



Emiliana De Blasio, Matthew Hibberd, Michele Sorice (eds)

Leadership and New Trends in Political Communication

SELECTED PAPERS

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Leadership and New Trends in
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Preface

Emiliana De Blasio, Matthew Hibberd, Michele Sorice¹

Contemporary democracies have seen the rise of political figures defined by Sergio Fabbrini (1999) as “democratic princes”. These figures have not always assumed the central role they now have in liberal democracies and indeed this would have been unthinkable during the institutional re-shaping that followed the Second World War.

Throughout the twentieth century writers “celebrated the centrality of the executive” (Fabbrini 2011, 9); the key place institutionally built for the decision-making process in modern societies. We have also to consider that the “executive” do not always overlap with “government”, the latter, in fact, may represent

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a very different institutional apparatus according to the legal and political traditions and history of countries. It is not chance surely that in recent influential political studies' books, the term "government" is often replaced with that of *governance*, a transformation that involves a shift from hierarchical concept of political authority to a more open structure that recognizes the importance of less centrally coordinated apparatuses, capable of directing and managing public policy-making processes (Helms 2005, 5; Rhodes 2003). In this transformation, the executive has substantially increased its power and independence from parliament; in other words, the executive has - even in parliamentary democracies - a prominent role, reducing the authority of Parliament. We should also consider other trends, which have strengthened the role of the executive in the political system and, in particular, the function of the head of government. This process can be ascribed to many factors, such as the sectorialization of decision making and the complexity of political agendas, elements which have required strong policy coordination (Helms 2005, 6).

The first author who tried to define in a scientific and systematic way political leadership in the modern era was Max Weber, although there is a long scholarly tradition that dates back to

Aristotle as well as philosophical positivism. Even Shakespeare provides important considerations on the function and social role of political leadership. However, as we have said, scientific studies on leadership and the construction of specific theories are relatively recent and the Weber's work on this topic has been strongly influential. Max Weber (1864-1920) believes that the life of the modern state is based upon the rational power of its bureaucracy. Without discussing in detail here the role of bureaucracy in Weber's theory, it should be remembered that according to the German sociologist, the question of power (and its evolution) is a very important aspect. In particular, Weber offers a type of power that evolves over time (that has both synchronic and diachronic characters). The Weberian type of power can be summarized as follows:

- a) *Traditional power*: based on the concept of sacredness. A sovereign enjoys this power because it comes from God (directly or indirectly) and it is connected to mechanisms that require no hegemonic social legitimacy (since its legitimacy is the result of a tradition perceived as "authentic" and unquestionable). Thus, it is based on belief in the sacredness of everyday authority (Weber 1922, trans. Com. 1974, vol I, 210);

- b) *Charismatic power*: is based on the authority of what is socially recognized as superior or at least capable of operating in an “exceptional” way in the human community. It is connected to the idea of “heroism”; heroes (leaders, saints, people socially considered “exemplary” characters that play a symbolic role, etc). It is performative in nature.
- c) *Rational-legal authority*: is authority that in modern states is managed by bureaucracies that are hierarchical, specialized and impersonal. This power is not moral, although it supports two ethical principles (that of intention and responsibility) and it is democratic, since it derives its strength from popular legitimacy.

Weber’s theory of leadership is based on the concept of “charisma”. Charismatic authority is based on the recognition of the superiority of a subject with respect to the community in which he/she lives and works: it is based on a kind of uncommon devotion to someone’s capabilities (in terms of heroism or sanctity or ruthlessness). Such leadership can complement, for Weber, other forms of authority such legal-rational power. Charisma, then, often contrasts with the presence of bureaucracies (the charismatic leader, in fact, finds his or her legitimacy in the formation of a

direct relationship with the masses that, in this way, it becomes an alternative means of taking and maintaining power).²

Within this framework, an important intermediary between leaders and citizens are the media. And, more generally, the whole communication processes seem to play an important role to provide legitimacy to, define and frame modern political leadership. Subsequently, the Weberian model of leadership is somewhat outdated, but it can be still used to understand how modern political leaders build a strong relationship with the people, very often operating outside liberal political institutions. It is probably difficult to avoid leaders but, as Sergio Fabbrini (2011) argues, modern democracies should find methods and institutional instruments to manage and to frame actions of political leaders.

At the same time, political communication must continue to study the many phenomena connected to the rise of political leadership: popularization, dumbing down, the role of spin doctors and the process of mediatisation.

In order to discuss the relationship between leadership and communication and understand how democracy can be nurtured

² More about the concept of political leadership in De Blasio, Hibberd, Sorice (forthcoming)

and improved, the Centre for Media and Communication Studies “Massimo Baldini”, based at LUISS University, Rome, organized an international conference on leadership and communication in May 2011. Keynote speakers (whose papers will soon be published in another book) proposed new prospectives and theories, with participants offering additional ideas.

We have collected here the selected papers presented at the Conference, held in Rome on May 20th and 21st 2011. This e-book is divided in to four parts and represents – more or less – the main topics discussed at the conference. The papers provide a rich assortment of critical discussion on political leadership for various reasons; they differ in their scientific approaches, in their structure, in the topics they discuss and due to the different social, political and national backgrounds of the authors. However, all contributions have one thing in common: their capacity to provoke debate and to deepen our knowledge about leadership and political communication in modern democracies.

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Part I

Political Communication in the Age of Web 2.0

“Hello!? Any leaders here?”

Community leading, knowledge sharing and representation: MEPs use of online environments for e-representation

Karolina Koc-Michalska and Darren G. Lilleker³

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are rarely a subject of study, and when studied it is normally during elections (Jankowski et al, 2005, Jackson & Lilleker 2010) or studies examine their adoption of innovations in communication (Elvebakk 2004). Consistent with trends in the study of the role of electronic and digital political communication, this study not only analyses adoption but focuses on determining the strategic function of the websites and social networking profiles of all online MEPs elected in 2009. Studies of individual candidates focus on a range of political and personal variables in order to explain the use of new communication technologies, with

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resources emerging as a key variable (Druckman et al. 2009, Williamson 2010). MEPs are unique in that they are all equally resourced; hence we seek to discover the extent to which national or personal variables act as key differentiators in strategy.

MEPs are an interesting group of representatives, and their political communication fertile ground for academic study. They are remote politically from their home parliaments and parties, and geographically from their constituents (Lusoli 2005). The challenge for an MEP is, therefore, that they simultaneously represent their constituents, nations and their parties within European parliamentary groupings as well as representing the European parliament within their nation. It is suggested that parliamentarians should engage more with wider audiences and that the internet facilitates this connectivity (Coleman & Blumler 2009). The remoteness of the MEP, the multiplicity of their roles and audiences, suggests that an online communication strategy could be integral for enabling them to perform their multiple roles and maintain contact with constituents, party activists, supporters, voters and journalists. Thus we suggest that for MEPs a model of e-representation would be highly efficacious, enabling them to build a network that includes physical constituents, party activists, and supporters of their political programmes and stances (Jackson &

Lilleker 2009). We therefore focus here on the extent MEPs act as leaders in communication and community building.

I. Communication, Communities and Leadership

Within the context of the European parliament (EP), what might it mean to be a communication leader? At the very basic level, those most innovative online may constitute an early adopter group who subsequently may act as role models, a factor for creating a bandwagon effect in other parliaments (Williamson 2009). However, more importantly in terms of acting as leaders, those with the most innovative communication strategies may also become key referents among journalists and the most politically engaged European citizens, either those MEPs represent directly or the more issue-based politically active. In order to reach out to the most politically engaged, one would expect an interactive strategy to be observable.

While features that allow some form of interaction among visitors within website is becoming more prevalent little of this discussion feeds into the process of decision making (Lilleker & Jackson 2011). However, the increased granularity of the use of

engagement tools which allow a range of interactions to take place (Chadwick 2009) is enhancing the visitor experience potentiated within the websites of political parties, candidates and elected representatives. Interactivity presents site hosts and visitors with a potential win-win zone (Jackson 2006). The host is perceived positively by visitors (Stromer-Galley & Foot 2002) while visitors gain a sense of efficacy and involvement (Min 2007). This permits for relationships between the host and visitors to be established and managed through an ongoing discursive process.

At the most basic level the interactivity can be with the site and permit visitors to access a range of informational content as well as disseminate this among their own networks. Many MPs are argued to be acting as information hubs (Jackson & Lilleker 2009), and some encouraging those who visit their sites to share this across their own networks. This positions the host as an information hub and encouraging knowledge sharing. However, bespoke discussion areas can also be created, using weblog tools to allow discussion and comment to take place on items the MEP has created. Normally these will be policy related discussions and reflect a strategy of building an online constituency. Social networking sites (SNS) allow a range of less formal interactions to take place with both the host and other users. Facebook has become the most popular

among politicians (Williamson 2009), and the use of the wall feature as a place to post items and allow commentary and sharing develops relationships with users of the platform (Utz 2009). The use of social networking platforms, it is argued, can play an essential role in politics in building attachments between visitors and the host and their political campaigns. The extent to which MEPs are not only utilising spaces on the world wide web but are offering specific material to engage casual, professional, involved or active browsers could be crucial for them to be perceived as embedded within local and national political life. While few may access their online presences there is potentially a dissemination process through individuals and their online and offline networks and the mass media which will enable them to communicate to and with broader national, European and global audiences.

2. Methods

We analysed the content of the websites of 440 MEPs, all with links from the European Parliament homepage, and all linked social networking site profiles; MEPs represent all 27 member states. The full coding scheme involved 103 items pertaining to feature

presence or absence and the functionality of the site and its architecture. We also measured frequency of updates on websites, blogs, social networking sites and microblogs. Features were categorised as belonging mainly within either the Web 1.0 or Web 2.0 era, and the extent to which the experience they allowed visitors and whether they linked to community building activities. We identified two types of leader: communication leaders who are innovative and seek to draw an audience to them; secondly community leaders who build and maintain online followings. The aim of this paper is to assess who are the leaders and what factors may explain their strategies. Following agreement of classifications a proof of concept study was carried out among a group of web designers, including strategists working with political parties on web development. Regression was used to determine national and individual variables which can explain online strategies.

3. Overall Online Performance: Communication Leaders

From the general number of 440 MEP with official web site, 201 have an official Facebook profile and 111 have an official Twitter profile, 84 use both Facebook and Twitter. Table 1 compares the

mean online performance of MEPs with just a website and those with Facebook or/and Twitter profiles. There is a visible gap in online communication between those using social networks and those not. The disproportion is even more visible for Web 2.0 communication, interactivity and engagement. This suggests the presence of a community of early adopters.

Table 1: Online performance of all MEPs, MEPs with Facebook and Twitter

	Mean No profile (n = 212)	Mean FACEBOOK (n = 201)	Mean TWITTER (n = 111)
GENERAL WEB PERFORMANCE			
(max. 52)	16.6	23.4	24.2
Web 1.0 (max. 34)	14.4	16.6	16.7
Web 2.0 (max. 18)	2.1	6.8	7.5
Information (max. 32)	11.7	15.1	15
Engagement (max. 31)	8.7	12.4	13.6
Interaction (max. 15)	2.9	7.1	7.5
Number of entries in November (web + blog)	7.3	9.4	9.7
Number of entries on Facebook		12.8	13.8
Number of entries on Twitter		17.2	38
Community size: number of friends Facebook		1859	1720
Community size: number of followers Twitter		430	989
Personalisation (max. 12)	2.7	4.88	4.49
E-representation (max. 4)	2.1	2.25	2.36
E-constituency (max. 6)	1.8	1.86	1.98
OKS community (max. 2)	.78	.98	.98
ISC community (max. 8)	.99	2.48	3.28
INT community (max. 9)	.41	3.28	3.38

MEPs with Facebook and Twitter profiles also offer elements dedicated to community building: sharing knowledge, ideas and information exchange (OKS, ISC, INT). They also offer more personalized websites, however there is no visible difference in their representative functions, neither for their party (E-representation) nor the EP (E-constituency). However their

strategies can be deemed effective as there is a strong relationship between number of friends or followers and number of entries on Facebook (Pearson's $r = .273$) or Twitter (Pearson's $r = .636$).

4. Who are the leaders?

General regressions (table 2) show the factors most influential on acting as leaders. There is a visible generational gap (older MEPs being less active), gender plays a significant role for community size on Facebook (female MEPs build larger communities). The preferential vote system (which is more personalized) has a positive impact on community size. MEPs representing more right-wing oriented parties generally perform worst online and have least followers on Twitter. The factors most significantly influencing the size of community are constant updates suggesting stickiness is crucial for community building.

Table 2. Web performance, Facebook and Twitter community size

	Web performance	Facebook community size	Twitter community size
Personal characteristic			
Gender	.028	-.437*	-.355
	-		-.023*
	.004*		
Age	*	-.023*	
Party size in national parliament (reference group: fringe)			
Major parties	-.008	-.460	.587
Minor parties	.078	-.460	.536
Country characteristics			
Preferential voting system	.025	.797**	.556*
GDP 2009	.104	.975*	-.225
Electorate size	.044	-.327	.890
% of population in country using internet			.588
EP characteristics			
	-		-.177*
	.020*		
EP party ideology scale	*	-.131	
Membership in EP commissions	.013	.042	-.052
Terms-old in EP	-.003	-.173*	-.247*
Terms-new in EP	-.004	.001	.590
'new EU'	.088	-.912	-1.599
Website activity			
Update Facebook		.007***	
			.005**
Update Twitter			*

Note: Models shows coefficient results of Poisson regression, robust. Dependent variables are continuous (web performance (0 to 40) number of Facebook friends (0 to 47461), number of Twitter followers (0 to 8307)). Independent variables: gender (dummy, 1=women, 0=men); age (in years);

preferential voting system (dummy, preferential = 1, otherwise = 0); GDP 2009 (ln natural logarithm) GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Standards ((PPS) (EU-27 = 100), Source: Eurostat); electorate size (ln natural logarithm) – nb of population in country/nb of seats in EP per country; % of population using internet per country (ln natural logarithm); membership in EP commissions (scale, 1=7); EP party ideology scale (from left to right on 1-7 scale, GUE(1), Greens, S&D, ALDE, EPP, EFD, ECR(7); Terms-old in EP – number of terms in EP for countries in EU before 2004 (15) (scale, 0-7); Terms-new in EP – number of terms in EP for countries joining EU after 2004 (12) (scale, 0-2); ‘new EU’ – countries joined EU after 2004 (12) (dummy, joined after 2004 = 1, otherwise = 0); update web (continuous) – sum of number of entries in November on website and blog; update SN (continuous) – sum of number of entries in November on Facebook and Twitter. Statistical significance *p<.15. **p<.05, ***p<.001

Table 3 presents the general online performance for the 10 best MEPs. The group is dominated by German representatives (8). Performance is better than the average MEP performance by 12 points (20 in maximum). The majority have Facebook (Fb) or Twitter (Tw) profiles with the community noticeably larger than average. However, updates are above average for Facebook but not Twitter. This would lead us to suggest (supported also by findings not shown in the paper) that in general MEPs are choosing one social network communication platform (either Facebook or Twitter) which they maintain and constantly update (regardless sometimes of having profiles on both).

Table 3 MEP social network performance according to general web performance

			General performance (20)	Fb nb of friends/likes (854)	Fb nb of entries (5,85)	Tw nb of followers (245)	Tw nb of entries (9,61)
1	Matthias GROOTE	DE	40	2863	30	2450	37
2	Bernd LANGE	DE	39	1064	30	389	18
3	Kristian VIGENIN	BG	35	1964	25	145	
4	Daniel CASPARY	DE	35	689	22	1100	3
5	Manfred WEBER	DE	35	1574	10		
6	Alexander ALVARO	DE	34	577	0	1204	19
7	Andreas SCHWAB	DE	33	122	18		
8	Ioannis KASOULIDES	CY	33	1912	25		
9	Franziska K. BRANTNER	DE	32	7	0	869	3
10	Nadja HIRSCH	DE	32	1787	29	958	2
10	Lena EK	SE	32				
10	Christofer FJELLNER	SE	32	870	0	1320	4

Half the top ten MEPs with the largest following on Facebook (Fb) represent Italy (table 4). Almost all are also considerably more likely to update their Facebook profile than the average MEP. However, their scores for online performance are not notably above average. The two categories where they perform better are

interactive elements of community building (INT) and personalisation of their online communication.

Table 4: MEP characteristics according to Facebook community size (average)

			N. of friend/1 likes (854)	N. of entries(5.85)	Gen. web (20)	Inf o (13)	Eng (11)	Inte (5)	OK S (.88)	ISC (1.8)	INT (1.7)	Pers (4)
1	Debora SERRACCHIANI	IT	47461	21	2	12	16	10	2	5	5	3
2	Sonia ALFANO	IT	27985	135	30	17	18	11	2	5	4	5
3	Jaime MAYOR OREJA	S	8461	35	1	3	5	3	0	0	3	2
4	Edward SCICLUNA	MT	6824	7	20	14	9	8	1	2	5	6
5	Norbert GLANTE	DE	5872	1	20	23	11	5	2	0	4	6
6	Jerzy BUZEK	PL	5354	20	2	18	15	6	1	1	4	6
7	Francesco DE ANGELIS	IT	4996	43	10	8	11	4	0	1	3	4
8	Crescenzo RIVELLINI	IT	4995	27	20	17	12	8	2	2	3	4
9	Dominique BAUDIS	FR	4994	0	2	19	9	7	1	3	1	6
10	Niccolò RINALDI	IT	4973	27	1	13	9	8	1	2	3	6
	Salvatore TATARELLA	IT	4039	396	2	13	16	10	2	5	5	4

A quite different picture occurs in table 5 where the online performance score is presented for the 10 MEPs with the largest Twitter following. First, they perform better than average in almost all categories, especially in Web 2.0 features, engagement, ideas

and information sharing (ISC) and interactivity (INT). However, contradictory to top 10 Facebook users, they are below average for personalisation. Twitter users are much more likely to update (174 in comparison to average of 9.61) than those updating Facebook (32 versus average of 5.85). The concentration of efforts on only one social network communication tool is also visible, only 3 MEPs are in top 10 for Facebook and Twitter (Debora Serracchiani, Jerzy Buzek (EP President) and Sonia Alfano (anti-mafia Italian activist)).

Table 5: MEP characteristics according to Twitter community size

			N. of follower	N. of entries	Gen. web (20)	Info (13)	Eng (11)	Inter (5)	OKS (.88)	ISC (1.8)	INT (1.7)	Pers (4)
1	Debora SERRACCHIANI	IT	8307	0	27	12	16	10	2	5	5	3
2	Sophia in 't VELD	N L	7799	678	28	17	17	8	1	2	5	4
3	Wim van de CAMP	N L	6310	226	13	7	9	5	1	1	1	2
4	Vincent PEILLON	F R	5055	3	25	13	15	9	1	3	4	3
5	Reinhard BÜTIKOFER	D E	4612	178	23	15	18	5	1	4	2	5
6	Marietje SCHAAKE	N L	3764	212	23	15	13	4	1	3	2	3
7	Adam BIELAN	P L	3656	NA	21	12	12	4	1	2	0	2
8	Jerzy BUZEK	P L	3398	19	23	18	15	6	1	1	4	6
9	Judith SARGENTINI	N L	2931	152	20	14	11	6	1	3	4	4
10	Sonia ALFANO	IT	2533	103	30	17	18	11	2	5	4	5

In general Facebook users concentrate slightly more on personalisation (4.9) than those with Twitter profile (4.4). While Twitter users are performing slightly better in engagement (12 for Facebook users and 13 for Twitter users) and idea sharing (ISC) features (2.4 Facebook, 3.3 Twitter). They perform equally well on interactivity (INT: 3.3 Facebook and 3.4 Twitter; Interaction: 7.3 Facebook and 7.4 Twitter).

Table 6 presents the top 10 average performance of MEPs per country. Among those who have best general web performance nine are also in the top ten for size of community. The nations with the worst average performance (below 17 points) are Spain, Latvia and Estonia. Latvian MEPs have no Facebook communities; MEPs from Slovakia, Cyprus, Luxemburg, Malta and Lithuania have no following on Twitter.

Table 6: The top 10 EU countries' average performance, average community size on Facebook and Twitter (average for all countries)

	General web performance (20)		Facebook nb of friends/likes (854)		Twitter nb of followers (249)	
1	Bulgaria	23.6	Slovenia	3186	Netherlands	1627
2	Slovenia	22.6	Italy	3132	Latvia	556
3	Slovakia	21.9	Malta	1905	Estonia	461
4	Denmark	21.1	Belgium	1468	Italy	328
5	Germany	21.1	Denmark	1345	France	317
6	Cyprus	21.0	Bulgaria	1180	Poland	314
7	Netherlands	20.8	France	1030	Portugal	273
8	France	20.4	Austria	768	Greece	271
9	Poland	20.4	Luxemburg	734	Sweden	261
10	Luxemburg	20.3	Finland	731	Ireland	251
10	Austria	20.3				

5. Conclusions

We identify a group of early adopters who tend to be younger MEPs, as would be expected, and female, who are more likely to use Web 2.0 and social networking features. These also demonstrate a higher propensity to build communities. Social networking sites are key spaces utilised for community building, MEPs tend to focus on one platform, with Twitter users building the larger communities, and Facebookers the more frequent updaters; however patterns of usage tend to be individual. The key finding is for those who seek to build communities there is a clear return in the investment of their time. The more frequently MEPs create new content, so making their sites and profiles sticky, the more friends, fans or followers they gain, suggesting that strategic community building positions MEPs as leaders of communities. Therefore, politically engaged communities, there appear to be a minority of MEPs who have earned the position of leader.

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The role of Web 2.0 in Italian local campaigns: the case of 2010 regional elections

Agnese Vardanega⁴

For election campaigning and political communication, Web 2.0 has represented a paramount innovation compared to Web 1.0 in that it allows users to be active producers of web contents, and to interact with websites, applications and other people. Many scholars – as well as activist groups on the Web – have thus seen these new media as an epochal opportunity for improving civic participation, and for developing ‘bottom-up’ campaigns (Kalnes 2009).

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1. Introduction

However, many studies indicate that the positive effects of Web 2.0, both on the results of elections and on civic engagement, rest upon the wider institutional and social environment (Anstead and Chadwick 2009).

Furthermore, besides the so-called ‘optimists’ and utopians, some scholars have pointed out that many ‘offline’ inequalities can affect online participation and engagement (Anstead & Chadwick 2009). Nam and Stromer-Galley (2011), for example, have recently argued that socio-economically advantaged are much more likely to do online political activities.

This point is particularly relevant when analysing Italy, a country that shows a great internal differentiation from the social, cultural and economic point of view. The access to the Internet, and broadband access in particular, is also unequal, while general indicators pose the country much below the European average (49% vs. over 60%).

Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that these changes are doomed to deeply transform, either in the short or in the long term, the public sphere – that is, the systemic relations between politics, media and civil society – even if the direction is still unpredictable.

These transformations, which stand in the background of a general crisis of political representation and traditional parties, can also be studied as innovation processes, which involve a plurality of social actors: candidates, as well as parties (both at a central and a local level), civil society, experts and specialised communication agencies.

With reference to the Italian situation, for example, it is possible to hypothesise that weaknesses in civiness and participation culture, technological backwardness, and resistances within parties reinforce each other in a vicious circle, slowing down change.

On the other hand, studies conducted in other European countries reveal a general inclination toward a ‘traditional’ or limited usage of social tools by candidates and parties. Particularly interesting is the expression ‘Web 1.5’, introduced by Jackson and Lilleker (2009) to describe the strategies adopted by British parties to gain the advantages of both Web 1.0 – central control on the information flow – and Web 2.0 – i.e. interactivity. ‘Web 1.5’ strategies can be seen as the way in which parties deal with the ‘problem’ of continuous innovation, driven by the Internet.

However, local interactions among organisational factors, settled communication practices and the wider social and institutional environment, make it difficult, if not impossible, to

advance a general interpretation to such dynamic processes of change.

This study was conducted during the 2010 Italian regional electoral campaign, in order to explore interactivity – as a way for improving participation, information, and interest, and the relationships between civil society and parties – within the websites of the candidates.

The election involved 13 regions and 52 candidates to the presidency (Table 1): some data from an ongoing study on 2011 mayoral elections will be also presented, to provide further elements of comparison.

Table 1: Candidates by Parties (2010 Regional Elections).

Parties	No. of candidates	Regions	No. of candidates
Partito Democratico	11	Basilicata	4
Popolo della Libertà	10	Calabria	3
Lega Nord	3	Campania	4
Lista Bonino	3	Emilia-Romagna	4
Movimento 5 Stelle	5	Lazio	3
UDC	5	Liguria	3
Forza Nuova	3	Lombardy	5
Federazione della Sinistra	2	Marche	3
Italia dei Valori	1	Piedmont	4
Sinistra Ecologia Libertà	1	Apulia	4
altro	8	Tuscany	5
		Umbria	3
		Veneto	7
TOTAL	52		52

2. Methodology and definitions

2.1. *Interactivity*

Assuming as a starting point the four levels of interactivity proposed by Van Dijk (1999)⁵, Stromer-Galley (2000) identifies two types of interactions on the Web: computer- or network-mediated human interaction, and media-interactivity, the possibility of interact with the medium itself. This second type of interactivity «allows campaigns to create a simulacrum of interaction between campaigns and citizens» (Stromer-Galley & Foot 2002).

In 2004, the author proposed a slightly different distinction between ‘interactivity between people’ as a process, and ‘interactivity between people and computers or networks’ as a product, roughly corresponding to the former concept of ‘media-interaction’, and related to technology (Stromer-Galley 2004).

Interactivity does not imply actual interaction, or real relationships. For instance, in a blog, the opportunity to comment does not imply that the visitors will actually comment, nor that the author will read

5 «(a) interactivity between human beings, (b) between human beings and media or machines, (c) between human beings by means of media, and even (d) between media or between machines (technical interactivity)» (Stromer-Galley & Foot 2002)

comments, or reply. More importantly, commenting on a blog or posting on the wall of a fan page does not imply a real and meaningful relationship between the author and her readers / visitors. On the other hand, interactivity can be effectively encouraged (or discouraged) through texts (Trammel et al. 2006), independently from the use of social media as such.

This study aimed at analysing the use of social tools by the candidates, in terms of presence / absence of certain features, considered as ‘social’ affordances: in this sense, it analyses interactivity, rather than actual interactions. In order to gather information on interactions, however, a content analysis of candidates’ messages on Twitter (‘twits’) has been carried out⁶.

2.2. Indicators

To assess candidates’ web presence, the following indicators have been used:

⁶ Although far less popular than Facebook in Italy, Twitter is particularly interesting in that it is a platform basically conceived to interact, and to interact publicly. This implies, from a technical point of view, that on Twitter (unlike on Facebook), messages sent by users are – by default – public, and consequently accessible through API (Application Programming Interface) or Rss Feed. It is thus possible to download twits’ texts and analyse them.

- Existence of a personal website (o weblog): with the possibility of commenting (value = 2), without possibility of commenting / static website (1), none (0);
- Existence of a Facebook page or personal profile, referring to the candidate: present (value = 1), not clearly identifiable (when the account appeared to be unofficial: 0.5); none (0);
- Existence of a Twitter account: active (value = 1), inactive (0.5), none (0).

From these items, a simple additive index has been calculated (named ‘social interactivity’), to measure the affordances offered to visitors for interacting with each candidate.

In addition to some characteristics of the candidates (such as age, party and eventually coalition), the “offer” of social media has been studied in the light of its potential “demand”, i.e.: average age of residents within the region (younger electors should be more acquainted to and interested in the use of social media) and the share of “big users” of the Internet (also a good indicator of broadband access).

3. Results and discussion

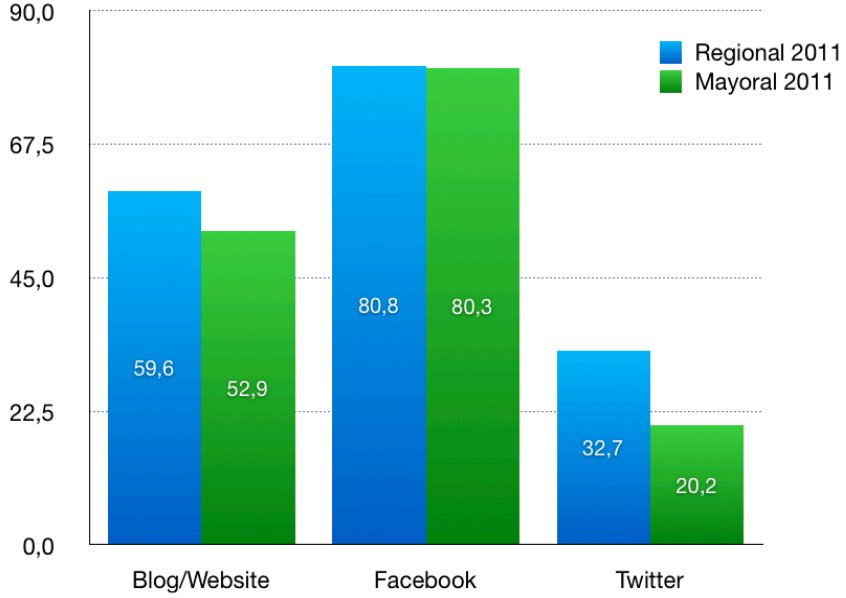
3.1. Web presence of the candidates

In 2010 Regional Elections, nearly 60 percent of the candidates for the Presidency (31 of 52) had a website or blog, only 17 allowing comments. This percentage drops to 53% among mayoral candidates in 2011 campaign (Chart 1), probably because of reduced budgets, particularly in smaller municipalities; for similar reasons, the share of websites without comments rises from 45 to 49%.

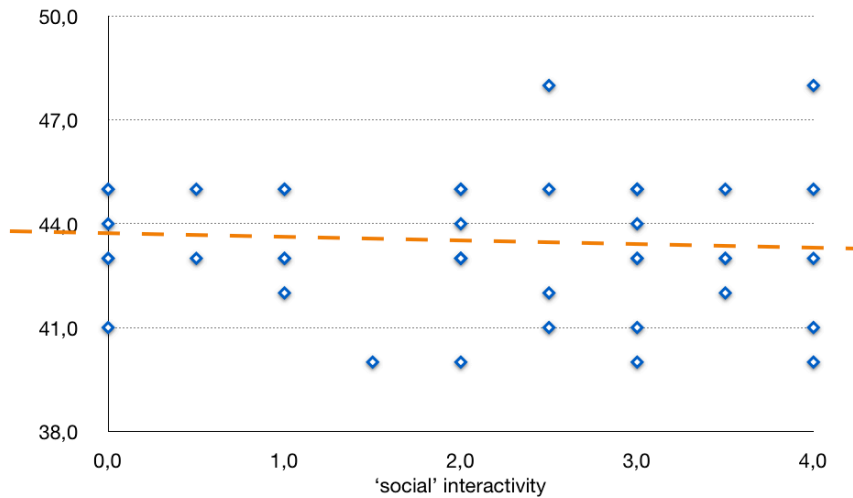
While the presence on Facebook remains almost unchanged (about 80 percent), the presence on Twitter falls from 33 to 20%. Not only is Twitter far less popular than Facebook in Italy, but it is also generally used only by the candidates who have a blog or a personal website⁷.

⁷ As a consequence, in 2011 mayoral campaigns, in small and medium capital towns or among smaller parties, Facebook has been the only platform used to guarantee a presence on the web (15,7% of the candidates).

Chart 1: Web Presence of the Candidates in 2010 (regional elections:) and 2011 (mayoral elections⁸)

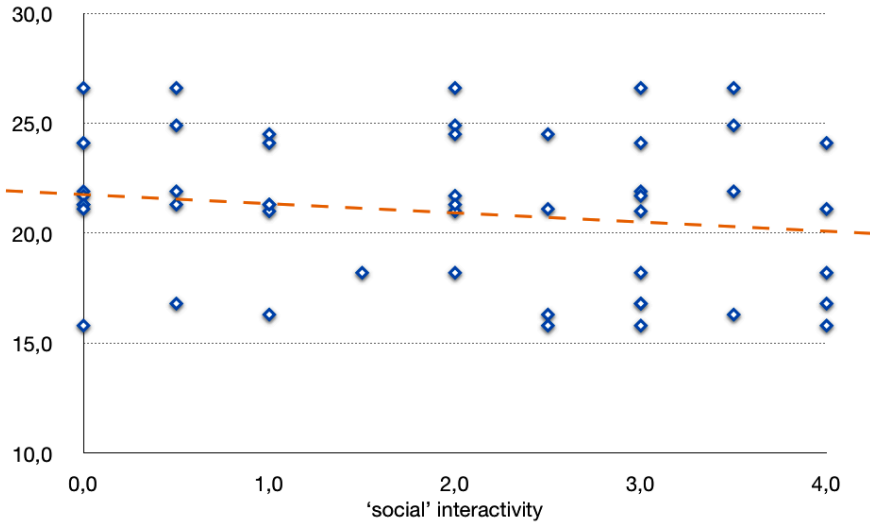


⁸ 223 mayor candidates for provincial capitals.

Chart 2: 'Social' Interactivity and Average Age of Residents⁹

The offer of social interactivity does not seem to match actual or potential 'demand', as previously defined: in Chart No. 2, it is evident the absence of a relationship between candidates' score on the 'social interactivity' index and the average age of the residents in their respective regions ($r = -0.107$). In simple terms, candidates' usage of social tools does not depend on – or does not go after – the age of their potential electors. The same is for the expected – or at least expectable – relationship between candidates' scores and the share of 'big users' of the Internet in their territories ($r = -0.199$; Chart 3).

⁹ 'Residents' do not exactly coincide with 'electors', mainly because of the presence of foreigners, who lower average age in many areas.

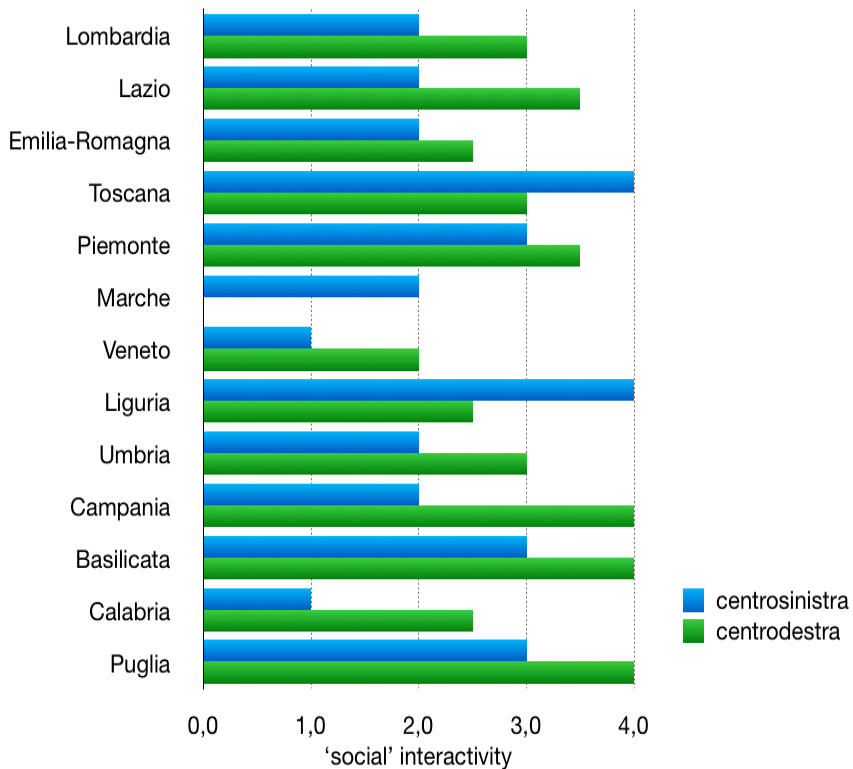
Chart 3: ‘Social’ Interactivity and Usage of the Internet in the Region¹⁰

Since the absence of significant relations could depend on the little number of candidates considered, and/or be the result of other relevant variables – such as parties’ size, or the realistic expectations to win (coalition and incumbency) – it can be useful to consider the scores of the two main candidates in each region. In Chart 4, regions are sorted in a descending order based on the share of ‘big users’ of the Internet, and the bars represent the two

¹⁰ Percentage of people aged 6 and more who have used the Internet every day (Istat - Eurostat).

main contenders for the presidency: again, no pattern seems to emerge from the data¹¹.

Chart 4: 'Social' Interactivity Scores among the two Main Candidates by Region



¹¹ The lack of a relationship between 'offer' and 'demand' of interactivity seems to be confirmed by the provisional analysis of 2011 data; in this latter case, however, the higher number of variables and candidates considered will consent to explore data in more detail.

3.2. Interactivity without interaction

In 2010 voters did not have many opportunities for ‘interacting’ with their candidates: a 17 % of electoral websites did not offer interactive tools at all, and – even when they did – candidates were not involved in actual interactions. On the other hand, comments from visitors were quite infrequent, with some relevant exception, mainly on Facebook.

If it is true that comments can be deleted by the administrators of a Facebook page, or by the owner of a blog, this is not the case of Twitter, where interactions were, nonetheless, infrequent. Candidates were not engaged in conversations, as indicated by the little number of ‘mentions’ posted: only 45 in over 1,000 messages, of which 24 by one candidate (21.8% of his overall messages) and 10 by another one (namely Nichi Vendola¹²; 3.4% of his ‘twits’).

This situation seems to be quite common among European politicians. Different hypotheses have been advanced by scholars to interpret the underuse of social media and Web 2.0 opportunities

¹² The leader of the post-communist party Sinistra Ecologia Libertà), whose 2010 campaign had been highly participative, under many respects.

for improving electoral communication, some of which may apply to 2010 regional elections.

A. ‘technological divide’

Both in 2010 and 2011 campaigns, many websites – especially among minor candidates, parties or municipalities – were obsolete from a technical point of view; some were evidently made by the candidates themselves, or maybe by non-professional volunteers, without any integration with the ‘offline’ electoral campaign.

As a consequence, websites were not only static (without interactive features such as comments, search tools, etc.) and old-fashioned from an aesthetic point of view, but also non standards-compliant, a well known threaten to their visibility on search engines like Google, that is their visibility on the Web.

B. ‘information overload’

Sometimes, the absence of interactive tools like comments is clearly intentional. Particularly interesting, under this respect, is the case of Nichi Vendola, whose campaign had been organised by an important communication agency. «We have such a flow of comments on Facebook, that we cannot even keep up» said the

responsible for the social media campaign¹³, stressing the well known problem of the so-called ‘information overload, and admitting that the choice was due to organisational problems, affected in turn (also) by budget limits.

‘Information overflow’, from the organisational point of view, may be related to the need of control over ‘risks’ or unpredictable events during the campaign: while technological changes are very rapid, candidates and parties (as well as enterprises) tend to prefer established strategies and settled practice, rather than risking – especially in an electoral campaign.

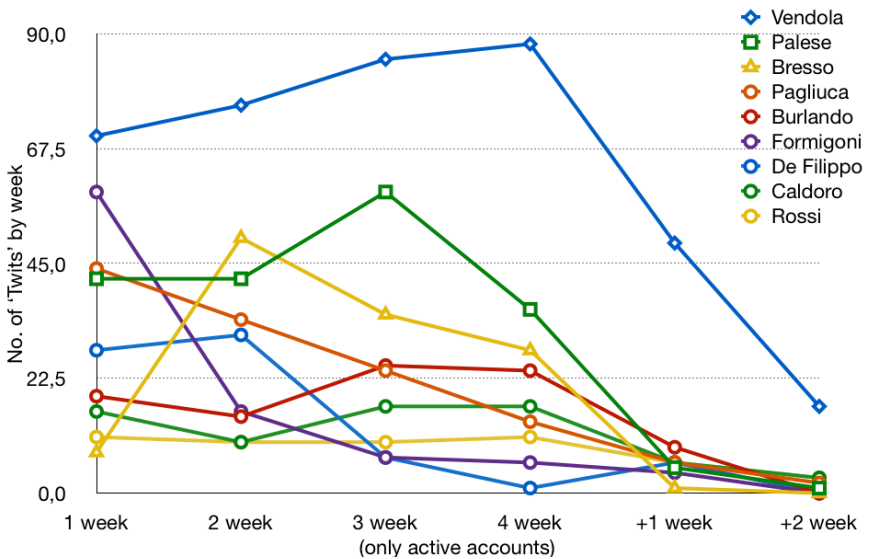
C. the electoral system: candidates, parties and coalitions

In the Italian regional electoral system, candidates to the presidency, even if generally proposed by a coalition of parties, play a very important role as individuals for the success of the campaign. However, candidates avoid using their personal websites, as well as the symbols of their own party, and tend to open new websites or blogs exclusively devoted to campaigning, bound to be closed soon after the elections. Social accounts share the

same destiny, as shown in Chart 5 (referring to the most active candidates on Twitter, for 2010).

It is difficult to say whether this strategy is aimed at highlighting individual personalities at assuring equal chances to all parties of the coalition in the competition for Councils' seats (candidates' parties could be advantaged). What is certain, is that this 'exit strategy' does not help a lasting relationship between candidates and their constituencies.

Chart 5: 'Take the Votes and Run' – Activity of Twitter accounts, during and after the campaign



A quite simple solution has been devised in 2011 mayoral campaign by Piero Fassino (national secretary of DS party), who redirected his domain toward the new electoral website. In 2010, instead, Nichi Vendola, opted for a very personalised campaign, using his own site for pursuing a personal legitimacy both as the President of Apulia region and as a national leader.

However, both the solutions are suitable only for those politicians who already have an established web presence. That is why this modality of ‘centralization’ (‘coalition sites’ or ‘coalition candidate’s sites’) is not only the result of an inveterate habit of major parties, but seems to be suitable also for those small parties and movements whose candidates are not very popular: on search engines, after all, electors will search (and will find) only the candidates they already know.

4. Conclusions, limitations and further research

On the basis of the data here presented, it is possible to conclude that 2010 regional web campaigns were not conceived as part of a strategy aimed at involving citizens: in most cases, e-campaigning has been juxtaposed, rather than being integrated, with the ‘offline’

political campaigns; in addition, although the mobilisation for supporting campaigns was sometimes solicited, a more active participation in deliberative processes was not encouraged (see also Gibson et al. 2000).

The absence of identifiable patterns in the use of social tools with respect to candidates' "audience" (average age of the population, and diffusion and use of the Internet in the regions) could indicate the experimental character of current web campaigns: lacking sufficient information and/or knowledge, the various actors involved 'check' several strategies, without any settled theory or good practice.

However, some hypothesis about relevant factors affecting the use of social media in web campaigning couldn't be statistically controlled, because of the little number of candidates involved in 2010 regional elections. In particular:

– The role of both the size and the internal organisation of political parties: Italian parties are very differentiated, ranging from large "traditional" parties (according to European standards), such as Democratic Party to small movements and "light" parties, such as Beppe Grillo's Movimento Cinque Stelle or Di Pietro's Italia Dei Valori. This variability requires, of course, a larger sample of candidates.

– The role of personal characteristics of the candidates: even if younger candidates are more likely to adopt social tools to communicate on the Web, in Italy they are also more likely to belong to smaller parties, with lower budgets (so that the correlation between age and ‘social interactivity’ scores was slightly positive!).

Also the attitudes toward innovation of politicians and communication professionals seem to play a role in the adoption of these new tools, and would deserve to be studied more carefully, also in terms of sociology of technology and innovation.

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Communicating with voters in the Facebook era. Political communication and the online identity that is still lacking in Italy

Francesco Pira¹⁴

I. Introduction

In our country it's very difficult try to take stock of the relationship between political communication and the Internet without referring to the specific context. For several years we have been following the Italian political parties' websites using specific criteria (graphics, usability, contents, interactive communication), and realized that the most significant problem was their incapacity to provide contents.

In the 2009 monitoring of the websites of those Italian political parties' elected to Parliament we recorded poor user participation and in particular an almost inexistent use of social networks compared to other European countries and the US. There were few communities and still a lot of propaganda, even on Facebook and

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Youtube.

ASSESSMENT GRID	Graphics	Usability	Contents	Interactive communication	Overall judgement
PARTITO DEMOCRATICO	@@@@	@@@@	@@@@1/2	@@@@1/2	@@@@
IL POPOLO DELLA LIBERTA'	@@@@	@@@@	@@@@	@@@@1/2	@@@@
LEGA NORD	@@@@1/2	@@@@1/2	@@@@1/2	@@1/2	@@@
UDC	@@@@	@@1/2	@@@@	@@1/2	@@@
ITALIA DEI VALORI	@@@@	@@@@	@@@@	@@@@1/2	@@@@

But let's forget just for a while the Web and look at the Administrative election campaign, which is now in full swing. If we take an overview of what's happening we see the weekly magazine of the Corriere della Sera with a long article devoted to women candidates, asking readers whether they will consider how candidates look as a factor in voting for them. We looked closer, and also found that electoral posters displayed prehistoric campaigning strategies, with meagre contents and unoriginal slogans. The phenomenon was countrywide, from Milan to Naples passing through Turin.

We even saw the sly use of the image of il Duce, Benito Mussolini, to obtain visibility and arouse debate or of women's bodies to criticise the government's fiscal policy.



Recent studies show us that the participation culture growing on the Internet is becoming a culture able to assimilate new tools that allow the consumer to modify, comment and forward the contents.

It seems hard to make this become part of political communication. We tried going on a short trip to find out why.

2. The difficult relationship between politics, communication and new technologies

It's difficult to understand if the recent revolts started out on Facebook or Twitter. It's widely held that this is what is happening even in Arab societies. In some recent studies on the difficult

relationship between politics, communication and new technologies, the concept of technological determinism introduced by Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929) has been repropounded.

This reductionist theory is based on the concept that the development of technology itself follows a predictable, traceable path largely beyond cultural or political influence. It's true that technologies have a key role in the social evolution but we know that the process of social construction occurs through the relationship between individuals: how they communicate, including the use of technological instruments.

In this sense the term use seems to be reductive if applied to the new relationship and communication models. Internet is a medium but the social networks that grow inside it appear as a relational environment where the physical dimension is replaced by a new one.

Cavallo and Spadoni affirm that: "... in the general opinion social network indicates a category including various internet sites that allow registered users to interact and keep in touch by means of a set of communication tools. This conviction, expressed both through traditional and new media, leads us to see social networks as a product of the web and in particular of Web 2.0. They reflect the direction of society in the information era, to use Manuel

Castells's term, characterised by the internet boom and the power of its innovative opportunities. Many actions typical of society are introduced into the virtual world, where they adapt to the new rules and in some cases lose their links with their origins; in this revolutionary progress they are transformed and acquire new meanings deriving from this technological and social change". (Cavallo and Spadoni 2010: 11)

3. How change the way to produce information

The success of the film "The Social Network", which rather than describing the phenomenon actually focuses on the biography of its creator, but also the news from the US should be a great cause for concern for politicians, who should find a new identity on the Web and leave behind television stereotypes, journalistic improvisations and performances in newspapers.

The news of the decision of Maryland's local online magazine, The Rockville Central, to close its website and communicate exclusively via Facebook is indicative of the difficulties experienced by the national and local press¹⁵.

¹⁵ <http://www.nicmanlab.org/2011/02/rockville-central-is-set-to-become-a-facebook-only-outlet/>

The site managers consider it a waste of resources to repeat the same work in two different spaces. “We go where people are”, explained Cindy Cotte Griffiths, Editor in Chief. It’s a small structure with 20,000 contacts per month, but Nieman Lab dedicated a long article to them, considering this decision “important for the future evolution of the information system of local communities”, and “an interesting experiment”. Cindy Griffiths underlined the advantages of the choice explaining that “publishing exclusively on Facebook meant choosing a platform with a perspective participative audience”.

