autonomy and are necessarily their own public sphere, with periods of intense political debates around the times of referendums. Because of the language diversity, there is no true national media sphere, but instead at least four distinct language-based media spheres whose reach cuts across the national and the cantonal levels. Media from Germany, Austria,

France, and Italy maintain significant audiences in different parts of the country, resulting in a particularly intricate arrangement of public spheres and media spheres. As an example, the Canton of Valais has two official languages and, as a result, is entangled between the French-speaking and German-speaking media and public spheres, with incursions from French- and German-language foreign media, while being part of many embryonic European public spheres, though feeling strongly about not being part of Europe in its most institutional forms.

Figure 2. Entangled media and public spheres
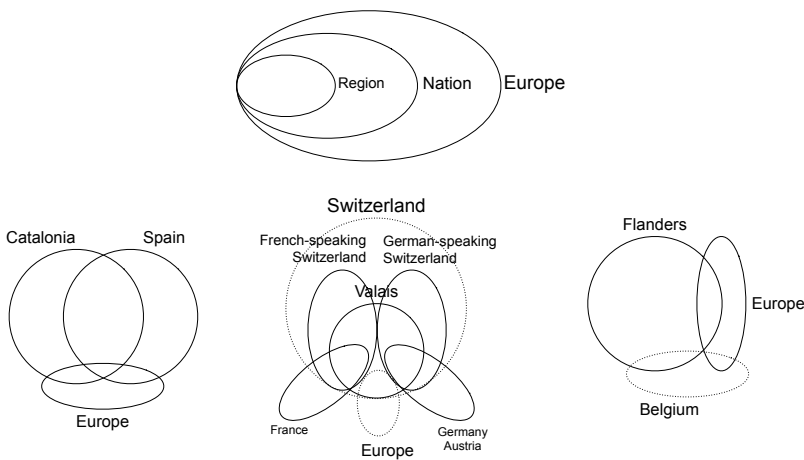
The case of Flanders (the Dutch-speaking region in the north of Belgium) is completely different insofar as there are no true national media in Belgium (as in Switzerland), but in this case, there is much more of a fit between regions and language use. As a result, the Flemish media play the role, for people living in Flanders, of what would be called national media elsewhere. This is a source of confusion because the two levels (regional and national) are not conflated, but one is substituting for the other. And in any case, there is not the concentric dual-level media sphere (regional, national) that can be found in other national contexts.

Many people in Flanders might enjoy sufficient command of French to be able to use French-speaking media, yet audience measurements show that this is rather marginal. Exposure to media of the other language community is not so much perceived as exposure to another set of Belgian media but as an incursion into the media sphere of the other community in a near-foreign-media experience. The absence of national media is often mentioned as an aggravating factor for the persistent tensions between Flanders and Wallonia (the French-speaking region constituting the southern part of Belgium). The situation is further complicated by an intriguing

asymmetry with regard to the success of media from bordering countries. Although viewing of television channels from the Netherlands is only marginal in Flanders, television stations from France account for nearly a third of the total market of television viewing in francophone Belgium, adding a layer of complexity to the media sphere there. This fundamental discrepancy between the two main media markets of Belgium is evidence that a shared language might be a necessary, but obviously is not a sufficient, condition for cross-border media undertakings.

In Belgium, observers often note that each community is ill informed about the other. Elections, even federal, are organized in such a way that elected representatives are accountable only to their own electorate in their own region in their own public sphere.

The situation in Belgium is an interesting model to examine how the absence of a media-enhanced public sphere maintains a distance with, and a weak understanding of, "the others," thus affecting the coherence and perceived legitimacy of the larger overarching political structure. News media-centrism, however, must be avoided, particularly in an age when new forms of media outlets (digital media predominantly) are reconfiguring the ways by which people form their opinions about the world and nurture their political consciousness. Yet whether the state of the news media is the sign or one of the determinants of the state of the public sphere, it is hard to deny that the two notions are closely knit.

6.   Toward porous, interconnected public spheres

The resilience of the national public sphere (and of the regional public spheres in contexts where regions claim near-national status) is undeniable, even if there are signs that they tend each, separately, to become more European (Risse-Kappen, 2014). Its weakening in favor of any kind of supranational public sphere is not just delayed and overdue; it appears to be stalled, ill founded, and elusive. Accepting the idea that mass media, including news media, are still a major component of contemporary public spheres; that they shape, consolidate, and invigorate them; and given the absence of any transnational, pan-European media outlet reaching a significant segment of the whole European population is recognizing that the advent of a large-scale, inclusive European public sphere is not just slow forming. It is not on the European horizon. It is not, in the end, the mere natural by-product of European integration that was once thought to simply, organically emerge as a sign of maturity of the European project and of some form of social-cultural-political convergence among the peoples of Europe. Neither is it a reality that can be enhanced, let alone created by sheer political will and force-fed by media development.

Therefore, waiting for a European public sphere to strengthen and buttress the European Union and take it to the next level of integration is risking to stall the European project altogether. The increasing presence of openly Euro-skeptics among the elected members of the European Parliament is a reminder that European integration is not necessarily an irresistible process that can progress only in one direction, albeit at varying speed. It could slow to a stop and even, to some extent, revert to a looser form of integration. Making a European public sphere the necessary condition to achieve European integration exposes the very idea of an integrated political union as a mere utopian and groundless chimera confined to policy papers and political rhetoric.

The budding of transnational public spheres (in business and highbrow cultural circles, among activists, in relation to humanitarian causes, etc.) must be nursed and amplified as much as possible, but with the aim to consolidate these essential cores of transnational political, social, or cultural consciousness; not to fantasize about how they could one day be magnified and replicated across larger portions of society.

A supplementary strategy could be to rely more on what could be called *porous, interconnected public spheres*. Going back to the early strategies of the European institutions, it is still reasonable and legitimate to improve the way Europeans get to know and understand one another. Not in hope that this will lead them to realize that they have so much in common that they would be driven to a postnationalist European state of mind, but with the more modest, realistic goal to diffuse antagonism, enable and facilitate empathy across a broad cultural, social, and political spectrum, Europe-wide. This strategy is not about finding the largest common denominator (by trying to interest everyone, one usually ends up deterring most) but about revealing and, where suitable, promoting differences and diversity as a natural and desirable part of a shared Europe.

This is reminiscent of how Brüggemann (2010) defines a transnational public sphere: "a space of communication which is comprised of a set of national public spheres connected by communication flows" (p. 7). The porosity implies that national and regional public spheres can move away from the self-centered, centripetal dynamics that often lead a nation or region to turn its back to others, by fear or disdain. The interconnectedness requires organized processes and structures to deliberately reach out to other media spheres in an effort to bridge the two by means of coverage of news from that other sphere that does not stigmatize or highlight differences, but instead shows realities that may seem disparate, but that will provide clues and examples of life, values, and emotions, and, ultimately, induce empathy and understanding.

Mechanisms of that nature already exist, though in rudimentary but promising forms. Public broadcasters have invaluable experience in this area. Not only have they been at the helm of the most daring, even if sometimes doomed, attempts at crossing the borders of national media markets; they have managed to maintain, among them, a collaborative work culture that offers considerable potential. The Eurovision News Exchange organized by the European Broadcasting Union since 1962 is an emblematic example. Although it is essentially a structure designed to provide partners with quality television footage of major events across Europe at a low cost, it represents a rare example of interconnection among public and media spheres across Europe (and beyond). The same structure, or another structure following a similar model, could be used to more systematically provide different perspectives on the same topic, and not just feed the "international news" segments of television newscasts. Instead of being a source on major events abroad, it could organize the exchange of material related to broader issues with high human interest and rooted in what would otherwise be seen as local news. If, for example, the financial crisis in one country is leading to schools being closed or restaurants going out of business, showing this reality by the example in other countries, enhanced by life stories and testimonies from actors and witnesses, would likely be of interest to a large audience and create empathy, because they, too, send their children to school and enjoy going to restaurants.

Creating more porosity among the irreducible national and regional public spheres could enhance mutual understanding not from a top-down attempt to relativize cultural differences but from a repeated experience of differences and similarities related to shared realities. And this should not be restricted to public-service television. Newspapers from different regions or countries have occasionally proven that they can undertake joint editorial projects with comparable aims. These initiatives are, however, isolated and short-lived and tend to involve flagship newspapers within the rather elitist "quality papers." The fact that the potential seems confined to public media and quality papers raises concern about the possibility for this interconnected, porous public sphere to be inclusive and not restricted to the upper segment of the socioeconomic spectrum of the European population. But it is also a reminder that such an approach must necessarily be associated with high journalistic standards. The portrayal of "the other" can too easily turn into caricatures, oversimplifications, and stereotyping. More than technology and infrastructure, news production of such nature requires time and human resources, both of which are unfortunately in short supply in newsrooms across Europe.

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A vindication of academic engagement in the European space

Victor Navarro-Remesal, Ignacio Bergillos

Abstract

In recent years, the European project has faced many threats and crises, but academic-related spaces (such as the Erasmus programme) serve as success stories where we can still hope for a recovery of the European ideal. The consolidation of the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School invites us to reflect on the core elements that define it not only as a doctoral programme, but also as a facilitator that shapes our professional identity as communication researchers in a shared European space. Thus, the Summer School can be understood as part of the European endeavour itself: an intellectual environment not of *being* but rather of *becoming*, where different scholars "united in diversity" can find common ground and expand their scholarly tools and skills to face problems both distinct and alike. This aim does not come without obstacles: university today seems to be co-opted by neoliberal discourses and changes in academic culture that create high expectations, competition and a difficult work-life balance.

Keywords: ECREA Summer School, PhD Studies, engagement, internationalisation, collaboration, academia, Europe

1. Introduction

This chapter opens a conversation with current and former participants of the Summer School with regard to the shared values and inputs that it has provided to us as young researchers in a challenged Europe. It also follows former discussions at the Summer School book collection on the European university and its neoliberal turn (Carpentier, 2009; Zaloznik and Gaspart, 2011) and being a young academic (Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, 2016). We frame our experience during and after the Summer School as an acknowledgement of its role in our professional development. We put forward three keywords that define it from our point of view: internationalisation, collaboration and engagement. These three values will be defined in light of our experience after Tartu in 2008, which we attended, as well as of some of our colleagues there. In doing so, we use our personal stories as case studies in an autoethnographic exercise, and our perspectives as early career academics as a viewpoint on the becoming of European scholars and European academia itself.

1.1 From SuSo '08 to SuSo '17

Last year's edition of the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School (henceforth SuSo) closed a circle for us that began ten years ago. In 2008, we attended SuSo in Tartu, Estonia, while in the early stages of our PhDs. Although we studied and lived only 100 kilometres away from each other, it was in Estonia where we first met. Our projects focused on online citizen journalism and mainstream broadcasters (Ignacio) and characters as mediators of player interaction through a formalist approach to videogame fiction (Victor). Interactivity and participation were, thus, our shared interests and the topics of our first conversations. Since then, we have forged a close friendship and we work together in a private centre called CESAG (Center of Higher Education Alberta Giménez) in Palma, Spain. As early career academics, we are aware of the good chances we have had (and the privileges we have experienced) in this, since many of our Spanish colleagues struggle to find a job after their PhD.

In our jobs, we have shared our Summer School experiences with those students with an interest in developing a career in academic research. In 2017, following in our footsteps, one of our former students successfully participated in the Summer School. Guillem Suau graduated in Media Studies at CESAG in 2015 and achieved a Master's Degree in Social Communication at Universitat Pompeu Fabra the year after. He is now a PhD Student in the Department of Communication of the same university and he attended SuSo during the first year of his PhD pro-

gramme. His participation in the ECREA Summer School makes us proud and also invites us to reflect on the reasons that might have helped it to happen. Our careers as young researchers and university lecturers have evolved in a close relationship with the core values of the SuSo project. Not only did it serve as a stimulating environment where we received theoretical and methodological feedback, but it also provided us with an inspiring setting for personal and academic exchange. In Tartu we participated in a new and encouraging way of approaching research, quite different from the standard way of working at our home institutions and their formal, and sometimes stagnating, academia. Although we have had a peripheral involvement with ECREA or other associations linked to it during this decade, we believe that the Summer School and the people whom we met there, both mentors and co-participants, have similarly shaped our vision of what academia ought to be.

The official description of SuSo (as found on its website) is, in this regard, very fitting: "The European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School is a student-centred summer school. In contrast to many other summer schools, the lecturers' main task is not to lecture, but to provide support to the participants in their PhD trajectories." SuSo was, for us, an informal workspace where we could test our research designs and pre-understanding. This nature is described in its goals as well: "The main emphasis of the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School is on providing structural and individuated PhD-support for young European scholars combined with numerous opportunities for informal dialogues with lecturers and peers." It is useful to bear in mind here two of the four main objectives of the Summer School, as described on its website: a) to provide a strong learning and research environment for PhD students at an internationally renowned research facility with the objective of fostering an optimal exchange between participants from all over Europe; and b) to provide innovative mutual support for doctoral studies in the field of media and communication, with additional organizational support from the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA).

Based on these objectives, we have tried to retain the values of SuSo to our own professional careers. It is not an easy task to find a balance between achieving these ideals and the expectations of a competitive and changing context in Spanish and European universities. According to Díez Gutiérrez et al. (2014), academia is suffering a triple crisis: of its traditional hegemonic function, of legitimacy and an institutional crisis (2014: 64). This crisis is caused by (and shown in) drastic budget cuts, a rise in public tuition fees, a reduction in scholarships and a reduction in staff combined with a precarization of the workforce in public universities (2014: 9-10). The neoliberal academia interlinked with this crisis is not unique to our country, Spain, nor even to Europe. However, some Spanish critics, such as Enrique Díez Gutiérrez et al. and Remedios Zafra (2017), emphasize the greater

impact of the economic crisis on national grants and investment in research, and especially the lack of generational replacement and professional career plans within Spanish academia. There is a "dual system" divided into an elite of star teachers and a majority of teaching staff in precarious conditions, dependent on continuous renewals by their superiors, poorly paid and overworked, with serious difficulties to maintain a certain amount of academic freedom and independence (2014: 46).

As discussed by Zaloznik and Gaspart (2011), there are growing tensions between the institutional conception of university and its strategies of marketisation, on the one hand, and the goals and hopes of scientists, on the other. These tensions appear in relation to the different conceptualizations of publicness, authority and engagement in the public sphere. While institutional strategies tend to understand their role as being responsible for satisfying the requirements of the Knowledge Society, "the self-understanding (or perhaps aspirations) of many social scientists is represented in the role of the 'scientist as public scholar', addressing public issues, informing public understanding and engaging with the public beyond the pure dissemination of facts" (Zaloznik and Gaspart, 2011: 212). Zafra writes about a "capitalist turn of knowledge" that is chiefly based on systems that seek above all to appear "objective" and to camouflage themselves as "impartial" (2017: 76), translating into simplified data "those aspects of thought that are more complex, ambiguous, nuanced, and even contradictory".

In this context, we propose three values that illustrate the ambivalent and tense relationship with our identities and careers as young researchers: internationalisation, collaboration and engagement. The application of these values in our work and our mindset as lecturers has been negotiated in a context of uncertainty, but taking into account the academic and personal lessons learned during and after SuSo '08.

2.   Internationalisation

The first key concept, internationalisation, is a strategic component of many universities in Europe, but also an undefined aspect of some activities that do not necessarily recognize the complex nature of the term. It has become a buzzword and its implementation has been linked with strategies of expansion, innovation and adaptation to the challenges of globalization. For us, the Summer School illustrates the twofold character of internationalisation: it is not only a way of 'going abroad' and creating networking opportunities, but also a personal process rooted in understanding the importance of openness and reception. Internationalisation is, thus, a mind frame. It can put local problems and phenomena in a broader perspective and highlight the interdependencies and connections between different regions of the Union, and of Europe within the world.

Internationalisation was a main point of the Bologna Declaration of 1999, in which at least three out of six objectives were directly related to it. First, the Declaration highlighted the "promotion of mobility" for both students and teachers, specifying the "recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context". The implementation of the plan has created a system that stimulates international collaboration, but which, at times, makes it difficult to incorporate individuals. In a personal communication, Guillem Suau told us that "although universities are establishing more and more agreements to cooperate between them, they fail at conveying the importance of these networks and practices to students". There is an increasingly important administrative and managerial culture that comes with internationalisation programmes. As Carpentier (2009: 318) points out, we need to critically evaluate how the process of Europeanisation has privileged homogenising forces "which can seriously disrupt the balance of our un-balance".

Thus, a focus on internationalisation as a mindset is very much needed to counterbalance its use as an obligation of cognitive capitalism and neoliberal academia. This is something stressed by Anne Kaun, a lecturer at Södertörn University in Stockholm, who attended SuSo '08. In a personal communication, Kaun argued: "I probably wouldn't speak of internationalisation, [it] sounds so bureaucratic and that wasn't my experience of the SuSo at all. I would call it transnational or intercultural experience. It wasn't [so] much the departments and schools we came from but the shared and, at the same time, diverse experiences that were gathered in one spot that made it such a great experience."

Zafra (2017: 81) suggests this distinction as well when she criticises how, nowadays, "researchers who are tempted not to participate in international conferences for a fee, or not to write in academic journals but in books, assume the risk of being excluded by the university evaluating bureaucracy". For her, academic culture, in Spain and worldwide, "is being turned into pre-packaged culture, endorsed by committees that feign being by just "being there", by evaluators as precarious as those who write the articles that they evaluate" (2017: 79-80), thus creating a "culture driven by databases" in which "the appearance is the message, the internationalization the incentive, the indexation the engine". In a similar vein, Díez Gutiérrez et al. (2014: 11) have criticised the Bologna agreement for not being a scientific nor a political reform process but rather one based on *exclusively economical* reasoning: the need to compete with the United States, too, in the education market.

Universities tend to treat internationalisation as something that is needed to remain competitive. Jannie Møller Hartley is a journalist, researcher and lecturer at Roskilde University who attended SuSo '08 with us. In a personal communication she discussed internationalisation with us: "Internationalisation is a buzzword at my university at the moment, as we have probably been quite national previously (all our courses are still only taught in Danish), but still for me as a Journalism re-

searcher I still need to keep a close connection to the field here in Denmark, [since] the field of practice is not as internationalised as academia." For Møller Hartley, internationalisation, collaboration and engagement are "interrelated": "internalisation is impossible without collaboration. Sure, you can go to conferences and present your research, get input and inspiration, but what really matters is the people you meet. It has amazed me how much research moves forward as a consequence of collaborative international work".

3.   Collaboration

Møller Hartley told us that "most of the international work I have participated in has come out of the SuSo 2008, the people I met there". Kaun agrees: "I found some of my best academic friends in Tartu also across generations. I think that is something that will last." We defend collaboration as meaningful participation in different spheres related to culture, industry and education, inside and outside academia. The production, exchange and transfer of knowledge and ideas are of central importance in this. Sharing references, advising and even informally peer-reviewing others is part of this second aspect. Collaboration arises from internationalisation but can also happen locally, as in our case, keeping that international mindset: we are citizens of the same state but met at Summer School, and we have been working together in one way or another since we came back from it. We have co-authored texts, coordinated events and even informally peer-reviewed each other's work.

　　Co-authoring (and working together in specific actions, in general) is thus a big part of collaboration. Since we attended SuSo, we have tried to translate this idea into action. After his research stay at ITU, Victor co-authored a chapter on community practices for an anthology on transgressive games (to be published in 2018 by MIT Press) with Torill Mortensen, Vice Chair of the Digital Games Research section of ECREA. This understanding of collaboration is something we have slowly reflected on since 2008. In a similar vein, Enrique Canovaca, another SuSo '08 participant, sees collaboration as "key to promote transnational projects that provide more global visions", and he considers that SuSo has a delayed effect in this regard: "when I attended the SuSo it was too early for me to understand this". Collaboration also requires solid structures, be they official, informal, stable or project-based. In this regard, our view on collaboration could also be linked to formal engagement between institutions, scholars and dissemination channels. Considering once again the Bologna Declaration, we find that promotion of the "necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regard to curricular development, interinstitutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research" is one of its main objectives.

For Suau, collaboration was "possibly the most important" element of SuSo: "thanks to the experience of the Summer School I have met colleagues who have helped me improve my project by providing software I did not know before as well as suggesting authors and reading that will be very relevant to my work". Suau highlights the final speech of Nico Carpentier, director of the School, who stressed that "collaboration between academics is vital because it allows us to improve the quality of our work in addition to being more productive". The SuSo experience has already led to some changes in Suau's practices: "my time there made me see that we had to try to change things from below and that is why, when I returned to my university, I started working on setting up an association of PhD students in which we can get to know each other, cooperate and help each other in our projects".

4. Engagement

Finally, engagement represents the commitment and recognition of our affective involvement in the practices and activities in which we take part as scholars, teachers and tutors. It is chiefly an affective element. There is a growing discussion about such matters as work-life balance, mentoring, overwork and self-care within academia, and having an extended network of mutual support can be important in that regard. Engagement and affect have an impact on the transfer of knowledge (both to our students and to society in general) and on both our personal becoming as scholars and our collective becoming as European citizens.

Mental health issues, such as burnout, depression and stress, are attracting more attention within academia. A report commissioned by the Royal Society and the Wellcome Trust in the United Kingdom, entitled 'Understanding Mental Health in the Research Environment' (2017), reviews 48 studies and finds that the majority of university staff find their job stressful. A study conducted in Flanders, Belgium, and published in *Research Policy,* reveals that one in two PhD students experiences psychological distress; one in three is at risk of a common psychiatric disorder (Levecque et al., 2017). According to its findings, "most prevalent are feelings of being under constant strain, unhappiness and depression, sleeping problems due to worries, inability to overcome difficulties and not being able to enjoy day-to-day activities".

While these problems need to be solved on a structural level, we see personal engagement as a safety net that can contain their worst effects on scholars, especially early-career academics. "If in academia our work is our life, I think that for surviving it, we need to actively work towards containing it", writes Pruulman-Vengerfeld (2016: 245), "otherwise, we become frustrated victims of a neoliberal "monster" for whom more of everything is always needed". Although these informal networks are formed by scholars, they can act to give our environments and fields a more human

face and to provide a much-needed rest from our work, containing it. In them, we can also negotiate and influence academic culture by discussing it. Pruulman-Vengerfeld (2016: 240) defends the same idea: "I firmly believe that open discussions of mutual expectations are needed to shape academic culture in a favourable direction."

For Canovaca, "personal commitment to academia [in Spain] is complicated if you do not have some contacts". He joins the criticism of scholars like Zafra, who writes of her presence in academia as an "infiltration of difference" against a "disciplinary corset" that oppresses and restricts knowledge, mainly due to "endogamy and intellectual poverty" derived from "places of privilege where everyone looks too much alike and hardly notice that that matters" (2017: 78). Zafra criticised the "homogeneity of those who at the beginning of the 21st century still hold academic power". For Canovaca, SuSo opened up new possibilities in this regard.

Møller Hartley talks about the affective network she found at SuSo: "our career paths have gone in similar directions, we have helped each other, formed networks, applied for money together, co-authored things together, etc. We have been able to support each other, and … although we don't see each other that often, I always feel a quite strong bond with many of the people from that summer-school". Peer review and feedback also acted as a form of personal engagement for Kaun: "I think the set up with peer discussions has taught me to appreciate the investment and time that academics are giving to improve writing and knowledge production at large. It is hard to give good feedback but it is essential for academic knowledge. I think I have learned a lot about valuable feedback."

Belonging, especially as a PhD student, a time when one can feel isolated, was an immaterial reward Møller Hartley found at SuSo '08: "It was also at a time in our lives where we were insecure, just becoming academics, doubting everything and [so] being there with people who were basically the same created an enormous feeling of belonging to a larger plan and group. Especially since the PhD process can be quite lonesome and disturbing at times, it was amazing to have people around who were going through the same [thing at] the same time."

The informal nature of SuSo, according to Møller Hartley, helped to create something that would have been much harder in a fully professional environment: "I think that the collaborative network that came naturally from the summer school would have taken a lot of very difficult work, and might not have happened at all." Once again, Møller Hartley details the scope of this affective, personal network of like-minded scholars she found at SuSo: "I get Christmas cards from Anne [Kaun] in Stockholm and we send pictures of our children. I have gotten to know new people, who were not even at the summer school, but knew [each] other from other places and now some of us are even in the same department. We share hotel rooms at conferences, even now when we don't need to financially. It feels like my academic family."

We are seeing the full extent of the personal network we created at SuSo now, a decade later, while assessing how it has helped us in our lives, but engagement also has immediate benefits for the PhD students who attend the School. Guillem Suau, just a few months after returning from it, compares engagement to networking and "public relations", and for him it was very valuable to meet "other PhD students with similar concerns to mine and with whom to write and publish in the future, design research projects together, and so on". He stresses that at UPF, and especially at CESAG, "they put great emphasis on the importance and value of teamwork and networking".

5.   Conclusion: being and becoming an academic in Europe

Without the Summer School experiences, our understanding of academia, with the demands and expectations associated with it, would have been much smaller. While some of the consequences and benefits of attending the SuSo are immediate, there are lasting effects that bloom years later, particularly after finishing one's dissertation. As Møller Hartley explains: "I think I did not really understand how much it meant until now several years later. At the time in 2008 it was just fun, amazing people and good feedback for my project, but it was also a place where I learned and understood the importance of those three concepts, having not thought that much about international conferences, big collaborative research projects. It's all a learning process, and the summer school started some thoughts and some networks, which are kind of materializing now, almost ten years later."

This slow but constant quality of the benefits of attending SuSo matches our understanding of academia and of what an academic is: not a definitive state, but a process. Not a clear *being*, not a state one achieves, but a never-ending *becoming*. As Enright et al. (2017: 1) defend, "there is nothing settled about an academic's identity" and "the process of becoming an academic does not stop because the being has been achieved". In our vindication of academic engagement, we find reasons for optimism, as opposed to a discourse of defeat and fault. Marina Garcés recently warned against the efforts to "preserve" academia and the humanities and instead proposed talking about "Humanities in transition" (2017), as a living space where society and the human experience are constantly analysed and negotiated and where meaning-making can occur. Internationalisation (as a mind frame or an outlook), collaboration (as working together and sharing structures) and engagement (as affective involvement) are key aspects and clear benefits of projects like SuSo, and they can help us all in our personal and collective becoming as academics, as critics of culture, and as European citizens.

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In defence of European universities: Scholars and activists, unite![1]

Hannu Nieminen

Abstract

In the last couple of decades, European universities have undergone several major upheavals. These include a policy of harmonizing university degree programmes (the Bologna Process); attempts to streamline and coordinate university governance structures, to transform the standards for universities' public funding; and so on. Together with other pronounced societal transformations, the roles and identities of European academic scholars have experienced significant challenges.

Both scholars and policymakers largely agree that in the last 20 years European higher education policy has turned from policy based on democracy and culture towards policy driven by market-based ideals. Although there is a broad consensus that this major policy shift has occurred, there is less agreement over its reasons and consequences.

If we really want our universities not only to defend their crucial capacity but also to expand it to better meet the major challenges of our times – climate change, immigration, inequality, terrorism, renewed Cold War – we must find a way to create an alliance between scholars with different academic identities and normative orientations.

Keywords: university reform, university policy, normativity, scholarly identities

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In the last couple of decades, European universities have undergone several major upheavals. These include a policy of harmonizing university degree programmes (the Bologna Process); attempts to streamline and coordinate university governance structures, to transform the standards for universities' public funding; and so on. Together with other pronounced societal transformations, the roles and identities of European academic scholars have experienced significant challenges.

Both scholars and policymakers largely agree that in the last 20 years European higher education policy has turned from policy based on democracy and culture towards policy driven by market-based ideals. Although there is a broad consensus that this major policy shift has occurred, there is less agreement over its reasons and consequences.

In this article, I discuss three potential explanations for this policy turn: structure, ideology and contingency. Furthermore, I offer a perspective connecting all three. The article will conclude by analysing six different normative approaches that characterise scholarly attitudes towards university policy today.

1.   Why the turn in university policy has occurred: three explanations

In broad terms, there are three main explanations for the policy turn; these include broad structural change in our societies, ideological change and contingent factors. In what follows I explore these explanations a little further.

1.1   Structural change

Shifts in European university policy reflect deeper changes in modern Western societies. Particularly in small countries like Finland, university institutions have played a central role in national development – not only in science and culture, but also in social, political and economic life. Universities have been instrumental in nation-building, the production of knowledge, the formation of cultural identity, the promoting of national science policies etc.

The structural explanation suggests that the national mission of universities has largely expired for both political and economic reasons. European integration has meant that issues previously defined and solved on the national level are now discussed and decided in European Union bodies. From this viewpoint, national universities are no longer sufficiently adapted to the goals of knowledge production and identity formation. In a similar manner, the globalization of the economy and increasing global competition has led governments to cut public funding to

universities. This has forced universities to participate in an uneven fight for financing from non-traditional sources – student fees, commercial ventures, industry endowments etc. Because of their small national economies, as well as cultural factors, compared to major universities in the UK, France, Germany or the US, universities in small European countries are less competitive in this global market.

Regarding the democratisation of knowledge and university access, this shift has been assessed from two different perspectives. According to some scholars, the policy changes exemplified by, among others, the Bologna Process and attempts to harmonize governance structures have led to the expansion of democracy through the dismantling of narrow paternalistic national frameworks. Today, information and knowledge are shared globally without national restrictions, and international and global networks, promoting new kinds of scientific and academic innovations, increasingly replace the old, national cultural and scientific structures (Hénard, Diamond and Roseveare 2012; EC 2015a).

However, critics offer another perspective, suggesting that this shift amounts to the commercialization of knowledge production and, as a result, to the enclosure of common domains of academic information and knowledge. This means that the best possible information and knowledge are not publicly available, and public discussion, necessary for healthy democracy, suffers. Higher education becomes a privilege of the wealthy and is detached from its previous national, regional and local background (Golding 2016; Freedman 2017; Lorenz 2006).

1.2 Ideological change

The explanation for this policy shift based on change in ideas and attitudes springs from a belief that the majority of people are tired of a paternalistic state that uses public money inefficiently and without real accountability. In this approach, public education is compared to any other public service or utility, such as water supply, electricity, communications etc. Public educational and scientific institutions were necessary when national reconstruction required mass education and national control of resources and science; at that time, educational institutions served the consolidation of a national market economy. However, today, public educational institutions– like all other public services and utilities– are seen as hindrances to the efficient development of markets and private businesses.

This has led to a fundamental reconsideration of the role of universities. Traditional universities were regarded as conservative and backward-looking, representing an old, elitist and nationalistic world view, against a tide of increasing cultural pluralism and liberation. As public monopolies were dismantled in other sectors of society, the aim was to also dismantle them in science and academic

education. It was believed that opening up higher education and universities to competition would bring about efficiency and innovation and help get rid of old, redundant academic practices and branches of academia, especially in the humanities and social sciences (such as rare languages and cultures, philosophy, social theory etc.) (Guardian, 2010; ib., 2013; THE, 2015.)

This has resulted in three kinds of development. First, there was an emphasis on creating 'lower' level higher education institutions, such as Universities of Applied Sciences (previously called Polytechnics). These were designed to respond to industry needs for new practical skills. However, these institutions have not answered the demands for a more independent and theoretically oriented workforce needed in digitized work environments. Second, there was a proliferation of private universities in many European countries that promised to offer an alternative to the anachronist public universities and an education designed to meet industrial needs. Third, public universities tried to respond to these challenges by restructuring their modus operandi, following the dictate of New Public Management and emphasising the role of 'hard' sciences in their strategies in order to increase external research funding. In answer to increasing international competition for students, universities started to design their degrees according to market trends and to profit from increasing student fees.

Critics have remarked, however, that there is contradictory evidence as to whether the privatization and marketization of universities have made them more innovative and efficient. Naturally, this depends on how innovativeness and efficiency are defined and measured: if indicators are only financial and technical, or if social innovations and social sustainability are equally included in measurement (see EC, 2015b). The weakening of the social sciences and humanities has led universities losing these critical faculties, crucial for resisting increasing extra-academic pressures from politicians and industries. One additional disturbing factor is that the emphasis on competition and privatization necessarily leads to fragmentation of the policy field, hiding the big picture. This means that even some OECD countries have experienced a downward spiral in both the quality and quantity of higher education (Nieminen, 2016).

1.3   Contingent factors

A contingency explanation for this policy trend relies on an understanding that change is not linear but rather the result of the interaction of several parallel factors occurring simultaneously. The assumption is that a 'window of opportunity' – in the form of situational political compromise – allowed these factors to be realised under situational conditions. The end result is a compromise where intentions do

not materialise as planned but are rather shaped by prevailing circumstances. We can talk about externalities, unintended consequences: the implications of decisions and choices cannot be fully predicted, as the original aims and foreseen consequences are replaced by situational compromises, the effects of which are only seen once change has occurred.

This is exemplified by the history of the former Polytechnics that were 'upgraded' to universities in several European countries, starting from 1980 and continuing until today. A non-intended outcome is that now the universities are, in practice, increasingly divided into two levels of institutions: 'research intensive' versus 'teaching' universities. At the same time, the qualification of academic degrees and their comparison have become increasingly difficult, as the standards – because of increasing competition and 'profiling actions' – seem to be increasingly uneven, both nationally and between universities.

The more complex European societies become as the result of globalization and societal differentiation, the more difficult it will be to reconcile the aims and purposes of different actors and to foresee the implications of public policy choices. Rational consideration between alternatives has less and less explanatory power than before. From this perspective, explanations for changes in university policy are not derived from long historical processes but from shorter term conditions. The triggers are identified from different factors: incidental political trade-offs between major parties, the personal characteristics of decision-makers, the unplanned accumulation of many small, separate choices etc.

When an opportunity for decision-making occurs or, in other words, when the window of opportunity opens, it is essential that choices are made quickly, utilizing the conditions that exist at that particular moment. This seems to have been the case when the Finnish government decided to cut university funding by hundreds of millions of euros in 2015 (UWN 2015). The risk is that these conditions will afterwards appear less than optimal, that the information used to justify the choice will be proved false, that the commitment of decision-makers was weak, that the decisions were inadequate and the outcome was a failure. The problem is that after decisions are made, they are difficult to reverse; this requires the opening of a new window of opportunity, and a new opening under similar conditions is unlikely to take place.

The strength of the contingency explanation is its intent to locate the moment decision-making takes place and the different factors that influence it. Its weaknesses include the disregard of power relations and the long-standing processes behind their formation – in the case of universities, the historical connection between human welfare and higher education. Contingent factors may impact on what form decisions and choices take and the situations in which decisions are made, but choices are always framed and conditioned by wider societal, economic and political power relations.

2.   A connecting perspective

As seems obvious by now, none of these explanatory models alone is able to explain the changes in European university policy. However, each contains interesting and seemingly valid elements.

The strength of the <u>structural explanation</u> is that it helps us to compare the changes in higher education policy to developments in other areas and sectors. Along with wider societal changes, the role and significance of science and higher education are also transformed. In this context, the traditional role of universities in constructing and consolidating national identities weakens. Previously, university policy aimed to protect and endorse the university as a national institution promoting national culture and democracy; today, this focus is replaced by economic ideals and values. This development can be seen in different forms across all European countries.

The weakness of the structural explanation, however, is that its explanatory power does not extend to the social and cultural consequences of these policy changes. This is exemplified by the two opposing interpretations of its effects presented above; structural changes can be assessed as either part of the widening of democracy or its narrowing.

The strength of the <u>ideological explanation</u> is that it helps to clarify the justification of neo-liberal university policy, promoted from the 1980s onwards. Previous science and higher education policy was seen to suffocate and restrict citizens' freedom of choice. Citizens wanted to get rid of the state's tutelage, and the freedom offered by the market provided a solution to this. The strength of the appeal of this market-led approach is demonstrated by the fact that it was embraced in nearly all European countries between the 1980s and the 2000s.

The weakness of the ideological explanation is that it does not account for why this change took place when it did, why it was rooted only in neo-liberal ideology and not, for example, Marxism or neo-conservatism, and why it occurred in similar forms in different parts of Europe. The structural explanation can illuminate this: in the 1970s and '80s, changes occurred in the structures of European societies – in the economy, social relations, politics – that promoted or 'invited' neo-liberal solutions, including in the sphere of science and higher education.

The strength of the <u>contingency explanation</u> is its ability to interpret the motives and negotiation processes behind individual decisions. As an example, we can consider the major lay-offs in Finnish universities in the spring of 2016; over 750 people were laid off in the University of Helsinki alone (YLE, 2015). The background to this includes the results of the parliamentary elections in spring 2015, which led to the formation of a right-wing parliament; and the Finnish economic crisis, which led to the implementation of a large-scale austerity programme resulting in large-scale cuts across all sectors of public spending. One of the worst-hit

was education, especially universities. The University of Helsinki, which is the only Finnish university among the best 100 in the global university rankings, faces a loss of funding of 106 million euros per annum by 2020. Several years ago, reforms to the Finnish university system had already begun with the aim of making it more competitive and effective in both education and research. The key words that university reformers and modernisers constantly repeat are 'profiling' and 'prioritizing'. For the university leadership, government policy seems to have opened a window of opportunity, allowing for a double strategy. First, university leadership has challenged the government by announcing major lay-offs in the hope that the government will back down from spending cuts. Second, the leadership can also promote their own agenda and utilise the opportunity in order to centralise their power by imposing major structural reforms – closing down departments, merging faculties etc. – that have been resisted by university personnel until now.

Although the contingency model can help to explain single cases and the reasons behind them, which are often contingent and non-predictable, it neglects wider economic and political frameworks. This creates the conditions that determine which outcomes are possible at different historical moments and which are not. Despite the individual factors on which each specific policy change depends, the changes to university policy in different European countries are to a large degree comparable (EUObserver, 2010).

3.   The challenge of normativity: research perspectives

The study of university policy is necessarily normative. Its starting point is the conviction that science and higher education are essential for the functioning of democracy and general human well-being, and that democratic, social and cultural values are key to the increasing economic and financial interests of universities today. At the same time, it should be said that within the scientific community there are different conceptions of what democracy means and how the balance between scientific and humanistic values and economic interests should be defined and maintained.

It follows that in the study of university policy, there are different opinions regarding the mode of assessing and responding to recent changes to policies concerning higher education and science. Roughly put, we can distinguish six normative approaches, reflecting different scholarly identities:

Democratic nostalgia: This approach demands a return to welfaristic university policy. Many scholars see scientific knowledge and higher education as public goods, which should be freely and publicly available. This is why public authority – the government – should carry the primary responsibility for science and higher education by safeguarding the autonomy of universities and guaranteeing free ed-

ucation on all levels. Many supporters of this approach are influenced by Jürgen Habermas's critical social theory.

Postmodern distance: Power is everywhere, and the task of critical academics is to dismantle its different manifestations. Largely influenced by Michel Foucault's concept of power, the followers of this approach analyse the discourses around university policy and aim to make power visible. Rather than focus on policy proposals or plans of action, they seek to provide instruments for deconstructing prevailing power relations.

Radical enthusiasm: Digitization and new information and communication technology (ICT) offer unprecedented opportunities for scientific research and higher education, breaking down traditional academic barriers. This approach is often influenced by Manuel Castells's theory of the information society. Digital ICT is supposed to fundamentally transform societal relations in the realms of the economy, politics and culture. This means that major reforms are necessary for traditional social institutions, including universities; they are invited to reform their functional logics to act as spearheads of digital change.

Critical activism: The duty of academic scholarship is to assist civic movements aiming to make all knowledge and information free through open access and the public domain. The starting point for this approach is a conviction that current university policy is restricting people's right to knowledge and higher education. Scholars' responsibility is therefore to support movements aimed at the democratisation of university policy.

Reformist expertise: The task of academics is to assist and advise decision-makers and public servants in formulating policies concerning universities and higher education. By participating in the planning and implementation of university policy, academics can influence policy content and the forms of its implementation. The expertise of academic scholars is often utilised on a national level and in many international organizations (e.g. OECD, EU, UNESCO) to promote extra-academic political aims and agendas.

Scientific objectivism: Scholars should only engage in the observation of measurable facts and finding theoretical explanations behind them or connecting them. The mission of scientists is not to propose value judgements or to present recommendations for action but to maintain scientific neutrality. The role of academic scholars is therefore not to make policy proposals or to participate in extra-academic policy activism. Because university policy concerns value judgements, it is therefore outside scientific expertise.

The approaches described above are ideal types, and in practice most scholars find their academic identity in more than one category. It would not be fair or even possible to order the approaches by preference as they are all justified from their

own premises. Each individual researcher has her own personal points of interest and societal views that inform her approach to realising her perceived role in relation to university policy.

4. Conclusion

As stated above, it is difficult to pin down one overall explanation for the major policy changes that European universities have faced in recent couple of decades. We studied three potential approaches: structural, ideological and contingency explanations, all having their own merits. However, in isolation, no single one can advise us how to protect European universities from being turned into mere technocratic, commercially oriented innovation centres, void of their original humanist and social critical ethos. In order to go deeper and establish more solid ground for guarding the critical academic heritage, we must expand our area of examination to wider historical and societal contexts, following, for example, Michael Burawoy's critical analysis of the US experiences vis-à-vis university policies (Burawoy, 2005).

Additionally, if we really want our universities not only to defend their crucial capacity but to expand it to better meet the big challenges of our times – climate change, immigration, inequality, terrorism, renewed Cold War – we must find a way to create an alliance between scholars having different academic identities and normative orientations. All the profiles described above – from a democratic nostalgic to a reformist expert, from a postmodernist to a critical activist – are needed to safeguard a better future for European universities.

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Biography

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Journalistic metadiscourse: Press coverage of media policy debates

Binakuromo Ogbebor

Abstract

This chapter explores how the paradigm repair strategy of minimization is used in media policy debates and the implications of such coverage for democracy. Studies on press coverage of media policy assert that mainstream newspapers in Britain trivialize and denigrate efforts to ensure press accountability, in a bid to protect their self-interest (Putnis, 2000: 110; McChesney, 2008: 451; Stiegler, 2013: 137). It is this trivialization and denigration of attempts to reform media policy that are referred to as a strategy of minimization. In this chapter, how the press used a strategy of minimization in the press reform debate that stemmed from the *News of the World (NotW)* phone-hacking scandal and the Leveson Inquiry is taken as representative of how the press uses a strategy of minimization in media policy debates. Using the methods of content and discourse analyses, this study found that strategies of minimization manifested in the following ways: 1. Playing down press reform efforts that originate from external stakeholders; 2. Playing down institutions set up to bring about press reform; 3. Playing down the scandal that led to a call for press reform; 4. In a discourse of "unfair" treatment of the press; and 5. Critiquing critics of the press's position. The chapter argues that the press's use of the paradigm repair strategy of minimization in its coverage of media policy debates promotes inequality and reduces the quality of media policy debates, the result being the emergence of weak media policies that cannot guarantee a democratic public sphere.

1.   Introduction

Previous studies on journalistic metadiscourse have pointed out that media coverage of the press is often characterised by certain paradigm repair strategies (Carlson, Berkowitz, 2014). The term paradigm repair was used by Bennet et al. (1985) to describe "how journalistic self-criticism protects existing paradigms rather than confronts entrenched deficiencies and contradictions" (cited in Carlson, 2015: 4). Studies on journalistic metadiscourse have identified four strategies employed by the media to protect an existing paradigm. They include "threat to the paradigm", self-assertion, minimization and individualization (Cecil, 2002; Thomas, Finneman 2014). This chapter is concerned with only one of the four strategies, the strategy of minimization. Minimization refers to a trend in journalistic metadiscourse whereby the media downplay a wrongdoing or an alleged wrongdoing as part of their efforts to protect a press paradigm. Studies have argued that mainstream newspapers trivialize and denigrate efforts to ensure press accountability, in a bid to protect their self-interest (Putnis, 2000: 110; McChesney, 2008: 451; Christopher, 2007: 42).

My Research Question is, therefore, "How did the British press use a strategy of minimization, if at all, in the media policy debate that stemmed from the *News of the World* phone-hacking scandal and the Leveson Inquiry? And what are the implications of this manner of usage for democracy?" Studies on the media's role in a democracy are often premised on normative theories of the press. The normative theory that served as the framework for my analysis is the concept of the public sphere (Habermas, 1989; Fraser, 1992). The normative expectation is that the media should serve as a democratic public sphere, one that gives voice to all parties involved in a debate irrespective of their argument or status in society. The exclusion, suppression or marginalisation of any segment of the population [of those involved] from or in a debate will run contrary to "democracy's claim of universalism" (Dahlgren, 1995: 36).

2.   Methodology

The main method used for this research is content analysis. In content analysis, textual components (example words, phrases, images etc.) relevant to the findings of one's research are counted, recorded and then calculated with the use of statistical methods (Krippendorff, 1980/2004 as cited in Zelizer, 2004: 115). The understanding is that the results when analysed can provide answers to the research question(s). Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was used as a supplementary method to my content analysis. I used principles from Norman Fairclough's approach

to CDA, because they make room for the analysis of power relationships in communicative discourse in relation to wider social and cultural structures (Fairclough, 1995a; Wodak, Meyer 2009: 12). CDA was used to explicate the findings of my content analysis in order to conduct an in-depth analysis of how the press used the strategy of minimisation in its coverage of the media policy debate that followed the *NoTW* phone hacking scandal.

2.1 Research sample

My study sample comprises all news articles on the debate that arose from the *NotW* phone-hacking scandal and the Leveson inquiry in six of the top ten British national newspapers (based on combined print and online readership figures for April 2011 to March 2012 – Source: NRS PADD, 2012): two newspapers from each category of the main newspaper classification in the UK. From the broadsheet (hard or 'serious-minded' news content) category, I examined the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Guardian;* from the mid-market ('less serious') category, I studied the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express;* and from the tabloids (celebrity, sensational and entertainment-style news) I looked at *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror.* My unit of analysis consists of all news articles on the media policy debate that arose from the *NotW* phone-hacking scandal and the Leveson inquiry, as contained in *The Sun,* the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Guardian*, the *Daily Mail,* the *Daily Express and* the *Daily Mirror* from the 14 November 2011 (when the hearing began at the Leveson Inquiry) to 14 November 2013 (the aftermath of the Privy Council's approval of a Royal Charter on press regulation). This 2-year period falls within the time frame when media coverage of the press reform debate was at its peak in the UK (Macfarlane, Torpey 2012; *Independent*, 2013).

2.2 Data collection and coding

My study sample was obtained from Nexis UK, an electronic archive service with full text access to all UK national newspapers. A total of 870 news articles were examined: 323 from the *Guardian*, 199 from the *Daily Telegraph*, 173 from the *Daily Mail*, 28 from the *Daily Express*, 96 from *The Sun* and 51 from the *Daily Mirror*. To deal with the differences in the number of news articles per paper, measurements were mostly based on percentage within the paper rather than a percentage of the whole sample. A coding sheet was designed to enable me to input data for my content analysis. Thirty stories randomly selected from the study sample were tested by two trained postgraduate student coders. The result of my intercoder reli-

ability test as computed by ReCal2 (dfreelon.org) was Krippendorff's alpha 0.822. This high level of agreement helps to guarantee that this research can be replicated, and if this is done, similar results can be achieved. My findings are discussed in the rest of the chapter.

3.   The pizza Charter

Following negotiations that led to the final drafting of a Royal Charter on press regulation which saw the charter being underpinned by statute, the British press (apart from the *Guardian*), obviously displeased by the outcome, sought to undermine the decision by portraying the meeting as unserious and unfair: "Unfair" because, according to the newspapers, Hacked Off, the campaign group for victims of press abuse, was invited to the meeting and the press was not (Forsyth, 2012: 12); and "Unserious" because, according to them, the meeting took place around 2 a.m. and they had pizza for refreshment. The emerging journalistic metadiscourse in all newspapers, apart from *Guardian*, undermined the meeting because of the resultant Royal Charter underpinned by statute. As if in collaboration, one with another, they all were careful to point out that the meeting was over a pizza meal:

> This week, the Queen will be told to approve a shabby Royal Charter, stitched up at a secret 2am pizza party in Ed Miliband's office by party leaders and Hacked Off vigilantes (Kavanagh, 2013c: 8 – The Sun).

> No wonder the New York Times, perhaps the world's most respected newspaper, opposed this state Royal Charter, agreed in a late night pizza stitch-up by politicians and a pressure group, with the press excluded (Daily Mirror, 2013b: 8).

> To date, there has been no compromise at all. The Royal Charter currently before Parliament is unchanged from the deal agreed by Mr Grant's friends over pizza in March (Slack, 2013: n.p. – Daily Mail).

> But the useless article who, munching a pizza at 2am in a closed room with the above, gave 300 years of press freedom away with a whimper was David Cameron's "strategic adviser" Oliver Letwin, another Old Etonian and apparently, a born capitulator (Forsyth, 2013: 15 – Daily Express).

> They were cobbled together late at night over pizza and Kit-Kats with no thought for the legal and constitutional issues involved (Mason, 2013: 27 – Daily Telegraph).

By playing down the meeting, the press sought to undermine the decision reached in it and warned of the threat such a decision posed to press freedom, and that it would ultimately prove harmful to democracy. As with most other arguments advanced by these newspapers (*The Sun, Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail, Daily Express, Daily Mirror)*, the *Guardian* newspaper condemned their coverage of the negotiations. The *Guardian* columnist/ City University Professor of Journalism, Roy Greenslade published a rebuttal by the Hacked Off's Executive Director, Brian Cathcart, in which Prof. Cathcart dismissed the pizza charter story as "another silly myth". Cathcart stated:

> The royal charter that was approved on 18 March was not thrown together late at night. It is based on the recommendations and findings of the Leveson report ... He adds: "No pizza was served, or at least we saw none. We gave the view that our supporters, and notably the victims, would welcome the agreed cross-party charter… ." Parliament's royal charter was not thrown together; the press was not excluded from the process of creating it; pizzas were not served and Hacked Off was invited in afterwards to honour the prime minister's promise to hear the views of victims. (Cathcart, 2013 *as* cited by Greenslade, 2013)

By labelling the meeting a pizza and Kit-Kat gathering, the press sought to delegitimise the Royal Charter on press self-regulation by representing the negotiations that led to its final drafting as unserious and unfair. Another way the press used a strategy of minimization to advance their position in the press reform debate was by describing measures aimed at reforming the press as revenge. How they did this will be the focus of the next section.

4.   Press freedom under attack: politicians seek revenge?

"Snub the press charter … it's a monstrous folly by politicians out for revenge: Boris slams gag on newspapers" is a headline from the *Daily Mirror* that summarises the discourse of minimization we shall discuss in this section (McTague, 2013: 24). Studies have shown that attempts by politicians to reform the press have often been interpreted as "political self-interest" (Putnis, 2000: 110; McChesney, 2008: 451). Table 1 shows that this representation of proposals for press reform as political self-interest or its equivalent (e.g. retribution, payback, revenge etc.) was done most frequently in the *Daily Telegraph* (11.3% of its sample) followed by *The Sun* (9.2%); *Daily Express* (6.7%); *Daily Mirror* (5.8%); and *Daily Mail* (4.6%). It appeared least in the *Guardian* newspaper (3.4%). The result reveals that this minimization strategy featured more in the commercial press than in the *Guardian* newspaper, which claims to function as a Trust. By representing statutory under-

pinning as a revenge tool, the commercial press sought to delegitimise the Royal Charter, the purpose possibly being to garner public support in its debate against press regulation that is backed by statute.

Table 1: Description of measures to check press misconduct: minimization

Description	Guardian	Daily Mail	Daily Mirror	Daily Telegraph	Daily Express	The Sun	Total
Independent press self-regulation	31.1%	6.9%	5.8%	7.7%	11.1%	8.5%	16.8%
Tough press regulation	12.4%	16.2%	10.1%	13.4%	20.0%	12.4%	13.4%
Chilling effect on investigative journalism	6.5%	14.6%	15.9%	15.5%	8.9%	9.8%	10.6%
Threat to press freedom	20.2%	30.8%	26.1%	30.3%	28.9%	39.9%	27.8%
State control or slippery slope to press-licensing	8.6%	11.5%	11.6%	10.6%	17.8%	13.1%	10.9%
Draconian or punitive	3.9%	10.0%	10.1%	3.5%	4.4%	5.9%	5.6%
Retribution	**3.0%**	**4.6%**	**5.8%**	**11.3%**	**6.7%**	**9.2%**	**6.1%**
Leveson-compliant	11.6%	5.4%	14.5%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%
Other	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	2.2%	1.3%	1.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The newspapers sought to undermine the Royal Charter by interpreting the move by politicians to underpin the Royal Charter with a statute as one born out of a revenge for the press's exposure of the MPs expenses scandal (Porter, 2011: 4; *Daily Mirror,* 2013b: 8; Forsyth, 2013: 15), as can be seen in the headline: "MPs want revenge on press over expenses" (*Daily Mail* 2013: n.p.). The MPs expenses scandal came to light in 2009, when the *Daily Telegraph* published uncensored leaked information from MPs' expenses files that showed that some members of the British Parliament had misused their privilege to claim some allowances (*BBC News,* 2009). The news sparked public outrage and led to resignations, prosecutions, repayment of expenses and apologies by some MPs (Crace, 2014: 64). All

newspapers apart from the *Guardian* argued that if the Royal Charter was backed by statute, "journalists would live in fear that if they angered MPs – by exposing another expenses scandal, for example – they could get revenge by making the rules even more draconian" (*Daily Mail,* 2013: n.p.).