She went on to say that “we economize resources in planning, in the use of the server and logistics, so the journalists save time”. Nieman Lab feels that publishing only on Facebook implies submitting its infrastructure to the conditions and problems of an external subject, forcing it to follow the rules of a company that continuously changes its privacy policies.”¹⁶

Recent studies allow us to define what network and social structure mean. For Cavallo and Spadoni “the structure on which society stands is a muddle of relations, some of them based on standard models. This proposition is the starting point which

¹⁶ Lsdi – Libertà di Stampa e Diritto all’Informazione 7 marzo 2011 – online magazine.

determines the evolution of American sociological studies on the network, especially interested with the structure considered as a set of relations. Observing these relations close up enables us to break them down into primary elements: the nodes and links that compose them. American researchers in this field (known as structural analysts) believe that there are bonds, structural compulsions, which push social actors to behave in specific ways as a consequence of their position in the social structure.” (Cavallo Spadoni 2010: 41).

This explanation introduces a further element of consideration on the concept of information. It’s clear that if on one hand the idea of using a relational setting to create a direct and immediate dialog with public opinion may seem attractive and may be interpreted as an evolution of citizens’ journalism, on the other hand we have to wonder how is changing the way we conceive information. In an open environment, as a social network, we lose the concept of source and we eliminate the barrier between those who inform and those who receive to build a public opinion.

4. Information and politics

The way of making information and its evolution is reflected in the way of making politics. For some years in Italy we have been witnessing the development of a political communication model characterised by a TV-centric vision, with an intensive use of slogans, populist messages and scant dialog with the citizen - voter.

Sorice explains that “political communication does not simply involve political parties and movements, but also other players, between whom a key role is played by syndicates, lobbies, movements and associations from the so called civil society and also terrorist groups (which despite being illegal criminal organizations apply media pressure on the world of politics through their activities, characterized by high visibility and emotional impact). The players who contribute to the political discussion have a different access to the media depending on their role.” (Sorice 2011: 95).

But if it's true that access is different according to role it's also true that access itself represents the first obstacle to the involvement of the various players. Nowadays we are witnessing the constant media presence of members of political parties and

movements, while civil society is poorly represented. This observation underlines that there is a close relationship between the media and politics. Politics presents itself through the media while the information system seems to have lost its ability to question politicians about what solutions they are able to propose for society's emerging needs.

In the Italian context we seem to be experiencing to the full the paradox of the convergence culture era, following Jenkins definition, of multiplatform communication, where information manipulation can be amplified and massified. Jenkins observes that: “media concentration is a very real problem that potentially stifles many of the developments of a convergence culture. Concentration is bad because it stifles competition and places media industries above the demand of their consumers. Concentration is bad because it lowers diversity – important in terms of popular culture, essential in terms of news. Concentration is bad because it lowers the incentives for companies to negotiate with their consumers and raises the barriers to their participation. Big concentrated media can ignore their audience (at least up to a point); smaller niche media must accommodate us.” (Jenkins 2006: 259)

5. How Italian politics communicates

The question arises spontaneously: In the social network era, are politicians, political parties and candidates able to talk with voters? Are they able to build what Paccagnella defines the online self in social networks?

“From the point of view of functional characteristics, social networks (SNS) represent the evolution of personal websites and blogs, allowing us to build an online self spreading personal information. They differ from those since beside the lists of interests they allow users to create lists of friends, to share multimedia contents and interact through various communication tools. Most SNS allow links to be published to online resources, photos, music and videos, including tags that can help recover these contents through internal search engines or Google. In the social network we find public (comments on profiles) or private communication tools, such as email and chats, that allow users to maintain and strengthen friend relations”. (Paccagnella 2010: 195).

Politics should use the social networks not in the same way as the common citizen, but identifying their risks and opportunities. Quoting Barack Obama may become repetitive, since a lot of

articles and essays have been written about his successful campaign. Paccagnella leads us to reflect, as politicians should also do, even the hyper-technological ones with Facebook and Youtube profiles.

“The information shared in the public environments are persistent, repeatable, scalable and searchable, unlike face-to-face interactions. Think about a conversation in a public park: a conversation between friends may be overheard by some people and become part of their memories and then forgotten over time. A conversation on a public profile of a SNS may have a different destiny: the comments and images published are stored in the database (persistence) and may be recovered over time through search engines (search). Moreover, the digital data filed may be copied and forwarded (repeatability) and thus reach a large potential public (scalability) even if this is not perceived by the users”. (Paccagnella 2010: 198)

Mazzoleni reminds us that political communication lives on rhetoric. “Today, rhetoric, while having lost the prestigious aura of the past and being perceived negatively by public opinion (synonymous with arrogant, unnatural, emphatic, declamatory, even false), cannot be considered dead. The language of politics has been defined as the language of persuasion par excellence and

as such cannot do without rhetorical models, argument, dialectics, and the figures which define it” (Mazzoleni 1998: 157)

This Italian attitude does not go well with SNS. According to Paccagnella, “for instance, two types of hybrid self representation practices have been identified in the videosharing services of Youtube. The first is the creation of publicly private profiles, where users reveal their identity but use strategies to limit access or compression of the contents by unexpected visitors. The second is the creation of privately public profiles to share videos with the aim of distributing them to a wide public and thus becoming a media celebrity, while the private identity still remains concealed by the creation of a fictitious one.” (Paccagnella 2010: 199)

Political parties and candidates have avoided this approach. They create pages without any possibility of comment or fail to answer the video posted by users (potential voters). Thus a political virtual space created to share contents and items is no longer effective.

6. The new forms of participation

Sorice invites us to reflect that “the new forms of online participation are closely linked to the emotional dimension (Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue* 1984). Hartley describes this trend, linking it to the process of constriction of what he has called the postmodern public sphere.” (Sorice 2011: 105).

In this sense “the private dimension of the emotional public (Higgins 2008) assumes public legitimation, thanks to social media. It’s in this sphere that the process to build political participation outside the institutional rules of liberal democracies can start. This is the case of those experiences outside the formal process of political practices (such as the forms of Italian anti-politics created and legitimated by informal media)”. (Sorice 2011: 105)

Moreover, Cristante affirms that the new technologies may facilitate some behaviours studied in the sociology of rudeness. “Even globalization demands good manners: global interconnections make it easier to import–export rude behaviour. The discovery of new cultural dimensions by the western individual facilitates the spread of exotic practices but we remain on the surface. In this way we perceive a larger cultural relativism but risk

taking the easy way to globalization, i.e. global westernization .”
(Cristante 2009: 240)

Politics on the Web manages to be even more vulgar than on television. Coarser, but more direct messages. Just read the pages written by MPs on their blackberrys. They quote themselves and self-celebrate their right to be on the Web. They have gone beyond the personal blog, too often not updated and not very functional. Facebook and Youtube are the new frontier.

7. Conclusion

What have we discovered at the end of this trip?

Italy's younger generations are using the Internet to raise people's awareness of specific items or try to create groups or movements like the violet people or the grillini.

The continuing risk is the lack of contents: on the Web as well in posters. There is an incentive to organise movements, to rouse people but too often without a strategy and real reasoning.

For some years Italian politics has been going through a period of constant campaigning, which has coincided with continuous debate. And this is not the kind of debate that Assange proposes

(which requires separate analysis) when he accuses the US Government of spying on politicians on Facebook.

We ask ourselves whether politics on social networks, through effective political communication, may be bearer of freedom.

We ask ourselves what kind of privacy we have when we leave a message on a notice board.

The impression is that Italian politics, whether on websites, blogs or social networks, still remains poor in contents. Consequently, do the ideas of leaders, candidates, political parties or movements reach the voters?

We believe not. We would like to be proven wrong by politicians and strategists, but don't expect any quick answers. We strongly believe that there is no significant difference between an ugly poster and a bad Facebook profile; between an obscene leaflet and a horrible Youtube video. The consequences are the same.

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The rising of Romanian President Traian Băsescu and the role of digital guerilla

Antonio Momoc¹⁷

In 2004, the year when internet was first used in electoral campaigns in Romania, the winner of the presidential elections, Traian Băsescu, launched the “digital guerilla” on his campaign website. “Digital guerilla” was part of the campaign website and represented a section dedicated to the readers which accessed Băsescu.ro. In this section, visitors could upload or download materials about the campaign that either showed their support for Băsescu, or showed their antipathy for Adrian Năstase, the counter-candidate from the Social-Democratic Party and Romania’s prime-minister between 2000-2004.

The rising of Romanian President Traian Băsescu and the role of digital guerilla is included in the research entitled Electoral Communication in Romania after 1989. Old and New Technologies in Presidential Campaigns, which is part of the post-doctoral program POSDRU/89/I.5/S/62259, Socio-human and political

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applied sciences. Post-doctoral training program and post-doctoral research scholarships in the field of the socio-human and political sciences. In this post-doctoral research about the new technologies the endeavor consists in trying to establish whether the moderate candidates or the radical candidates are those who rather use internet in their communication and to which extent do they use internet in order to promote their candidacy.

The hereby article does not intend to explain whether Traian Băsescu was or was not a moderate or radical candidate or whether he acted as a democratic or as a populist politician. The authors' inquiry is focused on the rising moment of the leader Băsescu and on the significance of using web 2.0, which mobilized the electors through a communication platform such as the "digital guerilla".

The political rise of Băsescu is linked to the increase of internet usage in Romanian campaigns. As internet penetration increased in Romania, as it moved on from the era of web 1.0 to web 2.0, Traian Băsescu's political success increased: According to the Internet World Stats (www.internetworldstats.com) in 2004, Romania had 4 million internet users. A spectacular growth compared to 2000, when the same statistics showed only 800.000 users. In 2007, 5.062.500 million internet users were counted. In December

2009 Romania had reached 7.430.000 internet users. In 2010, in Romania were 7,786,700 internet users.

Before YouTube was launched in 2005, Băsescu resorted to a user generated content website to attract internet users to criticize his counter-candidates. The first political parties' website appear in Romania after 2000, but the first online Romanian electoral campaign occurs in 2004 (Momoc, 2006).

In 2004, during the pre-campaign period, before appealing to web 2.0 and initiating the digital guerilla, there was an emotional political moment that was then intensely capitalized in the electoral campaign. Sorin Tudor (2008: 78) appreciates that in October 2004, mixing the emotional with the electoral campaign reached levels that Romanians only saw in the TV productions. Băsescu was the first candidate for Romania's presidency who cried during a press conference.

The Justice and Truth Alliance (Alianța D.A.) had formed by uniting the main parties in the Opposition: the National Liberal Party and the Democratic Party, acting together as an alternative electoral force to the Social-Democratic Party that was governing. Theodor Stolojan, the Alianța D.A. candidate for the presidential elections, was coming from the National Liberal Party. Before the official start of the electoral campaign, Stolojan announced at a

press conference that he relinquishes his candidacy. The manner in which he abandoned was a technical, analytical one, specific to his economics specialist style: „I strongly believe that the Alianța D.A. embodies at this moment the chance that Romania has for a better life”.

While Traian Băsescu was hardly controlling his emotions, Stolojan reached the key-point of his speech: he announced that his withdrawal from the electoral race was due to health issues that, if not treated urgently, “risk aggravating irremediably”. „Unfortunately, my road to the presidential race ends here. It was a road that worn me out, a great effort, but every second was worth it. Sadly, it left deep marks. My health condition stops me from this road. If I do not focus on my health now, my situation risks aggravating irremediably”.

The tears Băsescu poured at the moment Stolojan announced his withdrawal from the electoral race represented the symbolic moment when the Democratic Party candidate launched into the presidential campaign. After Stolojan ended his withdrawal speech, Băsescu stood up. He tried to talk about the position of the Democratic Party, but was only able to say “Dear Stolo...”, an expression that became famous in the mass-media folklore afterwards.

Bănescu covered his face with his hand and wiped out a tear. He reached a hand to his ex-colleague's shoulder in an attempt to hug him. "Thank you, Stolo, for everything you have done", managed Bănescu to say among tears. Bănescu's burst out seemed to unleash the other people in the room: Stolojan's councilor, Raluca Turcan, and the secretary of the National Liberal Party leader started crying, while the stunned journalists saw tears in the eyes of other important politicians, such as Vasile Blaga from the Democratic Party or Gheorghe Flutur from the National Liberal Party. Stolojan's wife also cried, although at first she tried to hold on strong. None of the journalists insisted with questions, respecting Bănescu request, who announced from the beginning that it was only going to be a press statement, thus avoiding the questions about Stolojan's disease.

After making it to the second ballot, in the final electoral televised debate with Adrian Năstase, the social-democratic leader, Traian Bănescu gave his opponent a knock-out. A single direct question addressed to Năstase was enough to leave the current prime-minister speechless. The question was difficult because it was a strongly emotional and sincere: „What curse is on these people that they ended up choosing between two ex-communists? Between Adrian Năstase and Bănescu... In 15 years no one from this

world came, no one who had not been dragged among the communist bad habits and who had not been affected by none of these. What kind of curse could this be?”

Blocked, the international public law professor Adrian Năstase could not find his words and stammered in front of millions of TV viewers. The answer to the question was offered again by Băsescu to the electors who were watching: „We are not allowed to remain communist in the way we think, we are not allowed to remain the same after 15 years since the anti-communist revolution. And you, Adrian Năstase, convinced me by your actions that you have not changed, that you are the same party activist.”

Some observers (Tudor, 2008: 128) appreciate that probably a major element that contributed to Adrian Năstase’s defeat was Traian Băsescu’s launch of the theory of electoral fraud between the two ballots. The theory was even more credible considering that in the first part of 2004 both Alianța D.A., as well as the “Great Romania” extremist right-wing Party, supported by a few NGOs, launched and asserted the thesis of the imminent fraud of the next elections by the Social Democratic Party, that was governing.

The event that determined Alianța D.A. to include the elections fraud theme on its electoral agenda was the “orange revolution” in Ukraine. The leadership change in Ukraine gained the symbolic

dimension of a “revolution”. The power shift was not perceived as result of an electoral confrontation between two oligarchies, but between an oligarchy and its contesters, who acted in the name of the people (Teodorescu, 2006: 400).

In Romania, the news TV stations transmitted images of the orange revolt in Ukraine. At the level of public opinion perception, a correspondence between the Ukraine and the Romania situation was induced: the “democratic” forces were orange both in Kiev and in Bucharest, while the “state-party” was blue. The Romanian public space became charged with tension and worried of the possibility of political instability and street revolts. This was the context in which the elections fraud thesis emerged and disturbed the second ballot campaign course. Moreover, the term “revolution” was applied to the Ukraine situation by the Opposition when the elections fraud thesis and the request to reorganize the elections had also been adopted by a significant part of the population (Teodorescu, 2006:402).

Between the two ballots, the NGO called Pro Democracy Association (APD) announced they withdraw their observers from the second ballot as protest against the irregularities committed at the vote. Without directly supporting that the elections were frauded, the APD statement prepared, voluntarily or not, Bănescu’s

action. Wishing to protect the elections righteousness, APD increased the electors' confusion through its intervention.

After announcing the result of the first ballot, Alianța D.A. presidential candidate, Traian Băsescu, demanded that the elections are canceled and repeated correctly, considering the “massive fraud that took place”. Alianța D.A. leaders, Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu and Traian Băsescu, also requested that: the Central Electoral Bureau (BEC) is dismissed, as participant at the fraud; the manager of the firm that developed the counting software is arrested; the Statistics Direction to start being supervised and its computers to be sealed; above all, they requested that neutral experts check the recalculation software that provided the elections results.

One of the charges that supported the fraud theory regarded the multiple vote, practiced by Opposition electors who were sent to vote by bus from one city to another (“electoral tourism”). Băsescu explained that the fraud committed by people who went by bus and voted three-four times was estimated by Alianța D.A. at approximately 300.000 votes. Despite this, the OSCE observers appreciated that the Romanian elections were free and correct. But no one paid attention to this verdict provided by the international

institution. The press attention was focused on the charges brought by the Alianța D.A. candidate.

The multiple vote practiced by the members or supporters of the Social-Democratic Party brought by bus constituted one of the head charges after the first ballot. Alianța D.A. leaders accused that the Social-Democratic Party, with its high numbers of voters brought by bus, blocked the students who wanted to vote in the cities they studied in (that were different from the cities they were born in) from voting in the special voting spaces on the additional voting lists (for those from outside the city).

The final results of the votes counted in the special voting spaces placed in Gara de Nord – the central train station – revealed something else: Alianța D.A. received twice more votes than the Union formed by the Social-Democratic Party and the Romanian Humanistic Party for the elections. In conclusion, the ones who complained about the elections fraud were the ones who benefited of the “Bus Operation”, at least in Gara de Nord train station (Tudor, 2008). However, it was unanimously accepted that such local frauds could not influence the general result of the scrutiny.

Alianța D.A. campaign speculated Băsescu’s tear, the elections fraud theme and the final electoral televised debate. At the same time, it is a fact that Băsescu won the elections in the year when the

first electoral communication campaign through SMS and internet was used in Romania. Alianța D.A. communication team used these new communication means.

Before video-sharing websites such as Youtube appeared, or the blog as political PR instrument, or the social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn), the most common uses of internet for online Romanian political communication in 2004 were e-mail, discussion groups, forums, web browsing, file transfer (podcast) and chatting through Yahoo Messenger. The campaign website Băsescu.ro distinguished through the special user generated content section, that the web administrators entitled “Digital Guerilla”. It contained web 2.0 interactivity elements and it displayed a disclaimer at the bottom of the page, saying that the website administrator does not take responsibility for the materials uploaded on the website and the responsibility belonged to the users who sent those campaign materials via email (Momoc, 2006).

PR specialists who work for the candidates recognize that they use certain groups of internet users, namely they hire teams having the mission to take care of forums, blogs, websites and post comments, opinions, insults, calumnies, according to the interests of their employers. (Tudor, 2008: 144). It is possible that these groups functioned also in 2004 and transmitted electoral messages

through SMS, emails and forums. When these “posting devices” sent positive messages about the candidate they were supporting, they were the actors of a positive online campaign. When they sent emails with messages that attacked the counter-candidates or posted the same kind of messages on forums and discussion groups, they were the actors of a negative campaign.

The negative political campaign points out the weaknesses of the counter-candidates and makes a mockery out of the threats coming from the counter-candidates (Momoc, 2010: 90). The twisted effect of the negative campaign is that the attacks launched by a candidate might bring benefit to other candidates.

A negative campaign does not necessarily aim to increase the number of votes, but to enhance the disorientation of the voters who are already disappointed. The strategic planners’ actions are meant to keep the undecided voters away from the polls and to attract the captive voters at the poll. So the primary purpose of the negative campaign is to determine both the undecided voters, as well as the instable voters to become so confused and disgusted that none of them would be interested in participating at the election process anymore. Also, the strategic planners aim to involve the party members and the candidate’s supporters in the online campaign of the party in order to defend the party leader

(candidate) and to engage them in the attacks against the political opponents.

The counter-candidates use the advantages of internet: the language and the online means of expression are not censored by the National Audiovisual Council (CNA) in any way. The regulations that prohibited the negative campaign in the audiovisual environment allowed the alternative means to display a bigger creativity in this regard (Teodorescu, 2006: 35). Hence, the negative campaign during the Romanian presidential elections has taken place mostly online (Momoc, 2010: 92).

The negative campaign of Alianța D.A. focused on accusing the Social-Democratic Party candidate and members that they were corrupt. After the electoral campaign ended, most of the charges disappeared: Alianța D.A. did not sue the Social-Democratic Party for corruption and the Social-Democratic Party did not sue Alianța D.A. for calumny; the charges were replaced with more or less direct apologies (Teodorescu, 2006: 35).

One of the materials that became viral in 2004 was an online letter that was presumably coming from Congo and that circulated on the internet in 2004. It ended with a poetry attacking Alianța D.A. candidate, Adrian Năstase, using his nickname – “Bombo”:
„And if boughs knock on the window/And you count again on

Bombo/I'll hang myself on the first bough/And get buried in Congo". The letter transformed into a short text message (SMS) and was soon disseminated on numerous mobile phones. In the days before the elections, the guerilla teams sent a SMS such as the Alianța D.A. SMS sent against Adrian Năstase: „And if boughs knock on the window and you vote Bombo, I * * * on the entire country and emigrate in Congo". The campaign aiming to discourage the Social-Democratic Party voters, to change their mind, to induce them a feeling of collective guilt and embarrassment for voting Social-Democratic Party used these SMS messages that were popular on the mobile phones.

The pioneer in using internet as part of a Romanian electoral strategy was Felix Tătaru, the manager of GMP advertising agency. Tătaru introduced the section entitled Digital Guerilla on the campaign website Bănescu.ro, where the web administrators uploaded the materials received by email from Bănescu's supporters (Momoc, 2006). Visitors could upload and download electoral communication materials and other pamphlet materials (such as caricatures), while the website owners specified they did not take responsibility for the content posted by the fans on the site. As a bottom-line, Sorin Tudor (2008:150) stated that:

“Internet transformed the electoral campaign into a national peal of laughter”.

In 2004 presidential campaign, Bănescu used the internet taking all the advantages of the web 2.0 era. Dorina Guțu (2007:167) appreciated that Traian Bănescu was the first Romanian politician to exploit internet potential as means of political communication.

Digital Guerilla was the first online communication platform to incorporate a negative campaign. Alianța D.A. members and sympathizers used the online environment to mock the Social-Democratic Party and its candidate, Adrian Năstase, and to stir young people’s interest in the presidential campaign through the following guerilla actions:

a) they mobilized people to vote for Traian Bănescu through forums and online discussion groups (such as Yahoo Groups).

b) they sent fake email warning messages about the alleged frauds at the poll.

c) they breached the computer of the voters and displayed political messages by spreading virus applications.

d) they ridiculed the counter-candidates through photos-caricatures and games shared through mass-messages (i.e., via Yahoo Messenger).

e) they developed user generated content websites (such as the Digital Guerilla section on Bănescu.ro) where users could upload and disseminate parody video-clips by video-sharing.

f) the uploaded video clips became viral after being shared with their readers by the most important bloggers – viral marketing.

Traian Bănescu is an interesting case: he did not significantly update his campaign website after 2004. He used Bănescu.ro temporarily in 2007, in the campaign for the Referendum, when people were asked to vote whether the President should or should not be dismissed. He reactivated his campaign website during the 2009 presidential elections. He promoted himself on a user generated content website (Bănescu.ro) during the 2009 presidential elections.

Bănescu is the first Romanian politician who understood how powerful internet is and how useful it is for reaching certain population segments. However, as opposed to his 2004 counter-candidate, Adrian Năstase, who was one of the most prolific Romanian blogger-politicians, Bănescu was among the politicians who never had a blog. His Facebook page hosted only news provided by the Presidential Administration.

Although he never owned a blog and his personal Facebook account was rarely updated, Traian Bănescu was present in the

online environment through the digital guerilla from his campaign website and especially through the other candidates' links with references to his campaign. While the traditional media became influenced by the online debates, candidate Băsescu succeeded in imposing his offline agenda also in the online environment. Digital guerilla was not only a web 2.0 section on a campaign website. Digital guerilla became style of action for the Democratic Party campaign team and an online action model for the supporters of the Party who are not party members officially.

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From Clicktivism to Web-Storytelling. Audiences from TV politics to Web participation

Giorgia Pavia

“There won’t be anymore a political struggle between right and left party, but between those who watch TV without any possibility of feedback, and those who have access to the internet and to more complete information; information which, moreover, can be managed and fed by everyone”.

(De Kerchove, D., in Granieri, G., 2005)

Media and methodological scenarios: audience studies, semiotics and background overview. When approaching media studies, you may know where you’re starting from but never know where you will get to.

I started this research intrigued by the Italian TV programme



Vieni via con me

(<http://www.vieniviacome.rai.it>), more specifically by

the episode on air on the 15th

November 2010, which

reached 9 millions, 31 thousands spectators (30,21% of share).

Guests of the programme were Pierluigi Bersani and Gianfranco Fini, respectively leader of PD, the Italian Democratic Party, and of FLI, the recently born party which separated from PDL, Berlusconi's main governmental party. The sequence of the programme taken into consideration was interesting in itself, because the two leaders read a "list of values" of the left and right party respectively, in a very complex phase of Italian democracy where arguments on left and right party¹⁸ seem every time so weak, and borders between the two of them so imperceptible (at least according to politicians' speeches). The two lists can be understood as an identity auto-representation of the two main opposite trends of the Italian political scenario. The sequence itself, inside the TV show, it's a relevant case of the so called "pop politics" (Politica pop, Mazzoleni, G., Sfardini, A., 2009) which "occupies" a relevant vast part of Italian TV's schedules. Also, it links to all literature and debates on civic and political participation, especially political participation through web 2.0 technologies¹⁹. The

¹⁸ In order to highlight differences and similarities and to better understand the issue, you can refer to Bobbio, N., *Destra e sinistra. Ragioni e significati di una distinzione politica*, Roma, Donzelli Editore, 1994.

¹⁹ For further in depth examination on the cited arguments, you can read De Blasio, E., *Italian politics and the web 2.0. Participation mistrust and disintermediation*

sequence gave then birth to massive Facebook “likes”, comments and sharing (<https://www.facebook.com/VieniViaConMe>), which caught up and fostered even more my interest in going on with the review of materials and background analysis of the programme. Both before and after this sequence of the TV show, press’ attention on the programme was very high.

In the middle of the process I re-focused my attention on blogs and stories I was re-directed to by primary links on the Facebook page. If at the beginning, my main interest was on the TV show itself, on its production and online marketing activities, my interest then shifted on users’ “re-semanticised” content, according to their personal interests and values; this let me think that I couldn’t underestimate the contribution of the broad literature production on audience²⁰, needing to take into consideration the “receiver of the message”.

processes, Roma, CMCS working papers, 2009 and Sorice, M., *Sociologia dei mass media*, Roma, Carocci, 2009.

²⁰ For a quick overview on audience studies and its variants, you may refer to Livingstone, S., *Relationships between media and audiences: prospects for audience reception studies*, in LSE Research Online, October 2008; there you can find references to Hall, S., who introduced the encoding-decoding model to integrate text and audience studies; to Katz, E., who introduced the concept of active audience with its selective responses, to Eco, U. and his “role of the reader”, which combines the semiotic with the sociological approach, etc.

If the starting sentence of this paragraph may sound like fitting to many fields of study, it even more fits to media studies, being them a sort of crossroads of many disciplines from humanities to social sciences: dealing with media studies means taking into consideration communication studies, sociology, economics and their related fields of interests and branches; furthermore, you can't prescind from the normative frame; moreover, when dealing with a research on a TV show, you can't underestimate the fertile contributions of marketing studies, advertising, cultural studies. As Meyerowitz stated, "What is needed is a better integration of medium theory with other perspectives" (Meyerowitz, 1994), so drawing a very complex scenario where media are intertwined with technological, economic, social and cultural dynamics. One of those variables - technology- is then, by definition, so dynamic that what it's written in this paper will be partly outmoded by the time you will finish this reading, making the scenario even more complex and difficult to catch and explore.

When approaching the TV show, I decided to have a complete vision of the issue. I didn't focus merely on one issue of the three involved in the communication process (emitter-broadcaster, message, receiver) but tried to give "voice" to the

three of them: they are the main “actants” involved in the communication process, and it’s important to consider all the perspectives bearing in mind the teaching of Peirce-inspired interpretative semiotics²¹ which suggests not to prescind from the glance of the observer on the object observed (so admitting the importance of the audience and, in such a way, mixing cultural studies and socio-semiotic approach). That’s why I tried to analyse the three of them: I focused on the first one, the TV show itself (the “object observed”), by analyzing the sequence of the programme I was interested in, the same sequence projected in the Facebook page; and then contextualized all through the internet page of the programme (<http://www.vieniviacome.rai.it>), in order to frame the “object of value” (the sequence of the two list by the two politicians) inside the mission and vision of the programme. In this phase, a great “added value” came from a phone interview with one of the producers of the programme.

I then decided to analyze users’ comments on Facebook and, through many links and re-direction, I “landed” on Giovanna

²¹ The scholars of interpretative semiotic (guided by C.S. Peirce and U. Eco in Italy) are usually opposed to those of generative semiotic (which finds in A.J. Greimas its “inspiring father”).

Cosenza and Annamaria Testa's blogs (www.disambiguando.it and www.nuovoeutile.it, respectively written by Giovanna, professor of semiotic, semiotic of new media and semiotic of consumption at Bologna University, and Annamaria, who teaches at Bocconi University in fields which shift from communication to creativity) and further initiative (PN – narrative programme, to define it “semiotic-ally”) “Destra e sinistra: trovarle, le parole per dirlo”, (which can be translated as “Right and left: let’s find the words to express it”). The project rose from the sequence of the programme and the two lists previously cited. This phase of the study was very interesting in order to point out the audience’s role in media production and consumption processes, thus supporting the Cultural Studies approach and research methods originated from the British tradition of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies of Birmingham²²; moreover, this phase, led to the literature about “prosumption” (Tapscott, 1997), with prosumers as the new

²²This audiences studies’ current of thought is usually considered as opposed to the one spread by the Institute for Social Research of the University of Frankfurt am Main, known as Frankfurt School; its main representatives (T. Adorno, M. Horkheimer, H. Marcuse) are the theorists of mass culture which considers audiences as passive and indifferetied (in this concern, even the plural differentiating word “audiences” wouldn’t maybe be accepted by Frankfurt scholars).

actors of the web 2.0 era, so overcoming the usual opposition between PRODucers and conSUMERS²³. At this point of the research, I also interviewed by chat and mail 5 users of the blog www.nuovoeutile.it and www.disambiguando.it which participated to the initiative of re-writing lists, and then creating stories starting from a salient word of those included in the tag clouds generated from the re-written lists.

Bearing in mind the literature, authors and background previously cited, I decided to investigate “How do social media change, affect and shape mass media communication?”. This question was a very broad one, a sort of common denominator I use to repeat as a mantra: through the *Vieni via con me* case study and the support of interviews, I wanted to give highlights on the relationship between internet and mass media, and the different audiences they contribute to shape and build; moreover, *Vieni via con me* is a very good example on the power of internet users and their possibility to affect and influence TV production. The work has no presumption of completeness and

²³ The role of prosumers as users which are, at the same time, producers and consumers of “cultural products” lead to all the literature about UGC – User Generated Content; for further information on Open Content you can read Foiaia, L.G., *Web 2.0*, Milano, Hoepli, 2007 and Jenkins, H., *Convergence culture*, New York, New York University Press, 2006.

it's only a first practice and descriptive phase to approach the broader question previously cited, for any further future investigation.

Internet affects and changes mass media representations: Vieni via con me case study

Apart from the sequence and lists analyzed, it's necessary to spend few words in order to make preliminary remarks on internet users' of the programme (through the official web page <http://www.vieniviaconme.rai.it>) and their impact on the TV show itself.

The second episode was in fact “contaminated” by the will of people (demonstrated on line by writing feedbacks and comment with their own personal lists, both by re-writing cited lists according to their personal points of view and inventing new original ones) who re-wrote on line their lists, so including in the TV show common people reading their lists. As I checked with the interview with Roberto Costa (who participated at the production of the format), the “common people lists” weren't part of the original format; once “delivered” the first episode

and considered the feedback on the internet page, they decided to implement people's lists in the TV show, "but it wasn't expected; it was just a reaction to the viewers' will demonstrated by the feedbacks on the official internet page of the programme. It was a bottom-up movement: we caught an unexpressed desire from the internet population and so we decided to include it in the official programme" (Roberto Costa).

The TV show was a new format obtained as a "mash-up" of genres:

«Vieni via con me is hosted in TV and is a typical TV product, but it is also theatre, music, narrative, show. We will speak about our country, the unbearable yet marvellous concepts it evokes, the tragic and the comic situations together» and was "composed" as a collection and sequence of lists: «There are all kind of lists, from "heavy" ones to light ones, from solemn to everyday life lists» (from the official web site <http://www.vieniviaconme.rai.it>).

I specifically analyzed the two lists of Fini and Bersani from a semantic point of view, in order to analyze isotopies and to identify recurrent topics; the below images are just excerpt of text to let understand the process of analysis:

Work!

Precarious work!

Stable work!

- "If few persons have a lot and a lot have a little, economy doesn't work"
- "injustice hurts economy"
- "goods that can not be left to free market... And the market should be without monopolys"
- "stole future (...) illegality"

PIER LUIGI BERSANI

GIANFRANCO FINI

- "For the right party, it's lovely to be Italian because is a privilege!"
- "being of the right party means loving Italy, loving Italians and their extra-ordinary ability to sacrifice, to work onestly"
- "public ethic..."
- "a better Italy already exists... voices of a better Italy"

**Italy!
Homeland!
Italians!**

I won't bother you with the specific results; what really matters is that the list are semantically constructed in order to be

redundant with such issues. This fuelled many critics on the lists, which concretized in an on line activism with a series of different “reactions”.

Not only profiles, likes, dislikes and sharing: let’s talk about stories.

The starting point of this paper was an overview of the concept of participation: participation at the political debate by politicians themselves through “pop” TV programmes; participation of spectators at the TV programme in terms of viewers-share, demonstrating a general interest on some issues (as politics framed and debated through the form of lists); then, participation which from TV switches and shifts on web platforms, feeding the Facebook page with comments and likes (and also, I suppose but impossible to check, feeding personal and friends’ pages through the “sharing” button); participation online in the official page of the programme, which reflected in the strategy of the programme itself, which included, from the second episode, common lists read by common people who could suggest their lists through the internet page.

Once considered these kind of participation (the last one being liable to be evaluated according to the AIP model²⁴), I took inspiration from the conclusive sentence of Gianfranco Fini's list, "(...) we don't have to build a better Italy because a better Italy already exists, we just need to let its voice to be heard".

This sentence represents, semiotically, the text as considered by Eco (1979): "Text is a lazy mechanism full of empty spaces and white gaps, thus needing the cooperation and collaboration of the reader to be actualized and fully realized". People, maybe because of listening to this "sort of motto", maybe just personally inspired and engaged by the programme and the issues presented, "re-opened" the text: they started a process of commenting and sharing on line, which at the highest extent fuelled re-writing processes of the lists and writing processes of new stories.

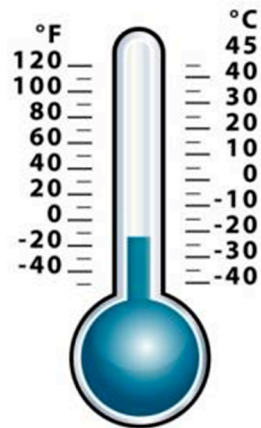
²⁴ For references you can read Carpentier, N., Participation, access and interaction: changing perspectives, in Nightingale, Dwyer, 2007; also, an example of the model is in De Blasio, E., Sorice, M., Italian politics and the web 2.0. Participation mistrust and disintermediation processes, Roma, CMCS working papers, 2009.

But let's see which are the possibility and degrees of on line participation, and let's see at which degree we can situate every one of those considered.

I included all the online actions studied in the next page scheme:

Diverse "degrees" of reaction/consumption

- Like
- Post (not original content)
- Recommend
- Share/Mail to a friend
- Comment
- Create & Spread



The above scheme is a sort of ascendant climax from the less to the most "participative" actions: the less involvement as possible it's demonstrated by the like button which only implies "to agree and like" a content and express this pleasure. It represents the so depreciative called clicktivism, a sort of

“degraded” civic participation where participation is “a matter of clicks”; in fact, just making a little experiment and going on a page (totally open) of one of the users who liked Bersani and Fini’s video on the *Vieni via con me* Facebook page, I noticed how the like button represents the expression of positive remarks on almost everything and the support to disparate contents, from objects, to concepts, to personalities. The same user “likes” at the same time *Vieni via con me*, Nutella, Vasco Rossi, Alda Merini, watermelon, the use of subjunctive, Birra Peroni, to sleep, to go to X event, not to make anything and going on, even with more complex and funny ones. A so heterogeneous combination means, at a superior level, that it’s a very “easy action” which doesn’t imply lots of engagement (apart from those user who spend their time only in looking for and searching for certain pages to like them, which represents a further level of engagement). Differently, by posting a video you like on your personal page, it’s like you are saying “I like this, do you agree?”; and you do it on your personal page, so defining your identity at a larger extent than a simply line “X likes this content”. Recommending and sharing means something more: a sort of “I personally agree with that content, at the extent to recommend it, or to personally share it with you”. If a friend of

us can avoid coming in our page to see the recently liked content, he/she can't avoid seeing a link recommended on his wall or in his/her post box. Moreover, a comment under certain content implies an even higher involvement, or at least you "put your face and name" exposing your personal view on the issue. Even more different and engaging is the case of creating content (such notes, videos, blog pages...) and re-launching it through social media platforms or simply sharing them on public blogs.

This last "approach" was the one suggested by Annamaria Testa and Giovanna Cosenza²⁵ in their respective blogs www.nuovoutile.it and www.disambiguando.it were they launched a project about improving and practicing through a review of the lists, searching new words to better define left and right and their respective values. Annamaria on her blog questioned about the so called easiness to write lists: "There was a large debate on the quality of Bersani and Fini's lists. My opinion is that it wasn't easy at all... I spoke about the issue with Giovanna, adding my personal feeling that, between classic definition of right and left, current oppositions and "available"

²⁵ I use this occasion to personally thank Annamaria and Giovanna for their kindness in supporting me and answering to my questions submitted via Facebook on the project and its reasons why.

leaders on the Italian political market, there were and there still are too many gaps. We so decided to embark on the project and see what happened. There was big participation, re-links by other blogs and mostly an excellent average quality of comments and contents produced”²⁶.

In quantitative terms the results were as follows: 54 new users’ list, of which only 2 of them on a re-reading of the right party lists; 31 out of 54 were re-written lists on the left party; 21 users re-read and re-write the both of lists.

The re-written content differ a lot from user to user: some of them didn’t wrote a list, but a narrative piece of content; Fabrizio wrote a list of essential books; some users just answered to a previous list, adding ulterior content; Rurrina described left and right by opposing objects: furniture brands (IKEA vs Kartell & Co), books (Vespa vs Pasolini),...; very efficacious lists where those very minimalist, obtained by contrasted opposition of single words/concepts: “give me it!” vs “let’s share it!” or Walter lists: “!” vs “?” (“right” and “left” respectively titled); Gabri wrote the difference between right

²⁶ Here http://www.nuovoeutile.it/ita_destra_e_sinistra_le_parole.html and here <http://giovannacosenza.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/liste-di-valori-destra-e-sinistra-e-tag-cloud.pdf> the collection of all the lists received in the comments of the two blogs

and left opposing a different concept and definition of woman; Giuliana wrote that “she won’t write lists, there are enough of them...”, and she evokes an image and describes it; Paoletta writes, among the many items of the left list, that it’s something related to the left attitude “knowing that a list is not enough”. Let’s bear in mind this sentence, maybe salient in order to explain the next step of Giovanna and Annamaria’s project and the re-opening of the project itself in order to derive “stories”. But let’s go in order. At this point, for the both of families of lists (right and left), Giovanna and Annamaria derived tag clouds in order to visualize the recurrence of terms according to the list they were cited in. You can see their results below:

LEFT Tag Cloud



RIGHT Tag Cloud



“This collective exercise was a very difficult one because was on a very sensitive issue (...) We aimed at re-define right and left in a modern perspective. This is fundamental, because while writing lists you have a clear vision in mind (...)” (Testa, A.).

The exercise was very productive and fertile, demonstrating the high involvement in such issues by users. Activity such as like, sharing and posting contents on social network are generally considered as vectors to define identities. This exercise demonstrated engagement in political issues and in the process of collectively defining values, desire to overcome opposition and stereotypes, effort to define a common denominator of the two opposite “visions”. This “social writing experience” was a very good example of “participated” and “participative” definition of values and content which are expression of national and cultural identities, and in this specific case are expression of the people will and need to contribute to those “collective representations of values”.

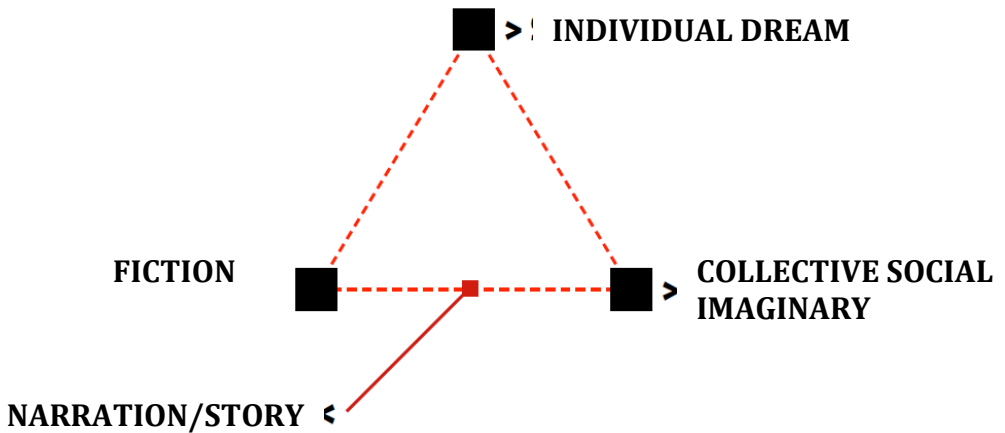
The list-exercise itself was the starting point for a further initiative about selecting a single word of those in the tag clouds and writing a story on it. Here’s where I would include the previously cited sentence of Paoletta when arguing that “a list is not enough”. A sort of new “empty space” (U. Eco would call it

so) needing the cooperation of other internet users to be actualized and fully realized. At this link http://www.nuovocutile.it/pdf/se_una_notte.pdf you can find the launch of the project “Se una notte d’inverno un narratore” (transl. “If on a winter’s night a narrator”), re-named after Calvino’s masterpiece *If on a winter’s night a traveler*.

What it’s meaningful are Giovanna and Annamaria’s words about this second initiative: “it is necessary, in the winter of our politics, to spread around fertile seeds able to germinate and let new visions grow from them, able to let people invent stories; able to spread stories around through telling and sharing them”.

As Augè (1998) states, between the fiction-pole and the “collective social imaginary” one, what are important are stories; this was confirmed by the interview with Annamaria which explained how storytelling is fundamental because stories “make visions tangible” and contribute to the social imaginary. Annamaria and Giovanna wanted to experiment a collective writing process in order to redefine concept of left and right in a contemporary perspective, also considering that “political choices have got a big component of emotion and identification”.

M. Auge's three poles in "la Guerra dei sogni"



Conclusions

Where do all previous arguments lead us to? What are entitled as conclusions are new questions, as new starting points in order to eventually further deepen the issues through new questions and stimulus.

We will point out some of them, in order to furtherly re-open them (so considering the questions I'm going to point out as the

usual lazy mechanism which will be fully realized through the lector cooperation) if someone would like to.

First of all, the job done until now highlights the changed role of audience, both the TV audience and the internet one, both asking for more visibility and voice: by evaluating content, commenting, sharing or re-writing lists they don't merely "occupy a new space of conversation and dialogue on web 2.0 platforms", but the platforms themselves become public arenas in which people discuss on cultural models and collective imaginaries, so shaping and furtherly defining their role of audience. This is what De Blasio (2010:10-11) argues saying that "reflexivity plays an important role in the social and political practices activated in/through social networking" by quoting Giddens (in De Blasio, 2010): "the reflexivity of social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those practices, thus constitutively altering their character".

The changed role of audience reflects itself in a changed role of TV: the *Vieni via con me* case study is an example on how TV redefines its formats in reaction to audiences' reactions online, so TV becoming itself a public and participated arena where to

discuss economic and cultural rules of the cultural product itself.

All these issues can be easily linked to the marketing strategy behind the programme. What is clear is that business models using and exploiting UGC (User Generated Content) are just at their larval phase: in *Vieni via con me* they were implemented as a reaction at the first episode, not strategically thought, nor even used (at least according to the interview with Roberto Costa) to exploit their full potential: revenue models weren't studied, neither users' info analysis were done to draw new marketing strategies or innovate the editorial profile of the programme.

The programme was a success in terms of share, but in terms of marketing and advertising *Vieni via con me* wasn't strategically exploited nor developed at all.

Maybe a new way of exploiting UGC is that of letting people tell their stories, so implementing storytelling in politics and TV programmes, as Giovanna and Annamaria's initiative demonstrates. The experiment born from *Vieni via con me* underlines how identities are mediated by stories, both personal and group identities (such as that of political parties, which are, moreover, expression of collective needs); Wittgenstein would maybe argue that identity has no existence outside the language;

and the great and great quality of the lists and stories produced online by users are a clear demonstration of that: “The only way there can be any real change is through conversation. It’s about asking questions that induce or allow the other person to think about his opinion. And, by being in a conversation, people change. Both do. I do, at least” (P., one of the re-writer of the lists, interviewed by e-mail).

Also, they represent a virtuous example of collective research and reconstruction of sense making in a so sensitive civic issue such as that of defining the right and left party values.

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Internet goes to Politics: The Swedish Pirate Party

Mariacristina Sciannamblo²⁸

In his contribution to the debate about the future of communication studies, Denis McQuail (2009) argues that the field under the title of 'media and communication studies' (MCS) relates to all the activities and potential consequences of an expanding sphere on institutional activity in the wider society. Thus, the early fragmentation of this field is not well-explained if we do not frame it in the larger changes in society in respect of an expanding of public and political communication sphere. So, as McQuail explains, 'informatisation', connected to technological developments in telecommunications and computerisation, played a key role because of the very broad reach of its implications, not only in the media field but also in the nature of economic activities, the structure of social relations and the exercise of power in national and international borders.

²⁸ Mariacristina Sciannamblo, CMCS – LUISS University – cristina.scianna@gmail.com

As for this compound relationship between media system, politics and society, discussing the ways and the consequences of the process of 'mediatisation', Michele Sorice (2011) claims that media system has deeply shaped political communication, in particular the role of communication tools regarding representation of political leaders. While in the "pre-media era" (Sorice 2011) the visibility of leaders was linked to public and physical space, the development of electronic media has enhance the degree of politicians media presence. Nowadays, new forms of political participation have gained ground in traditional political arena. They involve new political players that are unrelated to traditional political system, building new area of participation called 'subpolitics' (Beck 1997).

The Swedish Pirate Party could be regarded as the problematic translation of a broad and heterogeneous movement in political terms. It deals with the online piracy as an issue of participation in terms of mobilized collective action. Since it does not express some classic cleavages such as class, left-right or ethnicity, it could be regarded as a single-issue party whose programme responds to three basic priorities: reforming copyright and patent law, ending excessive surveillance, ensuring real freedom of speech.

In our analysis, we have adopted the concept of networked individualism coined by Manuel Castells (2001) to indicate the new social model based on the individual lives expressed by the net society. The latter appears, as Castells remarks, as the best environment for developing networks among citizens that share interests, values and similar projects. We combined the concept of networked individualism with the one of subpolitics by Ulrich Beck (1997), to intend the rising of individual and collective players outside of the political establishment. In this regard, certain consumer actions, like file sharing, become political choices able to influence political agenda.

The aim of this paper is to provide a description and analysis of the file sharing movement's transformation into a political party, underling how a certain use of the Web, such as online piracy, open source and free licences, can be recognized as a social movement able to prick politics. We also attempt to provide a more realistic outlook as possible about the future of the Pirate Party.

I. From Pirates to Politics: identikit of the Pirate Party

Many scholars address their studies to new forms of political participation and civic engagement in order to find out the impact of digital technology and web culture on political communication system.

Working on political participation and civic engagement in certain social networks, Emiliana De Blasio and Michele Sorice (2009), underlined four main tendencies among which the “growth of new subjects traditionally distant from the political sphere” and the “growth of networking as a tool to increase social participation”. Both of them are clearly evident in the history of the Pirate Party, a political formation with roots in the Pirate Bay, which is one of the last major Bittorrent trackers still remaining (Li Miaoran 2009).

After the high profile lawsuit settled by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and Motion Picture Association (MPAA) against peer-to-peer application developers in the Unites States, the Pirate Bay received a lot of media attention when, on May 2006, the Swedish police conducted a massive raid against its web hosting company and seized over one hundred servers. The raid brought street protests and international attention besides

increasing the number of users of the community. In addition, also new political party, the Pirate Party, obtains a relevant increase in membership due to media prominence.