This use of a retribution theme, in the press coverage of the debate that followed the phone-hacking scandal, affirms assertions made by previous studies on how the press represent debates about themselves (Putnis, 2000). McChesney (2008: 451) is of the view that such coverage is born out of a refusal by media owners to be held accountable to authority. Media magnates possess enormous power as a result of weak press regulatory systems, power which even political leaders are wary of, because it can be used to mar political careers (Papandrea, 2000: 12 as cited in Putnis, 2000: 105). Such "freedom" earns them not only money but also influence. Warnings of retribution or political self-interest serve as defence mechanisms to protect this enormous power. My study also found that the press, apart from the *Guardian*, attempted to denigrate the Leveson Inquiry, its report and other proposals to reform the press, by promoting discourses that questioned the legitimacy and relevance of the inquiry. The next section examines how they used the paradigm strategy of minimization to do this.

5.   Leveson Inquiry: not objective, not neutral

Previous studies on the coverage of media policy debates argue that during debates on press policy, the press resists reforms aimed at making it accountable to the public interest by portraying institutions given the responsibility for such reforms as incompetent, illegitimate or lacking the moral justification to reform the press (Putnis, 2000: 110; Pickard, 2015: 177-189). In the press reform debate that followed the phone-hacking scandal, such institutions include the Leveson Inquiry and its report, political leaders and the Royal Charter on press self-regulation.

Table 2 reveals that the use of this discourse of minimization. that described the Leveson Inquiry as illegitimate and unfair. featured in 7.1 per cent of the study sample. It was expressed more prominently in the commercial press appearing in 18.4 per cent of the *Daily Mail*, 15.2 per cent of *The Sun*, 5.6 per cent of the *Daily Express*, 10.3 per cent of the *Daily Mirror* and 3.9 per cent of the *Daily Telegraph,* as against 0.5 per cent of the *Guardian*. This discourse of minimization questioned the objectivity and neutrality of the inquiry. One way it did this was by alleging that there were "potential conflicts of interest" involving some members of Lord Justice Leveson's team of assessors.

Table 2: Description of Leveson Inquiry: minimization

Description	Guardian	Daily Mail	Daily Mirror	Daily Telegraph	Daily Express	The Sun	Total
A threat to press freedom	20.5%	28.9%	28.2%	28.6%	33.3%	38.0%	27.1%
Harmful to UK's reputation	2.3%	3.9%	5.1%	7.8%	5.6%	12.0%	5.4%
A chilling effect on journalism	8.7%	17.1%	20.5%	26.0%	22.2%	15.2%	15.0%
A fair deal	12.8%	3.9%	2.6%	11.7%	0.0%	0.0%	7.9%
Solution to efforts to curb press excesses	48.9%	15.8%	20.5%	13.0%	16.7%	8.7%	28.4%
Illegitimate/ unfair to the press	0.5%	18.4%	10.3%	3.9%	5.6%	15.2%	7.1%
Anti-democratic	3.7%	9.2%	10.3%	7.8%	16.7%	9.8%	7.1%
Other	2.7%	2.6%	2.6%	1.3%	0.0%	1.1%	2.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

This discourse questioned the fairness and impartiality of the inquiry, based on the fact that three of its six assessors had "direct or indirect links" with Common Purpose, a charity which the papers alleged had links to Hacked Off, the campaign organisation that represented victims of press abuse and was advocating tighter press control (*Daily Mail,* 2012; Kavanagh 2013b: 8). In a 3030-word article headlined "A nuclear bomb that dropped on the press – and the motley crew who seized their chance", the *Daily Mail* attempted to establish that Sir David Bell, a member of Lord Justice Leveson's team of assessors, had links that meant there was a conflict of interest that should delegitimise the Leveson Inquiry (*Daily Mail*: 2012). The details of the alleged links are that "Sir David Bell is a co-founder of the Media Standards Trust, the group behind the Hacked Off campaign. He is also a trustee and former chairman of Common Purpose, a charity that runs leadership courses… ."

The other two Leveson Inquiry assessors were also linked to Common Purpose (Kavanagh 2013b: 8). By pointing out these direct and indirect links to Com-

mon Purpose, the papers used journalistic metadiscourse to discredit the Leveson Inquiry, portraying it as partial and a conspiracy to stifle press freedom. The following article from *The Sun* summarises the press's argument:

> He [Sir David Bell] was a founder of Common Purpose, a shadowy organisation dedicated to curbing the Press. He helped set up the Media Standards Trust which virtually scripted Leveson proceedings, Hugh Grant's Hacked Off, and the disastrous Bureau of Investigative Journalism which led the BBC to falsely suggest Lord Alistair McAlpine was a paedophile. (Kavanagh 2013b: 8)

The *Guardian* newspaper (Wilby 2012: 30) carried a counter discourse relating to the allegations of conflicts of interest propagated by the other papers, particularly as these related to Sir David Bell. In an editorial with the headline "Cameron's dilemma: the press can still ruin careers: Coverage of the Leveson inquiry proves why the press must be reformed, but also shows the risk involved in doing so", the *Guardian* pointed out that such treatment given to Sir David Bell by the press was what might likely lead to statutory regulation of the press (Wilby 2012: 30). A similar article from the *Guardian,* with the headline "Laughable Daily Mail 'investigation' smears Leveson Inquiry assessor" (Greenslade 2012: n.p.), described the discourse advanced by the other papers as "a classic example of conspiracist innuendo"; "a farrago of distortion with added vilification". It then went on to deconstruct the argument, interpreting it as "prejudice against the Leveson Inquiry" (ibid.).

The journalistic metadiscourse on the media policy debate also accused politicians of spending too much time and resources on the Leveson Inquiry, to the detriment of "matters of higher social and economic importance". An example is an article published by *The Sun,* with the headline "Stop gagging the press and fix the economy; that's what you tell MPs" (Wood, 2012: 6). This discourse spelt out the cost of the Leveson Inquiry and tried to convince the public that a huge amount of taxpayers' money was being wasted on an unnecessary course, for political reasons (McKinstry, 2012: 14; Pettifor, 2012: 19). The reasons for this "expensive gagging of the press", the papers argued, were to cover up the politicians' messy role in the scandal as well as to stifle the press so that it could no longer challenge corrupt politicians; it was also represented as an emotional response to public outrage over a criminal offence whose penalty had already been provided for in law and, worse of all, their actions would (or had) dealt a terrible blow to press freedom: "THE absurdity of the entire Leveson business is that we never needed the expensive inquiry in the first place, for the behaviour of a minority of journalists was already against the law" (McKinstry, 2012: 14).

In line with Putnis' (2000: 105) claim that the press uses its privileged position as a disseminator of information to "pay back" any individual or institution that opposes its position in media policy debates, this study showed that in using a strategy of minimization, the press embarked on what can be described as character smears of those who opposed its position in the debate.

6.   Character Smears: Critiquing critics

"Critiquing critics of the press" was one of the minimization techniques employed by the press to promote their views in the media policy debate that followed the *News of the World* phone-hacking scandal. It involved what can, arguably, be described as character smears of persons with views opposed to those of the press in the media policy debate. This character-smearing technique was used to cast a shadow of doubt on the integrity and legitimacy of the Leveson Inquiry. For instance, *The Sun* newspaper revealed what it referred to as the "Loverson scandal" and, based on it, much of the press contested the legitimacy of the Leveson Report (Chapman, 2013; *Daily Mirror,* 2013a: 2; Nash, Schofield, 2013: 2; McKinstry, 2013: 14). The "Loverson Scandal" came to light in April 2013, when *The Sun* newspaper carried a story alleging a love affair between David Sherborne, counsel to actor Hugh Grant and other victims of the *NoTW* phone-hacking scandal, and Carine Patry Hoskins, one of Leveson's team of advisers. The story disclosed that David Sherborne and Carine Hoskins spent a holiday together at the Greek Island of Santorini four months before the end of the inquiry (Nash, Schofield, 2013: 2). The pair later explained that they went on holiday together to discuss the possibility of a future relationship and decided against it, but changed their minds after the inquiry. Lord Justice Leveson (and much later, the Bar Standards Board) excused the action of Sherborne and Carine, saying it did not stand in the way of a credible report from the inquiry (ibid.).

The "Loverson scandal" was used by the press, with the exception of the *Guardian,* to de-legitimise the Leveson report and call for a revocation of the Royal Charter. The emerging discourse warned that the relationship between a lawyer in Leveson's team of advisers with the barrister representing campaigners for statutory regulation of the press shows the whole inquiry was not impartial but a "panto stitch-up": a conspiracy to stifle press freedom. The papers then went on to call for the Leveson report to be scrapped, as can be seen in this headline from the *Daily Mail*, "Calls for press regulation plan to be scrapped after revelations" (Seamark and Cohen 2013: 14). A similar article in *The Sun* reads "Press must withdraw from panto stitch-up" (Kavanagh, 2013a: 8).

The amount of money paid to the lawyers was also highlighted, probably to attract public contempt and reduce the public's acceptance of the Leveson report, as can be seen in the *Daily Telegraph*'s headline, "Leveson lawyer who had affair was paid £220,000 of taxpayers' money" (Swinford, 2013: n.p.). Though the "Loverson Scandal" featured in the *Guardian,* the paper only went as far as mentioning that Lord Justice Leveson defended Carine Hoskins' involvement in the "developing relationship", saying that it did not compromise the Leveson report because she only played a minor role, such as proofreading the report (O'Carroll, Halliday, 2013: 17).

7.   Conclusion

This chapter has shown how a strategy of minimization was used in the debate that stemmed from the phone-hacking scandal and the Leveson Inquiry. My findings revealed that this strategy was used in varying degrees by all newspapers in the study sample. It manifested as press disparagement of the Royal Charter, which they nicknamed the Pizza Charter; interpretations of press reform measures and proposals as decisions motivated by political self-interest; by delegitimising the Leveson inquiry – describing it as illegitimate and unfair; and by using a character-smear technique against supporters of stringent press reforms. The press's minimization of opposing views and their propagators in the debate affirm the assertion of previous studies that newspapers take advantage of their position as facilitators of the public sphere to trivialize and denigrate efforts at ensuring press accountability, in a bid to protect their self-interest (Putnis, 2000; McChesney, 2008; Pickard, 2015). This finding provides answers to the research question, "How did the British press use a strategy of minimization, if at all, in the media policy debate that arose from the *News of the World* phone hacking scandal and the Leveson Inquiry? And what are the implications of this manner of usage for democracy?"

My findings affirm the claim by previous studies that journalistic metadiscourse is highly defensive, characterised by a lack of self-critique and based on an ideology that is quick to claim its rights and highlight its importance, while refusing to be accountable to society (Carey, 1974; Eason, 1988; Thomas and Finneman, 2014: 172; Haas, 2006 as cited in Carlson). I argue that the press's use of the paradigm repair strategy of minimisation in the coverage of media policy debates is an abuse of the press's gatekeeping powers. It promotes inequality in media policy debates, because other stakeholders with views considered to be against the press's interest are denigrated, the result being the emergence of weak media policies that cannot guarantee a democratic public sphere.

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Biography

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An agonistic approach to the Europeanisation of national public spheres: From permissive consensus to empowering dissensus

Alvaro Oleart

Abstract

While a wide range of competences have been transferred from the national to the European Union (EU) level, the media reporting of political issues remains largely based at the national level. The lack of a single European public sphere (EPS) beyond national borders in the EU might not be a democratic problem 'per se' from a deliberative democracy point of view, as long as national public spheres are Europeanised enough for citizens to remain informed and able to participate in the EU policy-making process. However, empirical research has shown that, so far, executive actors (EU Commission and national governments) are overwhelmingly overrepresented in national media outlets when covering EU issues (Koopmans and Statham 2010). This poses a double democratic deficit for the EU. First, as has been suggested by a wide range of scholars, there is a lack of a public sphere where EU issues can be discussed and disseminated. However, the EPS literature fails to identify the second democratic deficit regarding communication flows: the lack of (agonistic) conflict. In the present chapter, it is argued that the role of conflict should be introduced into study of the Europeanisation of national public spheres from a normative perspective, combining a deliberative and agonistic approach with democracy. By doing so, despite the irreconcilable tensions of their respective ontological views, the democratic theories of Habermas (1989) and Mouffe (2000, 2013) will be treated as complementary, to a certain extent. Empirically, the argument suggests that cross-national media content analysis should be undertaken as the central methodology.

Keywords: Europeanisation, European public sphere, transnational democracy, politicisation, European Union, democratic legitimacy

1.   A European public sphere: a democratic aspiration for the EU

In an earlier chapter in 2015 (Polownikow 2015), it was suggested to add a norma-
tive dimension to the study of the Europeanisation, or transnationalisation (Fraser
2007), of (national) public spheres. The increasing importance of political institu-
tions beyond the nation-state requires, from a deliberative democracy point of view,
building a public sphere (Habermas 1989; Calhoun 1992) beyond the nation-state,
in such a way that there are mechanisms to control the policy- and decision-making
of those institutions. This is of particular relevance at a time when issues such as
climate change, tax evasion or regulation of the financial system cannot be tack-
led only by the nation-state. In Europe, however, while a wide range of policy
competences have been transferred from the national level to the European Union
(EU) level, the media reporting of political issues remains largely based at the
national level.[1] A number of prominent authors have argued for the need to create
a European public sphere (EPS) to make the EU more legitimate (Koopmans and
Erbe 2004; Fossum and Schlesinger 2007; Conrad 2010, 2014), although the lack
of a European public sphere beyond national borders in the EU (Nieminen 2008)
might not be a democratic problem 'per se', as long as national public spheres are
Europeanised (Risse 2003, 2010; Koopmans and Statham 1999, 2010; Trenz and
Eder 2004; Trenz 2009) or 'transnationalised' enough for citizens to remain in-
formed and able to participate in the EU policymaking process. Habermas (1996:
360) defined the public sphere as "a network for communicating information and
points of view". Steffek conceived a public sphere as a communicative space "is
not necessarily circumscribed by national boundaries, but rather by the boundaries
of communication flows" (Steffek, 2010: 57), while Risse (2003: 16) defined it as
"a social construction constituting a community of communication". Such a public
sphere would be a space where issues of common concern are discussed by a wide
range of actors, and therefore the policy outcomes of decisions taken by suprana-
tional or international organisations would be more legitimate, given the role of
the public sphere in connecting ordinary citizens and the political institutions that
lead the policy- and decision-making process, a process by which institutions gain
democratic legitimacy. In this context, the lack of a transnational public sphere is a
democratic deficit for those institutions, given that a public sphere is necessary for
a democratic polity, in that it sets "the frame for the range of what the public of cit-
izens would accept as legitimate decisions in a given case" (Habermas 2006: 418).

In the EU, the EPS has been a subject of interest for a long time, within both
EU institutions and academia (Eriksen 2005, 2007). The European Commission

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1   Although the public sphere englobes more than the media, media outlets remain central plat-
     forms of the public sphere.

(2006: 4) expressed its interest in encouraging a European public sphere of communication through a White Paper on a European Communication Policy, where a new approach was suggested that "should be based on genuine dialogue between the people and the policymakers and lively political discussion among citizens themselves. People from all walks of life should have the right to fair and full information about the European Union, and be confident that the views and concerns they express are heard by the EU institutions". It can however, hardly be argued that such a European public sphere of communication exists, given the national fragmentation of mainstream political debates. The national fragmentation of public spheres and the lack of European mainstream media are what explain that the more logical approach to a European public sphere is to focus on the extent to which diverse national public spheres in Europe become Europeanised, as has been pointed out by several authors (Risse 2003, 2010; Koopmans and Statham 1999, 2010). By referring to the Europeanisation of national public spheres rather than the creation of a common European public sphere, it is assumed that the perspective of building a single European public sphere is unlikely to be realised due to cultural and linguistic differences, and that the more likely scenario is the progressive introduction of issues from the EU and the international arena into national public spheres, and having a certain degree of convergence between countries on issues of common concern. In the words of Bohman (2007: 21), the transnationalisation of national public spheres implies "a transition from a singular to a plural subject, from dêmos to dêmoi". However, so far, empirical studies on the Europeanisation of national public spheres indicate a clear conclusion as put forward by Statham (2010: 291): "the only actors who are systematically over-represented in Europeanised claim making are government and executive actors. (…) Generally, it seems that Europeanisation enhances the discursive power of the already powerful: national and EU executive elites. The evidence strongly supports the idea that after the permissive consensus, we are well on the road to an elite-dominated Europeanised public sphere."

2. The politicisation of the EU: the central role of (agonistic) conflict for a democratic polity

From a Habermasian perspective, the public sphere is meant to be a space for rational and deliberative debate, where participants in the debate aim to reach a consensus that is accepted by everyone. However, as argued by Chantal Mouffe (2000, 2013), conflict is inherent to politics, and therefore there is no democracy without conflict. Both Habermas and Mouffe are pluralists but, as pointed out by Mouffe, "for them (Habermas and other deliberative democracy academics),

pluralism goes without antagonism" (Carpentier and Cammaerts 2006: 972). For Mouffe, pluralism only exists if we recognise conflictual relations between actors holding different views of how society should be. Plural does not only mean that there are different views, but also that there are different views that are in conflict with each other, and that they cannot be reconciled. Mouffe rejects the emphasis that Habermas puts on rationality and consensus, given that, for her, it neglects the conflictual and emotional dimension that is inherent to politics. Democracy, however, cannot be based only on conflict, but rather on a particular way of channelling conflict, which Mouffe (2013: XII) labels 'agonism': "a central task of democratic politics is to provide the institutions which will permit conflicts to take an 'agonistic' form, where the opponents are not enemies but adversaries among whom exists a conflictual consensus". Therefore, the essential difference between antagonistic and agonistic conflict is that, in the latter, the opponents recognise each other as legitimate participants, while remaining adversaries.

Mouffe (2013) has developed her theory of democracy based on the recognition of conflict by describing the non-existence of a progressive internationalist left that would challenge the Neoliberal global order, arguing that, under the pretext of "adapting themselves to a globalised world", the mainstream Socialist parties have completely capitulated to a neoliberal world. Following Mouffe, a democratic polity requires more than a 'public sphere',[2] namely, an outline of different political choices between different alternatives where different actors put forward their ideas. Even if the EU was more present in national public spheres, as long as executive actors are overrepresented and there are no counter-hegemonic discourses circulating, it can hardly be argued that there would be an improvement in the democratic legitimacy of the EU at the national level. Therefore, a democratic polity requires politicisation in order to be more legitimate. According to Zürn, Binder and Ecker-Ehrhardt (2012: 74), politicisation "means making collectively binding decisions a matter or an object of public discussion". Politicisation does not appear in a vacuum, but rather as the consequence of strategic action triggered by political actors. In fact, issues are not politicised in general, but become politicised through "episodes of contention" (De Wilde 2011: 563), whereby political actors polarise the debate.

The politicisation of the EU has generally not been assessed in a positive light. Notably, Hooghe and Marks (2009) argue that the politicisation of EU issues has led from a 'permissive consensus' to a 'constraining dissensus' between EU member states. In this sense, politicisation is viewed as a threat to the European

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2   In fact, Mouffe uses the term 'public space' in order to avoid any connection with Habermas.

project as a whole, in that relevant national political parties no longer support une-quivocally the EU and in fact some use the EU as a scapegoat for popular discontent and harsh economic policies, such as austerity. However, other authors, such as Risse (2010), argue that the politicisation of EU issues is a precondition for the Europeanisation of politics at the national level, and for the democratisation of the EU. Therefore, the literature is not yet clear in defining the relationship between politicisation, Europeanisation and democracy. Applied to the study of the (lack of a) European public sphere (s), the view of the present article is that the fundamental question to be posed is *what type of politicisation can lead to the Europeanisation of public spheres and the enhancement of EU democracy?*

While national-level politics is often politicised in a left-right cleavage, regarding the European integration process and EU issues, politicisation can take different forms. In fact, there are different models of political conflict with regard to European integration (Marks and Steenbergen 2004; Hutter, Grande and Kriesi 2016). According to the Hix-Lord model (which is thought to be applied to political parties in the European Parliament), political conflicts over the EU are two-dimensional, including on the one hand a left-right[3] dimension, and a more-less European integration dimension, while on the other hand the relationship between the two dimensions is orthogonal. The Hix-Lord model serves well to differentiate between agonistic and antagonistic conflict. In order to distinguish between the different types of politicisation, I will use the Mouffian concepts of agonism and antagonism.

Figure 1. Hix and Lord (1997) model, situating a number of campaigns in a graph

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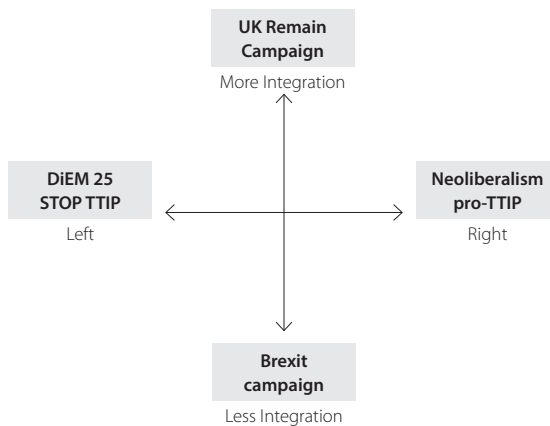
3   While the left-right cleavage is no doubt an oversimplification, it remains the best-known concept to differentiate between fundamentally different ideological positions.

In such an ideational perspective on the politicisation of EU issues, it is crucial to take into account the resilience of Neoliberalism as an economic paradigm (Blyth 2013; Thatcher and Schmidt 2014) in EU policy-making, given that Neoliberal ideas have travelled across the spectrum and become mainstream among both 'centre-right' and 'centre-left' actors in the EU. In fact, Neoliberal ideas have been resilient in Europe, including after the 2008 financial crisis and the Eurozone crisis (2010-11). Considering Neoliberalism as right-wing, the horizontal cleavage is politicised when the EU is accepted as a playing field, while criticising the Neoliberal proposals put forward by institutions. An example of left-right politicisation of EU issues is the contestation in Europe against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP): while criticising TTIP, the STOP TTIP coalition did not question the European project as a whole nor the capacity of EU institutions to negotiate international trade agreements. Another example in a similar vein is the Democracy in Europe Movement (DiEM), a pan-European political organisation whose aim is to unite the European left through a common anti-austerity and pro-European programme for the 2019 EU elections. The European Neoliberals and the Europeanist left have two discourses that reflect two paradigms that have different understandings of how the economy should function. Whereas Neoliberal discourse understands the economy as essentially self-referential, the left understands the economy as a matter of collective concern, which must be regulated in such a way that it does not only serve the narrow interests of those in control of the 'market'.

As reflected by the cases of the anti-TTIP coalition and DiEM, while contesting the policies put forward, EU institutions are considered legitimate participants of the debate, even if some of their (Neoliberal) policies are opposed. Then, we can consider this type of conflict as agonistic.

On the other hand, the vertical cleavage (more-less European integration) tends to be politicised by a nationalist discourse that comes mainly from the right, although not exclusively.[4] The most recent example is perhaps the 2016 British referendum on membership of the EU, where the central slogan of the 'Leave' campaign was to "take back control". A second example is the campaign of the French Front National during the 2014 EU elections, where the following slogan was used: 'Non à Bruxelles. Oui à la France.' The two examples make clear that EU institutions are not seen as legitimate participants in the debate. This type of conflict can therefore be labelled as antagonistic.

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4   A nuance is needed, however, in differentiating those opposing the EU from the left and those on the right. Whereas those on the left see the EU as inherently Neoliberal and tend to project themselves as 'internationalists', those on the right tend to be fuelled by a greater degree of nationalism. That said, despite the different reasons for which they oppose the EU, both have in common the rejection of EU institutions as legitimate participants in the debate.

In sum, the distinction of the two cleavages (left-right and more-less European integration) fits well with Mouffe's distinction between agonistic and antagonistic conflict. Whereas the left-right cleavage could lead to an agonistic debate, the more-less European integration can in fact lead to a 'constraining dissensus'. Therefore, rather than identifying politicisation as inherently positive or negative for the democratic legitimacy of the EU, the ideational dimension of such a process needs to be taken into account in order to define whether politicisation enhances the (input) democratic legitimacy of the EU or is harmful to it. According to the Mouffian model of democracy, the politicisation of the left-right cleavage can lead towards an 'empowering dissensus' (Bouza and Oleart Forthcoming), a concept that refers to the situation in which EU issues are controversial, but not in such a way that the foundations of the European project are questioned, but in a form that the EU is accepted as the playing field. In this way, politicisation could be good news for European democracy.

3. Empirical considerations for an agonistic approach to the Europeanisation of public spheres: cross-national media-content analysis

The responsibility for creating the conditions for agonistic (national) public spheres on EU issues lies with different actors, including the media, political parties, interest groups or governments themselves. However, from an empirical perspective, the national media are a necessary source for any research on Europeanisation and politicisation, given their central role in the public sphere. As argued by Statham and Trenz (2013: 3), politicisation "requires the expansion of debates from closed elite-dominated policy arenas to wider publics, and here the mass media play an important role by placing the contesting political actors in front of a public". Given the role of the media as an interface between political elites and the general public, the media are a platform through which political conflicts are mediated and reflect to a certain extent the discourses that are circulating in society, while also influencing them. There are other spaces in society that are part of the public sphere, but the media are the most evident platform, given their capacity to reach a wide range of social groups.

Assuming that the EPS should not be conceptualised as a supranational layer of communication that is autonomous and separated from national public spheres, an empirical analysis of the Europeanisation of national public spheres should aim to undertake cross-national media-content analysis as the central methodology. An empirically useful definition of the Europeanisation of national public spheres is that given by Risse (2003: 1), who argues that "an ideal typical European public sphere would then emerge

1.   if and when the same (European) themes are discussed at the same time

        at similar levels of attention across national public spheres and media;

2.   if and when similar frames of reference, meaning structures, and patterns of interpretation are used across national public spheres and media;

3.   if and when a transnational community of communication emerges in which speakers and listeners recognize each other as legitimate participants in a common discourse."

While the first two dimensions put forward by Risse are relatively straightforward, the third one is more complex, and it is crucial in distinguishing between agonism and antagonism. In an antagonistic debate, actors do not perceive each other as legitimate participants of the debate, whereas in an agonistic debate the different actors might oppose each other, but they do not question the legitimacy of the opposition actors to put forward their views. Connecting such an idea to the ideational cleavages that are prevalent regarding EU issues might be a good idea to allow differentiating those EU-critical actors from the anti-EU.

The argument put forward in the present chapter is that, in addition to a normative perspective on the Europeanisation of national public spheres, a further dimension is required: (agonistic) conflict. From a normative point of view, it is not only necessary to have a plurality of views vis-à-vis EU issues, but to have fundamentally opposing points of view that cannot be reconciled, in such a way that citizens do not get the sense that 'there is no alternative'. However, the alternatives to the resilient Neoliberalism in EU policy-making have to promote an 'agonistic' type of conflict in order for the EU to be more democratic. If, instead, the alternatives take the form of antagonistic conflict through ultranationalism and/or anti-immigrant discourse, the democratic legitimacy of the EU can, as argued by Hooghe and Marks (2009), be harmed. This is because the drivers of this type of conflict do not aim to bring pluralism to the public debate, but in fact put up obstacles to it by excluding non-national speakers. Therefore, even if this type of antagonistic conflict was Europeanised, in the sense that the same type of conflict and discourse circulates in different countries at the same time, it would not improve the democratic legitimacy of the EU as a polity.

In this context, the independence of the media in relation to executive actors and other powerful actors is thus very important, given that the media are supposed to put forward and amplify different voices, rather than be dominated by a certain group of actors while excluding others. Nevertheless, it is not enough for the media to put forward different ideas on subjects, rather it must be ensured that the framework of ideas is diverse enough to be open to different types of actors with, on many occasions, opposing views. For this reason, cross-national media content analysis

of the media reporting on EU issues (Koopmans 2002; Statham and Trenz 2013) should be considered as central for the study of the Europeanisation of national public spheres, including the ideational dimension that necessarily implies a certain degree of qualitative analysis, potentially combined with quantitative methods.

4. Conclusion: an agonistic Europeanisation of public spheres leading towards an empowering dissensus?

The present article has argued that the normative perspective on the Europeanisation of national public spheres has, so far, ignored the importance of (agonistic) conflict for the democratic legitimacy of the EU. Given the general lack of public debate in the EU policy-making process, the politicisation of EU issues and a Europeanisation of public spheres would increase the legitimacy of the EU, as long as the type of conflict is agonistic, rather than antagonistic. Normalising political conflict over EU issues at the national level normalises the EU as a polity, and it is therefore good news for European democracy, given that it can normalise the EU as a polity through political conflict (Oleart and Bouza 2017). The blockage of agonistic debate might in fact have negative consequences for the public debate, leading towards an antagonistic debate. The goal of a democratic debate should therefore be to express conflict in an agonistic way, rather than in an antagonistic way.

Such a process could be understood as an 'empowering dissensus', a concept that refers to the situation in which EU issues are controversial, but not in such a way that the foundations of the European project are questioned, but in a form that the EU is accepted as the playing field (Bouza and Oleart Forthcoming). In this way, dissensus is understood as empowering actors to understand the EU as the legitimate framework for decision-making on a range of subjects, while contesting the policy paradigm put forward by EU institutions (currently, Neoliberalism). The empirical implications for such research are to undertake cross-national media content analysis, assess the extent to which EU issues are discussed at the national level in different countries, and on the basis of which cleavage (if any) issues are politicised, and evaluate whether the conflict is agonistic or antagonistic.

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Biography

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Social media in shaping health-related norms: A review study and reflection of review

Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Annamaria Pulga

Abstract

This paper introduces the use of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, PRISMA, which can be useful both when selecting material for a systematic literature review, and writing the results of a literature review in a research paper. We exemplify our discussion by analyzing existing research relating to social media shaping different norms. Overall, while the underlying paradigmatic thinking related to PRISMA is positivist, we argue that there is also merit in trying to implement the approach in media and communication studies, in conjunction with more critical approaches to literature reviews.

Keywords: systematic literature review, social media, health norms, PRISMA, check-list

1.   Introduction

A layman's assumption would be that social media, through peer pressure but also through the distribution of diverse information sources, would be a good place to shape different norms. Social media, hence, can be seen as a public forum where what is normal is discussed and perhaps decided. At the same time, advances in medical science are allowing more people to survive complex illnesses and, rather than always curing them, making them more manageable. Thus, in society, different health statuses and people with different abilities are able to coexist. They also participate in social media and public discussions that help to shape a new normal that will perhaps accept them better. In order to investigate the role of social media in making and shaping health-related social norms, we wanted to start with a systematic literature review to see what kinds of analysis have examined this issue before us. The addition of the notion of health makes us take a look at this from a medical perspective, where norm-shaping has been investigated from other than the usual media studies perspective and inspired us to undertake a study of the literature following the norms of a medical, rather than a media studies, perspective. The aim of this paper was twofold. First, we wanted to find and analyse how social media have been studied in relation to health-related norms. We wanted to know what kind of health, norms and social media studies are out there, who and what is being studied with what methods, and within what kinds of theoretical frameworks. We deviate from a traditional PRISMA review here, as we are not looking for comparisons or outcomes, as or causal relations, rather we are scoping the field. Secondly, by utilising a systematic literature review approach called Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, PRISMA, our second aim became to study the applicability of this approach in media and communication studies.

First, we will introduce the methodology of this article and briefly discuss what PRISMA is and how we went about conducting a study with the help of this approach. Then, we will present the results of our investigation in a table format and discuss the different elements of the table, including timeframe, topic and object of study, how social media are understood in papers, what kinds of studies have been conducted from both methodological and theoretical perspectives. We will wrap up this paper with a brief discussion of how this kind of systematic review approach could also be useful in media studies.

2.   Method

To describe the methodological approaches to analyzing the interrelation between social norms and social media on health issues, we decided to try out the systematic

review method, which is popular and widely used in medical studies. We followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) recommendations (Moher et al., 2010). PRISMA is an evidence-based minimum set of items for reporting in systematic reviews and meta-analyses. It consists of a recommended flow-chart approach where stages of identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion of articles are described (see Moher et al., 2010, Fig. 1) and a 27-item checklist of what a research paper reporting a coherent systematic review needs to contain (Table 1). It is interesting to follow such a step-by-step approach to conduct literature searches as well as follow the 27-item checklist when it comes to quality assessment of the actual written report. We will do our best to follow the transparency guidelines, but as we are not interested in outcomes as such for this pilot, we will also not discuss nor report risk-bias related elements. We will also not discuss publication bias (Dickersin, 2005), although while the lack of no-result publications can be seen as part of the positivist discourse and reflects what is considered science, similar problems can also be part of media studies. Otherwise, the checklist is an interesting approach to a research paper, it reminds authors to report on certain aspects of literature reviews to make them more transparent and relevant in their arguments.

Table 1. PRISMA 27-item check-list (Moher et al., 2010) comments on media and communication studies applicability from authors

Section/topic	#	Checklist item	Comments on media and communication applicability
TITLE			
Title	1	Identify the report as a systematic review, meta-analysis, or both.	Applicable
ABSTRACT			
Structured summary	2	Provide a structured summary including, as applicable: background; objectives; data sources; study eligibility criteria, participants, and interventions; study appraisal and synthesis methods; results; limitations; conclusions and implications of key findings; systematic review registration number.	Applicable with adjustments in accordance with the later parts
INTRODUCTION			
Rationale	3	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known.	Applicable
Objectives	4	Provide an explicit statement of questions being addressed with reference to participants, interventions, comparisons, outcomes, and study design (PICOS).	Applicable, PICOS is not always applicable in media studies cases

METHODS			
Protocol and registration	5	Indicate if a review protocol exists, if and where it can be accessed (e.g., Web address), and, if available, provide registration information including registration number.	Not applicable
Eligibility criteria	6	Specify study characteristics (e.g. PICOS, length of follow-up) and report characteristics (e.g. years considered, language, publication status) used as criteria for eligibility, giving rationale.	Not applicable
Information sources	7	Describe all information sources (e.g. databases with dates of coverage, contact with study authors to identify additional studies) in the search and date last searched.	Applicable
Search	8	Present full electronic search strategy for at least one database, including any limits used, such that it could be repeated.	Applicable
Study selection	9	State the process for selecting studies (i.e. screening, eligibility, included in systematic review, and, if applicable, included in the meta-analysis).	Applicable
Data collection process	10	Describe method of data extraction from reports (e.g. piloted forms, independently, in duplicate) and any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators.	Most likely not applicable, but good to think about
Data items	11	List and define all variables for which data were sought (e.g. PICOS, funding sources) and any assumptions and simplifications made.	Applicable to the extent of selection criteria applied to the study
Risk of bias in individual studies	12	Describe methods used for assessing risk of bias of individual studies (including specification of whether this was done at the study or outcome level), and how this information is to be used in any data synthesis.	Not applicable
Summary measures	13	State the principal summary measures (e.g. risk ratio, difference in means).	Not applicable if working with qualitative or mixed research approaches
Synthesis of results	14	Describe the methods of handling data and combining results of studies, if done, including measures of consistency (e.g. I) for each meta-analysis.	Applicable
Risk of bias across studies	15	Specify any assessment of risk of bias that may affect the cumulative evidence (e.g. publication bias, selective reporting within studies).	Not applicable
Additional analyses	16	Describe methods of additional analyses (e.g. sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression), if done, indicating which were pre-specified.	Not applicable

RESULTS			
Study selection	17	Give numbers of studies screened, assessed for eligibility, and included in the review, with reasons for exclusions at each stage, ideally with a flow diagram.	Applicable
Study characteristics	18	For each study, present characteristics for which data were extracted (e.g. study size, PICOS, follow-up period) and provide the citations.	Applicable based on the criteria selected for the study
Risk of bias within studies	19	Present data on risk of bias of each study and, if available, any outcome level assessment (see item 12).	Not applicable
Results of individual studies	20	For all outcomes considered (benefits or harms), present, for each study: (a) simple summary data for each intervention group (b) effect estimates and confidence intervals, ideally with a forest plot.	Applicable based on the criteria selected for the study
Synthesis of results	21	Present results of each meta-analysis done, including confidence intervals and measures of consistency.	Possible to use if meta-analysis or aggregation is desired
Risk of bias across studies	22	Present results of any assessment of risk of bias across studies (see Item 15).	Not applicable
Additional analysis	23	Give results of additional analyses, if done (e.g. sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression [see Item 16]).	Not applicable
DISCUSSION			
Summary of evidence	24	Summarize the main findings including the strength of evidence for each main outcome; consider their relevance to key groups (e.g. healthcare providers, users, and policymakers).	Applicable
Limitations	25	Discuss limitations at study and outcome levels (e.g. risk of bias) and at review level (e.g. incomplete retrieval of identified research, reporting bias).	Applicable related to the chosen study approach
Conclusions	26	Provide a general interpretation of the results in the context of other evidence, and implications for future research.	Applicable
FUNDING			
Funding	27	Describe sources of funding for the systematic review and other support (e.g. supply of data); role of funders for the systematic review.	Applicable, if study was funded externally.

2.1 Paper Search Algorithm

The review included papers on social or health issues published between 2007 and 2017, in peer-reviewed journals, and containing the empirical results of original studies. The search for papers was conducted in October 2017, using the Libsearch bibliographic database accessible from Malmö University library. The search was last updated on 23 October 2017.

The following criteria were used for including a source in the study:
- The publication date had to be between 1 January 2007 and 22 October 2017;
- Publication had to be in English;
- Publication had to be scholarly and peer-reviewed
- Limited to academic journals
- Sources had to contain data on the methods and results of an empirical study that addressed the interconnection between behaviour norms and social-media networks concerning health issues.

In the process of working with Libsearch electronic bibliography database, the following search sequence was used: "social media" AND social norms AND behaviour AND health. A total of 289 entries were found (see Fig. 1). After applying the sequence NOT review of literature OR literature review OR meta-analysis OR systematic review, 24 of these papers were rejected. Moreover, 90 papers were rejected as duplicates. After the remaining 175 studies were screened for eligibility according to the criteria listed above, based on their titles and abstracts, 132 studies remained. After assessing the complete publication text according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria in the remaining 132 studies, the final corpus included 19 publications, which contained material and original studies on the interrelation between social-media networks and behaviour norms on health issues. Despite the search words, there were a number of reasons to include more articles, e.g. 64 articles were looking at social networks; mostly, those were not mediated and thus not part of the social media that we were interested in.

Annamaria was conducting the actual selection of articles and consulted with Pille when in doubt or when a study was more difficult to identify, e.g. when the discussion was around recommendations on how to use social media to conduct a campaign to change norms or when social media were only one part of a norms-related campaign that was broadcast.

Figure 1. Four step flowchart illustrating the elimination and selection process of different studies
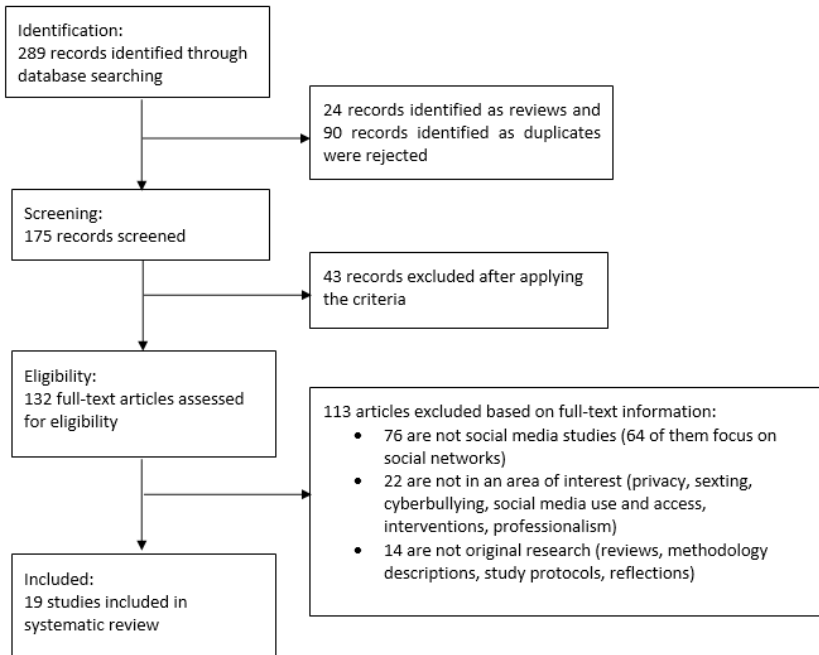
3.   Results

The results of a systematic review are often presented in a table format where all reviewed articles can be found together, as in Table 2. In addition to the selected titles, we also looked at what was measured, what kinds of research questions were investigated, notes and limitations. Those were more text-heavy sections as they also included a discussion and are thus excluded from this presentation.

Table 2 (next page). Overview of the total sample of 19 articles included in the study from the perspective of different elements in the articles

Source	Topic of study	Object of study	Social Media Technology	Study Design	Theoretical Framework	Data collection methods	Recruitment/ Sampling	Data analysis statistical methods
Nesi, Rothenberg, Hussong, Jackson (2017)	alcohol	adolescents/ high school students / six Rhode Island middle schools in rural, suburban and urban areas.	Facebook	Quantitative, longitudinal	1. Social cognitive theory/ 2. Theory of planned behaviour	scheduled 2-hour in-person baseline orientation session and thereafter -> **Web surveys** initially administered semi-annually and then quarterly/ Data on SNS usage collected on two occasions separated by 1 year.	N= 658 /Taken from an ongoing prospective study on alcohol initiation and progression among adolescents/ high school students	Descriptive/ Multivariate Probit Regression/ Path analysis-mediation model
Wombacher, Reno, Veil (2017)	alcohol	Binge-drinking game on social media NekNominate	Twitter	Quantitative and qualitative, longitudinal	1. Theory of normative social behaviour/ 2. Framing Theory	Google alert set-up for news stories. / Hashtag #NekNominate using Topsy/ (1st period 147 tweets, 2nd period 584 tweets, 3rd period 120 tweets)	N= 44 news stories of NekNominate/ N=851 tweets using the hashtag #NekNominate	Textual analysis - deductive/ content analysis/ inductive media framing
Boyle, LaBrie, Froidevaux, Witkovic (2016)	alcohol	First-year students at a private, mid-sized university on the west coast of the United States	Facebook/ Instagram/ Snapchat	Quantitative, longitudinal	no results	online survey	N= 412 students	univariate analysis, multivariate analysis/ moderated multiple mediation

Source	Topic of study	Object of study	Social Media Technology	Study Design	Theoretical Framework	Data collection methods	Recruitment/ Sampling	Data analysis statistical methods
Walker, Thornton, De Choudhury, Teevan, Bulik, Levinson, Zerwas (2015)	disordered eating	social media activity and health behaviours in college women	Facebook	Quantitative, Cross-sectional	no results	online survey	N= 128 college-aged women/ recruited via a university listserv announcement.	Descriptive, Statistical analysis, SPSS and conducted a series of multiple regressions adjusted for covariates. Post hoc mediation analysis
Carrotte, Vella, Lim (2015)	health and fitness	adolescents and young adults	Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)	Quantitative, cross-sectional	no results	online survey	N= 1001 recruited via the 2015 Sex, Drugs and Rock'n'Roll study (through social media, ads on Facebook and word of mouth)	logistic regression (both univariate and multivariate), using Stata Version 13.
Wombacher, Reno, Williams, Johnson (2017)	Health and risky behaviours	messages posted to Yik Yak assumingly by undergraduate college students	Yik Yak	Quantitative, Cross-sectional	no results	Schedule of day and time/ screenshots and transcribed the message content into a spreadsheet	N= 3,776 unique messages/Yaks captured three times a day on four days of the week across two separate weeks	Content analysis
Hanson et al. (2014)	healthcare	patients of a community health centre in the western United States	Social Media	Quantitative, Cross-sectional	Theory of Planned Behaviour	survey questionnaire/ Qualtrics survey software was used to collect data on Apple iPads	N= 444 patients	Descriptive, Statistical analysis using Stata version 12.0 for Mac, Regression analysis

Source	Topic of study	Object of study	Social Media Technology	Study Design	Theoretical Framework	Data collection methods	Recruitment/ Sampling	Data analysis statistical methods
Bisson-nette-Maheux et al. 2015	healthy eating (prevention of chronic disease)	female users/ potential users	blogs written by RDs	Quantitative, Qualitative, Cross-sectional	Theory of Planned Behaviour	semi-structured individual interviews, they also completed a question-naire and participated in focus groups that were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim.	N= 33 women recruited using the mailing list of the Institute on Nutrition and Functional Foods at Laval University, Quebec and ads in local newspapers.	Descriptive statistics and mean ± SD using SAS version 9.3/ deductive content analysis described by Elo et al. inspired the content analysis of the focus groups, which were transcribed verbatim. Coding with NVivo version 10 (QSR International, Cambridge, MA, USA)
Martinez-Bello, Martín-ez-Rojas, Molina-García (2017)	Physical activity	3 Facebook pages of different universities in the Valencian region/ Photographs and representations of physical activity on the timeline	Facebook	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Social cognitive theory	simple random process	N= 132 photo-graphs, excluded 14	Content analysis/ (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences SPSS version 22 for statistical analysis)
Hanson, Cannon, Burton, Giraud-Carrier (2013)	prescription drug abuse	Twitter networks: tweets and users	Twitter	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Uses and gratifica-tion theory	Twitter streaming API	N= 25 networks	algorithm

Source	Topic of study	Object of study	Social Media Technology	Study Design	Theoretical Framework	Data collection methods	Recruitment/ Sampling	Data analysis statistical methods
Black, Schmiege, Bull (2013)	Sexual Health	concordance between perceived and actual peer sexual risk and protective behaviour in online social networks	Facebook	Quantitative, Cross-sectional	Theories of Reasoned Action and Planned Behaviour (TRA/TPB)	online survey / baseline behavioural assessment of sexual risk via an online tool generated and delivered through Zoomerang (commercial online survey software program that allows users to create and publish surveys online)	respondent-driven sampling and random N=1,029 persons from 162 virtual networks	ANOVA model
White et al. (2015)	sexual health (HIV)	profiles of MSM on online dating websites	dating/ hook-up websites	Quantitative, cross-sectional	no results	2010 HIV surveillance data, the 118 Mean Statistical Areas and Divisions with complete data were ranked by HIV prevalence rate and divided into tertiles,	general sample N=5,588 profiles	Descriptive Statistics, 1. Chi square and Fisher's exact tests 2. logistic regression
Jiang, Beaudoin (2016)	smoking	Chinese Ministry of Health's anti-smoking social media campaign/ China Tobacco Control Media Campaign	microblogs	Quantitative, Cross-sectional	Health behaviour theories and dialogic theory in public relations/ subjective norms, perceived risk and self-efficacy.	collected all tweets from China Tobacco Control Media Campaign page from May 2011 to January 2015	N= 711/ final sample of 616 tweets	Content analysis/ **Statistical analysis,** Stata 13

Source	Topic of study	Object of study	Social Media Technology	Study Design	Theoretical Framework	Data collection methods	Recruitment/ Sampling	Data analysis statistical methods
Yoo, Yang, Cho (2016)	smoking	college students from three U.S. Midwestern universities	Generally social media	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Influence of Presumed Influence model	Web-based survey	N= 366 college students	Path analysis, in Mplus 6.1
Namkoong, Nah, Record, Van Stee (2017)	smoking	Undergraduate students, over the age of 18 with active Facebook accounts, enrolled in a Southeastern university	Facebook	Quantitative, cross-sectional	Mulittheoretical framework/ Communication mediation models (O-S-O-R; Orientation-Stimuli-Orientation-Response, O-S-R-O-R; OSOR + Reasoning) and/ Theory of planned behaviour	experiment/ we employed a two-group pretest-posttest experimental design	N= 201 participants/We recruited undergraduate students enrolled in a Southeastern university via e-mail invitations	Path analysis, using Mplus 6
Rose et al. (2017)	smoking	tweets about menthol cigarettes	Twitter	Quantitative, Cross-sectional	no results	data collected by the Health Media Collaboratory through the Gnip PowerTrack Firehose (keywords; cig or cigarette, smoking	N= 6,657 tweets	Content coding, univariate statistics
van den Heerik, van Hooijdonk, Burgers (2017)	smoking	Dutch Health campaign/ "smoking is so outdated"	Facebook/ Twitter	Qualitative, cross-sectional	Social cognitive theory/	Case Study	N= 441 slogans from the campaign and slogans co-created by the target audience.	Corpus-linguistic analysis

Source	Topic of study	Object of study	Social Media Technology	Study Design	Theoretical Framework	Data collection methods	Recruitment/ Sampling	Data analysis statistical methods
Link, Cawkwell, Shelley, Sherman (2015)	smoking (electronic cigarette and hookah)	ENDS and hookah users	primary social media account of the users (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or Google +)	Quantitative, Cross-sectional	Prototype/ Willingness Model (PWM) (the survey was guided by this model)	1. 60-90 minute interview/ 2. brief survey	N= 21 ENDS users and 20 hookah users	1. Likert-scale / 2. descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations here applicable. T-tests to evaluate continuous variables and Fischer's Exact Test to evaluate categorical data
Cook, Bauermeister, Gordon-Messer, Zimmerman (2012)	substance use (alcohol and drugs)	emerging adults (18-24) from across the United States	online networks	Quantitative, Cross-sectional	Social Network theory	survey/ online data collection	part of the Virtual Network Study examining emerging adults' interpersonal relationships online / adapted Web version of Respondent-Driven Sampling (webRDS) to recruit participants/ N=2,153	1. descriptive analysis for study variables and attrition analyses for those variables not included in the peer-network data sets 2. multivariate regression 3. stratified the regression models by sex and tested for sex differences in the regression parameters using independent sample t tests

Timeframe

Although the search criteria for timeframe criteria were between 2007 and 2017, the papers that were included in the analysis were published between 2012 and 2017. The following numbers of articles were published each year: 2012 (n= 1), 2013 (n= 2), 2014 (n= 1), 2015 (n= 5), 2016 (n= 3), 2017 (n= 7). This indicates that while people have used social media for much longer and in media studies, many seminal social media-related articles had already been written much earlier, while attention to the medical use of social media to shape norms is fairly recent. Moreover, many studies have focused on how offline social networks influence norms and behaviour on issues concerning health. With the emergence of online social networking sites, users are online in unprecedented numbers and regularly engage with their peers (Black, Schmiege, Bull, 2013); and consequently, these online exchanges have resulted in the formation of online social networks and norms (Cook et al., 2013). Apparently, the interest had to be switched from offline networks to online since users' engagement in social media has become more intense.

Topic of Study

Many of the articles generally focused on healthy and risky behaviours (N=5), e.g. disordered eating, healthy eating and physical activity, two of them were on sexual health and one was related to healthcare and patients. At the same time, a meaningful number of studies focused on smoking (n= 6), and substance use, e.g. alcohol and drugs (n=5). It is noticeable that no article focused on a specific medical condition. This is because of the limitations that exist in conducting a systematic review that uses specific keywords. Most of the studies aimed to draw attention to health-risky behaviours, how users develop attitudes and what affects their health-risky behavioyrs (Yoo, Yang, Cho, 2016) or the potential of social media as a health communication campaign tool, examining the effects of online social interactivity (Namkoong et al., 2017).

Sample or Subject of study

Of the 19 included articles, six studies focused on adolescent and young adults and four studied persons without specifying the age group. From the remaining sources, six focused on texts posted on social media concerning health issues and exploring the shaping of norms and behaviours, while the other three studied social media activity, profiles and photographs on social media networks. It is noteworthy that most of the studies were concerned with young adults, primarily students, and their social media activity (posts, profile, online interaction). We can assume that health-risk behaviours are more common among college students and norms can be shaped at the dawn of adulthood. Moreover, the engagement of

young people with social media networks is more common than with older people. At the same time, the nature of the studies also leads us to suspect an element of convenience sampling, where students are surveyed or interviewed as they are more easily accessible.

Social Media Technology

The most common social media technology studied was Facebook (n=9), suggesting that it is the most popular social medium that people use. Facebook was followed by Twitter (n=6) and Instagram (n= 3), which seem to have an increasing influence on social media users. Other social media technology studied (n= 6) were SnapChat, Yik Yak, Google +, blogs, microblogs and websites, while three studies did not specify the social media technology they focused on.

Study design and data-collection method

An overwhelming majority of the studies used a quantitative approach (n= 16), of which 14 were cross-sectional and only two longitudinal. Only one of the studies used a qualitative method, merely because the research was a case study aiming to explore how co-creation offered by social media can affect and shape social norms related to health issues. The study was cross-sectional. Moreover, two of the studies combined qualitative and quantitative methods. One of them was longitudinal and collected data through interviews, while the other was cross-sectional and collected texts that were then analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively through content and textual analysis and media framing.

Most of the studies used online surveys (n= 7) for collecting data. However, a notable number of studies (n=6) collected data through social media either by screenshots or using applications designed for extracting data from social media (API, google alert, Gnip PowerTrack Firehose). Other data-collection methods that we encountered in the studies were interviews (n=2), offline surveys (n=2), experiment (n=1), case study (n=1) and simple random process (n=1).

Theoretical basis

The most popular theoretical model was the theory of Planned Behaviour (n= 4) followed by Social Cognitive theory (n= 3). Six of the articles did not mention the use of any theoretical model underlying their study. To continue with, the rest of the theories used belong in the realm of social psychology, e.g. theory of normative social behaviour, theories of reasoned action, prototype/willingness model, social network theory and communication, e.g. uses and gratification theory, framing theory, influence of presumed influence model and dialogic public relations theory.

4. Discussion

In this article, we did not necessarily want to focus on the results of the studies, rather we wanted to see what methods and theories were used to understand this topic. As we saw, the interest in health-related norms was predominantly framed by medical research, using theories of social psychology, and from there, mostly looking at public health concerns. We excluded a number of studies that were focused on reporting social media interventions that different public health bodies undertook in order to shape people's behaviour. The predominantly positivist approach meant that people sought more to describe and understand people's behaviour and compliance to norms rather than looking at how, through their discussions, they can shape the norms. Overall, the norms in the articles also follow a positivist understanding and are taken as given and to be adopted rather than collectively negotiated. Thus, a study from a constructivist perspective, investigating how new norms around health-related issues are negotiated, might be a novel approach to this corner of the field.

The aim of studying discussions of health-related social norms in social media was our first priority but, to our surprise, the media research that is connected to medical studies opened our eyes to a new disciplinary approach and a new research instrument. In order to investigate only the instrument, we could have chosen a topic more central to media and communication issues to allow a better discussion of the applicability of such an approach outside health. However, the PRISMA checklist and approach to systematic review can in our opinion be seen to be general enough to allow for an interdisciplinary approach.

Overall, the idea of a systematic peer review, where articles are included and excluded according to a self-report protocol and a final selection is recorded in a table format like in Table 2, could be a beneficial approach to many more areas than medical studies. The relevance of such peer reviews as independent publications can perhaps be questioned, as they leave little space for weaving the results in an interesting narrative. At the same time, such reviews should definitely belong to the grey-literature tool for many researchers. The benefits of such an approach is the sense of credibility it gives to the reader. With the abundance of journals and digital search opportunities, there may be a nagging suspicion that something important has been omitted. This kind of 4-step process will allow researchers to backtrack their own (or other people's) literature reviews and have a sense of coherency and completion.

The PRISMA 27-step quality checklist is also worth investigating for methodological transparency and writing quality. Based on the Table 1 comments, we consider 17 out of the 27 check-list items are easily usable and useful for media and communication research. The current tradition of literature reviews in the me-

dia and communication area is lacking in transparency as to what kinds of studies are included and what kinds are excluded. More focus in on the narrative voice of the author of the review. The approach from PRISMA aims for objectivity and neutrality that is not very compatible with the dominant critical and constructive paradigms used in media and communication studies. However, the elements of the selected check-list are useful for consideration in almost any research report or paper, so using the checklist to see if they are clearly reported in an article or student paper might be helpful for everyone.

In our case, we did not conduct any more complex analysis than the simple counting of different articles as the end sample of 19 was too small for additional statistical manipulations. We do think that this kind of keyword-based selection could be interesting to combine with more nuanced research and would serve as good background material for future studies. There are additional interesting ways of conducting such meta-reviews where, for instance, new theoretical frameworks can be applied to extract and systematize new knowledge based on meta-reviews, as in the case of social media affordances for managing chronical illnesses (Merolli, Gray, Martin-Sanchez, 2013). In cases like this, a literature review can be utilized even more interestingly for media and communication studies

Overall, the experience of using PRISMA for a literature review was very interesting and we would recommend this as a trial and additional evaluation for other researchers as well.

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TRAJECTORIES
OF PARTICIPATION

The circuit of protest: A conceptual framework for studying the mediation opportunity structure

Bart Cammaerts

Abstract

In this chapter I present an encompassing conceptual framework to study the role of media, communication and mediation in contentious politics. I have called this framework the circuit of protest. This circuit is comprised of four core-moments, namely, the production of movement discourses, frames and collective identities, the self-mediation practices of the movement, the mainstream media representations and the reception of these movement discourses, frames and identities by non-activist citizens. The mediation opportunity structure refers to the dynamic interplay between agentic opportunities and structural constraints operating at each of the four moments of the circuit of protest. Besides this, the chapter also reflects on the methodological implications and challenges of the circuit.

Keywords: mediation, social movements, protest, circulation, multi-method, social change

> the development of new means of communication vital for the smooth
> flow of capital's circuit […] also creates the opportunity for otherwise isolated
> and dispersed points of insurgence to connect and combine with one another.
> The circuit of high-technology capital thus also provides the pathways for the
> *circulation of struggles*.
> (Dyer-Witheford, 1999: 93 – emphasis in original)

1.   Introduction

Given the importance of messaging, the articulation of demands, representation and public opinion for social movements and protest, it is rather surprising that it took so long for scholars to acknowledge and research the pivotal role of media and communication in contentious politics. This does not mean, however, that there have been no scholars focusing on media and communication in the context of social movements and protest, but they were a relatively small minority (see amongst others Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993; Downing, et al., 2001; Koopmans, 2004; Rucht, 2004).

Building on this early work, several scholars, including myself, have in recent years published a wide range of studies contributing to the theorization of as well as research on the various ways in which 'the media', but also communication technologies, are relevant to activists and social movements in the context of their various struggles (Gerbaudo, 2012; Cammaerts, 2012; Cammaerts et al., 2013; Kavada, 2016). This was strengthened by the cultural turn in social movement studies, which foregrounded the framing efforts of movements and the discursive aspects of a social struggle, both of which imply an inherent communicative and disseminative dimension (Benford and Snow, 2000; McCammon, 2007). Besides a focus on the content of what movements communicate, we can also observe an emphasis on media practices of social movements, studying what activists actually do with the media and communication technologies at their disposal (Mattoni and Treré, 2014). This includes a wide range of studies researching the precise role of the Internet for activists and contentious politics (Van Laer and Van Aelst, 2010; Earl and Kimport, 2011). Another strand of research investigates the way mainstream media and journalists report on activism and contentious politics, but also how activists increasingly attempt to manage mainstream media attention (McCurdy, 2012).

These studies and new perspectives were very valuable and important, but what was lacking, I felt, was an encompassing framework which ties all these

different aspects together and also goes towards theorizing the interconnections between them. In order to address the latter, I proposed the *mediation opportunity structure* (Cammaerts, 2012) as a way to denote the dialectic interplay between the agentic opportunities and structural constraints inherent to mediation processes. The mediation opportunity structure also represents a much-needed conceptual bridge between media and communication studies and social movement studies. Whereas mediation refers to a dialectic communicative process implicating institutions, collectivities and individuals (Silverstone, 2005), the opportunity structure refers to the political, institutional and technological contexts which shape opportunities and constraints for activists and social movements (Koopmans, 1999).

Mediation is a highly suitable and productive concept to relate to contentious politics, as it enables us to approach a set of dichotomies, such as the relationship between alternative media and mainstream media, the symbolic and material aspects of a struggle or the production and reception of meaning, in a dialectical and thus interrelated fashion. In addition to this, Martín-Barbero (1993: 188) made an explicit conceptual connection between what he called 'mediations' and social movements by defining the former as 'the articulations between communication practices and social movements and the articulation of different tempos of development and practice'. In doing so, he imbued popular and mediated culture with the possibility to disrupt and contest the prevailing hegemony. Mass culture, he wrote, 'is the first to allow communication between the different levels of society. Given that complete cultural unity is impossible, what is important is *circulation* between the different levels' within society (ibid.: 35, emphasis added). This highlights the centrality of the circulation of meaning in any analysis of protest movements, but also the potential of change and transformation. As Silverstone (2005: 189) also points out, mediation

> …requires us to understand how processes of communication change the social and cultural environments that support them as well as the relationships that participants, both individual and institutional, have to that environment and to each other.

I propose that the mediation process, which links the production of movement discourses to their circulation through society, can be deconstructed analytically by taking inspiration from the circuit of culture construct as developed in the cultural studies tradition (see Johnson, 1986; Du Gay et al., 1997). The circuit of culture is a conceptual model which enables the empirical study of social and cultural phenomena in a holistic manner without over-privileging structural features or cultural production at the expense of the analysis of agency and/or audience reception.

In what follows, I will discuss the circuit of culture to then develop a conceptual framework for the study of the mediation opportunity structure, namely the *circuit of protest*. I will end this chapter by addressing the methodological consequences of studying the circuit.

2.   The circuit of culture

In his seminal paper, 'Encoding/Decoding', Hall (1980 [1973]) identified four components of cultural production and reception which he used to explain how dominant culture and meanings circulate and are received – production, circulation, use and reproduction. Hall contended that dominant meanings are not reproduced passively and uncritically, but can potentially be resisted or, to use his words, decoded differently.

In response to critique that the encoding/decoding model over-privileged agency to the detriment of structural constraints, and that the four components are articulated as too discrete from each other, Du Gay et al. (1997), whose co-authors included Hall, revised the encoding/decoding model to render it much more dynamic and integrated. The circuit and circulation metaphor, which originates from Marx's circuit of capital (Dyer-Witheford, 1999), was appropriated and repurposed to denote the circulation of meaning. The authors subsequently identified five interconnected moments that make up the *circuit of culture*, namely: 1) production, 2) identity, 3) representation, 4) consumption and 5) regulation. This circuit of culture was represented in such a way that each of the five dimensions influenced the others.

The circuit of culture stresses the importance of studying processes of production in conjunction with the processes of media consumption or the reception of meaning. Proponents of this culturalist approach stress the polysemic nature of media production and reception while, at the same time, emphasizing the importance of differences in the social status and contexts of those encoding and decoding meaning (Hall, 1997). This opened up, they argued, a space for the negotiation or rejection of dominant meanings.

This culturalist approach goes beyond the production/consumption binary and affords greater agency to audiences. In conjunction with cognitive social psychology approaches, this gave rise to notions such as the active audience or the user of technology, both implying less passive actors (Livingstone, 2015).

3.   The circuit of protest

Without necessarily adhering to it fully, I take inspiration from the circuit of culture model discussed above to develop a conceptual framework which theorises the role of mediation in the context of political struggles waged by social movements and activists. The *circuit of protest* diverges from the circuit of culture in being less text-based, less cultural industry focused, and more related to collective than to individual actors and identities. The circuit of protest is comprised of the following four core moments, which all implicate collective identities: production, self-mediation, representation and reception. The mediation opportunity structure operates at each of these four moments and represents the interplay between agentic opportunities and structural constraints.

The circuit of protest represents an encompassing model that positions each moment in the circuit as equally important, and each moment impacts on the other moments (cf. Figure 1). The different moments need to be studied in conjunction with each other so as to analyse and assess the precise nature of this interplay between agentic opportunities and structural constraints present at each of the moments and between them, which subsequently amounts to a specific contextual articulation of the mediation opportunity structure.

Figure 1. The circuit of protest
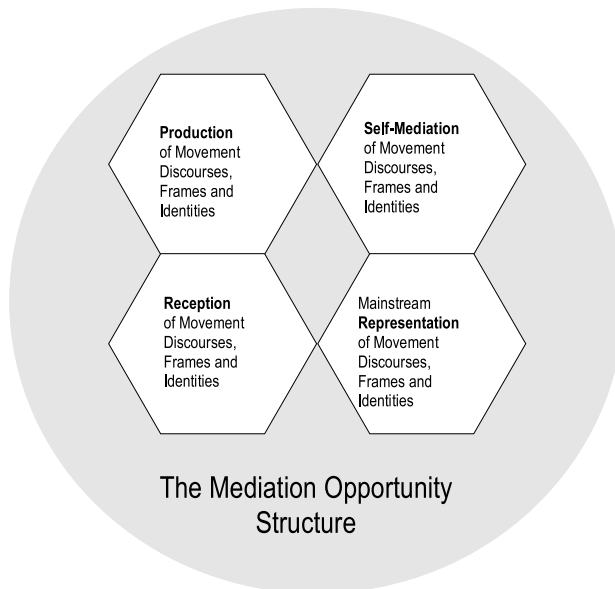
At the level of *production*, social movement actors produce or encode meaning through discourses and frames, whereby the former represents inherent contingency and the latter strategic attempts to fix meaning, to establish ideological boundaries and to construct a 'we' that is juxtaposed to a 'them' (Cammaerts, forthcoming). At this level of analysis, collective identities and ideological enemies are constructed, injustices are invoked, solutions to the problems the movement wants to tackle are imagined, and calls to action are articulated. This tends to align with a set of social movement frames, such as injustice and indignation frames, diagnostic and prognostic frames and motivational or action frames (Gamson, 1992; Benford and Snow, 2000).

The moment of production, as defined here, is situated exclusively at the symbolic – meaning-making – level. In this regard, the double articulation of mediation is highly relevant (Livingstone, 2007). This enables us to situate the mediation of the symbolic at the level of production and mediation as the appropriation and shaping of media and communication technologies in tune with their material affordances at the level of self-mediation practices.

The material dimension of the production of movement discourses, frames and collective identities thus links to *self-mediation* and a set of mediation practices using textual, audio and visual formats, distributed offline and online, locally, nationally and even transnationally. In this regard, different media and communication technologies have different affordances (Hutchby, 2001), affordances that are more or less useful to certain mediation logics relevant to activists. These affordances enable a set of self-mediation practices, which invokes a reference to practice theory (see Couldry, 2004). Some of these activist self-mediation practices are more outwardly focused while others are more inward-looking. There is also a temporal and historical dimension to self-mediation practices, invoking memory and potentially influencing similar or different movements elsewhere, enabling movement spillovers (Cammaerts, 2018).

Besides producing meanings and self-mediating them, social movement actors, the actions they organise and the various discourses and frames they disclose, are also *represented* by mainstream media actors and journalists, situated outside the movement. The cause that is defended, the political opportunity structure, certain journalistic routines, ideological biases, editorial lines, all have an impact on the nature and tone of those mainstream media representations (Cottle, 2008). Whereas mainstream media tend to be negatively biased against protest and social movements, amounting to what some call a protest paradigm, this is by no means always the case. Furthermore, because media resonance remains important to reach non-activist citizens and influence public opinion (Rucht, 2013), social movements

also develop a set of strategies to either cope with, adapt to or resist media routines and media values in their efforts to manage their public visibility (McCurdy, 2014).

Mediation in the context of contentious action is, however, not limited to the production of meaning, a set of mediation practices and the journalistic representations of a movement and its struggle. The ways in which non-activist citizens relate to the mobilizations and ideas of social movements matter too. Hence, the *reception* or decoding of movement discourses and frames from the perspective of extending collective identities and enlarging the scope of conflict is arguably crucially important when studying strategies of social change and their mediations. This implicates the complex process of political opinion formation. In his influencial book Talking Politics, Gamson (1992) suggests that non-activist citizens or audiences form their political opinions not only on the basis of mainstream media content or movement self-representations, but ideological dispositions, experiential knowledge and what is considered to be common sense at a given moment in time and in a specific context also affect people's political views and attitudes. I found similar patterns in my own study (Cammaerts, 2018). Besides, non-activist citizens, political elites could also be implicated at the level of reception, which was not part of my study.

Finally, the *mediation opportunity structure* brings the power dimension at the level of the production, self-mediation, representation and reception of meaning into the fray. Power is understood here as being productive in a Foucauldian sense, i.e. enabling and constraining at the same time and in doing so producing knowledge, subject positions, identities, hegemonies and counter-hegemonies. The mediation opportunity structure thus relates to the dynamic and complex interplay between agency and structure, between generative and repressive forms of power, between domination and resistance, between the power to (empowerment), the power over (domination) and the power in (discourse, subject-positions). Given its dialectical nature, the mediation opportunity structure avoids an overemphasis on the agentic, but, at the same time, it does not close down the potential of agency and fundamental change by privileging structural domination (see Koopmans, 1999).

From a media and communications studies perspective, the circuit implicates the role of media and communication in contentious politics, without being too media- or discourse-centric. As Martín-Barbero (1993) pointed out in relation to the mediation process and circulation, while 'communication has become a strategic arena for the analysis of the obstacles and contradictions that move [societies]' (ibid.: 187), at the same time we have 'to lose sight of the "proper object" [i.e. media] in order to find the way to the movement of the social in communication, to communication in process' (ibid.: 203).

From a social movement studies perspective, the circuit of protest enables us to bridge tensions between resources, agentic opportunities and structural constraints. It furthermore exposes mediation processes both internal and external to social movements and it combines attention to the symbolic and discursive aspects of protest and contestation with material considerations of resources, communicative technologies and a practice-oriented approach.

By studying a social movement through the prism of the circuit, and by implicating mediation as the conceptual glue collating the different moments of the circuit, a holistic picture of a particular struggle emerges, since the circuit enables us to highlight and include in a single study an analysis of:

- the aims, goals and messaging of a movement;
- the collective identity of the movement;
- the nature of the connections and interactions between different actors;
- the internal organizational structures (or lack thereof);
- the type of (direct) actions and protest events the movement enacts;
- the resonance of the movement in the public/media space;
- the resonance of the movement amongst ordinary non-activist citizens;
- the degree of resistance it endures or cooperation it receives from the powers that be.

This also leads to a more nuanced perspective on and complex picture of the degree and nature of success of a movement, which can be situated at various levels and not necessarily only at the level of policy or political change in the here and now.

By appropriating the metaphor of the circuit and applying it to social movement struggles to achieve social and political change, I am aligning myself also with the Glasgow Media Group which stressed the importance of analysing 'processes of production, content, reception and *circulation* of social meaning simultaneously' (Philo, 2007: 175 – emphasis added). However, empirically studying the different moments in conjunction with each other is not straightforward and has important methodological implications which are discussed in the next section.

3.1 Studying the circuit of protest: Methodological reflections

In the last section of this short chapter, I aim to shift the focus from the conceptual to the empirical. The different moments in the circuit of protest, as articulated above, require different research methods in order to study and analyse them. This, I would argue, is at once the strength and the weakness of the framework.

A rich and thick data set is needed to study the production of discourses, frames and collective identities by social movements in conjunction with the various self-mediation practices of activists, the mainstream media representations of the movement, and the ways in which these discourses and frames are received and decoded by non-activist citizens. Table 1 provides a tentative overview of possible methods of data collection and analysis for each moment in the circuit. This mixed methods design conforms to the category of *development*, whereby the results of one method are 'used to help inform the development' of subsequent ones (Greene et al., 1989: 260).

Table 1*: Overview of potential data collection and analysis methods for each moment in the circuit[1]*

Moments	Data Collection	Data Analysis
Production	• Desk-research of messages and communication by the movement • Semi-structured interviews of activists • Ethnography and field notes	• Discourse analysis • Frame analysis • Thematic analysis
Self-mediation	• Semi-structured interviews of activists • Collection of print material and/or community radio broadcasts • Desk-research of social media presence and other forms of communication • Ethnography and field notes	• Thematic analysis • Network analysis
Representation	• Sampling of mainstream media content • Semi-structured interviews of activists and journalists	• Content analysis/Statistical Analysis • Discourse analysis • Thematic analysis
Reception	• Representative survey of the general population • Focus-group interviews of non-activist citizens • Semi-structured interviews of political elites	• Statistical analysis • Thematic analysis

The main challenge of such an ambitious methodological design lies in the need for ample resources and a variety of research skills in order to cover each moment in the circuit in a detailed and sophisticated manner, also making sure that the data gathered in the context of one moment feeds into the design of research tools of other moments, as well as building-in possibilities of validation at several moments in the design. For example, it makes sense to do additional interviews with activists at the end of the research cycle in order to share the data of the content

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1   I do not imply here that all these methods need to be used; choices can and probably should be made at each of the different moments.

analysis and the analysis of the survey and focus groups, as well as to validate the overall analysis of the nature of the mediation opportunity structure.

4.   Conclusion

The *circuit of protest,* as presented in this chapter, constitutes a productive conceptual and methodological framework to study a particular movement or even to compare movements. Besides providing an empirical model to study the various ways in which media and communication are relevant for activists and protest, the circuit enables us to bridge or, at the very least, address some important tensions within social movement as well as media and communication theory.

It enables us to think about the symbolic and material sides of a contentious struggle in conjunction with each other. It stresses the interplay between a set of processes that occur internally to a movement, but also accounts for the context outside of the movement. It also implicates the reception of movement discourses, frames and collective identities by non-activist citizens in the study of contentious politics. Furthermore, it positions a dialectic and productive articulation of power centrally at each of, and between, the different moments of the circuit. This avoids determinisms and leads, I suggest, to a more sophisticated and nuanced perspective on the nature of the success and failure of a movement and the struggle waged.

Mediation, as also discussed at length by Martín-Barbero (1993), is a very apt and productive theoretical concept to study contentious politics. Silverstone's double articulation of mediation allows bridging the symbolic aspects of political struggle with the materiality of communication technologies and self-mediation practices of activists. In terms of contentious politics, the concepts of alternative and mainstream media are highly relevant in equal measure, the former in view of the self-mediation practices of the movement; the latter in view of the circulation of its frames beyond the likeminded. This brings us again to the complex nature of reception and the notion of active audiences. Researching the reception of movement frames is worthwhile and a crucial component to understand and discuss the ambivalent nature of the circulation of protest. As Silverstone (2006: 42) put it, mediation is

> …not just a matter of what appears on the screen, but is actually constituted in the practices of those who produce the sounds and images, the narratives and the spectacles, as well as, crucially, those who receive them.

Finally, the circuit of protest is a holistic conceptual and methodological framework which enables the study of the production of movement discourses, frames and collective identities in conjunction with the self-mediation practices of activists, the way the mainstream media represents a struggle and the way these movement discourses, frames and identities circulate through society and are being picked up or indeed rejected by non-activist citizens. The circuit has already been tested to study the UK's anti-austerity protest (Cammaerts, 2018), where its usefulness has been demonstrated. Now it can, and should, be applied to a wide variety of social and political struggles, which will allow for the model to be improved and built upon. Be my guest!

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Biography

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Diversifying the Other: Antagonism, agonism and the multiplicity of articulations of self and other

Nico Carpentier

Abstract

Antagonism and agonism have become popular concepts, including in the field of Media and Communication Studies, because they capture the logics of conflict, the construction of self and other, and the relationship between conflict and democracy. This chapter aims to deepen the theoretical reflections on these two concepts by combining a discourse-theoretical and an empirical-enrichment strategy in order to deal with two problems: the black-boxing of antagonism and agonism, and their dichotomization. The first problem is tackled by extracting three defining characteristics of these two concepts: the pairs of radical difference vs conflictual togetherness; homogenization vs pluralization of the self; and enemy destruction vs peaceful and non-violent interaction. The second problem is dealt with by acknowledging a multiplicity of antagonisms and agonisms and unpacking the category of the Other. The latter implies a move beyond the antagonistic other-enemy and the agonistic other-adversary and recognition of the existence of other-neighbours, other-allies, other-friends and others that become re-articulated as part of the self.

Keywords: antagonism, agonism, Other, enemy, adversary, ally, neighbour, friend, discourse theory, constructionism, post-structuralism

1.   Introduction

The notions of antagonism and agonism have been used in a wide variety of aca-
demic fields, including Media and Communication Studies (Dahlgren, 2005; Car-
pentier & Cammaerts, 2006), to capture the logics of conflict, the construction of
self and other, and the relationship between conflict and democracy. Even though
many theorists have contributed to the development of these two concepts (see De-
veaux, 1999, for an overview), in particular the work of Mouffe (2005, 2013) can
be seen as one of the main contributions to this conceptual development.

Despite this widespread use of both antagonism and agonism, there is, ar-
guably, still room to contribute to the further elaboration of these two concepts,
in particular when it comes to the specification of their key characteristics. This
chapter uses two strategies to distinguish antagonism's and agonism's key char-
acteristics. First, a discourse-theoretical strategy, grounded in the work of Laclou
and Mouffe (1985), is deployed, where antagonism and agonism are both defined
as discourses that have a series of nodal points that stabilize their meanings. Sec-
ond, this chapter benefits from an empirical strategy, where the two theoretical
concepts have been confronted with a particular social reality, even though this
chapter[1] only contains the theoretical outcome of this confrontation between the-
ory and social practice. More specifically, this theoretical chapter has been gener-
ated through confrontation of the concepts of antagonism and agonism, with the
participatory and conflict transformational work of a Cypriot community media
organization called the Cyprus Community Media Centre. The book *The Discur-
sive-Material Knot* (Carpentier, 2017) reports on both the theoretical elaboration
of antagonism and agonism, and how they are played out in this specific social
reality. For reasons of space, this chapter focuses on the former, but we should
keep in mind that it has been 'empirically enriched'.

This theoretical elaboration consists of three steps. In a first step, the notion
of antagonism is unpacked in a close dialogue with the work of Schmitt[2] (1996,
2004). This then allows for a second step, where agonism is unpacked in parallel
with categories of antagonism. In a third step, the chapter argues for a move away
from the dichotomy between antagonism and agonism, and from the dichotomy

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1   This chapter also uses a considerable amount of text from this book, see Carpentier (2017:
     171-184).

2   Although Schmitt converted to Nazism, his theoretical work remains important. As Mouffe
     (1999a: 52) wrote: 'Schmitt is an adversary from whom we can learn, because we can draw
     on his insights. Turning them against him, we should use them to formulate a better under-
     standing of liberal democracy.'

between the other-enemy and the other-adversary; in contrast, this chapter argues for the acknowledgement of a diversity of articulation of the other's (and the self's) subject position.

2.   Defining antagonism and enmity

> The specificity of modern democracy is precisely its recognition and legitimation of conflict; in democratic societies, therefore, conflict cannot and should not be eradicated. Democratic politics requires that the others be seen not as enemies to be destroyed but as adversaries whose ideas should be fought, even fiercely, but whose right to defend those ideas will never be questioned. (Mouffe, 2013b: 185)

From Mouffe's perspective, the aim of democratic politics is '[…] to transform an "antagonism" into "agonism"' (Mouffe, 1999b: 755), to 'tame' or 'sublimate' (Mouffe, 2005: 20-21) antagonisms, without eliminating passion from the political realm or relegating it to the outskirts of the private. In order to develop and theorize this model of agonistic democracy, Mouffe (2005) refers to the work of Schmitt (1996), and his friend/foe distinction. As Mouffe does not provide much detail about the characteristics of agonism, and of what she later started to call antagonism proper (see Mouffe, 2013a: 109), it makes sense to return to Schmitt's work to see how he characterizes antagonism and enmity. In the next part, we can then use these characteristics to further elaborate on agonism.

For Schmitt (1996: 27), the enemy is whoever is '[…] in a specially intense way, existentially something different and alien, so that in the extreme case conflicts with him are possible'. A few lines later, Schmitt (1996: 28) provides a more elaborate description of the enemy, stressing its public nature:

> The enemy is not merely any competitor or just any partner of a conflict in general. He is also not the private adversary whom one hates. An enemy exist only when, at least potentially, one fighting collectivity of people confronts a similar collectivity. The enemy is solely the public enemy, because everything that has a relationship to such a collectivity of men, particularly to a whole nation, becomes public by virtue of such a relationship.

These reflections tend to see (even if it is mostly done implicitly) antagonism as a cultural-definitional process, which brings me to define this model as an antagonistic conflict discourse,[3] which enables signifying practices that identify with

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3   When discussing antagonism in connection with war in earlier work, I have labelled this the ideological model of war (Carpentier, 2008).

this discourse (and which will be contested by other discourses), without forgetting that antagonism also has a material component. At this stage, the question is how antagonistic discourse is articulated. Arguably, three nodal points can be distinguished in antagonistic discourse: 1. the need for destruction of the enemy, 2. a radical difference and distance from the enemy, combined with (and supported by) a process of 3. homogenization of the self.

The definition of the Other as 'an enemy to be destroyed' (Mouffe, 1999b: 755) immediately brings us to the notion of destruction (and violence). In Schmitt's (2004: 36) writings, different degrees of enmity are distinguished, with the 'war of absolute enmity', which 'knows no containment' being an extreme form. The wish to impose destruction upon the enemy is shared by these different models of enmity, albeit with different degrees of destruction, ranging from the desire to neutralize the threat originating from the enemy, to the enemy's complete annihilation, as described by Schmitt (2004: 67):

> In a world in which the partners push each other […] into the abyss of total devaluation before they annihilate one another physically, new kinds of absolute enmity must come into being. Enmity will be so terrifying that one perhaps mustn't even speak any longer of the enemy or of enmity, and both words will have to be outlawed and damned fully before the work of annihilation can begin. Annihilation thus becomes entirely abstract and entirely absolute.

Second, antagonistic discourse requires a radical difference between the enemy and the self, where no symbolic (or material) space is thought to be shared or could be shared. Harle (2000: 12, emphasis in the original) wrote: 'The Enemy emerges if and only if "we" and "they" are thought to be *fundamentally* different […].' The construction of this radical other is supported by the logic of a dichotomy, whereas the idea of the absence of a common space produces distance. In more extreme cases, this radical othering leads to a dehumanization and demonization of the other, denying even the most basic features of humanity to that other, which makes its destruction easier and even necessary.

Moreover, radical difference is combined with a process of hierarchization. The dichotomy that defines the enemy and the self is not considered neutral, rather it supports a hierarchy that positions the enemy as inferior, and the self as superior. Delanty, Wodak and Jones (2008: 307) point to the combined processes of inferiorization and superiorization when analyzing migration into Europe in the following terms: 'The inferiorization of the "others" and the superiorization of "us" is a complex and often hidden process that is not easy simply to observe. It is often understood by many members of the majority society as "normal" and "objective".'

This citation can be seen as an illustration of how the process of hierarchization has a long history in positioning the racial and colonial other. For instance, Said (2003: 42) refers to *Orientalism* as the '[…] ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority'. Or, as Said (2003: 7) wrote a few pages earlier, 'Orientalism depends for its strategy on this flexible positional superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand.' Spivak's (1985) use of the notion of othering to analyze British colonial domination in its ethnicized, gendered and class-based logics is another illustration. Spivak (1985: 76) refers to '[…] the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as Other', which consists of the '[…] asymmetrical obliteration of the trace of that Other in its precarious Subjectivity' as the '[…] clearest available example of […] epistemic violence […]'. Here, it is equally important to keep in mind that 'In Spivak's explanation, othering is a dialectical process because the colonizing Other is established at the same time as its colonized others are produced as subjects' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2000: 141, emphasis in original).

The process of radical difference also has consequences for construction of the self, which brings us to the third nodal point of antagonism: the homogenization of the self, which involves solidification of the chain of equivalence of the self. If we return to Schmitt's (2004: 61, emphasis in original) analysis, we can see that the self is not indifferent to the threat that the enemy-other poses to it:

> The enemy is our own question as *Gestalt*. If we have determined our own *Gestalt* unambiguously, where does this double enemy come from? The enemy is not something to be eliminated out of a particular reason, something to be annihilated as worthless. The enemy stands on my own plane. For this reason I must contend with him […] in battle, in order to assure my own standard [*Maß*], my own limits, my own *Gestalt*. (Schmitt, 2004: 61, emphasis in original)

We also find this threat to the self in Laclau and Mouffe's (1985: 125) work when they write that: '[…] the presence of the "Other" prevents me from being totally myself. The relation arises not from full totalities, but from the impossibility of their constitution'. This also implies that '[…] the Other has an important function in establishing the identity of the Self' (Harle, 2000: 15)[4] or, to use Schmitt's (2004: 65, emphasis in original) words: 'The heart of the political is not enmity *per se* but the distinction of friend and enemy; it presupposes *both* friend *and* enemy.' But this relationship between self and enemy-other surpasses the process of hierar-

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4   This is in line with, for instance, Haraway's (1991) analysis of the components of the dichotomy as interdependent.

chization where '[…] the distinction is understood to reflect the struggle between good and evil, and when good is associated with "us" but evil with "them"' (Harle, 2000: 12, emphasis removed). The relationship with the enemy-other also homogenizes the self through the attribution of a series of characteristics that distinguish the self from the enemy and which apply to the entire self. The self thus becomes one, united in its struggle against the enemy, rallying round the flag.[5] Laclau (1996: 40-41), in his analysis of Luxembourg's writings about the unity of the working class in its political struggle, formulated this argument as follows: 'It is not, consequently, something positive that all of them share which establishes their unity, but something negative: their opposition to a common enemy.' In the creation of this solidified chain of equivalence, with the enemy as its constitutive outside, little room is left for internal differences, which is evidenced by the words of the German Emperor Wilhelm who, during the First World War, claimed that '[…] he would no longer hear of different political parties, only of Germans' (Torfing, 1999: 126). The then American president George W. Bush used an updated version during his address to the Joint Session of Congress and the American People on 20 September 2001,[6] saying: 'Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.' As a construction, the homogenization of the self becomes so hegemonic that resistance against it positions these actors as so-called enemies within, or traitors (Yiannopoulou, 2012: 127ff.). Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 125) offer an important addition to this way of thinking, arguing that this (fantasy of the) homogeneous self is also vulnerable, and that it can be 'revealed as partial and precarious objectification'. Even when the enemy-other triggers fantasies of a homogeneous self that denies contingency and difference, the diversity that characterizes the self is most likely to eventually dislocate the (construction of the) homogeneous self.

3.   Defining agonism

If we use the above discussion about antagonism to reflect on agonism, then the first point to make is that not every self and other relation has to consist of a self and enemy-other relation. To use Mouffe's words for support: The political is grounded in self and other relations, but 'Such a relationship is not necessarily antagonistic [in the proper sense]' (Mouffe, 2013b: 185). In *Agonistics*, Mouffe (2013a: 109) argues that '[…] this antagonistic conflict can take different forms', in order to introduce the distinction between antagonism proper and agonism. While antago-

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5   Mueller (1973) uses this metaphor to describe political support for US presidents, but in my text, the 'rallying round the flag' metaphor is used in a broader sense.

6   https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html

nism proper is grounded in the Schmittian friend/enemy relation, agonism is not (Mouffe, in Errejón and Mouffe, 2016: 55). Agonism articulates the relationship between self and other as a '[…] we/they relation where the conflicting parties, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless recognize the legitimacy of their opponents' (Mouffe, 2005: 20). Later, she also points to their sharing of ethico-political principles:

> What exists between adversaries is, so to speak, a conflictual consensus – they agree about the ethico-political principles which organize their political association but disagree about the interpretation of these principles. (Mouffe, 2013a: 109)

In other words, an agonistic conflict does not hide the differences in position and interest between the involved parties, they are still 'in conflict' but share '[…] a common symbolic space within which the conflict takes place' (Mouffe, 2005: 20; see also Mouffe, 2013a: 7). Still, antagonism proper[7] remains 'an ever present possibility' (Mouffe, 2013b) and societies can quite easily slip into antagonistic self-other relationships, where enemies need to be destroyed.

In developing the notion of agonism further, we can return to the three nodal points of the enemy-other that were discussed in the previous part, with the argument that the agonistic model of conflict will re-articulate these characteristics in shifting from the other-enemy to the other-adversary. As one of the citations in the previous paragraph illustrates, adversaries navigate in a common symbolic space, which implies a degree of togetherness. Arendt's (1998: 175ff.) writings on action offer an interesting starting point here, in particular when Arendt argues for the importance of disclosure of the actor in the act. For her, 'This revelatory quality of speech and action comes to the fore where people are *with* others and neither for nor against them – that is, in sheer human togetherness' (Arendt, 1998: 180, emphasis in original). Relevant here is Arendt's (1998: 180) usage of the enemy concept to illustrate a situation without disclosure, which is connected to a situation without togetherness:

> This [situation where action loses its specific character] happens whenever human togetherness is lost, that is, when people are only for or against other people, as for instance in modern warfare, where men go into action and use means of violence in order to achieve certain objectives for their own side and against the enemy. In these instances, which of course have always existed, speech becomes indeed 'mere talk,' simply one more means toward an end, whether it serves to deceive the enemy or to dazzle everybody with propaganda […].

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7   Their potential occurrence remains for Mouffe (2013a: 1) important, as this '[…] impedes the full totalization of society and forecloses the possibility of a society beyond division and power', but this analysis is made without any hint of celebration of the existence of antagonistic self-other relationships.

For Arendt, the position of the enemy is an illustration of a situation where human togetherness is lost which, in turn, makes this concept of togetherness highly useful to think about agonism. But this then raises questions about which togetherness, as Arendt has been critiqued for developing a too consensual model of action (and politics).[8] Breen (2009: 136, emphasis in original), for instance, problematizes Arendt's 'sheer human togetherness', arguing that a situation where an actor is not for or against some actor is not possible: 'Political actors are therefore never solely *with* their fellow human beings, but always *for* some and *against* others.' Mouffe's (2013a: 109) argument that '[…] what exists between adversaries is, so to speak, a conflictual consensus' is useful here to see this togetherness, still important to define agonistic relations, as what I would prefer to call a conflictual togetherness. This also implies that there is a structural (power) balance between the involved actors. While the enemy model rests on hierarchization, where the enemy-other is inferiorized and the self is superiorized, the adversary model builds on a structural balance where the different actors are not hierarchically positioned.

The second nodal point of agonism is the pluralization of the self, which is to be contrasted with its homogenization. Mouffe often combines pluralism with agonism, for instance when she refers to 'agonist pluralism' (Mouffe, 1999b) and the 'agonistic dynamics of pluralism' (Mouffe, 2005: 30). This combination of concepts is used to describe the need to acknowledge the ineradicability of conflict and the existence of a societal diversity that feeds this societal conflict, in combination with the need to democratically harness this conflict without suppressing it. As Mouffe (1999b: 756) formulates it: 'Far from jeopardizing democracy, agonistic confrontation is in fact its very condition of existence.' In the Introduction of *The Ethos of Pluralization*, Connolly (1995: xx) links pluralism to the construction of a 'we', arguing against the need to construct a homogeneous self, and instead pleads for a multiple, pluralized 'we' in the following terms:

> You do not need a wide universal 'we' (a nation, a community, a singular practice of rationality, a particular monotheism) to foster democratic governance of a population. Numerous possibilities of intersection and collaboration between multiple, interdependent constituencies infused by a general ethos of critical responsiveness drawn from several sources suffice very nicely.

It is this idea of a pluralized self (and a pluralized other-adversary) that is seen as characteristic of agonism. In other words, agonism moves away from a dichotomiza-

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8   Deveaux (1999: 20) disagrees with this critique, and briefly mentions (in a footnote) that '[…] the agonistic dimension of Arendt's account of action is often ignored in favor of "communicative" and "dialogical" interpretations […]'.

tion that creates impermeable and solid frontiers between the self and the other-enemy, together with hegemonic chains of equivalence of the self and the other-enemy that leave no space for internal diversity and pluralism. Or, to use Mouffe's (2005: 82) words again: '[…] the absence of an effective pluralism entails the impossibility for antagonisms to find agonistic, i.e. legitimate, forms of expression'. Agonism recognizes difference and conflict, but also positions the adversary in the same symbolic space, which means that, in the agonistic model, differences are no longer absolute and all-encompassing. Difference and conflict co-exist in an agonistic model with the acceptance of the other as legitimate: 'Adversaries do fight – even fiercely – but according to a shared set of rules[9], and their positions, despite being ultimately irreconcilable, are accepted as legitimate perspectives' (Mouffe, 2005: 52). This acceptance of the other creates linkages with the other, acknowledging the democratic rights and humanity of the other, but it also renders the frontier between the equivalential chain of the self and its constitutive outside less solid and more permeable, allowing for transgressions of that frontier and the creation of chains of difference.[10] Here we should keep in mind that '[…] the logic of equivalence is a logic of the simplification of political space, while the logic of difference is a logic of its expansion and increasing complexity' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 130). Using linguistics as an example, Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 130) argue that:

> […] the logic of difference tends to expand […] the number of positions that can enter into a relation of combination and hence of continuity with one another; while the logic of equivalence expands the […] elements that can be substituted for one another – thereby reducing the number of positions which can possibly be combined.

Laclau and Mouffe then connect the occurrence of several co-existing antagonisms with a '[…] situation described by Gramsci under the term "organic crisis"' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 131), and with social instability:

> […] the more unstable the social relations, the less successful will be any definite system of differences and the more the points of antagonism will proliferate. This proliferation will

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9   The articulation of agonism with a 'shared set of rules' (Mouffe, 2005: 52) is problematic, as it suggests that antagonism (proper) is not structured by regulatory frameworks. For instance, even if the so-called jus in bello (as part of the law of war) is not always respected, it does exist and provides a shared regulatory framework for belligerent actors.

10 At least in the 20th-century version of this concept. Later, the logic of difference gains an alternative meaning, referring to the role of a particularity in constructing social reality. In Laclau's (2005: 78) words, the creation of chains of difference leads to the '[…] assertion of a particularity […] whose only links to other particularities are of a differential nature ([…] no positive terms, only differences)'.

make more difficult the construction of any centrality and, consequently, the establishment of unified chains of equivalence. (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 131)

Arguably, agonism's nodal point of pluralization allows for a much less negative reading of this situation, as the co-existence of chains of equivalence and difference allows, on the one hand, for selves and other-adversaries (in plural) to be constructed, and on the other hand, for the avoidance of a hegemonic self that homogenizes itself as a united centre and transforms the other into a disconnected enemy. Pluralization, consisting of a combination of chains of equivalence and difference, enables connections between selves and other-adversaries, for changing alliances and border-crossings between them, and for the creation of affectious spaces of sharing.

Third, while the antagonistic enemy discourse is characterized by the need for destruction, the agonistic adversary discourse has the need for peaceful and non-violent interaction as a nodal point. If adversaries belong to the same political space, and do not attempt to destroy (or annihilate) each other, then a reflection on the nature of that interaction becomes unavoidable. Although peaceful interaction would be an obvious choice to describe this type of interaction, we again need to emphasize the context of conflictuality that structures this peaceful interaction. For this reason, peaceful and non-violent interaction[11] is preferred as a label. Peace and non-violence, first of all, refer to the absence of collective material violence (combined with the absence of interpersonal material violence motivated by an other-enemy logic), and the absence of the death and destruction that this brings. It also refers to the absence of structural violence, with inequality as 'the general formula behind structural violence' (Galtung, 1969: 175). In other parts of his article, Galtung also mentions social injustice as a defining element of structural violence (Galtung, 1969: 171). As Galtung poins out, the combination of the absence of personal and structural violence necessitates an expansion of the definition of peace. For this reason, he introduces the concepts of negative peace (the absence of personal violence) and positive peace (the absence of structural violence) (Galtung, 1969: 183). Peaceful and non-violent interaction also implies the absence of what Bourdieu calls symbolic violence, which we can define here as discourses that violate the other (or part of the self), or signifying practices that identify with these antagonistic discourses. This not only concerns discourses that call for the destruction of the other, but also discourses that are characterized by the logic of antagonism (proper) in their creation of radical differences and hierarchies, and in their constructions of homogenized and solidified – one could also say stereotyped – selves and others. Finally, there is

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11 The use of both peace and non-violence in this label should not be read as an attempt to equate them. It is meant to emphasize the range of practices that are seen to be incorporated by this label.

also a temporal component to peaceful and non-violent interaction, as an agonistic discourse is fed by trust that the other will not engage in future violent acts, or that violent acts from the past will not be repeated. Bloomfield (2003: 11) captures this idea when he writes: 'One of the biggest obstacles to [the] cooperation [between former enemies] is that, because of the violence of the past, their relations are based on antagonism, distrust, disrespect and, quite possibly, hurt and hatred.'

But equally important in the discussion of this third nodal point of agonism is the focus on peaceful and non-violent *interaction*, which again has many dimensions and variations. Interaction may be minimal, in the sense that it is based on mutual but distant toleration. Williams (1996: 19), although not discussing agonism explicitly, describes the necessity of toleration by contrasting it to antagonism and armed conflict:

> It is necessary where different groups have conflicting beliefs – moral, political, or religious – and realize that there is no alternative to their living together, that is to say, no alternative except armed conflict, which will not resolve their disagreements and will impose continuous suffering.

The breakdown of agonism, and the evolution towards antagonism occurs when '[…] people find others' beliefs or ways of life deeply unacceptable' (Williams, 1996: 19). Williams (1996: 19) illustrates this with religious toleration: 'In matters of religion, for instance […], the need for toleration arises because one of the groups, at least, thinks that the other is blasphemously, disastrously, obscenely wrong.' Toleration, which implies the acceptance of the other as legitimate, is the basic level of peaceful and nonviolent interaction, but more intense forms of (peaceful and non-violent) interaction, such as coordination, cooperation and collaboration, remain possible. This then, in turn, raises questions about when the other-adversary becomes an ally, friend or neighbour, but this will be discussed in the next part.

First, Figure 1 provides us with an overview of the nodal points of antagonism and agonism:

Figure 1: Nodal points of antagonism and agonism

Antagonism	Agonism
Radical difference	Conflictual togetherness
Homogenization of the self	Pluralization of the self
Enemy destruction	Peaceful and non-violent interaction

4. Multiple antagonisms and agonisms, and multiple articulations of the Other

Apart from the straightforward agonistic and antagonistic positions, we can distinguish several other positions and combinations (see Fig. 2, labelled the palm tree model of antagonism and agonism), which enables avoiding becoming trapped in a mere dichotomy between antagonism and agonism. First, both agonism and antagonism suppose the relevance of the other, as either adversary or enemy. It is equally conceivable that actors are articulated as irrelevant non-self *and* non-other, or are not articulated at all. In some cases, as has been analyzed through the lens of symbolic annihilation (Tuchman, 1978), or the subaltern (Spivak, 1988), this is part of an antagonistic logic, but in other cases an actor can be met with indifference, or be articulated as part of another symbolic space. This scenario is not so much a situation of a discourse of indifference (which still signifies relevance) but rather a situation of indifference to discourse. A situation of irrelevance is not necessarily stable, and irrelevance can always be transformed into relevance (and vice versa).

Figure 2: The palm tree model of antagonism and agonism. Source: Carpentier (2017: 184)
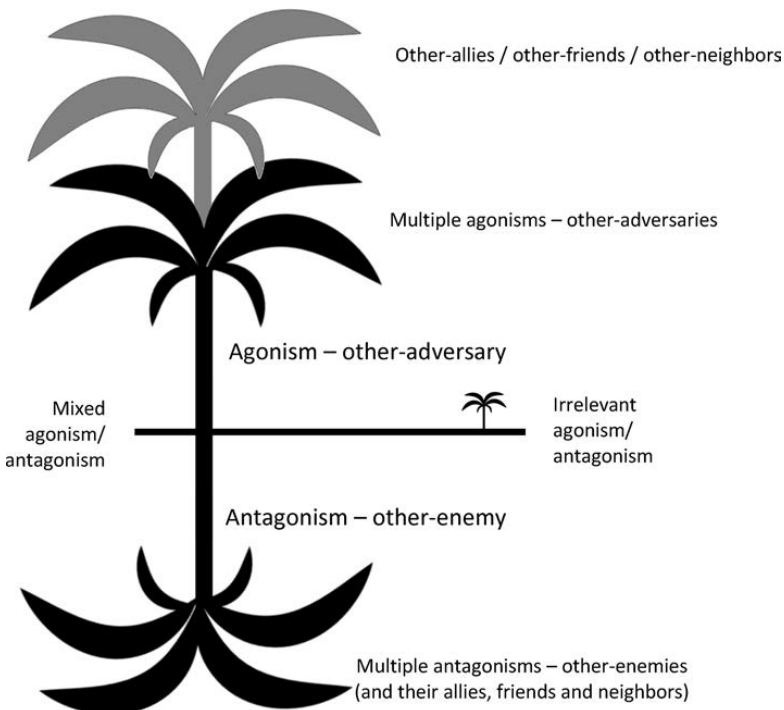
Second, we should incorporate the co-existence of antagonisms and ag-onisms. When Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 131) write: '[…] there are a variety of possible antagonisms in the social, many of them in opposition to each other', it is a clear acknowledgment of a multitude of antagonisms (proper or in agonistic form). But dominant situations of agonism and antagonism can be combined with upsurges of antagonism and agonism, respectively. In other words, they can co-exist, temporally or more structurally. A chain of equivalence that is sustained by an antagonistic other can (and often will) be characterized by agonism within the chain itself. Conversely, in a situation of dominant agonism, antagonism can still occur, as Mouffe's (2005: 64ff.) discussion of the responses of Western de-mocracies to right-wing populism shows.

Third, as already briefly indicated, there are more others than the other-enemy and the other-adversary. One of the problems of Schmitt's (1996) friend/foe dis-tinction is that he does not develop the friend part of the dichotomy that much in *The Concept of the Political*, although there is more attention to the friend in *The Theory of the Partisan* (2004). This is worsened by interpretations of his work that implicitly conflate the friend with the self, which tends to hide some of the com-plexities in relation to the subject position of the self. The equivalential chain is itself a construction that articulates a diversity of elements under the common de-nominator of the self without, however, totally eliminating their differences: They '[…] can weaken, but not domesticate differences' (Laclau, 2005: 79).

As discussed earlier, the subject position of the self can become pluralized, which is considered characteristic of the agonistic model, but the self can also disintegrate, e.g. due to internal differences. More importantly, the subject po-sition of the self can itself be articulated (or become part of a larger chain of equivalence) with other actors, who are considered allies or friends. In a book on political friendship, King and Smith (2013: 1-2) raise the question of '[…] whether any community ("us") is necessarily defined in opposition to some other and also whether any such opponent ("them") is necessarily to be construed as an enemy'. Their introductory chapter, and edited volume, argues for the impor-tance of political amity, which provides a negative answer to their own question. Slomp's (2013: 85, emphasis in original) chapter in this same book returns to Schmitt's work to argue that 'Two types of friends populate the world of *Theorie des Partisanen*: on the one hand there is the friend who is external to one's own group or party, whom we can call the ally, and on the other hand there is the friend who belongs to one's own group or party.' Slomp's reading of Schmitt (2004) opens up space to distinguish more other-related subject positions than the enemy and the adversary. To echo's Slomp's (2013: 86) words: 'The presence of external

allies is as important to Schmitt as the existence of enemies.' We can find other references to this other-ally, e.g. in Billig's (1995: 87) work. Still, going back to Schmitt, I would like to question whether the friend is necessarily part of the 'own group or party', and I would like to suggest that the other-friend is also a possible subject position. Inspiration for this argument can be found in Derrida's (2005) attempt to shift from fraternity to friendship in his *Politics of Friendship*, but also in Mehta's (1999: 41) reading of Mahatma Gandhi's use of the friendship signifier in structuring relations between Hindus and Muslims. What Chacko (2012: 74) called a 'politics of friendship' within Gandhi's framework was '[…] based on equality, and when equality existed, friendship was to be cultivated through the willingness to unconditionally and disinterestedly share in the suffering of the neighbour'. This brings Bryant (2004: 250) to suggest yet another option, namely the other-neighbour, when she writes:

> Neighbours […] are those persons to whom one is historically connected through place and with whom one must live. […] Affection, indeed, is not the point. Even the best neighbours may be noisy, may cause trouble, may know too much about one's comings and goings. Neighbours form a moral community and a tribunal.