The party was found by Ricard Falkvinge in 2006 during the Sweden's debate over changes to copyright law. According to Falkvinge, the issue received tremendous media coverage and generated interest among the public, but politicians basically failed to notice the entire debate. So, wondering how to get attention, he decided to bypass the politicians entirely and aim for their power base. When the website of the Pirate Party went live, the main goals were to collect some volunteers, to refine the party's manifesto and to collect enough signature to get the Pirate Party registered with Sweden's electoral authority.

The Pirate Party supports three issues as its primary focus:

1. the fundamental reform of the Copyright System
2. the abolition of the Patent System
3. respect for personal privacy

According to the pirates, the official aim of the copyright system has always been to find a balance in order to promote culture being created and spread. Today that balance has been completely lost, to a point where the copyright laws severely restrict the very thing they are supposed to promote. Falkvinge and his fellows are

persuaded that the monopoly for the copyright holder to exploit an aesthetic work commercially should be limited to five years after publication: hence, a five years copyright term for commercial use is more than enough because “nobody needs to make money seventy years after he is dead.

As for privatized monopolies, they are considered one of society’s worst enemies as they lead to price-hikes and large hidden costs for citizens: patents are officially sanctioned monopolies on ideas. Large corporations diligently race to hold patents they can use against smaller competitors to prevent them from competing on equal terms.

Regarding privacy, the members claim that control and surveillance are where practically everyone is registered and watched, thereby asking for the safeguard of the private life of every citizen, leading to opposition to most forms of control of both electronic communications and other communications.

When the party got started, Falkvinge rolled out his theory about the development of every major social shift. He argued that each of them followed a three stage pattern. First, wild activists provoke the public to generate attention around an issue. Next, academics get involved in researching the issue; finally, the issue is successfully politicized. So the first step was to go beyond the

original file-sharing community of pirates and reach the mainstream media's attention.

After the electoral defeat in the 2006 Swedish elections, in which Pirate Party had a mere 0,63 percent of the national total with 34.918 votes. Even though the party collected more votes than several established politicians becoming the third largest force outside the parliament, Falkvinge and his fellows set out a strategy in order to board the European Parliament and the Swedish one. The first step was to create a youth section called Young Pirate with the aim to develop young political talent to counterbalance the elders.

Thanks to the youth section, on June 2009, the Pirate Party overcome the four percent threshold gaining 7,1 percent of the votes in the European Parliamentary elections and had two representative seats in Brussels. More significantly, 19% of the voters were younger than 30 years old cast a vote in favor of the Pirate Party. But, unlike this first political success, the second goal was not reached as the party failed to enter in the Riksdag, the Swedish Parliament.

The Swedish Pirate Party did its best election campaign ever. We had more media, more articles, more debates, more handed-out flyers than ever. Unfortunately, the wind was not in our sails

this time, as it was with the European elections,” Falkvinge said. According to him, one of the reasons for the lack of votes was the disregard in the debates of all the issues that were so dear to the Pirate Party: in other words, Falkvinge has been admitting that a great media event, such as the appellate trial of The Pirate Bay, have led the electoral success in European Parliament just nine days later.

Despite the electoral defeat in Sweden, the party has increasingly spread around the world: by now, pirate parties have been started in 44 countries, inspired by the Swedish initiative. They are coordinated by Pirate Parties International, which is the international board of the Pirate Party movement, formally founded in 2010 with the purpose of helping, supporting and promoting communication and co-operation between pirate parties around the world.

2. Between politics and subpolitics

In 2001, Manuel Castells (2001) wondered if Internet played a mere instrumental role in political conflicts or if rules, forms and

objectives of political actors have been changed within and because of the cyberspace. The question is: which is the Internet role in the current political and social life? What is the relation between the use of the Web and political issues? According to Castells (1996; 2001) , social movements in the twenty-first century find in Internet the best place where manifest their own claims. Over to represent a tool to support political institutions, Internet becomes a place in which communicate, providing the adequate infrastructure of a peculiar social and digital context: the network. To many scholars (Rheingold 1993; Castells 2001; Sorice 2011), Internet and, in particular, the social Web seem to be the best environment for emergent movements that even more concentrate their core on not many issues.

The Pirate Party could represent, in this sense, an interesting case for two main reasons: on the one hand, it could be considered a clear political result of subpolitical or antipolitical (Sorice 2011) movement and, on the other hand, it appoints Internet as a specific, and possibly even, defining issue of its identity.

To better understand the first statement, it could be useful to quote a meaningful fragment of Pirate Party Declaration of Principles:

“The Pirate Party does not strive to be part of an administration. Our goal is to use a tie breaker position in parliament as leverage, and support an administration that drives the issues in our platform in a satisfactory manner. When they do, we will support that administration on other issues where we choose to not hold opinions of our own”.

It does mean that, even though the Pirate Party became formally a political force, it keeps on with its roots of movement committed in the field of free Internet and anti-copyright activism (Miegel-Olsson 2008). It deals with young’s people increasing activity of file sharing that evolved into a significant political question. One possible explanation of this shift is to refer to the severe difficulties of the established political parties in handling the question (Miegel-Olsson 2008). The key features of these kind of movements are, as Manuel Castells notes, the informality and virtuality, as it is for the hacker culture: the Swedish Pirate Party was born as an unstructured organization that pose the question of legitimacy of the traditional political system, its representatives and discourses. Consequently, it shows quite different features from conventional parties starting from the leader position. The leaders of these kind of parties looks like more to a *primus inter pares* than

to a modern political leader who reflects in himself much of the party's power. A reflection on the Pirate Party leadership is not possible without an accurate analysis of the party itself. As Castells (2011) points out, in the net society formal and permanent structures are replaced by free, semi-structured coalitions. The birth of these emotional movements is often determined by a media event or a major crisis. The Swedish Pirate Party just comes out of an extraordinary event which was the massive raid against the Pirate Bay and the consequent protests. Its founder and leader Rick Falkvinge had not any parliamentary experiences before. He showed a great skill in organizing the political party and gathering people's disappointment about the Bay trial. He drove the party to conquer a seat in the European Parliament, but, as the Swedish national elections have showed up, he did not able to capitalize in the long term on a riding wave of public protests.

We can also say that even though the Pirate Party started hosting The Pirate Bay, it developed a completely separate though parallel track. So, inspired but separated as well. In addition, after the national electoral defeat, the party was met with the need to break out of technician approach and broaden the debate in non technical terms. For this reason, Rick Falkvinge resigned as the

party leader and gave this duty to Anna Troberg.

As events have shown, the party seems to have neither the strength nor the intention of turning into a traditional political group. Instead, it mostly tends to retain its informal and virtual character, remaining indeed in the so-called subpolitic area. As explained by Christian Engström himself, the Pirate Party is basically a civil rights movement with the purpose of pressing the traditional politics with its key subjects.

3. The Pirate Party: which future? Perspective and conclusions

Despite its weakness, the Swedish Pirate Party has showed its global ramifications: inspired by the small successes the party booked in the first year, Pirate Parties were founded in dozens of other countries, prompting, de facto, a new political movement in Europe.

Observing literature, we can say that the Pirate Party experience highlights some important changes in political activism as remarked by Pippa Norris (2007):

- an increasingly disenchanted with political parties, indicated by rising anti-party sentiment and falling party membership;
- a general loss of power by the traditional political agencies and a consequent growth of communication networks that encourage political individual and fitful actions;
- the rise of cause-oriented activism, which focus attention upon specific issues and policy concerns

As for the leadership power, we can state that the Pirate Party is far from current phenomena that characterized political life such as “personalization” and “popularization” (Higgings 2008) of politics in favour of the attention for questions of principles and policy and for the real complexity of political events.

An investigation on the party of pirates cannot be done regardless of some considerations on the party system. The Pirate Party could be regarded as an example of what Marie Demker (2008) define ‘virtue parties’, namely new parties that have been founded on virtue basis, which means an ideological platform where a kind of political perfectionism is the main element. They are connected to the crisis of the mass party and “catch-all-parties” and to the birth of the new global cleavage of international network vs national states. These parties are issue-centred and often tend to

disappear after one or two elections, but some of them has great success and transform established political coalition.

At the moment, it is hard to predict how the international “piracy” movement will evolve. It will certainly be interesting to watch pirate leaders advance their agenda in legitimate arenas while still trying to maintain credibility among their eclectic constituency, many of whom seem to live on the fringe of conventional politics. Some observers state that it will be hard to keep up the spotlight on pirates issues because of the less prominence of problems like copyright, privacy, free Internet in political agenda and also because the fact that the online piracy movement is so loose-knit and heterogeneous (Linde 2010). The pirate movement was white hot during the Bay trial because it was an attack on people’s lifestyle, thus it drew the attention of mainstream media. But the Pirate Party is a young motley party who could not get themselves together into a streamlined political profile: this is one of many different views about the party’s future.

We should also consider the reactions of the market against pirate’s issues since many market players can themselves solve the “pirate problem” if they can create sufficiently clever business models.

In any case, the mere presence of Pirate Parties is likely to alter political debate in their respective countries. Suddenly, politicians will have to take copyright law reform, Internet policies and privacy more seriously or risk losing electoral support.

It will be interesting to see how the Parties fare in the coming half-decade, where privacy and technology issues are becoming more relevant than ever before. The most interesting question is whether politics will change the Pirate Parties or whether the Pirate Parties will change politics.

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Current Trends in Political Communication and Criteria for Political Leaders. Perspectives of the Finnish Press and Party Leaders

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For the past twenty years, the concept of change has been much discussed within the sphere of political communication. This change has also been described with different “-zation” concepts, such as Americanization, mediatization, modernization, professionalization, presidentialization, personalization, and privatization. While these concepts emphasize different trends within the ongoing change, what they all have in common is the importance of media. They also acknowledge the growing importance of the role of a politician’s persona.

The growing importance of a politician’s persona concerns above all political leaders. Such a development means that a vast number of requirements and expectations are imposed on the political leaders. Due to the nature of the job, voters and the media

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pay a lot of attention to the competencies, qualities and personal characteristics of political leaders. These qualities may also be very important in politics and even for the national as a whole. The fundamental question concerns the main qualities of political leadership in general. In this paper, we approach the qualities of political leaders from two perspectives.

Regarding the concepts describing the trends of political communication, personalization comes to the fore because this concept emphasizes the importance of a politician's persona in today's politics. Personalization is a widely accepted process (McAllister 2007), but there is no consensus on its exact definition. Lately it has also been considered critically (e.g. Karvonen 2010, Adam and Maier 2010). Because personalization describes the process in which the political weight of the individual actor in politics increases over time, there is discussion on the possibility of evidence for the historical development of this phenomenon.

The studies on personalization give a confusing picture of the phenomenon as a whole. Karvonen (2010) attempted to clarify this picture and analyzed earlier studies on personalization. He could identify no obvious and pervasive trend towards personalization in parliamentary democracies, but there were many indications that individuals have become more prominent in politics. He also

observed that the development of personalization is clearly not uniform from country to country. In Karvonen's analysis Finland was a positive case, meaning that there are more indications of personalization in Finland than in some other countries (Karvonen 2010).

Adam and Maier (2010) recently reviewed earlier studies of personalization. In their review they concluded that there is only one area of politics, media coverage, where the empirical state of research supports personalization and that is a shift from parties and issues to people. In the other area which they considered the development was questionable. Although the reviews are critical concerning the development of personalization over time, they do not deny the current importance of political leaders. Leaders are clearly seen to matter in politics and personalization is seen to increase their importance (McAllister 2007). Karvonen, too, points out (2010) that a party and its leader are strongly related to each other in voters' minds. Therefore, it may be difficult to distinguish between the influence or importance of the political leader and others factors which are relevant in politics.

Reinemann and Wilke (2007) studied media election campaign coverage in the German press between 1949 and 2005. They

reported an enormous increase in the number of evaluative statements on the candidates in press coverage in the 2000's. Appearance and media performance especially have become as important as character or competence when candidates are judged. Further, the trend towards a more negative portrayal of the candidates was perceptible as of 1980.

Langer (2007) analyzed reporting on British prime ministers in *The Times* from 1945 to 1999. She observed a positive trend in leaders' overall mediated visibility and in the salience of prime ministers' leadership qualities with a steep increase in references to leaders' personal lives. Her conclusion was that there has been an increase in the degree of personalization.

The earlier research has mainly been interested in the development of media coverage over time and the reporting on the qualities of political leaders. There has been no systematic analysis of the content of the categories of qualities, especially outside elections. Content here refers to what are deemed positive or negative qualities, which characteristics are discussed and what kind of picture is given of the qualities of good political leader in media. Nor is the data based solely on the analysis of media coverage as is usual in studies of this kind. In this study, we

interviewed also political leaders themselves to identify how they see those qualities and current trend of political communication.

1. Goals and Method

In this paper, criteria of political leadership will be examined from the perspectives of the media and also from those of the political leaders themselves. The analysis of the media material will show how the press describes and evaluates the political leaders. Secondly, the criteria of political leaders will be investigated by putting these issues to the party leaders themselves.

The empirical data consist of two datasets: data from the press and interview data. The data from the press were collected from two major quality Finnish dailies (Helsingin Sanomat, Aamulehti) and two afternoon papers (Iltalehti and Ilta-Sanomat) over a period of six months in 2008. All kind of articles on Finnish political leaders were included. In practice this meant articles concerning party leaders, ministers, presidents, chairs of parliamentary factions, party secretaries, a speaker of Parliament, or political leadership in general. The data comprise a total of 5,697 articles. The interview data consist of eight interviews with leaders of

political parties. All representatives of the parties with seats in the Parliament of Finland were included. The interviews were semi-structured, lasting from 25 minutes to 2 hours and 18 minutes.

All materials were analyzed by qualitative content analysis in order to identify relevant phenomena and key themes and patterns in the data. Additionally, the amount of our data was so large that a systematic method of research, organization and simplification was needed. After the qualitative content analysis the quantity of references in main categories and their percentage value was counted.

2. Results

Media Data. The evaluations and descriptions of politicians were divided into five main categories: professional competence; communication skills; maintenance of political relations; characteristics and behavior, and inspiring confidence.

Professional competence was the largest category, accounting for 28% of the references. In this category, four descriptions occur more frequently than the others. The most salient point in professional competence appears to be experience. It is also crucial

that politicians manage their work efficiently and possess the relevant competence for this. A politician should be a reformer. These four subcategories emerged clearly from the data. Further, for good political leaders it seems advantageous if they are ideological and responsible and have leadership skills. It is also good if they are well-known, brave and have the finesse to inspire and pull their party together. A political leader should be productive. Several other features were observable but did not, however, comprise larger classes.

The second category is communication skills, accounting for 22% of the references. The references in this category 60% concerned skill in oral communication and 40% media skills. Regarding skill in oral communication evaluations and descriptions dealing with public speaking skills were mentioned most often in our newspaper data. According to the press, political leaders are too often verbose, non-specific, rambling, dysfluent and suffer from lack of openness, colorfulness and charisma in public speaking contexts. Among the positive features of political leaders the words credible, charismatic, clear and understandable were mentioned most frequently.

The second subcategory in speech communication skills is nonverbal communication. In our data references to expressing

feelings were the most notable; a political leader should not look cold or emotionless, neither should he/she express bad mood, sadness, anxiety or anger, nor smile too much. The third category of skills in oral communication is interpersonal adeptness. These mentions refer to various discussions, meetings, negotiations, interviews and to other more informal interaction situations that arise daily with co-workers and citizens.

Another dimension of communication skills is media skills. According to the data a political leader should also have excellent media savvy. The press assumes that leading politicians understand the importance of publicity and the media's role in maintaining democracy and transparency in political decision-making. Communication should be open, sincere and fast. However, concerning the relationship between politicians and the press, there were clear indications of tensions regarding the politicians' privacy boundaries. In our data there were also a few mentions of skills needed in the use of new technologies of communication.

Evaluations of politicians' characteristics and behavior comprise the third main category, accounting for 20 % of references. These evaluations were first divided into positive, negative and neutral evaluations; 43% of the selected references were negative, 33% positive and 23% neutral. The descriptions varied greatly and it was

difficult to form any larger classes. Among the negative descriptions, the most often cited was that politicians should not be egocentric. Very often in the references, politicians were criticized for being immature and for lacking judgment. Nor should politicians be colorless and lacking in charisma. It is also bad if a politician is dishonest or emotionless. Regarding negative behavior, it was seen that committing indiscretions and behaving arrogantly or blundering in private life is undesirable. It was also bad if a politician did not learn from past mistakes, blamed others or was disloyal to other politicians.

In the positive descriptions the variation was even wider than in the negative descriptions. The most positive attributes were self-confidence, sociability, being hardworking and being sharp. It is also clearly positive if the politician is a new face in politics, empathetic, with a good sense of humor and good judgement. It seems to be positive if a leader is enthusiastic, moderate, considerate, honest, and charismatic. Regarding positive behavior, the political leader should be responsible and courageous about doing different things, behave elegantly, and concentrate on work.

In the neutral descriptions there are references to politicians' age and gender, both of which seem to be important. According to our data the politician should at least not be too old and female

gender was seen positively. These descriptions also reported on the political leaders' personal relationships, hobbies, health and background.

The fourth main category is maintenance of political relations, which accounts for 18% of the data. Political leaders' relations to other politicians and political institutions – the most important of which is the party – are essential. Relations with other high ranking party colleagues must be good, likewise with rank-and-file party members. The politician's relations with the government, the Prime Minister and Parliament should be on good, and to be able to develop these, he or she should be frank and cooperative. The co-operation inside the government should go well, but it is relevant that politicians from opposition parties criticize the government. The relationship between political leaders and the President also formed a category of its own in the data collected. Secondly, the politician's relationship with the general public is crucial. It is important in this relationship that a politician pays attention to and appreciates the ordinary people, manifests strong leadership, is honest and bases his or her action on the right values. Further, the political leaders should have good networks, in terms of international and social relations; however relations with enterprise

and businessmen should be somewhat distant. Private relationships should also be good.

The last category, the building of confidence, accounted for 12% of the references. This category was further divided into four subcategories: credibility, lying, trust and impeccability. The credibility of a politician was speculated on a lot in the papers and it was the biggest class in this category. In this data it was discussed particularly with respect to the positive or negative effect a politician's private life has on his or her credibility. A fairly strong and recurrent opinion in the papers was that a political leader must not lie. Rather than lying, the political leader must tell the whole truth and be responsible for his or her own actions. Concerning the trust category there were often general mentions that it is important for a politician to be trustworthy. In half of such mentions, it was said that other politicians especially must be able to trust the politician. The impeccability category means that a politician must be faultless from the perspective of voters and other politicians, in both their private and public lives. This means that a politician should behave morally, have good manners, be honest and act in the best interests of Finland.

Party Leaders' Interviews. Party leaders' descriptions of what makes good political leaders were categorized into nine categories.

In the qualitative content analysis of our interview data, 40 % of the coded mentions dealt with some aspects of communication skills. The majority of these descriptions were related to media skills. All eight party leaders interviewed agreed that media and communication skills are highly relevant to their work. They identified themselves as spokespersons of their parties and acknowledged the necessity of publicity through media as a way to get their messages across to their audiences. According to our data, it is important for a party leader to understand and accept the logic of the media. Some of the leaders emphasized the significance of Internet and similar skills in using social media to acquire and maintain contact with new audiences. According to the party leaders a political leader should be competent in rhetoric and understand, for example, how to capture the attention of an audience with an effective opening or tag line. Further, the party leaders discussed interpersonal communication skills, in that it is essential for a politician to have the ability to get on with different people.

The second slightly larger class (14%) comprised leadership skills. This means that a leader should be able to motivate party members, set an example and lead the way. The third class is the constant availability of the leader. It accounted for 11% of the

references. The party leaders talked quite a lot about how they are expected to be constantly available to the media and the public. It is nearly always the leaders who are wanted for interviews or visits. The fourth and fifth classes describe that it is important for a good political leader that he or she has a high tolerance for stress and has the courage to do different things.

The rest of the categories describing features of political leadership are quite small. The party leaders thought that a political leader must be ideological and display issue competence. The party leaders said they consider their actions and future plans on the basis of ideology. A good party leader also needs the ability to outline, meaning having a good perception of trends, ability to form a bigger picture and to be on the ball.

3. Discussion

A political leader needs vast professional and communication competence, according to both the papers and the party leaders. The press also emphasized the building of confidence and maintenance of relations. Confidence is a traditional basis for the work of politicians. The importance of relations can be explained at

least partly by Finnish political culture, where agreement and consensus have always been emphasized (Isotalus and Aarnio 2006). Further, the press paid attention to the characteristics and behavior of leaders more than did the party leaders themselves. In the party leaders' interviews, leadership skills and constant availability were emphasized more than they were in the media data. The party leaders themselves seemed to perceive their jobs as leading – leading the party, party members, ideology and the general public.

The results support the idea of personalization. Leaders and their behaviors, characteristics and competencies are much discussed in the papers. The leaders are treated as individuals whose personal characteristics are viewed as crucial and some characteristics are clearly seen in a more positive light than others. The category of constant availability, which the party leaders talked about, calls to mind the idea of personalization. This talk reveals that a party leader is the most central person for the party, whom everyone wants to meet, and whose opinion everyone wants to hear. This also illustrates the new negative features of personalization from the perspective of politicians themselves. On the other hand, the results strongly emphasize the professional competence of the political leader, but they also show that personal

and professional sectors intertwine in the evaluations of political leader.

The analysis also strongly indicates mediatization. In both the media and interview data, the media skills of political leaders were underscored. If the press and party leaders bring up these concepts so often, they must be significant, which in turn suggests the importance of the media in politics. Media skills are also seen as a crucial competence for political leaders in their work, and political success is partly seen as dependent upon these skills. However, these data may overemphasize the importance of this phenomenon, as the media itself may easily stress only these skills while the party leaders were asked separately about them. Further, the answers of the leaders in particular show that they are adapted to the media logic.

The confrontation between the media and politicians is also evident (e.g., Swanson and Mancini 1996). First, the press were inclined to describe the politicians negatively more easily than positively, and repeatedly evaluated their truthfulness. A certain distrust of media towards politicians is, of course, understandable and also needed in democracies. Secondly, the party leaders considered the requirements of the media to be excessive; for example, to be constantly available to the media, to have an opinion

on everything and behave exemplarily at all times. Thus, the politicians are also critical of the media. Thirdly, the question of the boundaries in politicians' public and private lives elicited from both the data and – with respect to this issue – the media and politicians are easily conflicting.

Therefore, the study shows that, at least in the current Finnish political culture, the persona and qualities of political leaders are seen as central: politicians and media itself see the role of media as essential to politics. Making public the private lives of politicians is discussed, and then the media considers political leaders from a cynical perspective. Moreover, the study shows that the job of a political leader is demanding. The criteria also indicate that political leaders need competencies and characteristics which differ in part from those needed by other leaders.

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Disintermediation in political communication: chance or missed opportunity?

Lorenza Parisi and Rossella Rega³⁰

The term 'disintermediation' has been introduced in the general framework of Communication Research by Katz and Dayan (1992) through the theory of "media events" applied to the television power. The authors described media events as disintermediation channels conveying TV public into the "sacred center" of society. Later on, the rise of the digital media extended the opportunity for political actors to autonomously publish and spread online contents. Nowadays two main aspects describe the communication of political actors: on one hand, political parties progressively lose their role in communication between political leaders and citizens; on the other hand, the role

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of media system acquires more power in the general context of political communication.

1. The role of disintermediation process in the communication strategy of political actors³¹

This working paper explores the latter point, and aims at analyzing how political actors directly manage their contents online, bypassing the traditional mass-media mediation. A special attention will be focused on the specific role played by the web 2.0 tools (O'Really, 2007) and, in particular, by social network sites (SNS) (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Recent field studies observe that political actors adopt a top-down strategy, and social media are mainly used for traditional communication needs. They seem far from making use of the participatory and collaborative potential of web 2.0 applications, and apparently they don't encourage the emergence of horizontal communication flows through online platforms (Jackson & Lilleker, 2009a, 2009b; Blanchard, 2009).

³¹The concept of the paper is the result of a process of dialogue and discussion between the authors. The introduction and the conclusion were written by both of us. Lorenza Parisi is the author of par. 3, 4, 6, Rossella Rega is the author of par. 2, 5 and 7.

In particular, scholars now start to investigate two main research themes: 1) are politicians making use of web 2.0 tools to bypass the traditional gate-keeping role held by journalists? 2) are the web 2.0 tools facilitating the emergence of participative, decentralized and flexible modalities of political communication between the political leader and his supporters? Are social media sidestepping the top-down and one-way model of communication that characterizes the mainstream media?

2. Literature review

During the last ten years many transformations in the communication field have caused new trends in political communication. In particular, the adoption of the Internet within society has generated a debate on its potential effect on political representation and on the relationship between politicians and citizens. Early predictions on the potential that the Internet would offer to political actors, such as political parties, individual politicians, members of Parliament or candidates for election, were often too optimistic. In general it can be argued that the early approaches on the Internet effects took into consideration

especially the macro-level aspects, such as assessing whether the impact of the Internet was revolutionary or not. For example, the research trend was the evaluation of the Internet power to attract more electors or more political participation. However, the evidence of the positive effects of the Internet on civic engagement was very rare, and the majority of scholars concluded that individuals who visit political websites are generally already interested in the political field, are well-informed and ideologically oriented (Di Maggio et. al. 2001, Bimber, 1998). At the same time, the hypothesis regarding how Internet would be beneficial for democracy wasn't confirmed (Stromer-Galley 2004, Bentivegna 2002) and the empirical data showed that the Internet is not a source of radical changes in the civic activities of people (Rice & Katz, 2004).

Similar assessments have been claimed about the role of Web 2.0 and its unfulfilled effectiveness to completely renew the nature of the relationships between political parties and citizens, on one hand, (Jackson & Lilleker, 2009a; Kreiss, 2009) and, on the other hand, between Members of Parliament and electors (Wright, 2008; Jackson & Lilleker, 2009b). The rise of social media (such as Facebook, Twitter), indeed, persuaded many researchers to closer investigate the adoption of these tools by political actors and verify

if they are fostering an higher level of online interactivity. This new research approach proposes to avoid the question whether the Internet is producing a revolution in political communication and suggests to adopt a micro-level perspective of analysis, focusing on more specific objects. For example K. D. Sweetser Trammell (2004) investigated the George W. Bush and John Kerry use of blogs to reach young voters during the 2004 campaign; Adamic & Glance (2005) analyzed the use of Liberal and Conservative Blogs during the Presidential election of 2004; Williams & Gulati (2007) studied the use of Social Network Sites in political campaign during the 2006 Midterm Election. Further researches focused on the time intervals far away from electoral campaigns, in order to verify two points. First the case that political actors are interested in promoting an high level of interactivity even during their mandate. Second the use of Web 2.0 tools to enhance the dialogue with citizens and to listen to their public voice.

Following these new research approaches we decided to describe the quality of online interactions promoted by political leaders through the observation of their communication activities during non electoral time. This choice is due to the fact that many political actors stop updating their website or their SNS profile the day after the election (Vaccari, 2008).

Moreover, even if the Internet and social media could encourage bottom-up participatory processes (thus bridging the gap between the representatives and the represented), several studies have shown that political parties are basically using Web 2.0 tools as additional channels to convey information and publicize their ideas (Jackson & Lilleker, 2009a). Therefore in order to critically analyze the uses of Web 2.0 by political actors we need to investigate the quality of the proposed interactivity (Stromer-Galley, 2004) and the direction of the online communication flow produced by politicians. Furthermore recent literature on political communication explored the contrast between diffused social Internet use and political actors' organizational needs, especially during electoral competitions. These studies underline the contrast between political parties (and leaders) needs to maintain an effective control over their online activities and the "bottom-up 'netroots' mobilitation" (Chadwick, 2007) expressed by social movement's supporters. In particular Chadwick stresses the tension between the political party desire to vertically and centrally control their political communication and the Internet users' participatory culture. He claims that although Internet may increase grass root control over candidates and party leaderships [...], in fact "there are still many reasons why increasing grass root

influence over party leaders will be difficult to achieve” (2006, p. 172) given the asymmetrical power relationships existing in the ‘offline’ world. Moreover Chadwick (2007) proposes to sidestep the traditional division among parties, interest groups and social movements, given that their “organizational features and policy impact appear to be converging”, and claims that the Internet encourages the rise of an organizational hybridity where ‘digital network repertoires’ are diffused. We will use these considerations to describe some of the features of the analyzed case study.

3. Methodology

This article aims at analyzing the characteristics of the disintermediation process within political actors’ online communication. We want to investigate whether the adoption of social network sites (SNS), Facebook in particular, is affecting the interactions between political leaders and supporters. Therefore the paper addresses the following three research questions.

1) What are the main posts in Facebook by Italian politicians? Do they put into action an effective multichannel strategy using social media? Are politicians really interested in encouraging wider participation or they only offer low level interactivity? 2) Are social

network sites, Facebook in particular, encouraging the emergence of new 2.0 intermediaries (i.e. opinion leaders, bloggers, citizens)? What is their role in this scenario? 3) What are the aspects of communication taking place in Facebook between political leaders and users (monologue contents or dialogue)? Is the daily web 2.0 communication produced by politicians affecting the traditional mediation power held by mass-media and traditional infomediaries (i.e. journalists)?

The study explores the emerging political use of social media through a case study: the analysis of Nichi Vendola political activities in Facebook³². He is one the most popular Italian politicians and his Like Page in Facebook has the highest number of fans among political leaders (440.000)³³. We decided to observe the features of Nichi Vendola communication in Facebook Pages manually 'rewinding' the posts published on his Wall during two months of online activities (from 10th February 2011 to 10th April 2011). This was due to the fact that, thus far, software collecting social interactions in social network sites do not work in

³² Vendola is the President of Apulia Region and the President of the Italian left party called "Sinistra Ecologia e Libertà".

³³ Facebook is the most popular SNS in Italy. In this country it counts 18 million users, around 75% of Italian Internet Users (January 2011).

Facebook, as the technical characteristics of the Pages makes it laborious to automatically save data. We manually examined the number of posts published by the leader and then we carried out a quanti-qualitative analysis categorizing the content of each post in terms of: author; theme; presence of link; destination of the link; source of the post; presence of original text explicitly created for Facebook; aim of the post; call for web 2.0 practices. On the base of previous researches that theorized that a website structure can foster a different range of political actions (Schneider & Foot, 2004) and according to researches analyzing the social media use in political communication (Jackson & Lilleker, 2009a; 2009b) we describe the level of adaptation of the political message to the Facebook platform. We believe that each online medium (e.g. website, blog, social media, etc.) conveys specific social practices and therefore it deserves a specific language. Nevertheless most politicians use to publish through social media different channels online content (articles, press releases, photos, etc.) without being aware of their specific characteristics.

At the same time, in order to investigate the role played by the web 2.0 intermediaries involved in online political communication, we focused on the political movement called “Fabbrica di Nichi” (“Nichi’s Factory”) created in 2009 to support Nichi Vendola

political vision and activity. These open political laboratories have been created in 590 different Italian cities and are similar to the “Meetup” experiences in the USA (in particular those created by Howard Dean’s supporters; Bentivegna, 2006). During the same two months interval we created a panel of six Facebook members of the “Fabbrica di Nichi Roma”, one of the most active groups in Italy, then we analyzed the political activities they promoted through their personal Facebook Profiles³⁴. Our hypothesis is that these users, through their online posting activities, become informal intermediaries of Nichi Vendola’s communication. Finally we conducted six semi-structured interviews with them in order to investigate features regarding the political engagement of intermediaries.

4. Findings and discussions

Nichi Vendola’s use of his Facebook Like Page

We carried out a content analysis of posts published on the Vendola Wall during the two months of our survey. We counted

³⁴ All intermediaries (3 males and 3 females) live in Rome and their age range is between 24-45 years old

275 posts published by Vendola: 25,836 comments and 224,697 likes expressed by users. Each of Vendola's posts got an average of 93 comments (Figure n. 1) and 817 likes.

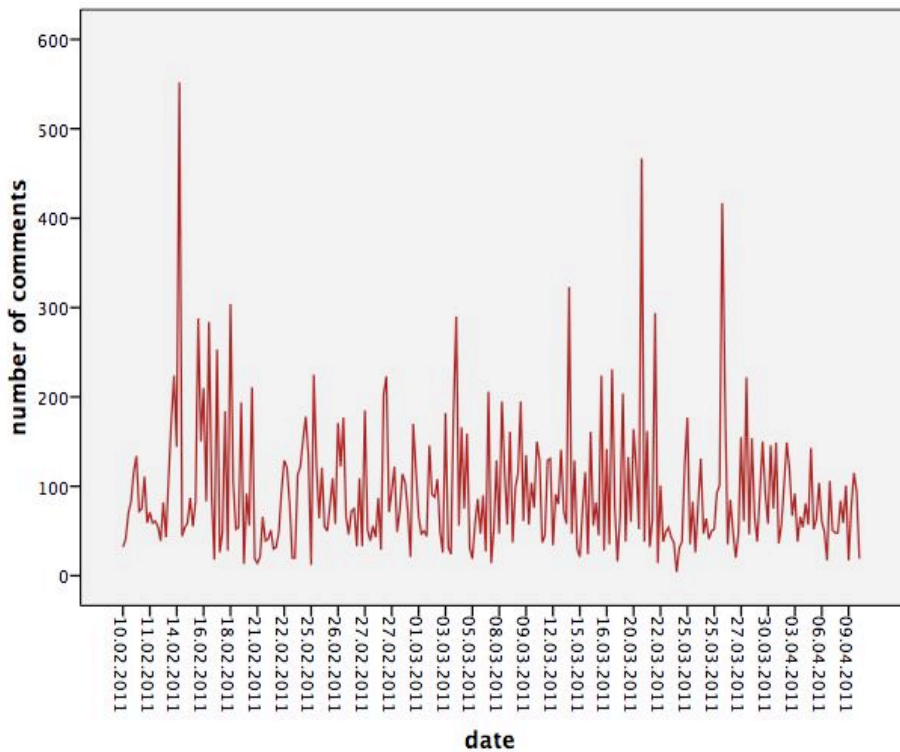


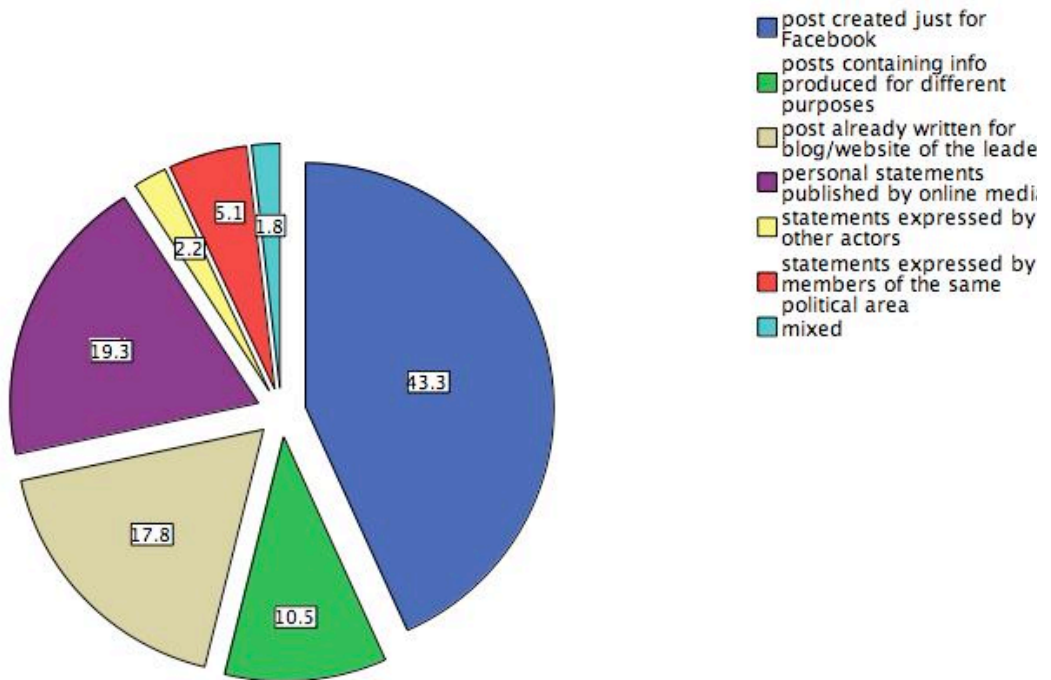
Fig. 1 Comments expressed by users for each of Vendola's Facebook posts

Our analysis focused on three main topics. Firstly we analyzes the adaptation of the political message to the Facebook platform.

We noted the author of the post, the presence of original text explicitly created for Facebook and the source of each posts. Almost all posts are published by Nichi Vendola (95%); only 5% are written by his staff. Overall 90% of the posts are introduced by an original text created specifically for Facebook.

As figure 2 shows most of all posts have been created just for Facebook (43,3%), others mention personal statements (speeches, interviews and comments) published by other media (19,3%). In other cases Vendola use Facebook to publish posts already written for his blog or personal website (17,8%). A small part of posts (10,5%) contains information produced for different purposes. Some posts refer to political statements of members of his reference political area (5,1%); others are statements expressed by others actors such as journalists, opinion leader, politicians (2,2%). In conclusion in 90% of the times Vendola himself is the source of the political messages published in Facebook. Despite Vendola is President of an Italian region this datum confirms Vendola's vocation for national leadership.

Fig. 2 Main sources of the posts.



Secondly we analyzed the content of the posts. National politics is the most recurrent theme (64%), followed by local politics issues (20%). The majority of posts links to an online resource (58%). Most of them link toward online media such as press agencies, newspaper, online tv (36,4%), followed by links referring to Vendola online blog and social media platforms (30,9%). Links toward institutional platforms are present (14,2%). Other links refer to online platforms managed by actors of Vendola's political area (14,8%).

Thirdly we notice the aim of each post. Vendola mainly use his Facebook Like Page to publish political statements concerning political issues (55%), in particular 28% of statements are policy issue and 27% of them are political issue. The topics of political statements are connected to current political affairs within the period examined. For example: nuclear power-plants; Libyan crisis; wind-power promotion; Italian Government political actions. Sometimes he uses Facebook Page to provide information related to his institutional role such (12%). In other cases he signals his participation to public events or protests (7%); sometimes he expresses political opposition toward other political actors (6%). Very rarely (4%) he solicits user for web 2.0 behaviors such as sharing, commenting or creating political contents.

Finally we annotated the number of commentes and likes for each post. The most liked post was published on the Vendola Like Page on 14th February and it arose 3,363 likes and 552 comments. The post contained a Vendola's statement in response to the attack led by the Italian newspaper 'Il Giornale' who decided to publish a private picture of Vendola.

5. Who are the “2.0 Intermediaries”?

We described the role of the “2.0 intermediaries” analyzing the political activities that the members of our panel promoted through their Facebook Profiles. ‘Fabbrica di Nichi’ intermediaries are not traditional party militants and, in most of the cases, they are not even members of a left wing party. They claim to have a peculiar, emotional, relation with Vendola and express trust towards his political role. One of the interviewed people claims that he is politically engaged with the “Fabbrica di Nichi” even if his first goal is not simply spreading Vendola's political message. Fabbrica di Nichi members appear to stand for ‘leftist grass root movement’ values such as: civil rights, opposition against government corruption, extension of minorities’ rights, fight against precarious

jobs. In other words they assume a political role that goes beyond the diffusion of Nichi Vendola political message. Therefore they are involved in a variety of political-civic groups; some of them are online groups, others rooted in every day life. An informant claims:

“In addition to groups where I’m physically engaged (such as “Fabbrica di Nichi”, “Anti-Mafia Association”, “Da Sud”) I joined other groups just to receive information about their work and activities. I consider them as links of the network” (LM).

In most of the cases our intermediaries appear to be keen on politics. Furthermore they use Facebook to publish several contents (text, images, video, events invitations) concerning their hobbies and their private life. Even if it is not our goal to answer one of the main questions of political communication studies, i.e. whether Internet can mobilize or simply reinforce previous interest (Norris, 1999, Don-Yun Chen & Chung-Pin Lee, 2008), our research confirms that, quoting Pippa Norris, “net political activists were already among the most motivated, informed and interested” (Norris 1999).

Moreover, all the users we interviewed refer to a particular appeal that they attribute to “Fabbrica di Nichi”. In particular,

several of them appreciated the innovative approach of Fabbrica in terms of flexibility and lack of traditional party structure. These points seem to set up the overall added value of the Fabbrica. The innovation affects the entire political process including the creation of a young and leftist political frame and the definition of a new youth brand. An informant refers to this innovative approach:

“I prefer to be involved in the Fabbrica because it is more innovative than the other political organizations” (MP).

The innovation is shown as the authentic brand. Participating in Nichi’s Fabbrica is perceived as cool and pioneering. For this reason some informants report a convergence of their private and public spheres:

“I’m involved in Fabbrica’s activities and I want to stress that participating to the Fabbrica’s activities is a strong emotional experience that affects my private life too: Saturday night friends are the same as those with whom you share Fabbrica’s activities during the week” (MP).

Vendola appears to act as “catalyst” who radiates the values and political actions that come from the “Fabbrica”.

“I support Vendola’s political mission because I consider him the fuse that can ignite a political transformation that goes beyond himself. Even if, politically speaking, he is not a new politician, he shows courage” (MP).

One informant published on her Walls a video posted by Nichi Vendola on YouTube supporting a workers’ demonstration against precarious job: “Now is our time, life doesn’t wait” (“Il nostro tempo è adesso!”). She commented in her Facebook status: “Nichi, now is your time too!!! I believe in you...”.

In most cases intermediaries use their profiles to amplify Vendola’s political vision, frequently publishing his political statements or his blog’ posts dealing with themes uncovered by media mainstream (opposition to nuclear power-plants; promotion of wind-power energy; etc.). In other cases they directly publicize Vendola’s forthcoming public meetings or announce his presence on TV talk shows.

Apparently Fabbrica di Nichi’s supporters describe Vendola using terms that evoke the conventional typology of the charismatic leader. In fact the relationship with the leader is not simply one-way and Fabbrica’s activists political positions are not

plainly leveled with Vendola's beliefs. For example an informant expresses in his Facebook Profile his clear criticism towards Vendola's statements during a TV talk show.

6. How do intermediaries use web 2.0 tools?

At a closer investigation of Facebook Walls intermediaries, they appear like a sort of portal, they match political information and activities (Wellman, 2001). Indeed intermediaries use their Facebook Profile to carry out several results: share political news, suggest videos, images or articles, express opinions and comments about political issues, promote cultural events and political demonstrations (and posting images and videos before and after the events that they attend).

In brief they act as a link of a network, selecting news and proposing a sort of political agenda quite different from the one fostered by the mainstream media. At the same time they look at single Facebook friends as a source of a selected information.

“Facebook is becoming a sort of information gatherer.
When I join Facebook I go to Luca's Wall, he is a

‘Fabbrica’ guy who has his own blog. I read his Wall in order to glance at the things he posted. Then I watch www.spinoza.it, then I take a look at the online newspapers headlines. According to what I saw I go out and everyday I choose a different newspaper to buy” (MP).

Another informant considers Facebook “a useful tool to share information and to collect ideas about society” (SP), another reports a similar assessment:

“Nichi Vendola and Bari’s Fabbrica di Nichi Facebook Pages can be useful in order to be informed on current activities and politics; as well as CGIL and FIOM are useful to gather job news” (RS).

Another actor explains the effectiveness of some of their friends in turning attention to problems to that have been cut off by the Government:

“The Government was going to pass an absurd law that raised the disability percentage parameters with the result that even a person with a missing arm was no longer entitled to a number of safeguards. This type of news is not covered by the main newspapers, whereas a friend in Facebook, who fortunately has a contact with

an association that deals with disabled people, can inform you about this " (LM).

Most of the political communication activities carried out by our intermediaries follow a multi-channel strategy. Online contents published in their Facebook Walls come from different online spaces (e.g. website, blog, social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Flickr). For example, an informant (LM) has his own blog that he manages together with a friend, where he published news about the Iranian Revolution and the Tunisian Revolution.

Looking at how users promote events in Facebook or how they publicize meetings, public events, etc. they appear to intuitively adopt advanced marketing strategies. Moreover they seem to know the Internet power-laws and the functioning of the hub's distribution through the web (Barabasi,1999). One claims:

"I have passwords for both Facebook groups, "Fabbrica di Nichi" and "Da Sud". Therefore I can create new events and "spam" them to the whole networks of friends in Facebook" (LM).

Moreover the "Fabbrica di Nichi" intermediaries post in Facebook contents coming from different online platforms and appear to be experts of social media management. They seem to be aware of

their role as ‘spreaders’ of civic and political issues, therefore we propose to call them ‘2.0 intermediaries’.

“Facebook is a tool that helps me to spread ideas against misleading information and to let them circulate” (SPR).

An informant reports the presence of an hidden Facebook group that he calls the ‘task force’ created in order to discuss which contents are going to be officially published on the “Fabbrica di Nichi Roma” Wall. He explains: “We share informations among us and then we decide which news we want to convey in the Facebook bulletin board” (MP).

In brief this use of Facebook reminds Chadwick notion of “digital network repertoires”. The first practice described by Chadwick, “creating, appealing and increasingly convergent forms of online citizen action”, results as the most widespread activity among the “Fabbrica di Nichi” members. During our two months-long survey we observed that intermediaries continuously use their Facebook profile to focus their friends’ attention on topics they consider important in the public debate. In particular they post news about hidden themes that are not in the agenda of the Italian

mainstream media. These topics are: the campaign against the privatization of water, demonstration against public school funding cut-offs; protests against precarious jobs, call for minority civic rights. They use social media tools to awaken public opinion on these specific issues.

For instance an interviewed lady (SP) ceaselessly spreads information about the referendum campaign trying to convince her friends of the urgency to vote. At the same time she lights upon less known topics, such as petitions against the decision to close the regional public centre for women health.

Her activities focuses also on a particular customization of the messages diffused by the social networks. For example she often uses to create personalized invitations (through tagging) directed towards friends that she considers more sensitive about specific issues.

“Fabrizia, Alice, Simona, Flavia, Caterina, Vincenza, Chiara, Giorgia:in case you haven't signed yet I invite you to sign this online petition: Against the law Tarzia Polverini. Save public services on women health - Lazio” (SP).

Finally intermediaries statements confirmed an intense dialogue between online and offline activities (Varnelis, 2008) showing that social online interactions can be totally connected to actions taking place in daily life. An informant refers:

“Online communication is a tool... without online communication we would not be here. Anyway, if you want to transform political participation to good practices these should necessarily take place in offline realm” (SP).

7. Disintermediation or re-intermediation?

At this point one question arises: what is the difference between the communication flow carried out by Vendola and the one promoted by his 2.0 intermediaries?

Our analysis shows that Vendola triggers an high number of user's comments in Facebook and he promotes a two-way communication flow even if there is no dialogue with his fans. On the other hand, the so called “2.0 intermediaries” regularly interact with their friends within their Facebook networks. Indeed they do not simply use social network sites to raise awareness towards

specific issues or to promote events' political participation. Actually they activate "an intimate and mutually communicative relationship" (Coleman, 2005, p.189) that consists of continuously engaging in a dialogue with friends and always answer to their questions, objections and feedback. Even when they propose issues which stress contrasts and political divergences they spend a lot of time listening to their friends (we did not find an unanswered comment). At the same time, since they are so involved in exchanging political thoughts within their networks, intermediaries can be considered influential people. This means that their opinions gain the opportunity to become even more persuasive than ideas expressed by traditional political actors. This happens firstly because they spend a lot of time explaining the meaning of every political demonstration or action promoted by the organization they support (i.e. "Fabbrica di Nichi"). Secondly, last but not less important, intermediaries promote political contents within a trusted network of 'friends', composed of strong and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973). This element explains why the "personal influence" expressed by the "Fabbrica di Nichi" 2.0 intermediaries" could be even stronger than Vendola's direct influence.