As is the case with the other-friend, the other-neighbour has also been addressed in philosophical texts, such as the work of Levinas (1978). For Levinas (1978: 159), the neighbour remains an other, but this other-neighbour takes a crucial place, because '[…] my relationship with the Other as neighbor gives meaning to my relations with all the others'. The subject position of other-neighbour, at least in Levinas's articulation,[12] produces an obligation that cannot be escaped, and which precedes experience: '[…] the face of a neighbor signifies for me an unexceptionable responsibility, preceding every free consent, every pact, every contract' (Levinas, 1978: 159).

These reflections enable distinguishing different articulations of the other subject positions, namely, the other-ally, the other-friend and the other-neighbour. Arguably, this distinction of more other-related subject positions does not push the political outside the context of conflictuality, as the other-neighbour, the other-friend

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12 This articulation of the (good) other-neighbour is not without alternatives, though. For instance, Painter (2012: 524) points out that the other-neighbour is more of an 'unknown' in 'highly urbanized societies […]', and Žižek (2008: 59) (following Freud) labels the other-neighbour '[…] a thing, a traumatic intruder, someone whose different way of life […] disturbs us, throws the balance of our way of life off the rails, when it comes too close'. In his inimitable style, Žižek (2008: 166, emphasis in original) writes: '[…] a Neighbour is one who per definition *smells*'.

and the other-ally are also not in a symbiotic relationship with the self, and this difference still has the capacity to generate conflict.

Finally, we should emphasize the workings of contingency, and stress changes over time, where the relationship of particular others with the self changes over time. Alliances can turn into enmities, but sometimes enmities can also evolve over time, where the other as former enemy can shift to a position that approximates to the other as friend. Wallensteen's (2012: 33) brief analysis of the changing French/German relations in the twentieth century illustrates this logic of difference, re-articulating the antagonistic chain of equivalence: '[…] the integration of the two former enemies, Germany and France, illustrated the potential of reversing dynamics. It showed it was possible to move from being enemies to allies, in a relationship that was closer than traditional alliances of convenience.'

5. Conclusion

Antagonism and agonism have proven to be valuable concepts in conceiving a relationship between conflict and democracy that does not ignore the structural presence of conflict in democratic societies, but that acknowledges the importance of conflict, caused by the equally structural diversity of positions, interests, discourses, identities etc. At the same time, the strong emphasis on agonism – as a way to think about the coexistence of conflict and democracy-– comes at a price, as it results in two problems: the black-boxing of antagonism and agonism, and their dichotomization.

Opening up, and looking inside, these two black boxes allow for more theoretical refinement, but also increase the empirical usability of both concepts. This chapter argues for a 3-dimensional operationalization of antagonism and agonism, identifying the pairs of radical difference vs conflictual togetherness; homogenization vs pluralization of the self; and enemy destruction vs peaceful and non-violent interaction. It is important to stress that these three pairs are indeed dimensions, with many different possible in-between positions, and with undoubtedly many contradictions and discontinuities when zooming in on sub-processes. Of course, other research projects might render other or more dimensions, but this model offers an operationalization that has proven itself in a particular research project (Carpentier, 2017) and offers itself to be further developed in interaction with other theoretical frameworks and empirical research projects.

Moving away from a dichotomy between antagonism and agonism is equally important. This chapters argues for a multiplicity of antagonisms and agonisms,

which implies that antagonism and agonism can (and often do) coexist. Moreover, there is a need to move beyond the antagonistic other-enemy and the agonistic other-adversary, acknowledging the existence of other-neighbours, other-allies, other-friends and others that become re-articulated as part of the self. This unpacking of the other, and acknowledgement of the diversity of others, is a crucial step in improving our understanding of othering, its fluidity and contingency, and its multidimensionality.

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Biography

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Reframing the ASEAN discourse by way of participatory photography: The Manila pilot project

Kristian Jeff Cortez Agustin

Abstract

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is known for its official photographs, taken during its annual summits and regular meetings. Since its founding 50 years ago, the 10-country bloc has invested in community- and identity-building by promoting its vision of a regional identity that is common or unique to Southeast Asians. In the last 10 years, three big surveys have been conducted to account for the public perception and recognition of ASEAN integration; however, what the data merely show is the lack of agreement and clarity among ordinary ASEAN citizens regarding the notion of "regional identity". Through participatory photography, this visual essay aims to put into perspective what Southeast Asian locals might feel about this issue, starting with a pilot project conducted in Manila. From November 2016 to April 2017, a total of 12 participants participated in the Manila pilot project by taking photographs and taking part in several workshops for the purpose of critically reflecting on their "ASEAN identity". Collectively, their photographs serve as a testament to how participation in the region-building efforts of the ASEAN is as relevant and valuable as the official discourse itself. Select photographs are featured in this visual essay to demonstrate how the participants themselves found their own voice by way of collaborating and engaging in what Paulo Freire called "we think".

Keywords: Southeast Asia, regional identity, participation, photography, photovoice

1. Introduction: The visual construction of identity in contemporary ASEAN discourse

Donned in their best diplomatic outfits or national attire, Southeast Asian state leaders would traditionally shake hands with each other while forming a human chain with their arms crossed and hands linked – this is how the ASEAN annual summits or official meetings are best pictured – signifying the much touted "ASEAN handshake" and conveying "One Vision, One Identity, One Community" (the official ASEAN motto). Simply *googling* the keywords "ASEAN", "ASEAN summit" or "ASEAN handshake" would almost always lead to online images of this iconic picture photographed over the years. This "official" tradition has undoubtedly permeated the public consciousness for decades now by way of the media, especially international news agencies; thus, it has become an undeniably visual rhetoric that has helped communicate the affairs of ASEAN, as much as its aspirations, ideals and policies to its publics and stakeholders alike.

Despite these official photographs being highly iconic and widely recognizable, the sense of regional identity is not always shared among the citizens of the 10 ASEAN member countries, as revealed by three region-wide public opinion polls, which were only conducted in the last 10 years: (1) the ASEAN Foundation's *Attitudes and Awareness Towards ASEAN: Findings of a Ten-nation Survey* (Thompson & Thianthai, 2008); (2) The Straits Times' *Are We A Community?* online survey (Phua & Chin, 2015); and (3) the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies' *Do Young People Know ASEAN? Update of a Ten-nation Survey* (Thompson, Thianthai & Thuzar, 2016). For instance, while the 2014 survey accounted for the increase in public awareness or "we-feeling" regarding the ASEAN integration since the first-ever survey was conducted in 2007, comparing the data between the two surveys also confirmed the need to prioritize identity-building efforts that involve the general ASEAN publics (Thompson, Thianthai & Thuzar, 2016: 182-183). The 2015 survey, on the other hand, delivered seemingly contradictory results concerning the question of a "common identity" (Phua & Chin, 2015), with 65.9 per cent of the respondents identifying with people in ASEAN and 52.7 per cent disagreeing with the idea that people in ASEAN share a common identity. While these surveys did not necessarily deal with visual culture, they are indicative of how an "imagined community", borrowing from Anderson (2006), tends to "imagine" itself.

As exemplified by the iconic picture of the ASEAN's annual summits, it can be argued that official photographs – which I also refer to as "official images" here – generally and constantly promote a sense of "regional identity" that often lacks public involvement or grassroots representation. Generally speaking, these images only reflect a top-down approach to Southeast Asian identity construction; the

Figure 1. © Martin Vidanes (2017). Caption by Martin Vidanes: "A foreigner seated alone by the bar, in a busy restaurant where patrons are enjoying 'authentic' Japanese food– or as authentic as we can get in Manila. Isn't it funny that while we belong to ASEAN, we are all connected by something that is not ours? Something we were taught? Something we didn't ask for?"

photographs only focus on those who are in power. Moreover, they communicate an official discourse that celebrates the notion of regional identity as something that is harmonizing or unifying, and which does not leave much space for critique. And while online platforms and social media have been instrumental in the increase of photographs taken and uploaded by ordinary citizens – which I consider "unofficial images" – the visual discourse emerging from these social networks often resembles the official discourse if one were to compare the official images with the thematic content of crowd-sourced photographs (Agustin 2017: 40-41); for example, the Facebook page formerly and unofficially called "ASEAN Community" (created in 2011 by a group of students from Thailand to informally raise awareness of ASEAN) is now officially the "ASEAN Youth Organization" page, which continues to promote "ASEANality", which started as an online photography contest (ASEAN, 2013; Planet Foto Indonesia, 2013). In other words, despite picturing everyday life, grassroots concerns and ordinary citizens, these unofficial

photographs echo the harmonizing tendencies of the official discourse and lack critical reflection about ASEAN.

For a geopolitical bloc that has prevailed for 50 years, despite the many economic and political crises it has faced, perhaps returning to the question of identity is not only long overdue but also more relevant than ever. Thus, this visual essay, a critical and reflective work as posited by Banks & Zeitlyn (2015: 139-141) and Grady (2008: 29-30), pursues an enquiry into how photography might help in re-constructing or challenging the notion of regional identity in the case of ASEAN.

2. ASEAN identity construction by way of participatory photography

I chose participatory photography as a method for engaging locals and exploring with them the various ways they might critically reflect on their supposed "ASEAN identity". Often, ordinary citizens are left out of the big picture that ASEAN wants to project; they often play the role of mere spectators of the regionalization process, despite the ASEAN discourse invoking their supposed "collective identity" as members of this regional community. It is as if some members of ASEAN publics are experiencing what Freire once called a "culture of silence" (1985: 72-73; 1970: 97), which brings about a culture of dependency instead of empowerment among general Southeast Asian publics. Thus, borrowing from Habermas (1970: 144-146), the public's lack of communicative power or "voice" might impede mutual understanding and promote social inequalities and repression. Through increased levels of participation, society at large might either experience critical consciousness or what Freire would call "conscientization" (1985: 160) which, in turn, could contribute to what Habermas (1989: 118) envisioned as the "enlightenment of the political public sphere" by way of democratic participation. It is, therefore, important that the methodology for this project is a participatory process.

Participatory photography can entail a process of collective, critical and reflexive analyses (Banks & Zeitlyn, 2015: 145; Rose, 2016: 331-330), as it is a way for individual participants to progress from "I think" to "we think", or in Freire's (1973: 137) words:

> The thinking Subject cannot think alone. In the act of thinking about the object s/he cannot think without the co-participation of another Subject. There is no longer an "I think" but "we think." It is the "we think" which establishes the "I think" and not the contrary. This co-participation of the Subjects in the act of thinking is communication. Thus the object is not the end of the act of communicating, but the mediator of communication.

By inviting ordinary citizens to this project and empowering them throughout the process, perhaps they could find the leeway to express themselves when engaging in the "we think" about their identity as interpellated subjects of the ASEAN discourse. In a way, the project is an opportunity for them, as members of broader ASEAN publics, to exercise their right to express themselves and become involved in the politics and transformation of society in relation to ASEAN. Of course, despite the Manila pilot project's ambition, we should remain modest, and not overestimate the capacity of one project to immediately alter a very well propagated identity discourse.

Guided by photo-elicitation methodologies, as elucidated by Banks and Zeitlyn (2015: 89-93), Blackman (2007: 42-48), Pink (2013: 96-101) and Rose (2016: 314-332), I designed and organized a participatory photography project in Manila, which ran from November 2016 to April 2017. Following the ideal group size of 5-15 participants recommended by Blackman (2007: 46), I invited a total of 12 participants – a peer group of young professionals, male and female, aged 26 to 33, all of whom have travelled to at least 2 countries in ASEAN – by way of snowball sampling (Kenney 2009: 25) into the project. I also organized 4 major whole-day workshops and several smaller meet-ups, which the participants made good use of, to exchange information and learn more about current events in line with ASEAN's 50th anniversary activities and events held in Manila (as the Philippines was the current chair and host). We also decided to have a Facebook group where we could continue with the exchange.

The three major surveys (Thompson, Thianthai & Thuzar 2016; Phua & Chin 2015; Thompson & Thianthai 2008), mentioned above, helped me formulate guide questions for the participants. For instance, as I was more interested in the visual culture aspect of community-building and identity construction, I formulated general questions such as "Do you feel that you are a citizen of ASEAN?", "How do you feel about this identity?", "Do you identify with other Southeast Asians and do you feel like you share with them a common identity?" and "What similarities might you have with other Southeast Asians?", among others.

By then inviting the participants to use their camera phones in responding to the initial questions above – and to several more follow-up questions that we together formulated and raised during our workshops – they were able to use photography effectively in putting forward their own way of envisioning and picturing ASEAN, which manifested differences and similarities from one another. I observed throughout the whole process their way of agreeing and arguing with each other, which helped each of them shape not only their individual opinions but also their collective understanding of what their "ASEAN identity" might mean. In effect, again borrowing from Freire (1970), by way of producing photographs, the participants do not only produce images as text (i.e. the "words") but the act of producing

these images and, at the same time, exercising action and reflection, contributes to "transform[ing] the world" (Freire, 1970: 75) for these participants. This approach allowed the invited participants to "put [their] idea[s] into practice" (Kenney, 2009: 97). More importantly, participatory photography helped them, as representatives of general ASEAN publics, to bring their own experiences and personal contexts (Banks & Zeitlyn, 2015: 133; Pink, 2013: 95) into the research process.

The specific photographs selected to be included in this visual essay were also the result of a concluding workshop with the participants, where they were personally involved in the captioning, curating and editing of all the photographs

3.   Photographing ASEAN

Figure 2. © Detsy Uy (2017). Caption by Detsy Uy: "The easiest way to explain 'Southeast Asia' is just to point to it on the map, where concerned countries lie geographically close to each other. This is not different from how ASEAN is trying to invoke an 'imagined community'. If we look more closely – be it at any Southeast Asian country – the convenience of mapping the region is disrupted by a more fragmented experience of people going their own way and just minding their own business. Simply put, we do not really consider our-selves part of ASEAN in everything that we do."

Figure 3. © Shekinah Pensica (2017). Caption by Shekinah Pensica: "I took this photo on my way to the office. It's an everyday situation for commuters in Manila and we get so used to it and sometimes fed up of the stress, going to and from work, that there's no point in trying to remember it visually. These ways of transportation are similar to those of our neighbouring countries in ASEAN. We see a lot of these similarities among us but achieving regionality seems to be a tad out of reach."

Figure 4 (on the left). © Jessica Buen (2017). Caption by Jessica Buen: "Although this photo was taken in Manila, for other major cities of ASEAN this image is not unusual. Conspicuous electric cables often draw my attention and this is something that I find interestingly common among Southeast Asian cities."

Figure 5 (below). © Erick Divina (2017). Caption by Erick Divina: "I feel like ASEAN is merely a marketplace that allows us to exchange our goods with one another. At the end of the day, it seems as if it is only driven by commercialism. Perhaps we should remind ourselves that usually when we go to a marketplace, we are in search of things that are of value."

Figure 6. © Beverly Lumbera (2017). Caption by Beverly Lumbera: "This is a picture I took inside the train on my way to university. It gets stickier during rush hour. Sometimes, I don't feel like I'm a citizen of my own country because I have no space here. How can I be an ASEAN citizen when a lot of the time it feels like I'm not even Filipino?"

4. Conclusion

This visual essay hopes to argue, as exemplified by the photographs of the participants, that photographing ASEAN should also be a participatory exercise, in order for it to be relevant. While the notion of a regional identity has always been concomitant with the official ASEAN discourse, it is refreshing to see a more local perspective – framed and nuanced by the participants themselves. It is even more revealing to see how the photographs somewhat demonstrated what the latest of the three big surveys surmised:

> We can expect that as the ASEAN Community project, especially the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), becomes a more concrete reality, there may be more dissension over the value of ASEAN. (Thompson, Thianthai & Thuzar, 2016: 183).

Perhaps, this "dissension" is not only an important reality that ASEAN integration is facing but also a challenge in itself that ASEAN must acknowledge and address. While the region has always hailed the "ASEAN Way", traditionally, the region's core principles of non-intervention and consensus-building in international relations and regionalization (Quah, 2015; Cockerham, 2010; Acharya, 2007) in its official discourse, there is no denying that the grassroots perspective is equally compelling. Amid pressing issues such as Southeast Asia's refugee crises and territorial disputes, among others, perhaps the question of ASEAN "identities", in the plural sense, is key to better understanding why the region is the way it is today. In the words of Kahn (1998: 2):

> [N]o nation in the region can credibly claim cultural homogeneity. Everywhere, the evidence of cultural diversity is overwhelming, if only because it is forcibly brought to our attention either by political élites, or by the spokespersons for groups disempowered by race, culture, religion, gender or distance from the political centre.

Thus, the more the political centre insists on one "official image", the more reason there is for us all to encourage participation and use our many eyes.

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Biography

Kristian accomplished his Master of Arts (MA) degree in Visual Culture at the University of Westminster, London in 2012, and obtained his Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Interdisciplinary Art Studies from the University of the Philippines, Diliman in 2006. He joined the summer school of ECREA in 2017 while undertaking his PhD studies at Hong Kong Baptist University School of Communication. Apart from being a researcher, Kristian is also an artist specialising in calligraphy, film, photography, poetry and theatre. In 2002, he co-founded the advocacy performing arts organisation *Sirkulo ng Kabataang Artista* (Circle of Youth Artists) at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, and hitherto serves as its Artistic Director.

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Journalism in a deeply mediatized city.
A locative approach to urban reporting

Leif Kramp

Abstract

This chapter introduces a research and development journalism project in the second largest city of Germany, Hamburg. Funded by the Google Digital News Initiative, the project aims to strengthen the core functions of local journalism in terms of social cohesion and civic participation by developing innovative storytelling formats for urban reporting that can easily be appropriated by local journalists. In a collaborative setting, journalists, software engineers, UX designers and researchers translate ongoing trends of deep mediatization, shaped by differentiation, connectivity, omnipresence, pace of innovation and datafication, into a location-aware approach to produce, distribute to and engage audiences with local news.

Keywords: locative media; location-aware news; metropolitan journalism; urban storytelling; communicative figurations; R&D

'Simply put, location changes everything.'
(Honan 2009)

1. Introduction

Worldwide, large cities tend to grow larger and rural areas experience a continued exodus; urbanization is one of the dominant global trends (United Nations, 2016). Although Germany is not one of the most urbanized nations in Europe (UNDP, n.d.) – with a number of small and mid-sized cities shrinking in previous years (cf. Nelle et al. 2017) – the country is experiencing steady growth in metropolitan areas, with over 75 per cent of the population living in urban areas and cities (cf. World Bank, n.d.). Urbanization challenges not only municipalities, but also civic actors and economic organisations, including media companies. Besides the imperative to cope with the transformation of urban space and social structure in densely populated areas, urban actors are confronted with challenges to facilitate economical and sociocultural progress (cf. Blokland and Savage, 2016). Cities have always been 'inherently' places and products of intense communication (Gumpert and Drucker, 2008: 196). Thus, cities are not only radically transformed by ongoing changing social compositions but also by the transforming media environment (cf. Livingstone, d'Haenens and Hasebrink, 2001: 7). The contemporary urban public is made up of new kinds of actor constellations and communicative practices.

Metropolitan areas in Europe have become fields of radical change, expressed by the digitization of infrastructure, segregation and gentrification, economic innovation, technical experimentation and cultural diversity (cf. Eurostat, 2016). Major challenges in today's society are contested and negotiated in urban spaces: social conflicts connected with segregation, gentrification and migration, rising rents and housing prices due to the constant influx of new residents, environmental concerns and economic change. The introduction of digital technologies to public administration and supplies, infrastructure and social control (surveillance) are a particular catalyst for the ongoing transformations of life in urban spheres. These changes also have far-reaching consequences for journalism practice and news organisations in their efforts (and business) to create and sustain a critical public sphere (cf. Kramp, 2016). In the following, the chapter discusses the radical changes to urban life in an era of deep mediatization and the shortcomings of local journalism in an attempt to keep pace this transformation. It also introduces an experiment – in its early stages – that tries to develop a new integrative approach for news in the urban information ecosphere in Germany.

2.   Urban journalism and social cohesion

Social cohesion has been repeatedly identified as a prime function of local journalism in urban spheres (cf. Costera Meijer, 2010; Leupold, Klinger and Jarren 2016; Boyles, 2017). Local news has helped generations of readers, listeners and viewers to structure everyday life, ensuring the circulation of information and commentary on current developments and thereby providing a sense of belonging to a city community (Kim and Ball-Rokeach, 2006), public connection (Franklin, 2006) and an urban identity (Robel and Marszolek, 2017). In short, local news has enabled a sense of civic engagement in urban communities (Friedland, 2014).

'Community' is an ambiguous term. The question of community is a question of reference (Black, 1997: 1). As communities change, the emphasis on space as a main factor of identification and coherence gives way to other indicators. Communities are also built by organisational and social references, by interests – but they mainly come to life when the members of a respective community participate (cf. Hiller ,1941). Starting in the 1990s, journalists and academics – mainly in the United States – were excited by a concept that was meant to drive forward the communal embedding of journalism practice, trying to promote civic engagement, create a public debate and offer help and solutions to problems that burden local communities. Debated under various headings – 'public journalism', 'civic journalism', 'community journalism', 'communitarian journalism' – this concept was able to secure its position in journalism practice (Haas and Steiner, 2006; Forster, 2010). However, elements and principles of this idea are basically part of the self-perceptions of many local and regional news organizations, as they pledge to stay relevant for their (local and regional) audiences. Usually, local journalists still strive to be, and are proud of being, personally connected to their communities, defined by audiences that live in specific areas. While these communities started to shift their references, forms and preferences, when it comes to locality, connectedness and identity, this has enforced a more conversational and discursive construction of community – instead of the earlier geographical one (cf. Pauly and Eckert, 2002: 321).

Consequently, we see a growing discrepancy between normative expectations of the role of local journalism in urban society and the media usage behaviour of citizens. As Pöttker points out:

> Journalists ought to allow their audience to participate in current issues, to enlighten readers and listeners and be advocates of an open conversation between groups and milieus, so that the society can be more cohesive. When it comes to the professional tasks of journalists […]

the keywords public sphere, enlightenment and integration are used frequently. (Pöttker 2002: 12, translated by the author)

However, in Germany the print media are experiencing a downturn and only a comparatively low percentage of the population accesses news outlets digitally on websites, via apps or social media (Hölig and Hasebrink, 2017). Thus, for journalists, and also on a local level, it is no longer self-evident that they serve as the 'informational backbone of what people know about social life in their city' (Leupold, Klinger and Jarren, 2016). News organizations and individual journalists are still important actors in the urban communities they serve, but they have to strive more than ever to maintain the public connection: the 'orientation to a space where, in principle, problems about shared resources are or should be resolved, a space linked, at least indirectly, to some common frame of collective action about common resources' (Couldry, Livingstone and Markham 2010: 7). This is, naturally, a field of contestation as it has become increasingly difficult for journalists and (their) news organizations to uphold their previously privileged status as an intermediary between the municipality and citizens.

The German news media sector is largely dominated by traditional regional newspaper publishing houses and federally structured public service broadcasting. The traditional mass-media business models of newspaper publishers and broadcasting companies have increasingly come under pressure in recent years as both advertising revenues and media use have shifted. Circulations have been in constant decline and a historically world-famous 'newspaper city' like Germany's capital, Berlin (cf. Mendelssohn et al., 2017), has seen massive circulation drops and sluggish business for local online journalism. 'The internet was not the trigger of the crisis of local journalism, but it is indeed a problem', writes Benjamin Piel (2017), former editor-in-chief of the local newspaper *Elbe-Jeetzel-Zeitung*. Especially, small news organizations – no matter where they are located – struggle in their search for new revenue models and monetizing their online ventures. Economic backing is a core condition for editorial development in times of change and uncertainty: For a long time, especially newsrooms in local and regional news organizations have shown a strong tendency of inertia, resisting innovative concepts, reorganizing workflows or launching new products, pursuing a hesitant adoption strategy due to high financial risk (cf. Kramp and Weichert, 2012; Weichert, Kramp and Welker, 2015).

However, this has changed in recent years, making way for new forms of distribution through social media (cf. Bruns, 2018). We increasingly see journalism trying to colonize virtual places, platforms 'where the audience is at' (Walden, 2016), such as Facebook, Instagram or Snapchat. News outlets have realized that

they are losing large sections of (younger) audiences to social media where users have found a different form of social cohesion, one that is not primarily signified by geographical community but rather by interests and identities. On social platforms like Facebook or Instagram, (young) users come across journalistic content rather accidently, leaving them unable to sufficiently assess its accuracy (cf. The Media Insight Project, 2015; Weichert and Kramp, 2017). So, news organizations pursued a pragmatic strategy that rapidly grew into an uneven collaboration between web companies and news organizations, which has been described as platform dependence (Newman, 2018: 12). Recently, this became a serious issue for the business strategies of news publishers when Facebook announced that its algorithm would be altered in order to offer its users more influence in deciding what content would be seen as 'trustworthy, informative and local' by it (Zuckerberg, 2018).

Young adults especially use social media to communicate, inform and entertain themselves and thus disregard traditional media (cf. Wadbring and Bergström, 2017; Weichert and Kramp, 2017). While some news organizations have launched fresh news brands that cover topics that directly address a younger audience (cf. Kramp 2017), those regularly do not have an explicit local focus, even though a perception of 'urban youth culture' is sometimes prevalent (cf. Kramp and Weichert, 2017: 203-204).

Particularly, local news media in Germany, which have so far sustained the public discourse on urban and suburban life, are confronted with eroding (in particular younger) audiences and a marginalization of their discursive influence on other public fields like politics, the economy or civil society and its actors. In the digital era, audiences are increasingly likely to be strongly influenced by new public actors, such as a broad variety of consumer industrial companies, collectivities like social movements or business associations and individuals like social media 'influencers' (cf. Booth and Matic 2011) disseminating information, interpretations and options that do not follow journalistic principles. As deeply as urban news organizations are interconnected with the historical weal and woe of their city, they are nowadays complemented by an often confusing plethora of alternative sources of information and polymorphous forms of mutual communication between individuals. Urban dwellers draw on a very diverse selection of media sources to cope with, learn about or adjust to circumstances, conditions and specificities of local civic life, no longer relying mainly on newspaper or broadcasting journalism to follow the 'city beat' (Sharma 2005: 149). Local journalism might have served the public for centuries with information and orientation, even mobilized citizens to participate in local public affairs and integrated communities just by its steady reporting, but its

future, especially in deeply mediatized cities, is already deemed uncertain (cf. Nielsen 2015: 16).[1]

The requirement to sustain an informed public becomes even more complex in a transforming city culture which constantly differentiates itself further: The individualization of media repertoires and communicative networking, especially among young people, tends to cultivate a landscape of heterogeneous local and trans-local groups which are hard to grasp by a provider of shared news. This raises the risk that cities lack a common ground for public reasoning. Whereas local mass media earlier reinforced a (at least imagined) common public space of reference for communal action and public discourse, the pervasive differentiation of communicative practices via technical communication media evokes sees the dwindling of this shared spatial reference and creates a serious crisis for public space in the mediatized city (cf. Mela, 2014; Kramp and Novy, 2013).

3. Communicative figurations in city life

Urban sociologists stress that with the rise of digital information and communication technologies, dimensions of space and geography become increasingly irrelevant, stretching the concepts of community and sphere of life into cyberspace. The urban increasingly prevails as interconnected 'nodes of activity across metropolitan spaces' (Gottdiener and Hutchison, 2011: 388). This raises a question about how a productive relation between physical and virtual urban spaces is established by the communicative practices of a variety of actors in general and how this can take place between journalists, groups and individual citizens. Hess (2013) introduced the concept of 'geo-social' news to grasp this new relation of geographically and virtually linked spheres (Hess and Waller, 2014: 131). It emphasizes the journalistic task to see the boundlessness of global flows from a local perspective and to contextualize the social space they circulate in. In doing this, news organisations need to retain the trust of citizens in an increasingly complex situation. As Hepp, Simon and Sowinska (2017) show, the desire of young people to follow news and commentary about the transformation of life worlds in the dense urban environment of a city has not vanished. On the contrary, young people belong to a wide variety of communicative figurations and use information and communication technology in ever more versatile ways to learn about the changes occurring around them.

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1 Nevertheless, we should not forget that journalism has always struggled to fulfil its integrative societal function. The demand for low-threshold news services, especially for low status groups, is still high, raising the bar even higher for accessible and engaging reporting (cf. Farwick 2012: 391).

Communicative figurations are understood as interdependencies in specific social domains – or '"spheres" as being meaningful in everyday practice' (Hepp and Hasebrink 2017: 23) – comprising actor constellations, frames of relevance and communicative practices. Mediatization research has traced an ever more complex and intensified moulding of social domains by technical communication media (cf. Lundby, 2014; Hepp and Krotz, 2014; Hepp, Breiter and Hasebrink, 2017). With more media affordances available to everyone, they are interwoven with each other in all thinkable contexts. Couldry and Hepp (2016: 56) describe this as 'media manifold'. To understand the consequences of these local news media, it is worthwhile to ask how repertoires of communication change in deeply mediatized urban spheres (Hasebrink, 2017), where numerous alternative forms of communication can change the flow of information quickly and profoundly (cf. the rise of direct messaging apps like WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger in everyday mutual communication). This puts urban news providers and individual reporters in a constant state of flux. The problem of how to *engage* with citizens constantly structures the modes of news production, distribution and follow-up interaction between journalists and members of the audience. News organizations see themselves under constant pressure to adjust to the changing needs and motives of recipients. This puts particular pressure on the journalist-audience-relationship, assuming that journalists want to help and constructively address social inequalities and conflicts as providers of news and commentary, and thereby orientation in the service of the public good.

Exploring these questions can be framed by pointing to five dominant trends of the changing media environment, as outlined by Hepp and the 'Communicative Figurations' research network (2017: 17). First, we see continuing *differentiation* in the growing number of technical communication media. Second, there is increasing *connectivity* between these media and between individuals, collectivities and organizations via these media. Third, the media landscape is characterized by the *omnipresence* of digital communication media affordances that offer a permanent state of being connected nearly everywhere. Fourth, there is the dynamic *pace of innovation* with new (digital) media and services being constantly introduced; and finally, all these trends are supported by spreading *datafication* whereby the exponential growth in digital data becomes an ever more relevant factor in structuring social life.

These trends imply more opportunities than threats for the enhancement of urban journalism in a mediatized society. However, they also demand dynamic and flexible change management for editorial innovation. Public engagement requires the dissemination of information, the enabling of conversations and the empowerment of citizens to understand and participate in the decision-making process

concerning the direction in which the transformation of the city should go (cf. Firmstone and Coleman, 2015: 122-123). Prolonged differentiation and connectivity pose challenges to three key requirements: 1) the distribution of content has to be organized via various own and third-party platforms and services, 2) news organizations have to develop new conversational routines to engage citizens and 3) they need to be able to scrutinize their ability to foster a critical public sphere that bolsters citizens' political participation. Audience engagement has become a new paradigm in the media industry, in particular in the news sector where engagement strategies have complemented editorial news work with various communicative practices that mainly make use of conversational interfaces on and inspired by the social web (cf. Meier et al., 2017). At the same time, the question of how digital connectivity can lead or at least relate to social cohesion in the mediatized city is widely under-investigated (cf. Tosoni, Tarantino and Giaccardi, 2013; Aiello, Tarantino and Oakley, 2017).

At the same time, ubiquitous computing has promoted the idea of a 'smart city' (Townsend, 2013) where digital technologies are deployed to facilitate life in urban spaces of high population density. The Internet of things, the use of wearables, locative media and near-field communication (cf. Doherty, 2018: 8) have shaped communication practices in urban contexts. Often this development is not driven at all by news organizations but by local governments that team up with influential IT and electronic corporations: 'A key question for critical urban research is around the extent to which these companies are becoming the urbanists of the future, and important architects of contemporary urban growth coalitions' (Luque, McFarlane and Marvin, 2014: 82). On the other hand, the field of digital innovation in the smart city has become contested by pioneer communities who use digital media technology to contribute to an informed public (cf. Hepp, 2016). These 'flexible data professionals who aspire to work in the public interest' (Baack 2017: 16) are in a constant competition with corporate actors who strive for commercial benefit from digital transformation. News organizations have yet to acknowledge their role in this trial of strength between conflicting interests.

4.   'Locative media' and 'locative news'

Proximity is traditionally one of the strongest news factors, signalling the relevance of current information for individuals' living environment (cf. Goggin, Martin and Dwyer, 2015: 44). Newsrooms in Germany have experimented, but seriously struggled to intensify their local reporting by covering individual neighbourhoods and addressing respective residential publics. Although engagement with the news

(and with news workers) promises to become more responsive for audiences when following locative approaches (Boyles, 2017: 955), this kind of 'excessively local news' (Hess and Waller, 2016) has not yet proven to be economically viable, for neither traditional publishing houses, broadcasters nor start-ups. The German news market still relies heavily on long-established structures of production and distribution. This means that the mass-media principle translated into news websites that offer local and regional reporting cannot be easily scaled down to the level of districts or even residential areas in order to provide tailored hyperlocal news. Hyperlocal journalism aims at news that is relevant in the immediate vicinity of people's homes, e.g. in their neighbourhood or district. While empirical studies show great interest from people for such news in Germany (cf. overview in Möhring, 2015), respective news ventures have not been successful in terms of outreach or advertising revenue. Therefore, hyperlocal news outlets have mainly been run by projects and enthusiasts (often unpaid or underpaid) to serve a particular community with (critical) news on social and political issues (Fröhlich et al., 2012).

Since smartphones, GPS positioning technology, public Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and other wireless technologies have become readily available, primarily in city centres, 'locative media' – 'media of communication that are functionally bound to a location' (Wilken 2012: 243) – have experienced considerable expansion in many areas, but not in terms of news production and distribution (cf. Frith, 2015). Mapping technology enables users to navigate, but also to access various location-specific information (text, pictures, videos, sound) and even annotate or create customized maps with aggregated data and curated content (e.g. Google Maps, Apple Maps, Open Street Map). While this practice has an obvious functional value in a social world that is characterized by increased mobility (cf. Pellegrino 2006), it also offers ways to produce and enhance the meaning of places, trigger the curiosity of otherwise hard to reach audiences or even help in building new or reinforce community bonds (cf. de Souza e Silva and Firth, 2012; Silva, 2014). Location-based services are widely used for navigating the urban sphere, as a knowledge resource to explore new places, learn about travel destinations or residential communities, but also connect with people on site. Furthermore, 'geo-tagging' has become a quite common and automated activity with digital content (pictures, videos, texts) generated by users on their mobile phones appended automatically with geospatial metadata and published on social media (cf. McQuire, 2016: 7).

These new practices of media appropriation and data generation raise questions about the ownership of publicly available information about urban places: Lemos (2010) coined the term 'informational territory' to point to a power struc-

ture with respect to a digital information flow conjugated with a physical area. The question of who controls, adds to and repurposes location-dependent information at the intersection between urban space and cyberspace is virulent. Corporations that strive to market their commodities are already in situ and competing for the digital traces of users to increase brand awareness and sales. Also, users themselves are empowered to share their sense of place via 'creative interventions' and to hybridize the informational territory by the use of locative media (cf. Lemos, 2010: 416-417).

Experience from Norway shows that location-sensitive journalism has the potential to generate interest in local reporting, especially among young media users. The *LocaNews* project, run by researchers from Bergen and Volda, experimented with a prototype for a smartphone news app that delivers articles to an audience dependent on the physical position of the individual user, based on GPS data (Nyre et al., 2012). Together with entry-level media students with an average age of 21 years, the researchers explored how the spatial notions of students affect the production of local reporting with respect to different levels of proximity to specific locations. The team used a tripartite scale of proximity zones to produce three versions of a single news story, serving users with 'ultralocal, hyperlocal and local news', depending on a radius of 100 metres (on site), 100-500 metres (in the neighbourhood) and more than 500 metres (in the town) (cf. Øie, 2013: 563). In a qualitative survey of 32 visitors (average age 29) to a sports festival in the Norwegian town of Voss, many respondents found this form of local journalism 'more interesting', 'more entertaining' and 'more informative' than the usual forms of local reporting (Øie, 2012: 172). The questions, experiences and implications of such experiments are intriguing: Since the advent of the social web, news organizations have explored various ways to create new kinds of online presence, besides their central news websites, by unbundling their content and partially giving up their sovereignty over distribution, audience engagement and the advertising business, due to their platform dependency on Facebook and other platforms. Locative news instead offers a new access point for the reception of and interaction with local journalism, based on the particular expertise of local news organizations.

In the United States, participatory news mapping was so successful that the Web-based local community network *Everyblock* (founded in 2007 to provide microlocal community news by and for citizens), was acquired by Comcast/NBCUniversal, the world's second largest media corporation, in 2014. It has now been rolled out in roughly ten cities across the US. The platform follows a 'Be a better neighbour' principle, understands itself as a 'digital version of an urban street: an exciting, surprising, diverse place' and promotes local bonding (cf. Oppegaard,

2014). Users can post messages and events and comment on geo-tagged (hyperlocal) articles, e.g. crime reports, propert listings, meetups and conversations neighbours are having. There have also been a few attempts by news publishers to explore the location-dependent distribution of their content in cooperation with the search-and-discovery mapping app *Foursquare* (cf. Kirchner, 2010; Sherk, 2010; on the sustainability of the concept: Gell, 2017). Apart from some limited projects, locative approaches have hardly reached noteworthy prevalence among local news media. As Weiss (2015a) has outlined, news organisations are mostly attracted to adopt geo-location features for automated sections like weather and traffic information. Otherwise, they have tended to shy away from efforts to develop connected and interactive news formats that take advantage of geolocation technology and related innovations associated with the emergence of the smart city. 'Journalists are coming late to this party', states Faleiros (2012): 'While social networks are quickly making advances in mapping people's locations and giving them geotagged information, media organizations have not transformed their own content into layers of information that can be effectively combined with satellite data or other large-scale scientific mapping.' This delay is often due to limitations in the compatibility of content management systems in newsroom operations with emerging digital technologies. It is also based on economical hesitation with respect to costs for staff and software engineering and related to the persistence of established routines in journalism practice that were solidified over decades and are not likely to change quickly (cf. Nyre et al., 2012: 300).

Nonetheless, the pace of how locative media in various non-journalistic fields (cf. Wilken/Goggin 2015) continues to grow into a powerful way of disseminating knowledge and capitalizing on marketing is noteworthy. 'Out of home' advertising has built efficiently on the spread of digital infrastructure in urban areas by using geolocation technologies and it registers steady growth and high adoption rates among consumers (cf. Stalder, 2011; Provenzano, 2018). Also, large tech corporations continue to invest in location awareness functionalities for their platforms and services (cf. Burrus, 2018). As the technology is constantly evolving, with third-party services offering algorithms and modules to geotag and distribute in location-aware settings, news organizations are yet to develop sustained location-based access to the richness of their local reporting that rests in the digital archives of their news sites. Furthermore, as Salovaara (2016) has pointed out, this relates less to the question of product and more to journalism practice and skills in the first place, in order to exploit an operational framework for engaging locative news production.

5.   A location-awareness approach to urban journalism

In 2016, a consortium of three institutional partners in cooperation with local two
news organizations[2] successfully applied for funding from the Digital News Ini-
tiative that was initiated by the tech corporation Google to support sustainable
innovations in journalism in the European news market (cf. Ellis, 2015; for a
critical view: Kayser-Bril, 2017). The project aimed to address the crisis in the
urban public sphere constructively with the development of a data-driven frame-
work for urban journalism in the form of a research and development lab. The
Urban Storytelling Lab (USL) is conceived as a creative editorial space in which
new engaging formats for urban journalism are generated, prototyped and tested
in a collaborative space for journalists, journalism students, software developers
and UX designers. By establishing the USL, the partners involved– including two
leading local news media (the newspaper *Hamburger Abendblatt* and the public
regional broadcaster *NDR*) – aim to enhance civic engagement and participation in
democratic processes with engaging news formats that are rooted in urban places,
using location-based computing and services as well as a broad range of interactive
features (e.g. data-driven reporting, 360° photo- and videography, Augmented Re-
ality, Virtual Reality). The main objective is to create a new reporting environment
for urban development by helping local news organizations – that do not neces-
sarily have the resources and expertise to apply emerging digital technologies to
their reporting – to produce and publish geo-based storytelling formats referring to
open data connected to public places. The development output of the USL will be
implemented on news websites and in the social media outlets of media partners
who have committed themselves to improving their audience engagement with the
thematic focuses in question.

The *Urban Storytelling Lab* focuses on both the location-dependent distribu-
tion of news and the integration of innovative, engaging and geo-based interaction
with news. This is not merely a question of proximity-based sorting of news con-
tent, it is also about creating location-sensitive news experiences that exceed the
textual level of perception, integrating text, photography, video and audio, data
visualizations, social media content, augmented or virtual reality. Based on an ag-
ile collaborative project management methodology, including design sprints and
hackathons, development seminars with media partners and application prototyp-

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2   The 'Urban Storytelling Lab' is headed by Stephan Weichert (editorial development and proj-
    ect management, Hamburg Media School), Leif Kramp (research and evaluation, ZeMKI,
    University of Bremen) and Timo Lundelius (software engineering, WeBuildCity) and initially
    involves two media partners: the leading local newspaper *Hamburger Abendblatt* and the re-
    gional public service broadcaster NDR. The lab is coordinated by Lennart Kutzner.

ing, the main emphasis of the project is on a design thinking methodology (cf. Plattner/Meinel/Leifer 2010) that addresses the demands and expectations of local audiences and leads to a geo-based platform for the location-based distribution of and interaction with news in innovative data-driven formats.

Hamburg lends itself very well to an experimental research and development project like the USL: The second largest German city consists of diverse districts with distinguishable profiles and public images, yet still has a relatively coherent metropolitan identity (as opposed to Berlin, for instance, with its strong emphasis on its culturally disparate 'Kiezes' neighbourhoods). The city of Hamburg has experienced an unprecedented transformational process in terms of a number of iconic building and development projects: The Elphilharmonie concert hall opened in 2016 after a decade-long controversy about soaring costs and eroding support from the city's population; the HafenCity quarter became Europe's largest urban development project in a city centre, Neue Mitte Altona ('New Centre Altona') will relocate a complete main-line station to the west side of the city and restructure the core of the Altona quarter, the Hamburger Deckel project ('Hamburg's Lid') will cover the autobahn A7 which cuts through the west side of the city in order to reunite the affected parts of the city with a green park belt; and the housing market generally is over-inflated. Historically and currently, Hamburg is a city of social dynamics and conflicts, with a lively cultural scene and strong gentrification, but also political radicalization: The protests against the G20 summit in Hamburg in 2017 went down in history for their exuberant violence. Beyond that, the city government has proclaimed a digital agenda for Germany's long-enduring print media capital that foresees the penetration of 'all areas of life, work and learning' by digital technologies, with a focus on mobility, economy, public administration, infrastructure and civic participation, as well as the education sector, and also European interconnectedness with the aim of democratizing information and communication contexts so as to increase the outreach for information and products, promote new efficiency potential and increase the usability and usefulness of services (Scholz, 2016).

As a starting point, two surveys among readers of the local newspaper *Hamburger Abendblatt* (n=264) and among listeners and viewers of the regional public broadcaster NDR (n=145) were conducted regarding their interest in local urban news on the transformation of the metropolitan area of Hamburg. Against the background above, it is not surprising that the vast majority of respondents in both surveys saw Hamburg's transformation as most clearly reflected in urban development and building projects. Changes in the property market and the changed composition of the urban population were also prominent. More than two-thirds (HA) and three-quarters (NDR) of respondents are critical of these changes, showing that the potential interest in critical reporting on these topics is high. At the same

time, the need for differentiated and illustrative background reporting (not merely opinion-based criticism) can be assumed. The most frequently mentioned terms and thematic areas in the NDR survey were construction sites/urban planning and improving the quality of life (especially through environmental protection), reporting on traffic issues (from public transport to traffic jams to the improvement of cycle tracks) to the strengthening of citizen participation. In the HA survey, subjects like transportation and traffic, modes of citizen participation/inclusion in the transformation of the city, questions of urban/living space development and the state of schools, as well as green spaces and environmental problems, are mentioned, as well as the change in the composition of the urban population due to immigration (of migrants/refugees).

The interest in local news coverage tends to focus on local spheres of life: for 58% (NDR) and 47% (HA) of the respondents, information from the immediate neighbourhood is 'very important', 47% (NDR) and 53% (HA) of respondents say that their larger district is of great interest to them. Information that is concerned with the even larger city quarter level, on the other hand, is only 'very important' for 32% (NDR) and 42% (HA) of the respondents. This underscores a point of interest on a more hyperlocal level, which is not covered sufficiently by established news media.

A clear majority of respondents (81%, NDR; 77%, HA) are willing to take part in a public discussion on the transformation of their city. However, only 19% of the users surveyed via the NDR stated that they were 'very likely' to engage publicly via a news medium (app or website), in addition to which there were 24% who 'probably' would. Among the respondents to the HA-survey only 13% would be 'very likely' to participate in this way, 27% would be 'likely'. More than half of the respondents were undecided or rejected such a form of participation. Here, it becomes apparent that urban news outlets are not (yet) considered a suitable channel or attractive platform to participate as citizens in a public discussion. Nevertheless, the examples of *Facebook*, *Instagram* and some location-based platforms like Foursquare show that easy to use low-threshold interaction features can be successful in engaging users with content and spur discussions. This is crucial as '[i]deas about the broad possibilities of digital media for urban living' (Hepp/ Piet/Sowinska 2017: 76) all too often do not resonate fully with people's everyday reality. This calls for testing whether, for example, forms of direct communication –with editorial staff, with other users or commenting on or adding editorial content to a geo-based web app – might be able to bridge the gap between the increasingly common social media practice of expressing individual attitudes on online platforms and the use of a news outlet.

Consequentially, the respondents were asked *why* they wanted to be informed about the respective changes. The answers to this question were disparate. It is noticeable that in the NDR survey, well under a third of the respondents stated that they wanted to find out more information in order to be able to take part in the conversation. The NDR participants were mainly motivated by their personal involvement as residents or commuters (61%) and a majority of them had an interest in actively shaping the transformation of their city, thereby wanting to inform themselves (56%). The HA respondents, meanwhile, wanted be well-informed out of general interest (approx. 60%) and in order to be able to join the conversation (58%). The fact that fewer respondents in the HA survey were motivated as residents or commuters may also be due to the composition of the readership of the newspaper, which mainly lives outside Hamburg's city centre. However, more than half of the respondents in both surveys were interested in actively shaping change. All four reasons for being informed mentioned above scored high. Hence, there is potential for involvement.

The majority of respondents want to be informed about what is happening in general and to critically monitor the actions of the powerful in politics and business. However, only a minority obtains information about change in Hamburg in order to discuss it with other citizens (12%, NDR; 8%, HA). Follow-up communication is therefore not a predominant goal for news, rather a self-centred interest in information. Users want to be well-informed themselves and then express their opinions, but they do not necessarily want to discuss change with their fellow citizens. Most of the respondents prefer traditional forms of communication, such as text and photos (analogue or digital). Interestingly, however, the 'comprehensible visualization of complex data' is favoured over video/audio (analogue or digital), both with the ratings 'I like very much' or 'I like. The fourth-ranked category is 'reporting with direct interactive involvement of opinions from the population', followed by the fifth-ranked category 'thematically specialized mobile apps'. The survey results differ in their ranking order only in the evaluation of innovative forms of digital content: While those surveyed via HA prefer Virtual Reality over interactive online content, such as interactive animations and 360° photos and videos, those questioned via NDR prefer it the other way round. Users favour familiar forms of presentation which ensure that information is conveyed as efficiently and effectively as possible. However, since data journalism receives higher approval than video and audio, the visualization of complex data on the transformation of the urban sphere seems to be a promising direction for further development.

The *USL* plans to build a platform for location-dependent urban journalism with an appealing and lucid user interface. With many fields of experimentation in journalism practice trying to nurture the mediation potential of, for instance, the vi-

sualization of open data, 360° photography and videography, Augmented Reality or Virtual Reality, the stakes are high for local newsrooms to keep up with the pace of innovation (cf. Newman, 2017: 24-25; Schmierer, 2017). Furthermore, with mass phenomena like *Pokémon Go*, a smartphone application that took the world by storm in 2016, gamification elements could also be seen as a promising way to go (cf. Goggin, 2017). However, in Germany (but also elsewhere), newsroom cultures, corporate structures and budgetary limitations are often obstacles to reinforce strategies for open editorial change management (cf. Kramp and Loosen, 2017).

Therefore, the USL platform itself is being developed together with two major news organizations to ensure proper integration into content management systems. Also, the platform is being developed as a *sum of its parts,* where each is meant to help local reporters on its own to create an engaging news experience without necessarily having technical expertise in the application of emerging digital media technologies. The lab's objective is to enable local newsrooms to adopt the required skills to follow a locative approach to engaging urban reporting. Journalism students and experienced journalists together develop formats that have the potential to be adopted easily by local newsrooms to complement conventional forms of news presentation in the urban sphere. The formats to be developed include geo-tagging, visualization of complex data, augmented reality applications, social media storytelling and conversational bot technology. In its parts and in sum, this can help urban journalism practice to meet the actual information needs of residents, commuters and tourists in their immediate urban vicinity with comfortable easy to use access to news with accompanying options to interact and participate.

Adopting principles of ambient journalism (cf. Hermida, 2010; Sheller, 2015), the platform will be based on GPS and mapping technology, providing several layers of news content on the immediate surroundings of the user. With the datafication of media use, journalists could emulate marketers' actions and deploy analysis data of their users to gain a deeper understanding of how local reporting is appropriated by members of the community and how it contributes to shape their conversations (cf. Weiss, 2015b: 126). The location data of individual users enable newsrooms to address them directly, depending on their current location, and involve them in editorial matters, e.g. in the form a 'call to action' which opens up alternatives for occasion-related audience engagement. If journalists can draw on closer contacts with residents in that way, the communicative relationship with audiences could by solidified and the journalistic function as a supplier of relevant news, a moderator of the public conversation and an intermediary between the various stakeholders shaping urban transformation, could be consolidated.

The imagined goal of the USL experiment is a new kind of location-aware journalism. Such journalism not only relates abstractly to the world, but becomes part of the real-life experience of its recipients, whether they stroll around the city or stay at home. Proximity reporting zones can introduce tangible and comfortable access to local news. With the adaptation of popular communicative forms like the use of digital cartography as a structural order for news, journalism itself occurs in a different shape, which differs decisively from conventional forms of accessing local news. Urban journalism coalesces with the urban space on which it reports. Public spaces become publishing spaces in which journalists and users start conversations. Data-driven visualization techniques like AR or VR make it possible to look behind the bricks and mortar of buildings across the street, bringing building sites to informational life, giving perspective to faceless concrete and glass monoliths and visualizing complex (social, political, economic) processes that all characterize urban development. This will ideally lead to deeper, contextual and vivid reporting, but it might also trigger civic participation.

6.   Conclusion

'The digital media environment undoubtedly represents considerable potential for inspiring new forms of local journalism, but so far few have managed to realise that potential and establish sustainable forms of born-digital local journalism', states Nielsen (2015: 17). In its collaborative and experimental setting, the *Urban Storytelling Lab* tries to raise the bar by following an experimental and integrative approach, bringing early career journalists and senior editors, newsroom strategists, software developers, UX designers and researchers together to ensure sustainable viability of the project's outcomes. With high hopes for altering newsroom cultures to encourage editorial experimentation, user-centred perspectives and design thinking, research and development intertwine to create valuable user experiences.

User tests will show how a platform for locative news might flourish on urban territory, how audience engagement has to be orchestrated to have a detectable effect. The main impediments to overcome include geo-tagging potentially large corpora of archived news content, codifying location awareness into standard editorial workflows and promoting the further development of location-based interactive formats using open data, AR or VR technology. By achieving this, local journalism could devise a novel and genuinely natural point of access for its audiences to stay informed about urban matters that relate to them according to their actual geographical position. For communication and media researchers, the related field of transforming journalism practice, newsroom organization and

news business is not only an opportunity to study but also to participate in actual developmental – and, more profoundly, to shape the oft-debated future of journalism (cf. Lowrey and Shan 2018).

Community cohesion will continue to be a predominant issue for cities that have to face a changing population structure and economic growth or decline. Local journalism has a lot to discover by taking the changing audience perspective and geographically guided perceptions of the urban sphere(s) of life seriously. A reinforced sense of place can develop into a sense of getting involved. This can lead to a (stronger) sense of community and a lively and informed urban public sphere. First results of the *Urban Storytelling Lab* are expected in mid-2019.

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Biography

Dr Leif Kramp is a media, communication and history scholar. He is Senior Researcher and Research Coordinator at the Centre for Media, Communication and Information Research (ZeMKI), University of Bremen. Kramp has authored and edited various books about media and journalism. He is a founding member of the Association of Media and Journalism Criticism (VfMJ) and serves on the directorate of its scholarship programme VOCER Innovation Medialab, which promotes young journalists developing innovative projects. Kramp has also been a jury member for the German Initiative News Enlightenment (INA) since 2011.

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Mediation opportunity structures in illiberal democracies. Social movement responses to state anti-refugee propaganda in Hungary

Zsofia Nagy

Abstract

The recent rise of illiberal democracies shapes a distinct environment in which social movements emerge and operate. This has challenged social science to offer a more nuanced analysis of the potential of social movements in such contexts. This chapter contributes to this ongoing discussion using the framework of *mediation opportunity structures*. By focusing on the case of Hungary, the chapter argues that understanding the dynamics of protest and social movements in contemporary illiberal contexts demands that we pay attention to three issues: 1) the structural power of the state to dominate the mainstream media discourse, 2) the logic of right-wing populism that sets limits on public discourse and 3) a new re-feudalization of the public sphere where top-bottom, unidirectional propaganda tools aim to replace forms that promote dialogue. The chapter draws on research in 2015-2016 in Hungary, focusing on three different movement responses to government anti-refugee propaganda and politics: 1) a counter-billboard campaign criticising the government, 2) a grassroots humanitarian movement and 3) a local protest movement against a refugee camp. Highlighting the findings of these case studies points to the key potential of the new media environment and to tactical innovations (in mobilization, organization and direct action) facilitated by social media. However, they also show how the effects of these innovations were limited, mostly as a consequence of their ambivalent relationship towards the populist logic of public discourse and structural constraints in mainstream media representation. The findings show that the application of mediation theory to contentious action in illiberal democracies allows for a nuanced and multi-layered understanding of opportunities and constraints of such action.

Keywords: social movements, mediation opportunity structures, illiberal democracy

1.   Introduction

There are two gaps that urgently need to be bridged between media research and the study of social movement organizations. First, the recent evolution of the *media landscape* – notably digitization, the rise of social media and emerging hybridization of the environment – has produced new concepts and theoretical frameworks in these fields, but explicit connections across disciplines are rare. Second, media scholars and social movements also both need to take stock of the changing *political* environment: the rise of the 'illiberal' – a context that does not fit the inherited democracy-dictatorship binary.

The framework of *mediation opportunity structures* (Cammaerts, 2012) provides a potential missing link between media and movement scholars in studying such emergent phenomena. Applying this framework to illiberal democracies is also an analytically useful tool to uncover a previously under-researched area: the mediation constraints and opportunities in illiberal democracies. In this chapter I will first outline this theoretical framework and then introduce three case studies carried out in 2015-2017 in Hungary. They focus on different movement responses to government anti-refugee propaganda and politics: 1) the case of the Two-Tailed Dog Party's counter-billboard campaign that criticized the government, 2) Migration Aid, a grassroots humanitarian movement and 3) a local protest movement in the village of Martonfa against a plan to set up a refugee camp in the neighbourhood. The findings of these case studies point to the potential of the new media environment, showing how tactical innovation appeared and was facilitated by social media. However, they also show how the effects of these innovations were limited, mostly as a consequence of their ambivalent relationship towards the populist logic of public discourse and structural constraints. The application of mediation theory to contentious action in illiberal democracies allows for a more nuanced and multi-layered understanding of opportunities and constraints of such action.

2.   The academic challenge: bridging media studies and social movements research

Recent changes – digitization, mediatization, the rise of social media – and their effects on social movements have not gone unnoticed in media research. However, what is lacking from many of the conceptualizations is a connection to social movement research. Hence, we urgently need frameworks that integrate media scholarship and social movement approaches. One such candidate for conceptualization is the notion of *mediation opportunity structures,* put forward by Bart Cammaerts (2012).

The concept of opportunity structures has been established by political process theory within social movement scholarship. In short, political process theory puts the emphasis on political opportunities and threats, mobilizing structures, framing processes, protest cycles and action repertoires. The focus is on the *interaction* between the context and movement characteristics (Ritzer, 2007). Cammaerts has proposed the notion of *mediation of opportunity structures* within this paradigm. The core idea states that 'mediation' is useful as:

> It enables us to *link up* various ways in which media and communication are relevant to protest and activism: the framing processes in mainstream media and political elites, the self-representations by activists, the use, appropriation and adaptation of ICTs by activists and citizens to mobilize for and organize direct actions, as well as media and communication practices that constitute mediated resistance in its own right. (Cammaerts, 2012: 118, emphasis added)

Cammaerts (2012) suggests that we think of the mediation opportunity structure through a model that comprises three kinds of constraints and opportunities: in the media, in the discourse and in the networked environment (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Mediation opportunity structure (Cammaerts, 2012)
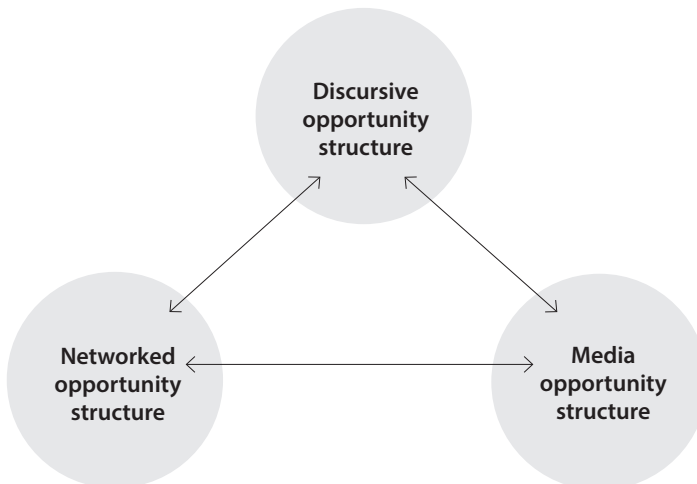
3.   The political challenge: illiberal democracies

The recent rise of illiberal democracies poses a different kind of challenge to scholars of media and social movements. Existing paradigms and theories in these fields

gravitate clearly towards either liberal democratic or authoritarian states. What is sorely needed today, however, is theoretical and empirical work that addresses the case of illiberal democracies. The recent backslide of previously established liberal democracies to illiberal regimes has been widely documented and led to a blossoming of literature in the political and social sciences.

First, there is a wide-ranging debate on *terminology*. Authors use terms such as 'autocracies' (Kornai, 2015) or 'hybrid regimes' (Cassani, 2014). In part, this variety also stems from the different foci of researchers. Thus, those focusing on the political economy of such regimes can describe them as 'neo-patrimonialisms' (Fukuyama, 2014) or 'mafia states' (Naím, 2012). A second question concerns the *root causes* of illiberal democracies. Sheiring (2015) distinguishes between three competing explanations: the role of elites, the significance of social inequality and varieties of capitalism. Third, there is important work aiming to reveal the *conse-quences* of the illiberal trend (Magyar, 2016).

There has been little reflection on the mediatized nature of the societies within which these developments take place. Research on media policies on the one hand and discursive-ideological issues on the other tend to be disjointed too. What is needed is a comprehensive framework that addresses these gaps. In this respect, the framework of mediation opportunity structures allows us to ask two important questions. 1) How do illiberal tendencies play out and constrain the mediation op-portunity structures for social movements? 2) How do social movements perceive and take advantage of this mediation opportunity structure?

Figure 2. Illiberal threats in the mediation opportunity structure
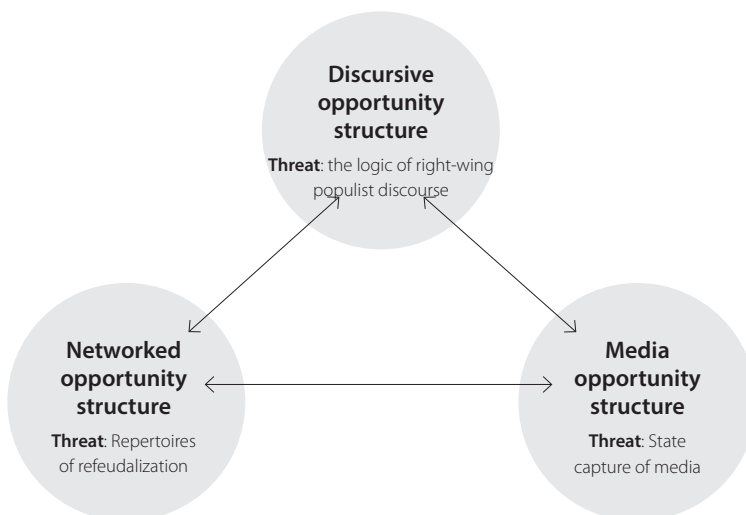
Regarding illiberal threats, Figure 2 identifies the key points in the three inter-related dimensions. In the media opportunity structure, it can be conceptualized as the state capture of the media. Since 2010 Hungary has been governed by the right-wing party Fidesz, led by prime minister Viktor Orbán, who was re-elected in 2014 with a two-thirds parliamentary majority (in both terms), allowing for amendment of the country's Constitution and foundational laws singlehandedly. In the case of Hungary, the dynamic building of a right-wing media empire had begun with the help of associated businessmen before Fidesz came to power in 2010, and this work is still ongoing. In 2010, Fidesz begun its rule with strategic media positions – daily broadsheets, radio stations and television channels – already controlled by businessmen closely linked to the party. By 2012, this portfolio comprised 15 companies, including the country's biggest outdoor advertisement company. Hungarian oligarch, and close friend of the prime minister, Lőrinc Mészáros personally owns 192 newspapers in Hungary. All regional newspapers are owned by businessmen associated with Fidesz. While advertising revenues in the overall media market dropped by 30 per cent after the global financial crisis, members of the empire continued to enjoy the benefits of state-led advertising campaigns.

State control of the media system did not limit itself to commercial outlets: the public service media landscape was redrawn by legislative changes immediately after Fidesz took power. As the budget allocated to public service media is continually increasing, they have a strong influence on audiences. The new 'media constitution' in 2011 established a central institution called the National Media and Infocommunications Agency. It is responsible, for instance, for granting operation licences and broadcasting frequencies. It also monitors content through the Media Council where the opposition is not represented.[1] Having set up the framework, in recent years Fidesz has been using legislation as a punitive measure. Open attacks against independent outlets have become more prominent over the years and culminated in the infamous closing down of Hungary's largest daily newspaper, Népszabadság, in October 2016.

The discursive opportunity structure in Hungary is dominated by the logic of right-wing populist discourse. As discussed by Jan-Werner Müller (2016), populism is a 'particular moralistic imagination of politics'. It is *anti-elitist* in pitting 'ordinary' people against the elites. It is also anti-pluralist in emphasizing the existence of a singular common good and unity of the 'people'. Thus, populism is an

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1 The Council is a 5-member body, within the Agency, responsible for monitoring and enforcing the realization of media laws in private and public media, with the power to impose steep fines on outlets, which can potentially lead to the withdrawal of an outlet's licence. Its president single-handedly appoints the executives to public media outlets. The president of the Agency (who is also the automatic candidate to be the president of the Council) is personally appointed by the prime minister. The opposition is not represented among the members of the Council.

exclusionary form of identity politics.

During the refugee crisis of 2015, the discursive construction of the 'unde-serving and frightening migrant' was clear and dominant from the beginning. At the level of concrete speech acts, this discourse refused to use the very word 'refu-gee', it forged a power linkage between 'illegal' and 'migrants' and built a storyline about a 'state of exception' by a constant reference to no-go zones and terrorism.

Refugees are forcefully also coupled with conspiracy theories linking this outgroup to hostile elites: the EU-leadership (in general) and George Soros (per-sonally). In 2016 the government initiated a referendum to provide public support for its opposition to the EU's 2015 relocation scheme. The main message of the campaign showed the EU leadership as an aggressor looking for the 'forced settle-ment' of refugees on Hungarians. This was followed by a campaign attacking Hun-garian-born investor and philanthropist George Soros, also reaching well beyond the issue of migration and directed also at Soros-financed NGOs and the Central European University. Billboards around the country were set up claiming that So-ros had a detailed plan for settling migrants in the EU.

The networked opportunity structure refers to practices of networking, many-to-many communication and forms of direct action. The illiberal threat to this terrain means practices of surveillance, control or state propaganda through net-worked technologies. While threats are unquestionably present in some illiberal democracies (such as Russia and Turkey), in Hungary they are not widespread. Rather than relying on many-to-many communication tools, the government's communication (still) follows a top-bottom logic. Hence, the Hungarian case is an example of the new re-feudalization of the mass media public sphere where unidirectional marketing tools are favoured over the manipulation of dialogue and debate. Thus, since the first half of 2015, Hungary has been in a state of 'permanent campaigns' where new waves of billboards hit the streets every few months, fol-lowed by their corresponding television, radio and newspaper ads. This marketing logic strategy has a double purpose. On a symbolic level, rather than promoting an ideal of 'rational-critical' citizenry, it positions the voters as a passive, unthink-ing mass audience. On the material level, these state-led advertising campaigns provide substantial sources of income for the Fidesz media empire. However, marketing is only one aspect of the new re-feudalization of public discourse. It runs parallel with a strategy of bracketing out dialogue and debates from political discourse. Governmental politicians refuse to give interviews to independent jour-nalists and newsroom debates have also ceased to exist.[2] Overall, talking points and sound bites have taken the place of interviews and debates. Such practices fit

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2   Viktor Orbán has refused to participate in televised election debates since 2006, and the ruling party Fidesz has decided to boycott independent („oppositional") media in early 2015. Fa-mously, in 2017 Orbán declared the media as its enemy to combat in the future.

well the populist logic of anti-pluralism, where debates are seen as an unnecessary hindrance standing in the way of representing singular common good.

It should be noted that referenda and so-called 'national consultations' are also often used by the Hungarian government to gather public support for its policies. To offer a taste of this, the national consultation on migration in 2015 included a question that asked: 'Do you agree that mistaken immigration policies contribute to the spread of terrorism?' An open-ended question in the national consultation of 2017 asked: 'By now it has become clear that, in addition to smugglers, certain international organizations encourage illegal immigrants to commit illegal acts. What do you think Hungary should do?' Referenda in the hands of populists do not aim to engage citizens in public discussions or deliberation but to claim ownership over the – singular – public will (Müller, 2016).

To sum up this background, the mediation opportunity structure in Hungary faces a set of interrelated illiberal threats: state capture in the media opportunity structure, the logic of right-wing populist discourse in the discursive opportunity structure and a mode of new re-feudalization in the networked opportunity structure (see Fig. 2.) It is within this context that we can make sense of the social movements in Hungary.

4.   Methods and approach

In broader research carried out between 2015-2017, I examined three social movements that rose in response to the so-called refugee crisis (and the government's policies): 1) an alternative billboard-campaign for a mock Hungarian party: the Two-Tailed Dog Party (Nagy, 2016); 2) the birth of a humanitarian grassroots movement: Migration Aid (Dessewffy & Nagy, 2016); and the emergence of a local anti-refugee camp movement in the village of Martonfa (Nagy, 2017). While all cases were situated in the same context, they articulated different relationships to the hegemonic government policy. Each of them challenges parts of the dominant discourse in a different manner – but none provides a radical political opposition nor a fundamental alternative to it.

My analysis of these movements took a threefold approach, combining a *critical perspective* with emphasis on the *context* and *content* of the communication activities of these movements. This approach provided the framework for the methodology as well. A critical approach towards the issue put the emphasis on the mediation opportunity structure heavily shaped by the government's agenda setting during the 'refugee crisis', and I draw here from preliminary research on the mainstream press for an overview of the government's approach. A focus on context refers to an attempt to develop a multi-sited ethnographical approach to the

movements, looking also at self-created communication content of the movements, both on- and offline, as well as their mainstream media representations. To create an overview of the social movements' activities, a systematic content analysis was conducted (Krippendorff, 1980), which consisted of a close reading of content, notetaking and identifying emergent issues and patterns. To identify the potential reach of social movements, I also conducted a web-link analysis of their websites.

5.   Lessons from three movements

5.2   *The Two-Tailed Dog Party*

Following the January 2015 terrorist attacks on the French magazine Charlie Hebdo, prime minister Viktor Orbán concluded: 'We should not look at economic migration as if it had any use, because it only brings trouble and threats to European people … Therefore, immigration must be stopped … We will not allow it, at least as long as I am prime minister and as long as this government is in power' (Reuters, 2015). Following this, political and communication tools were applied to reinforce this message. The government set up a working group to handle the immigration question (Index, 2015). This was followed by a national consultation and a government billboard campaign with three basic slogans:
   'If you come to Hungary, you have to respect our culture!'
   'If you come to Hungary, you have to respect our laws!'
   'If you come to Hungary, you can't take away our jobs!'
   When the first billboards hit the streets on 6 June 2015 an outburst of memes followed. On 8 June, the Two-Tailed Dog Party, a satirical political party specializing in urban performances and street art, launched an 'anti-anti-immigrant campaign', soliciting donations from the public. The original goal of the campaign was to set up no more than a few dozen billboards but the initiative soon escalated into a wider protest. Within 10 days donations had reached over 100,000 euros, enabling the creation of more than 900 billboards nationwide. Their content and visuals were also co-created: anyone with an idea could upload their version online, and decisions about which ones would be used were also outsourced to a social media vote. By the end of the campaign, 1,025 governmental billboards were being countered by 900 counter-billboards on the streets. The satirical messages attracted wide coverage in the press and on social media, and successfully altered the direction of public discourse.
   The counter-billboard campaign successfully broke the 'spiral of silence' as people with minority opinions were given a platform and visibility in the public eye. On a deeper level the counter-campaign challenged hegemonic views of

public discourse via contrasting messages based on fear with counter-messages relying on humour. It also questioned perceptions about how to address collective action problems in society, replacing a top-down, one-to-many campaign with a participatory alternative. However, the limits of the counter-campaign should not be overlooked. While it managed to become part of the political discourse about migration, it never offered a substantial critique of the government's activities and views (for a more detailed analysis, see Nagy, 2016).

5.2 Migration Aid: a grassroots movement helping refugees

Established by a previously unknown one-person NGO in June 2015, in a couple of months Migration Aid (MA) built a complex relief infrastructure for refugees, something the government was hesitant to provide. After three months of relief work, MA compiled statistical data about its operations and the efforts undertaken by its members and donators: it had mobilized 500 activists in 70,000 work-hours, helping 111,600 refugees (Migration Aid Számokban, 2015).

An enquiry into how MA operated sheds light on how the concept of connective action (Bennet & Segerberg, 2013) can be applied and developed to understand the specific ways a coherent organization is achieved in digitally born movements. My analysis suggests that new rhizomatic social movements epitomize emerging types of organizations, pointing to four central characteristics of the rhizome (as they appeared in the case of MA). The movement was *non-hierarchical* and lacked fixed start and end points. This characteristic affected the group's *action repertoires* in allowing a wide range of modalities of participation. The group was also an example of a *hybrid* organization where thebblurring of lines between online and offline spheres had an important impact. Finally, the existence of a *stitching platform* (its Facebook group) was central to the group's survival. A unique characteristic of the rhizome is its ability to reconfigure itself in both the short and long run. This flexibility, together with the stitching role of Facebook, suggests that the movement developed an 'information thermostat', a self-regulatory system that permanently receives inputs from given surroundings and changes its outputs accordingly (for a more detailed analysis, see Dessewffy & Nagy, 2016).

5.3 Martonfa: an anti-refugee camp movement

The case study of Martonfa, a small Hungarian village, examined a local social movement opposing the building of a refugee camp. This study aimed to unpack the effects of a perceived threat to this local community. This movement

emerged in August 2015, when locals from Martonfa woke up one morning to the news that the government had announced the opening of a refugee camp on the Martonfa shooting range – without consulting the mayor of the village. On the very same day a Facebook group was established and offline contentious activities began. A group of locals 'occupied' the shooting range for 50 days and other events were also organized, often with the aim of creating alliances with a range of actors. The movement ceased its activities after 50 days, when the government withdrew its plan. Nevertheless, the effects of the social movement on the local community reach beyond this period.

The research examined how collective action frames (Benford & Snow, 2000) are being filled with meaning and how inconsistencies within the frames are handled. The movement's diagnostic frame (what is the problem?) focuses not on the refugee problem but the problem of democratic decision-making. In line with this, the prognostic action frame (what should be done?) contains very few details regarding possible solutions to tackle the refugee issue. The motivational frame (why should we act?) centred on 'calling to arms' possible allies and partners. This points to two broader conclusions. First, it seems that the movement – because of the small size of the village – balanced its lack of power by using online tools to address and mobilize possible allies. This need to widen the constituency encouraged the creation of frames – such as injustice frames – that resonate with the wider public. Second this suggests that a cultural approach – such as framing theory– is insufficient for explaining strategies of the movement, as these are often driven by the resources available – or in this case, the lack thereof. In order to enrich cultural approaches in social movement studies a more structural emphasis must be added, even if the analysis focuses on the discourse itself (for a more detailed analysis, see Nagy, 2017).

6.   Discussion

The potential opportunities for the movements studied are summarized in the mediation opportunity structure (Fig. 3). Given the illiberal constraints on the media opportunity structure, social movements in illiberal democracies start off with serious disadvantages. Nevertheless, all three movements were able to achieve considerable media visibility during their operations. In the case of the billboard campaign of the Two-Tailed Dog Party, this visibility was through the use of billboards, but the campaign also generated significant media attention. MA also gained momentum by having strong field experience and often giving expert interviews or taking the role of spokesperson for the refugees during the crisis. These opportunities for visibility thus arose for the movements, although these moments of fame were

limited in both time and reach. They were mostly covered by the ever-shrinking independent media and the effects of this visibility can well be questioned.

A potential opportunity in the discursive opportunity structure is the salience of the chosen issue and self-mediation of this issue in opposition to the hegemonic discourse. This means that while movements apparently cannot compete with the agenda-setting abilities of the government and cannot easily introduce alternative agendas to the discourse, attaching themselves to prominent issues opens up opportunities of mobilization for them. Mean while the movements studied here could not change the hegemonic discourse they successfully utilized to increase their own potential for organization, mobilization and self-mediation.

All three movements utilized affordances in the networked opportunity structure in a manner that led to complex, intensive and hybrid frameworks of action. Complexity can be seen in the structured use of different tools that build on each other in each case. Activities were clearly intensive enough to result in quantitatively significant mobilizations of resources. The movements' communication repertoires were all hybrid – successfully connecting forms of online and offline organization.

Figure 3. Opportunities in the mediation opportunity structure
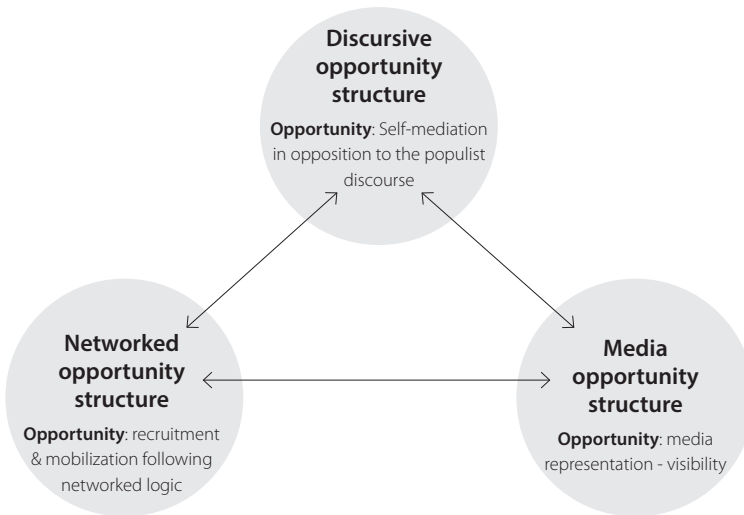
The mediation opportunity structure does not consist of three isolated spheres but rather interconnected dimensions. It is important, therefore, to look at the relationship between these elements. In this sense, the tactical innovations within the networked opportunity structure should not be underestimated. However, in the cases above, such tactical innovations facilitated by social media resulted in

limited effects. This can be best explained by the role played by the *discursive* and *media* opportunity structures. The structural constraints present in media representation – namely the state capture of the media – often result in either no representation or a negative representation of social movements. Inside the discursive opportunity structure, the movements' ambivalent relationship towards the hegemonic discourse is an important factor. As noted above, none of the movements provided a direct and radical opposition or alternative to the hegemonic discourse. The ambition of the Two-Tailed Dog Party was to satirize – not to offer a substantial critique. Even though the context was a politically polarized one, the self-definition of MA strongly stated its non-political nature. The Martonfa movement's relationship to the dominant discourse represents a classic case of NIMBY (Not In My Backyard), where national and European level arguments replicate each other at the local level, verifying the master narrative of securitization. Overall, then, the potential tactical innovation in the networked opportunity structure remained limited, given the constraints and missed opportunities in the two other dimensions.

The rise of illiberal democracies has made social scientists question and rethink long-held assumptions in their respective fields. An upside to the often-worrying trends that play out on a societal level is the blossoming of related and relevant theorizing and research in different disciplines and paradigms. What I believe is necessary is communication and cross-pollination of the different middle-range theories existing across disciplines that are often not aware of each other. My aim here has been to provide an illustration of such an attempt, namely to create connections between the fields of social movement theory, media and communication studies and research on illiberal democracies.

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Biography

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"You have access to all of it."
Assessing documentary participation through an ethics of care

Erika Theissen Walukiewicz

Abstract

Different media genres generate distinct ethical challenges. While the professional journalistic ideal includes a distance from one's sources, the intimacy and longevity of the storyteller-subject encounter in extensive factual formats challenge such a distance. In an attempt to acknowledge such diversity, this chapter looks beyond professional ethical frameworks to allow for a receptive and context-sensitive reflection on media ethics. In the context of the television documentary, I propose care ethics as a way of honouring subjects' interests without compromising storytellers' autonomy. Based on the assumption that media ethics would benefit from increased attention to the subject experience, the focus of this chapter is on the documentary subject. Following care ethical assumptions, I suggest that paying attention to subjects' interests makes for increasingly informed ethical considerations on the part of the practitioner within long-form factual storytelling, such as documentary filmmaking and narrative journalism. Based on in-depth interviews with documentary subjects, this chapter traces concerns relating to participation in Swedish television documentaries. I present an array of subject interests ranging from the transmission of a message to the relationship with the filmmaker, and the protection of a third party. Besides adding empirical knowledge about the experience of participation, this chapter highlights the potential of care ethics within a media context.

Keywords: care ethics, documentary, television, subject-filmmaker relationship, long-form

1. Introduction

While Swedish media, public broadcasting in particular, enjoy high credibility among Swedish citizens (Carlsson and Weibull, 2017; Ipsos, 2016) there is one area where the public express significant discontent. Respondents in a recent study believe that Swedish media are failing to show due respect for the private lives of individuals (Carlsson and Weibull, 2017: 7). Do such responses mirror the experiences of individuals represented by the media? Despite increasing interest among media scholars in ethics within extensive factual formats, e.g. long-form journalism and documentary film, we know remarkably little about subjects' own experiences of participating in such mediated representations. This chapter adopts a care ethical perspective in order to expand the premises on which ethics in factual storytelling can be approached. Care ethics promotes relationships as moral paradigms and considers moral duties as context-specific (Collins, 2015). Such points of departure make for new insights into the subject experience, spurring ethical practice within factual storytelling. The present chapter suggests how this approach can begin to be operationalized.

At a time when media credibility and conduct are coming under ever closer scrutiny, concurrent with market demands for speed and the quest for audience ratings that affect both commercial media and the public service (Lindén, 2011), media ethics has seldom been more important. A central, yet under-researched, issue concerns the preservation of subjects' interests without compromising storytellers' autonomy. Within journalism as well as documentary research, there is a clear lack of scholarly focus on the subject. When approached within journalism studies, it has generally been via quantitative methodologies. Focus has tended to be put either on elite sources or subjects unhappy with participation (Palmer, 2016). Such points of departure are:

> […] poorly suited to helping us understand to what degree being wronged by the news media is actually the norm, or how news subjects feel about the news production process more generally. (Palmer, 2016: 6)

Palmer's argument can be extended beyond the context of news production to long-form factual storytelling.

It has been argued that documentary is neither fiction nor journalism, and that application of journalistic ethics to documentary is not straightforward (Winston, 2005: 181). There are, however, journalistic genres where the "application of journalistic ethics" in its dominant form is far from straightforward. Scholars highlight

the particular concerns generated by extensive factual formats (Kramer, 1995), such as long-form journalism and observational documentary, where audience and storyteller tend to come exceptionally close to the subject (Nash, 2009). Examining the documentary filmmaker-subject relationship, Aufderheide et al. note that filmmakers: "[…] usually treated this relationship as less than friendship and more than a professional relationship" (2009: 6-7). Subjects of documentary as well as journalism have been found to describe their relationship to the filmmaker/ journalist in terms of friendship (Nash, 2009; Palmer, 2016; Sanders, 2012). While potentially resulting in more ethical practice, these relationships generate ethical challenges of their own. Extensive trust engenders vulnerability. A documentary subject, interviewed for the present study, put it like this: "The more we got to know each other it was like … film what the heck you want, you have access to all of it" (Subject S).

Among the first to pay empirical attention to the documentary subject, Nash claims that a different approach to documentary ethics is necessary: "[…] in focusing on the needs of documentary as a profession, documentary ethics has failed to see that one of the most unique features of documentary practice is the documentary relationship […]" (Nash, 2009: 33). She suggests sensitive engagement instead of an ethical framework as the way towards ethical documentary practice. Identifying the meaning of participation, for both subject and filmmaker, is a cornerstone of sensitive engagement. Despite filmmakers' attention to ethics, Nash found this conversation to be lacking.

2.   Care ethics and the media

Ethical standards and their realization in codes of ethics is a well-established focus of media ethics. Although potentially instructive, such rules may prove counterproductive, particularly when replacing moral reflection (Boeyink and Borden, 2010: 9). There is an abundant body of scholarly work critically assessing codes of ethics (Yngvesson, 2006; Zelizer, 2013), and neither documentary filmmakers nor journalists strictly abide by guidelines if alternatives are considered more ethical (Sanders, 2012; Wilkins and Coleman, 2005). Approaching the foundations of media ethics, Couldry argues that the focus needs to be elevated above a reflection on codes:

> […] the prevalent institutional models of media regulation do not encourage any link to broader questions of ethics, quite the contrary. It is significant that an authoritative international review of media ethics glosses the word ethics as "deontology" [… .] (2006: 106)

In line with such arguments, this chapter considers media practice against an ethical framework that allows for problematization in alternative theoretical terms, at the same time as evaluating the relevance of this perspective in relation to mediated practice. A starting point for the study is that ethical challenges and possibilities vary with genre. This does not entail a specific framework for every genre. Rather, I am pointing to the need for an ethical perspective not only suited for news journalism but able to acknowledge and address ethical challenges within different forms of factual storytelling.

Media ethics has traditionally been assessed through the language of rules or duties. The last decade has seen an expansion of the discourse, with words of virtue, but also of care, entering the field. Examining journalists' moral development, Wilkins and Coleman found care ethical thinking, characterized as attendance to relations, in their ethical reasoning. Emerging from the study was an ethics of strong care informed by duty (Wilkins and Coleman, 2005). A concern for scholars considering care ethics in a media context is what they perceive as a too narrow focus on the private sphere and intimate relations (e.g. Steiner and Okrusch, 2006). Inability to care for a large number of people is a relevant concern that makes some versions of care ethics unsuitable within a media context. Scholars have, however, elaborated the theory to be applicable outside of the private sphere (Tronto, 2006).

3.   Dependency relationships generate responsibilities

Many records of care ethics start with Carol Gilligan and her questioning of ethical thinking primarily based on rights, justice and moral autonomy (1982). Bringing relationships to the fore as a basis for moral reasoning, Gilligan laid the ground for an ethics of care. Building on Gilligan and more recent theorists, Stephanie Collins proposes four care ethical claims highlighting such issues as: the importance of ethical theory to consider concrete particulars; that relationships ought to be treated as moral paradigms and acknowledged as giving rise to weighty duties; that care ethics sometimes calls for agents to have caring attitudes, and perform actions, directed at a moral person's interests (2015: 10-11). The claims are unified and justified by the dependency principle: "Dependency relationships generate responsibilities" (Collins, 2015: 2). The responsibilities Collins places on a moral agent are duties to fulfil important interests. Consistent with Wilkins and Coleman's arguments for care informed by duty, Collins regards duties as context-specific. This strengthens the relevance of care ethics to media practitioners by allowing for the consideration of practitioners' costs in moral reasoning, diminishing the self-sacrificing nature sometimes attributed to care ethics.

Placing interests on a scale from trivial to important: the closer to important, the more valuable that the interest is fulfilled. Care ethicists tend to see basic needs[1] as highly important. According to Collins, these are not the only interests that deserve to be fulfilled (2015: 103-107). An addition to what might be classified as an important interest and how it should be formulated is that dependency duties are duties to take measures to *fulfil* interests (Collins, 2015: 106). Thus, Collins' proposition does not limit moral responsibility to character but extends it to action.

A limitation of Collins' principle in the present context is that the only costs considered are those to the agent and the recipient (2015: 110). This is where the relevance of "defeaters" comes in, factors that lie outside of the dependency principle but which might affect or outweigh dependency duties. Examples of such defeaters are: when someone else has promised to fulfil the interest or when the dependent is wholly responsible for the interest being unfulfilled (2015: 101, 122). This resonates with the fact that documentary filmmakers tend to abandon their protective attitude if subjects' actions are considered ethically repugnant (Aufderheide et al., 2009: 9). To open up for competing duties is to allow for consideration of a third party, such as audience and/or funders, in moral reasoning.

Attendance to subjects' needs and motives for participation are considered crucial within ethical documentary practice (Nash, 2099; Sanders, 2012). Collins' version of care ethics draws attention to the weight of interests in moral reasoning. She further suggests that the nature of a relationship might affect the level of responsibility an agent holds, opening up the possibility that relationship characteristics affect the value of the fulfilment of interests, and thereby the experience of participation.

4.   The documentaries

The following analysis is based on in-depth interviews with seven subjects in six documentary films broadcast by Swedish public service company SVT (Sveriges Television) 2012-2013. These primarily observational documentaries are thought to demonstrate a more straightforward relation to the historical world than, for instance, the poetic documentary (Nichols, 1991). In keeping with a journalistic view, responsibilities towards subjects are believed to vary. The study is therefore restricted to subjects not considered elite sources. The documentaries focus on individuals or personal experience and cover controversial or emotionally intimate topics such as: love across national borders; being diagnosed with a fatal cancer; working within a highly contested industry.

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1   Here classified as an interest categorized as a human right (acc. to the European Convention of Human Rights).

Swedish public service broadcasting is authorized and regulated by the Swedish government. The present charter, valid from 2014, guarantees SVT's independence from the state and political interests. It further obliges SVT to pay attention to the privacy of individuals (The Swedish Press and Broadcasting Authority, 2013). Unlike many countries and broadcasting companies, SVT does not require formal consent through release forms signed by documentary subjects. Filmmakers are, however, recommended to establish contracts in cases considered ethically complex. SVT further recommends that filmmakers show the documentary to the main subjects, preferably before the final cut.[2] This does not amount to giving subjects the right to a final cut (I. Persson, 2017, pers. Comm.).

5. "It's not pretty, but that's what it looks like"

A central aspect of the care ethical frame applied in the present chapter is attendance to interests, here categorized as: concerns of great importance to a subject that are related to documentary participation. A further characteristic of care ethics is its reciprocal nature. To be a successful carer, it is not enough to "[…] act on one's concern for the care recipient: to be fully successful, the care must actually fulfil the right interests. In many cases, these are the interests the recipient endorses" (Collins, 2015: 75). A first step towards applying care ethics and determining its relevance in the present context is to identify subject interests related to the documentary experience. A second step, which is beyond the scope of the present chapter, is to examine filmmakers' actions and attitudes in relation to subjects' interests.

Listening to the informants' accounts, several interests emerge in relation to participation. Subjects' concerns are closely connected to their motives for participation, but not exclusively. In the following, I divide concerns into categories related to particular interests.

The message
In assessing subjects' motives for participation, the wish to convey a message emerges as an important interest. Among the messages that informants in this study wanted to communicate were: Presenting a more nuanced view of a controversial industry or a stigmatized movement, and drawing attention to particularly vulnerable groups in society. Few subjects, however, sought to actively intervene in the documentary process in order to ensure that their message got through. For a majority of the subjects, viewing the documentary before the final cut was the

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2   Recommendations differ between different types of documentaries.

most obvious measure for wielding influence, although objections at this stage were remarkably few. Input in the post-production process has been identified as an important factor for subject satisfaction (Hibberd et al., 2000), the subject in this study who was the least content with the documentary message was the one who did not see the documentary prior to transmission. Other informants appear to be satisfied with the message; objections concerning the final result were generally directed at other aspects of the documentary.

Since dependency duties are duties to take measures to *fulfil* interests, important interests are best phrased as interests that can be fulfilled (Collins, 2015: 106). In general terms, the present interest is therefore formulated as: increasing the possibility of communicating a particular message. This implies that even if a filmmaker is not capable of transmitting the specific message, he/she might still have a dependency duty to take measures to increase this possibility. The exact phrasing of an interest should be adjusted to each documentary subject.

Authenticity

A major concern for the interviewed subjects is that the film should constitute what they consider to be an authentic representation of reality. The notion that the film is being true to reality often seems to outweigh the exposure of possibly controversial behaviour or opinions. When acknowledging feelings of discomfort connected to scenes in the documentary, several subjects, however, motivated the scenes' presence with reference to truth or reality. The documentary *The Mink Farmers* starts off with the sound of gas pouring into a box where farmers throw animals to be gassed, followed by a scene where a farmer is seen skinning minks. Subject N did not have any objections to such a potentially controversial scene but refers to its authenticity: "We skin the animals, that's what it looks like. It's not pretty, but that's what it looks like. Period. The same is true when he films in the gas box when they are dead, that's what it looks like" (subject N).

Critical verdicts about the documentary also tend to be related to the present interest. When a poster depicting the leader of the right-wing party The Sweden Democrats is cut in during a political discussion at the farm, Subject N is critical. He bases his criticism on the notion that the clip gives a distorted picture of reality and falsely connects him to the party. Other subjects also voice objections when parts of the documentary are seen to depart from their notion of reality. Phrasing this interest in relation to care ethical standards, it can be formulated as an interest in: increasing the likelihood to perceive the depiction as authentic.

Interests related to a third party

Exceptions to subjects' interest in "perceiving the depiction as authentic" emerge when it comes to the protection of a third party. When other people's inter-

ests are at stake – especially those closely related to the interviewee – subjects appear to be prepared to withhold information or limit access. Subject S had distinct concerns in this respect regarding how her mother might be represented:

> I guess she thought that she would be depicted as a bad mother. And I was quite clear with him [the filmmaker] that: It doesn't matter if she has been a bad mother, it shouldn't show. It's not kind. You don't expose people like that. And he was on board (Subject S).

Subjects' interests related to a third party do not only concern the representation of that party. Besides considerations regarding his immediate family, subject N, for instance, expressed concerns related to his colleagues and the farmer community, which had to do with their potential response to the film. These concerns turned out to be justified as several colleagues expressed their discontent with the documentary.

The wish to help others by sharing personal experience has been identified as one reason for wishing to participate in a documentary (Hibberd, 2000). This was also observed in the present study and is categorized as an interest related to a third party.

Personal interests related to participation
Talking about their motives for participation, personal motives emerge alongside the wish to convey a message. This interest takes on different forms, including a desire to be seen and heard, also recognized in previous research (Donovan, 2012). Subject G's interest in visibility was primarily based on a wish to make it within the entertainment industry. While subject Sv shared this wish to some extent, she also saw the documentary as an opportunity for self-realization and increased status in her new country, having recently moved from Russia to Sweden. Both subjects were prepared to compromise with some of their other interests in order for the result to become a "good" documentary. For subject M, on the other hand, important personal concerns were those of recognition and vindication related to her professional standing:

> It was about some kind of redress. My way of working, I can't say that all colleagues have mocked me, that's so harsh, but when they have seen me […] so many people have shaken their head, thinking: Oh well, now she's dancing, now she's singing, now she brings in the drums, and now they have their morning assembly with that tiny little lamp. I have felt that no one has given me cred. So I felt that this is my chance (subject M).

Preserving integrity

The desire to preserve one's integrity intertwines with an interest in authenticity. Concerns regarding integrity seem to be partly connected to whether subjects perceive the representation to be accurate or not. One aspect of this interest is thus related to how the subject is actually depicted in the documentary. Subject N's negative reaction to the clip including the poster image of the Sweden Democrats has to do with the fact that it establishes a false sense of his political affiliation and thus challenges his integrity. Based on previous experience of mediated representation, subject M was deeply concerned that she shouldn't be regarded as some kind of "crazy teacher".

Preservation of integrity is, however, not restricted to accuracy of representation, it can also involve withholding information. Although subject S was concerned that the documentary should accurately represent her situation, she asked the filmmaker to exclude aspects perceived as intimate, which were not believed to add to the documentary message. While not objecting to a scene where she was crying for her life, she refused to allow the filmmaker to film her teenage room.

Matters of integrity are not confined to the finished film but extend to the documentary process. Several subjects demonstrated a wish sometimes to shield their private sphere in the sense that they wanted to be left alone.

Concerns related to the subject-filmmaker relationship

In addition to the concerns mentioned above, subjects also voice interests related to their relationship with the filmmaker. Subjects appear to put significant trust in the filmmaker: access is extensive and the amount of control exerted is limited. Several subjects express high levels of accommodation, sometimes at the cost of their own comfort. This is thought to reflect both a desire to create a good documentary, but also a wish to please the filmmaker. Subject Sv, who was friends with the filmmaker prior to the documentary process, described her participation as a way of helping a friend. Such a statement points to the possibility that: the closer you get to someone, the more inclined you are to help him/her, possibly to the detriment of your own interests. An important condition for such attitude/behaviour to work out well is for both parties to perceive the relationship in similar ways (Ahrne, 2014).

When approached from the perspective of the participant, the subject-filmmaker relationship shows traits of a professional relationship, but the characteristics indicating a more intimate relation such as friendship are perhaps even stronger. The closer to an intimate relationship, the greater the risk related to issues of trust and vulnerability, as demonstrated in the aforementioned quote by subject

S: "The more we got to know each other it was like … film what the heck you want, you have access to all of it." The more you share, the bigger the risk that the other party passes on sensitive information. This risk accompanying the knowledge-sharing characteristics of intimate relations (Zelizer, 2005) is particularly relevant in the documentary filmmaking context due to scope and documentation. Besides spending months or years with a subject, most likely sharing times of both joy and despair, emotions and information are caught on tape. An obvious element within the present concern is thus that of the preservation of trust, also recognized in previous studies (Nash, 2009). This aspect affects several other interests, such as the preservation of integrity and concerns related to a third party, interests that are dependent on trust being cherished.

Aside from relationship interests attached to the documentary, subjects also appear to have an interest in the relationship as such. Interviewees valued the establishment of a reciprocal relationship with the filmmaker that went beyond the actual making of the film. A telling example is subject S's comment about her relationship with the filmmaker: "[…] it wasn't just that he should know everything about me during my most vulnerable moments, but I knew who he was, I knew who his children were, met them, talked a little to them and all that." Several subjects, even when voicing criticism, make a point of expressing their appreciation of the filmmaker and confirm their satisfaction with the relationship.

Interests in a care ethical sense can be indexed in different ways including to the agent who fulfils them (Collins, 2015: 106). Concerns connected to the subject-filmmaker relationship are categorized as two related interests: establishing and maintaining a good relationship with the documentary filmmaker, and trust being cherished.

6.   Conclusion

Research into documentary ethics has indicated that subjects have a series of concerns and interests related to participation (Donovan, 2012; Nash, 2009; Sanders, 2012). Care ethics encourages us to scrutinize those interests as possible grounds for moral duties on behalf of the filmmaker. In this chapter, I have followed a care ethical lead and examined the interests of documentary subjects.

Dependency relationships generate responsibilities; that is the core of the dependency principle. The concern of care ethics is not dependence as such but the possibility of responding to dependence. It follows that focus is placed on "dependence as a relation between a dependent and an entity *on which* they depend. To de-

pend on someone or something is to need them or be vulnerable to them" (Collins, 2015: 102). The second claim of care ethics attends to relationship importance. Within the claim it is stated that, to the extent that they have value to individuals in the relationship, relationships ought to be acknowledged as giving rise to weighty duties (Collins, 2015: 146).

Subjects' dependence on the filmmaker materializes in several ways. Among the subject interests presented in this chapter are the transmission of a particular message; the protection or support of a third party; and subject's personal aims related to participation. Fulfilment of those interests is to a great extent dependent on the filmmaker who is responsible for the process as well as the final result and, arguably, its potential aftermath. The extensive access provided by subjects, and related interests such as the preservation of integrity, imply vulnerability on behalf of the subject towards the filmmaker, which increases subject dependence. The value that most subjects attach to the relationship with the filmmaker enhances dependence by suggesting that at least one of the interests is connected to the filmmaker as a person, not as a filmmaker.

The dependency principle suggests that all relationships (personal or non-personal) that are able to fulfil important interests are treated as moral paradigms (Collins, 2015: 148). Following the interests identified in the present chapter, filmmakers have moral obligations to subjects in discharging relationship duties. Obligations derive from the value the relationship has to the subjects in the sense that filmmakers are likely to be able to fulfil, or go some way to fulfil, subjects' interests related to documentary participation. The subject-filmmaker relationship can thus be categorized as a dependency relationship. The value that subjects place on the relationship as such potentially generates even stronger duties on behalf of the filmmaker (Collins, 2015).

In this chapter I have taken a first step towards determining the potential of care ethics in the context of long-form factual storytelling. There are additional conditions for the dependency principle and the strength of dependency duties, which are mainly connected to the entity on which the dependent depends (Collins, 2015: 102), in this case: the documentary filmmaker. To fully access the relevance of care ethics and problematize the detached ideal of the practitioner-subject relationship within factual storytelling, the subject experience ought to be examined in relation to filmmakers' actions and attitudes. Filmmakers' interests and possible competing duties will also need to be taken into account. This will be the subject of a subsequent piece of research

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Biography

Erika is a PhD candidate in journalism at the Department of Media Studies, Stockholm University in Sweden. Her dissertation explores ethics in long-form factual storytelling from a care ethical perspective, with particular focus on the subject experience and the subject-storyteller relationship. Erika is also involved in a research project about the Norwegian TV-series *Skam*. Prior to enrolling in the PhD program, Erika worked as a journalist.

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FROM TRADITIONAL
MEDIA TO NETWORKS

Self-Other positioning: Insights into children's understanding of risks in new media.

Lorleen Farrugia

Abstract

This work uses Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961) to identify how pre-adolescent children understand and represent online risk. Adults often mediate children's online experiences, but their understanding of risk in the context of new media might differ from what really worries children online. This points to the importance of acknowledging the child's world view when making sense of risky situations online. Data were collected using six focus groups with Maltese children (n=49) aged 9 to 12. Participants were asked to talk about what children should be careful about when they go online and why. One of the themes identified through thematic analysis of the data was that children position themselves and others differently in relation to content, contact and conduct risks online. Since one way of analysing social representations is through dyadic oppositions in language and thought (Marková, 2015), the Self-Other is used as an epistemological thema via which to analyse the children's representations of risk. The analysis shows evidence of cognitive biases and distortions in the way children situate themselves and the way they situate others. The perception of self-invulnerability could place children at the risk of miscalculating the dangers they come across in the online environment. Shedding light on these distortions helps identify which digital literacy skills children need to learn so that practices and policies can target their needs specifically.

Keywords: Self, Other, online, risk, pre-adolescents

1.   Introduction

Children develop in a 'media-rich' environment (Chaudron, 2015) where mobile, Internet and face-to-face communication are seamlessly integrated, and their digital footprint starts taking shape at a very young age. Aside from providing children with several opportunities, such as access to information and possibilities for self-exploration, new media can present them with content, contact and conduct risks (Staksrud & Livingstone, 2009). The pre-adolescent years between 9 to 12 have the potential of being both formative and detrimental to the development of digital citizens, and there is less research on this age group in comparison to adolescents. Their prolific use of new media does not automatically result in digital skills and cognitive capabilities to understand and assess risky situations online. This chapter presents a section of the author's doctoral research. It adopts a child-centred perspective to understand how pre-adolescent children represent online risk using Social Representations Theory as a framework.

1.1 New media and risks

New media can be defined as "technologies that people use to connect with one another" (James, 2009: 6), with particular emphasis on the interactive, dialogical and participatory activities possible through devices that can access the Internet. Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel (2012) found that the most popular activities with children between 9 and 12 years were content-based activities, such as schoolwork, playing games and video clips. Participatory activities, such as content creation, were those least engaged in. Findings show that for this age group, there are few gender differences in online activities, except in the case of boys playing more games with others in comparison to girls. Children below the age of 13 also use social networking sites as they lie about their age to be able to gain access to these sites (Boyd, Hargittai, Schultz & Palfrey, 2011).

While some risk-taking could be considered as contributing towards development and resilience for adolescents, it might not be so for younger children (Buckingham et al., 2007). When younger children encounter online risk, they are more distressed in comparison to older children (Straksrud & Livingstone, 2009) and they are less aware of online safety strategies (Cranmer, Selwyn & Potter, 2009). This implies that the chances that younger children will be harmed by online risks may be higher. For instance, girls aged 9 to 12 were those bothered most by encountering sexual material online (Livingstone et al., 2011). Such material is often stumbled upon while doing other activities online and children did not always feel

comfortable discussing this with an adult for fear of the consequences it could have (Smahel & Wright, 2014). In comparison to such content risks, contact risks such as cyberbullying and harassment are less commonly experienced by pre-adolescents, but they have an increased likelihood of exposing children to harmful situations (Livingstone et al., 2011) and children have negative associations with this kind of risk (Smahel & Wright, 2014).

Children acquire social representations as part of their developmental processes (Duveen, 1996), through their interactions and systems associated with representations (Ivinson & Duveen, 2005). Representations of these online risks develop through their own and peers' experiences, mediation by parents and educators, their social context and the media, amongst others. Understanding pre-adolescents' representations, their sense-making and emotions related to risk, enables researchers and policymakers to create targeted interventions to address their digital literacy needs.

2. Theoretical framework: Social Representations

The theory of Social Representations was put forward by Moscovici in 1961 and since then has become an important theoretical framework in Social Psychology. Social representation is the process of shifting the unfamiliar to the familiar through the use of metaphors and codes. Representations are a form of 'common sense' used to assign meaning and to relate to the environment (Sammut, Andreouli, Gaskell, & Valsiner, 2015). These dynamic thinking systems are agreed upon and generated through social interaction and communication, and in return they facilitate communication. Wagner et al. (1999: 103) explain that "childhood offers a particular arena for the study of social representations, since those very things which are most familiar and taken for granted in the adult world are themselves the focus of children's cognitive reconstructions".

Moscovici (1984) discusses two operational processes that transform what is unfamiliar into the familiar: anchoring and objectification. Through Anchoring, what is new is classified and named through comparisons with what is already known about other 'old' things or prototypes and "incorporating the new or strange into existing representations" (Krause, 2002: 607). If the characteristics match, the features and characteristics of the prototype are generalised and, in the process, what is old is also changed. Naming something to recognise and comprehend it also implies a process of evaluating it. Through Objectification, what is new is transformed into concrete and objective common-sense reality and thus loses its

newness and abstract qualities, by becoming formed in everyday reality and common sense. The notion of 'common sense' as containing the reality of everyday life can also be found in Berger and Luckmann (1966), where common-sense knowledge is considered crucial to discussing the social context within which thoughts and meanings develop. Complex information is usually simplified through the process of objectification, and knowledge becomes part of the representation by being linked to a specific person or group, through metaphors or by giving physical properties to the construct. According to Krause (2002: 607), this social knowledge produced though anchoring and objectification "makes it possible for us to function in the network of relations and situations involved in everyday life". Anchoring and objectification processes occur constantly as new elements are incorporated into old representations and what is abstract is given a solid base. The shared nature of new media also brings about shared meanings and this is why and also where representations are communicated.

Children's shared meanings are different from those of adults, particularly because "to some extent, the view of the child at risk stems from the adults' sense of exclusion from children's digital culture" (Buckingham 2007: 85). Apart from feeling excluded, often, adults and parents express a sense of loss of control when caught between moral panic and their children's developmental needs. These anxieties are where social representations of risk start to germinate (Joffe, 1999), but a parent's anxieties can differ greatly from children's anxieties. In her PhD research, the author aims to uncover children's cognitions related to online risk within the social contexts in which they go online using a mixed-methods approach. For this chapter, qualitative data are being analysed using the Self-Other as an epistemological theme to explore how children position themselves in relation to others when discussing online risks.