Finally a third crucial aspect characterizes the role played by intermediaries: the rise of a communication pattern based on some features of Web 2.0 (horizontal and dialogic communication) that aims at increasing interaction and political participation. Recently Sorice & De Blasio (2010) wondered whether this outcome is a result of the transformation of the political party-form or whether it is one of the consequences of the horizontal and participatory Facebook architecture. Our case study illustrates a political organization transforming itself to enhance its grass root influence. Therefore “Fabbrica di Nichi” experience can be described as something in between a permanent electoral staff and a liquid social movement. In our opinion “Fabbrica di Nichi” experience represents a new type of political organization structured around the concept of “organizational hybridity” (Chadwick, 2007). Chadwick introduces this concept to describe organizations characterized by the collapse of traditional distinctions among political party, interest group and social movements, organizations that integrate several patterns of political action, in particular through the use of the Internet, putting into practice “digital network repertoires of collective action” (Chadwick, 2007, p. 286). In this scenario the two hypotheses mentioned above, one giving prominence to the transformation of the political party-form,

the other mainly focusing on the peculiarity of social media (Sorice & De Blasio), appear to be connected. As it occurred during the Obama 2008 campaign (Cioni & Marinelli, 2010) in “Fabbrica di Nichi” communication we notice the presence of two different flows: on one side the communication strategy is firmly managed by Vendola staff; on the other hand we assist at the empowerment of bottom-up networked public creating a new space for political mobilization. The organizational hybridity promoted by the Internet networks let these two levels finally interact.

8. Concluding remarks

This working paper aims at describing, in a critical perspective, the features of disintermediation process in political communication. We illustrate this process by means of a case study: the analysis of Italian politician Nichi Vendola’s activities in Facebook and, at the same time, the role played as 2.0 intermediaries by the members of the political movement called “La Fabbrica di Nichi”, a social movement widespread in more than 500 Italian cities, inspired by the above mentioned politician. Our analysis reports that Vendola is making an effective use of social media: he promotes civic

participation, despite the fact that he doesn't foster a real dialogue with users. We observed a substantial convergence between the issues proposed by Vendola and those proposed by "Fabbrica" intermediaries, even if it is complex to identify who is introducing each issue. By means of "La Fabbrica di Nichi" activities on the internet, Vendola is able to provide a frame for political participation, a sort of "2.0 political franchising".

In this case study, the organizational hybridity promoted by the Internet (and by social media) fosters the coexistence of two parallel processes: a 'first hand' political communication activated by the political leader and an horizontal communication flow, liven up by networked users as they spontaneously promote, comment and share online political issues.

We can conclude that disintermediation of political communication through social media does not necessarily mean to eliminate mediation roles. On the contrary, we observe the rise of new mediators, seizing politician's messages and redirecting this flow through their online activities (e.g. posting, sharing, tagging, promoting, commenting) within their relational network.

In conclusion, this case study represents an interesting example of a political leader's exploitation of the net's multiplicative power. Through 2.0 intermediaries, who intensively filter political

contents and actively assign new meanings to the leaders' contents and actions, we are witnessing a process of real re-intermediation in political communication.

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Net-based Participation: An Italian Case Study

Donatella Selva³⁵

For the last sixty years democratization has brought to a perpetual struggle between citizens and institutions for the redefinition of policy making process and actors who are legitimated to be involved in (Dahl 1998), and that has been fought also through the use of media. A mediatization process is working on political sphere: media are at the same time working as institution who plays in the political realm with other actors and as communicative space where actors can express (that is called mediatic model of political communication by Mazzoleni 1998), and doing so media influence the logic of the political processes. In short, mediatization changes the way political actors and citizens communicate to one another, creating a sort of “media-centric democracy”, in which media are “frames, object, arena – and sometimes even the subject – of political debate” (Sorice 2011, p. 36).

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I. Political participation and networks

In this context, consensus building and negotiations between citizens and leading classes can be extended to an extra-parliamentarian theatre – typically mass media because they are agents able to provide audiences the possibility to start “processes of engagement with issues and discursive interactions among themselves, either via face-to-face settings or various mediated ones” (Dahlgren 2009, p. 74). The so-defined “issue publics” can use media to access and engage in political agency, expressing and facing social conflicts through dialogue and interactions among themselves, with media and with political institutions.

The existence and resolutions of those conflicts imply a problem of power, or

“the relational capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favor the empowered actor’s will, interest, and values. Power is exercised by means of coercion (or the possibility of it) and/or the construction of meaning on the basis of the discourses through which social actors guide their action” (Castells 2009, p. 10).

In democratic regimes, institutions are legitimized to be in an

asymmetrical position with respect of other political actors because they can use discursive power and coercion aiming to the general collective welfare. A deep crisis of this legitimacy is in place: some scholars talk about “democratic deficit” to describe this situation, which is featured by a failure of democratic performance by governments to meet citizens expectations about what representative democracy means and how it has to work (see for example Norris 2011). That is why scholars talk about a rising anti-parties feelings and citizens disengagement in political sphere.

Maybe citizens learned how they can (at least) try to fill out the democratic deficit through informal ways. They in fact mobilize not just in a traditional way (electoral participation and affiliation or membership to political parties) but in a more fluid and horizontal one, a cause-oriented activism in which people are engaged because of their interest in single issues – which does not implicate a party membership, an ideological affiliation nor an institutional framework (Norris 2007, p. 639). A way to join political discourse is through social movements, modern agencies for promoting social and political change, “through direct action strategies and community building, as well as by altering lifestyles and social identities, as much as through shaping formal policy-making

processes and laws in government” (id., p. 638 – for the same reasons those movements are the main actors of the insurgent politics described in Castells 2009).

If public arena is mediatized, then citizens and social movements has to negotiate their proposal in the spotlight, where power relationships and legitimacy are defined. The same definition of what the label “public” covers is changing by the effect of the development of media technology: publicity means visibility in a despatialized simultaneity, which is not localized anymore but not less concrete because people still experience the existence of a public everyday life, even if through media consumption (Thompson 1995). According to that definition, public sphere has to be intended as a territory where diverse actors discuss plural opinions around issues perceived as relevant for the entire community.

Citizens can participate to the public discussion in form of diverse collective agencies, such as interest groups, informal networks, or non governative organizations. Those represent the sub-politics or the proto-politics, as they are “outside institutional (traditional) politics or liminal with respect to economic system, often in an antagonistic (or simply critical) relationship with consolidated

forms of politics” (Sorice 2011, p. 98). They express values about how they think society and democracy should be by creating “issue linkages” more than ideological and community affiliation, and they can give birth to mobilizing networks (Dahlgren 2009, p. 117).

Among all media, Internet is particularly efficient in helping sub-political groups to communicate and coordinate themselves, primarily because they often are organized in informal networks of social relations, which can be easily translated in conversations and bonds in cyberspace. That symmetry has not been ignored: since the beginning of Internet studies an optimistic vision has guided the study of the relationship between world wide web and politics, following the network metaphore, because new connection technologies seemed to finally let groups of citizens access to political processes as co-producers of the public discourse and policy making, as in an ideal direct democracy adapted to an expanded territorial context (see Castells 1996; Rheingold 2002). Social networking sites, mobile devices, diffusing broad band connection were (and sometimes still are) depicted as technological means to be part of the history – to paraphrase the Us President Barack Obama, whose 2008 campaign is the most effective example in political use of web for electoral purposes.

Technological determinism has revealed to be very unuseful to understand social practices. Although latest revolutions and protest movements in the world were born on line, suggesting a strong correlation between democratization processes and the Internet – in particular its social networking devices – that does not allow us to state that these media can change the social structure of a given community, nor its power relationships. Here I need to clarify that when I talk about the Internet means taking in consideration many kinds of media as many are the possibilities that Internet provides to mediate communication flows among users, among users and texts, and among texts: the process of mediation acquires a central status with respect to the actual medium that supports that process, because media technologies are converging and hybridating in new forms of medial ecology (Lievrouw and Livingstone 2006) – that is clear if we look at webtv's and webradios, but it is still valid for social networking sites and blogs, being all services provided by a mother-platform which is the web. Some considerations have to be pointed out regarding the relationship between new forms of political participation and the role of Internet in mediating them

First, we cannot assume Internet users as all equal for quantity and

quality of consumption styles and that inequality is exactly what a relation of power implies. As Silverstone stated, technology has a political meaning in two senses: it concerns political issues around media technologies, which stress problems of access and regulation, availability and control; and political issues inside media technologies, which means it involves problems of participation and interaction, representation and construction of identities (Silverstone 1999).

On one hand, it basically concerns differences of access to new media technologies, which is commonly called digital divide. Pippa Norris gave a multidimensional definition of this problem, as it implies a global divide – between developed and developing countries, a social stratification – between rich and poor people in a determined country, and a democratic divide – between citizens “who do, and do not, use the panoply of digital resources to engage, mobilize, and participate to public life” (Norris 2001, p. 4). Anyway, having access to digital resources does not necessarily bring to interaction or participation in creative processes. According to Nico Carpentier’s model, there are three kinds of relationship between users and media: access, interaction and participation – the last one defined as co-decision and referring to

content production, content and technology producers' organizations (Carpentier 2007; see in particular De Blasio, Sorice 2010 for adapting this model to political engagement through social networks).

On the other hand, media consumption results from a set of discursive practices by which audiences attribute sense to what they experience in everyday life – as Stuart Hall stated (Davis 2004, p. 63): these practices vary for contexts, social relationships and skills, and constitute the basis for the belonging to an interpretative community or another one (Schrøeder 1994, cited in Sorice 2005, p. 189). So that, it is very difficult to assume that Internet always promotes political engagement, because each member of the diverse audiences is related to particular social contexts and frames, those contributing to determine the meaning of media products in everyday life – which is properly what matters to each one, and even the possible use of media technologies. There are some examples of political participation through the Internet but it is more probable that social media can allow different ways to engage for people who already are involved in political discourse (De Blasio, Sorice 2010).

In addition, for what concerns the relationship between citizens and political actors, the web 2.0 brought forms of

disintermediation in political processes, particularly through social networking platforms (ibid.). Disintermediation refers to the possibility for citizens to have a direct intervention in political activities and dialogue with political agents as parties or unions (Sorice 2011, p. 107), once the only ones deputed to filter and articulate grassroots demands (Cotta et al. 2008). We can list some examples of on line activism from the simple expression of consensus or subscription of causes, to on line mobilizing call to action or the construction of a website. Therefore, it is better to talk about re-intermediation, a process of “transformation of political mediation into horizontal and “dialogical” communication styles” (De Blasio, Sorice 2010, p. 22): according to that definition, Internet plays a double role as medium to access politics and public sphere and as “mediatized publics”, multiple on line places where people share opinions and knowledge about relevant public issues (Boyd 2007, p. 2).

Far to be forgotten, political parties and newsmedia’s primacy in defining public agenda has to be reconsidered: because more people can produce and publish information, today we face with “multisector online public spheres”, as “certain groups may require a separate space where they can work out internal issues

and/or cultivate a collective identity” (Dahlgren 2005, p.152). Internet’s affordances are surely related to citizens’ empowerment for many reasons (Dahlgren 2009): for example by using the Internet, groups can in some way escape central institutional control better than by using other media – and maybe that is why Internet played an important role in connecting and mobilizing North African peoples against authoritarian regimes.

The following case study is particularly useful to describe and exemplify these concepts. Rete29Aprile has been carrying out an important advocacy function, with the explicit aim of raising the public debate about an issue it believed was of general interest, against the government’s framing of that issue. At the same time, it can not be fully understood with the category of advocacy group: its kind of engagement, structure, functioning and resources are closer to those of social movements (see Della Porta 2009). Many of these kind of collective actors are populating political debate, so the case of Rete29Aprile can be an useful lens to look at processes of policy-making and agenda building (Sorice 2009).

For that reason I interviewed three activists who contributed to this mobilization since the earlier period and who are in somehow representing three intervention areas of Rete29Aprile: one is

particularly involved in institutional relations; another one in theorizing and put in practice alternative ways of protest; and the latter one is active in bridging with other movements and groups who mobilized against the government. All the three activists are researchers in some Italian universities and have been elected by colleagues as representatives in coordination board of Rete29Aprile (respectively in Salento, Siena and Catania universities).

During the interviews they explained me the very reasons and functioning of their mobilization; in addition, I referred to their official website, in particular the policy documents and videos sections. In the next section I am reporting what I have been told.

2. Rete29Aprile: an Italian case study

Rete29Aprile (literally, “Network of April 29th”) was officially born in 2010, when researchers from several Italian universities finally met each other in Milan. Before that day, they only used to communicate through the Internet without any physical meeting, and after that they started to mobilize – as if they were aca-activists,

to cite Henry Jenkins' famous self-definition as tv series aca-fan (Jenkins 2006).

Since the previous Autumn, one of those researchers created a website where he published information about the Bill of University Reform that was going to be presented by the government – represented in particular by the University Minister Maria Stella Gelmini, and discussed in Parliament. One of his first article was titled “Let’s focus our attention to the Gelmini Bill”, as to underline the necessity for all the researchers, students, and professors, to involve in this issue. That document pointed out that the Gelmini Bill was trying to change Italian university system by introducing a private participation in each board of directors, who was contemporary acquiring more power upon scientific and financial issues (from the document “An idea of the University”, <http://www.rete29aprile.it/>). With this norm, the Italian government was trying to reform the university giving students and researchers more chances to encounter the labour market: private investors had to be involved in designing academy’s strategies so that they could produce useful high-qualified employees. This point, strictly linked with financial cuts, was instead perceived by students and researchers as an attempt to undermine the university public service – which means not only the ideal concept of public,

free and open university, as Rete29Aprile's claim, but also the possibility to rely on public resources for conducting research and teaching activities that might not always encounter companies' direct interests. Rete29Aprile activists report that government was conducting a press campaign to negativize the whole university citing some cases of waste of public money, inefficiency and malfunction, recommendations and corruption: in their own words, government was trying to meet with public acceptance by depicting an unfriendly and wasteful university system, in order to let the bill pass without problems.

The reform was very unpopular also for students. They have been the first to mobilize against the minister Gelmini's cuts. Since 2008 they have created a movement called Onda Anomala ("abnormal wave") in order to protest: it was very innovative in the Italian context, because it adopted ways of protest such as the creation of a fake website of the Ministry of University (see De Blasio and Sorice 2010) and open-air lectures (Caruso and Giorgi 2009). Students' protests reemerged one year after, in Autumn 2009, diffused in various groups that linked with Rete29Aprile in the 2010 wave of protests. For the interviewed activists, the Onda movement was a "missed opportunity for the university establishment" because they say it was a chance for rectors and

professors to link with civic society and to protect the public university from government's cuts. This silence, associated with the progression of the reform bill procedures, prompted researchers to mobilize against government, who seemed to ignore citizens' demands, and against an internal enemy, the rectors, responsible for the malfunctioning and money waste but not punished.

As Onda Anomala already did, Rete29Aprile proposes a reform which involves the whole system of the university management: that means it do not limit itself to category's demands as an union would typically do. Researchers' official union (Coordinamento Nazionale Ricercatori Universitari – Cnru) is very uneffective to promote their own point of view about the reform because they say it works as an oligarchy which has no interaction with its base. Activists refused some proposals by unions and government to cease protests: “we were not trying to obtain something for researchers, we were fighting for the institutional system of the public university in Italy”. To witness this openness, Rete29Aprile created a network of advocacy groups to demonstrate in public squares: it has bridged with students, professors, and temporary workers (so called “precari” – precarious), but also radical left unions and other extra-parliamentarian formations.

According to Rete29Aprile's strategy, public opinion is a political battleground: activists' awareness about the role of influencing public opinion is clear as they say they used news media and Internet as a cushion to influence public agenda building, and by this way the policy-makers' agenda. Their first aim in mobilizing was in fact to bring back the reform in the spotlight, against government's attempts not to create a public field of negotiation with university stakeholders. For example, as other groups of protest, Rete29Aprile wrote many times to the minister but they did not receive any answer. This situation is confirmed by a letter they sent to the President of Republic, Giorgio Napolitano: in this letter they listed their point of view about the reform and denounced the fact that the government nor the other parties accepted a dialogue with them. The President answered this letter inviting the government to involve researchers and students in the process of policy-making³⁶ and he formerly invited a delegation of Rete29Aprile during the Autumn protest: in that occasion, as activists who were there report, he said he was very worried about the distance between politicians and citizens' reality.

³⁶ http://www.corriere.it/politica/10_agosto_05/napolitano-universita-ricercatori_gel45986-a096-11df-bc17-00144f02aabe.shtml.

The first step in the process of mobilizing was the creation of two newsletters, alternative to the official Unilex, which was the traditional information channel for university workers about bureaucracy and legal issues concerned in their job. That newsletter was not enough anymore for some of them who were interested in reflecting about their role in the university system and in the country as a whole: they moved to a free newsletter platform and created a “coordination” list, which was addressed only to a small group of two elected representatives for each joined university, and another one named “base” or “wide” because it was used to spread news and decisions taken by coordination members to the whole community of researchers – but it was open to anyone who would participate to the discussion. Then they published a website (<http://www.rete29aprile.it/>) created a YouTube channel and a Facebook page.

As their name suggests, they are a network. Their structure is horizontal and democratic: each university researcher can elect two representatives, who has to participate to the coordination meeting and on line discussions and then report to his colleagues what has been decided there. They define themselves as network of researchers because the organization started from people who shared the same position in the university, but they expanded

involving other categories such as students, professors, and temporary workers: the constitution of Rete29Aprile is based on informal social networks that joined the movement little by little. An interviewed activist declared that probably Rete29Aprile would not have been created if it was not for the Internet: in his own words, Internet is the “natural” place where information can be diffused and decisions can be worked out; that happens because Internet enables a many-to-many model of communication among people who are not in the same place at the same time (Slack and Wise 2006), just as researchers are. That feature of the Internet suggests it is a bias: like in Innis’ theorization, Internet facilitates a decentralized organization of power (Innis 1951, cit. in Slack and Wise 2006, p. 148) but as said before, participative potential provided by the Internet does not mean a necessary participation. Internet provides researchers instruments to serve several functions: through the diverse on line platforms they can subscribe and communicate each other sharing news; deliberate and define the strategy to follow; coordinate protest actions and demonstrations; and be known by the general audience. This last point is very important for them: as I anticipated before, activist researchers are asking the government to listen. They do not refuse the Gelmini reform because they want to maintain the status quo:

they are instead aware that a reform is necessary but they think that it is not sufficient because it does not reform the whole system.

Here we see two souls of this movement, one opposite and other propositive. It is important to inform public opinion that something is happening without the consent of people who probably best know the issue politicians are talking about, and so show their opposition through public demonstrations; but it is also important to let citizens know what they are proposing as an alternative reform of the university. The demand to leading class is both procedural (about discussion, responsibility and accountability) and substantive (related to future, education, inspiring ideals).

They have few instruments to obtain their aim and this is what distinguishes them from other organizations. In other words, Rete29Aprile has the typical aim of advocacy groups with the exception that it can not exercitate pressure on policy makers but rising the public debate about the reform, because it does not have resources to use – as for example money, influence, media relations (Cotta et al. 2009). For that reason, they seek “traditional” media coverage: in fact they define “mass media” or “traditional media” all the news media institutions both off and on line, characterized by addressing to a mainstream audience and high codified working

rules. They did not have any possibility to access these institutions, and they were not able to count on quantitative mobilization, so they tried to catch their attention by using unconventional forms of protest. Besides the participation to public demonstrations – often organized by other groups, typically students, because they are much more than researchers, they boycotted university system by declaring themselves unavailable to give lectures (creating an on line register of “unavailable” ones) and occupied the roofs of some faculties in Rome. Aca-activists say that was an example of research-action because they used what they have been studying during their university career to conquer news value: as a social geographer, an activist chose this form of public protest because it does not need a large number of people but it perfectly achieves the attention of press and audience – maybe better than road blocks that could be annoying (Tabusi 2011).

Rete29Aprile first chose the roof of the Faculty of Architecture using Google Maps: starting from the Italian Parliament, Palazzo Montecitorio, they moved to the first visible roof around there and they found that one. They wanted to communicate the “sense of the distance” between institutional politics (and institutions in general, press included) and active citizens reporting an urgent social demand. It is not only a geographical distance but also a time-lag

from the moment citizens raise a question to the moment politicians answer, linked with an empathetic distance – let's say symbolic distance – from the government car to the stairs taking to the roof where citizens are (ibid.). In the words of this “active theorist”, “if you climb a roof you show you are upon there, you are more important, and that university does not mean four walls which usually close people inside, but it means heads, brains, minds, fantasy of those who are upon the roof” (ibid.).

Rete29Aprile activists report there has been a communicative circuit from the Internet based participation to the traditional media coverage that has brought back audience to the on line headquarters. Some researchers joined Rete29Aprile only when the movement has begun to be covered by news media institutions: as they obtained visibility media was operating as social pressure to get involved for those who shared the same problems but also for the general audience. News media institutions and politicians went to their roof: in Thompson's words, they won the struggle for visibility because they obtained public acknowledgement as soon as they won the coverage of the mediated public sphere (Thompson 1995, p. 247).

In their attempts to influence public agenda is implied a clear vision of public opinion: if public opinion knew what government is trying

to do with public university, it would certainly react and impede the approval of the Reform bill. That is as to say that citizens are not well informed about this issue, probably because government is framing it in uncorrect ways: spreading information and knowledge are seen as preconditions to reach a critical mass, which can contrast government's decisions because it has to be listen.

3. Some conclusions

Italian researchers lost their fight: the reform has passed in Parliament, despite Rete29Aprile also proposed amendments through opposition parties. As one can easily notice, researchers have never refused traditional politics but instead always wanted an interaction with it: some political actors, both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary, accepted this dialogue but government did not. They are somehow following a “utopian realism” approach: as in Giddens' statement, social movements can aim to utopian horizons, trying to promote a change in the society and transform it in a better way, but they also have to match against reality to get what they want, in a perspective that “recognizes the unavailability

of power and does not consider its use as damaging per se. Power, in a wider sense, is a mean to do things” (Giddens 1990, p. 160).

If asked to make a realistic assessment of their political experience, they are partially satisfied. On the one hand, they obtained the publicity of the university issue by imposing it in the newsmedia and public agenda – “punching the wall of silence built by news institutions” as one activist said. On the other hand, even if traditional media finally covered their protest, they did not succeed in explaining their point of view about the reform: they noticed media logic imposed strict rules in timing and presentation of argomentations, so they could not manage the situation in the best manner. They wanted the possibility to explain the reform, pointing out what was wrong and what could be implemented, but they are quite disappointed of the quality of the coverage they received. Media tended to simplify the conflict by depicting them as students or temporary workers because this could have a higher dramatic potential, touching generational gaps or sustainment issues. That is why Rete29Aprile created some independent news channels on the Internet – in particular, the website and the YouTube channel, which streams videos explaining the reform they shot on the roofs.

Rete29Aprile is continuing publishing documents and videos on its web platforms and following the process of rewriting of universities' statutes. Its activity is now focusing on dialogue with such political parties who have been most friendly, trying to influence the administrative evolution of the reform. This story seems to exemplify a process that is becoming more and more typical nowadays: groups of citizens interacting and coordinating themselves on the web create a mediatized space of public debate around issues they are interested in, often in contrast with politicians and traditional politics. The proto-political engagement (Dahlgren 2009) can be aimed to build public agenda and conducted to access policy-making processes through the mediation of traditional institutions such as mass media and political parties.

Stringa describes this dynamics putting in comparison traditional and web politics – the definitions she uses underline the importance of media in shaping the way politics is made:

“Italian politics is a property politics, in a technical sense; the law of the web is to share. Sharing versus ownership. Movementism versus currentism. Italian traditional politics, including those on the web, demands leadership and chiefs. Web politics, MoveOn based, first builds big opinion

movements and generates issues, then finds someone who capitalizes them” (Stringa 2011, p. 123).

Traditional politics, in particular political parties, are now facing a critical situation: on one hand they are affected by a legitimacy crisis because of the increasing perceived distance between representatives and electorate in contemporary democracies, which can bring to anti-political sentiments and disengagement (Dahlgren 2009; Norris 2011; Sorice 2011).

On the other hand, they are asked to redefine their role in filtering and articulating citizens’ demands (Cotta et al. 2008), primarily because they are more complex and fragmented (Giddens 1990) but also because citizens have increased their instruments to submit them, thanks to the Internet. By the push of social movements, “politics becomes not only an instrumental activity for achieving specific goals, but also an expressive activity, a way of asserting, within the public sphere, group values, ideals and belonging” (Dahlgren 2005, p. 155).

This context is suggesting we are living a wider public sphere, where multiple points of view can be expressed and have equal opportunities to contribute to public discourse. As Rete29Aprile’s case demonstrated, an increased pluralism in public sphere,

stimulated by the Internet, does not correspond to pluralism in the whole media system – including among them also on line versions of traditional newspapers, televisions and so on.

In addition, that pluralism does not mean we are living in a more democratic society: as some observe, this is not free from risks of iperpluralism and fragmentation, where everybody speaks and no one listen to each other, making a social interaction and a productive synthesis almost impossible, and in practice affecting the deliberative character of democracy (Dahlgren 2005; Della Porta 2009). As Higgins stated, “effective participation in the public sphere depends as much on access to the apparatus of media as the ears of formal political power” (Higgins 2008, p. 142). Power relationships seem to be maintained in the fight between institutional frames and citizens’ utopian realism: although public agenda is negotiated between media, political system and advocacy grassroots groups, and the last ones are empowered by a wider access to public sphere, the evidence of Rete29Aprile shows that policy-making is not yet an inclusive process of sharing.

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Part II
TV, Press and Beyond

“Family Picture”. Interaction of Political PR and Media in Portraying Private Issues of Czech Politicians

Denisa Kasl Kollmannova³⁷

“Private life of politicians has never been so visible”, stated James Stanyer in 2007 (Stanyer 2007: 72). In the Western democracies is the image-making and “packaging” of politicians (Franklin 2004) merely an established and professionalized form of political PR. In order to present to wide public a positive, friendly and emotional image, politicians started to present themselves accompanied by their family members – wives and kids in a family-friendly environment. Private life of politicians became a part of “political package” (Franklin 2004), an integral part of politician’s image, promoted mainly by the media to the public. According to John Corner (2003: 73), private sphere, such as personal CV, home,

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friends, family etc. creates the political action side by side with the sphere of political institutions and processes, such as political party and governance. The image of leader is comprised though from his/hers physical appearances as well as from his/her ability to communicate political messages, and creates “public personality” (in Corner – Pels 2003: 74).

The image of privacy, though, is not only a “natural” matter³⁸: it has been designed and made-to-measure by established communication professionals (Scammell 1996) and often is a part of professionalized strategic reputation management. The question, whether details from private and family lives of politicians and their personal biography should or should not be incorporated as a part of political and (at least) non-tabloid media communication, is being widely discussed (see e.g. Corner – Pels 2003). Keith M. Dowding (1991, 1996) has discussed widely the concept of “rational choice” and its relation to the political power. However we can argue that there is no more a strict differentiation from personalized and more irrational “body politics” to ratio-based intellectual “briefcase politics” (Meyer 2002), but the concept of

³⁸ For the dichotomy of private vs. public (oikos and polis) see e.g. Plato’s Statesman and its reflection in Arendt’s *The Human Condition*, Ehlstains *Public Man, Private Woman* or Bourdieu’s *Theory of Action*.

“lifestyle politics” (Bennett 1998) is taking over in general political-mediated discourse. As van Zoonen and Holtz-Bacha proved (2000), the hybrid personal and political performance is a widely accepted format of political communication.

From the standpoint of media and communication studies, the problematic of portraying private matters of politicians is widely examined and discussed. Dörner (2001) uses the term *politainment* for merging politics and entertainment, following Postman’s *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (1985). Liesbet van Zoonen concept of entertainization of political news stories (soap opera politics, see van Zoonen 2004) became widely influential, however, in interaction of politics and popular culture Storey (2010) shows his long-term in this field. The concept of *celebritization* of politics, as predicted in 1960’s by D. J. Boorstin (1992: 52) and Lang – Lang (television personality, in Lang – Lang 2002), has been revised and widely examined by Rojek (2001), Turner (2004), Dörner – Schicha (2008) among others.

It is not only the media interest in publicizing the savoury stories from politician’s lives, but it is also a result of strategic reputation management, which serves the media information and creates events in order to get a front-page story. Christina Holtz-Bacha (2004) argues that in Germany, private side of politician’s lives has

been regarded as journalistic taboo, but with the relocation of the political and media centre from Bonn to Berlin (and we can add with the unification of Germany and change of socio-political climate) the relationship between media and politicians has changed towards the rising role of “private” information and image-politics represented both by the media and politicians. Holtz-Bacha (2004) puts personalisation, humanisation and privatisation as political image strategies. Holtz-Bacha uses the example of German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to show the usage “of the private as a political strategy” (2004:7), which was supported by his wife Doris Schröder-Kopf.

As we have seen on the example of Germany, the wider perception of privacy and political communication is always closely bound to each state’s socio-cultural milieu. It’s necessary to mention wide intercultural differences in each country’s possession of what is private and what is public, to which point it is acceptable crossing the borders of privacy (e.g. doorstepping mentioned in ethical code by BBC, 2011³⁹), and also other culturally-bound values and norms, such as tolerance to

³⁹ See BBC. Editorial Guidelines.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/page/guidelines-privacy-doorstepping>. Retrieved May 11th, 2011

extramarital relationships, index of masculinity, power distance and other (see online source of Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions⁴⁰). The Czech cases of politicians Václav Klaus, Václav Havel, Mirek Topolánek and Jiří Paroubek (see Kasl Kollmannová 2010) proved that the anatomy of political sexual scandal (Thompson 1990) in the Czech Republic are neither comparable with the U.S. standards set by Clinton-Lewinsky affair (see Foerstel 2001) nor with British, but can be compared with France, Italy, Germany or Hungary (see Stanyer 2004).

In the Czech Republic as in one of the post-communistic countries the socio-cultural situation differs of course from the Western democracies, but also due to relatively low religious rate on the one hand and high divorce rate on the other, it also differs from other post-communistic countries in the Central and Eastern Europe⁴¹. During the communistic regime (1948-89), there were hardly any images or information about private life of Czech, resp. Czechoslovak politicians published. No image of local politicians' home, children or vacation has ever been published on the pages of

⁴⁰ See Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, comparing Czech Republic and other states:
http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_dimensions.php?culture1=22&culture2=34 . Retrieved May 11th, 2011

⁴¹ See <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ci/bgn/3237.htm>

few, strictly censored or auto-censored dailies. To add the “warm and friendly” attitude of the political figures (humanisation, see above), images of children, greeting politicians with flowers, politicians having discussion with young pioneers or listening to the merely anonymous women (workers, members of Women’s union or young mothers, celebrating International Women’s Day) were published⁴². The first politician after communist era⁴³, who became publicly known with his wife standing beside him, was Vaclav Havel and his wife Olga.

This article concentrates on the later development of professionalization and institutionalization of specific forms of political marketing and PR, helping to manage and create a certain media image of private life of selected Czech leading politicians. It uses the method of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1992, van Dijk 1998, 2008a,b) to explore the meta-textual connotations and

⁴² See qualitative content analysis of the Czechoslovak daily newspaper *Mladá fronta*, January – October 1989, exploring the images of politicians (Kasl Kollmannová 2010: 56-65). The change in portraying foreign politicians accompanied by their wives to the official ceremonies began with the Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachov and his wife Raisa, who began “perestroika” also in the field of mediated private life.

⁴³ It has to be stated that a strong meme of a politician representing a wider family picture has been in the Czech, resp. Czechoslovak political culture present since the very first president of the Czechoslovak Republic, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. Not only accepted Masaryk the surname of his wife Charlotta Garrigue (U.S. descent), but he intuitively developed an image consisting of photographs or films featuring him riding a horse, talking to his children, or discussing with his close friends, who happened to be influential intellectuals (see XY).

socio-political context of the mediated texts (both visual and textual representations). The main hypothesis is: “The media and PR interact in portraying, framing and setting the agenda of private matters of politicians to pursue their goals: gain voters or readers.” However in this article just a short derivation from the whole analysis is presented, concentrating on two case-studies of distinct approaches to strategic reputation management in private life of two Czech political leaders and rivals of two opposition parties, Mr Mirek Topolánek (Civic Democrats), and Mr Jiří Paroubek (Social Democrats). The analysed term concentrates on the past five years from 2005-2010, since the election campaign in 2006 has been the first when major Czech political parties widely accepted the concepts and principles of political marketing, including the presentation of privacy and image-making of political leaders (see detailed analysis of political marketing in the Czech Republic in Matušková 2009).

Case Study 1: Mirek Topolánek: Family as a source of political legitimacy

The first case of family background as a strategic political communication in the Czech Republic has been used by later Prime

Minister Mirek Topolánek, who has printed his whole family on pre-election billboards as early as in 1996.⁴⁴ Despite Topolánek's election success, the usage of family as a source of political integrity and power legitimacy has not been widely accepted by the majority of the politicians, mainly because of the possible exploitation of this topic by tabloid media and possible loss of trustworthiness, as happened in the case of President Václav Havel.⁴⁵ However Mirek Topolánek has been continuously building his political PR supported by his wife Pavla, who has been his employed as his assistant in Senate (1996-2003) and then employed (2003-5) as a communication manager at New Deal Communications⁴⁶, a Czech PR company linked to the lobbyist and friend of Mirek Topolánek, Marek Dalík. The campaign has not been yet run by American advisors but has been widely influenced by American-style campaigning, personalizing the leader Mirek

⁴⁴ The Senate campaign ran in fall 1996 in the region of Northern Moravia. „Properly functioning family is the core of my programme,” claimed Topolánek ((tnt). *Podnikatel Topolánek je na plakátech s celou rodinou*. *Mladá fronta DNES*, 24. 10. 1996, p. 4.).

⁴⁵ Václav Havel widowed in 1996 and in January 1997 married popular Czech comedian actress, Dagmar Veškrnová. The marriage has not been “approved” by the public and mainly led to the loss of his political popularity by 25% (for detailed analysis see Kasl Kollmannová 2010: 92-95). The Havel's cause has been compared to Clinton-Lewinsky case in Czech media, although there has not been a comparable substance (see Kasl Kollmannová 2010: 83-97).

⁴⁶ See personal CV of Pavla Topolánková <http://www.topolankova.cz/zivotopis.html>, Retrieved: 08-02-2010

Topolánek and creating his strong, conservative image as a responsible husband and father of three children. His wife Pavla has accompanied Mirek Topolánek during the road-show one month prior to the election (see Matušková 2006).

Shortly after the election, an extra-marital affair of soon-to-be prime minister Mirek Topolánek with an attractive MP Lucie Talmanová was revealed by the tabloid daily Aha!⁴⁷ The affair was soon confirmed and Pavla Topolánková began her own political carrier as a candidate to the Senate elections (fall 2006) for the opposition party Suverenita, which has been quoted by the media as “revenge” and Pavla Topolánková has been nicknamed as “Hillary from Ostrava” (North-Moravian capital). However the electorate presumably did not see her political legitimacy strong enough to be elected as a senator. Mirek Topolánek began a complicated, widely medialized and criticised divorce process, which ended in 2010 before the election campaign. Topolánek’s communication strategy towards the media and journalists has not been “professional”, Topolánek has clearly lost his temper many times, including a physical assault on tabloid photographer taking picture of Topolánek, Talmanová and their new-born baby Nicolas

⁴⁷ <http://www.ahaonline.cz/clanek/musite-vedet/2810/topolaneck-nevera-s-krasnou-poslankyni.html> Retrieved 06-17-2006

in 2008⁴⁸. However, he has conducted a minor press conference to announce the birth of his son Nicolas and has given the media pictures of his wedding to Lucie Talmanová in 2010. Topolánek's divorce and extramarital affair has been an attractive developing story for various sorts of media – tabloid, dailies, lifestyle magazines, political opinion editorials and even foreign press, when naked Topolánek was pictured in Silvio Berlusconi's villa in 2009⁴⁹. However, Topolánek's divorce and love affair has not primarily lead to his political decline, despite his career has ended after publishing another private part of a journalistic interview with anti-Semitic connotations.

Case Study 2: Jiří Paroubek: Private life as a form of personalized PR

Jiří Paroubek was a leader of ruling party ČSSD (Czech Social-Democratic Party) and from 2005-2006 Prime Minister after Stanislav Gross had to resign due to financial scandal. However, as a newly appointed Prime Minister, his private image was badly

⁴⁸ Exclusively: Topolánek hit photographer, protecting his son Nicolas. Online. Retrieved: <http://tn.nova.cz/zpravy/domaci/topolaneck-uderil-fotografu-pesti-chranil-syna-nicolase-exkluzivne.html> 05-10-2011

⁴⁹ BBC News. Berlusconi fury over naked photos. Retrieved: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8084694.stm> 05-10-2011

damaged due to massive media coverage, sarcastically commenting his wife's physical appearance and both Mr and Mrs Paroubek's fashion style (see Kasl Kollmannová 2010: 108-117). Paroubek reacted firstly by suing some of the media and secondly by arranging professional photo-session of his wife by Czech celebrity and fashion photographer Jakub Ludvík. By using the tactic of demarketing ((Sidney – Rook 1999: 82, in this context is demarketing used to minimize media coverage on private life) and dissimulation (according to Thompson 1990 – substitution or replacement of certain topic by creating different PR contents) Paroubek tried either not to communicate about his private life and marriage, or to manage the media content according to his needs (e.g. interviewing his wife only by e-mail, publishing only Jakub Ludvík's photographs, publishing a PR book "Rendez-vous with Mrs. Zuzana,"⁵⁰ written by Czech Musician and Music manager Ladislav Štáidl, known for his connections to the former communist establishment. Despite ČSSD hired professional American-based political advisors Penn, Schoen and Berland⁵¹ and

⁵⁰ Štáidl, Ladislav (2006). *Rendez-vous s paní Zuzanou*. Ladislav Štáidl: Praha

⁵¹ ČSSD hired american experts again. Retrieved 01-05-2011 <http://www.novinky.cz/domaci/137257-cssd-si-na-krajske-volby-opet-najala-americke-experty.html>

created a spectacular campaign, it lost the election by 3% difference to the winning Civic Democratic Party.⁵²

One year after the election loss, shortly before the Summer holiday and Czech National holiday in July, when most of the people leave for holidays, a sexual scandal of Jiří Paroubek and his interpreter Petra Kováčová (attractive blond single woman, two decades his junior) has been revealed by Czech tabloid Blesk (by a photograph “from anonymous reader” picturing the pair at the Brussels airport). Five days after the publication of this information Jiří Paroubek has officially declared divorce and announced Mrs Kováčová as his official partner, despite his wife Zuzana has not confirmed the divorce arrangement (Kasl Kollmannová 2010: 122). Petra Kováčová has become a frequent topic in media content and started to play visible role in her self-presentation, giving interviews, attending PR events and revealing details from her relationship with Jiří Paroubek (e.g. “the most sexy part of a man is his brain”⁵³ became a widely used socio-cultural meme (see Kasl Kollmannová 2010: 128).

Jiří Paroubek became a first Czech top politician, who has widely and thoroughly used professional public relations to promote his

⁵² <http://www.volby.cz/pls/ps2006/ps>

⁵³ Malinda, Jan. Čím mě přitahuje Paroubek? Mladá fronta DNES, 7. 7. 2007, p. 1.

private life – from enhancing the media coverage on his partnership, to creating press conferences and photo-shoots during his wedding, and turning the christening of his new-born child into a mediated event. Mrs. Kováčová-Paroubková has publicly declared her professional communication management incl. her private life has been operated by Mr Jaromír Soukup, owner of one of the biggest Czech Media agencies Médea⁵⁴. However, despite Paroubek's self-promotion, pro-active PR, “quick and fair divorce” (according to Paroubek's words⁵⁵), gaining a “trophy-wife” and complete style make-over, which included pink cashmere sweaters instead of former three-piece suits, did neither lead to election success, nor to steady political carrier of a former Prime Minister.

The aim of this article was to show on the examples of two case studies of leading Czech politicians individual cases of interaction between professionalised political communication and PR and media. The method of critical discourse analysis was used to show

⁵⁴ Médea also serves to several political parties, incl. Social Democrats, as a Media agency – in media buying during the election campaigns. See HN: Paroubkové radí Soukup, dřívější spolupracovník strany zelených. Retrieved: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8084694.stm> 05-01-2011

⁵⁵ Zpráva ČTK. 12. 9. 2007. On-line, dostupná z: http://www.tyden.cz/rubriky/lide/rozvod-paroubkovych-trval-dvacet-minut_22100.html.

both the macro- and microstructures of the media texts, covering private issues of politicians, however, for more detailed analysis see Kasl Kollmannova 2010. The main hypothesis has been partially approved - the media and PR interact in portraying, framing and setting the agenda of private matters of politicians to pursue their goals, however, setting the agenda or framing of private issues in a certain manner does not automatically lead to gaining voters or supporters. It does, though, attract readers and create media hype – the private issues have been specifically in the case of Jiří Paroubek widely repeated and mediatised in various media formats and contents. Political news is being framed as private or romantic. To the media, private life of politicians serves as a great topic for news story – it enables the media to publish romantic or „soap-opera“ narrative in political news. Creating „ideal“ private life and media buzz does not automatically mean getting support and trust from the voters. However, private life issues management can be an important tool to intra-political relations and negotiations. For the cultural specification of the Czech Republic it can be declared, that a divorce after several decades of marriage or an extramarital affair does not automatically mean threat to political carrier of an individual, though sexual scandal is widely used among politicians as a defamation strategy in media communication.

In the Czech Republic personal reputation management and campaigning are thus closely tied together with unclear financing, which can be compared with the concept of berlusconization (see Plasser – Plasser 2002: 74 and Mancini – Mazzoleni 1995). However, detailed study of the structure of political power, media and financing of campaigning is yet to be examined.

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Berlusconization Process of Politics in Turkey: Political Parties, Individual Politicians and Media

Nigar Degirmenci⁵⁶

As Campus noted, in the early 1990s, Italian politics has changed its outlook completely and now appears dominated by highly personalized campaigns (Campus, 2010:6) and summarized the literature on the most effective strategies for the shaping and reinforcement of leadership image through the media as; (Campus, 2010:4-5)

- 1) Building appealing image
- 2) Establishing a direct an emotional link with the voters
- 3) Creating media events
- 4) Going personal

In this study, I follow her classification in order to design a comparative study of Berlusconization of politics in Turkiye in the manner of individual politicians and political parties, particularly of Berlusconi and Erdoğan. At the end, I will propose a model via what I have got throughout the paper to understand how

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“Berlusconization of politics” works and what are the possible consequences in the system. As Mughan points out, the earliest manifestations of personalization emerged in the early 1960s (Mughan, 2000:3) in Britain, and moreover in Türkiye, Erdoğan is not the first (and will not be the last) person who has ever attempted personalizing politics. For example, after the Turkey’s first wave of democratization occurred in 1946, with competitive elections, Menderes (former PM, 1950-1960) became a very popular leader. When there were various accusations about his government in 1955, he asked for personal vote of confidence after the resignation of the each member of his cabinet members, and he got it. This example shows us a very early form of personalization of politics in Türkiye⁵⁷. From those days to today, there were many political leaders whom could be the subject of a personalization of politics study but none of them would resemble Berlusconi’s way as Erdoğan did due to conjuncture (domestic and international political life) and Erdoğan’s personality and opportunities (media,

⁵⁷ Menderes government was accused by corruption and guilty off the events of 6-7th September. Menderes appeared before the Group on 29 November and the dissidents offended the government angrily. As a result of sharp criticisms Menderes accepted to resign. Mükerrerem Sarol’s original idea (also known as the Sarol Formula) came to Menderes’s help. Menderes allowed the members of the cabinet to resign and sought vote of confidence for himself. Sarol Formula worked and only nine voted against. (...)The total domination of Menderes over the party was approved with this incident.” (Özçetin, 2004:74)

news technologies, capital, the communities (Fethullah Gülen and others).

Term of Berlusconization

There are several suffix have been used to create new words by neologism of Berlusconi:

Table 1: The Categorization of Meanings of the Neologisms of Berlusconi (Sources: Clark, 2005, Telegraph 2005, Duhamel 2010, Samuel, 2010, Prevost, 2005)

The Neology	Genre	Short Exp. Berlusconi (B.)
Antiberlusconisme	Noun	Negative propaganda about B.
berlusconardo	Noun-Adj.	Someone who is in the close circle of B.
Berlusconite	Noun	A condition, illness or syndrome of someone who is excessively optimistic, who tends to distort fact and reality to paint a rosier picture.
Berluschesese	Adjective/Verbal	The populist political language he speaks
Berluschiista	Name	A supporter of B.
Berlusconeide	Adjective	Relating to his "epic" political journey or career.
Berlusconiano	Adjective	Pertaining to B.

Berlusconise of	Verb	To attempt controlling media
Berlusconizzante	Verb	To seek to behave, act like, carry oneself like B.
berlusconizzare	Verb	"To turn something into B.'s property" or "to adopt the strategies of B."
Berlusconizzarsi/Berlusconised	Ref. Verb	To behave like, or succumb to the political style of B.
Berlusconizzato	Verb	To adopt the strategies or policies of B.
Berlusconizzazione	Noun	The process of being dominated by or characterized by B.
Berluzconization of politics	Verb	Hysterization political controversy
La Sarkoberlusconisme	Noun	A term which developed by Peter Musso[i]
Neoberlusconismo	Adjective	B.'s latest brand of political thought
Postberlusconiano	Adjective	That which comes after B.

In this paper we take into account each method for personalizing politics as the way Berlusconi did as a strategy, as we can observe from the neologism of Berlusconi from above i.e. mediatization of politics. By amalgamating different neologisms of Berlusconi, we reach an inclusive concept of “Berlusconization”. What we understand from Berlusconization of politics is, using any kind of political behaviour that is in Berlusconi style, in order to gain and keep the political power.

Berlusconization as Personalization of Politics

Back to 60s there have been variants of the personalization of politics, although today there is a ubiquitous catalyzer factor named media (with new technologies). According to Mughan, for example in Italy, parliamentary elections generally have the appearance less and less of contests between political parties vying for control of government and more and more presidential-style struggles between Berlusconi and Prodi (Mughan, 2000:4) Adding to that, Berlusconi case is a result of very special conditions. As Castells points out that Italy, under the government of Berlusconi, produced a most original model of public-private partnership; the Italian government owned the three RAI networks, and Berlusconi, a real-estate businessman, (...) build three private national television networks on the basis of the local stations that he owned, (...) leveraged his media power from these networks to be elected prime minister (Castells, 2009: 109) As media tycoon, Berlusconi has more power on politics in any other political leader for their own countries. In this respect, when I study of Berlusconization of politics in Turkiye, I do not expect same results but I do expect using similar techniques' ending up with similar results, as in Italy, in Turkiye.