2.1   *Self-Other as an epistemological thema*

Marková (2015) presents thinking in dyadic oppositions as one of the ways in which social representations can be explored. These oppositions develop implicitly during everyday life and influence lay thinking. A shift in these dyadic oppositions brings them into consciousness and they turn into a thema that breeds social representations. The 'Self-Other' thema is the way one positions oneself with respect to others. When assuming a position in relation to the 'other', one attributes (or misattributes) qualities to the 'other', and in the process also identifies oneself. The different self-other relations bring about varied forms of communicative action through which social representations are developed and also transmitted, creating

knowledge in the process (Andreouli, 2010). In turn, these representations influence behaviour. Marková (2015: 28) considers the Self-Other as "the thema that underlies thinking and imagination" and brings about other thematic concepts to be explored. For this purpose, the Self-Other as an epistemological thema will be used for the present data analysis.

3. Methods

The percentage of children aged 8 to 15 with Internet access in Malta was slightly above 98 per cent in 2014 (Lauri, Borg & Farrugia, 2015). Considering that children are avid users of new media, they will be familiar with the subject. This made focus groups an appropriate tool to delve deeper into the way children make sense of the risks present in the online world. Focus groups were also chosen because of their relevance for exploring social representations, as the conversations highlight the participants' context and their shared meanings (Heary & Hennessy, 2002: 53).

After attaining ethical approval from the University of Malta Research Ethics Committee, schools were contacted to enlist their cooperation in forwarding parents the researcher's request for their child to participate in a focus group. Six schools accepted to forward the information to parents, and if they agreed that their child could participate in the research, parents were asked to return a consent form to the school. During October 2016, six focus groups with children aged 9-12 were conducted. Three focus groups were held with children aged 9 to 10 and another three with children aged 11 to 12. Children were grouped into these two age groups to avoid large age discrepancies in the focus groups that might inhibit the participation of younger children (Hoppe, Wells, Morrison, Gillmore & Wildson, 1995). Moreover, the younger age group were in primary school and children over 11 were in secondary school, and thus it was also more practical to conduct each focus group in one school. For each age group, one mixed-gender and two single-gender focus groups were conducted – one with boys and one with girls. The focus groups were all held in state or church schools in Malta, and children could speak in either Maltese or English, since both languages are spoken on the island. Table 1. Participant Demographics presents the participants' demographics and pseudonyms.

In the focus groups, participants were first asked to describe their online activities and to discuss issues that children should be careful about when they go online. They were also asked to explain what they considered was the worst thing that could happen online to children their age. During the discussions, children often mentioned risks spontaneously, before the researcher got to the point of asking

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Mixed 9-10			Boys 9-10		Girls 9-10	
Niamh	F	10	Ivor	9	Erin	10
Jennyfer	F	10	Niall	8	Elis	10
Jeannette	F	10	Gilroy	10	Fiona	9
Kieron	M	10	Jac	9	Treasa	10
Jarlath	M	10	Conor	9	Norah	10
Jana	F	10	Darragh	9	Janette	9
Grady	M	10	Brennan	10	Ainthe	10
Jean	M	10	Greagoir	10	Aoife	10

Mixed 11-12			Boys 11-12		Girls 11-12	
Kelly	F	10	Donal	12	Kathleen	11
Aidan	M	11	Dougal	11	Kiera	11
Justin	M	10	Jacob	11	Sinead	11
Nolan	M	11	Barry	12	Kaitlin	11
Kevan	M	11	Desmond	12	Sheila	11
Maeve	F	11	Jamie	11	Aisling	10
Siobhan	F	11	Declan	11	Aileen	11
Mahon	M	11	Sean	11	Lean	11
					Alannah	10

direct questions about them. This was already an indication of the salience these matters hold for children. When the participants described issues related to risks, the researcher probed them to clarify and explain further, in order to gauge the meaning that these held for the children. The focus-group sessions were recorded with the permission of the participants and transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

Thematic Analysis as described by Braun and Clark (2006) was chosen for analysing the data from the focus-group discussions. This flexible approach for qualitative analysis is useful for identifying and analysing patterned meanings across a data set to provide an answer to the research question. Using NVIVO, the researcher first familiarised herself with the data by re-reading the transcripts and annotating sections that were relevant to the research question. Following this phase, and driven by Social Representations Theory as an analytical framework, deductive coding was used for a constructionist thematic analysis where latent meanings were identified and coded to unravel the content of the participants' so-

cial representations of risk in new media. This chapter will focus only on one section of the findings. Using the Self-Other as an epistemological thema, instances where the children positioned themselves vis-à-vis the 'other' were collated. These data were analysed to understand how the positions children assume reflect their thoughts and actions related to online risks and safety.

4.   Analysis

Children referred to others in several ways while discussing their online experiences and expressing their thoughts about risks in new media. They spoke of other children in terms of their own peers, younger children and also older children. Adults also had a significant role in children's discussions. They spoke of adults who were known to them, such as parents and other family members, and also adults who were strangers to them. Occasionally, children also spoke about famous adults and how they used new media to connect with them. Table 2 - Self-Other Positioning presents the Self-Other positions taken by participants and their stances towards the other in relation to risk behaviours, together with some quotes from the discussions to illustrate the findings.

Table 2 - Self-Other Positioning

Others as…	Stance towards the other	Sample Quotes[1]
Peers	Double standards	Mahon: And on Facebook, there was a friend of mine who was insulting me … insulting me because I posted a photo (…)[2] Researcher: And how did you feel about this thing? And what did you do? Mahon: Then I was steaming miss, when I saw that comment on Facebook. And I started … I started insulting him back.
	Critical	Mahon: And I add friends [I know][3] only, I don't add … as there are those who add friends to see who has the most, to have the most…
Younger children	Vulnerable	Ainthe: Like a small child is listening to a song, or playing a game, a pop up can come and then … and then … and then like (…) they will say write this … write that … and … and … and she would write it because she would think probably it's of … part of the game or … or something

1   When children spoke in Maltese, excerpts have been translated into English

2   Indicates that some text has been omitted from the quote for the sake of continuity

3   Information in [square brackets] is added for context or explanation

Others as…	Stance towards the other	Sample Quotes[1]
Older children	Privileged	Treasa: and to my brother … [aged 13] to my brother she [my mum] doesn't check, and to me she checks.
	More knowledge-able	Sheila: And … my sister watches them … I don't know why but Kaitlin: Oh, but she's y- … she's older Sheila: 15 Kaitlin: She knows
Known adults	Experts / Authority	Jennyfer: I tell my mum to check [the information I find] (…) and she says "this does not make sense". Grady: Because sometimes, when I think I'm making a mistake (…) I ask my dad
	Safety	Aileen: I only … I only add people which I know (…) Because I know that they're not gonna do that to me
	Annoying	Treasa: I don't really like it when she [my mother] checks
Unknown adults	Danger	Nolan: Umm … eh … I agree that you don't need to add friends like that, carelessly, because if you don't know him Researcher: Why? Nolan: Because if you don't know him, you don't know what he's going to do. It could be that if you add him, he can hack you…
Famous adults	Para-social rela-tionship	Siobhan: when I had Music.ly, I had started adding, for example some stars and so on, that would be … and after it was like everyone trying to add you, you always add, add, add, and … there were … there were some comments that I didn't quite like.

4.1 Peers and siblings

When referring to their peers, participants seemed to be biased against them. They were often critical of their peers' behaviours, such as collecting friends or likes and befriending strangers. They seemed to imply that their peers had less insight into such dangers and thus were positioning themselves as knowing more about such risks and distancing themselves from them. At the same time, there seemed to be some double standards. Participants expressed disdain regarding some behaviours carried out by others, but if they sometimes engaged in such behaviours themselves, they considered it differently. As the quote from Mahon shows, he got angry when he was insulted, but at the same time, he behaved in a similar way towards this boy. This finding corresponds to the "not me – others response" which Joffe, (1999: 35) describes as customary when people face potential threats. As some literature (e.g. Sjöberg, 2007) indicates, emotions might also influence the child's ability to assess the situation adequately and act rationally rather than impulsively.

This contrast is also evident in the way they speak defensively of some questionable behaviours they engage in. When they mentioned behaviours such as talking to strangers, they often specified that if they do it, they don't do it much or that they are careful. When they spoke of accessing dubious links or content, they often explained that it happened by mistake or that it was not on purpose. This seems to indicate the presence of some self-serving biases in the way they conceptualise risk for themselves. Their position seems to be implying that they are better able to take care of themselves online in contrast to their peers. However, as Joffe (1996: 126) argues, this feeling of invulnerability has an adaptive function when facing risks. These perceptions of self-invulnerability might impair children's judgements when assessing potentially risky situations and possibly decrease their chances of taking preventive measures.

Participants were often referring to their siblings when they spoke of younger or older children. They seemed to associate being younger with a naivety and vulnerability that called for them to protect their younger siblings. This also seemed to perpetuate their position as being better at dealing with risk because of their greater age, even if at times the age difference between them and their siblings was only a few years. In the case of older children, participants spoke of them as having a better vantage point because they were more knowledgeable and had more privileges. Generally, participants were jealous of them and expressed a desire to be treated by their parents in the same way.

4.2 Parents, strangers and famous people

The expert and authoritative status attributed to known adults was quite evident. Participants mentioned on several occasions, and in all focus groups, that they asked adults, these often being their parents, for help. Participants perceived adults as knowledgeable and referred to them when they needed to, and this helped them feel safe online. They also had expectations of them, because they spoke with disillusionment when these adults did not behave according to the status they attributed to them. This is a positive finding, but it also highlights the importance of the children's reference points having adequate and sufficient knowledge (Kim & Davies, 2017: 7), so that the expertise children attribute to adulthood is warranted and the adults can help children adequately when the need arises.

Yet, despite the expert status assigned to them, there were instances where children found their parents' involvement in their online behaviour annoying, especially when this involved checking on them or checking their profiles. It could be

that the children's desire for increased peer interactions (Kim & Davies, 2017: 7) brings about conflict with parents about new media use. Children might dislike their parents' snooping out of fear of the consequences (Smahel & Wright, 2014) if their parents discover they are breaking the rules. Often punishments involved the withdrawal or restricted use of devices. Children have the right to access and make use of digital media (Livingstone, Carr & Byrne, 2016), but to be able to access these opportunities, they also require the support of adequate media literacy or the ability to think critically about media content and reflect on its impact. Being a social process, media literacy "encompasses skills that foster autonomous decisions and supports the development of a coherent self" (Pfaff-Rüdiger & Riesmeyer, 2016: 166).

When children spoke of adult strangers, these were consistently associated with danger, as the quotes portray. Often, the danger children perceived was related to hacking or data theft and their position towards strangers also perpetuated stereotypes, as often the perpetrator was portrayed as male. Participants did not always seem to connect strangers with the danger of grooming and sexual abuse. Educating children about this can be a delicate matter as, on the one hand, it can protect them from harm, but at the same time it exposes them to the darker side of human nature and does not preserve their innocence, which is already a concern because of the sexualisation and commercialisation of childhood (Bailey, 2011). Ideally, this education would be part of a larger programme that includes timely media and sexual education based on the child's readiness and experience.

In contrast, when children referred to celebrities, they did not consider them as strangers, even though they did not know them. Children might develop para-social relationships (Horton & Wohl, 1956) with these personalities, and even though the interactions often remain one-sided, when seeing one-off occasions where famous people interact with their followers, children might hope that, one day, their heroes would talk to them. This desire might be why children sometimes put themselves in harm's way and connect with popular people on their profiles, not knowing whether they really are whom they claim to be.

4.3 Limitations

While focus groups were considered the ideal tool for this research, like all tools, they have some limitations. Primarily, the focus-group dynamics could have influenced the participants to respond in ways that they thought were desirable by the researcher or that were in agreement with the general atmosphere of the group. Another limitation relates to the participants. Only those participants whose parents

consented to their participation were included in the selection, and additionally some of the schools selected the students themselves rather than by ballot. These factors might have excluded some children's voices from the research. For the purposes of this chapter, only the representations related to Self-Other positioning are included. A comprehensive discussion of children's social representations of risks in new media will be forthcoming once the doctoral work is completed.

5. Conclusion

The relations and interactions of the self and the other generate a social reality (Marková, 2017). The ways in which children position themselves with respect to others when reflecting on online risks gives insights into their conceptualisations of these risks. Children consider their peers and younger children to be more prone to online perils, while they have a sense of self-invulnerability to these risks. In comparison, older children and known adults have a better vantage point because of their knowledge and expertise. Despite this, some children react negatively to their parents' mediation because they value the possibilities afforded by new media. These fallacies in thinking can be dangerous as they limit the child's ability to assess risk and engage in adequate safe behaviours. Children might "make cognitive errors due to the limitations of their information processing skills" (Joffe, 1999: 14), and their cognitive development should place them in a better position to assess risk. However, as children grow older and start exploring their identity and intimacy during adolescence, there can be other biases that interfere with adequate risk assessment. This makes media literacy crucially important for children to learn how to be aware and overcome these cognitive distortions. Such skills need to start developing at an early age and ideally should continue to accompany children throughout their development, based on their online activities and interests, so as to remain relevant to their needs.

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Biography

Lorleen Farrugia is a PhD researcher at the University of Malta. Her doctoral work focuses on pre-adolescents' social representations of risks in new media technologies. She has researched young people and self-disclosure on Reality TV as part of her Master's Degree in Youth and Community Studies. Lorleen has been a member of the EU Kids Online Network (www.eukidsonline.net) as part of the Maltese team since 2012. She is also a member of the Advisory Board of the Maltese Safer Internet Centre BeSmartOnline! (besmartonline.org.mt). Her research interests include children's understanding of online risk and safety, ethical issues in research with children, Social Cognition and Media Psychology.

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Centre and periphery: How to understand a network

Reinhard Anton Handler

Abstract

The social sciences and humanities have turned to network analysis in order to better understand society and culture. Whether that is through digital methods or qualitative approaches such as those proposed by Actor-Network Theory, relations between actors (or actants) are mapped. The golden rule for both quantitative and qualitative approaches is that actants only exist in a network if they leave a trace. The most successful pieces of research are those that manage to distil significant associations to reveal social trends on the Internet or produce a 'thick description' of a network via ethnographic methods. Sometimes, however, minor relations or non-existing traces may deliver a more comprehensive understanding, yet they are omitted in order to concentrate on the centre of networks. This chapter reflects on my own research using digital methods, as well as ethnographic methods, in order to understand a network. To deliver conclusive descriptions of a network that are compatible with the theoretical framework, I have focused on places with rich interrelated associations and connections. I have found diverse interest groups that share strong ties and a sense of belonging to a greater community. What I have overlooked though is that this sense of belonging also spreads out to the margins of the network, where relations may be ephemeral but deliver a better understanding of what the network thrives on. By focusing on the margins of networks and personal entry points, this reflection on my own research practices shall take a critical look at networks as a research axiom.

Keywords: networks, network society, ANT, centre, periphery, free software, open source software

The social sciences and humanities have turned to network analysis in order to understand society and culture that are increasingly influenced by digital media. Whether that is through digital methods or qualitative approaches such as those proposed by Actor-Network Theory (ANT), relations between actors (or actants) are mapped and measured. The most successful pieces of research are those that manage to distil significant associations to reveal networks on the Internet or produce 'thick relations' (Geertz, 1973) of a network via ethnographic methods.

This chapter reflects on my research, which is also guided by a network perspective. In order to deliver thorough descriptions of free and open source software communities, I have focused on places with rich interrelated associations and connections. What I have found are diverse interest groups that are internally characterised by 'strong ties' (Granovetter, 1973). These strong ties are people who interact with each other on a regular basis in chatrooms and via mailing lists, wikis or messaging apps. Additionally, they meet at conferences which, as Coleman (2013) has explained, are an important element for free and open-source software. Free and open-source software organisations are characterised by their shared sense of belonging to a community that also spreads out to the periphery of their networks. Relations may be ephemeral on the margins of these networks but they can deliver a better understanding and paint a more comprehensive picture. I will try to show how a network as a metaphor and notions of decentralised networks tend to concentrate on the thick relations in the centre and omit the non-central relations of network nodes at the periphery.

1.   The network metaphor

It is fair to say that networks have become the dominant concept to analyse transformations in human relations. Whether it concerns forms of political organisations (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Wainwright et al., 2007), social movements (Castells, 2012), work and labour (Hinds & Kiesler, 2002; Rossiter, 2006; Wellman et al., 1996) or communities (Rheingold, 1993; Wellman, 1999), to name just a few domains, they tend to be understood predominantly as an array of relations in a network. The idea of thinking of society as networks can be traced back to the evolution of sociology into a scientific discipline that found patterns of behaviour in society. From the earliest beginnings, attempts to understand societies as networks have been closely associated with advanced conceptions of networks by engineers, communication networks in particular. Thus, it should come as no surprise that the first attempts to depict society as forms of networks were made in the 1920s and 1930s, most famously by the psychiatrist Jacob Levy Moreno (1934). Since then, computers have changed in terms of applicability, design and functions to a point

where they are immersed in all spheres of everyday life, and the term network lost its meaning as a purely technical term some time ago. The idea of a social network and its connection to the Internet is articulated clearly by Castells. According to Castells (2010: 469) networks constitute the new social morphology of our societies. One could also argue they have become more than a morphology and are rather an ontology, as this has become the dominant category into which things are sorted. Castells himself points out that this ontology is directly connected to computer networks. I think this passage is worth repeating:

> A network society is a society whose social structure is made of networks powered by microelectronics-based information and communication technologies. By social structure, I understand the organizational arrangements of humans in relations of production, consumption, reproduction, experience, and power expressed in meaningful communication coded by culture. A network is a set of interconnected nodes. A node is the point where the curve intersects itself. A network has no center, just nodes. Nodes may be of varying relevance for the network. Nodes increase their importance for the network by absorbing more relevant information, and processing it more efficiently. The relative importance of a node does not stem from its specific features but from its ability to contribute to the network's goals. However, all nodes of a network are necessary for the network's performance. When nodes become redundant or useless, networks tend to reconfigure themselves, deleting some nodes, and adding new ones. Nodes only exist and function as components of networks. The network is the unit, not the node. (Castells, 2004: 3)

These few sentences are impressive in more than one way. They show the after-effects of a post-structuralist philosophy which incorporated debates on ecology into complex systems which are asymmetric and heterogeneous, as Ramon Margalef (1968) pointed out in his work on biodiversity. This notion influenced the use of the rhizome, by Deleuze and Guattari, to describe culture as a non-hierarchical root system instead of a tree. It can be found in Castell's network society. Latour, who Castells also draws from, also admitted that actor-network theory, to which he substantially contributed, could be renamed as actant-rhizome ontology (Latour, 1999). Castells (as well as Latour) shapes the idea of a centreless fluid way of being in analytical concepts that facilitate an outline of the reorganisation of human relations in a network society. This passage also shows a complete adoption of network engineers' vocabulary by the social sciences. The network society is a unit of interconnected nodes, intersecting curves and efficient processes. Turning both towards the vocabulary of engineers and the thought structures of post-structural philosophy results in a mash-up that looks at society as a decentralised network that is in a constantly fluid and unstable state. The term network has become commonplace as a dominant metaphor.

2.   Centre and periphery

While Castells argues that a network has no centre, just nodes, earlier conceptualisations of networks do indeed depict networks as a morphology that consists of a centre and a periphery. Luhmann (1997) insists that where there is a centre there is a periphery. Without the periphery the centre would forfeit its structuredness. The difference between centre and periphery can first be marked as the concentration of people within a certain space where social complexity is higher than at the periphery. Hierarchies start there and not in the simple structures of the periphery, according to Luhman. These "structural idiosyncracies", as Luhmann (1997) calls them, do not grow out of a geographical distance between centre and periphery. What determines them is the compatibility and complexity of communication, that is much higher in the centre than at the periphery.

Luhmann's differentiation between centre and periphery attempts to describe the importance of communication technology in modernity that is characterised by the supposed unimportance of geographical distance and difference. The structural differentiation between periphery and centre is a lens for looking at networks. The idea of 'the annihilation of space' by electronic means, as Castells (Castells, 2010: 379) calls it, is indirectly borrowed from Wyndham Lewis via Marshall McLuhan. Lewis (1927/1993) writes in *Time and Western Man* about a 'global uniqueness' that is established by a 'mercurial spreading-out in time' and an 'overriding of place'. While Lewis's was an artistic concept which he called vortex, McLuhan (McLuhan, 1964/2010) translated his ideas of a dynamic and progressive image into his Global Village where space and time are abolished and mankind lives in a 'technological simulation of consciousness'. This annihilation of space does not lead us into a space of vectors and constant transitions, though we can understand the global village as a network that is an extension of our central nervous system.

What gets lost in this notion of networks as the annihilation of space is the difference between centre and periphery that Luhmann argued for. Computers have bridged spatial distances but social networks still show thick relations in the centre and weaker relations at the periphery. Hierarchies develop even at the periphery of decentralized structures. Luhmann's caveat is also valid for the most tech-friendly communities where non-hierarchical elements are of high importance, such as in free and open-source software. Free and open-source software projects combine elements of multiplicity and heterogeneity, but they also show hierarchical structures. Besides agile structures that foster self-organisation and collaboration, including continuous development and improvement, the position of a benevolent dictator for life in a project is not uncommon in free and open-source software projects. In such a case, as well as in other examples, hierarchies are the result of a meritocratic system that results in the formation of a centre and a periphery. People

who contribute for a long time or whose contributions are deemed to be substantial by other central actors get central positions. These people have more possibilities to take part in decision-making or are allowed to make certain decisions on their own that others at the periphery cannot make.

The center-periphery question arose at the start of my research. By deciding to locate my study in the realm of free and open-source software, I was confronted with the dilemma of how to get access to the field. FOSDEM, Free and Open Source Software Developers Meeting, seemed like a valid start in order to get acquainted with a field I was not invested in nor in any way involved in before (besides being a user). However, the problem in terms of doing research there is the sheer size of this meeting/ conference. Every year, it brings around 7,000 people together for two days in Brussels. Attending Europe's biggest conference/ meeting of free and open-source software contributors was helpful to get an overview of the field. Later, I reflected on my data that I collected there in 2016 and 2017 and began to realise that most people who attend FOSDEM are those who are at the centre of networks. They are members of an organisation, they go to Brussels for a weekend to meet kindred spirits, and they regularly contribute to projects. People on the periphery of these networks, programmers who occasionally send a piece of code to a project or publish it on a sharing platform like GitHub, do not typically travel to the conference. Thus, while free and open-source software can be analysed as a network of a variety of organisations, projects and people, collecting data at a physical meeting such as FOSDEM might only capture the central nodes. The contributions of the actors on the periphery can hardly be captured with such an approach.

3.   ANT and centrality

As mentioned earlier, the network metaphor plays its part in actor-network theory. Apart from highlighting the inseparable interweaving of the social and the technical by including non-human actors in the network by giving them agency, ANT replaces spatial metaphors such as close and far, or inside and outside, with associations and connections. The notion of the network, Latour (1996) explains in a short article commenting on actor-network theory, is a lens that allows one to look at society-nature in a different way. The obvious impact of the way we look at things is exemplified by visualisations in social-network analysis. These colourful network diagrams are indeed impressive and certainly played their part in allowing social network analysis to established itself as a key research method across many disciplines and a major research area. Latour (1996) recognises the influence of technical networks in actor-network theory but he argues that it is a mistake to give an actor-network a technical meaning in the sense of a computer network or a train

network as the former is neither strategically planned nor does it reach a stable or final state. Instead of being static and topological, a network has to be considered dynamic and ontological. Actor-network theory adds the notion of the actor to modify a mathematical conception to the network. However, this attempt at animating networks leads to a second misunderstanding, Latour explains. Actor-network theory does not add social networks into the mix but it does go beyond the social relations of human actors by including non-human and non-individual actors. Connections do not have to be qualified as social, natural or technical. This theoretical conceptualisation displays the interplay between technical transformations and social organisations that is informed by the network metaphor. For ANT this means not starting from universal laws and deciding 'to take local contingencies as so many queer particularities that should be either eliminated or protected, it starts from irreducible, incommensurable, unconnected localities' (Latour, 1996a: p372). While this approach tries to avoid a priori assumptions and analytical frames that are imposed on the data, centrality becomes a possible problem.

Ethnography is the preferred methodological approach of ANT-related research. It assembles various research methods such as in-depth interviews, participant observation or field notes that are all geared towards capturing the queer particularities that Latour favours instead of grand narratives. Ethnography is about collecting data on small-group interactions in workplaces or special conferences in a non-systematic way. A more systematic approach would lead to the construction of artificial situations and hinder the researcher from entering the field 'as it is' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). According to Howard (2002), such an approach helps to immerse oneself into a community as it provides multiple perspectives and depth, but it sacrifices control, researcher objectivity and generalizability (Morrill & Fine, 1997).

The character of ethnography resonates well with the notion of a decentralized network as the methods are designed for capturing local specifics and small groups. Focusing on the central actors in these local groups though is a problem in ANT-related research. The theory delivers a useful framework to understand the emergence of networks. Intermediacy and centrality are not included in Actor-Network theory. The opposite is the case, as ANT focuses on problematizing these categories. Actor-Networks are not stable, they are in flux and are renegotiated constantly. Change is key and a centre can shift, actors might lose some relevance or create new networks. Providing a theoretical toolbox to understand and capture these movements is the strength of ANT. While theoretically, it does not neglect 'the small actors' by focusing on the 'big actors' (Law, 1991), in research practice a lot of ANT-related studies do focus on the central actors because change and fluidity can be best observed by analysing shifts at the centre.

Thus, centrality in networks is a problem for ethnographic work. When ANT-related research focuses on smaller groups such as small-scale research

teams or small companies, the fluid (re-)formation of networks, or translations as Callon (1986) called them, can be easily observed. When analysing bigger or-ganisations, however, centrality can become a problem. Studies of free and open-source software show that centrality plays a part in the organisation of bigger projects. Berdou (2011) analysed two projects, GNOME and KDE, and found that a core developer group makes a large number of commits and is responsible for maintaining key parts of the code base. These core developers are often paid developers, another strategy to stabilise the centre of the network. According to her research, core developers do the major share of work on the central parts of the code. Actors on the periphery tend to be given other assignments that might constitute peripheral work. This form of network is not permeable, translations in the understanding of ANT are not the common case. Actors on the periphery of the network stay on the periphery. Berdou suggests that this has more to do with the practical requirements of a project. Maintaining the code base requires a high degree of specific knowledge and skill. Core developers who are paid by a project can develop specifically needed skills as they have the time to assemble the necessary parts. Part-time contributors or volunteers who occasionally make contributions cannot gain highly specialised insights. I have started to analyse LibreOffice, which is less focused on writing code and also less centrally organ-ised. This project has paid contributors too, but they do not exclusively work on code but tend to be engaged in marketing or user design, while there is only one paid developer who is responsible for maintaining the core infrastructure. Thus, LibreOffice is highly dependent on the contributions of volunteers. While there is a small but stable group of contributors, a lot of additions and edits come from peripheral contributors. However, there is centrality in this network as well, which also becomes visible at their major community event, their annual confer-ence. Peripheral contributors are not likely to participate and it might also be true that central actors and peripheral contributors have different priorities, as Berdou (2011) suggests: Paid developers search for technical excellence while volunteers focus on practical use and access.

4.   Conclusion: Measuring centrality

Central nodes in networks are influential, they might have great control, they are visible, and they are involved. The major difficulty, I suggest, is the method of measuring centrality. Centrality is traditionally measured by four parameters: "De-gree" is based on the number of direct links a node has to others in the network, "betweenness" is based on the number of times a node is part of the shortest path-way between two other nodes, "reach" is based on the number of nodes that a

single node is linked to through two steps, and "eigenvector" is based on the idea that the centrality of any node is determined by the centrality of the nodes to which it is connected (Bonacich, 1972; Freeman, 1977). The nodes on the periphery of a network, those which are not central, are viewed as not being very important.

I have tried to show that centrality plays a major role in decentralised networks. Differentiating between the centre and the periphery of a network, and thereby focusing on the centre, is often the result of research. Even with free and open-source software, a community that motivates itself and is often described as being decentralised and open, networks have centres and peripheries. Centrality plays a major role, but I would argue that it depends on how centrality is measured. Degree, betweenness, reach and eigenvector might seem to be abstract categories that are applicable in network analysis, but they can be fruitfully deployed in qualitative research as well. A free and open-source project such as LibreOffice is characterised by degree, as it is supported by a community that tends to be linked very well. It shows a high degree of betweenness as people are interconnected quite well. And it also offers a high degree of eigenvector, as central nodes are connected with many on the periphery. LibreOffice has managed what well-working free and open-source projects have managed to do, i.e. spreading an ethic and imagination of a community throughout the network to the periphery. What I as a researcher have to do is follow these links and include the nodes on the periphery. While the network perspective helps to explain major shifts and their consequences, it is important to consider what to include in (or exclude from) the network. Adopting the boundaries of the network which its central subjects have established results in concentrating on the central actors and might exclude potentially more complex and less organised structures on the periphery.

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Biography

Reinhard Anton Handler is a PhD researcher in media and communication studies at Karlstad University. He studied communications, Hispanic linguistics and literature, as well as philosophy, at Vienna University and the Universidad Autónoma in Madrid and obtained a master's degree in communication studies. His dissertation project revolves around collaborative structures in free software production.

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From PSB to PSM in local media.
The challenges for television stations in
their adaptation to the digital era

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Abstract

In recent years, new goals have been added to the traditional functions associated with PSB, such as the need for innovation and interaction with the audience. How are local media adapting to the digital era? What challenges are they facing in this process? Are there more risks for them than for big broadcasters?

The goal of this chapter is to answer these questions, with two main objectives: to show how adaptation to the digital era is taking place in public local stations that offer a public service, and to explain the challenges that these media are facing in the process. Using a qualitative methodology based on consultation of official documentation, interviews, non-participant observation and a focus group, this chapter describes the situation of public local television in Catalonia regarding adaptation to the digital era.

Local stations have adopted some internal measures to adapt their structure and routines to new ways of producing and consuming content. It should be mentioned that they have integrated newsrooms, and that they have begun working with other innovation-linked projects in the territory. Despite these changes, the results show that local media have less capacity to respond to the challenges of the new age, especially due to lack of funding to develop new technologies and strategies.

Keywords: Public Service Media, local television, digital era, innovation, new technologies

1.   Introduction

There are many cases in Europe where adaptation of PSM to the digital era is taking place successfully, such as the BBC in the United Kingdom or TV3 in Catalonia (Spain). But how are local media adapting to the digital era? What challenges are they facing in this process? Are local television stations adapting successfully? Are there more risks for them than for big broadcasters?

This text has two main objectives: (1) to show how adaptation to the digital era is taking place in public local stations that offer a public service, and (2) to explain the challenges that these media are facing in the process. From a theoretical framework about Public Service Media theories and cultural proximity to argue the importance of the existence of local channels at the local level, we developed a qualitative methodology based on consultation of official documentation provided by the Catalan government about the licencing process of local channels, interviews with 13 managers of local channels, non-participant observation of these channels and a focus group with seven managers of local stations.

This text presents the situation of public local television in Catalonia regarding adaptation to the digital era. The status of Catalan local television is a relevant example of how this adaptation is taking place and could serve as an example for other cases. It is paradigmatic due to the abundance of local television channels and their aim to integrate into the digital landscape.

2.   Public Service Media: an approach to new functions of television

Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) has been analysed by many European authors (Brevini, 2013; Van Cuilenburg and McQuail, 2003; Dönders, 2012; Ferrell Lowe and Steemers, 2012; Bardoel and d'Haenens, 2008). Some academics have focused on the transition and adaptation to the digital era by broadcasters that offer a public service (Moragas and Prado, 2000; Trappel, 2010; Jankowsky, 2012; Iosifidis, 2007). In the last few years, new goals have been added to the traditional functions associated with PSB, such as the need for innovation and interaction with audiences.

Adaptation to the online environment is related to new technologies available for sending messages to citizens, but it also has an impact on the structure of these media. Regarding the first issue, Public Service Media (PSM) needs to be aware of new tools and must also research how to connect to audiences through social networks, apps and new formats. In terms of the second issue, media have changed

their way of working, for example through the integration of newsrooms and prioritising digital content (digital first).

With the growth of new technologies, Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) must be reformulated due to the multiplicity of ways to disseminate content and the need to insert itself into the digital era. Owen (1999) considers that the Internet can provide information and entertainment to compete with digital television, although it cannot provide a massive video-services market. Nowadays, online video consumption is constantly rising, while conventional television registers a decline in audience numbers. However, television is still the most consumed mass medium. We are all facing a paradigm shift in the audiovisual model, in which Public Service Media cannot be just broadcasters but must adapt to the new existing reality, reinterpreting its concept.

To update PSB to the digital era, we cannot overlook how technical developments have affected television and its functions. Traditional roles associated with PSB are related to education, culture, aesthetics, identity, political plurality, social issues, economics and development, humanism and moralising. The advent of the digital era has introduced new goals and, consequently, public television might now consider issues such as developing a communications strategy, guaranteeing universal access, mediating in the face of multiple sources of information and balancing and putting restraints on new oligopolies.

Moreover, the need for technological innovation and the aim of interacting with audiences might not be forgotten by Public Service Media, as Figure 1 shows. It must also act as the driving force to bring the communications sector and other social sectors together, among other things. As a result, new technologies must be taken into account when constructing theories on the role of public service in the digital age. The change in terminology from Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) to Public Service Media (PSM) stems from a technological evolution that has been influenced by political interests and social demands.

Given the diverse ways in which audiovisual public service providers can now broadcast, especially with the rise of the Internet, there was a need to update the terminology. Hence, the B (for broadcasting) was changed to an M (for media) because of various new formats and models of public communication, like the Internet. The digital era requires public service television providers to take on a new role, since they are now integrated into a more global system of public communication services.

Different media service providers can no longer be considered as independent from each other, rather it is more pertinent to look at how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) providers can develop as one and converge while communication platforms diversify. Technological development and social changes are related to each other, and technology is seen as a social product that can be democratically controlled (Smith and Leo, 1996).

According to a study edited by the Reuters Institute (Sehl, Corina and Nielsen, 2016), Public Service Media leading adaptation to the digital environment (the BBC in the United Kingdom and YLE in Finland) have common features: all are well-funded, work with different platforms in an integrated way, have a major level of independence from political power, and security through agreements concerning public service functions and funding. Social television, enhanced television and interactive television are good options to lead in this new scenario.

Regarding production routines, public mass media face challenges in their capacity to offer online news in an effective way. These include adapting to a new online landscape that is in constant evolution, and internal adaptation, such as building integrated newsrooms and being able to produce news in faster ways. New technologies facilitate citizen participation in the media, through the Internet and social networking sites, while allowing public service providers to diversify their distribution channels. With so many different information services now available, public media providers must adapt to this online environment, since they play a crucial role in the communications ecosystem and should provide a quality service that is diverse, pluralistic and representative. However, as we will see in a practical case in Catalonia, local media are facing several challenges in adapting their goals to the demands of the digital age.

Figure 1: Goals of Public Service Media in the digital era (original creation)
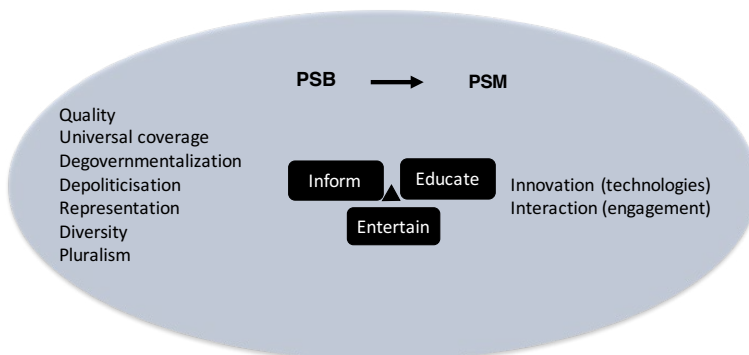
3. PSM at the local level. What does it mean?

Most of the authors mentioned talk about the goals of Public Service Media in the digital era. Now we want to take a step forwards and analyse the challenges, not for broadcasters in general, but more specifically for those that operate at the local level.

According to Straubhaar (2007), individuals identify themselves on a variety of levels (multiple layers of identity). The identity of individuals has not only become global or transnational; rather, different layers of geographical identity coexist (local, regional and transnational) that are linked on the basis of cultural-linguistic and national regions (Anderson, 1983). Local television is popular because people live most of their lives in a local area and, consequently, want to remain well-informed about this area and also feel a strong identification with it (Straubhaar, 2007).

Cultural proximity explains the tendency to prefer local or national productions, and cultural products close to the identity of citizens. In the context of globalisation, where the Internet is an important platform for consuming audiovisual content, two parallel phenomena occur: the growth of big informative circulation and an increased need for programming reflecting local culture. Therefore, the different layers of identity represented in the media do not make local television disappear. This is a symptom of audiences' need to have communicative projects that reflect their different layers of identity.

With the multiplicity of new television outlets, local media play an important role in satisfying citizens' demands, in response to cultural proximity theories. Citizens look for their own signs of identity in their immediate community (Moragas, Garitaonandia and López, 1999), and local stations have as their mission offering local audiovisual content online, too.

Local television accomplishes the goal of representing local culture, traditions and politics, one of the pillars of Public Service Media. In that sense, reflection on the implications of digitisation at the local level brings a new approach to the situation of PSM.

Public Service Media at the local level are crucial to following-up on what happens in a small territory and illuminating the relevance of general news to the local area. These media can be more specific on local issues and explain them in greater detail than general broadcasters. To the role of covering local issues in-

formatively, one should add the goal of documenting and archiving local events. These media report stories, and also save all material related to the local area, and make them available online. New technologies allow cataloguing content in a more agile way, in order to preserve and transmit local culture.

As Figure 2 shows, there is a space where the need for proximity and the need for Public Service Media match, which is the representation of local communities by PSM.

Figure 2: Interaction of public service and proximity theories (original creation)
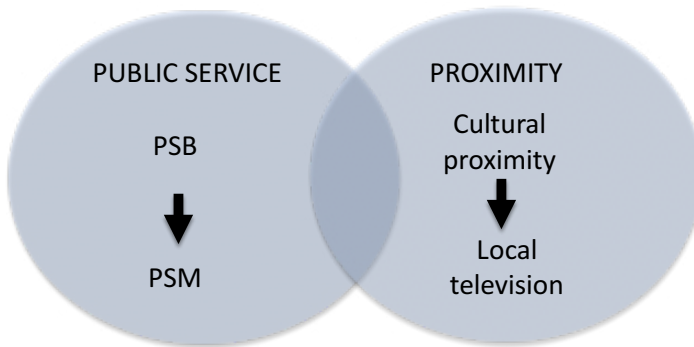
4.   The adaptation of local stations to the digital era in Catalonia

In Spain (and therefore in Catalonia) the switch from an analogue signal to digital caused organisational problems in the structure of channels. As a consequence of the DTT spectrum distribution, municipalities have to share channels with surrounding villages, so stations become supra-local. This caused difficulties in terms of identification because audiences expect to watch exclusively local content on these channels.

Public service and identity construction are linked, taking into account the goal of representation. The identification of citizens with their territory is crucial to understanding and ensuring the functioning of local media. The importance of the local sphere explains that, in some cases, groups of municipalities introduced by DTT did not function. Fieldwork demonstrated that local identity, at least in the Catalan case, is not shared by different villages, and the situation is even more complicated if there are different regions – "comarcas" in their Spanish denomination – involved (Martori, 2014). For example, it is difficult for a citizen of a village or town to identify with the traditions of another village, and unlikely that he or she would be interested in a strictly local piece of news from another city.

This analysis has practical consequences, such as many city councils abandoning supra-local television projects because of policies implementing DTT in Spain. The economic crisis and the possibility to start cheap online projects, without any barriers or the need to request a spectrum on which to broadcast, favour this phenomenon. Moreover, Movistar TV, the main cable platform, decided not to broadcast every single local channel existing in Catalonia and, instead, invited La Xarxa – a network created to give support to local media in terms of content exchange, innovation and technical developments – to broadcast local content from each region in Catalonia on a common channel. This limited the presence of local stations in the digital environment and, consequently, damaged the representation of the local sphere.

One of the main problems of local media is restrictions on funding, based on subsidies from local government and its aim to promote these channels. Sometimes, because of the dependence on public economic resources, independence from governmental and political power is not guaranteed. Another consequence of the low funding is that many local media are unable to produce a large amount of local content, so they rely on content exchange with other stations, or use cheap methods to produce content that can affect the quality of programming.

The limited funding also affects the capability to innovate, one of the pillars of PSM in the digital era, as we have argued. Being more traditional and having fewer resources to commit to explore new technologies, local media need to work together and to receive help from La Xarxa. In fact, many projects related to innovation in local media are initiated by the network. To prevent a lack of innovation, we observed that local stations have, in recent years, begun working with other innovation-linked projects in the territory, such as universities and companies, usually start-ups.

There is only one local broadcaster in Catalonia that has started innovative projects in order to become a transmedia system: betevé, the local public broadcaster of Barcelona. In comparison with other local television channels in Catalonia, betevé has experienced the most development, particularly in terms of innovation, as it has benefited from a far larger budget. As an example, betevé has established ties with Pompeu Fabra University (UPF) to set up a project based on pilot shows that use new formats. Another significant project is being developed in collaboration with an innovation laboratory, BTV Media Lab, which acts as a business accelerator and a place for testing out different programmes for inclusion in the programming schedule.

Local stations have adopted some internal measures to adapt their structure and routines to new ways of producing and consuming content. It should be mentioned that they have integrated newsrooms, mostly to provide informative content to television channels, radio stations and websites. However, the results show that local television in Catalonia has not developed a solid online strategy.

All local stations have websites where they update the content once broadcast by DTT, some of it not made originally but using the platform provided by La Xarxa. But these platforms are not yet used to delivering breaking news. Informative routines are still based on offline linear broadcastingby DTT. Channels could work more as a multimedia channel, with audio, video and text on their websites when they update content, as generalist stations are doing.[1] Therefore, these websites are not providing content that then will be broadcast by television, a practice that could work to increase audiences.

Following this tendency, we observed the deficient use of social networks: Twitter and Facebook are tools mainly used to link content previously broadcast and then updated on the Internet, rather than platforms where local channels receive live feedback from audiences during synchronic transmissions, or a place to advertise programming. In that sense, greater audience engagement through social networks could be explored, as Figure 3 shows.

Figure 3: A proposal for the use of social networks by local television stations (original creation)

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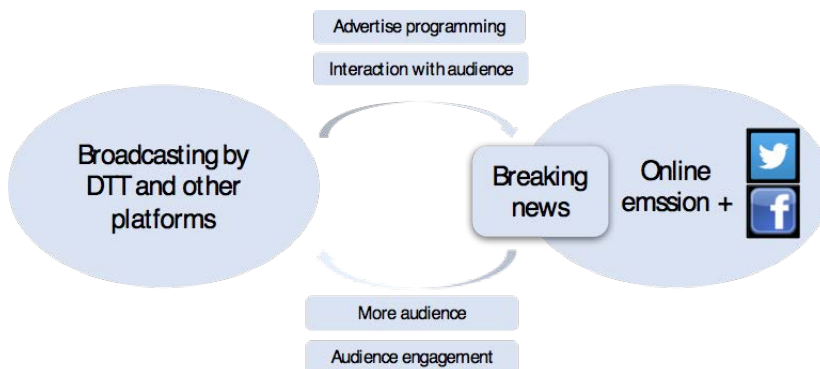
1 In Catalonia, an example is the website of the generalist broadcaster http://www.ccma.cat/324/, although the newsroom is not yet integrated. The BBC news website is an example of good practice. http://www.bbc.com/news

Despite the aforementioned, technological changes introduced by DTT have forced local broadcasters to work with a digital signal, which makes uploading content to websites easier.

Apart from the adaptation of traditional media to the digital era, we observed the creation of native online hyperlocal stations. Most of these media serve small geographical areas and are community-oriented. Described by many authors as hyperlocal, they broadcast original information, fill perceived information gaps (Metzgar, Kurpius and Rowley, 2011) and cover information of civic and cultural value, including news about local groups, events and council issues (Williams, Barnett, Harte and Townend, 2014). These online media, often less professionalised, coexist with traditional media and their websites and, as digital natives, are more advanced because they do not include analogue routines in their way of working.

Within a global flow of information, local media have a role in providing information about the layers of identity close to citizens, and their function is still – or even more – important in order to avoid a lack of information about local issues. However, we have seen that television stations need to better explore the possibilities introduced by new technologies.

Table 1: Challenges and proposals for the adaptation of local television to the digital era

Challenge	Proposal
Digitization of the signal has changed the territorial distribution of media and caused organizational problems in the structure of channels	Respect the previous local distribution of broadcasters and make plans according to the pre-existing reality regarding local television
Many distributors of content (cable platforms such as Movistar TV or global players such as Netflix) do not carry local channels	Establish policies that obligate all audiovisual content distributors to broadcast local channels in order to assure local representation in the online environment
Limited funding affects the quality of programming and the capacity to innovate	As is taking place in Catalonia, local channels should collaborate, exchange content and share technological innovations. Generalist public channels should transfer developments in innovation to local channels, which do not have the resources to do so
The need to optimize the integration of newsrooms, although the majority of channels work together with radio and websites	Change the telecentric view, from channel direction to the worker's level, in order to think about multiplatform and transmedia systems at the local level
To achieve prioritisation of digital first	Promote the better use of websites that show breaking news and advertising content, and more efficient use of social networks to interact with audiences, advertise content and show breaking news

5.   Conclusion: challenges and opportunities for local stations

Local broadcasters have to accomplish a public service function, which has to be translated as the capacity to transmit true information and respectful content with political, social and cultural pluralism, and to reflect the territory of each area in a balanced way. Media have to be well-equipped in order to favour the disclosure of main political, social, economic, scientific or sporting events in the municipalities. But not only that, they need to innovate to offer this service using the technologies of the digital era.

Local media are related to the capacity to inform about local news, most of them without visibility in other channels. In promoting participatory spaces to enhance social cohesion in villages and cities, they could not only open the door to diverse local actors but also increase online interaction and feedback through social networks. The role of local stations is not only to broadcast content about what matters in people's daily lives, but also to increase the engagement of the citizenry with the local area and participation in social activities. Moreover, local media have not only to be focused on television but also to integrate all media, creating a virtual community at the local level.

PSM has recently faced challenges not only at the State and regional level, but also at the local level, where broadcasters have more difficulties in investing resources in innovating. Despite the increase in platforms to consume content and globalisation of the media landscape, there is a need for local content according to cultural proximity theories. In that context, results show that local media have a lower capacity to respond to the threats of the new age, especially due to a lack of funding to develop new technologies and strategies. Traditional television stations have not successfully adapted to the digital era, and online platforms are virtual sites to watch content previously broadcast by Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT), excluding local channels of cable distributors and connected television which do not have enough presence on these platforms.

Moreover, we observed a deficient use of social networks, where greater audience engagement could be explored. Being more traditional and having fewer resources to innovate, local media need to work together and receive help from La Xarxa, a network that is crucial for the functioning of local media and their survival. In fact, many projects related to innovation in local stations were initiated by La Xarxa. Besides the adaptation of traditional media to the digital era, there is a growing phenomenon: the creation of hyperlocal online stations that coexist with local stations.

In order to overcome new challenges, the local television system has to adapt. Despite the difficulties, television channels are trying to innovate and are looking for cross-media and (only some of them) transmedia, but investment in advertising continues to be concentrated on television. Therefore, a business model needs to be found in order to diversify sources of advertising revenues. Having more windows open does not have to translate into additional distribution costs, but it does mean there is a need for more economic resources with regard to technological development, e.g. the development of applications ('apps') for smartphones and tablets.

The Catalan model shows that digitisation has an impact on the model, causing some structural problems. In terms of not damaging the local nature of the system, this case could serve as example for other countries where this transition has not yet happened (especially in some countries of Africa, Latin America or Asia). The structure of DTT, and also connected television and online projects, should respect pre-existing context and policies and change them as little as possible in order not to provoke more stress, taking into account that internal organisation and routines have to address the digital environment.

This case study has allowed us to identify the status of local media in a moment when adaptation to the digital era is crucial to continue connecting with audiences. Television channels need to have enough ability to readjust in order to face new demands. It is also useful to show some challenges that traditional media have to face if they do not want to be left behind in the media landscape. In that sense, there is a danger that local communities can be underrepresented if PSM does not integrate these new technologies.

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Biography

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Rethinking media events as a TV format: A study of the 2014 Eurovision Song Contest

Michael Skey

Abstract

The literature on media events has grown dramatically in recent decades. More recent studies have looked to move beyond functionalist readings, noting the complexity of media environments and social settings and foregrounding relations of power. Notwithstanding their key contribution, these critical approaches present a rather one-dimensional vision of social change and, at times, risk losing their connection with Dayan & Katz's original formulation. We argue that events that are anticipated and involve external organizations in their design demand a specific set of analytical tools. In particular, we suggest that focusing on the production side and, in particular, conceptualizing such events as a specific type of TV format enables us to achieve two objectives. First, to move beyond textual analyses to focus on the struggles that take place inside the media events between different interest groups (organisers, producers, participants, fans). Second, to sharpen our thinking around the place and significance of media events in the contemporary era. We illustrate our arguments by drawing on ethnographic material from the 2014 Eurovision Song Contest, held in Copenhagen.

Keywords: media events, TV formats, Eurovision Song Contest, television Producers, Denmark.

1.   Media events: a critical overview

Recent work on media events has looked to expand the definition of the concept to incorporate a whole host of features, including disasters (Katz & Liebes, 2007: 416), 'popular media events [tied to] … celebrity culture' (Hepp & Couldry, 2010: 8) and 'news events' (Seeck & Rantanen, 2015: 175). The original definition proposed by Dayan & Katz in their groundbreaking work *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History* (1992) was far more parsimonious and referred to *live* events that *interrupt* daily routines and schedules, are *preplanned* and *organized outside the media* by large public or other bodies, involve *ceremonial* elements that are presented with *reverence* and *electrify very large audiences* (ibid.: 4-8). Crucially, they also drew on Durkheim's (1976) seminal argument around the importance of religious festivals in strengthening social ties and applied it to the modern era of mass media broadcasts. As they wrote, media events 'integrate societies in a collective heartbeat and evoke a *renewal of loyalty* to the society and its legitimate authority' (emphasis in original, ibid.: 9).

This presumed integrative function of media events has been the focus of the most important critiques of the concept (see: Hepp and Couldry, 2010). The problem with such a functionalist reading is that it presents an unduly simplistic view of social order and overlooks struggles for power and the cleavages (ethnic, religious, class, gender and so on) that fragment even the most settled societies.

A second critique concerns the place of media and how we understand media power. In the original formulation, media events were viewed as 'shared experiences uniting viewers with one another and with their societies' (Dayan & Katz, 1992: 13). This top-down approach underplays the extent to which audiences and alternative media can ignore and challenge dominant readings of such events. Such criticisms are becoming even more salient in an era of digital technologies that blur the boundaries between producers and audiences, enable a range of competing narratives around particular events and contribute to the complexity of local, national and regional media landscapes.

2.   Expanding the category: From disasters to 'popular media events'

Another recent critique of the media events concept has been its narrow focus, with two broad arguments being made. First, scholars such as Liebes and Katz (2007) have taken issue with the idea that media events should be preplanned or

anticipated, arguing that this omits major news events that interrupt schedules and capture the public's attention for short periods of time. A related argument comes from those who observe a move towards 'eventization' (Hepp, 2004), as media producers look to interrupt regular schedules in order to capture the public's attention in a fiercely competitive marketplace. Hepp and his colleagues have argued for a new category of 'popular media events' that can capture the growing importance of 'consumer and celebrity cultures' (Hepp & Couldry, 2010: 8). In doing so, they observe that such events 'break with the everyday but in a much more routine way', only monopolize media coverage in certain 'cultural segments' and 'do not happen 'live' but in a continuous development' (ibid.).

While it is obviously important to attend to 'events' or programmes that interrupt schedules in novel ways as well as audiences' increasingly complex engagements with a variety of media, we are not necessarily persuaded that this expansion helps to sharpen our understanding of these different phenomena. Indeed, we believe it is still important to draw an analytical distinction between events that are preplanned and those that are not. Although unexpected events, such as disasters or terrorist attacks, have become a notable feature of contemporary news reporting, it is also important to acknowledge the differences between the mediation of, say, a major natural disaster and a subsequent event designed to commemorate it. These differences include everything from the style of reporting to the ability of powerful institutions to shape a coherent narrative.

In a similar vein, we suggest making a further distinction between those 'events' produced by and for the media (such as the finals of reality TV shows) and those that are produced by the media but in collaboration with other institutions, whether state, supra-state or non-state. This is because, as we will see, the involvement of these 'external' actors impacts on the design of an event and how it is managed.

Part of the problem here may be that the vast majority of empirical research into media events has offered textual analyses of particular performances (Jones & Subotic, 2011), alongside a more limited number of audience studies (Georgiou, 2008). In other words, there have been relatively few studies of the production side of such events, despite the fact that Dayan and Katz (1992: 62-73) viewed the negotiations between organisers and broadcasters as a key element in their original conceptualization. Such a perspective allows us to restate the importance of events that are preplanned, as well as the need to study them in terms of design, organization, reception and evaluation. In the next section, we want to develop some of these ideas by drawing on another body of literature, studies of television formats.

We believe that conceptualizing media events as a specific type of television format can help us to sharpen our thinking about their continuing significance in the contemporary era.

3.   TV formats

Put simply, television formats are programmes developed in one country that are sold to (and repurposed by) producers in other parts of the world. Popular examples include *Big Brother, Survivor* and *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* In the last two decades, the popularity of television formats has risen dramatically, to the extent that they now form part of a multi-billion-dollar global industry and, in the process, have become some of the most watched television shows of all time (Waisbord, 2004). While there is no overriding consensus on how to define a television format, two key elements have been identified in the literature (Esser, 2010; Oren & Shahaf, 2013). First is the 'distinctive narrative dimension' (Chalaby, 2011: 294). This refers to the specific ways in which key elements of a television programme are arranged so that an identifiable 'narrative progression is created' (ibid.). The format has often been discussed as a set of rules or even a recipe that producers must follow in order to develop dramatic arcs, generate particular moments of tension and conflict (commonly called 'trigger moments') (Chalaby, 2011: 295) and highlight the 'journey' of key participants. The second key features are portability and adaptability, as formats are defined by the manner in which they cross borders and appeal to audiences in multiple locations (Esser, 2010). At the heart of this process lies what is called the production bible, which sets out key aspects of a show's design, budget, marketing, organization and so on. For while some degree of local adaptation is permitted, the 'bible' is designed to ensure the programme remains faithful to the original and, in theory, has the best chance of success in new markets. In order to protect their brand, and ensure its continuing profitability in international markets, the format's copyright holders may also send out consultant producers to provide advice to local teams (Chalaby, 2011: 296).

Although, to our knowledge, the concept of the television format has never been formally applied to media events, we believe that insights from the former may be usefully adapted to study the design, production and significance of the latter. This is particularly the case for events that are cyclical in nature and managed over time by a central authority (the European Broadcasting Union being a good example), but where each individual competition is hosted by a different, usually governmental, organisation (local, national or regional) and may involve a range of media producers, some state, some commercial.

4.   Media events as TV formats

With these types of cyclical media events, the central organizing authority again looks to ensure consistency across time when it comes to many aspects of their design, organization and promotion. For instance, the Olympic Games features a range of clearly defined elements, the Olympic Torch relay, the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the lighting of the Olympic flame, a fixed schedule for the 'blue riband' competitions, medal ceremonies with anthems and flags, that cannot be tampered with, no matter where the host city. To this end, the International Olympic Committee has a 276 page 'production bible', entitled the Host City Contract, which 'is designed to ensure that all parties understand and agree to a specific set of responsibilities that guarantee successful Olympic Games and, create a beneficial legacy for the Host City and the Olympic Movement' (IOC, 2016: 13). This contract covers a panoply of issues, ranging from signage (sponsorship and branding is, of course, a major concern) to sustainability and ticketing. Moreover, while host cities and nations are obviously encouraged to emphasise their own unique attributes and cultural traditions, there are often quite ferocious struggles between the IOC and local organising committees when it comes to, for instance, what is featured in the various ceremonies, how an 'Olympic legacy' is developed and evaluated, how the various sporting competitions are mediated and so on. Similar patterns can be seen in relation to the organisation and promotion of the football world cup, where the main organising body, FIFA, uses its considerable power to primarily ensure: consistency in the way in which the competition is marketed, the pre-eminence of the various FIFA sponsors, and the global image of the game of football, sometimes at the expense of the hosts and football fans (Eisenhauer, 2013: 260). FIFA also produces guidelines for host cities (its production bible) which not only outline the rules of the competition but how it is to be organized and, of course, marketed (FIFA, 2017). There is some leeway for each host country when it comes to issues such as designing the official mascot and 'look' of the tournament (ibid.), but as for television formats, while 'local producers can be allowed to alter the 'flesh' of a format [they] … can never touch the "skeleton"' (Chalaby, 2011: 295).

The second part of this paper will develop some of these arguments in relation to the Eurovision Song Contest, drawing on a range of empirical examples from inside the media event. In the next section, however, we provide a brief overview of the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) and outline its relevance to our overall argument.

5.   The Eurovision Song Contest: A brief overview

Ostensibly a competition to decide the best original pop song among member states of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the ESC has become the most popular international music event in the world, attracting annual audiences of over 150 million (Eurovision Song Contest 2014). As well as the live broadcast, the ESC also generates debates across other media. For instance, Twitter reported 5,384,678 tweets sent around the 2014 final (which compares with around 11 million for that year's Oscars ceremony) (Twitter, 2014).

In terms of its history, claims are often made (Bourdon, 2007: 264) that the ESC was part of a sociocultural project *designed* to unify Europe after the travails of the Second World War. but the historical record shows this to be largely wishful thinking (Henrich-Franke, 2012). Rather, the focus of the fledgling EBU (created in 1950) was to develop common technological and judicial frameworks for the new medium of television (ibid.: 35). When it comes to the significance of the contest, some have argued that it matters because it is one of the few occasions when substantial numbers of 'ordinary' people across Europe may come to reflect on what it means to be European (Skey et al., 2016, Kyriakidou et al., 2017). Leaving aside whether the ESC integrates (Bolin, 2006; Akin, 2013) or fragments (Jones & Subotic, 2011) European producers and audiences, the contest remains a notable feature of the European media landscape and continues to engage viewers, hosts, performers and sponsors.

In the following sections, we draw on data collected from the 2014 ESC with a particular focus on interviews carried out with senior Danish television producers employed by the Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR). These individuals are experienced producers of major television events and worked closely with the EBU on planning and organising the ESC in Copenhagen that year.

These discussions were significant in not only flagging up the tensions between the different stakeholders involved in producing the event, but also the idea of media events as a particular type of television format. In doing so we demonstrate that the pre-planned nature of such events, and the involvement of media producers and non-media stakeholders, is of absolute significance, marking them out from other forms of interruptive programming.

6.   The EBU and the ESC production bible

As the long-term custodian of the ESC, the EBU is 'directly responsible for over-seeing and guiding all aspects of the finances, organization, creative planning and execution' (European Broadcasting Union, 2015: 10). Each year it works closely with the member who won the previous year's competition to identify a suitable venue, market the event, design a programme and ensure that the broadcast and other facilities are in order. Here, a production bible, which covers everything from the permitted content of songs and the eligibility of performers to the workings of the voting system, is again used to ensure that there is consistency over time and the competition retains a unique 'brand' within an increasingly competitive (and global) media landscape (more of which below). It is also designed to reduce the potential for disruptive elements that might damage the standing of the competition or cause problems for future hosts. The EBU has to deal with a range of governments and media organisations, both in Europe and beyond, and such a high profile event represents an ideal opportunity for many such groups to try and promote their interests. Therefore, the EBU is particularly concerned with trying to portray the ESC as an apolitical event and ensuring that overt political statements are omitted. To this end, the rules of the competition specifically state that:

> The ESC is a non-political event … No message promotion for any organization, institution, political cause or other cause, company, brand, product or service should be allowed in the Shows and within any official ESC premises (i.e. at the venue, during the Opening Ceremony, the Eurovision village, the Press Centre etc.). A breach of this rule may result in disqualification. (EBU, 2018)

> Moreover, these are not idle threats. Georgia's 2009 entry, a thinly disguised attack on the Russian leader Vladimir Putin, was banned from the competition. Likewise, Turkey was suspended for two years when the state broadcaster refused to transmit coverage of the Greek entry in 1976 (Akin, 2013).

> The voting system is another element that is carefully managed by the EBU, with recent shifts to the current mixed system being an attempt to manage concerns over voting irregularities, improve audience engagement and ensure a wider range of winners after the dominance of newer entrants in the 2000s (Fricker and Gluhovic, 2013: 3-4).

7. Keeping the format intact

While the EBU is able to control many aspects of the ESC, from monitoring the activities of national broadcasters, through the use of undercover agents (Akin, 2013) to placing restrictions on the size of flags that fans are able to bring in to the venue, we should also be aware that different groups will want quite different things from the event and will attempt, where possible, to influence its design accordingly. For the hosts, the chance to promote the city, region and/or nation to a global audience is generally seen to offset the cost and effort of producing the event. The host broadcaster is given opportunities within the programme itself to market the country and will often use other techniques, the involvement of government officials or local celebrities, awe-inspiring facilities or production technologies, to further advertise its economic, political and cultural attributes to those watching (Bolin, 2006).

However, it is also worth noting that the EBU continues to place limits on these activities in order to both discourage an ongoing 'arms race' in relation to expenditure and ensure that the 'format stays intact'. As we were told by the two producers from the Danish broadcaster, DR:

> It is their [the EBU's] job to make sure that the long-term vision for the show or the format stays intact. And each broadcaster has an incentive to try and make this year the best and wildest one yet, we want to break previous frames and patterns and we want to do something different and crazy. And they sit there and say yes, sure, but next year it will take place somewhere different and they will also want to do something crazy. And they therefore discourage the wildness and craziness … So some kind of continuity has to be kept and they are in charge of that on a daily basis. The reference group comes in on a continuous structural checkup with a fixed cadence; and then, if there are some issues that you cannot agree on, then they intervene.

This extended extract highlights a number of key issues. First, it shows the extent to which cyclical media events, such as the ESC, are viewed as a format by the Danish producers of the show. Earlier we discussed how copyright holders of particular TV formats were primarily concerned with protecting their brand on a global stage to ensure its future profitability and, in the process, used consultant producers to give advice to local teams. This is exactly what we see happening in the case of the ESC, where an established reference group works with local organisers to ensure that the basic framework is adhered to. Second is the key issue of consistency across time. The literature on the topic often focuses only on individuals events (Štětka, 2007; Akin, 2013), thereby failing to take into account the ways in which many of the most prominent are cyclical in nature, not only pre-planned

as individual events, but also within a wider framework that is the direct purview of the main organizing body and/or rights holder. The IOC, FIFA and the EBU have a longer-term perspective which, in most cases, will trump the shorter-term objectives of local hosts. Likewise, focusing on the production side not only highlights the tensions between different stakeholders but, above all, points to the very different nature of such a pre-planned, interruptive event.

8.   The brand will continue to live on

The final extract we want to point to in this paper also deals with developments over time but, in this case, looks at how events such as the ESC are refined as a result of the contributions, and innovations, of different local organizers. We noted earlier that formats are often strengthened when they move into different markets as producers can evaluate particular features so as to better see which ones work and do not work. The following extract, again taken from our interview with the Danish television producers, highlights this very process in relation to a cyclical media event.

> There is the core structure and core format – which looks the way it does – and then there are those 10 per cent that you might move a bit. And they ought to, if this Eurovision concept is to survive for many years to come, then it ought to year after year in certain areas be an innovative process. So … you … build on each other's work year after year by bringing along what worked the previous years. The Austrians have taken our postcard ideas – the postcards were previously this thing where you stand on a beach in Greece and wave – but we tried to get closer to the artists, to see them in their normal clothes and see them do something etc. They are taking our idea and developing it further. So we have to accept that they do a better job than us. But it is things like this that ensures that the brand will continue to live on

As TV formats travel, they start to contain a certain amount of local knowledge. Ideas that are tried out successfully in a market become part of the production bible, while subsequent licensees are warned against previous failures. According to Sue Green, an established producer, 'a format is a show that has "been debugged" to remove "the mistakes" that have been made that won't be made again' (Green quoted in Chalaby, 2011: 295). When it comes to the production of large-scale, pre-planned media events, tensions between different groups are a noticeable feature, but at the same time, those involved are generally interested in producing a spectacular and successful show. They are, therefore, also open to building on the achievements of previous iterations and incorporating noteworthy features that can help their own event run more smoothly or attract attention in what has become a

fiercely competitive media environment. This delicate balance between protecting the format and making each show a unique performance is what marks out major media events that are cyclical in nature. It is also something that distinguishes them from other disruptive media events.

9.   Conclusion

Recent work on media events has been significant in calling into question the concept's functionalist origins and noting the growing complexity of global media landscapes. Notwithstanding these important critiques, the expansion of the concept to take in a growing range of interruptive events (disasters, news, reality TV shows and so on) is problematic, confusing issues where clarity and precision are required to make sense of these shifts. Therefore, we have first emphasised the cyclical nature of many of the most high-profile media events and the extent to which they are managed by a governing organisation that works in combination with local media producers and authorities. We then argued that such events could be viewed, and analysed, as a particular form of television format, defined by the use of a production bible, negotiations between rights-holders and local producers and the need to maintain a consistent brand over time, whilst allowing for local adaptations. Adopting such a position allows us to sharpen our thinking about the range of interruptive events that pattern, and increasingly complicate, media schedules and narratives around the globe, as well as focusing attention on the particular impact and significance of events that are pre-planned and organised by a range of media and non-media actors.

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Biography

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Controlled disconnections: A practice-centred approach to media activities in women's solo travelling

Simone Tosoni and Valentina Turrini

Abstract

Drawing on the preliminary findings of an ongoing case study of female solo travelling in Italy, the present chapter intends to propose some methodological considerations about addressing media activities in social practices. In this way, it intends to contribute to the attempt to decentre media studies advocated by authors like David Morley, Shaun Moores or Nick Couldry. With this aim, it focuses in particular on the practice's 'media territories' and on the temporality of media activities that participate in articulation of the practice. An analysis of what Theodore Schatzki defines as 'objective' and 'subjective' time reveals how solo travelling in Italy contrasts with the ongoing tendencies of transformation related to the pervasive mediation of tourism.

Keywords: non-media-centric media studies; solo travelling; social practices; media territories; temporality

In the present phase of ubiquitous diffusion, ICTs permeate every domain of human activity: they participate in our daily routines, and in the specialized practices we may take part in, in our work or leisure time. Far from simply providing representations of our activities, media contribute to enable, organize, extend, monitor and coordinate their enactment, ultimately informing the way we act.

An exemplification of the scholarship on the mediation (Livingstone, 2009) of social practices would necessarily appear as heterogeneous and dispersed as the possible fields of our practical engagements. In sport, for example, several authors have illustrated how the 'body-equipment-media assemblage' (Thorpe, 2017, p.12) informs how embodied performances are planned, executed and monitored. Writing about the use of wearable cameras in surfing, Clifton Evers points out how the 'the camera's material technical architecture is woven through perception, techniques, choices, ideas, space, etc.' (2015: 153). Similarly, Jeff Ferrell, Dragan Milovanovic and Stephen Lyng (2001) drawn on an ethnographic research to describe the constitutive role of media activities in the illicit practice of base-jumping, which involves illegally parachuting from public buildings. The authors point out how 'BASE jumping activities do not take shape in one realm, then to be simply recorded or reported in some other, mediated realm. Rather, mediated dynamics saturate the BASE-jumping process, from planning and execution to aftermath and audience' (p.195). Along the same lines, but addressing completely different practical fields like music production and judicial decision-making, Giovan Francesco Lanzara (2010) shows how the adoption of a new medium in an established practice implicates the general re-articulation and re-organization of the activities that compose it: a process that he defines as the 'remediation' of the practice. Another case of remediation is presented in Rhonda N. McEwen's study (2011) on the transformation of drug-dealing – and its enforcement – in Canada, now heavily relying on the use of mobile phones. Other practices require instead, for symbolic or practical reasons, a temporary disengagement from a specific medium or from media in general (yet, on using social media while driving, see Licoppe and Figeac, 2015; on new forms of gameplay allowing video-gaming while engaged in other practices, see Keogh and Richardson, 2018): it is what Alex Leavitt defines as 'situational non-use' (Leavitt, 2014), that he opposes to the far more studied topic of resistance to the adoption of a medium.

Investigating these forms of entanglements, where media and non-media activities are articulated together to constitute social practices that are not primarily or exclusively media-oriented, is of pivotal relevance to understand the present forms of pervasive mediation. Nick Couldry, advocating a renewed attention to practices as 'a new paradigm of media research', underlines how 'we should open our lens even wider to take in the whole range of practices in which media consumption and media-related talk is embedded' (Couldry, 2004, 2010). Therefore,

'one possibility we need to be ready for (…) is that, in many cases, "media consumption" or "audiencing" can only be understood as part of a practice which is not itself "about" media' (p.45). Yet, this sort of 'decentring of media research' has not so far been systematically practised: while scholars have actually widened their perspectives once centred on media effects, texts or production structures, their analytical attention has remained by and large focused on practices that are primarily 'media related'. Even when addressing non-media-oriented practices (like, for example, commuting), media scholars tend to concentrate their attention mainly on media activities, extrapolating and abstracting them from the overall practice they are an integral part of (Tosoni and Ridell, 2016). On the other hand, while acknowledging the key relevance of media activities in social practices, the second generation of practice theorists (including authors like Theodore Schatzki, Elizabeth Shove or Andrew Reckwitz, who have inspired the practice turn in media research) have not so far dedicated systematic attention to media, and to how to methodologically investigate their involvement in social practices.

As a contribution to the attempt to decentre media studies a little more, in this paper we intend to advance some methodological observations about researching media activities in practices that are not primarily media-oriented. In particular, we will draw on the preliminary findings of an ongoing research project on female solo travelling in Italy, as enacted by Italian practitioners, to address the temporal regimes that organize the activities (media-related and not) that constitute the practice, including forms of 'situational non-use', or controlled disconnection from media. In what follows, we will proceed in three steps. In the next paragraph, we will briefly clarify the main tenets of the practice approach we are adopting, focusing in particular on media' and practices' spatial and temporal arrangements. In the second paragraph, we will introduce the preliminary findings of our ongoing research project on female solo travelling in Italy, discussing them in light of the present remediation of tourism. In our final remarks, we will summarize some of our main findings.

1. Researching media activities in social practices

As pointed out by John Postill, 'social theorists agree that there is no such thing as a coherent, unified "practice theory"' (2010: 6). Yet, all practice theorists 'uphold (…) that practices consist in organised sets of actions, that practices link to form complexes and constellations – a nexus – and that this nexus forms the "basic domain of study of the social sciences" (Giddens, 1984: 2)' (Hui, Schatzki and Shove, 2017: 1). What is relevant for us here is that from this perspective an action – or, with Schatzki (2012), an activity, as in this paper we address the 'bodily doings

and sayings' (Schatzki, 1996: 22) that compose a practice – 'is the action it is as part of a practice' (Schatzki, 1996: 97). In our view, in fact, this simple statement implies 'a more radical adjustment to our research agendas than might at first appear' (Couldry, 2010).

This adjustment is indeed 'radical' not only because, with Couldry, it leads researchers to decentre their main analytical focus from media texts and effects. From a practice perspective, in fact, the 'identity' of the (media or non-media) activities that compose a practice do not 'derive solely from features of the individual [enacting them, as in] (...) his or her understanding or motives' (Schatzki, 1996). The practice therefore has an ontological precedence over its activities: activities' 'identity' derives from 'features' of the practice they belong to, and that organize and articulate them with one another. In Schatzki's approach, for example, this organization depends on four 'types of items': '(1) action understandings, which are abilities to carry out, recognize and respond to particular actions; (2) rules, which are formulated instructions, directives, admonishments, and the like; (3) teleoaffective structures, which contain enjoined and acceptable ends, enjoined and acceptable projects and actions to carry out for those ends, and enjoined and acceptable emotions; and (4) general understandings – of matters germane to the practice' (Schatzki, 2009: 39). A practice can be therefore conceived as a double articulation:[1] of activities as tasks with a function in an overall teleological architecture; and of activities as bodily performances, coordinated in their enactment in complex choreographies. Each activity makes sense only in the light of this double articulation, and of the symbolic meanings 'germane to the practice'.

Moving the analytical focus from media texts to the media activities of an audience (or of a group of users) risks therefore being methodologically insufficient for a fully fledged practice approach. As research objects, in fact, audiences and users are methodologically constructed on the basis of people's engagement with media devices, platforms, services or contents, and not of their participation in the same practice. The issue here is, of course, if and when audiencing or using media devices can be regarded as practices in their own right. Yet, with Shove, Pantzar and Watson, who suggest taking as a practice 'anything that practitioners themselves take to be such' (2012, p. 121), this seems to us more an empirical than a theoretical question: watching our favourite series on our Netflix night, after ordering a food delivery and silencing our mobile phones so as not to be disturbed, can easily count as a practice. On the other hand, consulting online information to find in real time our way to the place we are heading to should instead more properly be acknowledged as a form of 'secondary audiencing', or an 'audience

1   A third form of articulation, that we are not addressing here, is represented by the expressive nature of activities as spectacles performed in front of an audience (see, of course, Goffman, 1959).

activit[y] that [is] functional to or a subservient part of other practices' (Tosoni and Tarantino, 2013: 575). A large part of our experience of engagement with media consists exactly of these forms of mediation. Yet, these forms of mediation cannot be adequately tackled with a focus narrowed down to media activities alone. From a methodological point of view, addressing these forms of mediation requires a further decentring of media studies: the overall articulation of social practices must be assumed as the main criterion of construction and demarcation of media scholars' research objects. The technicalities of this operation depend on the research methods employed: they could for example consist of the construction of a multi-sited ethnographic field (Marcus, 1995) encompassing all the sites where the practices actually unfold (instead of focusing only on sites of media engagement); or they could consist of selecting a group of practitioners – base-jumpers, musicians, lawyers or drug-dealers – as informants for in-depth qualitative interviews (instead of sampling an audience or a group of users).

To regain a specific focus on media after this operation of methodological decentring in favour of social practices, we have elsewhere introduced the concept of 'media territories' (Tosoni and Ciancia, 2017). While there's disagreement on conceiving 'materials' as a basic constituent of social practices (e.g. Shove et al., 2012, pro; Schatzki, 2002, contra), all theorists agree on the relevance of material 'objects, infrastructures, tools, hardware and the body itself' (Shove et al., 2012: 23) for the structuration and unfolding of a practice. Some of these 'tools' are 'media devices, platforms and services: (…) we refer to these ensembles of specific material elements (…) as 'media territories', carved out by practitioners from the general mediascape to be employed in a stable way within a particular practice' (Tosoni & Ciancia, 2017: 44). Being firmly centred on a social practice, 'media territories' differ from similar concepts like 'media diets' (Pozzali and Ferri, 2012) and 'media repertoires' (Hasebrink and Hepp, 2017) – as 'the entirety of media that a person regularly uses' (p. 6) – or 'media ensembles' – that focus 'on entire collectivities and organizations and the media which are used within them' (p. 10).

Media territories also concur to define the spatial arrangement of a practice: 'using the spatial metaphor of 'territories' we intend, [in fact,] to underline how these media assemblages represent also the mediated sites in which practices unfold, contributing to define their overall spatial arrangement' (Tosoni & Ciancia, 2017: 44). In line with Paddy Scannell's concept of the 'doubling of space' (Scannell, 1996), extended by Shaun Moores (2004a) to digital media, media activities are in fact to be regarded as operations performed on virtual sites (e.g. sharing a post on Facebook) and, at the same time, as performances enacted by embodied actors engaged with media devices in spatially dispersed physical sites (in a room, interacting with a keyboard, a mouse and a screen to share a post on Facebook, for example). This double nature of media – as virtual sites and material tools – must

be taken into account to clarify the 'identity' of media activities within a practice. Mapping a practice's media territory is therefore a methodological precondition to understand the 'identity' that media activities acquire within a practice, and to understand how media 'remediate' the overall practice itself.

In this paper, we also intend to extend our focus to time, and in particular to the relationship between media activities and the temporality of social practices. Actually, from a methodological perspective, for Schatzki time and space can be addressed separately only when 'conceived of as features of reality that persist independently of human activity and understanding' (Schatzki, 2009: 35), or as 'objective' time and space. Among the objective temporal and spatial properties of a practice, the author enlists 'the rhythms, sequences and periodicities of its constituent actions as well as the geometric distribution of the locations where these actions are performed' (p. 41). Tackling the role of media activities in weaving the 'rhythms, sequences and periodicities' of a practice, and in turn understanding how media activities' temporality is shaped by the overall organization of a practice, is of key relevance to grasping its mediation. Yet, objective time is not the only feature of the temporality of a practice and its activities (Schatzki, 2006). As there is a '"phenomenological", "existential" [or] "lived' space"' (Schatzki, 2009: 36) – or space as it is experienced while acting, when for example some locales are constituted as places, while others as paths connecting them – Schatzki remarks that there is also an 'activity time', a concept that for the author resonates with 'experiential time, lived time, existential time and the time of consciousness' (p. 38). In this case, 'temporal and spatial dimensions are connected inherently – and not contingently as with objective space-times. Indeed, the two dimensions are coordinately instituted together' (p. 38) and inextricably intertwined in what is defined as 'timespace'. Drawing on Bergson and on Heidegger (Schatzki, 2006), Schatzki describes activity time as teleological and non-sequential:

> Projection, throwness and being-amid are, respectively, the future, past and present dimensions of human activity. Projection is acting for the sake of a way of being or state of affairs. (…) Throwness, meanwhile, is being situated. When a person acts, she almost always responds to or acts in the light of particular states of affairs. These states of affairs are that given which she does whatever she does. This departing, or coming, from particular states of affairs in acting is the past dimension of activity. Being-amid, finally, is having to do with entities: acting amid, towards and at (…) them. It is the present dimension of activity, activity itself. (Schatzki, 2009: 37)

In this sense, 'the three dimensions of temporality occur simultaneously, "at one stroke" (…). If activity ceases, the three disappear together' (p. 37). In Schatzki's approach to practices, timespace play a relevant and complex role, and its clar-

ification exceeds the limits of the present chapter. What we want to reiterate here is that a practice's objective time and space features 'derive from the timespaces of actions and from the practices that actions compose' (Schatzki, 2009: 49).

In the following section, we will probe this methodological framework, aiming to shed light on how media activities enacted by Italian practitioners of female solo travelling are shaped by, and in turn contribute to shape, this social practice.

2. Remediation of tourism and female solo travelling

In the last decade, tourism has undergone a radical transformation, along with changes to people's lifestyles and technologies (Uriely, 2005). The touristic experience was once defined by its distinctiveness from everyday life and by the suspension of norms and values of our daily activities (Turner and Ash, 1975; Smith, 1977). According to Philip Pearce and Ulrike Grezel (2012), this traditional view of tourism resonates deeply with Van Gennep's concept of rites of passage (1977), with travellers crossing a threshold which disconnects them from their home and plunges them into a usually rewarding and, although sometimes challenging, different environment. Since the early 1990s, as Wang, Xiang and Fesenmaier (2016) point out, many scholars have challenged this dualistic notion, arguing that there is a mutual penetration of experiences between the travel context and everyday life (Urry, 1990; Lash and Urry, 1994; Munt, 1994). Nowadays, in fact, tourists tend to 'extend' daily life into travel (Inversini, Xiang and Fesenmaier, 2015), using various forms of mobile technology to stay in touch with family and friends (White and White, 2007). The fact that people use the same media applications in both travel and daily lives (Inversini et al., 2015) results in a sort of 'spillover' effect, whereby people carry their everyday routines into travel (e.g. reading news and participating in social networks) (D. Wang et al., 2016), sometimes performing them with their family and friends (Moores, 2004b).

Hence, mobile technologies change the nature of travel by 'decapsulating' (Jansson, 2007) or 'de-exoticizing' (Larsen, Urry and Axhausen, 2007) the touristic experience, since the sense of adventure and escape diminishes because of better information about a place and better connection with the everyday environment (D. Wang and Fesenmaier, 2013). The pervasive connectivity of the Internet fades some peculiar dichotomies that were used to characterize the travel experience, including home/away, authentic/inauthentic, leisure/work, extraordinary/mundane and present/absent (Hannam, Sheller and Urry, 2006). For other scholars, it leads to a more general blurring of space and time, which Pearce calls 'digital elasticity' (Pearce, 2011: 27). In particular, several authors have underlined how the touristic experience is progressively losing its linear articulation in clear-cut phases, as

described by Craig-Smith and French (1995). In their classic study, the authors distinguish an anticipatory phase, involving activities like planning and reservations; an experiential phase, when the travel actually takes place; and a final reflective phase, which includes telling others about the experience. Yet, in the last decade, it has been pointed out how the widespread diffusion of portable media has blurred such a clear demarcation. For example, decision-making (typical of the first phase) and receiving/giving feedback from and to friends and family (typical of the third phase) can occur on-site thanks to the support of mobile phones (Mascheroni, 2007; Wang and Fesenmaier, 2013).

Within this general context, solo travellers, or tourists without companions, represent a fast-growing segment of the international tourism market (Mill and Morrison, 2009; Dempsey, 2015). While this trend is influenced by an increasing number of single-person households, delayed marriages and childless couples (Laesser, Beritelli and Bieger, 2009), several studies have pointed out how travelling alone is not necessarily the result of circumstances, but also a lifestyle decision: Mehmetoglu, Dann and Larsen (2001), for example, differentiate solo travellers 'by default' from solo travellers 'by choice', and they enumerate different socio-psychological motivations for travelling alone by choice, including searching for freedom, exploration,and solitude. Laesser, Beritelli and Bieger (2009) add curiosity and looking for new social contacts to these motivating factors. Specific motivations characterize female solo travelling, recently the object of a growing number of studies that bring together tourism and gender studies (Wilson and Little, 2005; McNamara and Prideaux, 2010; Wilson and Little, 2008).

As noted by Jordan and Aitchison (2008), there is continuous growth in women travelling independently. Research has shown that female solo travellers are interested in life-changing experiences, in 'meaningful travel' (Wilson & Harris, 2006) that pushes them to reconsider their perspectives on life and reassess their interpersonal relationships (McNamara and Prideaux, 2010). Yearning to challenge oneself (Jordan and Gibson, 2005; Wilson and Little, 2005), moving beyond personal comfort zones, developing a sense of autonomy and independence (Butler, 1995; Wilson and Little, 2008) and having an adventurous experience (Chiang and Jogaratnam, 2006), but also escapism (Butler, 1995; Wilson and Harris, 2006; Gibson, Berdychevsky and Bell, 2012), have been identified as other key motivations for the practice. Other scholars have in turn investigated deterrent factors, as risks and fears, as a way to highlight the social and cultural barriers women face. In line with some classic literature about women's leisure and outdoor activities (Henderson, 1989; Shaw, 1994), some authors have for example shown how national parks and forests are often described as dangerous for women (Curson & Kitts, 2000). The same level of perceived danger has been documented for women travelling alone in big cities, e.g. London (Carr, 2001). Wilson and Little (2008) argue that

female solo travellers are more likely to feel inhibited to travel independently, and they identified deterrent factors including others' perceptions and opinions, vulnerability – especially at night – and a sense of restricted access. In particular, negative attitudes and apprehensive comments from social networks can affect their level of participation in this practice (Chung, Baik and Lee, 2017) even if travellers can find, in the same virtual environment, positive emotional support and encouragement during their trip (Kim, Fesenmaier and Johnson, 2013). As we will see, both these motivations and deterrent factors are of key relevance to Italian female solo travellers.

2.1   Female solo travelling in Italy and the circuit of experience

What makes the Italian case particularly interesting is that, in Italy, female solo travelling is invested with specific gendered meanings, which are negotiated and socialized mostly online, on Facebook and in the blogosphere. As we will see (2.2), solo travelling is depicted as deeply related to women's identity: as a form of empowerment, as a challenge, and as a form of care of the self, especially after existential turning points such as the end of a relationship. Our interviewees refer the first two of these meanings to Mediterranean culture: in their opinion, while for northern-European and Anglo-Saxon women travelling alone could be considered common, for Italian women it still represents a form of rebellion and emancipation. Data gathered in 2015 by TripAdvisor in nine countries show how in Italy only the 23 per cent of travelling women have travelled alone, against an overall average of 55 per cent.[2] It is therefore particularly relevant to clarify how media engagement contributes to shaping these meanings for practitioners and, more generally, how media activities participate in the articulation of the practice. Since the beginning of 2017, we have been ethnographically observing online interactions in the main Italian virtual spaces dedicated to female solo travelling, with a more intense phase of observation from January 2017 to March 2017, a cyclical follow-up in subsequent months, and an analysis of previously published online content. The multi-sited online ethnographic field was initially assembled to map the main solo travelling sites through search engines, and later integrated with resources mentioned in spaces already mapped or quoted in interviews. A survey (of 80 respondents) distributed in these online spaces – and in particular in the most active female solo travellers' community, the Facebook group 'Viaggio da sola perché' ('I travel alone because') – aimed at ascertaining practitioners' general media usage. Among these respondents, we finally selected a first group of nine informants as 'informal

2   Survey conducted in 2015 on a sample of 15,958 respondents from Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, South East Asia, the UK and the US.

experts' (Line et al., 2011) for in-depth interviews to investigate media activities related to the practice.

As we will show, our preliminary investigation indicates that female solo travelling in Italy presents relevant differences if compared to the current tendencies of mediatized tourism reported in the reviewed literature. In particular, while itself pervasively mediatized, female solo travelling does not present that 'de-exoticization' (Larsen, Urry and Axhausen, 2007), and that 'blurring of phases' that, as we have seen, scholars attribute to the pervasive adoption of portable media in touristic travels. The point we want to make is that a practice-centred analytical focus can show how these differences are related to the way the understandings of solo travelling as a specialized practice (distinct from general tourism), and its overall organization, inform the 'identity' of its media activities.

In female solo travelling, in fact, travel is still understood as an experience comparable to a rite of passage, and it must therefore be lived as 'exotically' as possible in order to be perceived as authentic. This understanding of the practice depends on, and informs, a strict discipline of its media activities, which also includes forms of controlled disconnection from media in order to keep daily life and travel separate. As we will show, each of the phases in which the practice is articulated – a pre-, a during and a post-travelling phase – is in fact characterized by different media activities, by different rules disciplining their temporality, and by the activation of different portions of the practice's media territories. It may therefore be true that in solo travelling, as in general tourism, activities like planning or discussing the experience are no longer strictly relegated in distinct phases. Yet, this does not imply any form of blurring in the articulation of phases of the practice's objective time.

This clear-cut distinction of phases also characterizes practitioners' subjective time. The symbolic relevance of this articulation in shaping solo travellers' experience is in fact discursively addressed, socialized and institutionalized in online interaction, in particular in the community 'Viaggio da sola perché', where the practice is imbued with symbolic meanings and its activities organized. In these spaces, users share the same discursive temporal frame but are engaged in different phases of the practice, contributing therefore via different roles to its elaboration: notably, interviewees report how practitioners interacting online are perceived as (and attributed the status of) future travellers, travellers, and returned from travel, and distinguished from members not yet actively engaged in the practice.

In sum, each of the practice's phases is discursively addressed online with practitioners engaged in the same or in different phases. From this perspective, all of them are therefore actually 'experiential' and 'reflective' – as for Craig-Smith and French's definition (1995): we have thus called the second and third phases, phases of 'travelling' and 'active sharing', and the overall organization of the practice a 'circuit of experience'.

2.2 Circuit of experience: anticipatory phase

Our informants have underlined the key relevance of the anticipatory phase, which involves activities such as deciding on a destination, planning and psychologically preparing for the trip. The perceived challenges and potential dangers of travelling alone for women imply in fact thorough preparation for the experience. This does not imply overscheduling or the exclusion of serendipity during travel; yet, travellers learn, mainly from other female solo travels, what to expect from a specific destination, what risks could and/or should be avoided, and up to what point on-site improvisation is possible. Online resources, and social media in particular (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014), play a key role in this case.

The practice's media territories are in fact organized in some sort of concentric circles, that have at their very centre – as anticipated – the Facebook group 'Viaggio da sola perché', opened in August 2015, expanded in 2017 to a Facebook page and a website (when the project acquired a professional and commercial vocation), and counting in July 2017 around 12,000 members.[3] The group is explicitly gendered (only women can participate) and owes its success to the fact that a potential trip is not 'anticipated' by economic players such as hotels or travel agencies, but by peers, who often tell in a reflective way of their own experiences, thus permeating solo travelling with specific symbolic interpretations. In this circuit of experience, in fact, what for some is the anticipatory phase of the trip, for others is the final elaboration of the experience (see 2.4). It is mainly in this online space that symbolic meanings of the practice are generated, negotiated and socialized. Solo travelling is mainly framed according to three distinct, yet interrelated, narratives: travelling as empowerment, according to which solo travelling women become conscious of their full potential and independence; travelling as a challenge to the practitioner's own limits and fears, and at the same time to the prejudices that stigmatize a woman travelling alone; and travelling as a cure and care of the self, where the experience of solitude is depicted as a reflexive one, granting access to the inner and real self, and to its desires, ambitions and fears. The acceptance of these narratives, that make solitary travel 'meaningful travel' (Wilson & Harris, 2006), and the ideal of woman that they imply, foster a strong sense of belonging to the community. Online relationships are sometimes transferred offline: occasionally, gatherings are organized around Italy. Moreover, solo travellers can plan to meet while travelling alone – a possibility that is not held in contradiction with the practice.

Together with the aforementioned narratives, and with the descriptions of the trips and emotional inner landscapes to which they grant access, group members

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3   https://www.viaggiodasolaperche.com/it/media-kit/.

also share practical information regarding the planning and organization of travel. The practical suggestions gathered in this centre are in fact highly trusted and valued by female solo travellers, who in this space acquire a status depending on their competence and contribution. The most visible members sometimes have personal blogs that are linked to the community through various forms of collaboration and constitute a sort of webring surrounding it: practitioners follow one or more of these blogs on the basis of a blogger's competence and perspective on the travel experience, often ascertained in the community.

Finally, this network is part of a wider portion of the Web dedicated to (not gendered) solo travelling, and to travelling in general, that constitutes the periphery of media territories. What is interesting to note is that the community itself often mediates the access to these resources, selecting more women-friendly ones as a sort of compass that direct members across the entire media territory. In this sense, the community is of key relevance to gaining competence to travel, but at the same time also for finding orientation within the Internet and assembling the 'proper' media territory. The community is therefore assimilable to communities of practice, described by Wenger et al. as a group of people 'who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis' (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002: 4).

2.3   Circuit of experience: the travelling phase

In the travelling phase, the practice's media territories are rearranged for mobility. Once again, hints and suggestions are provided within the Facebook group: mobile phones, power banks, e-readers (or books, often in the language of, or talking about, the country visited, to better 'get in touch' with the place) and MP3 players; and more sporadically, digital cameras and laptop computers are mentioned as necessary in our online survey and in-depth interviews. Mobile services like BlaBlaCar are used to deal with the matter of travel, while specific applications are used to get temporarily in contact with locals (Tinder, Couchsurfing, Meetup) or with other travellers (Couchsurfing, Couchsurfing Hangout). As a peculiarity of the practice's media territories, interviewees mention the relevance attributed to tools that allow memorization in written form: journaling, both in short notes and more extended forms (which, in light of the inconvenience of mobile phones' keyboards, generally requires a laptop or an audio recording device for future transcription), is in fact held as an integral part of the practice, and interpreted as a form of reflexive care of the self (Demetrio, 1996). In several cases, practitioners pointed out how they prefer a paper diary and pen over digital technology, not only for the intimate

nature attributed to handwriting, but also as a better way to temporarily disconnect from media (the same applies to paper books).

While in fact in the first phase the practice does not ascribe any specific rule to the temporality of its media activities – they must simply find their place within the temporality of practitioners' everyday lives – in this second phase they are carefully disciplined. In particular, the management of media engagement aims to strike a compromise between the feeling of safety granted by connectivity, the need for social interaction, and the desire for 'authenticity' in the travel experience. In this regard, Wang and Alasuutari discuss the concept of 'authentication, which refers to the social process through which authenticity is produced' (2017, p. 4), and they distinguish 'object-related authenticity' and 'existential authenticity': 'the former is oriented towards engagement with markers signifying the worthiness and authenticity of an alien culture, such as touristic sights and destinations, whereas the latter concerns the tourist's self and sentiments instead of tour objects' (p.6). While the competencies and the right attitude for both forms of authentication are learned online, controlled disconnection from media is a pivotal part of the latter. The absence of familiar sensory inputs from digital devices is framed as a rewarding experience (Germann Molz and Paris, 2015), able to give relief from the rhythms and responsibilities of daily life, and access to the 'authentic' sense of a place visited– and of solo travelling. When not representing a danger, solo travellers tend therefore to avoid all the media activities that are not strictly related to the practice itself, and sometimes those too –for example using Google maps or currency converters. Once again, interviewees report how this is as a way to experience the journey in a more 'authentic' and immediate manner, but also a way to gain competences (like wayfinding) and confidence to be used later in everyday life.

In what Tanti and Buhalis (2017) define as 'selective unplugging', and distinguish from 'active connection' and 'self-imposed total disconnection', solo travellers tend to confine their media activities, practice related or not, to what they perceive as downtime, when they temporarily retreat from a visited place – for example before sleeping. Among the activities related to the practice, together with journaling, connecting to the community is also seen as crucial. In this case, the temporality of engagement with the Facebook group differs from the anticipatory phase: while technically remaining an asynchronous communication environment, practitioners use the platform as a sort of chatroom, for real-time communication with people online. Travellers, in fact, know that they can count anytime on the support of the community, which has enough members to have someone always online: when needed, members who are perceived to be in their travelling phase receive advice, encouragement for forthcoming challenges, and company when they feel lonely.

Thanks to this sort of controlled disconnection, solo travellers 're-exoticize' their journey, once again in contrast with the aforementioned tendencies in con-

temporary tourism. Actually, the practice's overall articulation organizes the temporality of its media activities, but also their avoidance: in this last case, to put it in Derridean terms, media are an 'absent presence' in the organization of the practice.

2.4   Circuit of experience: phase of active sharing

While posting in the community is a media activity that can also be performed in the journey's downtime, 'active sharing' is pursued once the travel has ended, and subjects engage in storytelling about their experience. In this way, for members not yet engaged in the practice, or in the anticipatory phase, the journey is already imbued with symbolic meanings end emotional expectations: in what we have called the circuit of experience, many respondents realized how the posts written by others motivated them to enter the practice, or to select their destination on the basis of the kind of experience the travel was reported to grant.

On many occasions, practitioners extended their storytelling beyond the Facebook group starting personal blogs, the most successful of which are largely followed by the community. In this way, meanings constructed within the group migrate from the community to the blogosphere, and vice versa. Affinity and adherence to the same values ensure an ongoing collaboration with the network. Yet, this phenomenon is not uncontested and unproblematic. Some interviewees have, for example, underlined how the network of blogs that stem from the community may create the perception of a sort of 'travellers-guru lobby', who represent travelling almost like a job: the individualistic nuances that characterize these blogs seem to be in contradiction with the communitarian approach of the group from which they derive. Moreover, to bloggers themselves, the media activities required by running a blog are seen in potential contrast with the practice of solo travelling: a former blogger, for example, pointed out how documenting the trip, with the intention to publish quality content once back, prevented her from grasping the moment, giving her the feeling of living in the future and not in the present.

Also, the emotional landscape of re-entering daily life at the end of the journey is widely addressed and discussed. The community acknowledges a common sense of post-travel alienation, where a dichotomous view of one's lifestyle emerges (immobility and conformism vs dynamism, freedom and empowerment), often associated with the perception of a conflict between a newly discovered sense of self, and the expectations of gender in daily life (related, for example, to the role of mother). On these occasions, gender expectations and roles are reflexively addressed and – at least discursively – contested.

Sharing one's experience, and return advice and support, is also perceived as a form of restitution to the community. Our interviewees reported that the more

feedback they received, the more they were led to share after the journey. As we have seen, this form of sharing contributes to defining the practice's competences, which are therefore acquired not only during travel. Moreover, this form of restitution may condition not only *what* and *how much* to publish, but also *where*, actually pushing practitioners to change their media territory. Practitioners have in fact often reported that they stopped publishing about their travels on their Facebook wall, to avoid sarcasm and criticism, in favour of the protected context of the Facebook group. At other times, they reported how they posted the same photos and materials in both virtual spaces, but with different meanings: sharing on a personal wall responded to a desire for self-exposure and connection with friends, while in the group the dimension of introspection and encouragement of others prevailed.

3.   Conclusion

While still preliminary, these results allow us to sketch two different orders of consideration.

Regarding solo travelling, we have shown how, while strongly remediated, the practice contrasts with and resists present tendencies in the contemporary tourism experience (section 2), that scholars attribute to the widespread diffusion of social and portable media. Actually, a practice-centred analytical focus can clarify how specific media activities – and a specific organization of their temporality – contribute to the re-exoticization of travelling, to the centrality of crossing a symbolic threshold for travellers' experience and to the overall organization of the practice in phases, typical of Italian solo travelling.

This leads us to the second order of consideration: in the present paper we have aimed to tackle the role of media activities in social practices, integrating the analysis of media territories and media activities' temporality. Together with contributing to the overall organization of practices, we have seen how. in solo travelling. media activities' temporality may be subordinated to the temporality of activities not belonging to the same practice (in the anticipatory phase), or to the temporality of activities belonging to the same practice (in the travelling phase), that can also require controlled disconnection. We think that exploring these forms of coordination is of key relevance for both media studies and practice theory. Yet, more investigations – on Italian solo travelling, but also in general on the remediation of social practices – are needed before proposing a systematic typology of media and non-media activities' articulation within social practices.

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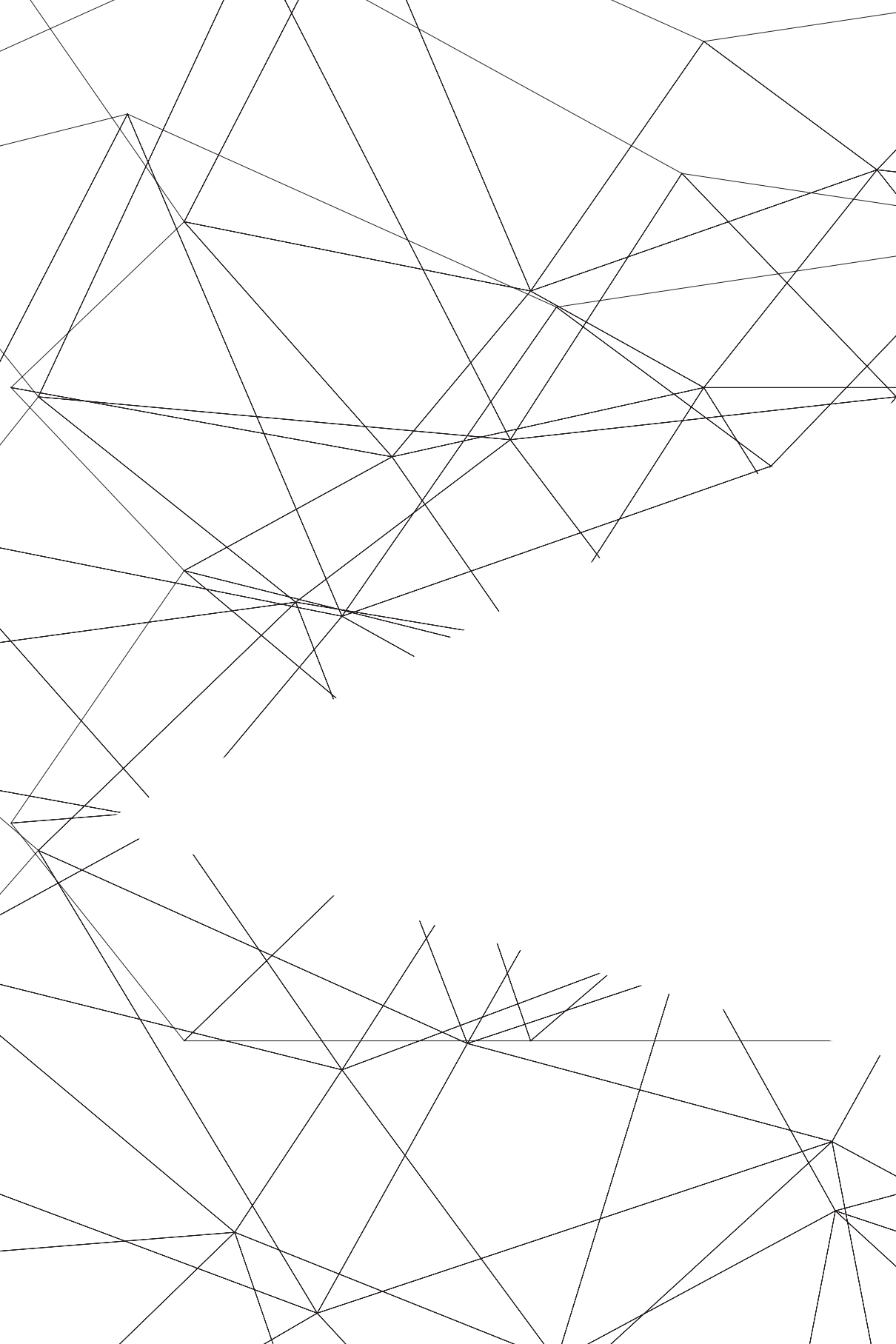
PART II

MAMMA MIA

I've been Habermasian since I don't know when
But the public sphere has it come to an end?
What about Mouffe, or grounded theory?
I don't know how neoliberalists took control
There is incivility in my soul!

Fifteen minutes then we'll hear the bell ring
One more week and we'll forget everything
Mamma mia! We're the yellow flow
My, my, how can I resist you?
Mamma mia! Nico says although
My, my, will we ever get through?

Yes, I participated
But how is that related?
To the workings of democracy?
Now I realised, that's a fantasy
But, I could never let that go!

I've been queering a film and I did CDA
I can't read German news so I am choosing the French
And when you tweet, when you astroturf
I think you know, that your case study is too long
And the theory is not that strong

Fifteen minutes then we'll hear the bell ring
One more week and we'll forget everything
Mamma mia! We're the yellow flow
My, my, how can I resist you?
Mamma mia! Nico says although
My, my, will we ever get through?

Yes, I did gender studies
Cared about power structures
But, but where's the lived experience?

Mamma mia! I must focus now
Is it really only discourse?
Mamma mia, identities at stake,
Is the, region our new course?

Fifteen minutes then we'll hear the bell ring
One more week and we'll forget everything
Mamma mia! We're the yellow flow
My, my, how can I resist you?
Mamma mia! Nico says although
My, my, will we ever get through?

Yes, We'll be brokenhearted
Yellow since the day we started
Why, why do we really have to go?
Mamma mia! we're the yellow flow
My, my, I will never let you go!

(Lyrics by John Magnus Dahl and Maria Sjögren)
(YELLOW FLOW)

ABSTRACTS

Reframing the ASEAN discourse by way of participatory photography: The Manila pilot project

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The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is known for its official photographs, taken during its annual summits and regular meetings. Since its founding 50 years ago, the 10-country bloc has invested in community- and identity-building by promoting its vision of a regional identity that is common or unique to Southeast Asians. In the last 10 years, three big surveys have been conducted to account for the public perception and recognition of ASEAN integration; however, what the data merely show is the lack of agreement and clarity among ordinary ASEAN citizens regarding the notion of "regional identity". Through participatory photography, this visual essay aims to put into perspective what Southeast Asian locals might feel about this issue, starting with a pilot project conducted in Manila.

From November 2016 to April 2017, a total of 12 participants participated in the Manila pilot project by taking photographs and taking part in several workshops for the purpose of critically reflecting on their "ASEAN identity". Collectively, their photographs serve as a testament to how participation in the region-building efforts of the ASEAN is as relevant and valuable as the official discourse itself. Select photographs are featured in this visual essay to demonstrate how the participants themselves found their own voice by way of collaborating and engaging in what Paulo Freire called "we think".

Issues, tensions and health operators' appropriation of the New Public Management & info-communicational devices

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After several caregivers committed suicide in the summer of 2016, health workers started staging regular demonstrations to expose a political context of public services rationalization which deeply changed the organization, the working conditions and the values of the French healthcare system.

We assume that this context of rationalization has been made operational by the features of the New Public Management (NPM) and could be accounted for by the convergence of private and public management logics. According to us, this context originates from the radicalization of the modern truth regime (Staii, Martin-Juchat, 2016), which is at the root of our current framework of representations.