1. Building an Appealing Image

We live in a visual world with homo videns like Sartori says (Sartori, 2004). This process has been started decades ago.. The abstract intelligence becomes weaker at every next generation. Since the visual images make it easier for viewer to develop a rapport with the politicians.(McAllister, 2005:7). In the age of Berlusconi, politics have become more visual and focused on political images, the image of leaders i.e. a good family father, an honest businessman, a patriot, young, rich. In the case of Berlusconi, Calise focuses on three features of Berlusconi's political communication strategy; the distribution of pre-recorded campaign videos directly to voters; his ubiquitous TV presence; and the personalization of campaign issues. (Calises, 2005, 101) Those strategies have been very well applied by Berlusconi since 1994. In the era of Berlusconi of politics in Turkiye, Erdoğan has transferred those strategies and applied very nicely even during the Referendum process of Constitutional changes in 2010, the posters were with his images, he appeared on both public and private media

2. Establishing a direct an emotional link with the voters

Italy and Turkiye. Two different looking countries at the first sight due to their regional and religion, and even ethnic differences but those two Mediterranean countries have many common things such as both of the countries' people's majority is conservative, live according to their own religions and cults. This common qualification of those countries' peoples led them to be manipulated by their beliefs and emotions instead their mainly intelligence. So, political leaders work on those emotional and spiritual things too. For example, according to Croci, Berlusconi, sold his personality through a discourse which is full of religious and sports metaphors (Croci, 2001:366) i.e. likened himself to Jesus Christ when he decided to enter politics. He said he had decided to 'drink the bitter chalice' of politics for the redemption of Italy" (Croci, 2001:359). Back in Turkiye case, first of all, Erdoğan is already an Imam (due to his high school education) which means he has right to speak about religion, of course not as political leader but, it is too late to separate his two identities now. In Erdoğan case, he wouldn't likened himself to Mohammed because it would inappropriate due to İslamic culture and respecting the prophet, but instead, Erdoğan preferred to describe

himself warrior of the prophet, i.e. he was imprisoned by the he read provocative poem⁵⁸.The Referendum 2010 propaganda process were held mostly in Ramadan (when its the peak level of religious feelings in daily life), and his speeches were full of religious words especially compared to his opposite leader. We can clearly observe that in both countries, religion is a strong subject to take account when analysing the changes in those. Another main theme of Berlusconization is football in making contacts with voters. For example according to Prevost, the name of the party, Forza Italia, is derived from the slogan Forza Milan supporters club which Berlusconi owns (Prevost, 2005:17).Erdoğan had played football professionally instead owning a football team, but it is well known that he is supporter of Fenerbahçe, he usually attends in national games as a family. One of the most important techniques about direct link is the myth of an impending danger which is to build unity and loyalty around one man one party and Giansante finds out that according to Berlusconian dictionary, there was only one LEFT which was equal to communism which was the ultimate enemy. “This enemy” was danger for their property, for their

⁵⁸ “Minareler süngü, Kubbeler miğfer, Camiler kışlamız, Müminler asker”, can be translated as “Minarets are
The minarets are our bayonets, The domes our helmets, The mosques are our barracks, and the faithful our soldiers.”

religion. So people of Italy were in need of Berlusconi to save from that danger and the enemy! (Giasante, 2008:72) This danger myth was worked for Erdoğan after the Davos Crises as well; he became a kind of popular leader of the Middle East (because according to Middle Eastern peoples, "there was finally someone who could stand against to Israeli" and "say the truth", even many Turkish people who were not supporter of Erdoğan were agreed on that.)

3. Creating media events

According to Mazzoleni and Schulz if political actors stage an event in order to get media attention, or if they fashion an event in order to fit to the media's needs in timing, location, and the framing of the message and the performers in the limelight, we can speak of a mediatization of politics. The same measures also may be seen as attempts by political actors to gain control over the media (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999:252). In the mediatization of politics process, political leaders have become obsessed with gaining and controlling media power. In this respect, Berlusconi is far lucky than any other politicians. Erdoğan has had none, although there have been strong media support by his ideological networks (which

includes Fethullah Gülen cult's).. However, in 2007, just 3 months before the General Election, Savings Deposit Fund Insurance (TMSF) confiscated ATV-Sabah (A powerful group of TV-Newspapers, central-right of political spectrum) media group which was sold to Çalık Holding, whose media arm Turkuaz includes also Erdoğan's son-in-law as its top manager. (Since the media group was confiscated and afterwards, was to Turkuaz, there were clearly change at discourse and also, there had been transferred many right and liberal journalists, and finally ATV (which is top 1 or 2 TV) has arranged (still before the General Election in 2011, June) special programs (one-man guest shows) for Erdoğan to let him express his political thoughts freely and safely (without interruptions and annoying questions).

Pseudo-events

Events are identified as “newsworthy” when they satisfy certain rules, commonly understood as the criteria for determining “news value” (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999:251). There are examples of both of Erdoğan and Berlusconi created pseudoevents which let them to be seen as victim of the situations. In Berlusconi case, there was “hit-on-face-event” held in 2009, exactly before Christmas. The attack was symbolised by a souvenir of Milan's cathedral which

caused to get attention and gain sympathy from believers. Even the attack was REAL; Berlusconi was good at taking advantage of it, and at the end, according to the comments, Berlusconi's approval ratings, which had slipped over the past six months because of sex scandals and corruption charges, have bounced back amid a wave of sympathy; the attack has boosted Mr Berlusconi's popularity rating to 55.9 per cent from 48.6 per cent in mid-November. (Timesonline, 2009)

In Erdoğan's case, the example of "Davos Crises" was displayed in 2009, January. There was no physical attack but the concept was still being "victimized" although, Erdoğan displayed a "strong leader", a kind of leader of not only Türkiye but also the Middle East. He was angered by the moderator not giving him a chance to counter Peres' argument, he said "one minute, one minute!" stood up and said "I will never ever come to Davos again!" This reaction of Erdoğan was supported by the people of throughout the Middle East, of course except by the people of Israel. At the end, Erdoğan's approval ratings went up 19 percent after his showdown with Peres in Davos. and the phrase "One Minute" became a popular phrase.

4. Going personal

A salient characteristic of the leadership in the era of mediatization of politics is to encourage the establishment of a trust relationship between the leader and the voters that bypasses the traditional intermediary role of parties. (Campus, 2010:228-9) and in Berlusconi case going personal has been always easier because he was a famous man could run for prime minister was destined to attract maximum media coverage. (Campus, 2010:228). On the other hand, Erdoğan was Mayor of Istanbul (1994-1998) that allowed to be known by inhabitants of İstanbul. But the main event which let him well known by all of Turkish people happened by a poem (altered by him) at one of his speech (in late 1997) which caused him to be imprisoned for four months. This (psuedo)event let him seem to be looked like a “victim” and to be a famous political image in Turkiye throughout late 90s and early 2000s. “Berlusconi did not need to become “recognizable.” Nevertheless, he was an outsider with no previous political experience, and therefore he had to establish his credentials as a political leader.” (Campus, 2010:228) Erdoğan had previous political experience but needed to become recognizable by all Turkish citizens. In short, Berlusconi was already famous man while Erdoğan had to

earn it by some pseudoevents. Talking as first person to use “I” sounds natural and in the context of personalization of politics competition it matters a lot, and it is convincing in a political speech and both of the leaders have used that technique in their speeches (Prevost, 2005), (Degirmenci, 2011).

By the personalization of political competitions, Berlusconi has succeeded in shaping the political game so that the attitude of his opponents, who do not hesitate to demonize him, helping to strengthen personalization of political competition in a way that, for now, serves him (Prevost, 2005:17). This strategy also can be tracked for Erdoğan, during the General Elections 2011, the Referendum 2010 or even before in 2007 General Elections (Değirmenci:2010). Similarly we can also track that the opponents’ serving for Erdoğan at speeches of the main opposite party leader Kılıçdaroğlu by his mentioning about Erdoğan very often (Degirmenci, 2011: 10).

Comparing those two technique shows that in the Berlusconi era, governmental party leader is tend to show himself as an “hero”, all the opposites are as a different faced of the “same evil”, the country is “supposed to be saved” from those, at the end, voting for them is almost patriotic. One of the probable and also important results of this tactic is that voters may vote more

emotional than logical which may lead declining party identification at the end.

5. Boomerang Effect of Going Personal

As in physics, when there is a pressure there is a counter-pressure in politics too. Although Berlusconi owns enlists his media empire, and nearly 30 years, he has shaped the public opinion in Italy by this media empire, there is still a resistance among Italian people and “going that much personal” creates anti-personalism even hatred leadership at some point as well. For example, No Berlusconi Day was held worldwide in December 5th 2009. The protest organized by the Internet (<http://www.noberlusconiday.org/>) and the organizers declared the main aim as, “Let’s save Italy, Let’s save democracy. Let’s ask for Berlusconi’s resignation”. The Day started on December 5, at 4:00 am in Rome, when Sydney group gathered and the event kept going on all over the world (i.e. Beijing, Paris, Berlin, Madrid, London, Buenos Aires, New York). This event was a first time event which was protesting a political leader world-widely. The second NO BERLUSCONI DAY was held in 2nd October 2010 with approximately 90.000 demonstrators

Picture 1: The Second “No Berlusconi Day” (PressTV2010)



As Berlusconi suffers from this effect, Erdoğan has had similar problem as well. There are many voters who vote against to only Erdoğan as many as who voters for only Erdoğan. There were events against Erdoğan like Berlusconi experienced.

Picture 2: A rally view from İzmir, 13.05.2007, Reuters



The Republic Protests (*Cumhuriyet Mitingleri*), were a series of peaceful mass rallies that took place in many cities through the spring of 2007, against Erdoğan and AKP. The initial aim of the protests was to pressure Erdoğan not to stand in the upcoming presidential elections.

That much of going personal tends to cause spreading political cynicism between anti-voters at the beginning, then at the political culture level. According to Cappella and Jameson, the cynic tends to hold that the political system is corrupt; its players are Machiavellian partisans uninterested in the public good (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997:19) and as Saito points out, in many democratic

societies, political alienation such as political cynicism or inefficacy is widespread among the general public, particularly the younger generation (Saito, 2008:101) and it can not be coincidence that in many democratic societies, personalization of politics is widespread too. As politics became (overly?) communicatively managed, advisors seemingly steered politicians towards the uncontroversial center of the political spectrum.. Politicians became rewarded for their abilities to be Machiavellian ‘performers’ (with appropriate scripted ‘personalities’) rather than statesmen. (Louwe, 2005:197), all of those developments could be regarded as a result of both Cynicism and over- personalizing of politics.

Conclusion

Personalization of politics has been and will always be on the ground of media which carry the actions and decides of political leaders and their personalized politics to public opinion, socio-economic, political environment. This interaction between all of those may (and some of them has already) lead to increase of political rootless; floating voters; worshiped/hatred leadership; amorphous political parties, cynicism, superficialism of politics and

declining of power of parties; party identification. Each of those developments is truly a threat for a democracy.

Like in many other countries, Turkish political system has been forced to “two party system”, similar each other but hotly divided on major issues, and there seem no alternative government in waiting either. Voters have been forced to vote tactically, by selecting one of 2nd and 3rd parties which could get seats in the parliament. This kind of political system tends to cause more vacillating voters, and that makes political leaders more personalized and aggressive to each other.

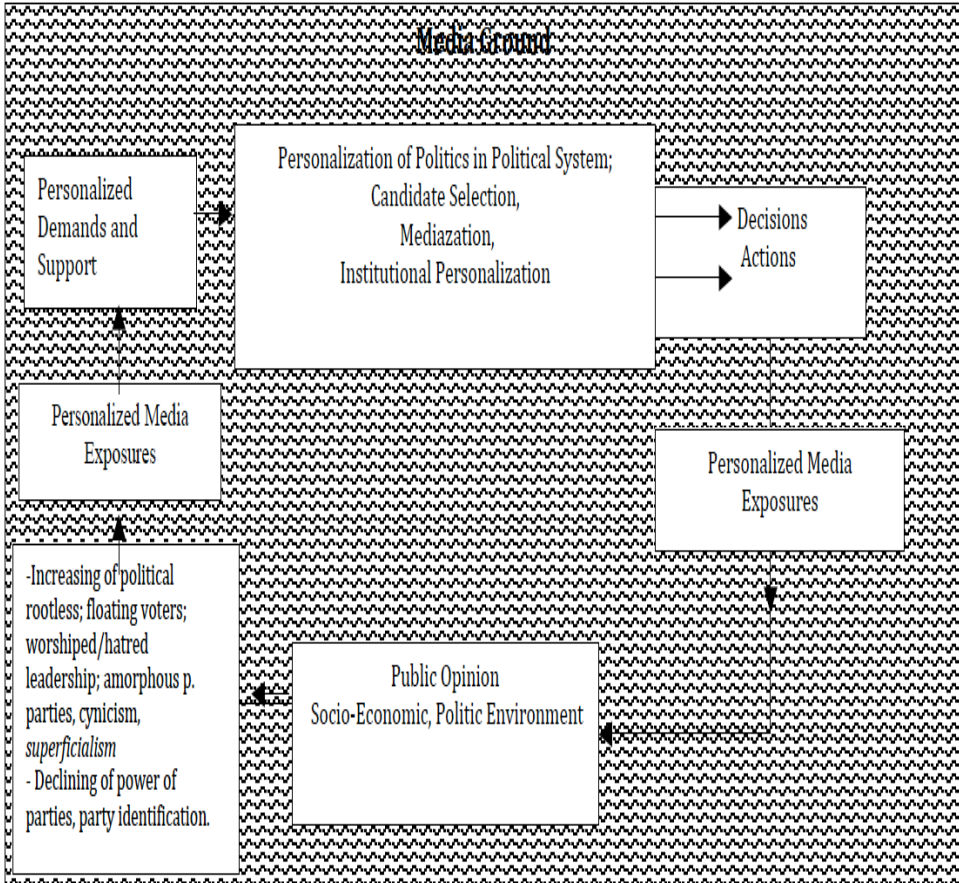


Figure 1: The figure of the system of Berlusconi, was derived from David Easton's "The Political System Analysis", (Easton, 1965) by the writer of this study.

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The changing representations of political leadership

Political television debates in Finnish newspapers from the 1960's to the new millennium.

Ville Pitkänen⁵⁹

When defining an ideal modern political leadership, definitions such as showmanship, charisma and appealing personal characteristics have become more and more predominant among scholars of political communication. Even though the idea of charismatic leadership is hardly new (e.g. Weber 1978), the role of television in recreating novel political culture and political leadership is emphasized in many studies (Ware 1996; Butler and Ranney 1992; Hart 1999; Newman 1999; Swanson and Mancini 1996). The general idea is that television encourages the personalization of politics by bringing political leaders to the living rooms of citizens in “flesh and blood”.

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Critics (Postman 1986; Bordieu 1998) have argued that television has led viewers focus away from political substance to images. According to this interpretation, televisual culture constructs political leadership that is highlighted by character issues instead of ideological questions or policy issues. Some scholars have however emphasized a more complex evolution of the political public sphere (Norris 2000) where the role of television is not as straightforward as critics sometimes claim.

I. Introduction

Regardless of the approach one takes on this issue, it has been demonstrated in numerous studies that in the 21st century political leaders are estimated more and more often in the media through their personal leadership qualities (Karvonen 2009; Johansson 2008). Even though the role of television in this process may well be undeniable, this article argues that the political imagery produced by television can be interpreted in multiple ways. Political television as such seldom produces direct interpretations of its contents. When a politician is performing on television, it is ultimately the viewer who is in charge of the final interpretation.

What is considered to be relevant and what is not depends on the viewer as well as on the prevailing political culture. As Dahlgren (1995, p. 148) puts it, “people make their own sense of television, though such meaning-making tends to follow established socio-cultural patterns.”

This article approaches the question of ambiguous imagery of television by studying newspaper reporting on television debates in presidential and parliamentary elections over a period of forty years (1960 – 1999). In this article representations of political leadership refer to the interpretations made in newspapers that directly or indirectly depict the prevailing ideals of political leadership. When reporting on the debates, newspapers are obviously using their own news criteria, biases and frames that are linked to the prevailing journalistic culture but this article argues that journalists writing these stories are operating in wider socio-cultural surroundings that mirror the prevailing understanding of the political sphere and how it functions.

This article provides a longitudinal analysis of intermedial interpretations made by the newspapers and argues that by addressing political leadership and its manifestations from a historical perspective, it is possible to contribute to an increased

understanding of the processes where the demands for political leadership are constantly changing.

2. Intermedial interpretations of television debates in focus

Next I will briefly introduce some starting points for the analysis and determine the material and the method used in this study. As stated above, the research design of this article has a strong historical foundation. This can be considered to bring new dimensions to the discussion about the role of media in politics, since there are few longitudinal studies that stress long term changes in the media coverage of political leaders (Johansson 2008; Langer 2007).

Television was introduced to Finnish audiences at the end of the 1950's and televised debates were broadcast for the first time during the municipal elections in 1960. Since then, political parties have considered television debates to be an integral part of their political campaigning and also the newspapers have always paid attention to these programs. The ways in which these debates have been organized and staged have changed from decade to decade. Audiences have been used to vivify the atmosphere, the role of

chairing journalists have changed from passive bystanders to aggressive participants. The settings have changed from minimalist television studios to more symbolic surroundings such as industrial buildings or casinos. Because of the Finnish multi-party system, as many as eleven to twelve party leaders or presidential candidates have participated in television debates while at times there have been only two candidates. Despite these changes, one aspect of these programs has remained intact: the focus of these programs has always been on political substance and the first and foremost interests of these programs have been the political views of the party representatives.

While the initial focal points of television debates have remained the same, the way in which these programs have been reported and interpreted in the newspapers has changed a lot since the 1960's. The analysis of newspaper texts show that the way in which the performances of candidates have been analyzed have changed from decade to decade and the frames used in newspaper journalism have not developed in a linear fashion. As stated above, this article describes how newspapers have covered television debates and analyzes what sorts of manifestations of political leadership these newspaper stories produce.

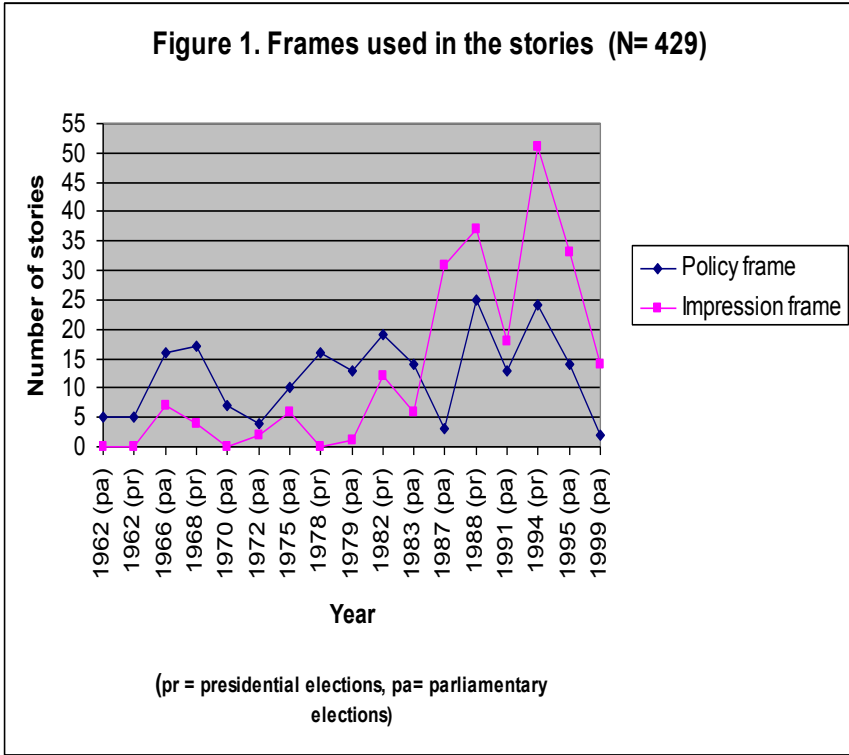
The empirical data consists of texts in Finnish newspapers reporting about televised political debates from the 1960's to the new millennium. In this article, the analysis is restricted to editorial contents and columns that report on the television debates. When studying the representation of political leadership in newspapers, one has to be aware of the pitfalls of excessive generalizations drawn from the research results. It is important to pay attention to the newspapers' political affiliations, to the cultural context of each newspaper, to their circulation, and to whether we are dealing with regional or national newspapers. I have decided to observe two big Finnish dailies, *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Aamulehti* and the tabloid *Ilta-Sanomat*⁶⁰.

In terms of circulation, these were the leading newspapers in Finland during the research period covered in this article. *Helsingin Sanomat* is a national newspaper although the readership is concentrated in southern Finland and especially the metropolitan area. *Aamulehti* is a strong regional paper in the Tampere area and *Ilta-Sanomat* is sold nationwide. *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Ilta-Sanomat* have been independent newspapers ever since the 1930's

⁶⁰ Colin Sparks has divided press in to five categories: serious press, semiserious press, serious popular press, newsstand tabloid press, supermarket tabloid (Sparks 2000, pp. 14–15). In Finnish literature (Kivioja 2008) *Ilta-Sanomat* is often situated to the serious popular press category.

whereas Aamulehti was politically affiliated with the Coalition party until 1991. Aamulehti's general approach to politics has however been rather neutral. In the beginning of the 1980's, the paper covered 76 percent of households in its own region while the support of the Coalition party was approximately 20 percent. This shows that the paper enjoyed a certain non-ideological status among its readers.

A total number of 429 stories were included in the analysis. This data includes all news stories, editorials and columns that deal with television debates during parliamentary or presidential elections. As pointed out earlier, this article emphasizes the emergence of televisual leadership, so restricting the data to cover only stories that deal with television debates is justifiable. Representations of political leadership constructed in these stories however, cover only a limited section of political publicity. Restricting data to cover only one aspect of political publicity means that the conclusions can be generalized to cover newspaper journalism as a whole only to a certain degree. In spite of this, it is possible to argue that representations made in these stories mirror the prevailing ideals of political leadership.



The analysis used in this article is mainly qualitative, but the stories have also been coded into two different categories that indicate the main frame used in the story: the policy frame and the impression frame. The policy frame stands for stories that deal with political issues and political substance whereas the impression frame stands for stories whose main focus is on a politician's performance and performance strategies and overall impressions. The coding was straightforward for the most part but some stories

contained elements of different frames. In these cases, the frame used was the one that was more dominant in the headline, in the lead and in the overall story.

3. Changing representations of political leadership

When a newspaper reports on television debates some facets of the event are highlighted, particular interpretations emphasized and some are left unmentioned. Next, the long term changes in frames used by newspapers will be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results will be used to describe the changes that have taken place in the representations of political leadership.

By analyzing the quantitative data, one can make certain observations about the importance of these programs from the point of view of newspaper journalism. As Figure 1 demonstrates during the 1960's and the 1970's the intermedial references to television debates were rather rare. From the standpoint of newspaper journalism, the most important political arena was the parliament and during election campaigning the news journalism focused mainly on the political manifestations of the candidates. In

the data covered here, there were a few attempts to analyze the characteristics of the candidates during presidential elections, but overall the focus was on political substance.

Figure 1 also shows that the frames used in the stories have changed a lot during the research period. The policy frame is dominant in the 1960's and the 1970's and only a few stories use the impression frame. In the newspaper texts of the 1960's and 1970's, the political leadership, at least in the context of television debates, was constructed through the idea of ideological leadership and collectivity. Images of political leaders and the importance of television in image creation were occasionally discussed, but the party leaders remained, at least in the context of newspaper journalism, characters whose most important tasks in television debates were to articulate the values and the political program of the party. The ways in which the party leaders performed, how they articulated or what kind of impression of their party they left, were rarely discussed in the newspapers.

Then, as the figure 1 illustrates, the newspapers began to pay more attention to television debates in the 1980's. This increased interest towards television perhaps indicates that newspapers began to value television as an increasingly important arena for political campaigning. One indicator of this was the fact that

succeeding in television debates became highly valued among contemporary journalists. Also the use of the impression frame becomes more common during the 1980's. One can detect a certain turning point in journalism during the 1982 presidential elections. First of all, character issues of the candidates were highlighted during election campaigning and newspaper journalists emphasized the importance of a positive media image, media skills and the personal charisma of candidates. When analyzing the data qualitatively one can detect that also use of the so called "competition frame" became more and more popular among journalists. The competition frame means simply that the journalists are trying to find the winners and the losers of the debates and are evaluating the tactics used in the debates. The same approach was used also in the parliamentary elections of the 1980's.

The impression frame became for the first time the dominant frame during the 1987 parliamentary elections. Ever since then, the impression frame has been the more common frame in the newspapers. From the point of view of political leadership, this represents a turning point, because the political message is toppled by the symbolic value of the political leader. During the 1980's the focus of newspapers turned away from political substance and

started to underline the importance of political images. A political leader was no longer merely the articulator of the party's political program or ideology but the symbolic character whose own personal qualities became the most important political capital that the party possessed.

A second important observation here has to do with the journalists' overall attitude towards television debates. During the 1980's television debates were for the first time manifested in the press as important media events in the sense that Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz (1991) have described them. Television debates were considered the highlights of campaigning and they were represented as decisive events that could even determine the outcome of the election. Occasionally the candidates performing in the debates were treated as some sort of celebrities or sports stars who were asked to share their pre-show sensations and to analyze their performances after the debate had ended. The tabloid paper *Ilta-Sanomat* was most evident in using these new approaches, but also the dailies *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Aamulehti* revised their journalism to new angles by paying more attention to the performance tactics of the party leaders, starting with the outfits they were wearing.

Figure 1 also shows that the impression frame is slightly more used during presidential elections than during parliamentary elections. This is understandable since in presidential elections there are fewer candidates, the role of parties is weaker and the candidates typically receive massive amounts of media attention. Particularly the 1994 presidential elections stand out as elections where the newspapers were extremely interested in the television debates and were eager to evaluate the leadership qualities of the candidates. The reason for this stems from the changes in the election system. Before the 1990's the president was elected by indirect ballot, in an assembly of 300 electors. So even though the votes of the citizens counted, the choice of the president was basically a result of bargaining by the party leaders in the electoral assembly. The direct election of the president was introduced in 1994, which meant that the role of the parties in the process was minimized to campaigning and the presidents legitimacy was reinforced by the immediate support of the people. This can be considered the main reason why the attention of the media turned to the personal traits of the candidates.

Overall the 1990's brought only minor changes to the journalism and to the ways in which the party leaders and candidates were

treated. Clearly the “competition frame” became more dominant in newspaper journalism. Newspapers started for example to use various kinds of juries to evaluate the performances of the candidates. Image researchers, rhetorics teachers and journalists among many other experts evaluated different sectors of the performances of the candidates including body language, argumentation skills, performance skills as well as clothing and hairstyle. These same trends are visible also in the journalism of the 21st century.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The analysis of the newspaper articles from different decades reveals several interesting tendencies. First of all the analysis showed that the political leadership represented in the newspapers of the 1960’s and 1970’s was about being the voice of a political collective that had shared ideological and political goals. In the 1980’s and 1990’s a new kind of political leadership was introduced where political message became less essential and the focus turned to the personas of the political leaders. Similarly the significance of

television and especially television debates in political campaigning were emphasized in newspaper journalism.

The leading role of television in contemporary politics and in defining political leadership can be easily emphasized but as this article has shown, televisual imagery can be interpreted in many ways. In Finland it took nearly 20 years of political television and televised political debates before the focus of the newspapers turned away from political issues to the images and appearances of political leaders.

As described above, the representations of political leadership have changed in many ways during the research period. The important question here obviously lies in the dynamics of these changes. The developments are well in line with the changes in the Finnish media system. The market share of politically aligned newspapers had declined from 70 percent in the 1950's, to a little over 50 percent in the 1960 and less than 15 percent in 1995 (Salokangas 1999, p. 98). In the 1980's the Finnish media system began to assume a more commercial orientation with a more independent status towards politics. Many of the changes depicted here can be connected to the changes in the Finnish media system.

On the other hand, these changing representations of political leadership can also be viewed in the context of the Finnish political system. Class dealignment began in Finland already in the 1960's but the polarization between the left and the right remained relevant and ideological differences were still sharp. The real breakdown of old party-based political collectives is often placed in the latter half of the 1970's (Mickelsson 2007). The same weakening social basis of left-right conflicts have been identified in most Western European countries (Luther & Müller-Rommel 2005). The ideological differences between parties have weakened and this has led to a situation where the parties are trying to broaden their appeal beyond their natural electorate by, for example, promoting their party leaders' personal charisma.

These observations resonate with the changing representations of political leadership described above. One might argue that the emergence of symbolic political leadership in the 1980's is a result of the gradual collapse of the traditional party-collectives that earlier were the key determinants of citizens' political behavior. Political parties have become professionalized campaign organizations and using a charismatic leader as the symbol of the campaign is one way of attracting moving voters. The change in the media system and especially the role of television in the process is

central, but as the data here illustrates, the televisual aspects of political leadership introduced into the Finnish political sphere in a rather lengthy process.

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Part III

Leadership, Campaigns and Theoretical Frames

Televised Leader Debates in Ireland: Wider lessons from the 2011 General Election

Kevin Rafter⁶¹

Televised leaders' debates are one of the main political communication events in modern election campaigns, and have been classified as "a valuable and essential part of our democratic process." (Minow and Lamay 2008, 8) These debates attract high audience ratings. The first televised debate in the 2010 British general election was watched by 9.68m people, with the three debates in total attracting, "huge, unprecedented audiences for general election-related broadcasting of any kind." (Wring and Ward 2010, 802) The debate in the 2007 general election in Ireland was the tenth most watched programme on Irish television in the first decade of the twenty-first century. This paper focuses on the Irish experience of televised leaders' debates providing a brief history of such debates over the last thirty years in Ireland before concentrating on the pre-debate period to highlight

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the conflicting interests of three different constituencies - the politicians, the broadcasters and the public.

Televised Leaders' Debates in Ireland

Televised leaders' debates have been a feature of national parliamentary elections in Ireland since February 1982. Irish voters have been able to judge the leaders of the main political parties in eleven of these televised encounters with the exception of the 1989 general election when agreement was not reached to organise a debate. These debates can be placed into two categories - first the seven debates in the 1982 to 2007 period defined by consistency in attachment to a traditional format, and second the four debates in 2011 defined by relative change.

The seven debates between February 1982 and May 2007 share a number of common distinguishing features. First, participation was confined to the leaders of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, the two largest parties in the Irish parliament, which in effect turned the encounters into 'Prime Ministerial debates' as holders of the office of Taoiseach (Prime Minister) have been drawn from these two parties. Second, there was a single televised debate in each

campaign. Third, all the debates were hosted by RTÉ, the state-owned public broadcaster. Finally, the programme format was studio based featuring a table debate set with the leaders and single moderator seated in close proximity behind a desk.

The nature of the Irish leaders' debate changed significantly in the February 2011 general election although the level of innovation in format was less than might have been expected. First, the number of debates increased to four - from a single debate in previous contests. Second, the number of host broadcasters increased to three from a single broadcaster previously with the involvement of the privately owned TV3 and publicly owned Irish language service, TG4. Third, one of the four debates in 2011 took place in the Irish language - all earlier debates were in the English language. This was also the first ever debate to be pre-recorded, to allow time to apply English language subtitles. Fourth, there was some innovation with the debate format - although of a conservative nature - with the use of stand-up lecterns and debating before a live studio audience.

Finally, and undoubtedly the most important change in 2011 was an increase in the number of party leaders who participated in the televised debates. The Irish Labour Party had long sought inclusion

- and had viewed the absence of its leader as making the debates, “largely irrelevant.” (Finlay 1998, 127) In the 2011 general election involvement went beyond the leaders of the two main parties. The leader of the Labour Party, traditionally the third largest party, participated in all four debates while one of the debates was a five-way encounter involving all the parties with representation in the outgoing parliament.

Table 1: Irish Leaders’ Debates, 1982-2011

Debate	Channel	Parties	Participants
1982 (Feb)	RTÉ	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael	FitzGerald (Taoiseach); Haughey
1982 (Nov)	RTÉ	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael	Haughey (Taoiseach); FitzGerald
1987	RTÉ	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael	FitzGerald (Taoiseach); Haughey
1989	No debate		
1992	RTÉ	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael	Reynolds (Taoiseach); Bruton
1997	RTÉ	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael	Bruton (Taoiseach); Ahern
2002	RTÉ	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael	Ahern (Taoiseach); Noonan
2007	RTÉ	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael	Ahern (Taoiseach); Kenny
2011	TV3	Fianna Fáil; Labour	Martin; Gilmore

2011	RTE	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael, Labour; Greens; Sinn Fein	Martin; Gilmore; Kenny; Gormley; Adams
2011	TG4	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael; Labour	Martin; Gilmore; Kenny
2011	RTE	Fianna Fáil; Fine Gael; Labour	Martin; Gilmore; Kenny

The four televised leaders' debates in the 2011 general election in Ireland attracted significant audience ratings although as shown in Table 2 the two debates on RTE had the highest average audience - they were well ahead of the TV3 and TG4 debates, and also had significantly higher shares of the overall television audience available when they were broadcast. Despite its novelty the Irish language debate failed to attract significant audience interest although both this debate - and the TV3 debate - may have suffered from their earlier scheduling time. Interestingly, the five-way format, which was least favoured by the broadcasters, was the most successful debate in terms of the viewing figures. The highest audience share in 2011 - at almost 60 per cent of those watching television on 14 February - was actually below the figures in the 1997 and 2007 contests but marginally ahead of the ratings in 2002. The long lead-in to the formal election campaign may have been a factor with the main subjects well debated over the

preceding months along with several viewing opportunities in 2011 against a single leaders' debate previously.

Table 2: Audience Figures

Date	Time	Station	Average Audience	Audience Share (%)
8 February 2011	20:00 - 21:57	TV3	339,100	20.51
14 February 2011	21:37 - 23:05	RTÉ	910,200	59.94
16 February 2011	19:00 - 19:57	TG4	130,100	8.70
22 February 2011	21:39 - 23:11	RTÉ	767,100	50.55
4 June 1997	21:38 - 22:40	RTÉ	757,300	64.32
14 May 2002	21:37 - 22:48	RTÉ	834,200	58.72
17 May 2007	21:39 - 23:02	RTÉ	940,900	63.31

Changed Political Context 2007-11

Political life in Ireland has long been defined by the dominance of three parties – Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Labour Party. The system has frequently been labeled the ‘two and a half party system’ given the traditional presence of two larger parties – Fianna Fáil

and Fine Gael – alongside the smaller Labour Party. (Mair, 1992: 85)

Both Fianna Fáil and Fine are centrist ‘catch-all’ parties with the ability to shift ideological position dependent upon the public mood and the needs of their potential coalition partners while the Labour Party in a European context can be seen as a moderate left organisation. (See McGraw, 2008) General election outcomes since 1973 are shown in Table 2. The long established dominance of Fianna Fáil - which actually stretched back to 1932 - changed dramatically in 2011 with a reordering of the relative strength of the main parties.

Table 2: Dail Eireann election results, 1973-2011

Year	FF	FG	Lab	Rest
1973	46.2	35.1	13.7	5.0
1977	50.6	30.6	11.6	7.2
1981	45.3	36.5	9.9	6.6
1982	47.3	37.3	9.1	6.3
(Feb) 1982	45.2	39.2	9.4	6.2
(Nov) 1987	44.2	27.1	6.5	17.0
1989	44.2	29.3	9.5	17.0
1992	39.1	24.5	19.3	17.1

1997	39.3	27.9	10.4	22.4
2002	41.5	22.5	10.8	25.2
2007	41.6	27.3	10.1	21.0
2011	17.4	36.1	19.4	27.1

This electoral outcome was the culmination of what has been described as a “series of tumultuous events” which defined Irish politics - and indeed, the Irish economy, in the period since the previous national contest in 2007. (See Murphy, 2011) In considering the changed approach to the televised leaders debates in 2011 it is necessary to understand these events.

Ireland’s economy started in slow in 2008 amid a realisation that the property market fuelled boom of the previous decade was not sustainable although at that stage the scale of the financial system’s exposure to property speculation was not fully realised. The national (public) finances were already under pressure with declining tax revenues when in September 2008 the Fianna Fáil-Green Party coalition government felt obliged to instigate a State-supported scheme for the Irish banking system. The effect of this decision was to guarantee the assets and liabilities of the six main financial institutions to the order of €44obn. This controversial policy intervention, however, did not stave off ongoing difficulty -

the following two years were marked by continued banking instability and fiscal austerity involving increased taxation, cuts in public and private sector salaries and reductions in social security payments.

On 30 September 2010 - on what became known as 'Black Thursday' - the Fianna Fáil-Green Party coalition published its latest plans to protect the financial system with a bank recapitalisation plan at a cost of between €45bn to €50bn. The final cost of the bailout at the most controversial institution, Anglo-Irish Bank - which had been taken into public ownership - was potentially €34bn, a huge difference from the government's original estimate of €4.5bn. The 'Black Thursday' announcement, however, did not deliver the required impact. The banking and fiscal situation in Ireland was judged to have reached the point that external intervention was necessary. The deterioration was so severe that an economy that only a handful of years previously was the leading light in the European Union was in November 2010 forced to seek a €85bn bailout deal from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Central Bank (ECB).

Although the Fianna Fáil-Green Party coalition could have remained in office until the early summer of 2012 the ramifications of the need for external financial assistance sundered the already

fragile alliance. The political fall-out also produced a pre-election leadership change in Fianna Fail but the switch made little difference to the ultimate outcome of the general election contest in February 2011, and a new Fine Gael-Labour Party coalition eventually took office.

The Pre-Debate Period

The so-called ‘debate about the debates’ has become a familiar ritual in nearly all jurisdictions where televised leaders’ debates are part of the electoral campaign process. Broadcasters seek to deliver television programmes that attract high audience ratings while, it has been said, that the goal of the political negotiator “is to try to win a format and rules that play to his candidate’s strengths and minimize his weakness” (Schroeder 2008, 26)

These rules emerge following, in some cases, several months of meetings and negotiations between the participants - the parties and the broadcasters. There is a long tradition in this regard, the first series of American presidential debates (between Kennedy and Nixon in 1960) “were carefully planned and negotiated before the candidates showed that September night in a Chicago television

studio.” (Self 2005, 362) One advisor to Ronald Regan admitted that, “it would be no exaggeration to compare the 1980 debate process with an advanced game of chess”. (Kraus 2000, 33) The organisation of US presidential debates has since 1988 been overseen by an independent commission but they are still defined by “behind-the-scenes arguments about everything from the format of the questioners to the length of the response time, the placement of cameras, the height of podiums, and the location of water glasses.” (Minow and Lamay 2008, 8) The negotiations in the UK for the 2010 leaders’ debates produced “a 73-point specification for the programme format.” (Hook and Hitchins 2008, 8)

The ‘debates about the debates’ had previously in Ireland involved private interactions between Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and RTÉ. There was some public comment about the negotiations, and ongoing pressure from the Labour Party for inclusion, but essentially with a single debate on a single station involving two parties the negotiations were relatively straightforward to conclude. The more recent situation was very different due to changes in the media market and the political environment.

The economic situation in Ireland - and its consequence for national political life - was the backdrop to pre-debate discussion of the televised leaders’ debates, which were ultimately broadcast in

February 2011. This pre-debate period actually commenced in the early months of 2010 - in part influenced by the shift in public support between the three main parties, and also in part influenced by the ‘spill-over’ effects from the introduction of televised debates in the UK.

The three main parties in Ireland had different strategic considerations when deciding about their participation in televised leaders’ debates. There were two phases to Fianna Fail approach marked first throughout 2010 by relative silence about Brian Cowen’s participation and second by a very different stance in January 2011 as the party’s new leader Micheal Martin sought to maximise the number of debates. Fine Gael, as the frontrunner and with its leader Enda Kenny - perceived to be a weak debater - was keen to reduce the number of debates and increase the number of participants. The Labour Party wanted to exclude the minor parties and favoured a three-way debate to elevate its status alongside that of the two main parties.

The ‘debate about the debates’ commenced in earnest when Labour - enjoying a significant increase in opinion poll support - gathered for its national conference in mid-April 2010. Against a dramatically changed political landscape the party made the case for its leader - Eamon Gilmore - to be included in any televised

debates. “Irish politics is now a three-horse race,” Liz McManus, the party’s communications spokesperson, declared while calling on the national broadcaster RTÉ to acknowledge this new reality when organising the next round of televised debates. (Sheehan, 17 April 2010)

The pre-debate discussion in Ireland was also framed by the first ever leaders’ debates in the UK in April 2010 and, in particular, the decision to include Nick Clegg, the leader of the Liberal Democrats, the third party in British politics, in the debates. Given the close proximity of the UK - and the ‘spill over’ of its media into the local market - there was a high level of Irish interest in the UK experience. The Irish Labour Party sought to take advantage of Clegg’s involvement. One former Labour party advisor argued that: “What has happened in the British election shows clearly that not only is there a democratic case for including the three main party leaders in the election debates, but there is also a public hunger for the change.” (Finlay, 20 April 2010)

Throughout 2010 Fianna Fáil remained silent about the intentions of its leader with respect to participation in a televised debate and also with respect to the format of such a debate. The public had come to expect that candidates for major office would engage in debate - so it was unlikely that Brian Cowen would have

declined to participate. (See Trent and FriedenberG 2000, 259) There would not, however, have been any great enthusiasm in Fianna Fail for including more of its opponents given the party's unpopularity and the knowledge that it's record in office would dominate the debate. Fine Gael initially rejected the idea of a three-way debate. "I don't think you want to turn it into a media event. In this country you have a tried and trusted system," the party's leader Enda Kenny asserted prior to the second of the three UK debates in April 2010. (Sheehan, 23 April 2010)

Denying Labour access to the main leader debate was, however, becoming more increasingly problematic. Opinion polls published in June 2010 and September 2010 were even more favourable for Labour, - and the party continued to pile pressure on the broadcaster stations to respond to the new political environment. "It would be a distortion of democracy if any less was agreed by the broadcasters," one party figure argued. (Sheehan, 28 June 2010)

The leadership tiers in the smaller parties - Sinn Fein and the Green Party - were also seeking inclusion but interestingly, the Labour Party - which was seeking inclusion in a three-way debate - was not keen on the involvement of the leaders of these parties. Labour favoured restricting the main debate to those who participated in leaders' questions in the national parliament - a

move that would have excluded Sinn Fein and the Green Party. (Kelly, 11 September 2010)

It is not entirely clear why but Fine Gael leader Enda Kenny changed his approach in September 2010 in relation to Eamon Gilmore's participation. "As far as I'm concerned as leader of the Fine Gael party, it doesn't matter to me – it's not my call in any event – where the leaders' debates are between myself and Brian Cowen, whether they're between three leaders, four leaders or five leaders, whether they are on RTE, TV3 or on TG4." (Kelly and Kerr, 10 September 2010)

The new Fine Gael attitude was described by the news media as a "major u-turn" and evidence of Enda Kenny's having "caved in to pressure for a three-way televised debate". (Kelly and Kerr, 10 September 2010) Nevertheless, once Kenny had conceded a change in attitude in September 2010 it was clear that the traditional format of a single debate between the leaders of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael broadcast on RTE was about to change. Far less clear, however, was what exactly that change would actually be. Separate negotiations between the different political parties and the broadcasters continued in the latter half of 2010 without any progress. The negotiations in fact continued into the official

election campaign period with parliament, being dissolved on 1 February 2011 with polling day set for 25 February 2011

The ‘debate about the debates’ was also influenced by changes in the local media market where the traditional dominance of RTE had been challenged by the licensing of privately owned television and radio services. The commercial national television station TV3 had shown a greater commitment to current affairs output in the post-2007 period and was interested in hosting a leaders’ debate. The Irish language television service TG4 was offering to broadcast a debate. The British satellite broadcaster Sky News was also actively seeking to host a peak-time 90-minute five-way debate. One Sky News executives said: “Viewers have never been so engaged with the country and the outcome of its general election.” The interest of the 24-hour news channel led one media commentator to ponder the involvement of “a foreign broadcaster that would probably drop it mid-debate to go to a car chase in Florida.” (Hegarty, 12 February 2011)

The broadcast companies shared one common objective: they all started from the position of each wanting the autonomy to control their own programme format. There was no evidence of working together to agree an overarching approach to the debates in terms of formats and rules. Each broadcaster ultimately negotiated

separately with the various political parties, a different approach to the UK experience in 2010 when the broadcasters “communicated and agreed a concerted approach.” (Hook and Hitchins 2010, 3)

Deciding on whether to debate

The unsettled political landscape in Ireland - which experienced so much upheaval in 2010 - changed even further on 22 January 2011 when Taoiseach Brian Cowen announced his decision to stand down as Fianna Fáil leader - the Green Party withdrew from the coalition government the following day. Four days after Cowen’s resignation Micheal Martin, a senior minister since 1997, was elected as the new Fianna Fáil leader - the third party leader in two and half years.

One of Martin’s first acts was to challenge the leaders of Fine Gael and the Labour Party to a series of televised debates – to provide, “the most extensive and detailed series of debates yet seen in an Irish election.” (Press Association, 27 January 2011) It was very clear by now that the politicians were setting the terms of the debates rather than the broadcasters, and that the public had no input whatsoever. A spokesperson for Fine Gael was reported as

saying that the composition of the debates was still “at the bartering stage”. (Cullen, 29 January 2011). A whole series of separate negotiations were underway. It was reported that the political parties were dealing with four different broadcasters over possibly six separate debates.

By the first weekend of the formal election campaign it had become clear that TV3 would broadcast the first debate on 8 February 2011, RTE would host a five-way debate on 14 February 2011 with agreement still not reached its three-way debate proposal for 22 February 2011. TG4 had pencilled in a three-way debate on 16 February 2011 while the possible involvement of Sky News had concluded without agreement.

Despite the emergence of this draft schedule Kenny had not agreed to participate in the first debate on TV3. On 3 February 2011 Kenny said he would not participate unless it was a five-way debate. The following day he said he would not take part in a debate moderated by Vincent Browne, a journalist and TV3 presenter. Browne had been a longstanding critic of Kenny’s leadership. Fine Gael was said to be adopting a “high-risk strategy” in avoiding the first debate – a decision that was seen as an “own goal” (Glennon, 7 February 2011). The Kenny strategy was, however, not unique - as one veteran US television producer noted: “the candidates have all

the high cards, including the ultimate high card - whether to participate” (See Schroeder 2008, 17)

What this ‘debate about the debate’ period in Ireland shows is that the power in negotiating televised leaders’ debates largely rests with the politicians, with the broadcasts in a relatively weak position to impose their preferences while the public has no input whatsoever. This situation must be a concern to those who subscribe to the view that these debates “must belong to all of us, and in taking ownership of it we will surely be nourishing the public sphere of democratic deliberation.” (Coleman 1997, 18)

Conclusion

A number of important conclusions arise from the 2011 experience of televised leaders’ debates in Ireland. First, the pre-debate period, which is dominated by ‘the debate about the debate’, is the preserve of the broadcasters and the political parties. The public is excluded from this process - “relegated to the stands as onlookers.” (Schroeder 2008, 309) The existence of an independent entity like the Commission on Presidential Debates - which is has to say has not been without its own critics - could remedy this weakness

although it would not, as the US experience shows, automatically guarantee that the public interest is given equal weighting with the needs and demands of the broadcasters and the candidates. Such a body would, however, act as a reminder that the campaign is the ownership of the public. Moreover, in the Irish case it would assist in ensuring greater pre-campaign coordination between the competing commercial interests of different broadcasters and the strategic manoeuvrings of the politicians. Second, the 2011 debates were a missed opportunity by Irish broadcasters to devise innovative formats. This was best illustrated by the fact that the two new entrants, TV3 and TG4, adopted the format used by RTE in all previous debates. RTE also failed to exploit the opportunities for enhanced participation with its live audience debate - and while all three broadcasters promoted social media engagement through weblogs, Twitter and Facebook the public's involvement was still as 'watchers' of the debates rather than active participants.

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Empires of the Mind. Metaphors and strategic discourse in Italian politics

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The aim of this study is to analyze the strategic use of metaphors in political discourse during the Italian 2008 electoral campaign. The results will be discussed in light of the debate about effectiveness in political discourse.

Corpus and methodology

The corpus includes the discourses of the two main parties' leaders - Silvio Berlusconi and Walter Veltroni⁶³ - pronounced during

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⁶³ Several candidates were running in the elections. However the only two to stand a real chance to win were the leaders of the two main parties: centre-right leader Silvio

television talk shows in the forty days before the elections⁶⁴. The corpus is composed of approximately 120,000 words from twenty television appearances, ten for each candidate.

Talk shows have been chosen as they are considered particularly appropriate for the purpose of analyzing the strategy of the campaign, in fact, as Cienki (2008) writes for a similar corpus:

[t]he debate data constitute an example of one kind of discourse which is representative of the supraindividual level; in this case, the team which has constructed strategic ways of framing issues verbally for the campaign (Cienki, 2008: 244).