In the workplace, the features deriving from the NPM are meant to safeguard the activity of structures and are info-communicational, facilitating the regulation of collectives (Staii, 2016). This means that they are designed to standardize and legitimize practices of administration by a "spirit" (Weber, 1964) which they are representative of. From there, the dissonance generated by the acculturation from a "spirit" (*Care*) to another (rationalization, budget cuts, all-powerful techno structure, self-pressure, flexibility, networking, etc.) could explain a sense of meaninglessness at work.

Therefore, we need to try and seek how each of us manages to keep a sense of humanity at work, in order to re-create meaning. In other words, we need to develop a communicational approach (Bouillon, 2008) to study the traces of reinvestment/re-composition of *Care* in a context of rationalization.

New communication spaces in the Arab World: A multi-method study of emerging media organisations in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria

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The proposed study aims to investigate the new communication spaces opening up in the Arab World, by looking at emerging media organisations (EMOs) as a specific category of media producers in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. The study aims at examining the phenomenon of emerging media organisations beyond the dichotomy of mass and alternative media and taking into account a comparative and non- eurocentric perspective. These EMOs, while often having their genesis in activist media and networks, attempt to take on more traditional organisational structures found in mainstream media, both in an effort to raise their efficiency and reach wider audiences. The study intends to outline the structural conditions (state relations and regulation, ownership structures and financing models) that constrain and shape the operations of emerging media organisations in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. Finally, the study also aims to analyse the processes of resistance, negotiation and mediation by which these organisations (through their key actors) attempt to align the structural constraints, challenges and opportunities they are faced with, with their professional and political objectives and visions.

The study adopts a mixed-method approach that allows for a more in-depth understanding of the target organisations. Developing the theoretical framework of EMOs that will guide the work will be done through a process of desk research and systematic literature review. The research will then investigate the phenomenon of EMOs in the Arab World both in breadth and depth. The former will be achieved through a systematic mapping of relevant media organisations, in the selected case studies by means of a survey and expert interviews. The latter will involve a more in-depth look at internal dynamics and day-to-day operations at a smaller sample size from the three through ethnographic research methods.

Construction of disability in political discourse in Latvia

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Social construction of disability in political discourse in Latvia refers to a constructing reality in which people with impairments then need to live in and manage their social roles. According to Susan Wendell social construction of disability is "..interaction between biological and the social to create (or prevent) disability.." (Wendell 1996, p.1). Goal of my research is to look at disability as a category that has been socially constructed in political discourse in Latvia. Main research question is: How disability and identity of people with impairments is constructed in political discourse in Latvia and what factors are determining it? Research is planned to have both theoretical and empirical parts.

The theoretical part of my research will include a chapter about usage of the concept of disability historically and internationally, a chapter on social construction of disability, initiated by the concept of social constructivism developed by Berger & Luckmann. The metodological part of my research comprises chapters on political discourse, discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis as it has been developed by Norman Fairclough.

In empirical part of my research I will review political documents on disability in Latvia, speeches of politicians and dialogues between politicians and people with impairments as well as organizations representing them in the period from 1989 till 2017. Finally I will analyse the above mentioned material, mainly using approach of Critical Discourse Analysis.

Since my research also aims to question the ways in which disability is being constructed in political and overall public discourse in Latvia in my thesis I intend to come to conclusions and suggestions on how to represent people with impairments in a more accurate way having positive impact on their everyday lives.

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Composing with flexible phrases

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This research project involves the production of a range of original compositions employing a software system replacing traditional sampling instruments which I designed for this purpose.

The context of this study comprises my process of producing original compositions described from my point of view as a composer. It also includes an exegesis which contextualises and describes the relationship of my compositional process to the software.

For the purposes of this study, the new music production software system emulates the sound of an excitation continuous instrument using sound sample synthesis approach. The newly designed software called "Flexible phrase system" has been produced and is undergoing testing and prototyping while producing original works. The flexible phrase system works within existing digital audio workstations (DAW) and is accessible to other music producers and composers. The interface environment is programmed within the Kontakt 5 environment with the help of the scripting language called Kontakt Script Processor (KSP). All original compositions are realised with the help of the flexible phrase system.

In addition, this research includes a description of the human computer interface from my perspective as a composer and contains a description of the composition and music production process of the included works.

In order to identify the composition and music production process, the methods that I use are autoethnografic and self-study techniques.

I initiate this study to contribute the following knowledge to my research field:

1. Contribution of software to the music technology software market
2. Contribution of original compositions to the repertoire of music
3. Providing original and critical insights to the field of an artistic music production process
4. Providing self-reflection and autoethnography techniques to other music producers and composers.

Cinema as a time lab: challenging ordinary time perception through cinematic technologies and representations

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The doctoral project outlined in this abstract is part of a wider collective research that focusses on the subjective perception of time in audio-visual arts and media, and on the ways this kind of temporal perception affects everyday one. The present project, specifically, examines the medium-specific ability of cinema to expand the borders of spectators' ordinary experience of time.

Based on its technical features, cinema can deliberately manipulate time and thus challenge the concept of a regular and orderly temporal flow. On the one hand, it can *alter* spectators' own experience, triggering desynchronizations between their subjectively perceived time and objectively measurable one. On the other hand, it sometimes gives visible shape to *alternative* forms of experience, which are unfamiliar and normally unavailable to spectators since they belong to the sphere of the (supposedly) irregular or even pathological. By affording such experiences, it is argued, cinema turns into a creative time lab enabling spectators to experiment with their own and alternative ways of living time.

The project takes advantage of this bizarre time lab in order to address, particularly, two main questions. Which aspects of a given cinematic product are responsible for *altering* spectators' own perception of time and making it highly subjective? How can spectators gain, through cinematic representations, at least partial access to *alternative* ways of perceiving time, and what can they learn from them? With regard to the first question, the theoretical and methodological framework of Neurofilmology will be adopted and neuro-psychological experiments assessing subjects' reactions to specific audio-visual stimuli will be designed and run. Concerning the second one, both semiotic and phenomenological tools will be employed in order to study psychopathological forms of temporal experience in particular, their cinematic representations and the effects of the latter on spectators.

Watching the Cybertroopers: Demystifying online astroturfing in Malaysia's political sphere

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This research project attempts to understand better the political communication practice engaged in by State and political actors known as astroturfing, that is, the disguising of staged movements and opinions as coming from the grassroots.

Across the globe, astroturfing is used for various reasons: suppressing dissent, propaganda purposes, reverse censorship and manipulation and spin. The practice is usually covert in nature and thus, is based on deceit and falsehood – both in its intent and truthfulness in content. This paper will look at the online political astroturfing practices in Malaysia as a case study to illustrate the murky line between information and disinformation being disseminated from politicians, political parties and the Government. In Malaysia, this practice is generally known as "cybertrooping".

This PhD project will involve the analysis of emails, tweets and other data mined from social platforms. This corpus of data is invaluable for the project, not in the least because of the way that it allows me to address significant methodological issues in existing research on astroturfing. While the covert nature of astroturfing could be said to be the main reason why there are so few empirical studies done in this area, it is also important to highlight that methodological difficulties could also have played a part.

My original contribution to knowledge lies in both in the context of empirically studying the cybertrooping phenomenon in Malaysia, and astroturfing as a global phenomenon, including using new digital methods of research.

Queering Almodóvar

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The aim of my thesis is to analyse Pedro Almodóvar's filmography (1949) from an approach based on queer theories of film analysis and within the more generic and comprehensive framework of cultural studies. I have focused on using aspects of his filmography related with sexuality and gender issues and the socio-cultural contexts in which his work has been developed and received in Spain from the end of the seventies to the present day. It is therefore a proposal anchored in a hermeneutic and historical-critical methodology.

The point of view adopted in the research is located in the so-called reception studies that come largely from cultural studies and that allow incorporate the referential function of the context. Queer film analysis proposes a theory that goes beyond the statement "images are" to "how certain images are read in context".

This aim requires adopting a series of analytical frameworks that allow to approach the proposed objectives and which are articulated around two basic core concepts, on the one hand gender and sexuality and on the other, cinematographic genres interpreted in queer code: mainly melodrama (woman's films) and comedy. Therefore, it will be necessary to approach the relationship that is generated between sexuality and gender from the discourses on identity issues, the body as a site of control and resistance, masculinity/femininity, heteronormativity/homonormativity/trans* and aspects of representation such as intertextuality, irony, camp, parody, subversion, masquerading or carnivalization.

Somehow our purpose is to seek new analyses and to readjust the asymmetry that has historically occurred between dominant cultural texts and dissident practices, such as queer. We are looking how calling attention or deconstructing the normative (hetero/homo) aspects of a cultural artifact. Accordingly although we defend that the filmic texts lack a single discernible meaning, it is also true that from our situated knowledge we also pursue to study the ideological dimension of cinema in order to emphasize its possible value for social change.

As cultural studies does, we include ideas drawn from Marxism and ideology, structuralism and poststructuralism, psychoanalysis and subjectivity and the politics of difference, in which it is central the sexuality and the gender issues. As such cultural studies addressing topics as diverse as human biology and emotions, space and nation, social difference or the relationships between dominant culture and subcultures. All of these topics are at the very core of Almodovar's films and discourses.

Immigration comedy in the Scandinavian public spheres

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The Scandinavian immigrant population, and the majorities relation to them, are popular topics in comedy in the three countries (Sweden, Denmark and Norway), and both the immigrants themselves and the majority population are among the "jokers". This particular part of the cultural public sphere may contribute to the wider public sphere by addressing taboos, challenging prejudices, and constitute group identities

The goal of my PhD project is to examine if, and how, television comedy may have contributed to the treatment of the immigration issue in the public spheres in Scandinavia. Methodically, I will combine textual analysis with reception analysis and audience analysis. The dissertation will include a history of immigration comedy and its reception in Scandinavia from 1970 till present, research of how comedians experience their role in the public sphere, and studies of how the comedy shows are used and interpreted by different audiences.

The project also has historical and comparative goals. By looking into a 45 year time span, it is possible to see if and how comedy has developed, both regarding content, platform, genres and actors, and relate this to other aspects of the public sphere in the three countries. To thoroughly examine and explain this is an important part of the project, which theoretically also aims to better understand how popular culture plays a role in the political public sphere. The project is situated within Habermasian public sphere theory, but also draws on theoretical perspective on humour, ethnic identity and multiculturalism.

On the discrepancy regarding how American elite print media frame human rights infringements

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The elite US print media such as New York Times, when framing human rights issues in USA and China, tend to frame China's human rights issues and American's own civic rights violations in different ways, a reflection of deviation from core values. The consensual view of news is that journalists have a fourth estate role, as news texts and images not merely concern representing reality but also the products of media institutions. It is necessary to understand news production in order to understand the social and cultural phenomena behind news contexts. There are certain ways in framing practices demonstrating the discrepancies of the discursive practices as part of the framing practices by journalists. Empirical data is collected from a succession of writings on human rights infringements by using content analysis to examine the various dimensions of the discrepancy. The frames are to be examined in a ten-year period, punctuated by major events to examine whether there were associations between the types of frame used and tones of media coverage. News-reporting articles are to be searched and selected from the LexisNexis. Two coders are assigned to code these articles, before categorizing them into dominant and secondary frames. Besides, all these articles are rated by its overall tones of coverage on a Likert scale from negative to positive or based on other criteria, with inter-coder reliability calculated. The associations between the frames and tones of coverage are made salient in various contexts to examine the various dimensions of discrepancies. The topic is also to be examined from the sources on which elite American elite journalists' reports are based, to the new interactive model derived from gatekeeping theories shed under sociological perspectives, as efforts to account for their deviations from the core value system in their practices In order to explore the reasons underlying the discrepancy in journalists' framing practices, both the reports issued by U.S. state department and white paper on U.S. human rights by Chinese State department from the past few decades are also to be examined from to explore to what extent the discrepancies in various aspects of human rights between two countries actually exist before an inquiry is made into to what extent and how U.S elite media constructs the reality of human rights infringement of self vs. others.

Students' media literacy as a starting point of media education: An action research

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Digital media are proliferating faster than culture, laws and education (Bolter & Grusin, 2000). Our lives do not take place separately from media, we live in media (Deuze, 2015). Every aspect of our life takes place in media (ibid.). Moreover, media have became ubiquitous and all-pervading (ibid.). This situation demands competence that would enable humans to cope with media life (ibid.). The most common name for such competence is media literacy.

The current generation of young people lives in a different world than their parents or teachers (Deuze, 2015). Their lives have an electronic dimension to it and it resulting in the creation of a cyberlife (Bauman, 2007). Young users often face problems which they cannot solve by themselves and if their peers or older siblings cannot help them (Jirák, Šťastná and Zezulková, 2016; Deuze 2015) then, young users find help in media (Deuze, 2015). In this context, media plays the role of a super-peer (ibid.). For todays' youth, media is a source of information and a tool for communication (Jirák et al., 2016). In a class, teachers can benefit from youths' previous knowledge of media content (Zezulková, 2015).

The main goal of this research is to compare opinions, attitudes, experiences, knowledge and skills of teachers and their students. The research applies qualitative action research (AR) methodology. Although the aim of the AR is usually not about creating new theoretical knowledge but improving the practice (Morales, 2016). The proposed research will apply Edwards' and Willis' (2014) AR strategy.

The research method is participating observation. This method was chosen because it enables the researcher to work in an environment that is natural to the participants. Furthermore, the researcher will be at the level of a participant as an observer (Disman, 2002). The method that allows to choose from and apply a number of data collection techniques such as group interviews, educational interventions and content analysis (ibid). The data will be continuously recorded in the form of field notes. The tool for analysis and interpretation of data will be open coding.

EMEDUS (2014) research survey pointed out, that there is a lack of knowledge what goes on in formal media education. The survey recommends to implement several research projects across Europe to encourage good practises in media education at schools (Hartai, 2014). This research has an potential to be one of them.

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Self-Other positioning: Insights into children's understanding of risks in new media

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This work uses Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961) to identify how pre-adolescent children understand and represent online risk. Adults often mediate children's online experiences, but their understanding of risk in the context of new media might differ from what really worries children online. This points to the importance of acknowledging the child's world view when making sense of risky situations online. Data were collected using six focus groups with Maltese children (n=49) aged 9 to 12. Participants were asked to talk about what children should be careful about when they go online and why. One of the themes identified through thematic analysis of the data was that children position themselves and others differently in relation to content, contact and conduct risks online. Since one way of analysing social representations is through dyadic oppositions in language and thought (Marková, 2015), the Self-Other is used as an epistemological thema via which to analyse the children's representations of risk. The analysis shows evidence of cognitive biases and distortions in the way children situate themselves and the way they situate others. The perception of self-invulnerability could place children at the risk of miscalculating the dangers they come across in the online environment. Shedding light on these distortions helps identify which digital literacy skills children need to learn so that practices and policies can target their needs specifically.

Singledom and female subjectivity: fantasy, representation and lived experience

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While the number of single women has steadily grown in the UK-US over the past 15 years, there has been a simultaneous proliferation of images and narratives of the single woman within popular culture. This thesis argues that there is a tension between contemporary mediated constructions of the single woman that concurrently draw on historical and postfeminist tropes to jointly stigmatise single femininity, and increased diversity at the level of lived experience of single women. Existing research has largely examined cultural representations and the lived experience of single woman in isolation. However this thesis examines both how the single woman is constructed in popular culture and the ways in which such representation may be impacting on the individual subjectivities. It takes Foucault's theory of subjectivity as its framing, employing the concept of fantasy to investigate how the single woman is being discursively constructed and regulated through *fantasies* in popular cultural representations and in single women's narratives of lived experience. Methodologically it will employ a Foucauldian discourse analysis to explore how single women negotiate what may be stigmatising, regulatory cultural fantasies. Qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews will be combined with an analysis of popular culture media texts. Such research is increasingly urgent in order to examine how in the context of a growing number of single women, female subjectivities may be impacted by misogynistic, abject media representations of single subjectivity.

Information treatment in the generalist channels: Comparative analysis of the TV information and infotainment in Spanish television.

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Information is a TV macrogenre with heavy presence in all TV schedules around the world, and TV shows which contain information are one of the main gatekeepers in our society nowadays.

This PhD investigation is willing to study and analyze the information treatment that the information TV formats use.

The main objective of the project is to analyze and compare the most important TV shows in the Spanish generalist channels and manage to determine if the so-called classic information is fulfilling the objective that the society assumes that these TV shows should satisfy, as compared to other formats of Infotainment, which the audience takes more as entertainment than as information.

Taking as reference different TV formats such as the classic TV news, talk shows or magazines, our research analyzes every TV show on the generalist channels in one complete week of a TV schedule from Spain with a double perspective.

Mediated urban creativity: the poetics and politics of creative and media practices in Southeast Asian cities

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This doctoral research focuses on mediated urban creativity in contemporary Southeast Asian cities, in particular the poetics and politics of urban lives and what people do with media in the context of their everyday creativity. The research follows the selected creative collectives in two cities, i.e. Bandung in West Java, Indonesia and George Town in Penang, Malaysia, as the two cities are home for several creative collectives that actively use media especially digital media to express their views, display their works and engage with their social networks on a daily basis.

The selected collectives in the two cities work in various types of creativity: crafting, alternative library, independent music supporting system and collective arts. By exploring their experiences and investigating their perspectives, this research aims to critically analyse the articulation of creative and media practices and their interplay with space, place, memory, identity and power in Southeast Asian contexts.

Since the research uses a qualitative and cultural approach to theories and practices of media and creativity in everyday life, the thesis draws on qualitative, ethnographic and visual methodologies to explore what people do with media in the context of Southeast Asian urban everyday creativity. Theoretically departing from *practice theory* and specifically informed by Michel de Certeau's *poetics of everyday life* and Stuart Hall's *articulation*, this research builds the methodological aspect from ethnographic and visual approaches by incorporating various methods, such as field observation, semi-structured and go-along interview, remotely digital observation and photo-documentation, particularly in the tradition of documentary photography.

Jacques Lacan and the British film culture of 1968: Historicising psychoanalysis, cinema and revolution

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My research focusses upon the British Cinema of 1968 in order to argue for the efficacy of a Lacanian theoretical framework for its analysis. In 1970's Screen Theory, a limited number of Lacanian concepts were used in tandem with Althusser to explain cinema's ideological hold. Instead, I situate Lacanian thought historically and argue for a fuller use of Lacan in the analysis of cinema. Allied to this, my project affects a conjunction between Alain Badiou's event and Lacan's Real in order to provide a model for textual analysis; essentially, a Badiouian reading of Lacan to interrogate how the event creates the collective subject of 1960s British Cinema.

British Cinema of the late 1960s included a number of formally radical texts that questioned dominant modes of representation within the feature film. Nineteen-sixty-eight has taken on an agency beyond the actual events with which it is associated, primarily the events in Paris: it is seen as the beginning of Screen Theory; as a site of play and the carnival; and as the zenith or tipping point of the 1960s. I argue that Lacan gives us a radical model for examining cinema at this historical moment.

The use of Lacan, once common in Film Studies, has lessened in recent years. The turn away from Lacan in the 1990s can be seen in the context of other 'post-ideological' concepts that were part of post-modern thought and that led to the emphasis on reception-based modes of film analysis. My project is an attempt to help redress the balance.

Centre and periphery: How to understand a network

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The social sciences and humanities have turned to network analysis in order to better understand society and culture. Whether that is through digital methods or qualitative approaches such as those proposed by Actor-Network Theory, relations between actors (or actants) are mapped. The golden rule for both quantitative and qualitative approaches is that actants only exist in a network if they leave a trace. The most successful pieces of research are those that manage to distil significant associations to reveal social trends on the Internet or produce a 'thick description' of a network via ethnographic methods. Sometimes, however, minor relations or non-existing traces may deliver a more comprehensive understanding, yet they are omitted in order to concentrate on the centre of networks. This chapter reflects on my own research using digital methods, as well as ethnographic methods, in order to understand a network. To deliver conclusive descriptions of a network that are compatible with the theoretical framework, I have focused on places with rich interrelated associations and connections. I have found diverse interest groups that share strong ties and are believed to be part of a community. What I have over-looked though is that this sense of belonging also spreads out to the margins of the network, where relations may be ephemeral but deliver a better understanding of what the network thrives on. By focusing on the margins of networks and personal entry points, this refection on my own research practices shall take a critical look at networks as a research axiom.

"Another day in paradise?" - Outside interference, harassment and intimidation experienced by Finnish journalists

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Studies measuring intimidation and harassment of journalists and the effects of outside interference on journalism have traditionally focused on authoritarian and partly democratic states with weak institutional, legal and cultural safeguards for journalistic freedom and press autonomy. Because of this, the methods of influencing journalism and harassing and intimidating journalists utilized in Western democracies have often remained overlooked and understudied. Still, experiences of outside interference and intimidation can foster a culture of fear, anxiety and self-censorship among journalists and gradually hinder the freedom of expression even in countries with highest estimated levels of press freedom.

Finland has been considered one of the paragons of press freedom and held the top position of the RSF World Press Freedom Index during the years 2009–2016. This study examines the extent, the methods, and the consequences of outside interference experienced by Finnish journalists based on representative survey and thematic interviews.

The concept of outside interference used in this study covers all active and invasive methods that external actors use to harass, pressure or persuade journalists with the objective of influencing editorial content. This makes it possible to examine side by side the more conventional threats such as political or economic pressure and the new challenges emerging from web environment such as online abuse, security breaches, smear campaigns and aggressive fake news sites.

The objective of the study is to observe and analyze existing and emerging threats to journalistic autonomy and safety of journalists in context of Western democratic countries and to develop effective countermeasures to help uphold autonomy and freedom of the press against outside interference.

Motherhood in contemporary German and Irish cinema since 1990

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My research project focuses on the depiction of non-traditional motherhood – such as young single motherhood, maternal regret and conflict – within German and Irish contemporary film since 1990. The maternal portrayals will be situated within E. Ann Kaplan's highly regarded categorisation of motherhood in media. In the final chapter of her book *Motherhood and Representation* Kaplan identifies several types of mothers who tend to be represented in American media in the 1980s. These representations mirror discussions and fears regarding motherhood of the time. According to Kaplan, this categorisation serves as a mere "basis for later researchers to argue from" (Kaplan, 1992: p. 180). Consequently, my research project will not just apply this US categorisation to German and Irish film but will expand it in order to advance knowledge of the representation of motherhood in film by bringing a European focus to the subject.

The thesis will give an introduction into the different environments, childcare systems and institutional structures to support mothers in both countries. This will be used as a foundation for the filmic comparison and then supplemented by Kaplan's categorisation of motherhood. The project will ask what motherhood in our contemporary society is and how the mother is embedded within the cinematic family structure. In doing so, this thesis also considers the impact of the mother's partnership, her sex life and her working life. This project will clarify the similarities and distinctions between Irish and German motherhood through film analysis and will start to develop a categorisation of contemporary Irish and German cinema within its maternal representation.

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Agonistic dislocation of hegemonic discourses: a discourse theoretical analysis of *(in)civility* in social media in Kenya.

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Offensive comments are a challenge to social media users. Although social media sites have increased participation by enabling users to generate content easily, many users are distributing *incivilities*. Instead of equating all *incivility* in social media to anti-democratic speech such as hate speech, this study explains how *incivility* can advance agonistic peace through confrontation of hegemonic political projects (cf. Mouffe (2005). From this perspective, *incivility* is only anti-democratic when directed at the powerless — those outside the existing hegemonic order of things, but *incivility* is democracy-enhancing when used to disarticulate existing hegemonic discourses. Such *incivility* is comparable to Dadaism, Surrealism, Fluxus and Situationism (cf. Cammearts, 2007:75) used to resist dominant thinking. The following central research question guided the study: How is *incivility* in social media dislocating hegemonic discourses? The study will analyse *incivility* using Discourse Theoretical Analysis, a method created by Carpentier and De Cleen (2007) who transformed Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) Discourse Theory. Since social media 'texts' can be viewed as technologies of representation or technologies of dissemination, these two categories of representation will be sampled. This study aims at showing how unlimited incivility in social media is creating agonistic peace by enabling people resist various forms of domination.

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Crowdfunding: analysis and prospects of developments in the participatory web

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Thanks to widespread information technologies and with the rise of Web 2.0, online activities seem to have assumed a more participatory connotation (Jenkins, Ito, boyd, 2015). By taking into account these several mutations, the main focus of the research is to examine the crowdfunding phenomenon, which is an alternative financing system that allows people with a creative project to receive a large number of micro monetary donations via internet (Pais, Peretti, Spinelli 2014).

Even if some critics perceive crowdfunding as just a fad and interpret its popularization as a side effect of the financial crisis, the purpose of the study is to examine this model by assuming a sociological framework of analysis that allows crowdfunding to be considered not just as the latest instance of the new wave of sharing economy, but also as an example of an innovative type of networked solidarity.

Therefore, in order to better understand how this financing model works it is central to understand how the actors (backers and backed) involved behave and interact and what are their inner motivations. In fact, it's important to notice that crowdfunding platforms seems to have popularized a user-centric structure that allows campaign launchers to establish a relationship with their niche audiences even before the project is realized. For these reasons, the research not only provides an in-depth exploration of the literature on the matter, but also, by interviewing the campaign promoters through qualitative methods (Gianturco, 2004), the study offers an analysis of some selected crowdfunding projects from which it is possible to draw general evaluations on this grassroot and alternative funding system.

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Mediation opportunity structures in illiberal democracies. Social movement responses to state anti-refugee propaganda in Hungary

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The recent rise of illiberal democracies shapes a distinct environment in which social movements emerge and operate. This has challenged social science to offer a more nuanced analysis of the potential of social movements in such contexts. This chapter contributes to this ongoing discussion using the framework of *mediation opportunity structures*. By focusing on the case of Hungary, the chapter argues that understanding the dynamics of protest and social movements in contemporary illiberal contexts demands that we pay attention to three issues: 1) the structural power of the state to dominate the mainstream media discourse, 2) the logic of right-wing populism that sets limits on public discourse and 3) a new re-feudalization of the public sphere where top-bottom, unidirectional propaganda tools aim to replace forms that promote dialogue. The chapter draws on research in 2015-2016 in Hungary, focusing on three different movement responses to government anti-refugee propaganda and politics: 1) a counter-billboard campaign criticising the government, 2) a grassroots humanitarian movement and 3) a local protest movement against a refugee camp. Highlighting the findings of these case studies points to the key potential of the new media environment and to tactical innovations (in mobilization, organization and direct action) facilitated by social media. However, they also show how the effects of these innovations were limited, mostly as a consequence of their ambivalent relationship towards the populist logic of public discourse and structural constraints in mainstream media representation. The findings show that the application of mediation theory to contentious action in illiberal democracies allows for a nuanced and multi-layered understanding of opportunities and constraints of such action.

Public service media in search of the elusive active audience

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Public service broadcasters, but more in general television as a whole, are adapting to todays' reality, made of a multitude of audio-visual providers both traditional and online, by exploiting the possibilities offered by the synergy of television with the internet and, in certain cases, other media in the attempt to address the often lamented fragmentation of audiences. The shift from a classical broadcasting approach to cross-media productions brings however a number of challenges. The relation between producers and audiences is undoubtedly one of those.

The aim of this doctoral research is to explore the processes behind the producers' conceptualization of audiences and the possible differences between the implied and the actual audience engagement.

This empirical work combines different methods. On one side it consists of a set of in-depth semi-structured interviews (20) carried out with the creative teams of three different public broadcasting television programs, all of which have aspirations to be cross-media productions, produced by the public service media of Estonia (ERR) and Finland (YLE).

On the other side it consists of a set of focus groups both with the imagined audience, previously defined by the producers, and the actual audiences of the considered productions.

The findings indicate that in certain cases the implied and actual interpretation do not match leading to a dichotomy between the expected and actual audience engagement. This is because of two main issue. First, producers and their creative teams tend to position themselves as gate keepers failing to truly embrace the participatory promises typical of cross-media productions. Second, the actual interpretation of texts is the results of forms of cultural practices that, in certain cases, are opposite to the participatory elements present in cross-media productions.

Searching for a Communicative City: Rhetorics and practices of participation in urban development

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Cities grow at a speed never seen before. New and old neighbourhoods are made of a wide diversity of people from different socio-economical backgrounds, different familial situations and different needs from their physical environment. In the future as diversity and proximity grow in cities, it is to be expected that conflicts are ever more present (Hamelink, 2008). In order to adjust with growing agonism (Mouffe, 2000) in cities, there must be richer dialogue between municipal government and citizens.

This PhD project looks at communicative cities, namely communication done by city organizations to participate citizens in the development of a city. What are the chances for citizens to voice out their urban needs to the urban planning machinery? I approach this question through different case studies in my article-based thesis. The first article of my thesis scopes city officials' participation speech to locate challenges and possibilities in citizen participation in two quickly growing cities: Helsinki and Amsterdam. The focus is on researching provided (and unprovided) communication practices and channels for citizen use in newly constructing urban areas in these two cities. The second article studies the role of social media and online discussions as a part of the city planners work. The third article examines methods used in implementing the voice of young people in official urban planning, especially concerning the metro environment as an urban space. The final article of my project examines the rhetorics, or spectacularization (Debord, 1967), of participation in strategies and marketing materials of four big cities in Finland.

A changing and densifying urban landscape requires for a reimagining of more interactive and participatory communication practices and ultimately - more democratic cities.

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An agonistic approach to the Europeanisation of national public spheres: From permissive consensus to empowering dissensus

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While a wide range of competences have been transferred from the national to the European Union (EU) level, the media reporting of political issues remains largely based at the national level. The lack of a single European public sphere (EPS) beyond national borders in the EU might not be a democratic problem 'per se' from a deliberative democracy point of view, as long as national public spheres are Europeanised enough for citizens to remain informed and able to participate in the EU policy-making process. However, empirical research has shown that, so far, executive actors (EU Commission and national governments) are overwhelmingly overrepresented in national media outlets when covering EU issues (Koopmans and Statham 2010). This poses a double democratic deficit for the EU. First, as has been suggested by a wide range of scholars, there is a lack of a public sphere where EU issues can be discussed and disseminated. However, the EPS literature fails to identify the second democratic deficit regarding communication flows: the lack of (agonistic) conflict. In the present chapter, it is argued that the role of conflict should be introduced into study of the Europeanisation of national public spheres from a normative perspective, combining a deliberative and agonistic approach with democracy. By doing so, despite the irreconcilable tensions of their respective ontological views, the democratic theories of Habermas (1989) and Mouffe (2000, 2013) will be treated as complementary, to a certain extent. Empirically, the argument suggests that cross-national media content analysis should be undertaken as the central methodology.

Creating shared value with stakeholders through organizational communication: a case study of a shopping centre company

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No organization exists in a vacuum. Every organization has a place in, and impacts upon, its own environment. Each organization is defined by the communication established with those key publics whose perceptions and opinions it deems important regardless of the economic cycle direction.

In a context of economic crisis, organizations tend to re-evaluate their investment decisions, namely in what concerns corporate social responsibility (CSR) actions as they usually represent an economic cost. When it happens in a systemic way there is a paradox as it is precisely during an economic crisis that the society as a whole needs more investment from the corporate world. As a result, several multinationals are breaking away from the CSR paradigm and adopting a new one, the creation of shared value (CSV) which central premise is that the competitiveness of an organization and the health of the communities around it are mutually dependent.

With a CSV positioning an organization needs to engage with most, if not all, of the stakeholder groups upon which it is dependent, and a challenging task is to develop an integrated organizational communication strategy that clearly signals the strategic direction of the organization and demonstrates a commitment to its stakeholder groups.

This research will analyse the change in organizational communication that resulted from the transformation of a company's sustainability strategy from CSR to CSV with its stakeholders.

The proposed framework depicts the organizational communication environment, through the case of an international shopping centre company, that aims at creating shared value through stakeholder engagement.

In terms of research design and considering the novelty of the concept CSV both in academia and in the industry, we propose to use a case study approach as research strategy, with data gathering from interviews, focus groups and content analysis.

Gender representation on prime-time and late-night television talk shows

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Gender representation on television has been an issue of utmost interest since the 1970s, when both Television and Gender studies flourished in academia. The main objective of this PhD project is to analyse how gender representation is being carried out within one of television's most successful and popular comedic genres: the prime time and late-night television talk show, in four main Europe audiovisual markets and the US. The main motivation for this line of research is based on the principle that television content can influence and shape our perceptions and attitudes (López Díez, 2001; Martinez-Sheperd, 2006; Galán Fajardo, 2007; Wood, 2009; Berberick, 2010), which means that what we see on television can affect the way we interact with each other as part of a society. It is relevant to put into perspective how gender is being presented in different television genres, especially those which are highly popular in television programming and within the emergence of social networks and social television. Talk shows match these criteria and have always been a reference when it comes to comedy and comedians' reputation; and, also, a space of a big debate: are women funny in the same way as men are?

While daytime television talk shows are usually hosted by women and associated with the private sphere, late-night and prime-time programmes of this type have been linked to the public sphere, commenting on relevant current affairs from a satirical or comedic point of view. Does this leave women out of the conversation in night television talk shows, or are both genders being represented in a similar way? Is there any significant difference between countries and public and commercial channels? These, among other questions, will find answers in this study.

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Critical digital literacy and civic, political engagement: utopian/dystopian imaginaries of the internet

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This research project looks at the intersection of critical digital literacy with practices of civic, political engagement. Employing a mixed qualitative methodology, it focuses on two social categories in the United Kingdom: IT/media specialists (e.g. media studies/computer science teachers, IT and media professionals such as web designers and librarians) and activists involved in various social, political causes. Western liberal democracy is undermined by political economy constraints along with institutions' and traditional media's difficulty in representing citizens' concerns. While civic, political participation is affected by low political interest and efficacy, the Internet has been championed for facilitating, for instance, a deliberative democracy, institutional/non-institutional political engagement and diversified political content. Its democratising potential, nonetheless, remains constrained by issues of elitism, a commodified public sphere, government surveillance and, among others, content fragmentation, polarisation and unreliability. Often interpreted as the ability to critically consume online content in relation to bias, prejudice and trustworthiness, critical digital literacy has the potential to reinvigorate democracy by contributing to informed, critically autonomous and empowered citizens. As understanding online content as potentially affected by issues of representation is one of the aspects in relation to which users may be expected to critically understand the Internet, this project approaches the notion of critical digital literacy as incorporating users' broader understandings of socio-economic issues related to the Internet along with its ambiguous civic, political potential. In doing so, it draws on a dialectical approach to utopian thinking as relying on both utopianism and dystopianism to interrogate critical digital literacy as incorporating users' utopian/dystopian imaginaries of the Internet. Such a dialectical approach implies that as utopian thinking projects utopian possibilities along with awareness of dystopian limitations, critical digital literacy may be essential for users to pursue civic, political opportunities online provided they understand both potentials and limitations of the Internet.

Blurred memories, blurred identities: An intergenerational dialogue with family members of the Egyptian Jewish Diaspora.

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This research-creation doctoral thesis proposes to engage family members in an intergenerational dialogue about Egyptian Jewish identity, with the aim to produce an immersive media installation piece. How does one come to terms with an identity that has overtime become disconnected from land, culture and language and even become contentious as Arab-Jewish tensions persist in the Middle East? How did Egyptian Jewish identity evolve with future generations? What sort of stories did the first generation of migrants tell their children and grandchildren about the homeland and their past? Through an intergenerational dialogue about Egyptian Jewish identity, I ask family members to share memories about Egypt, lived and inherited, and what Egyptian Jewish identity means to them today. Do they still identify with both Egyptian *and* Jewish identities, one more than the other, only one, or perhaps neither?

I will start from a home base in Montreal, Canada, and trace family ties that reach out beyond these borders through the local community as a way of also studying how vast the ties travel.

This process-oriented research-creation draws from experimental documentary making practices (research), and processes the research material through an immersive media installation piece (creation). The interdisciplinary approach draws from fields at cross sections of memory, identity and representation, art and documentary, exploring storytelling as a mode of identity making. How do disjunctive media allow for complex and diverse perspective to co-habit within a mixed and diverse ecosystem? Shifting from more traditional frameworks and fixed notions of identity, as national, cultural and geographical identities, for example, we develop a new way of contextualizing identity all together, one that is more fluid and relational.

Rise of the public amid protests in Slovenia in years 2012 and 2013

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In my doctoral dissertation I analyse how in a specific context of an economic, political and social crisis "a public" as formulated by Jürgen Habermas was constituted. I develop and stratify some "theoretical tendencies" present in Habermas's conceptual framework and reformulate his concept of *the public*. I apply that framework to specific historic circumstances of popular contention and social movements' mobilizations in Slovenia. First, dissertation explains some general structural transformations of Slovenian social structure, its post-socialist institutional architecture and its international integration. It also examines key structural determinants and causes for the biggest and most violent protests in Slovenian independent history (so called "All Slovenian People's Uprisings" of 2012 and 2013) and how those conditioned and contributed to the unique formation of a public and a public sphere. I classify and categorize movements (or counter-publics) that actively participated in "All Slovenian Uprisings" as well. I determine various organizational forms, principles, tactics and their communicative strategies on one hand and central conflicts, antagonisms and relationships on the other. After analysing heterogeneous dynamics of social movements I propose how and where *(a) public* was formed. I show how activists and members of various social movements publicly articulated issues of systemic nature, discussed prospects for democratic governing, critiqued established order and elaborated radical proposals for social transformation in a rational exchange of arguments and formation of opinions. I locate forming of a public in a configuration (or infrastructure) of various media platforms, intellectual weeklies and alternative media outlets (i.e. *a public sphere*) where published opinions and elaborated antagonisms garnered extensive national readership and public attention (i.e. formation of *public opinion*).

Data journalism and its effects on democracy

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The emerging field of the intersection between computer science and journalism is fruitful on different forms of journalism where *data journalism* is one of them. Data journalism is a form of storytelling that combines traditional journalistic methods with data analysis, programming and visualization techniques (Appelgren & Nygren, 2014).

My PhD project conceptualizes data journalism as a separate journalistic sub-field. The overall research question is "What are the implications of data journalism to the democratic development?" To distinguish those implications, I conduct studies on three levels of analysis (Örnebring, 2012): product level – content analysis of data journalism output; individual level – interviews with data journalism practitioners and; organizational level – observation of the production process. Such a combination of the studies allows for better grasp of the potential of this journalistic practice for the democratic development.

In the first part of my project, I focus on the output, i.e. end product of data journalism. To do that, I conceptualize data journalism in terms of the output and offer the way it should be operationalized. Based on this conceptualization and operationalization, I examine how common is data journalism practice by applying quantitative content analysis. By conducting interviews with practitioners, I examine the specificities of the production process of data journalism end products. In its turn, observations of the production provide a closer look at the collaborative culture of data journalism and help to identify possible cultural clashes and shifts in journalistic profession. I conclude by discussing the possible effects of data journalism on democracy identified through the analysis on those three levels. For instance, what are the different dimensions that data journalism brings into profession of journalism in terms of objectivity, transparency, epistemologies etc.

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Online surveillance, Tor Network, and anonymity: a study about Deep Web' perceptions and representations

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Internet provides social networking sites, ecommerce, and search engines, among other services, turning everyday tasks easier, but also allowing a large data collection of user's behaviour. Nowadays, gathering online data is the centre of surveillance practices encouraged by states and corporations, a main risk to privacy. In this scenario, anonymous communication is essential for resistance against censorship and an opportunity for online freedom. When looking for an alternative, users can find Tor Network, one of thousands of Deep Web systems, as an option for private browsing, which has opposing appropriations: political resistance and criminality, for instance. This research discusses Deep Web and Tor Network perceptions, considering (1) Tor Network users and (2) general users; and representations, seeing (3) UK higher circulation daily newspapers. For the empirical research, this work applies a set of methods, including content analysis, conceptual history and discourse-historical approach for analysing newspapers; ethnography, with a combination of participant and non-participant observation and content analysis for Tor users' analysis; and participant observation and semi-structured interviews for general users. With this approach, this work shows how British media portraits this system in opposition to how users perceive them, and also the awareness of general users of issues as online surveillance and privacy.

The discursive construction of a citizens' dialogue

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To include citizens in public participation processes has been an increasing practice for the last 20 years in Sweden as well as in many western democracies. The practices relate to normative ideals of democracy and participation; as well as to notions on power and citizenship. The rise of public participation can be seen as an answer to societal challenges and a democracy in crisis as well as to the backdrop of new conditions for political institutions and more porous boundaries between journalists, politicians and citizens. In order to deepen the understanding of how public participation work on a micro level, the aim with my dissertation is to analyze how meaning is created about citizens' dialogues as social practices.

I am studying one participatory process in Biskopsgården in Gothenburg. This is an area with a low socioeconomic status and highly exposed to criminality according to reports by the Police Authority. The dialogue process, initiated by the municipality, aims at decreasing violence by involving a large number of citizens in interviews and workshops. I will be following this process during 2016 and 2017 and use a discourse theoretical framework to analyze how the practice is coming into being, how ideals are interpreted and how power is negotiated. By analyzing how this is legitimated as a social practice and how the actors are referring to each other my aim is to contribute to an understanding of discourses on dialogue and participation.

Retooling citizenship in Estonia: online media practices by civil society actors in everyday and mobilization contexts

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This study directs itself towards civil society organizations as well as informal groups of citizens in Estonia. The central focus lies on environmental organizations and initiatives with the aim to find out how these actors perceive and employ digital media as means for acquiring and disseminating information, building civic connections and collective identities, and pursuing activities related to civic causes and intervening in public debates.

Research shows that while digital technologies and social media platforms are actively used by civic activists and carry a potential for greater citizen participation, the actual impact of the digital media is strongly context specific and dependent on how particular activists put these tools to use. Mapping Digital Media project (2013) reports that Estonians are active in using digital services for making their everyday life more convenient but people willing to take part in online public discussions is still low.

The thesis contributes to the scholarly discussion by giving a local perspective to the use of digital media in the context of civil society via investigating into the possibilities and obstacles of using digital media in facilitating civic engagement. This is done through the analysis of in-depth interviews with civic activists and representatives of selected environmental organizations, and by using case studies of mobilization around environmental issues.

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Investigating collaborative learning through location-based augmented reality games at cultural heritage sites

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In recent years cutting edge technologies like Augmented Reality (AR) technologies, have entered the field of cultural heritage. Location-based AR apps, which augment cultural heritage sites like museums or archaeological sites with digital information based on the users' position in the real world, have the potential to be ideal tools for supporting informal learning and collaboration in such contexts. The topic of location-based AR apps in informal learning settings has only recently started to attract the interest of researchers (Yoon & Wang, 2014; Rubino, Barberis, Xhembulla, & Malnati, 2015). However, not much is known, at an empirical level, about the way the interaction with location-based AR apps affects visitors' participation and collaboration, and therefore their learning, during their visits at cultural heritage sites.

This doctoral dissertation adopts a design-based approach aiming to gain a deeper understanding of this area and contribute to theory building efforts on AR supported collaborative learning in cultural heritage sites. To achieve this, I am designing a location-based AR learning game that will facilitate interactivity, knowledge acquisition and collaboration between visitors and between visitors and the site. The design-based approach that I will follow as part for my dissertation includes: (a) Collection of information about the nature of the visits and visitors' collaborative practices at cultural heritage sites, (b) Development of the location-based AR learning environment, (c) Pilot study in order to test our location-based AR game environment and examine our research instruments, (d) Improvement of the game-based AR learning environment according to the collected data; and (e) Final implementation and data collection with a different cohort of participants.

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Bulgarian media & refugees: politics of representation (2013-2018)

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In 2013 media in Bulgaria began to present the refugee as the new image of the "enemy" in the society, gradually equalizing it with that of the Roma person. That was the period in which one of the main refugee waves arrived in Europe as a result of the long-standing civil conflict in Syria and as a result of other civil and military conflicts in other Middle-Eastern countries, Africa and Asia as well.

Since then media in the country have not clarified to the society the real problems of the asylum seekers and the reasons why they are having to leave their countries of origin. On the other hand, the messages of disinformation and hate speech against those people in disgrace were more noticeable and easier to absorb by the media audience than the factual reality. As a result in the early 2016 about 60% of Bulgarians had considered the refugees as a threat to the national security, according to a survey of the "Sova Harris – Bulgaria" Agency.

The trends and tendencies that have been found till now in my study are the following:

- There is a mass misuse with the terminology on the refugees subject.
- Some politicians and public figures consume the topic of the refugees for their own aims by participating in media nearly every day. They often use disinformation and hate speech.
- In some media - especially in the party-bound ones - the instigation of hostility and fear in society about refugees is not just a question of irresponsibility, but also a deliberately sought effect.
- The specific reasons why asylum seekers and refugees leave their countries of origin are not presented clear, sometimes the reasons are not presented at all.

The electoral campaigns of 20-D and 26-J on Twitter: A study about the use that Podemos and Ciudadanos and their political leaders, Pablo Iglesias and Albert Rivera made of this platform

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The parliamentary elections of December 20, 2015 in Spain were the first elections in the history of the country that didn't allow forming a government, which led to the dissolution of the courts and the repetition of elections. Finally, the elections of June 26, 2016, which were a repetition of the previous ones, allowed the formation of the current Government of Spain. This relationship between the two electoral processes, being an electoral continuum, is the main reason for the analysis of both electoral campaigns in this doctoral thesis.

The investigation objectives:
1. Analyze the contents that these profiles published in both electoral campaigns through Twitter, observing on which subjects they published with more frequency and under which component (Canel, 2006) presented these subjects.
2. Investigate the similarities and differences that exist between the contents published by political parties and political leaders.
3. Compare which topics were addressed by tweets that received more retuits and favorites, in the four profiles analyzed and in the two election campaigns.
4. Observe if the political leaders indicate the authorship of the tweets.
5. Study how to design an electoral campaign for digital social networks and how it coordinates with the mass media campaign.
6. Examine what assessment do the communication officers of the election campaigns on the possibilities of interaction that Twitter allows with users. Knowing how those responsible for communication themselves value their interaction with users in the 20-D and 26-J electoral campaigns.
7. To know the previous training and the labor situation of those responsible for the digital campaigns of Podemos and Ciudadanos.

To meet the proposed objectives, mixed, quantitative and qualitative methodology will be used, the analysis techniques used will be the following:
1. Analysis of Twitter metrics.
2. Analysis of significant phases of the political message

3.   Analysis of thematization.
4.   Content analysis.
5.   Depth interview.

The scope of the research will be of descriptive level with analytical and interpretive depth.

A first relevant finding is that all parties and political leaders analyzed made less use of Twitter in the 26-J elections, compared to 20-D. In all, the four profiles published 4,921 tweets during the 15 days of the official election campaign of the parliamentary elections of December 20, 2015; while in the official election campaign of the June 26, 2016 elections they published 4,027 tweets. In total, both electoral campaigns constitute a universe of analysis of 8,948 tweets.

Communicative figurations of friendship relations in mediatized everyday communication

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Concentrating on friendship relations, this dissertation project explores how social relations are maintained and changed through a variety of digital media everyday. The overall aim of this research project is to explain social effects caused by the use of media technology in interpersonal communication that become obvious on transformations of the society (Hepp & Röser, 2014: 174).

Regarding the frame of life course and status passages (Heinz, 1991), that provide an access to analyse individuals' preferences on organising social lives, this research project analyses the importance of friendship relations in the status passage of professional life after first career entry.

Guided biographical-narrative interviews and personal network maps are used to explore media use among friends. Different age groups *within a generation* will be compared regarding differences and similarities and their ability to produce 'friendship' across media while attempting to create proximity and sociability. Relying on the conceptualization of Grounded Theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), theory development will take place along with the process of sampling and is based on the interconnection of mediated communication and the construction of social life (Couldry & Hepp, 2017: 5).

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"You have access to all of it." Assessing documentary participation through an ethics of care

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Different media genres generate distinct ethical challenges. While the professional journalistic ideal includes a distance from one's sources, the intimacy and longevity of the storyteller-subject encounter in extensive factual formats challenge such a distance. In an attempt to acknowledge such diversity, this chapter looks beyond professional ethical frameworks to allow for a receptive and context-sensitive reflection on media ethics. In the context of the television documentary, I propose care ethics as a way of honouring subjects' interests without compromising storytellers' autonomy. Based on the assumption that media ethics would benefit from increased attention to the subject experience, the focus of this chapter is on the documentary subject. Following care ethical assumptions, I suggest that paying attention to subjects' interests makes for increasingly informed ethical considerations on the part of the practitioner within long-form factual storytelling, such as documentary filmmaking and narrative journalism. Based on in-depth interviews with documentary subjects, this chapter traces concerns relating to participation in Swedish television documentaries. I present an array of subject interests ranging from the transmission of a message to the relationship with the filmmaker, and the protection of a third party. Besides adding empirical knowledge about the experience of participation, this chapter highlights the potential of care ethics within a media context.

The Good the mean publicity. case study of refugee reporting in traditional media and counter media during 2015 and 2016 in Finland

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This study investigates how traditional media and counter media covered the European refugee crisis during 2015 and 2016 in Finland. In this research, I examine how these two different media operate in a same public sphere, construct a publicity and a public discussion, and how these perceptions relate to a normative understanding of publicity with its ideals. In addition, I investigate a composition of contemporary public discussion and how does it respond to requirements of a democratic society. On ground of my research data, I interpret what kind of publicity professional media and non-professional media develop and how does it relate to demands of a functional democracy. I approach my research problem with the theory of deliberative democracy and normative understanding of journalism. The context is in hybrid media system. In this thesis I aim to respond the following set of questions: What kind of public discussion the professional media and the non-professional media develop today? How do they construct it? What kind of publicity and public sphere the liberal democracy would require? This research is a case study which presents four news cases from the recent past. Three of them are located in Finland and one in Paris, France. Utilized research methods are based on qualitative approach. My thesis is an article-based dissertation, as there will be four articles in the entirety, and multiple methods will be used. My study participates a discussion of media's role and need in democracy in the digital age.

A cultural study of conspiracy thinking: An ethnographic audience study on male industry workers' engagement with international politics through conspiratorial news

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This research project aims to understand functions and receptions of political conspiracy news through an ethnographic inquiry. Although it is common in audience research to approach entertainment content, hard news and daily interactions of people as separate spheres of knowledge, media related meaning creation process' are too complex to catch through the reception of isolated media contents. Therefore, contrary to prevalent inclination, this research takes a group of audiences as a starting point and their conspiratorial references as a second step of the research project.

I attempt to fill this gap by offering a detailed understanding of the interconnectedness of news coverage and leisure content of TV shows and their reception by male industry workers who spend large amount of their daily lives in an industrial area in Ankara. Nonetheless the workers have neither time nor the required cultural capital to follow news from various news outlets, they have an understanding and interpretation of politics in Turkey that is mainly derived from TV serials and in-group conversations. However, the ways in which high politics and current affairs such as war in Syria, domestic security issues in Turkey are covered in these TV shows are, as might be expected, very rarely represent facts but they in fact offer narratives of conspiracy theories.

In this framework, using participant observation and semi-structured qualitative interview methods I aim to discover the role of conspiratorial media content in Turkish audiences' signifying processes of the world news and their engagement with politics. Through the utilization of ethnographic research methods I expect to gain an understanding of the constraining and enabling inner group codes as important elements in the interpretation of media content.

Community media as a participatory contact zone for youth in the divided Cyprus

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How can media support reconciliation in divided societies? Taking this question as a starting point, my doctoral research explores the transformative function that community media may serve in the context of Cyprus conflict with their participatory-democratic dimensions, building on the theory of agonistic pluralism (Mouffe, 2000; 2005). Against the backdrop of long-lasting antagonisms embedded in the media and education systems across this divided island, the research locates community media content production processes as a contact zone among Cypriot youth, fostering maximalist forms of participation, and investigates the potential of this symbolic space to transform antagonisms into agonism, by studying both the possibilities and limits, and the realizations and failures of a series of self-organized participatory community media production sessions bringing together Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot teenagers.

Methodologically, the research covers four stages. The first stage involves a mapping study of inter-communal projects carried out in Cyprus in the educational field, with two case studies to examine their participatory intensity in relationship to conflict transformation. The second stage, drawing on action research methodology, involves an ethnography of the community media training and production sessions organized in collaboration with Cypriot schools and NGOs, as followed by in-depth interviews with the participants of these sessions at the third stage, and a reception analysis involving 10 focus groups with Cypriot stakeholders at the fourth stage, with the aim to scrutinize the participatory intensity of these sessions and their perceived contribution to conflict transformation in agonistic means. Qualitative analysis methods will be used to analyze the data gathered during all the four stages.