Therefore, the corpus can be considered especially suitable for our purpose. A further validation comes from the period we chose. As we mentioned, all the TV programs were broadcast live in the forty days before the vote. Thus, “one can assume that by this late date, it is more likely that the candidates would be reiterating elements of the argumentation and wording which had been

Berlusconi, for Popolo della Libertà, (The People of Freedom) and the Partito Democratico (Democratic Party) leader Walter Veltroni.

⁶⁴ Elections were held on April 13th and 14th 2008.

developed by their campaign team during the preceding months” (Cienki, 2008: 244).

To access the strategic level of the discourse we applied a two-step analysis. We used a Textual Statistical approach, in order to access the repetition level, that we assumed to be indicative of the strategic level of the campaign.

The analysis was performed using the software TaLTAC₂, that allows to identify the most frequent occurrences and the repeated segments with highest significance indexes (IS)⁶⁵, in other words, the terms that are repeated more often and the fragments of discourse proposed with lower variability.

Analyzing the elements of the discourse repeated more frequently and with the least variations allowed the identification of the elements that constitute the result of the process of supraindividual strategic elaboration and to isolate them from the rhetoric contingency of the discourse.

⁶⁵ The IS index (indice di significatività) and the relative IS index (indice IS relative) are two measures of the relevance of the repeated segments in relation to the whole corpus. An introduction to the software TaLTAC₂ and to the statistical meaning of the indexes is contained in Luca Giuliano's "Il trattamento del testo con TALTAC", available at the web address:

<<http://www.ledonline.it/ledonline/giuliano/giulianoanalisiautomatica4-5.pdf>>.

Once the strategic level of discourse was identified, it has been analyzed with a qualitative approach, paying special attention to metaphor analysis, following the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

The focus on metaphor was chosen for two reasons. The first concerns the topicality of the debate around the role of metaphor in the political context. The second reason lies in the concept of metaphor in Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) approach. They propose an alternative theory to those that consider metaphor as a mere linguistic instrument. Their seminal work suggests that metaphor is a way to represent and organize our world. They argue that our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. The implications of this characteristic in the political discourse lies in the cognitive role of metaphor, in his capacity to contribute to the definition of the way we think of certain concepts.

Main results

In this work we will focus on the description of the metaphorical construction of the main characters of the campaign story (Van Zoonen 2005): the hero and the opponent⁶⁶. The main results will be described separately for each candidate; subsequently a comparative discussion will be conducted.

Berlusconi's campaign

The centre-right leader discourse shows a high level of phrase repetition if compared to Veltroni's. It is the the description of the hero to provided the largest set of repeated phrases. In this context the segment that Berlusconi repeats more frequently is the so called welfare equation, a phrase that the candidate repeats with little or

⁶⁶ It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by hero and opponent. The first has come to be used to refer to the portions of discourse where the candidate talks about himself, his coalition or his political proposal. While the term opponent is used to refer to the parts where the candidate refers to his adversary, his coalition or his political proposal.

no variation in every TV appearance. Due to his relevance it is interesting to quote it:

We will try and apply the recipe that was successful in all the western countries that live in prosperity: the welfare equation that says: less taxes on families, on labor, on companies equals to more consumption, more jobs, more revenues in the Treasury, and thus having more funds to help those who are in need, to realize the infrastructures we lack and also to decrease the public debt. We will do this with great concreteness and great humility.⁶⁷

The metaphor analysis reveals that, to present his economic proposal, Berlusconi uses metaphors and lexicon related to the domain of MATHEMATICS.

This is a pattern that emerges in other expressions, that Berlusconi repeats frequently, such as the family quotient <quoziante familiare> [5], and the equity (fairness) formula <formula dell'equità> [3]⁶⁸.

⁶⁷ The metaphorical terms are highlighted in italic. The sentence has been pronounced on the Rai Tre channel during the show Tg3, Primo Piano on March 14th 2008. A translation in English has been suggested by the author.

⁶⁸ We will indicate the lemma between single guillemets (e.g. <sinistra>) and the number of occurrences (that indicates how many times the word is repeated), between square brackets: <sinistra> [232].

Analyzing this metaphor use through Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory it can be noted that the source domain is MATHEMATICS, while the target domain is POLITICAL ECONOMY.

This finding has important implications. The essence of metaphor, in fact, is to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another. In this way it highlights certain aspect and hides other aspects of the concept (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

In this case the use of mathematical metaphors has the effect to associate Berlusconi's political program to mathematics, thus to underline that his political programs is steady, guaranteed. At the same time it hides other aspects of his political proposal, in this case, for example, the temporal factor. It is commonly recognized, in fact, that it takes time to obtain "more revenues in the treasury" if the starting point is "less taxes".

The co-occurrences reinforces this construction of the hero: concreteness <concretezza> [7]; good sense <buon senso> [5]; realism (pragmatism) <realismo> [4]; humility <umiltà> [4].

Turning now to the construction of the opponent the metaphor analysis reveals that, to construct his image, Berlusconi uses metaphors and lexicon related to the domain of FICTIONAL SHOW. The following is a significant example:

There is another left, the left of Veltroni, that is the left of electoral promises, it is the left of the words, the left that tried to stage a great illusionist trick, a great conjuring trick, to make people forget that the Prodi cabinet exists, to make people forget that there is a past of the Left that is still alive and that presents in its political side the same characters of all times and that gave this mission impossible to a very good communicator as Veltroni⁶⁹.

The use of metaphors related to this domain is displayed in a different expression that Berlusconi frequently repeats to describe the opponent: the fireworks of the Left are over, in Italian, “sono finiti i fuochi d’artificio della sinistra”.

Berlusconi comprehends an aspect of the LEFT in terms of a FICTIONAL SHOW. This attitude has the effect to underline that the left coalition is illusory, that it cannot be trusted. It highlights that, however appealing, the political offer of the Left is not sincere. At the same time it hides the political novelty of the Democratic Party and actually hides any other aspect of the adversary.

The occurrences associated with the opponent (in this case Veltroni) are: communicator <comunicatore> [7]; very good

⁶⁹ From the show “Conferenza stampa” aired on Rai Due on April 1st 2008.

<bravissimo> [4]; very able <abilissimo> [3] and promises <promesse> [7].

To sum up, Berlusconi builds the hero using metaphors related to the domain of MATHEMATICS and characterizes it with qualities of realism and concreteness. On the other hand he builds the opponent using metaphors related to the domain of FICTIONAL SHOW and characterizes it with terms such as illusion and promise.

This construction is built along an axis that goes from the complete reliability of the hero, to the lack of reliability of the opponent and from the ability to keep promise of the hero to its opposite.

The hero-opponent construction is consistent with an instrument of political marketing known as the Message Box. The logic that structures it is summarized by Grandi and Vaccari: ideally the message of a candidate should construct its strengths in those dimensions where it builds the opponent's weakness (Grandi and Vaccari, 2007: 45).

Veltroni's campaign

The first result to emerge from the data is that the democratic candidate's discourse displays lower repetition levels if compared to Berlusconi's corpus. In particular Veltroni's discourse shows a lower disposition towards the repetition of whole sentences as it happens for Berlusconi⁷⁰. Therefore an effective description of the strategic level of the discourse will emphasize the occurrences and the co-occurrences of the segments with higher significance indexes.

The most striking results concern the construction of the hero and the opponent. Veltroni avoids to attack his political opponent. He actually does not even name Berlusconi but refers to the main representative of the opposing coalition⁷¹.

For our purposes it is interesting to state that not only did Veltroni not name Berlusconi, but he did not criticize him. The semiotic opponent of his campaign is: the political system <il sistema politico> [7], the political-institutional system <il sistema

⁷⁰ The results of the textual statistical analysis show that the segments with higher IS and relative IS index have a lower number of words if compared to Berlusconi's.

⁷¹ In Italian: "il principale esponente della coalizione a noi avversa".

politico istituzionale > [7], the institutional system <il sistema istituzionale>.

The political system in his discourse is: grown old, blocked, crashed.⁷² The candidate describes the system through personification, an ontological metaphor in which the system is represented as a person. Furthermore the analysis shows that Veltroni frequently uses primary metaphors⁷³ related to the domain of weight (light vs. heavy), movement (motionless vs. rapid), age (young vs. old).

Turning now to the description of the hero we find strong evidence that Veltroni avoids to frame it metaphorically. He does not focus on his personal story, nor on his success experience as the Mayor of Rome. He does not even describe his political proposal. In this regard it is useful to remind that we are not considering the general discourse but the strategic level, in other words the level of the discourse characterized by higher levels of words or phrases repetition.

In relation to the construction of the hero this means that Veltroni puts forward several proposal but few of them enter the

⁷² In Italian: <fermo> [11], <stanco> [9], <bloccato> [5], <appesantito> [2], <cupo> [4], nero [3], invecchiato.

⁷³ Lakoff (2008) provides in-depth analysis of the concept of Primary Metaphor.

strategic level. The democratic candidate prefers to list a wide series of proposal that show low repetition levels.

He does not use metaphors to frame his proposal. On the contrary, his proposals reminds of a laundry list (Lakoff 2004). In this regard the findings of the current study are consistent with those of Lakoff (1996).

Rather than the hero, Veltroni emphasizes the description of the value object: the aim of his political work. His purpose is to make the country simple <semplice> [9], dynamic <dinamico> [8], fast <veloce> [4], open <aperto> [3], fresh <fresco> [2], modern <modern>. In describing his coalition Veltroni stresses the dimension of novelty: he declares the aim to open a new page <pagina> [16], a new season <stagione> [12]: in fact new <nuovo> [39] is among the first significant occurrences of his discourse.

The metaphor analysis of the construction of the hero confirms that Veltroni shows a preference for primary metaphors. These are metaphors with no particular cognitive involvement. Furthermore they are traditional in the Italian political language and appear used and overused.

To sum up we can notice that in describing both the hero and the opponent, the Democratic leader shows low levels of repetition and a moderate use of metaphors, preferring to use a more abstract

and conceptual language. When using metaphors he prefers primary metaphors that were typical of the old political language model, the “politichese” (political jargon). In this way the candidate creates a dissonance between his discourse and the image of change and novelty that he proposes for himself and his coalition.

The last elements of interest is the relation between the hero and the opponent. As we have seen Veltroni’s opponent is the political system that is considered grown old, blocked, crashed. The hero of the story is Veltroni’s coalition, the left coalition that is due to open a new page and is characterized by co-occurrences belonging to the semantic domain of novelty.

If we refer to the political marketing instrument of the Message box we notice that Veltroni’s campaign strategy is semiotically consistent with the logic of this instrument for strategic construction. In fact the hero-opponent relation is built on an axis that goes from oldness to novelty. However it is not politically consistent: in fact Veltroni and his coalition did not embody the idea of novelty⁷⁴. Therefore the perceived distance between the

⁷⁴ The very leader Veltroni has a long political history, in fact he was first elected Rome city councilor in 1976 as member of the Italian Communist Party.

opponent and the hero was not maximized as the Message box logic recommends to do.

Elements for a conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to analyze and compare the strategic use of metaphors in political discourse during the Italian 2008 elections. The two main parties leaders discourse were analyzed.

As Table 1 summarizes the results of this study indicate that Berlusconi and Veltroni show a different approach towards the use of metaphors.

While the centre-right candidate's discourse displays a high level of repetition, the democratic leader's repetition levels are lower. If Berlusconi uses metaphors in a creative way, exploiting their cognitive role, Veltroni uses metaphors in a conventional way, resembling the use typical of the *politichese*. Finally if Berlusconi constructs strategically the relation between hero and opponent, Veltroni builds this relation on a dimension where the perceived distance is minimal.

Berlusconi	Veltroni
High repetition levels	Low repetition levels
Creative use of metaphors	Conventional use of metaphors (primary metaphors)
Strategic metaphorical construction of hero/opponent	Scarce perceived distance between hero/opponent

Table 1 – The strategic use of metaphors in Berlusconi and Veltroni's discourse.

The results of this research support the idea that a different approach to the use of metaphors reveals a different attitude towards political communication.

As Table 2 shows two different patterns emerge. On the one hand Berlusconi shows a special attention to the decodification mechanisms, exploiting the cognitive aspects of repetition⁷⁵ and

⁷⁵ Repetition plays a big role in persuasion (Rank 1984, Nimmo 2001), in particular for its ability to contribute to the overcoming of the mechanisms of selective perception (Atkin et al., 1973; Surlin and Gordon, 1976; Atkin and Heald, 1976).

metaphorical framing⁷⁶ and their ability to stimulate an emotional response in the public⁷⁷.

Berlusconi (cognitive politics)	Veltroni (rational politics)
Exploit cognitive aspects of repetition, strategic construction, metaphor use.	Emphasis on rational discourse (facts and figures).
Attention to decodification mechanisms	Attention to codification mechanisms (e.g. logical argumentation/discourse)
Emphasis on emotions	Emphasis on reason
Appropriate for persuasion purposes (opinion voters)	Appeals ideological voters

Table 2 – A different attitude towards political communication.

⁷⁶ We mentioned Lakoff and Johnson's approach, however we cannot forget to mention that the role of metaphor in persuasion has a long history that dates back to Aristotle and Cicero.

⁷⁷ On the role of metaphors in fostering an emotional response see Charteris-Black (2005). Recent studies have shown that emotions play a crucial role in persuasion (Damasio 1994, Westen 2007). However we must remember that the role of emotions in discourse was well known in classic rhetoric.

This communication pattern seems to be more appropriate for persuasion purposes, especially if we take into account the context in which the political discourse takes place, with the public less involved in the political process. This facilitates the activation of processes of cognition that do not involve elaboration of the message through extensive cognitive processing (Petty and Cacioppo 1986)⁷⁸.

These considerations support the idea that Berlusconi's political communication is more appropriate to get the consensus of opinion voters⁷⁹.

Turning now to Veltroni the main characteristics are an emphasis on rational discourse, the lack of metaphorical framing and the preference for logical argumentation. In general, we can

⁷⁸ Petty and Cacioppo distinguish between two routes to persuasion: the central route, where a subject considers an idea logically, and the peripheral route, in which the audience uses preexisting ideas and superficial qualities to be persuaded. The activation of the second route is more likely when the subject shows less interest towards the theme. Therefore we can assume that in a context of lower attention towards politics, the peripheral route is likely to be activated by a higher number of people.

⁷⁹ We refer here to the classic distinction made by Parisi and Pasquino (1977) that classifies voters in three categories: vote of belonging, opinion voters and vote of exchange.

suggest that his discourse is less appropriate for persuasion and thus more appealing to ideological voters.

However, it must be stated that more research on this topic needs to be undertaken before the association between models of discourse and voters is more clearly understood. In fact the current research was not specifically designed to evaluate factors related to this association and further investigation and experimentation into this topic is strongly recommended.

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Italian online discourses during the European Parliament election campaign, June 2009

Iryna Sivertsava⁸⁰

One of the greatest challenges of post-modern democracy is bridging the gap between citizens and democratic institutions. One of the ways to do it, according to some researchers, is to creatively use the Internet. The role of the new medium in political life still remains a subject of discussion, with some researchers thinking that it has the potential to improve public communications and enrich democracy, and others finding negative aspects in its implementation. What unites the scholars is the idea that the new medium of communication is changing our perception on how politicians should communicate with us. The object of my research is the manner in which the Internet has been used during the Italian election campaign to the European Parliament, in 2009. In my paper, I will speak about the impact of this medium of communication on the students' decision-making and electoral turnout.

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The aim of this article is to show how the Italian online political discourse dealing with the elections to the European Parliament in 2009 is perceived by the Italian young people. The texts under examination are personal messages of Silvio Berlusconi and Dario Franceschini that appeared on the web sites of their parties: Popolo della Liberta' (People of Freedom) and Partito Democratico (Democratic Party), respectively. We also analyze a message on election campaigns in Italy, delivered by an informal leader, the journalist Roberto Saviano, in order to see how official and informal political discourses differ in their addressing the audience. Before analyzing the features of the web sites in question, I would like to give a brief outline of the Italian political parties that took part in the European elections of 2009.

1. Outline of the Italian political parties that took part in the European elections of 2009.

European elections to elect 72 Italian Members of European Parliament (MEPs) were held on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 June 2009. The same day, local elections were held in over 4000 communities and 73 provinces. As the Italian Minister for Internal

Affairs Roberto Maroni explained, they had anticipated the elections, which were usually held on Sunday and the first half of Monday, to Saturday afternoon and Sunday, in order to reduce public administration costs. Quite accidentally, the European elections always finished on Sundays not to delay the general results on continental level, so the newly introduced measure enabled Italy to conform its practices to that of Europe.

The election was a victory for Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, his party *Popolo della Liberta'* taking 29 seats in the European Parliament. *Lega Nord* (Northern League) that was considered to be Berlusconi's ally won nine seats, increasing the number of pro-Berlusconi MEPs to 38.

The major opposition party, *Partito Democratico* led by Dario Franceschini, won 21 seats in the European Parliament. Seven seats were won by *Italia dei Valori* (Italy of Values, IdV), the party of Antonio di Pietro, Berlusconi's opponent. The anti-Berlusconi *Unione del Centro* (Union of the Centre, UdC) won five seats, and *Südtiroler Volkspartei* (South Tyrolean People's Party), which allied with the Democratic Party, won one seat, thus bringing the number of seats won by oppositions to 34. It is peculiar that Berlusconi's party is member of the same coalition in the European

Parliament, as some of his opponents (UDC and SVP) – the European People’s Party (EPP).

1.1 Theoretical basis underlying the experimental part

The analytical framework of my project is based on the concept of persuasion, as it is analyzed by the Italian authors.

Some Italian scholars believe that persuasion emerged together with advertising and it aimed at changing people’s behaviour [23. P. 287]. Others, like Cavazza [4. P. 13-16], think that the concept of persuasion relates better to that of attitude change. Despite disagreement on whether it was attitude or behaviour studies that first began to mention persuasion, authors agree that persuasion exploited the consumer’s desire to produce a certain image of themselves.

According to Villamira, the initial research on persuasion had a serious drawback – it ignored the role of the individual, suggesting that an almost mechanical use of stimulation techniques would create the same response in people, as it did in animals. This limited approach to consumers’ personality resulted in the

epistemic problem of the behaviourist approach and its deterioration.

Later studies recognized the central role of the individual and started studying attitudes. Those studies backed on the psychoanalytic approach, which had previously introduced such crucial terms as symbol, the unconscious and unrestrained associations. According to the psychoanalytic approach, by inserting certain stimuli that pass unfiltered by the conscious part of mind into a discourse, it is possible to induce a certain action in a person, Villamira sustains.

However, the role of the individual was still limited in the psychoanalytic approach, as it paid little or no attention to the rational part of the individual's mind. Advertisers realized that apart from the unconscious there was also rational explanation or justification of reasons to buy some product. So, in the late 1960s, the cognitive approach appeared that considered attitudes as part of the cognitive structure with its peculiar characteristics. It was then that the term "persuasion" began to be substituted by the term "influence", so as to show that it was no longer manipulative or hidden, but functional and socially determined. The authors who developed the idea of persuasion as influence include Cialdini, Pirovano and Di Giovanni.

According to Di Giovanni, persuasion is defined as “a particular case of social influence, in which everyone is trying to modify thoughts and/or behaviour of other people intentionally and by using communication” [8. P. 359].

According to Pirovano [17. P. 66-69], persuasion as ability to influence others is based on “the principles of persuasive dynamics”, such as:

1) The principle of contrast: “When we confront two relatively different things one after the other, the difference is perceived more greatly”;

2) The principle of “payback”, according to which if one is doing even a small favour to the other, the person who receives it is likely return the a favour;

3) The principle of coherence, according to which one is likely to make a choice in favour of this or that person (product), if (s)he has previously chosen them, out of the inner desire to remain coherent;

4) The principle of “peer pressure”, which states that one will probably make a choice in favour of a person, if (s)he knows that their representative group have chosen them (Other principles include “tuning”, authority and scarcity but we do not discuss them here [17. P. 67-75]).

The task of this paper is to analyze political discourse in its online oral form and in the written one and to compare the results, tracing the use of the principles of persuasive dynamics, as stated by Pirovano.

The initial hypotheses to be tested during the experiment are:

1. If the message is construed with the help of the persuasive principles, it is likely to be considered as trustworthy by the audience.
2. The online (visual) communication will surpass the written one in the degree of consent given to the preferred (most credible) message.

1. 2 Websites and discourses under analysis

In order to investigate the online discourse during the election campaign, we have chosen the websites of parties with different political orientations. Thus, we have selected the site of the party led by Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi – il Popolo della Liberta' (the People of Freedom, PdL). A week before the elections, a video spot in which Berlusconi addressed his audience appeared on the party's website. There was no other information

about the campaign on the website of PdL, excluding the section “How to vote” that was created by the party’s affiliate in Rome in order to support the local candidate. The webpage with the video spot had numerous functions aiming at diffusing the information and sharing it with others, such as “Mail this to a friend”, “Share it on facebook, twitter” etc.

The second Internet resource under study is the website of Berlusconi’s opposition party – Partito Democratico (Democratic Party, PD). PD has created a special edition “European Elections” on its site with rubrics: “Special Edition”, “Updates”, “Agenda”, “Materials” and “Services”. Visitors of this site had access to all the materials of the election campaign, which included the party’s programme written for the European election and audio-video spots that have also been shown on television and aired on the radio. Besides, one could follow the elections on the Internet television portal – www.youDEM.tv. Information about donations was repeated three times in this edition. The video address of the then PD leader Dario Franceschini on the issue of the European elections was posted there, but later on it disappeared from the official site. We were able to access it only from <http://www.youtube.com>, which counted 87,457 thousand viewings of it, as of April 13, 2011 (as compared to Berlusconi’s

message, which was viewed only 258 times on <http://www.youtube.com> as of April 13, 2011).

We have found it necessary to include a monologue by the Italian journalist and public figure Roberto Saviano into our project. This choice is explained by our intention to study the topic in the extended format political and public actors rather than in the isolated context of the two parties involved in the campaign. In the view of the current public discontent with politics and a growing popularity of street movements in Italy, it seemed impossible to us to ignore the message of the informal leader and opinion maker Saviano. Saviano's discourse first appeared on television in the programme "Vieni via con me" ("Come along with me") on November 28, 2010, and was devoted to the topic of mafia and corruption during election campaigns. We have found a copy of this discourse on <http://www.youtube.com>.

The chosen videos had approximately the same length, about two minutes. The unabridged English translations of the texts can be found in the attachment to the present paper.

The viewers were to watch the messages once and then to complete the questionnaire in a 30-minute time.

2. Experiment

2.1 Subjects

In our experiment, there have been 95 participants, of which 63 were female and 32 male Italian students of humanistic disciplines. Their age varied from 19 to 23. 36 students participated in the audio test, of which 20 were females and 16 were males. 59 students took part in the written test (43 females and 16 males).

Most of the students held a first-level degree in different fields of Humanities, and two – in Economics (96% and 4%). Most of the Humanities students have previously taken their first three-year degree in Communication Sciences (19 student); others in the following fields: Modern Languages and Literature , Social Sciences, Educational Sciences, Ethno-anthropology, Politics and International relations, Theatre.

2.2 Questionnaire

Our questionnaire consisted of two parts. In the first part, the viewers had to answer the yes or no questions to the audio message. In the second one, they had to answer the question: “Which

message do you consider the most/ least credible and why?” and to give their reasons in minimum 12 (maximum 20 lines). The questions to the personal addresses were designed to prove the hypothesis about the effectiveness linguistic principles of persuasion, as presented to Pirovano, such as:

- 1) The principle of “payback;
- 2) The principle of coherence;
- 3) The principle of “peer pressure”.

However, as far as Saviano’s monologue is concerned, we have found that the above given principles are absent in his speech, which made us elaborate different questions, based on the analysis of his multimodal behaviour (speech tactics, gestures and mimics).

Thus, the questionnaire consisted of the following tasks that bore no reference to their authors. We mention them here in brackets so as to inform the reader about the distinction in questions and to give them an idea of what techniques the speakers resort to. Full messages can be found in the Appendix to the present article.

1. Listen to Message one (Silvio Berlusconi) and answer the following questions by ticking the answer on your right.

When you hear one speak about “affectionate support” and “connivance”, do you feel like spontaneously returning these feelings?	yes	no
When you hear one mention your eventual previous choice in favor of the speaker, do you feel the desire to be coherent and to support him again?	yes	no
When you learn that “the Italians have elected” a certain party, do you have the desire to conform your behavior with that of your fellow citizens?	yes	no

2. Listen to Message two (Dario Franceschini) and answer the following questions by ticking the answer on your right.

When you hear the speaker mention “an extraordinary Italy”, “men and women with courage and force”, do you feel like returning him this compliment?	yes	no
When you hear one mention your eventual previous choice in favour of the speaker, do you feel the desire to be coherent and to support him again?	yes	no
When you learn that the speaker shares the values of “our mothers and fathers”, do you have the desire to conform your behavior with that of your closest ones?	yes	no

3. Listen to Message three (Roberto Saviano) and answer the following questions by ticking the answer on your right.

Do the mimics and gestures of the speaker, in your opinion, convey the idea of his transparency and honesty?	yes	no
When you hear the speaker to use the second person singular, for example, in “when you see this politician”, “sometimes you feel your heart break”, do you identify with what he says?	yes	no
When the speaker tells you about his personal experience, do you feel close to him?	yes	no

4. *Which of the messages do you consider the most/ the least convincing?
Why?*

3. Results

3.1 Analysis of response to video messages

3.1.1 Statistical analysis

The analysis of answers to online messages has shown that females' positive feedback to Saviano's performance was twice as big as the negative one: 40 positive answers against 20 negative ones. Berlusconi was an absolute outsider, with 4 positive answers against 56 negative ones. Franceschini did a bit better than the Prime Minister, winning 18 of female "votes" and losing 42. The same rating: Saviano on top, followed by Franceschini, and Berlusconi as a loser – was present in males' response. This situation does not change, when the form of message presentation is switched from oral to the written one, but in the latter case, the anonymity of the third message (initially belonging to Saviano) makes it a less evident favorite. In fact, in its written transcribed version, which has no reference to the author of the text, Saviano's message wins 23 to 16 over Franceschini, and 23 to 10 Berlusconi,

while in its oral online form the votes share was: 42 positive votes for Saviano, 11 for Franceschini and 6 for Berlusconi.

According to female response, Saviano's strongest points were his mimics and gestures, on the one hand, and his sharing of personal experiences, on the other, whereas his technique of addressing the audience by a casual "you" gathered a slightly less positive reaction. Two females did not like that, which, generally speaking, can still be a good result and a proof of its efficiency. In males' response, all the techniques, including the casual-close to the audience manner of address, appealed to the audience. In the written message, as the question on mimics and gestures was senseless, we included the following question instead: "According to you, the message below is credible?", and the majority of students (10 out of 14 said no, two people withheld their opinions).

In Berlusconi's message, the only question, which created a bit of uncertainty dealt with the principle of coherence: "When you hear one mention your eventual previous choice in favor of the speaker, do you feel the desire to be coherent and to support him again?" Two female viewers and four males answered yes to this question, probably feeling a contradiction between a need to be coherent and a clear dissatisfaction with the speaker. The overwhelming majority of responders (19 females and 14 males)

gave a negative answer to the other two questions, thus failing to confirm our initial hypothesis about the effectiveness of the principles of “payback”, coherence and “peer pressure” in Berlusconi’s case. In the written version, the principle of coherence gathered 6 male votes and 19 female one, which is almost one half of the responders (53) who were subject to the written transcript of the message. The principle of “peer pressure” that featured fellow Italians as a reference group failed, and so did the principle of “payback”.

In Franceschini’s message, more females (five as opposed to two in Berlusconi’s case) felt a need of coherence. Seven females said yes to the following question: “When you learn that the speaker shares the values of “our mothers and fathers”, do you have the desire to conform your behavior with that of your closest ones?”. This ‘family’ point won the biggest number of votes both with males and females. It was based on the principle of “peer pressure” in its most culturally applicable form for the Italian responder – the respect and co-division of family traditions and values. However, we expected more positive feedback from the Italians on this point, but 13 of 20 females and 11 of 16 males ran against this cultural stereotype, evidently having more important reasons than the respect for family to resist the speaker’s appeal. In the written

version, again, there was confusion, as far as the coherence principle was concerned, but the latter prevailed, winning Franceschini 29 votes out of 53, while “peer pressure”, with family members as reference group did worse, winning 20 votes out of 53.

Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis shows that females consider the most convincing message that of the journalist Saviano, while the least credible one belongs to PM Berlusconi. The message of opposition leader Dario Franceschini leans toward Berlusconi’s one, as females do not consider him credible enough.

Females’ reasons for believing that Saviano’s message is credible can be divided into the following groups (exposed here in the order of priority):

Reasons	Verbalization
Correspondence of message to fact	“He speaks of real things”
Social (not political) intent	“He is not a politician, and he is governed by a sense profound social responsibility and not by egoistic motivations to achieve personal success”
Status as a (competent) writer and journalist, a fighter for the truth	“He is a serious person who makes a thorough research on every topic he

	embarks on
Reflection of the audience’s inner world, thoughts and feelings	“It’s like as if he understood what I feel and think”
Exposing the problem instead of avoiding it	“He wants to denounce things that don’t work”
Being on the audience’s level, installing a personal relation with the audience	“He tries to be on the same level with the listeners”
Being clear	“He speaks about the situation in a simple and clear manner”
Absence of personal attacks	“There’s no discourse that tries to put into the negative light his opponent”

Males’ reasons for believing that Saviano’s message is credible can be divided into the following groups (exposed here in the order of priority):

Reasons	Verbalization
Being on the audience’s level, installing a personal relation with the audience	“He moves as he speaks, and this, to my mind, co-involves the viewer”
Social (not political) intent	“Saviano is out (at least apparently) from the Italian political scene”
Status as a (competent) writer and journalist, a truth-fighter	“He has his past which speaks for him”
Being clear	“He is the only speaker who can denounce in a clear and direct manner all that socio-political world that surrounds us”
Reflection of the audience’s inner world, thoughts and feelings	“His passionate message reflects my thoughts”
Correspondence of message to fact	“He shows how things really are, he confirms our suspicions”

Exposing the problems instead of avoiding them	“He reveals problems that tend to be minimized, as a rule”
Personal experience	“He speaks about his personal experience”.

Females’ reasons for thinking that the politicians’ messages (in particular, Berlusconi’s one) are not to be trusted are as follows:

Reasons	Verbalization
Rejection of the character	“I don’t identify with Berlusconi”
Absence of facts in the message content	“Many nice words but few facts”
Creating a distance between himself and the viewers	“He seems to be distancing in his institutional role from the citizens” (about Franceshini) “He is distant from the listeners, although having an educated way to present himself, he’s too imposing” (about Berlusconi)
Saying lies	“He advertises actions and things that have never been made”
Manipulating the audience	“Exaggerated positivity, with the help of which he tries to manipulate the Italians’ choice during the elections”.

Males’ reasons for thinking that the politicians’ messages are not to be trusted are as follows:

Reasons	Verbalization
Rejection of the character	“In the light of the latest events, in which Berlusconi has showed his disrespect for the Italian political institutions that citizens identify with, his message is the least convincing one”

Creating a distance between himself and the viewers	“Politicians create the distance between themselves and the citizens”
Absence of facts in the message content	“Two messages without any content, conclusions, that seem very much alike commercial on consumer goods”
Manipulating the audience/ the truth	“The politicians speak only of good things they have done” “The messages have been construed to denigrate the opponent, rather than to expose real problems”
Saying lies	“He lies – he hasn’t resolved the refuse problem”
Personal interest	“The first two messages are less convincing because they speak of personal interest – to win the election campaign”
Dissatisfaction with the present-day Italian politicians, in general	“The Italians are tired of false promises, useless votes, public money frittered away...Italy needs new forces in politics”

Conclusions

Our experiment has shown that the principles of persuasion, as described by Pirovano, have a rather limited application to the online political discourse when it is given to such a non-conformist audience, as students. The main factor that determines whether or not the viewer will consider the message credible is the speaker’s image, which includes his profession, professional and private experiences. The analysis reveals a deep dissatisfaction of young

Italian people with politicians, and this is an a priori reason why they consider the political addresses, irrespective of their ideology, not trustable. However, this mature and sophisticated reaction of the Italian youngsters fails to recognize the fact that writer and journalist Saviano is involved into politics, too, as he criticizes the current state of affairs and advocates change in the government of the country. The students consider his intent to be a social one, whereas that of politicians is labeled “egoistic and unsocial”.

The only principle that resists the attack of unpopularity of politicians is that of coherence, under which one understand the continuity of one’s previous actions with the present ones. This principle works even in the case of the most unpopular politician – Silvio Berlusconi. Other principles – the principle of “payback” and “peer pressure” – fail to produce the desirable effect upon the students.

The closest positions between all audiences were observed in the analysis of the Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Both males and females indicated him as a “false politician”, the one who “only knows how to say beautiful words, but gives little facts”, etc. Contrary to our prior hypothesis, an opponent of Berlusconi, Dario Franceschini of the Democratic Party, has done just a bit better. The message by Saviano, who, unlike other speakers, gave very

discomforting “truths” about the Italian electoral campaigns gathered the absolute majority of the audiences’ preferences, proving the hypothesis that Italian young people identify with informal leaders, without consciously understanding the fact that the latter are also doing politics.

As far as the form of presentation is concerned, we have found that it influences the perception of the message and its acceptance or refutation. We have found that online discourse reinforces a positive or negative image of the speaker, as based on the viewer’s prior knowledge or experiences.

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- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VbDOzC4zzIU> (Roberto Saviano's monologue).

Appendix

(all texts are transcribed and translated from Italian by the author of the present article)

Text 1

A year ago you chose to entrust me and the People of Freedom with the task to give our country a new start after the misgovernment of the left, and together we have won many challenges. We have freed Campania from refuse. We have avoided the bankruptcy of our flagship airways company. We have protected enterprises and savings from the crisis that proved to be dramatic in many other countries. We have guaranteed citizens of Abruzzo immediate help to overcome the tragedy

of the earthquake and we are now giving them a hope to make a new start. We wouldn't have done it without an affectionate support of all of you. Your closeness has given us every day the force to make all these successful enterprises real.

Now, we have a new challenge in front of us. We must become the first group in Europe in European People's Party, in order to be able to have influence on the decisions of the European Parliament, and, therefore, to protect best the interests of Italy, the interests of each of us in Europe. A Europe, which must give every day more opportunities to those who work and who study, which must give enterprises a more helping hand in development and which must ensure concrete aid to those in difficulty. We can do it; we could do it if we stay together; we, men and women who love freedom in one great people – the People of Freedom.

Text 2

There is an extraordinary Italy, which is coping with the crisis. There are men and women who, having courage and force, work hard every day in order to overcome difficulties: a too-low pension, a son or a nephew who don't find a new job after losing one, the prices that are constantly growing up. Those in government cannot look at another side. Problems must be resolved with because you have chosen us to resolve them. We do not govern today, but I know that a great party can do a lot of good to its own party, even being in opposition. That is why we have presented concrete proposals in order to help those people who cannot make it to survive until the crisis finishes: unemployment benefit for those who lose their jobs, fiscal aid for small enterprises, a rise in pensions and in the lowest income rates. That is why we have asked that those who have a higher income, like us the parliamentarians, pays a little bit more taxes in 2009 to aid the poorest.

The parliamentary majority coalition has blocked all of our proposals. But we will insist until we have voice. The right and Berlusconi have been at power for as many as six out of eight last years. It is time that every citizen reflects on the distance between the promises made before the elections and what happened afterward. Do you but remember the re-

launch of Malpensa? The tax cut? The elimination of car tax, the great infrastructures and the local policeman...Where have all these good things gone?

We of the Democratic Party want to change the country, but in order to manage to do it, we need your help. I am facing an opponent who has thousand times more power than I do, who controls everything, who has billions, television companies. But I will combat this battle till the very end simply because I feel it is my duty. There is the future of our democracy at stake. There is a risk to wake up after the June elections in the country under one absolute lord. And only a great party can avoid that this happens. Our mothers, our fathers have shown us what honesty and loyalty is and what it means to help one another. It is our duty to convey these values to our children and grand children. We must prevent that these values are broken by the world in which egoism is the only winner. If you give us more force with your vote, things will change soon. This is not a promise – it is my responsibility, and I will maintain it.

Text 3

...and receives this voting card. He puts this card into his pocket and goes voting. When he goes voting, the member of the local electoral committee gives him a card to be used when voting, he goes into the cabin and substitutes the card given by the committee member by that given to him by the organization, the card already completed. He takes the card and puts it into the ballot and goes away, the other one kept in his pocket. He brings that other card, which is still blank, to the organization, thus showing that he has gone voting. He gets the money and the card he has brought goes to another person. And so on, and so on, and so on. And this way, democracy is often determined by these mechanisms. And when you see a politician and say: “How is it possible that he’s been elected?”, “Who elected him? He does not know how to speak, he has that curriculum vitae...it’s impossible!” Very often these are those votes to elect him. Do you remember the famous hours of waiting for the Regions that determine the majority vote? Very often these are the Regions, in which the vote has been determined in this manner – it has been bought for 25 euro. People who have sold it don’t

feel ashamed – at least, I have earned something. When you think about these things, you become sure that nothing can change. When you think about this, you feel short of breath; you get the desire to tell people about these things.

International mediatic fluxes and political State governance

Alejandro De Marzo⁸¹

As can be immediately verified, the largest part (if not the totality) of the specific studies in political communication conducted from the beginning of this disciplinary field has generally focused on the characteristics of the communicative fluxes actuated in the political sphere (determining functions, roles, directions of influence, etc...), but in a certain sense closing eyes in front of the international scenario represented by the “world of diplomatic relationships and foreign State affairs”. What goes to be relevant to underline theoretically, therefore, is the hypothetical intervention of this factor in re-designing, just in the dimension of political communication, the structures and the processes which could be better shown, explained and predicted thanks also to this unavoidable horizon of comprehension. In other words, it is quite “obvious” and justifiable that till now both administrative research and scholarly reflections have pointed out

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how does it happen that in a precise State (seen as a “restricted” and “distinguishable” social community) the activation of mediatic instruments and the implementation of an appropriate electoral campaign could afford to reach the goal (winning the electoral competition and obtaining the institutional position debated), but it is no longer thinkable that researchers and professionals of political communication continue to conceive their interests forgetting the system of symbolic and effective implications deriving from the actions and events concerning the life of politicians and foreign governments when they interrelate between them. This is something necessarily due to the new changes in the modalities of democratic representation, the forms of governments, and the doubtless role of communication as vehicle of social innovation. The interest in “campaigning” and social influence of media for political decisions was surely the first sector of application of communication studies because the activity of political propaganda has been ever thought as something affecting mainly the concrete citizenship of a nation, but other “external” variables (such as: state of international relationships of the Country, or other historical elements as wars or diplomatic alliances) were not adequately taken into consideration out of the idea that they could be “significant accessories” (instead of

“primary colours” for a latent social construction of the political imaginary). A same conception of “latency” (if we could define it so, but without any correspondence to the deterministic and hypodermic theory of communication) is just the unseen condition that characterizes in most recent years that “permanency” of the nature of the political communication as it was already recognized by S. Blumenthal (1980) when he refers to electoral campaigning. According to his known analysis, “a new electoral campaign begins the day after the conclusion of the previous political consultation”, and this means that practically “we live in a state of un-perceived permanency of communicative electoral fluxes”. The “consequences” are soon told: any aspects of national life could be so read in terms of persuasive actions directed to manipulate popular consensus just when the social defences are down; politicians are requested to prepare their imagine much before the starting time of electoral competition, and this implies a constant attention for their own public presentation combined with a huge economic availability in order to sustain the related costs; people (in spite to be recognized as citizens contributing to determinate public policies through their right of political representation) receive a continuous mediatic treatment that change them on the contrary in an elementary “audience” to make it enjoy and affiliate,

instead to convince and mobilize it (sometimes also through the use of emotional techniques). From these annotations, it's more evident therefore how it has been possible (also cause a larger range of reasons, and under other aspects) that in the present era of political communication some trends find principal place: spectacularization (the tendency to transform into spectacle the political activity and the phases of recruiting, formation and competition of politicians, especially the life of the leaders in their private and personal sphere); leaderization (strictly associated to the previous phenomenon, it manifests the concentration of resources and the gating of the public attention on a candidate, in representation of the values and policies of all his Party); personalization (it's the social attitude to be more interested and involved in a politician, due to his charismatic personal qualities and not exactly for his ideas).

Returning to our initial point, we can argue that today the procedures and communicative instances to advantage the political consensus seem particularly to have passed on not only the time borders of political persuasion, but also - and ever more - the space boundaries of the mediatic influence; on the other hand this occurs, not by chance, in the so named age of "cultural globalization" and in a growing situation of "participated

journalism”, in which the possibility to speak about any aspects of social life becomes an ordinary activity for “common” people (not exclusively for professional journalists) and available from any part of the globe. The effectiveness of a political campaign in a Country, in addition, becomes really not more under unique control of the campaign promoters, but more related to a major range of unmanageable factors which are spontaneously given by people displaced out that Country; this is the reason why political leaders and campaign specialists should have begun to take in better and expanded accuracy the image of the candidate given in the other Countries as if that citizenships were similarly affected by a same common political campaign. It happened for Obama, evidently because USA represents a nation-guide for the rest of the world, but in proportion it is something that it’s being replicated in Europe too (as we will demonstrate).

What should be now accentuated regards the nexus between the tools of propagandistic influence managed by leaders in search of electoral validation in their own Countries, and the “regime” of their State governance considered under a diplomatic “manipulated” perspective. But this is a very underestimate variable immediately linked to the recent developments of political communication that anyway should not be simply confused with a

traditional idea of “international collocation” of a State policy (as during the so called “Cold War” and the polarization of planet democracies divided for USA and for the ancient Soviet Union). It ought to be better definable, for precision, in terms of “enlarged” propaganda, to better give the meaning of the involvement of the globalized stage. In fact, State governance nowadays lives not only in a stronger relation to the political communication done to reach/perpetuate power thanks to the “inner” channels of a social community, but it goes to affects also the foreign social contexts in search of “external” support (and international legitimacy) for those actors (leaders in charge or politicians in general) who need to advantage the image they have constructed in front of their own citizens (or for counteract that revealed by own Oppositions).

In U.K., for example, Tony Blair was successful in restructuring Labour Party and guiding it to the electoral victory not before having studied communication in USA and having before “conquered” the favour of that national public opinion and a good support of a large part of american journalists. It’s just opposite to what happened in ‘30-‘40th, when international context put into alarm the italian leader of the time (Mussolini) for the reason of the growing counter-propaganda against fascist kind of national governance. And it’s what is occurring for other countries on the

same basis: a national “audience” should be convinced to think positively for a leader (voting him as candidate, justifying his governance, etc...) checking the state (image/reputation) of national identity on the international context. Therefore an analysis of the strategies of public accrediting by an increasing number of Prime Ministers (especially friendship they mutually strengthen: Berlusconi, Bush, Putin, Gheddafi, etc...) may deeply explain the “efficiency” of enlarged propaganda in contemporary period.

Considering Berlusconi, for example, it's clear he always presents his career as private businessman to legitimate himself as independent, efficient, uncorrupted, and his biography was surely the “great narration” that allowed him to win last Italian consultation, as already happened with the previous ones. Moreover, just the way in which he matches for the Italian audience his “traditional” political strategy (the fights against communists, wasters, magistrates) to the use of the international stage deserves a deeper glance under the “enlarged” propaganda perspective. Probably he could perceive the powerfulness of the diplomatic window on his skin since 1996 when journalists informed him about an important Italian prosecution against him during the final Press Conference of an European Meeting. The impact of this kind of events affects both national public opinion and the international

one, so that the “external” public opinion can contrast political communication directed to the “internal” one, consisting in fact in objective criticism emerging from independent journalism. But could also integrate it, as Berlusconi as soon learned. In fact personalization and spectacularization previously described are just animating also the international relationships of the national leaders distorting in a certain sense the uprightness of their same patriotic delegation. A crucial element is the meaning of the personal friendship between Berlusconi and Bush, and at the same time between Berlusconi and Putin, Berlusconi and Gheddafi, Berlusconi and Sarkozy, and so on... These are preferential relations that obviously better foster cooperation and peace, commercial developments and exchanges, but that are interpretable in primis as propaganda’s arms to magnify governments which can to be relied on to last a long time. The coincidental convergence of ideas and policies between the so quoted leaders, in addition, seem creating an international “casta”, an historical axe on the basis of the communicative success of the synergy.

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Servant leadership within the context of Prime Minister Erdogan's political communication discourse in 2002 elections in Turkey. Serving the society as customer consumers or citizen consumers.

Zeynep Hale Oner⁸²

Sovereignty and direct democracy were the popular terms in the 18th century. However, the occurrence of group conflict due to the challenge of stratification was the main concern of the 19th century. On the other hand, 20th century has accustomed us to the role of leadership due to the economic instability, war; technological changes and urbanization. The search for the values of security and equality has led to changes in the character of politics. Nowadays, the political communication and campaign communication is following the American pattern. The new dominating and rising trends all over the world are human rights, equal voice of the suppressed, cultural diversity, human dignity, economic globalization, and empowerment leading to

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emancipatory tradition. We face the changing role of the public that finds the effective voice in a direct and interactive relation with the chief state executives (cited in Ampuja, M., 2010). In late modernity however, life style politics took over as people began seeking happiness. Governance and activists' movements became significantly popular themes. Citizens started shaping and giving directions to the leaders as citizens give aim and purpose to the whole events in the world. Thus, redefinition of citizenship in terms of consumer activism searching power and choice has turned the customer consumers into citizen consumers. The emphasis is on the strengthening of the democratic control in the form of open dialogue with citizens, representation of public opinion in government through polls and local/regional citizen juries. The cultural change is towards creating legitimate stakeholders.

Within this framework, the emphasis on "Servant leadership" which is a post-modern leadership style based on the service of the leaders to the followers is worth analysis as an answer for the realities of the 21st century. Servant leadership is based on service to others with altruistic motives and desire to serve. The definition and merits of servant leadership will be explained in the following paragraphs.

It is the aim of this study to analyze the content of the political speeches of Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan during the period leading to his presidency to compare and contrast with the servant leadership discourse which may offer implications to explain his success factors in year 2002 elections. This study will analyze the prime minister's discourses on 'service' with respect to the themes/dimensions of servant leadership. Although there are other dimensions of servant leadership such as morality, inspiration, vision, service, relationship building, participation, altruism, empowerment, love, humility, trust, stewardship and persuasiveness: for the purposes of this study, Page and Wong's (2000) dimensions of servant leadership construct i.e. empowerment, service and vision will be analyzed.

Moreover, the analysis of the prime minister's speeches aims to define the context in which he uses the term 'service', what he means by that keyword, and if the meaning of his usage of the keyword has changed during that period. The explicit reference by the keywords as well as the inferred reference are analyzed in the content analysis. The qualitative content analysis will be based on the online archive of AK Party prepared by the party's media and public relations department to make a detailed and extensive analysis of the Prime minister's published speeches under the

topics of ‘ speeches to the citizens’, ‘ group meetings on Tuesdays’ and meetings with administrative province heads. The time frame of the analysis is between 01.04.2000 and 03.11.2002. This time framework encompasses the foundation of the AK party on 14 August 2001, the candidacy of Erdogan on 3 November 2002, the general elections on November 2002. Later on, his ministerial assignment on 9 March 2003 and assignment as a prime minister on 15 March 2003 have also been analysed.

Definition of Servant leadership:

Traditional and top to bottom functioning leadership models are unable to create adaptive solutions to deal with challenges. Derived from the principles of ecology, the leadership theories of today have to emphasize individual responsibility, long term perspective of developing capacities of individuals, and a sustainable future generation (Allen, K.E., Stelzner, S.P. and Wielkiewicz, M.R., 1998). The adaptive challenges of a changing world calls for human capital with an increased capacity to critically think, understand, define and solve problems to solve complex problems. The principles of ecological approach to leadership are

interdependence, open system, adaptation to influence rather than attempting to control the system. Holistic leadership thinking recognizes the world to be in constant flux and strives for synthesis which relies on intuition and creativity leading to a more integrated world. Thus this theory moves the locus of leadership from the skills of leaders to the innovative, contextual interaction in an entire social system. It analyses the role of leader as a catalyst to expedite the processes among many individuals through their independent actions to form a collective action (cited in Harter and Oner, 2011).

Servant leadership as an alternative to the 20th century traditional leadership models is gaining popularity all across the United States as it is highly supported by well-known authors such as Peter Senge (1990) and Stephen Covey (1994). The rising trend of participative management and empowerment of employees with an ethical leadership style, coupled with emphasis on learning and development go well aligned with the manifesto of servant leadership. Although Anglo-Saxon definitions of leadership have mainly focused on the influence process of leadership (cf. Anderson et. al., 2002), servant leadership functions by leaders' influence in terms of service to their followers. Greenleaf (1977) contended that great leaders are primarily motivated to help and

therefore serve others. As Cunningham (2002) states a leader is successful only if the served follower grows as a person. Greenleaf (1970) emphasized the caring nature of servant leaders to meet the highest priority needs of the employees being served as well as the less-abled of a society at large. Servant leadership, based on the service principle, has strong altruistic ethical overtones. In accordance with that principle, the servant leaders are attentive to the concerns of followers and empathize with them and moreover care and nurture them.

Velasquez (1992) suggested that benevolence, truthfulness, and humility are attributes of ethical leaders which prove servant leaders to be ethical. Based on this ethical nature of servant leadership, the altruistic base creates ground for the servant leaders to act morally and show concern for the best interests of the followers.

Spears (2002) proposed ten attributes to explain servant leadership: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community. (Notice that being an irritant does not appear on his list.)

Graham (1991) stressed the inspirational and moral dimensions of servant leaders and defended servant leadership as a value-

neutral paradigm unlike charismatic leadership. Although charismatic leadership practice is quite common in developing countries, there is a positive relationship between charismatic leadership and the need for leadership. This implies increased dependency for subordinates in the existence of charismatic leaders. Thus the possible effect of unquestioning obedience and absence of openness to criticism may result in detrimental consequences for the organization (cf. Anderson et al., 2002).

Servant leadership, based on personal trust and well developed relationships, is a humble means of affecting follower behavior unlike the use of charismatic abilities as a form of personal power (Bass, 1960). It triggers the influence mechanism of leaders on followers and motivates followers by facilitating service and stewardship (Sarkus, 1996). Servant leaders value service and relying on service, they endear the followers to the leaders in reciprocal relationships. Cialdini (2001) evaluates this reciprocation as a primary means of influence on the followers. However, this reciprocity is assumed to be a positive form of reciprocation as the ultimate goal is that the followers will respond to this reciprocal relationship by serving others in the same manner the servant leader serves him. Thus it is neither ownership by the servant leaders nor obedience to the servant leaders, but the

exchange is in the form of service and accountability to the followers and the stakeholders the organization serves. Thus Greenleaf (1977) envisioned a servant leader as one who facilitates achievement of a shared vision via the personal development and empowerment of followers.

Servant leadership creates a sense of community with participative management based on shared decision making power. Robert Greenleaf (1977) defined this style of leadership as one where a leader truly takes into consideration the needs of others and makes it a priority to empower and develop these individuals in a spirit of true service. Servant leadership linked to the emotional well-being of employees takes a disciplined view about ethical and caring approach to individuals (Spears, 1995). De Pree (2002) broadened the definition of leadership emphasizing the moral and trustworthy nature of servant leaders; Page and Wong (2000) incorporated the ideals of empowerment, team building, participatory management, vision and service ethic into the servant leadership philosophy; Barbuto and Wheeler (2002) emphasized altruistic calling, emotional support, wisdom, persuasion and organizational stewardship as the basis for servant leadership and finally Patterson (2003) defined constructs of love, humility,

altruism, vision, trust, service and empowerment to be servant leadership values.

Servant leadership based on foresight, vision, ethics, care, empowerment and communication creates reciprocity on the part of the workers as well as customers. Reciprocity based on such values as trust, openness, and loyalty, and results in value-based interactions characteristics (Yukl, 2005). Greenleaf's idea of serving followers implies preparing them for what is about to happen, for the future. Servant leaders have to propose intelligent thoughts and ideas to enhance operations, have the courage to question, disagree without confrontation, defend their point of views and beliefs even if they are unpopular with the crowds. Critical thinking might be disturbing temporarily, yet it presumes to serve long term interests.

Servant leaders will assume that doing something now for someone can deliver much of what is conventionally called the future (see Frick & Spears, 1996, p. 74). Perception of the future will depend on awareness. Awareness varies among individuals, yet it is developable. Foresight is filling in the blanks, bringing the future into the present by our efforts. This then is the attitude of the servant leaders, namely to build one's awareness of the connecting links in the form of progressive events from the past

into the present and future. Awareness that comprehends the future views time as a process and brings the future and the past into the present. At that stage, critical minds set the stage for development. Questions define what is not known and this opens up the search. If we ask questions stemming from critical thinking, we are likelier to get both the right means and the right ends – or at least recognize that we have the wrong means or the wrong ends.

In any case, the greatest foresight of all is the influence one has over the future by helping the growth of subsequent generations. The future can only be shaped and radically altered by the kinds of people being prepared now for the future. It is the servant leader's vision to paint a big dream – a dream that will last – and assign the new generation a goal to direct their energies and stretch their horizons.

Methodology

The speeches of Prime Minister Erdogan as displayed on the AK party official party website. All the public speeches have been archived and they were qualitatively analyzed. The content analysis is more concerned with the contents of the text, and the number of

words and expressions, discourse analysis is more concerned with the form, structure and meanings of the text. Johnson and Duberley (2000, p. 59) identify three approaches to textual analysis i.e. positivist, linguistic and interpretative approaches. In this qualitative research, I chose the positivist approach, that is the nature of the text is considered objective and the research method is close to identifying the non-random variation in the material. The role of the researcher is an outsider.

Functional definition of servant leadership dimensions in context

For the inferred implicit analysis of the content analysis of the speeches, the following functional definitions have been referred to. The definitions are based on a study carried out in Istanbul as part of my doctoral study (Oner, 2008).

Service: provide resources to help citizens reach their aims and cater the citizen needs.

Vision: leadership as responsibility, appreciation of others' achievements.

Empowerment: Participative decision making, community building, social responsibility for the society, delegation and consultation, setting realistic targets, problem solver, encourages risk taking, emotional pacifier, gives explanation about happenings.

Content analysis of speeches of Prime Minister Erdogan

The time frame of the analysis is between 01.04.2000 and 03.11.2002. This time framework encompasses the foundation of the AK party on 14 August 2001, the candidacy of Erdogan on 3 November 2002, the general elections on November 2002. Later on, his assignment to the parliament on 9 March 2003 and assignment as a prime minister on 15 March 2003 have also been analysed.

Period 1	Period 2	#of speeches	service	vision	Common decision / social responsibility / target/ authority	citizen
01.04.00	19.04.11	n/a	1925	884	14/13/2175/1188	2248
02.07.07	19.04.11	n/a	659	406	5/4/668/350	740
15.03.03	2.07.07	n/a	1158	412	9/7/1418/720	1367
15.03.03	21.11.06	n/a	1036	358	6/7/1288/667	1217
03.11.02	15.03.03	n/a	29	13	0/0/32/41	33
14.08.01	3.11.02	n/a	80	53	0/0/57/77	142
01.04.00	03.11.02		80	53	0/0/57/77	142

Total number of speeches as of 19.04.2011 as displayed is: 5108

Source: <http://www.akparti.org.tr/haber-arsiv>

Themes

The first period that is 01.04.2000 and 03.11.2002 is characterized by the following themes:

The humanistic approach with an overtone of trust, hope, love, national values, humility to praise the citizens.

The term service is translated into education, security, equity, health and social/economic change. Trust is contextualized in the law, government, financial and political system.

The empowerment of local authorities, common good of the whole without discrimination, people questioning the system and functioning of the government.

The will of the nation and power of the citizens is another theme.

The controlling/supervisory role of the state. The “happy people” concept. The citizens in the participatory political system with democracy, supremacy of the law and courts and individualized cultural rights.

Prime Minister’s quotations such as “The people should be praised to praise the state”. “One who serves pays the cost”. Sign of political virtue is in context.

The second period that is 03.II.2002 and 15.03.2003 is characterized by the following themes:

Service is exemplified in terms of various projects such as AKIM (project on effective communication with the citizens), quality of life, social services, women and family issues.

Participatory democracy for structural reform and transformation to make life easy and lean state.

Pride of the nation, will of the nation, citizens wishes, primacy of the democracy are the repeating themes. Trust, equal opportunity and self criticism are the other encountered themes.

Prime Minister quotes: “Solve the problem and let live the nation”.

Changes in the content of the speeches between 2003 and 2007

Although the themes of authority, call for authority and power of the citizens to realize the transformation and stability of the country, the call for community building is essential. A quotation from the Prime Minister during this period is ‘We did not come to be a master to the nation but we came to serve the nation’. ‘Service to the citizens is service to Allah’.

The emphasis is still on education, health, fairness and security of the nation with an underlying emphasis on hope, opportunity, peace and stability. The vision keyword in terms of 20 years, 30 years long term plans, target setting such as Turkey as the number six nation in Europe (expressed in a speech on 01.03.2007), and facts related to increase in income per capita figures are the new emerging themes. The future is shaped by ombudsman projects, nongovernmental organizations i.e. promotion of new ones with government tax incentives, emergence of a new citizen in villages by projects to improve life in social, environmental and health related issues in villages (KOYDES) .

The emphasis has shifted towards local democracy, societal consensus, strengthening of the national identity, constitutional state based on democracy, laicism, social and legal rights.

Limitations of the study

Assumption is that all the speeches were uploaded in the system for any given time frame between 2000 and 2011. His speeches may have increased by them and that gave him the opportunity to give more visibility to the usage of keywords.

Conclusion

Based on the content analysis of the speeches, I may conclude that the empowerment dimension of the servant leadership displayed in the political sense in the prime minister's pattern is getting powerful after 2007. The service and vision dimensions of the servant leadership construct started getting mentioned between 15.03.2003 and 21.11.2006. However, the term has increasingly been in use more after 2007 nearly doubling in 4 years of time period. The same pattern is valid for vision. The empowerment analyzed in terms of keywords such as authority has an increasing tendency in the years thereafter 2003 which indicates the trend toward citizen consumer. It is also worth noticing the emphasis on

humanity and humility aspects of servant leadership in the prime minister's speeches.

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Deciphering the Code of (recent) Turkish Foreign Policy. The 2011 Libyan Episode as Case Study

Ali Fuat Borovali⁸³

It could be asked whether it is appropriate to initiate the proceedings with a reference to Bernard -Henri Levy , the Parisian philosophe⁸⁴ . Levy has been on record that he finds Turkey’s position in the Libyan affair, as nothing less than “shameful”⁸⁵ ... What Levy finds distasteful, given his declared commitment to the Benghazi opposition, that Turkey has not been forceful enough in support of the French anti-Ghaddafi stance⁸⁶. In fact , Levy was not the first person to regard the Turkish position

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⁸⁴ This kind of reminds me of the familiar story about someone travelling in Ireland, and asking the pub owner what is the ‘shortest way to Dublin’. The publican’s answer: “You don’t start from here...”

⁸⁵ In fairness to Levy, Turkey is not the only “shameful” country in question. That accolade is shared by Algeria as well. Even the United States does not escape the wrath of M. Levy. For him the American policies are simply “meaningless”... But the hottest place in Hell is reserved for the African Union (from an article Levy has published in El País, the Spanish newspaper; recounted in Aksam, 18 April, 2011)

⁸⁶ On the cover of Newsweek April 11, 2011 , the caption reads:

“ The Man Who Sent Sarkozy to War “

According to Newsweek, it was the philosophe who managed to convince Sarkozy that saving the Benghazi people was the morally essential thing to do.

as dithering and/or sitting on the fence⁸⁷. Given Levy's track record on moralistic issues concerning foreign policy, the whole thing was not a surprise.

Actually most people (I mean the attentive public)were somewhat baffled as to what was going on with regard to Libya, in those heady days in early March⁸⁸. In terms of the chronology of the Arab Spring, the Libyan (or more specifically Benghazi) uprising had come on the heels of two successive (and by all accounts successful) uprisings elsewhere –Tunisia and Egypt ...These had turned out to be relatively smooth processes, but it came as no surprise that Libya was going to be different – a tough nut to crack... After the unexpectadly mild scenarios drawn out in Tunis and Tahrir Square, which one could say was too -good -to -be- true, now was the time, apparently, to crash headlong into a wall...

While Levy was in Benghazi , in person and physically, in early March, using his satellite phone to call his good friend Nicholas

⁸⁷ In Turkish parlance this is called, in reference to the Ottoman cuisine, “ let's see to it that we burn neither the shish nor the kebab...”

⁸⁸ The word “baffled” has reminded me of Michael Lind's (almost) seminal article back in the heady days of early 2003, where he started with the opening sentences : “America's allies and enemies alike are baffled. What is going on in the United States? Who is making foreign policy? And what are they trying to achieve ?...”

From “ How Neoconservatives Conquered Washington-and Launched a War “ www.antiwar.com, April 10, 2003 { the day after the capture of Baghdad, and the notorious falling down of the Saddam statue in Firdavsi Square }.

(Sarkozy, that is), relaying him the message that a Benghazi delegation was on its way to Paris, and would he be good enough to receive them at the Elysée, there were simultaneous developments across the Atlantic—in Washington D.C. and along the Washington–New York axis . The major actors there – in a similar moralistic vein– had been the likes of Susan Rice (America’s U.N. delegate) , Samantha Power (of the National Security Council), and no less than Hillary Clinton herself. In other words , what was being done along the Benghazi –Paris axis was being performed by a trio (or a triumvirate ?) of powerful American women, trying to nudge the President towards humanitarian intervention .

The rendition of this background is somewhat necessary in the attempt to understand and make sense of Turkey’s Libya policy during March 2011 and since...It is almost certain that these goings-on affected the initial figuration of policy in those days... Who was making (Libya) policy in the West, and why ? .. In the effective Western capitals of Washington, Paris, London, Berlin, and even Rome, what was being decided on, and what was the reasoning behind those decisions ? .. What I can claim from the restricted information available is that the Turkish perspective was being formed against a fuzzy background with regard to Western intentions—on both sides of the Atlantic. It was indeed quite

difficult, even amongst academic circles, to fathom Paris, London and Berlin in those instances. Washington was a bit more straightforward in Turkish mode of assessment.

At this point, it might be advisable to say a few things about the structures and mechanics of Ankara's foreign policy-making—particularly the foregoing era of AKP rule... The mode of foreign policy-making can be said to have been crystallized during the Libyan crisis in the sense that the various layers of decisional authority have become somewhat more evident. The policy in this case was formulated at the levels of:

- the Prime Minister (Mr. R.-T. Erdogan) = PM
- the Foreign Minister (Mr. A. Davutoglu)= FM
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (known as Balgat, in tune with the district in Ankara where it is located) = MFA

If we apply this “level -of- analysis” methodology to the Libya crisis, and the modality of Turkish policy-making, we have to ask from which level / or levels, the ultimate policy has been emanating from. It seems quite evident that a good part of the Libya policy has been geared to the preferences of the PM. Of course, we cannot disregard the consultation with the FM, and the input of the MFA. What seems to have transpired in this case has been the more – than-usual involvement by the PM. The discourses emanating from

Ankara during the Libya crisis have all the marks and bearings of the PM, as we know him...For instance:

(...) Libya belongs to the Libyans. Our concern is for the Libyan people as a whole. We are not among those who are interested in Libya for the sake of its natural resources...

Now in terms of high-level diplomatic analysis this obviously sounds rather mainstream, at the minimum. Whether the implications of the PMs statements (which by the way were uttered at a conference in Medina / Saudi Arabia) which comes to mean in plain language that the Westerners are involved with Libya purely because of oil. It is hard to believe that the PM – though not a Talleyrand, or a Holbrooke—is quite an experienced hand in all manners of policies, well into his eighth year as PM. So how do we account for the initial reactions such as “what does NATO have to do with Libya?”

There are those who tend to portray such instances as partly reflecting the Neo-Ottomanist concerns of the FM, and the diligent fine-tuning that is demanded thereof. But if I may venture an informed speculation of my own, I would say that the Turkish Embassy in Paris was working overtime trying to monitor the goings-on at the Elysée and Quai d’Orsay –with particular focus on the message traffic between Benghazi and Paris. My accumulated

impression in this instance is that the Embassy relayed to Ankara the kind of deal ‘con-cocted’ along the Benghazi – Paris axis, sponsored by our friend than Bernard Henri, almost in broad daylight...

Looked at this way, the suggestion is that Ankara would have founded it extremely impractical to follow the lead in a project clearly branded “ Levy & Sarkozy “... Recalling that the PM – reknowned he is for the famous Davos ‘one minute ‘ episode and aftermath of the tragic Gaza Flotilla event –would indeed be highly reluctant to follow a lead of that sort... Even to be seen in such company and to be associated with such perceived motivations right at the outset would clearly be anathema to the PM. When the eyes of the world, and especially the Arab World (despite the position taken by the Arab League prior to that) were on NATO capitals—including Berlin and Ankara – it was important to convey the message of a non-committal Turkey, at least not committed to a leadership con-cocted in Paris, with the bold L & S imprint heavily placed on it...

The point about French leadership cannot be overemphasized (French rather than American, leadership). Controversial at the best of times, France leading the pack would be fraught with all kinds of difficulties from the very start. In fact, when the Paris

meeting on March 19 (Saturday) was called, Ankara had not been invited. The importance of this event cannot be overlooked. As to why Paris chose not to invite Turkey to the proceedings on that fateful Saturday, the logical explanation is not hard to come by. Of course, when someone says “ what ‘s NATO got to do with it ! “ , and when you are planning an airstrike that very evening, it would be wise to avoid potentially awkward guests. What if Turkey engages in certain – to be – publicized confrontations? Especially when Berlin turns out to be adamantly opposed to any kind of military intervention—humanitarian or otherwise.

Just to recall the chronology of the times – those fateful days in March – one would have to go back to March 15 (which was a Tuesday) when Obama convened an NSC meeting. This was the urgent / emergency times-- the Qaddafi forces closing in on Benghazi... With horrific bloodletting a distinct possibility, the “ humanitarians “ won the day, and it was decided to support (and make sure others support as well) the Lebanese -proposed resolution. Two days later, March 17 (Thursday, St. Patrick’s Day no less) so the launching of SCR 1973... So looking back to the fateful week’s chronology, March 15 - 17 - 19, we see a process leading up to the first batch of airstrikes on the evening of Saturday March 19 – just after sunset.. That the non-invitation occurred on

such a day, obviously created certain amount of irritation, at the “levels” cited above—PM / FM / MFA ...

As the NATO - card had been in the offing, it was not long before that the military authority was transferred to NATO, and vested in U.S. Admiral J. Stavridis... And during this time, certain unusual things began to happen. The NATO enterprise turned into what is called “ the coalition of the willing “, and more significantly perhaps, Washington deciding to take the “ backseat “, with the argument which can be summed up as :

“I have two ongoing operations – Afghanistan and Iraq – on my plate. Both happen to be Moslem countries. I can not take on – and seen to be taking on – another Moslem – country operation. So please excuse me this time, I know I can count on your understanding, etc.!”

Of course, this “backseat driving” position imperiled the mechanics of the operation, because the kind of technological capacity (like cruise missiles / Tomahawks) can only be furnished by the USA. So the operation has gone willy-nilly, as we are heading towards a long –hot-summer !

It is kind of apparent that in the Turkish position nowadays, there is an element of ‘ I told you so ‘... And, the moans and groans coming from all kinds of places –including Rome—indicate that a

retrospective is underway with all that it implies apart from the usual suspects. Could it be that what had been seen as wavering at the outset, even deserving the accolade “shameful”, has been kind of vindicated?

There are those who think that the pragmatic aspect of relations with the Arab world, as well as Iran, is of paramount importance and / or highly determinative of Turkey’s attitudes. It would be true to say that the Gulf finances (particularly that of Qatar) is a major consideration affecting policy. The much-heralded Turkish investment -construction projects (as well as the 25,000 workers involved) in Libya are also known to be effective considerations. But to say that such factors ultimately determine the fundamental course of policy would be missing the point. Therefore, one could state openly and clearly that the policy over Libya has been reflective of the PM’s ideological prism produced out of the synergistic interaction among the “three-levels” in Ankara, rather than anything else.

But then, if that is the case, how do we explain the May 3 ‘turnabout’?.. What happened on May 3 was captured by International Herald Tribune in succinct manner.. “Turkish Leader Says Qaddafi Must Step Down Immediately”...And under the caption it read

In his harshest comments to date on the situation in Libya, Prime Minister {Erdogan} of Turkey, a regional power broker, told reporters here on Tuesday that Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi had chosen “blood, tears, oppression” and that he must “immediately step down” ...⁸⁹

The May 3-turnabout has drawn widespread commentary. In one of them, Anthony Shadid is seen offering an interesting perspective:

“In a few short years, Turkey has emerged as the Middle East’s most dynamic power. But weeks of Turkish diplomacy in Libya has collapsed... and Turkey’s prime minister bluntly called for Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi to step down”.⁹⁰

Framed in such strong terms as “collapse of diplomacy”, the situation obviously demands some explanation. But what is the question ? The question, by all accounts, is what or who is behind this radical turn of events. How was it that Turkey (or the PM for

6 Direct quote from Erdogan, as noted by NY Times reporter :

“Muammar Qaddafi, instead of taking our suggestions into account, refraining from shedding blood or seeking for way to maintain the territorial unity of Libya, chose blood, tears, oppression and attacks on his own people”.

⁷ “Unrest Around the Arab World Endangers Turkey’s Newfound Influence”, International Herald Tribune ,May 4, 2011. Shadid continues his glowing account of Turkey’s role in the region :

“From Iraq to North Africa, Turkey’s growing profile in the Arab world has emerged as one of the region’s most remarkable dynamics.”

⁸ Richard Brody, The New Yorker, March 25, 2011.

that matter) sitting on the fence so far, suddenly deciding to throw its lot with the anti- Ghaddafi coalition ?...

As scholars / academicians, we are familiar with situations where no amount of theory and / or structural analysis would suffice in providing plausible explanation. This is one of those cases which calls for journalistic hard - information . When even soft-information is unavailable, then we have no option but resorting to what is known as informed speculation... Therefore at this point I will venture an explanation along the lines of deciphering the code...

What seems to have transpired over the period leading to the May 3 reversal is that, as NATO has increasingly found itself mired in hard trouble—militarily or otherwise, having to raise the stakes like a losing poker-player, one would have to summon all available resources. And the experienced / seasoned diplomats of the West would have thought who would be near to the ears of Ankara, in an effective way. The answer would not have been long in coming: the Emir of Qatar !!.. Therefore, it is plausible to suppose that the Emir, who seems to have made a radical commitment to the Western cause, to the point of engaging in the military side as well, has ringed the door bells of Ankara and obviously was not turned down.

Ultimately, we may have to come full-circle to where we started...And the question posed by *The New Yorker*, incredulous as it may sound :

“Did Bernard-Henri Lévy Take NATO to War?”

Though the said magazine is sometimes noted for its flippant approach to “ profound-matters-of-State” and the like, it is not something that needs to be abruptly dismissed. The article containing the above title was posted on March 25, a few days after the fateful Paris meeting. Within the article posted by Richard Brody, there is a reference to an article which appeared in *Le Monde* on March 10. The date is important because March 10 Thursday happened to be even before the March 15 NSC meeting in Washington. In that article there is reference to “France’s breaking of diplomatic relations with Qaddafi’s government and recognition of the national transitional council as Libya’s legitimate government.” The announcement having been made in Paris after President Sarkozy met with the representatives of the NTC.

But the highlight of the article in *Le Monde*, so far as our ‘case study’ is concerned is this:

Soon thereafter, Bernard-Henri Lévy, who was present at that meeting, specified that the new Libyan ambassador to France

would be accredited “in the coming days.” He added, “The French embassy in Libya will be transferred from Tripoli to Benghazi.”

According to *Le Monde*, which is also known as the serious paper – perhaps *The Times of Paris*, or maybe the *Cumhuriyet* of the French capital – Bernard-Henri (otherwise known as BHL in Parisian parlance) is responsible for the following quotes as well :

“We are the first to say that Qaddafi is no longer the legal representative. It’s an event of major importance” ...

“...the head of state affirmed this, at the beginning of the meeting, very forcefully. The emissaries {NTC} were surprised by the clarity of the French position.”

In the same time-frame, *Le Figaro* also produced accounts of the “*les aventures de BHL*” –Renaud Giraud offering a reconstruction of the events. While in Benghazi in the early part of the Libyan episode, BHL met the leaders of NTC and “promised to do everything he could” to get them to meet le Président. In continuation, Giraud notes:

“That evening, from his satellite phone, he managed to reach Nicolas Sarkozy: Would you be willing to meet with the Libyan Massouds?” The President of the Republic immediately agreed.”

Apart from the overall significance of what Giraud had to recount, there is the slight issue of what / or who the Massouds might be. It is an obvious reference to Ahmad Shah Massoud, who has been tragically and brutally terminated, upon the orders of a certain Bin Laden, on September 9, 2001—two days before the infamous event...

It is rather pleasant to note that Ahmed Shah { who has been portrayed as the Che Guevara of the Afghan hinterland } seems to enjoy the moral force / charisma of the years gone by... But whether there would be a Libyan Massoud – with the requisite qualities, photogenics included – would seem to be highly unlikely...The likes of Guevara, Shah Massoud, JFK and / or M. Kemal are very hard to come by – whichever historical sampling method we choose to employ...

What is said here is not to assess / evaluate the actions and interventions of BHL. In fact, there may be quite a few positive things to say about the pro-active stance he has taken. The point at issue is that, whatever the merits or demerits of BHL's access to the corridors and alleyways of power in Paris (hence the formulation / timing / and implementation of French foreign policy) –with certain reflections upon NATO decision-making process, Ankara's

attitude to such goings-on is unlikely to be conducive and amenable.

Whichever way we look at it, and whichever “level” in Ankara we may wish to uphold, it is quite clear that even the mere mention of the possibility that, it was after all none-other-than “BHL who took NATO to war”, would not make high premium in places where decision-making authority is located in Ankara. The Libyan intervention, which may have been perceived as BHL’s war at the very outset, may have squandered some part of the enthusiasm even before the project’s initial take-off.

Part IV
Intersections

Studying Changing Political Leadership from the Late 1980's to the Present. How to analyze party leader representations in their historical and societal context?

Mari K. Niemi⁹¹

The role of party leaders has become more visible as the struggle for power between the parties is increasingly framed as a battle between party leaders in media publicity. Studies carried out in several countries show that the overall visibility of central politicians, like party leaders and prime ministers, has grown during the last approximately fifty decades (Langer 2007; Mughan 2000; Perna et al. 2009; Poguntke & Webb 2005).

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1. Introduction

The relationship between politics and media is inseparable. People depend on the media to get information about politics and equally also the political and other elites depend on the media for information about people's opinions – and for reaching out to the people. (Strömbäck 2008: 228–230; Langer 2007: 372).

Media publicity offered by party leader successions is one important arena for formulating political leadership and leadership ideals. Even though party leader elections are events reported intensely across the democracies of the world, there are relatively few studies on the subject (Bynander & 't Hart 2007: 47–48). Since the late 1980's, party leader selection processes have turned into widely reported media events also in Finland.

To analyze and explain further the changes in party leader representations and leader ideals it is important to recognize the elements which influence both the leader succession processes and our understanding of political leaders. In this article I suggest that it is necessary to scrutinize political leadership in its historical, societal and organizational circumstances. Recognizing the various elements of the operational landscape helps us to both understand and explain the changes taken place in party leader ideals and in

leader representations. Furthermore, this approach is needful also in distinguishing the temporary blips in leader ideals from more fundamental changes.

Representations of political leadership in the media are deeply connected to the political party in question – its culture, history and leader traditions – and the overall situation the party is in at that current historical moment. For example, the competitive standing of the party or its previous leader's success while in office will in all likelihood affect the topical debate on desirable leader qualities.

Epochal political decisions and events, like in Finland's case for example membership in the European Union in 1995, have sometimes implicated the idea of desirable party leader qualities. Current politics may affect the leader ideals constantly, as membership in the EU did by highlighting the importance of each party leader candidate's knowledge of languages, international experience and connections. Sometimes, however, the influence is just temporary.

In this article I will present my proposal for factors and elements that I find important to include in any analysis studying leadership in a historical perspective. I will present a classification of three main categories of environmental and contextual elements I find

necessary to take into account in analyzing changing representations of party leaders in the media. Leader ideals and representations are discussed in view of the reporting on party leader elections of the three main Finnish political parties 1987–2010.⁹²

2. Changes in the operational landscape

As an example of the variety and nature of changes in terms of party leader elections, I will next concisely describe two separate leader elections of one of the largest political parties in Finland, the Social Democratic Party (SDP). One of the elections is from 1987 and the other from 2008. These two elections are illuminating examples of the changes that have happened during the past decades, as the procedure in the party leader succession from 1987 was as

⁹² This article is part of my PhD study, in which I analyze changes which have taken place in party leader ideals in Finnish media publicity. The focus is on the three main Finnish political parties – National Coalition Party, Centre Party and Social Democratic Party – and the media publicity around the elections of their leaders in 1987–2010. The research material consists of the reporting of three large Finnish daily newspapers (Aamulehti, Helsingin Sanomat and Turun Sanomat) and one tabloid (Iltalehti) during 13 successions which have taken place in the period under study. The number of party congresses in that time frame is 36.

conventional in those days as the drama seen in 2008 is in the present day.

After briefly comparing those two cases I will analyze the changes in the operational landscape⁹³ based on the changes in three different areas:

1. Changes in the role and standing of party leaders
2. Changes in the political culture and traditions of the parties
3. Changes in the role of the media and in the style of reporting

SDP's leader elections: from private occasion to public media event. In the spring of 1987, the long-time leader (since 1975) of the SDP and prime minister of several governments, Kalevi Sorsa, was reticent about his future plans. For weeks there were growing assumptions in the news media that he might be inclined to leave office. Finally Sorsa announced his resignation by informing the

⁹³ Inspired by J.L. Gaddis's book "The Landscape of History" (2002) I use the term landscape instead of environment or context when referring to the changes in the societal, political, historical and juridical circumstances.

members of the party. The very same day when his abdication was in the news, the name of the future party leader, Pertti Paasio, son of old SDP pioneer Rafael Paasio, already emerged in the headlines. All this happened before a public discussion of Sorsa's successors had even started. To put it explicitly, competition for the leadership actually never started. The only rival candidate, Vappu Taipale, the first female candidate in the history of SDP's leader elections, applied for the office after a majority of the party congress members had already announced their support for Paasio.

In practice, the "competition" was mainly symbolic in nature and there was no real public debate on the subject. During the entire process the power was strictly in the hands of the party's leading politicians. Both journalists and the general public were able to take part in the process only when the decision was virtually final.

Approximately 20 years later, in the spring of 2008, the situation was fundamentally different. SDP's party leader at the time, Eero Heinäluoma, revealed his resignation in a public speech. His unexpected announcement showed great showmanship and gave a kick-start for an extended media event, as nine candidates (four of them women) applying for the office toured around the country, campaigning for their election.

The duration of the process had become notably longer. In 1987 all was over in less than six weeks, but in 2008 the running time was approximately four months. The media was an active participant during the whole process, framing the campaign and evaluating the candidates. In Great Britain, increased competitiveness of leader elections has been tied in with the trend towards greater openness in the party leader selection process (Punnet 1992: 155, 163). As SDP's example shows, the same trend can be seen in Finland as well.

Also the outcome of the election was notably different from anything that had ever come before, as in June 2008 the SDP chose, for the first time in its history, a woman, Jutta Urpilainen (32), as the chairman. Whereas Pertti Paasio, (48) the son of Sorsa's predecessor, had been like a personification of the traditional party leader – an experienced male parliamentarian and the leader of the parliamentary faction – Jutta Urpilainen was quite something else. This former schoolteacher and second term parliamentarian was the youngest among the candidates and politically less experienced than most of her eight competitors. This time, however, the differences in the candidates' experience, opinions or skills did not create any in-depth conversation. As

Helsingin Sanomat (5.6.2008) analyzed in its accurate leading article, the essential qualities emphasized in the public debate were characteristics relating to the leader candidates' images such as age, gender and communication skills.

Gender became an important issue in the debate, but the arguments were new. The traditional demands for gender equality were often replaced by utility views: a relatively young female leader might improve the party's image, allure young voters and enjoy positive attention in the media – and thereby bring SDP back into government.

Changes in the role and standing of party leaders

Since the early 1980's, the regime type of the Finnish political system has gradually evolved affecting also the role of party leaders, especially in the largest parties. In the year 2000 the new constitution 'parliamentarized' the process of forming a new government after a general election, since the president was now deprived of most of the prerogatives that were typical of the previous semi-presidential system. According to an informal agreement between parliamentary groups, the leader of the biggest

party in the parliament will be the first individual offered the chance of taking on this responsibility. (Paloheimo 2004: 248–251, 255)

As Heikki Paloheimo (2004) argues, the competition in general elections between the largest parties has increasingly become a competition for the position of the next prime minister. Debate on the relative merits of rival candidates for the premiership is thus a significant new feature in Finnish election campaigns. (Ibid.: 258) Interestingly, similar elements have emerged also in the reporting of party leader elections, as they have gained the features of a sort of primary election for the party's prime minister candidate. Journalistic analyses of desirable leader qualities have followed the change in the party leader's role: the ability to charm over party factions has become a more important quality in a leader than before.

Since the 1980's, there has been a growing tendency to emphasize the personal role of leaders as figureheads of their party, as partisan dealignment and ideological convergence between the parties have given space for the personalization of politics. On the other hand, the personalization of politics, in combination with the declining role of party organizations, has also enhanced the autonomy of party leaders within their own parties. (Paloheimo 2004: 263, 256–257)

It is important to notice that the concept of an ideal party leadership is not universal, not even in one country at one particular time, although some elements of it may be. One example of this is the deep-seated idea that different parties need different kinds of leaders. In the Finnish public debate, for example, there were serious doubts in 1991 whether SDP's leader candidate, elegantly dressed banker Ulf Sundqvist was too posh to become a leader of the socialist party. The conventions and ideals related to age and gender are fitting examples of the changes which have taken place since the late 1980's. The ideal age of a party leader has lowered, and the leadership positions of large political parties have become a truly accessible post also for female candidates.

Changes in the political culture and traditions of the parties

In the three traditionally largest Finnish parties the role of the leader has changed notably. Even though many features are national in nature, the general picture is very similar to other western European democracies in terms of the growing visibility and political independence and influence of the party leaders (see Mughan, A. 2000, 19).

Between the First and Second World Wars, Finnish political parties moved little by little towards a more centralised party executive as the party organisations and the leaders of the party gained power at the expense of weakening parliamentary factions. However, until approximately the mid-1970's it was still typical that the leaders of all major Finnish parties worked as the heads of their organizations while the party's strong politicians, like ministers and central parliamentarians, were responsible for the party's everyday politics. (Mylly 1989: 344–346; Vares 2007: 204; Jokinen 2011: 538–539).

Generally speaking the parties have loosened their practices regarding voting in their party congresses. By convention, a consensual solution to the choice of party leader was sought beforehand, so the actual voting in the party congresses was often only a formality. As the outcomes of leader elections in party congresses are more rarely predetermined, there is more space for journalistic discussions, like interpretations of the needs of the parties and the qualities of the candidates, than before.

As also the examples of SDP's party leader elections show, one notable change took place in the publicity of the party leader

elections: they are now more open to the public eye. It has for example become common practice to organize imposing campaign tours for the candidates, which indeed invites the media to join in. Interestingly, many of the changes in leader succession conventions have actually prepared the way for the media to participate in the process.

Changes in the role of the media and in the style of reporting

The Finnish media landscape has undergone major changes during the last few decades. For example, competition between the various means of communication has increased notably and the formerly so vital party press has nearly vanished. (Pernaa 2007: 73–74; 77–79; 102–105.)

One important modification, however, has occurred in the style of reporting. According to Maria Kaisa Aula, Finnish journalism shifted during the 1980's from a fairly loyal, respectful and polite attitude towards politicians to a more challenging, critical and independent approach. This kind of intervention of the media into political processes is parallel to similar changes seen in other western countries. (Aula 1991.)

The change of attitude is evident also in the reporting of party leader elections as journalists have become active participants in the selection process framing the campaign and evaluating the candidates. In their reporting of SDP's new leader in 2008, several journalists expressed openly their disappointment about the candidates: they were described as boring, colourless and even low quality. According to journalists, they lacked "star potential" and their campaign tour around Finland was criticised for being too tiresome and lame.

Media publicity of leader elections is a felicitous example of the way the media, for example newspaper editors in their leading articles, reflect and re-shape the understanding of the ideal qualities of party leaders. In editorials, the leader candidates' media skills and abilities as public performers have become publicly expressed requirements for party leaders.

Interestingly, Pertti Paasio's slight stutter and somewhat threadbare presence did not seem to harm his political career before he was elected SDP's party leader in 1987. However, during his period in office these qualities became the object of public criticism, probably reflecting the growing demand for smooth and

distinguished public performances and the leaders' role as the figureheads of their party.

3. New landscape – new party leader ideals?

The competition in general elections between the biggest parties is now increasingly a competition for the position of the next prime minister in Finland as well. This, together with the leaders' strengthened political standing in their party organizations is reflected in the selection process. The topical question concerning possible future prime ministers seems to be whether the candidate might be able to succeed in both: in activating the members of their own party and in being at least acceptable – or hopefully even magnetic – in the eyes of others.

In the recent public debate on party leaders in Finland the belief that personal charisma and media appeal are increasingly important qualities in a leader seems to prevail. There is, however, a rather limited amount of research about the so called party-leader effect; whether popular leaders really act as vote-magnets for their parties

(see Bean & Mughan 1989: 1171; Jones & Hudson 1996: 230, 236, 244).

The tendency to accentuate the importance of a leader's personal qualities is naturally not an exclusively Finnish phenomenon. Jenssen and Aalberg have asked insightfully: could it be that charisma becomes important just because both politics and journalists and in the end also the public believe it to be important? (2006: 249, 253)

As Ana Inés Langer has pointed out, the personalization of politics raises also valid normative questions on the distribution of political power in the future. Might the focus on leaders' personalities affect the quality of leadership as it is feared to belittle the criteria for the selection of candidates? (Langer 2007: 372). Although the concern may be justified, it is important to analyze the possible changes without negative presuppositions.

It is worth asking how the growing aspiration to anticipate leader candidates' media potential might influence the terms with which one is opted to become a member of the political elite. It is equally important to identify the elements of the party leader selection process that have not changed and ask what kinds of leader ideals they support.

Alterations in ideal leadership qualities and in concrete leader choices may have unpredictable – and not necessarily negative – consequences. Taking politicians' personal image and media appearance more seriously may have given the advantage to certain types of candidates. In the case of Finland, for example, there is at least slight evidence that growing value given to the media skills and interesting personality may have smoothed the way of female candidates to finally become elected as leaders of the large parties as well.

The fact that several changes have taken place does not mean that the ideal picture of a party leaders' proficiency has changed totally. Qualities valued traditionally like political skills or experience have not lost their significance. As Erkki Karvonen puts it, at least at the top level of politics it's no longer sufficient that a politician knows all the facts and details, as excellent media skills have become an additional requirement. (2005: 34)

4. Conclusion

In this article I have argued that the changes in the party leaders' organizational roles, parties' political conventions, the media and

journalistic styles must all be taken into account especially when analysing party leader representations and ideals from a historical perspective. Although many of the changes described here have different roots, they all have an effect on the way in which party leaders are evaluated in journalistic news media.

I have suggested that to distinguish temporary blips in leader ideals from fundamental changes to them, it is necessary to examine leadership in its historical and societal settings. For example current political questions of the time may have affected the leader ideals: sometimes their influence is permanent, sometimes just temporary.

My interpretation is that several alterations in the landscape have actually prepared the way for the media to participate more in the political processes. In the 21st century, media is not only the arena for public debate but also an active participant in the party leader selection process. One consequence of the more participatory role of the media may be the tendency to accentuate the importance of media skills like showmanship and brilliant personality. By stressing the significance of party leaders' capability to perform in the media, journalists actually promote the understanding of media's importance in politics.

I find it essential to analyze the changes in party leader qualities without negative presuppositions. It is possible that alterations in ideal leadership qualities manifested by the media may affect concrete leader choices. However, this kind of effect is not simple to verify. Moreover, even if the possible consequences may be unpredictable they are not necessarily negative by nature.

The tendency to give more weight to politicians' media appearance may have given the upper hand to certain types of candidates at least in the media publicity. There is, however, no reason to overemphasize the changes. It is equally important to identify the elements of the leader ideals that have not changed and ask what kinds of leadership candidates they support.

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Virtual nodes as erosion. How social networks mean culture, power and neo middle ages.

Enrico Gandolfi⁹⁴

Today theatres like Facebook, Twitter or Blackplanet are fundamental spaces where political issues are diffused, discussed and also created. Who wants to participate to the democratic game has to use a concrete 2.0 strategy able to interact with people. Also dictators need a strong knowledge about digital media, in order to slow down their potential. Every leader incarnates values, visions and philosophies; each country has an history, a cultural frame that strongly determinates its traits; also every social network shows its own identity. These three elements can be in tune, be in disaccording or one of them can dominate others.

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1 Introduction

Social networks are cultural islands, economic potentates and active actors in the politic agenda. They may depend on some national and ethnic qualities of their audiences, but their constitution crosses national boundaries. States' law often isn't able to regulate digital world, because it shows a strong concentration and a dilatation of time and space (Giddens 1990, Thompson 1991). This new condition was recently underlined by Wikileaks. Also the apparent freedom and the disintermediation that it seems to offer aren't foregone: censorship and user's data theft are frequent. What appears free and bidirectional only because I am able to interact can be manipulated in a very hidden way.

In these pages my aim is to describe the manner in which these elements can interact together, according to some important political theories. We will also use the four types of political uses of social network reported by Sorice and De Blasio (2010) and the result of their research about politic audiences on the web 2.0.

2 Where does the state touch the nation?

There are a lot of definitions of nation: a community in which members live in the same territory and have in common history, culture, blood and language; a path between people in order to create a peculiar type of society; a collective vision in which I feel myself in, a sort of imagined communities (Anderson). In the first case we are talking about a cultural nation (France, Japan), in the second of a political nation (Switzerland, Belgium or U.S.A). By the way, we frequently find a mix between similar traditions and desire to build a collective reality.

The state can coincide with the nation, but it's not the same thing: the first refers to the centralized political realities and institutions that have sovereignty on an established territory with a permanent population, autonomous referring to outside: a geopolitical concept. This community can be national, but either not. It's easy to observe that nowadays these traits are changing: international conduits are often coordinated, modern conflicts show different scales, etc.

For many authors its erosion is evident already now: Huntington sees in the near future the end of politics and the return of religious instances, also in the manage of power. The

world is becoming more and more polycentric, with few strong realities and a rhapsody of little-medium entities with different natures (Thompson 1991). Authority appears more ambiguous and negotiated, never absolute. Many nations and feelings of belonging don't coincide to the domination of states. The new challenges are too big or too small for this type of political nature, and supranational or subnational realities can better solve actual problems like environment emergency, terrorism danger or specific local requests. There is a sort of pressure from top and at the same time from down. People identity is not national in the acceptance of state, if national doesn't mean living culture; this relationship isn't automatic.

Something more important, the nation itself is reemerging: race, ethnicity, origins. But also macro juggernauts like "civilizations" (the most general level for identification after human race for individuals) maintain their prominence (Huntington 1996).

Globalization and related media evolution are surely accelerating this phenomenon. From a traditional view, for national state is fundamental the binomial "outside-inside"; web era and social networks break this relation, creating new corporations, unifying visions but also improving local feelings. Also sensible topics change, and new generations have mobilization reasons far

away from traditional priorities. Social networks aren't only geocentric, but can underpin on lifestyles and on subcultures.

Approaches that see the future fall of the state can be subdivide into two main traditions: one is referring to the so called "theories of neo middle ages", and oversees in the future a new situation of domestic and diffused violence. To the disappearing of states' hierarchy will follow a degeneration, where the stronger will win against the weaker (the Hobbes's "Homo Hominis Lupus") (Bull, Hassner). Moreover, old identities will shine again, causing conflicts that no one agreement can neutralize. The global level of economy works as key of disintegration and of provocation for violent reactions to homologation by minorities (Kubrin).

The second, whose approaches trust in the end of the history (Fukujama, Held, McGrew), is more optimistic. These visions believe in a superior cohesion brought by globalization: they predict a world of peace and cooperation in the name of democratic liberalism principles. In this scenario of diffused consensus, everyone can goes in mutual synergies with others. The economic internalization will automatic solve every discords, helped by the mutual dependence. Here the macro beyond the state is linked more to market and multinational enterprises (Omahe, Strange).

From a realistic point of view, the state form isn't going to disappear in the next future. Maybe it will need to evolve and to mutate some aspects in order to be effective, but it still remains the best mode of managing resources and the main political frame. By the way these evolutions are in part true. Frankfurt School members view state as the triumph of Weberian theories about rationalism. In the last decades the irrationalism, son of the excess of mechanization, has irremediably changed this construction. According to Sorice and De Blasio (2008) are also emerging affiliative belongings in relational communities, different from ascribed ones typical of traditional space communities: social networks improve this formulation crossing nations and countries; better, a spatial conception that is exceeded (the state). Culture is a fundamental key in order to bring light to this phenomenon.

3 Social network, a definition from a cultural point of view

But what is a social network? In a few words, is a totally or in part online platform that permits the creation of a network between real people; the individual becomes a node of a system characterized by various different natures and principles. Fundamental are the

profile system and the live status of the digital landscape (the interaction should be totally or in part simultaneous). We are using a very generic definition, but we must consider that there are a lot of social networks all around the world. Maybe is more correct talking about social elements, social spaces inside systems able to create connections (Castells). We need a simple categorization to describe the relation between identity of social network, related audience and the institutional reaction. The principle of the next distinction (not fixed neither exclusive) is not semiotic or strictly linked to media experience tout court; it's about the common traits that the social network shows: a sort of mix between structural elements, bottom up reactions, numbers. We can call it its identity, the cultural frame that it has assumed.

The priority is to understand the soul of the social network linked to the common window of the state in which it can be active. Adopting the structuration theory of Giddens (1984), we see human actions as cultural determined but also able, by reflexivity, to modify the same culture; the tool of instruments, paraphrasing Swidler, that a Facebook clone offers to user influenced his movement but it is also vulnerable in various way to be modified by audience response. It's a sort of circular flow where laws are not rigidly fixed: we are talking about audiences that cross the

distinction between activity-passivity; performativity and involvement are seen as social practice on the net too. Again, social networks play an important role in the level of “discursive consciousness”, also collective.

Mainstream frame: the aim and/or the result of this type of social network is to create a transversal space where people can communicate and share experiences. The community is diffused, delocated and doesn't have a unique connotation (of course groups, movements etc. can use it, but as a small part in the ocean). A space that can be consider neutral and usually profile-oriented. Facebook, Twitter, Gowalla, Foursquare and at first Orkut are good example of these type. They recall the networking individualism (Castells), but for their diffusion they are extremely dangerous for authoritarian governments. Surely there are a lot of possible reactions by authorities, but virtual audiences are more difficult to control for their richness and the structures in which they operate, able to cross national walls.

Obviously, social networks don't create themselves a revolution, but can accelerate it unifying opposite forces and breaking a state jail. The result can be to give consciousness of internal and show the situation to external: they usually are effective when people are already engaged in the fight; as De Blasio and Sorice wrote, here

politic communication works as activator of audience already engaged (2010); in Egypt the revolution has been overseen by a lot of scholars. Instead Facebook clones seem to be very chaotic, dispersive and disorienting for new born movements (it remains a network of single nodes). To sum up, the mobilization is here central in the level of representation and secondary in the action's one. Furthermore, cultural industries and economy needs prevail here. To sum up, the erosion of the state form is accelerated when the cultural frame doesn't correspond to the geopolitical entity: for a measure but also for a qualitative point of view.

National-state frame: social networks with a national frame have gained success in a specific country. This is due for a programming choice or to peculiar evolution. Orkut was born as the Google's answer to Facebook, but now it is the leader social space in Brazil and India. Why this? In part because it facilitates the creation of communities with specific languages, clearly important in countries such those (multinational states). Mixi is the most diffused social network in Japan probably for two reasons: first because it follows the national karaoke passion; secondly its structure is closed to the outside: only Japanese people can have access to it. We can associated that to the strong national feeling (that following the state's boundaries). Either Huntington sees Japan as single

peculiar civilization. When the state coincide with nation, this type of social network can be a case very interesting to study. This dimension can be also easier for a politic communication, because there is sort of common ground between geopolitical dimension and national bonds that can orient and contextualize inputs. Here the uses can be various, but it's interesting the basic sense of belonging in which I have to move.

Subcultural frame: to follow a subcultural identity (term in this case linked to the contrast between “majority-minority” inside the national theatre, but that can gain a cross national dimension), often trying to carry on specific necessities. This is the case of Blackplanet (Afro-American people) Asiaavenue (Asiatic community in U.S.A) and Migente (usually Latinos). For this nature their goal is to create strong affiliation, in order to promote causes (they are “collective-oriented”). In political nation these kinds of realities can be very important, as Obama understands; in multinational one the same (especially for a dictator). Another unifying principle is the religion, if we think about Mychurch.com or Muxlim.com. Again, from this kind of virtual network they can develop some important activist groups like the famous Anonymus. The subcultural frame that characterized a virtual arena makes it a laboratory value-oriented, improving the resistance and the

capacity of react. It seems to show a great potential in involvement and belonging and action levels of mobilization.

Specialist frame: here the topics are based on interests, lifestyle, instrumental aims, specific tasks (a possible sub distinction may be goal-oriented/consumption-oriented). We can find also political ones like Velayat Madaran (Iran) or GovLoop (U.S.A). They will assume also national dimension and other, in future; but their political uses, even if possible, are still very limited. Now they are small and/or very specific (is also the new business model, in the Facebook's domination).

4 How politicians speak social networks' idiom

We have a large amount of manners in which institutional politicians and politic movements promote themselves in the net: blogs, websites, social networks. For its interactive nature and the public sphere that it summons, the last represents a hard task to complete. If I want to use Facebook with efficacy, I have to know it: every social network shows a galaxy of values, laws and audiences. We want to propose another simple series of categories again, based on the main type of the politician's course of action in social

networks (the reference is for formal politicians, but with some modifies this work can be translated to other actors). We start with a scale from the most active (external) to the most passive (indifference), passing the internal coherent language (typical of Obama's campaign) and the token role (1.0).

External-active (3.5): the skill to concentrate the ownership of main social media in a few hands: Putin has done this, controlling them without evidence. Websites like Russia.ru and Zuputina (of Konstantin Rykov, a Putin's vassal) impose the issues and the prospective of the ex president; the involvement can be served by this, other uses aren't necessary. In other words it the continuation of the filters that Chomsky and Herman describe in their Propaganda model, similar in Thompson views (2004).

External-negative (3.0): we are talking about all the measure (also legal) created in order to block the social networking life. The classical example is the censorship: to give a current example, in China the "jasmine revolution" has been erased from every main social network when some sit-in were organized in various Chinese cities in order to support Arabic riots. These measures can put social networks in a sort of law-jail nationally connoted (think about Cloob.com, the Orkut's substitute in Iran). With mainstream social networks, more dangerous because linked to the outside, this

conduit requires a continue agreement process; by the way, it's impossible to oversee the dynamism of audiences. In this field we also report the recruiting of hackers in order to attack hostile websites.

Internal-inclusive (2.5): fundamental in political nations and multinational states. It's the case of Barack Obama and its capacity to tune himself in every main social network in which he appears. He was able to speak to a mainstream audience, the so-called "YouTube generation" (the mainstream target), but also to different subcultures and minorities. Fundamental in this perspective is not only information and fund raising (the second very successful), but also the involvement and the mobilization. The challenge here is to convert mistrust in trust, supporters and cold supporters in militants, and catching also the emotional public (Higgins). By the way, there are evident alliance signals between Obama and Zuckerberg: the first has started its second presidential candidature from the headquarter of Facebook, in Palo Alto, the 20th of April 2011. In other words, some external active elements are present in Obama's conduit.

Internal (1.5-2.0): like the further, but less diffused. It refers to the use of the social network in an appropriate or normal way: to create a concrete network of supporters, to talk with them and to

try to listen their ideas. This is possible only following the rules of the social network that I choose, not only in esthetics but also in philosophy (a 2.0 communication able to serve all the four political functions). Obama is again a perfect example, also with the creation of Mybarackobama.com.

Internal-propagandistic (I.25): to create a specific rigid social network in accordance with government goals or to train groups ready to defend the establishment's needs and causes in every digital arena. Chinese politicians use the so called "50 Cents party", more or less 300000 people paid to promote government's agenda and to offend enemies of institutions on Facebook or on RenRen. Is the top-down creation of active militants.

Internal (I.O): a lot of Italian politicians only compare on social network, as inside a static shop window illuminated only during elections. Is a sort of I.O "top-down" presence in a platform programmed for a 2.0 one. Only information can be served with this approach.

Indifference (o): the politicians don't appears on social networks. This may be an individual decision, but also a consequence of the political culture of the country. Returning on Japan, the politic caste is very closed and self-referenced, used to discuss decisions in a sort of informal sphere through the practice

of the “harage”, a sort of ritual for negotiate and improve relations (Pempel). We can talk about a different vision, more oriental than western, in which politics have to be clever and practical (a sort of golem inside a strongly coherent culture) despite the occidental “populization” of leaders like Berlusconi and Sarkozy.

5 Conclusion

When we see all the procedures and have the sensation of equality in communication, we can be victim of the illusion of control. It’s a sort of faith that can be connected to the discourse of Giddens about “expert systems” (1990), that are schemes of technical realization or professional skill that organize large areas in the material and social frames in which we live.

This requires a trust in these structures, a sort of belief. Surely the direct experience can influence my predisposition, but usually I don’t dominate all the knowledge that flows around me, like the engineering one that has built my home or has assembled my car. I do this in order to simplify my everyday life, too much rich of inputs and variables. It’s a sort of necessary filter.

To sum up, we think that social networks are themselves expert systems, because are competences and technologies mixed to give me a space apparently clear in which I believe, even if I don't know its secrets, hidden in the sociality embedded in bit constructions. In this way expert systems assumes public sphere with an enigmatic constitution.

One of basilar moment in relation between a man and expert system is the access node, when the first meets a person who incarnates the competence of the second. In this occasion the "simulacrum" can disappoint expectations and scale down hopes. In social networks paradoxically we are the simulacrum, the access node for ourselves. Our trust is for our copies inside a circular and never-ending process. The same expert system becomes our social space, whose laws and norms aren't clear. Also politicians can fall in that.

In other words, we legitimate a structure, believing in it and contribute to its evolution, but we are like inside a magic ritual where I accept irregularity to conserve every possible regularity. A lot of scholars use the figure of the "panopticon", the jail project designed by Bentham, in order to describe social networks. We think that they are something more complex. All we are observer sure to have the control, but everyone is observed by others.

Everyone thinks to be the big brother, but he is also the hedonist victim of alien eye. And there is not a laughing or supporter audience out the asylum: only panopticon on panopticon, a network of panopticon. We know, it's a provocation, but the desire of transparency can be translate in new dogmas and duties. The menace is a performance inside a world that we think home and remains cryptic instead. In this case, communication risks to mean its reverse: the political meaning could forget its peculiarities and become mechanism, abstract, irrational. In these pages we have furnished some simple suggestions; the future challenge is to go deeper into relations between culture, social media and politics; the first refers to traditional key concepts, that remain fundamental to understand our time. Politicians have to face social networks, but social network culture has to preserve itself by an excess of faith.

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Animating leadership: symbio-political communication paradigms from the Japanese manga Dragon Ball Z

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From its initial conception in the 1950's as simple humorous pictures, Japanese animated manga today in its various language versions occupy a substantial patronised segment of the international TV media. Manga and anime are two distinct visual communication forms. Manga refers to the Japanese term comics or whimsical images while anime refers to Japanese animation or "Japanimation" (Ueno, 2006) . Simply put distinguishing each is an act of "watching anime and reading manga" (Patten in King, 2005). Both share many similar characteristics and a small amount of manga is adapted into anime. In general, both do not exist in a vacuum. Rather, as Kinko Ito (2005, p.456) attests:

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(They are) immersed in a particular social environment that includes history, language, culture, politics, economy, family, religion, sex and gender, education, deviance and crime, and demography. Manga reflects the reality of Japanese society, along with the myths, beliefs, rituals, tradition, fantasies, and Japanese way of life. Manga also depicts other social phenomena, such as social order and hierarchy, sexism, racism, ageism, classism, and so on.

The concern for what evolves and revolves around the social phenomena similarly creates the *raison d'être* of leadership which through the years has been associated with various theories including: charismatic (Weber 1947), transforming and transactional (Burns 1978), symbolic (Pfeffer 1981), prototypical-social (Hogg 2001), and archetype (Abramson 2007). They are incarnated by unique personages including Mao, Gandhi, Mussolini, and recently Bin Laden, Obama, Berlusconi and Pope Benedict XVI. Noting a number of leadership strengths, Burns (1978, p.3) nonetheless highlights a crises of leadership – “a bifurcation” between leadership (message-senders) and followership (audience-receivers). Recent scholars associate it with the uncertain challenges, changes and continuities within the public sphere prevalent in political communication (e.g. Mazzoleni 1998; McNair 2007; Stanyer 2007; Negrine 2008). Leadership is

consequently linked with the interaction exchange or symbiosis in media politics, rituals, language, symbols, influence and effects.

This current paper aims at identifying symbio-political communication paradigms (SPCP) in manga animations and their validity and mechanism for leadership. Through content analysis as presented by Webber (1990) and Krippendorff (2004), it examines Dragon Ball Z (2006) - the Saiyan Saga, 36 of the total 518 episodes of the Dragon Ball anime series. Episodes are framed into character and scene structures, category definitions, similarity patterns, connotative messages and narrative relationships. Related works *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu written in 6th century BC (Watson 2009) and *The Book of Five Rings* by Miyamoto Musashi written in 1645 (Sorbello 2009), both translated and utilised in military and business communication science, are used to prove the validity of the analysis. Questions asked:

1. What symbio-political communication paradigms (SPCP) for leadership are offered by manga animations?
2. How can they be read with current leadership communication?

Three hypotheses are underlined: First, more universal applicability of the grammar of manga animations and its inherent theme of culture, leadership, family, enterprise and innovation not only for entertainment but also for the political communication process; second, visual representations, more than the audio, as providing greater reliability and accuracy of the process; and third, animation narratives read as a whole and not only as separate entities, provide better understanding of political communicative strategies and aids in their continual validity even today. Basic definitions adapted in the paper are deemed useful. By animation, the author refers to the agency of congruent life giving movement to inert subjects. By symbiosis a mutual exchange, dependence and reliance is implied (Bernal 2010, p.25).

Brief history and plot of Dragon Ball Z

Dragon Ball was started in 1984 by Akira Toriyama in the Weekly Shōnen Jump. From 1984 to 1995, 519 individual chapters were made that were later published. These were then adapted into three anime series each divided into sagas: Dragon Ball (153

episodes in 9 sagas), Dragon Ball Z (292 episodes in 16 sagas) and Dragon Ball GT (64 episodes in 4 sagas). Each saga is made up of different episodes that run for approximately 24 minutes. Dragon Ball has been a popular manga series worldwide. Over 150 million volumes of the series were sold by 2007 with reviewers praising its art, characterisation and humor. It ranked 12 among the best anime series in 2006 (Anime News Network 2009).

Inspired by the Chinese folk novel *Journey to the West*, the Dragon Ball trilogy recounts the adventures of Goku, from childhood to adulthood, in his continuous training in martial arts and his quest for the seven magical dragon balls, which when gathered together, are able to grant the possessor three wishes, including rebirth after death. The episodes of Dragon Ball Z - Saiyan Saga present Goku as an adult who discovers on earth his real identity as a Saiyan whose goal is the destruction of all living creatures. Compared with the initial Dragon Ball which presents Goku as a child. Dragon Ball Z – Saiyan Saga is more action packed with more scenes of training, direct duels and prolonged battles. The Saga demonstrates symbiotic interactions by co-Saiyans who come on earth to remind Goku of his original goal and by co-earthly inhabitants who remind him of the nature of equality and living in harmony. Goku with his son Gohan, wife Kiki and their

friends including Krilli, Junior, Bulma, and others, compete in a ferocious battle against the Saiyans, composed of Vegeta, Nappa and Raditz, to restore harmony and peace and save the earth.

Method

The 36 Saiyan Saga episodes of Dragon Ball Z were chosen as valid and reliable representation of the whole Dragon Ball series. They continue where Dragon Ball began, the birth and childhood of Goku, and foreshadow the next series - Dragon Ball GT, Goku and his children and grandchildren.

Content analysis was applied to the Saga episodes where the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, and characters were objectively quantified, coded and mapped into categories. The categories were taken from The General Inquirer (Stone 2000) text-analysis and mapping procedure which combines the Harvard-IV and the Lasswell dictionary content-analysis categories. The General Inquirer has 182 categories. TABLE 1 gives a non-exhaustive list of the 10 major category tags with their definitions of the major characters.

Table 1: Dragon Ball Z: Major Characters Category Definitions from Harvard IV and Lasswell Value Dictionary Categories (Stone, 2000)

TAG	Definition
1. Affil	AFFILIATION: words indicating affiliation or supportiveness.
2. EMOT	EMOTION: words related to emotion that are used as a disambiguation category, but also available for general use.
3. EnIOth	ENLIGHTENMENT OTHER: other enlightenment words
4. Exert	EXERT: Movement categories
5. Goal	GOAL: names of end-states towards which muscular or mental striving is directed.
6. Hostile	HOSTILE: words indicating an attitude or concern with hostility or aggressiveness.
7. HU	HUMAN: general references to humans, including roles
8. IAV	ACTION VERBS: verbs giving an interpretative explanation of an action, such as "encourage, mislead, flatter".
9. Know	KNOW: words indicating awareness or unawareness, certainty or uncertainty, similarity or difference, generality or specificity, importance or unimportance, presence or absence, as well as components of mental classes, concepts or ideas.
10.NatrPro	NATURE PROCESS: words for processes found in nature, birth to death.

Didactic distribution followed the word mapping. Effectiveness of outcome depended on three factors: categories adapted; the accuracy, validity and reliability of data gathered from the communication form being analysed; and, the resolution of problems encountered with eventual inferences deduced. Three syntactic and procedural problems were encountered:

1. Presence of words not in the dictionary entry list for General Inquirer like duel, truce, spaceship, dragon, etc.
2. Subject of the research itself which is not pure text but animated visual narratives.
3. Episodes available and studied were in the Italian version and the General Inquirer version available and used is English.

The first problem was solved noting the “disambiguation” of words not currently present in the dictionary entries to words currently present and mapping their connotative signification. For the second and third problems, conceptual analysis for visual representations actually shown in each of the episodes were utilised in the coding. Narrative unity of the episodes facilitated the coding task and the visual representation (what is seen) became part of the guarantee of the accuracy and validity of the mapping. Thus when fight scenes are coded as the English word *fight* whose category tags in the General Inquirer analysis are **NEGATIVE**, **STRONG**, **HOSTILE**; a child is tagged **NON-ADULT**; thinking is tagged as **KNOW**, and so on. The total amount of the words tagged were obtained and listed according to weight, frequency and rank. These were later limited to tag words focussing only to the major

characters that were sub-categorized into three groups: behavioral pattern, training strategy, and communicative-competitive strategy. Inferences were made from the results.

Results

Overall the Saga contains 161 of the 182 tag categories proposed by The General Inquirer. The top 10 tag categories with their frequencies or number of contained entry words mapped were: STRONG (165 word entries including courage, and force), ACTIVE (163 including run, shout, fly, resist and fight), POSITIVE (137 including train, assurance, support and love), NEGATIVE (134 including trap, betray, cancel, and prohibit), ACTION VERBS (110 including challenge, survival, help and escape), POWER TOTAL (92 including strength, authority and energy), PASSIVE (76 including remember, wait, value and sleep), HOSTILE (67 including enemy, danger, cut and destroy), VIRTUE (65 including sacrifice, help, and goodness) and DESCRIPTIVE VERBS (58 including clean, create and wake).

Tag divisions per character portrayal with frequency or episode appearance is found in TABLE 2. Results seem to indicate that

100% of the Saiyan Saga showed POSITIVE categories, 77% showed AFFILIATION and support, 58% showed KNOWING and enlightenment, 15% showed NEGATIVE and HOSTILE and so on. What these seem to indicate too is that although there is the immediate impression of violence in the visual competitions and fights that audience see in the Saiyan Saga series, it does not focus on it as an end. Rather it appears to show the visual violence so as not to disregard and negate its presence but at the end offer positive strategies on how it can be overcome.

Table 2: Content Analysis: Dragon Ball Z – Major character SPCP					
Major Characters	Episode Frequency appearance	Behavioural Pattern	Training Strategy	Interaction Strategy	SPCP
Good (Protagonist)					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real self • Inner strength • Iconic oneness • Ritual space • Negative well-bring
A. Goku	36 (100%)	Postv - Affl - Strong	Perceiv - Enl	Ritual - SocRel – IAV - Strong	
B. Gohan	36 (100%)	Nonadlt	Strong - Goal	EMOT - PowOth	
C. Krilli	28 (77%)	Affl	Postv - Affl	NatPro	
D. Junior	21 (58%)	Know - EnlOth	Perceive - EnlOth	Ritual – Virtue - PowGain	
Bad (Antagonist)					
A. Vegeta	15 (41%)	Ngvtv – Strong Hostile	SureLw	PwrOth – Space - Strong	
B. Nappa	9 (25%)	Hostile	SureLw	WlbPhys - Exert	
C. Raditz	6 (16%)	Hostile	SureLw	Exert	

Relational analysis of the tags in TABLE 2 reveal interconnection between the three sub-categories. For main protagonists, behavioral patterns, training strategy and SPC strategies are distinct with Goku, Gohan Krilli and Junior each exhibiting unique characteristics. For the antagonists, the

behavioral patterns are similar with Vegeta, Nappa and Raditz showing HOSTILE. Vegeta, the main protagonist though also show STRONG and Ngtv. Training strategies are similar – SURELW which appears to indicate certainty of winning and them being too sure of themselves. The antagonists competitive strategy strategies distinct. They are similar however in their use of a gadget of “combat level” that allows them to perceive the combat level of their opponents. At the end though they discontinued its use, claiming that always the protagonist have an inner strength that cannot be immediately and externally measurable.

Discussion

Overall, the following SPCP emerge: 1) Real Self: recognising, remembering and reclaiming own identity and purpose in life; 2) Inner strength: effective power and force continually cultivated, nourished and trained; 3) Iconic oneness: need of others for encouragement and support; 4) Ritual space: acceptance of human emotions and needs (eg. food, sleep, reflection); and 5) Negative well-being: facing fears, doubts and difficulties with innovation and courage.

The SPCP confirm earlier mention of manga animations being reflections of the perceived culture of a society, Japan in particular. Grigsby (1998, p.61) relates this to manga animations being “cultural commodities and part of the dynamic process of culture”. Part of Japanese culture is the importance, for example, of the highly valued inner strength and of power not solely in physical force but also on iconic thinking, relationships and togetherness. Training is an important key. Almost 50% of the Saga episodes were focused on it. Here is where manga animations extends its reach not only on entertainment but edutainment where visual virtual education occurs. For Adams (1999, p.74) manga can be a pedagogical vehicle of assimilation. Kinsella (1999) and Morris-Suzuki and Rimmer (2002) affirm the educative influence of manga as part of popular culture, society and politics. In this regard, Toku (2001) maintains:

By drawing a scene of ordinary life in sequential frames, (people) will pay attention to life and nature around them. These manga activities make art more meaningful and will give them a chance to find their identity by depicting themselves in a narrative story.

Whilst mention is made regarding the reliability and accuracy of the analysis, its validity is measured by two related works bearing the

same genre theme of competition and battle: *The Art of War* and *the Book of Five Swords*. Other than treatises on war, both works have been adapted to formulate a number of present day principles on management and communication. (Floyd, 1992). They generally point to elements of nature as part of successful strategy. Thus *The Art of War* explores: The Moral Law, Heaven, Earth, The Commander and Method and Discipline. Part of its tenets is that “to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists I breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting” (Giles, 1910). Five essentials for victory for which one wins and which are also manifested in *Dragon Ball Z* are:

one who knows when to fight and when not to fight; one who knows how to handle both superior and inferior forces; one whose army is animated by the same spirit through the ranks, one who prepared himself, waits to take the enemy unprepared; and one who has military capacity and it not interfered by the sovereign (Ibid.).

The Book of Five Swords is instead summarized into five books: Ground (Earth), Water, Fire, Wind and Void. They refer to strategies undertaken for victory which generally encompasses appreciation of the power of nature and knowing the rhythm of the situation. They are similar to learning art (Sorbelli 2009):

1. Do not harbor sinister designs. Think honestly and truthfully.
2. The Way is in training. One must continue to train.
3. Cultivate a wide range of interests in the ten skills and ten arts. Then one can definitely find the benefits of hyoho and develop oneself.
4. Be knowledgeable in a variety of occupations, and learn the thinking of people who work in them.
5. Know the difference between loss and gain in worldly matters.
6. Nurture the ability to perceive the truth in all matters. It is important to build up an intuitive judgment and understand true values.
7. Be aware of those things which cannot be easily seen with the eye. Develop intuitive judgment and a mind that freely controls one's body.
8. Do not be negligent, but pay attention even to the smallest details. Keep them in mind all the time, so as to avoid unexpected failure.
9. Do not engage in useless activity. Do not argue about useless things. Concentrate on your duties.

A non-exhaustive analysis of the two works, also utilising *The General Inquirer*, demonstrates proximity with *Dragon Ball Z*.

TABLE 3 shows this. First 9 tags were present in all while 8 tags were not present in *The Art of War* and *Book of Five Rings*. STRONG was the primary tag in all. Other than the proximities which seems to document the validity of the analysis, the composition of the three works in different epochs yet arriving at close proximities suggests that emergent paradigms could be proven to be universally valid in time, from the 6th century to the 1600's to 2000.

TAG		Dragon Ball Z (161 total tags)		The Art of War (79 total tags)		Book of Five Rings (82 total tags)	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Strong	165	1.025	75	0.949	58	0.707
2	Positiv	137	0.851	35	0.443	28	0.341
3	IAV	110	0.683	25	0.316	46	0.561
4	Ngtv	110	0.683	25	0.316	16	0.195
5	Hostile	67	0.416	12	0.152	14	0.171
6	Virtue	65	0.404	16	0.203	11	0.134
7	SocRel	48	0.298	3	0.038	9	0.110
8	Affil	46	0.286	8	0.101	4	0.049
9	HU	43	0.267	18	0.228	22	0.268
10	EnlOth	37	0.230	NP		NP	
11	NatrPro	26	0.161	7	0.089	6	0.073
12	PowOth	23	0.143	23	0.291	13	0.159
13	EMOT	22	0.137	NP		NP	
14	WlbPhys	21	0.130	NP		NP	
15	Space	13	0.081	12	0.152	NP	
16	Exert	11	0.068	NP		4	0.049
17	Know	11	0.068	9	0.114	15	0.183
18	Perceiv	10	0.062	4	0.051	NP	
19	Goal	8	0.050	8	0.101	3	0.037
20	Ritual	8	0.050	NP		NP	
21	Nonadlt	7	0.043	NP		1	0.012
22	PowGain	6	0.037	NP		NP	
23	SureLw	6	0.037	NP		NP	

* Frequency = number of words mapped in the given tag
 * % = frequency / total tags * NP = not present

Combining the three works, parallel leadership SPCP emerge:

- 1) Success of positive, strong and virtue;
- 2) Overcoming the continual presence of the negative;
- 3) Importance of human social relations and affiliations;
- 4) Nature-self power, knowledge and perception;
- and 5) Goal orientations.

Conclusion

Being part of perceived social reality, manga animations provide avenues for leadership communication research. A close scrutiny of *What Is My Destiny Dragon Ball*, the lyrics of the Italian version of the opening and closing song of *Dragon Ball Z*, reveals that a summary of the SPCP identified in this paper is embedded therein.

- Real Self - “Chi sei, Goku non lo sai, però, presto lo scoprirai” (Who are you Goku, you do not know but soon you will discover);
- Negative well being – “e poi tu scomparirai. Una nuova realtà, con le sue verità, scaverà nel tuo passato” (Then you shall disappear. A new reality with its truth will be dug from his past);

- Iconic oneness – “io so che tu lo sai DragonBall, perchè non c’è, un drago che, sia grande come te” (I know that you know Dragon Ball, for there is no dragon as great like you);
- Ritual space – “e poi, guardando piu’ in là, il tuo cuore saprà ritrovare Dragon Ball” (and then searching deeper, your heart will rediscover Dragon Ball);
- Inner strength - L’oscurità splendente diverrà con te, perchè, la tua fiamma oramai è piu’ ardente che mai” (With you the darkness becomes bright because your flame is now more ardent than ever).

Congruence of these SPCP can be found in the leader influence exertion identified earlier by Burns (1978, pp.460-461): clarifying personal goals, identifying whom one seeks to lead and where one seeks to go, and knowing how obstacles are overcome to realize goals. These in mind one can ask how SPCP can be read with actual leadership communication?

The definition of animation and symbiosis earlier made - as the agency of congruent life-giving movement and exchange of mutual dependence and reliance respectively - provide an initial pertinent

response. In animating leadership part of the real self and iconic oneness and ritual space is clarifying personal goals and identity of followers and destiny and part of negative well being and inner strength is overcoming obstacles and realizing goals. Animating leadership entails symbiotic participatory exchange exercised both by the message-sender leaders and audience-receiver followers. Inobservance results in a malign symbiosis the treatment of which in web communications Bernal (2010, p. 25) advocates “a break in dependence, giving up of certain freedom, allowing markets to redress balance and weaken dependence”. Actual crises in leadership interaction in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya have portrayed a malign symbiotic participatory exchange. In each instance it can be asked: What real self appeared? What was done to the negative well being? Was iconic oneness present between the leader and people? Were the points of accord present on the ritual space between the parties? What inner strength was displayed by the both leaders and people? The thoughts of Islam (2008, p. 28) on leadership is deemed an initial proper response:

For the idea of leadership itself to even make sense, it may be necessary to posit a symbolic link between (certain) individuals and society as a whole, and that positing will open certain interpretive spaces wherein the activity of the individual leader becomes more than

individual behavior. Leaders encapsulate and condense in their persona an image of society as a whole.

Blessed John Paul II, in many ways incarnate a contemporary example of such leadership. His first words during his election in 1978 hints to his SPCP role.

We are still saddened by the death of our beloved John Paul I... and the Cardinals have called a new Bishop of Rome. They called him from a country that is far... I was very afraid in receiving this task, but I accepted it in the spirit of obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ ... I do not know if I can explain myself well in your... in our Italian language. If I commit a mistake please correct me. (John Paul II in Weigel 1999, p.318).

In John Paul II's address there were the SPCP of humanism, clear sense of identity, humility, fear and readiness. Iconic oneness is implied by the phrase 'still saddened by the death of John Paul I'. Real self was marked by being 'called from a country that is far', 'always near in communion of faith and the Christian tradition'; inner strength was underlined by 'but I accepted in the spirit of obedience', and negative well being was highlighted by the words 'very afraid in receiving the task' and 'if I commit a mistake, please correct me'. For Weigel (1999, pp.318-319), the "latter phrase made a deep and admirable impression on all the audience."

The final animating leadership image of Blessed John Paul is also worth nothing. Sitting with his parkinson disease that chained him to his wheelchair he tried to deliver his Sunday Angelus message. People knew he had something to say. He opened his mouth, tried to speak but no words came. Like his frail body, illness chained his words. And there were tears in his eyes and those of the people - tears which opened not their ears but their hearts to listen to a person who until the end had wish to animate. It was in the animating silence that people heard his message, in the animating silence that he spoke in their hearts. That then was all the leadership that mattered.

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Partisan realms. Political news produced by a journalist-politician relationship shaped by the local media system. The case of Morelia, Mexico

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The general aim of this paper is explaining the extent the media system shapes the relationship between politicians and journalists in Morelia, Mexico; and as a result of this interaction, why the messages they produce have a clear partisan bias that represent specific political ideologies. Thus, the central hypothesis that leads the study points out that the local media system shapes the distance, nature and logic of the relationship between political communication actors, which produces political news with a partisan bias.

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1. Introduction

Its main contribution is proposing an integrated framework for explaining the political communication process, considering two levels: Media system and journalist-politician level. The former is based on Hallin and Mancini's (2004) model for classifying media systems according to the political system they operate in; and the latter is focused on Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) and Pfetsch's (2004) ideas related to the different sets of interactions between reporters and politicians. Although the original frameworks were thought independently in different times and with divergent goals, by no means they exclude each other. On the contrary, they represent a specific view of the same phenomenon.

Morelia, the capital city of Michoacán, represents an interesting case study for analyzing the political news coverage in the way proposed here: Firstly, because it is one of the few places in Mexico that has been governed by the three main political parties (PAN, PRI and PRD) and, thus, its citizens have experienced three apparently different styles of public administration; and secondly, it has quite a lot of media outlets (five newspapers, five television channels and 13 radio stations); which, at least in theory, may

facilitate the political communication process but, as it will be argued, reality points in an opposite direction.

2. Theoretical frameworks

As it was mentioned before, two approaches were selected for this case study, firstly the concept of Media System proposed by Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004); who established a set of parameters to evaluate a media environment, which included the structure of media markets (development of the media markets, especially of the mass circulation press), the level of political parallelism (partisan stance), journalistic professionalization (autonomy, newsworthiness values, professional norms and public service orientation) and the role of the state (official involvement and intervention in the mass communication production process).

The second includes, for the one hand, the ideas proposed by Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) regarding the political communication process (considered by them as a triangular system where media, politicians and citizens interact) and the adversarial (watchdog) and/or exchange (collaborative) nature of the relationship between journalists and politicians; and for the other,

the work done by Pfetsch (2004) in which she classified those interactions according to the distance (professional and ideological) between the actors and the logic that determines the messages they produce (imposition of content and format).

3. Towards an integration

Since the aim of this paper was not just testing the selected frameworks within the Morelian context, but only using them as the first step in building an explanation about the problem stated in the introduction, the goal then is to take the ideas suggested by the authors in order to design a particular scheme for approaching to the case study. This new model allows explaining the extent the media environment shapes the journalist-politician relationship and how it impacts on the political information that people get through the print media.

Although the original frameworks were thought independently in different times and with divergent goals, by no means they exclude each other. On the contrary, they represent a specific view of the same problem. Whilst Blumler/Gurevitch and Pfetsch's work analyzes the relationship between news organizations and

party/governmental officials, the Media System pays attention to the way news outlets operate and are organized.

However, they share some evident limitations: Firstly, they only focus on one single aspect of the political communication process; secondly, they do not produce hypothesis, because their main goal is only to describe and classify the phenomenon. Rather than raising propositions about the causes and consequences of their case studies, they just try to adjust their perceptions of reality into their predetermined categories, without any further explanation.

In that sense, Hallin and Mancini (2004) only regard the system and, therefore, they have a general view of the situation; that is why they neglect the internal processes, which represent the way political communication actually operates. Nonetheless, compared with Blumberg and Gurevitch (1995) and Pfetsch (2004), this is also an advantage, because the latter do not take in count the context where the actors are in touch; nevertheless, they analyze the interaction between the involved players, which is absent in the former's work.

Besides this, they all tend to consider that, even though certain differences in shape or intensity, there is an inherent homogenization in the relationship between political actors stressed by a general correspondence of roles (e.g. watchdog media

and information provider authority); which, at the end of the day, would bring a sense of equilibrium to the system. Nonetheless, neat homogeneity at all levels is far from reality; because the existence of diverse news outlets, each one of them with its specific interests and political orientations, sets different parameters of interaction between individual politicians and public servants as well.

Hence, as the empirical evidence proved⁹⁷, every day journalistic life indicates that there are certain media environment influences that shape the roles and routines of the actors involved in the political communication process; but these influences, rather than uniform, are specific for each interaction between key players, even within the same system.

3.1. The research problem

The research question addressed is focused on explaining how the media environment shapes the relationship between journalists and politicians, which outcome is determined by a partisan tendency.

⁹⁷ Collected, for the one hand, through 18 interviews with political correspondents/editors of the five local newspapers, government/party communications officers, and politicians; and, for the other, through a content analysis of the political sections of those newspapers, from January to June 2010.

Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) considered the political communication process as a triangular system formed by media, politicians and society. Although ideally the three actors are supposed to interact, the findings showed that in practice only news organizations and party/government officers are in permanent contact.

For that reason, only the first two actors are connected through a bidirectional and horizontal flux of information, and the third is only a mere passive observer without having any proper feedback. Despite of this situation, this triangular process occurs in a specific context: There is a media macro level that exerts an undeniable influence in shaping the actors and the interaction with each other.

The set of factors that define the media system directs the relationship between newsmen and politicians, by providing them the ground where that interaction takes place. In other words, the specific characteristics of that structure determine how distant/close the actors are, how conflictive/harmonious is their relation and under which logic, media or party/government, they work.

It happens like that and not in the other way around, because the participants in the production of political communication are constrained by the rules, both formal and informal, that the media

environment imposes over them. That is the reason why different contexts promote diverse relationships between journalist and party/government officials.

In short terms, the hypothesis that leads this research is that the particular media system conditions (market development, political parallelism, journalist professionalization and role of the state) shapes the distance, nature and logic of the relationship between politicians and reporters, and this situation affects the news that people get; which in the Morelian case, those messages are constructed under an evident partisan alignment.

It is important to stress that there is a clear interdependence between the variables in which both frameworks are built on, which means that whatever impacts any of them will affect the whole system. Since the political communication process is not fragmented, then, an aspect such as partisanship in the news must not be understood as an isolated phenomenon. On the contrary, partisan stories are the result of a specific set of the characteristics found in the media environment (e.g. external pluralism and official advertising pressures) and in the journalist-politician relationship as well (e.g. closeness and collaboration).

4. Conclusions

The last part of this paper presents a glance at the analysis of the empirical evidence collected from the field work, which is organized in the following way: Firstly, it will be stressed the relevance of the media context in shaping the journalist-politician relationship; and secondly, as a result of that interaction, the information published by the local newspapers showed an evident partisan bias.

4.1. Context matters: Media macro level and journalist-politician relationship

According to the findings, media system in Morelia is characterized by a high number of organizations (five newspapers, five television channels and 13 radio stations), but in political information terms, only the print media have prominence -even though their readership is only 40% of the population (González 2008)-; because news programmes in broadcast outlets are not the main features.

There is also a clear partisanship in the newspapers but, despite of the expected ideological alignments, the inclination is mainly towards state government and its party, Democratic Revolution Party (Partido de la Revolucion Democratica, PRD). To a lesser degree, there is a partisan trend towards local government – especially the Mayor, because of his personal charisma-, even though he is from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional, PRI). On the contrary, state Congress, PRI and National Action Party (Partido Accion Nacional, PAN) are the main targets of criticism, the last one in particular.

Related to the journalistic professionalization, the results indicate that this issue is at very low levels, due to a limited autonomy that media has in front of the governmental authorities and politicians, an evident lack of investigative news reports and, hence, a weak public service reporting tradition.

Regarding its levels of participation, the state has an active role in the political communication process, because of its prominent involvement in the agenda setting through the official advertising contracts; which, in practice, exert a real influence in local newsrooms.

On the other hand, in spite of specific conflicts between individual political actors and newsmen, the findings point out at a

close, collaborative and determined by a party/government logic relationship between journalist and politician. In other words, rather than a thorny interaction, the players establish a interaction based on mutual benefits: Money for publicity and branding.

But, what does all of this mean? How does the media environment impact on the relationship between political communication key players? The answer is quite simple: Context matters, because the specific set of conditions of the environment in which news outlets operate determine the way reporters and party/government elites interact.

‘Journalists and the organizations in which they work operate within a broader societal context that sets the parameters for news production’ (Hughes 2006:197). In that sense, if news stories are a constructed reality (Tuchman 1972 and 1978, Schudson 1989, Lozano 1996 and Marín 2003), it means that several actors are involved in the process then, and the initial part of this process is the journalist-source relationship. Nevertheless, this interaction does not take place in a bubble, but within a specific context; for that reason, the particular characteristics of the environment define the rules of engagement between the actors.

Hallin (1995) and Adler-Lomnitz et al (2004) suggested that media partisanship is a result of the predominating political culture

of a specific place. Therefore, it is more than viable to rethink the local journalist-politician relationship as a reflection of the political structure, with its own official and unofficial processes that are imported by the players within a particular environment.

In simpler terms, the empirical evidence reinforced the initial hypothesis which argued that the specific conditions of the media system (development of the market, journalistic professionalization, partisanship and the governmental involvement) dictate the formal and informal norms that guide the way newsmen and politicians/civil servants interact; which are the distance (how close is their relationship), nature (collaborative or conflict oriented) and logic (imposition of contents and formats).

However, as the findings also showed, there is not a neat homogeneity within the media environment and its actors. On the contrary, rather than a permanent and general conflict or collaboration among the players, each one of them interact in different ways with one another. Of course there are trends, but they only involved specific actors, not all of them (e.g. the alignment towards state government's agenda or the intermittent conflicts with Congress or PAN). Thus, in general terms there is certain level of homogeneity, but when the macro view is broken

down –just as it was done here- the differences start becoming evident.

In that sense, changes in the political context necessarily imply changes in the media system and, therefore, the relationship between news workers and their sources would be modified. Notwithstanding, once again, structural readjustments impact to different extent on every element of the system; which means that change is neither homogeneous nor even immediate.

Since different contexts imply diverse relations and exchanges, Morelian political journalism reflects the specific features of the local political system then. A quick example: Political parties' coverage obeys the logic of the general electoral preferences, which is openly dominated by PRD and struggling for the second place are PAN and PRI; hence, besides being in charge of the state government, PRD's presence in the news is by far greater than the others, simply because it enjoys great sympathy among the electorate; such as the results of last two elections for governor proved, in which its candidates won by undisputed margins.

Even more, local journalistic practice is clearly the result of deeply rooted patron-client relationships with the government in turn. It is not surprising then that the low levels of professionalization have fostered a poorly developed journalism,

more focused on collecting reactions instead of investigating causes and effects of the events; which, in Tan and Weaver's (2009) parameters, coincide with the quality of the political elites and their practices.

For that same reason, it is not extraordinary that Morelian press is openly partisan, just because the weight of historic political practices dictates so. In other terms, since national, regional and local media have been historically aligned towards government, of which legitimacy is mainly built upon diverse patron-client exchanges, it would be extremely difficult that at the ground level the journalist-politician relationship could be otherwise.

As an example of this claim, both the literature (Rodríguez 1993, Torres 1997, Adler-Lomnitz et al 2004, and De León 2009) and the findings pointed out that governmental advertising and partisanship are interdependent concepts, deeply rooted in Mexican political journalism and, as a consequence, Morelian too. The use of the former as a means of coercion towards the media could also be conceived as a reflection of the patron-client structure which, despite of the regime change, still determines power relations in the country and Michoacán as well.

4.2.- Partisan news as the result of the political communication process

Morelian reporters are not particularly keen about investigative journalism principles, because they actually do not need them in order to do their job. Since most of the governmental officials and politicians are more than ready to provide information to reinforce their own images or weaken someone else's, newsmen just have to make phone calls or drop by the press offices to get ready to print statements; which will be more than welcome by the aligned newspaper.

In order to explain Mexican media system, and Morelian as well, an instrumentalist model suits best (Hallin 1995); because there is a direct control over the content of the news by government and political elites which, in agreement with owners and editors, shape the information that is going to be published or broadcasted.

Under these circumstances, there is a permanent risk of instrumentalization when local media personnel, instead of actually being journalists, willingly or forced they only act as government spokespersons by parroting official statements; which is the sign of a reactive journalistic practice, just as the one practiced in the city where this research was conducted.

Instrumentalization, hence, is one of the key features for understanding Morelian political journalism, which suffers from a press release-dependence. By simply reproducing the official version, without presenting different sides of the story or even giving follow-up, news organizations are frozen in the PRI regime time; when the head of the administration, whether federal or state, used to dictate the headlines.

As this results proved, there is no such thing as media influence in Morelia; there is just a media submission instead. This is especially true at the state government level, because it is the main player in the agenda setting process; whilst Congressmen and political party members –mainly PRI and PAN- are considered just as mere opinion providers.

On the contrary, Lawson (2002) and Hughes (2003 and 2006) claimed that Mexican journalism was moving towards a more civic orientation. In so doing news outlets and their staff started regarding the society, not as victims or governmental programmes recipients, but as active citizens who demanded a more balanced coverage and strict scrutiny of authorities' performance.

Nonetheless, due to pro-government publications with nearly identical political coverage, Morelian dwellers do not have reliable and trustworthy information sources; which could help them

understanding their historical moment and keeping public servants accountable. In other words, since there is no such thing as civic journalism here, newspapers are mere government messengers then, because the media environment promotes this practice.

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Can Turkish Diplomacy become a model for the following revolutions in the Middle East?

Mesut Hakki Caşın⁹⁸

“It looks to be a new wave in the making because democracy often happens in successive waves over a small period of time. You find a number of countries falling like dominoes towards a particular regime type. Samuel Huntington called this ‘The Three Waves’,” he said. “I believe we are on the precipice of another wave that might remake geopolitical and internal arrangements of politics within states across the Arab world.”

Middle East expert Dr Sreeram Chaulia⁹⁹

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⁹⁹ “Turkey Good Model for Emerging Arab World Democracies – Analyst”, Ria Novosti, 16 February, 2011.

I. Theoretical framework of the revolution in the Middle East

“Middle East oil resources are one of the greatest material prizes in world history” and “a stupendous source of strategic power” hold as true today as ever.

US President Eisenhower

The Arab world has faced a series of mass protests, escalating internal conflicts and instability while seeking democracy, the rule of law and greater social justice. The key question is to define *how young and highly dynamic protestors challenge the institutional framework in this region*. Of course, it is not easy to address all these complex questions correctly since it requires an academic analysis of *international relations perspectives*. The goal is to identify and define all factors which led to the sudden Revolutions in the Arab world and the theoretical framework of these revolutions in international politics.

In its broadest sense, the term *revolution* means a fundamental change in power or organizational structures that takes place in a relatively short period of time. Merriam-Webster defines a revolution as the overthrow or renunciation of one government or

ruler and the substitution of another by the governed.¹⁰⁰ On the one hand, one can say *that revolutions have often a strong correlation with democracy*. On the other hand, some philosophers argue the existence of that kind of correlation. For instance, Alexis de Tocqueville says *that great revolutions are rare in democracies*. According to Tocqueville, *democratic people* have neither the time nor the taste to seek out new opinions; *they stay with the familiar despite its faults regardless of the humiliation they suffer because they are subject to the majority*.¹⁰¹ The first was that a revolution was marked by “*violence... rather than the degree of change*”. Tocqueville also remarked that a revolution could remain purely political, assume a *political and social dimension*, or a simultaneous political, social and religious dimension.¹⁰² Kantian liberal theories suppose that institutional democracies are designed to respond to the views of their electorate and people generally prefer peace to war and conflict.¹⁰³ Nevermore, Charles Tilly, a modern academician of revolutions, affirms *that revolutions facilitated, but*

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/revolution>

¹⁰¹ Harvey C. Mansfield, *Tocqueville – A Very Short Introduction*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 50.

¹⁰² Melvin Richter, ‘Tocqueville’s Contribution to Theory of Revolution’, in *Revolution*, Ed. Carl J. Friedrich, New York: Atherton Press, 1969, p.81.

¹⁰³ Graham Evans, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, Penguin Books, London 1998, p.120.

by no means guaranteed, democracy. Tilly's arguments were based on three main factors: *First, changes in revolution and democracy* resulted in part from long-term transformations of relations between states and social life. *Second, whether or not they articulated democratic programs,* revolutions often shook the *social foundations of oligarchic rule* and established *battlegrounds between democratic and anti-democratic forces.* *Third, democratization,* when it occurred, created *models of popular sovereignty* for revolutionaries and had many times *external allies* for revolutionaries who espoused democratic programs.¹⁰⁴

The revolutions of 1789, 1830 and 1848 in France may help to have a better understanding of the subject. Especially the events of 1789 make the year memorable. A big part of the historians say that the French Revolution was the beginning of a new age. Whether the French Revolution, whose roots lay in a fairly typical eighteenth-century ideology of *privileged élites who wanted to innovate the government,* was simply the logical consequence of a breakdown of the ancient régime, other tendencies which developed in French culture and society, a series of negative economic episodes, or an eruption of irrepressible forces has been

¹⁰⁴ Charles Tilly, 'When and How Do Revolutions Promote Democracy?', Working Paper CSGP, Trent University, 2007.

long debated and is almost infinitely discussible.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, a new social class, the *bourgeoisie* emerged as an influential group in France. The revolution started in May-June of 1789 as a result of the convening of the *Estates General*, made up by the *Clergy, Nobility, and Third Estate*. The Third Estate deputies, for the most part well-heeled and educated professionals, rebelled against monarchy and the two other orders. With help from members of the lower clergy and liberal nobility, the Third estate deputies renounced the existing system and *declared themselves, under the name of the National Assembly*, the sole representatives of the French nation.¹⁰⁶ This was a bourgeois revolution. Notwithstanding the *successful maintenance of peace between the great powers*, the years until 1848 were the years of heightening revolutionary aspiration. A wave of incidents in Germany, Italy, Spain and Russia after the early 1820's showed that a revolutionary flame could be found in the heart of many people and it can be said that the *Napoleonic years were still alive in the Europe*.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ John Roberts, "Revolution from Above and Below – European Politics from the French Revolution to the First World War", in *The Oxford History of Modern Europe*, Ed T.C. W. Blanning et al. New York, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 16.

¹⁰⁶ Sarah Maza, *The Myth of the French Bourgeoisie – An Essay of the Social Imaginary 1750-1850*, (Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 69.

¹⁰⁷ Roberts, "Revolution from Above and Below", p. 27.

The end of 1830 could make a simple ideological categorization between *constitutional states which were more liberal in their policies, and despotic systems in Eastern Europe*, the defenders of international order. *A successful revolution took place in France and another began in Belgium*. Every government in Europe was terrified by the prospect that *revolution in France might lead to new great wars*. It looked as if revolution might again roll outwards from a country which could only be stopped by the united efforts of all Europe.¹⁰⁸ Nearly two decades later, in 1848, *France sneezed again, and most of continental Europe caught a cold*. There followed a complex, continent-wide crisis. What can be easily understood is the strength of hope and the fear which aroused by many revolutions in a short time. *1848 had also shown that expectations of a brighter future were connected with nationalism*, which was used by conservatives to promote their ends while liberals were regarded as the foremost standard bearers of nationalism. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, revolutions spread over *Central and Eastern Europe due to the changes that had been brought by French occupation*.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, p. 32.

In the Middle East, after WW-II Western colonialism and their cooperation with military or monarchic regimes under authoritarian leaders have delayed the advent of legitimate democracy and destabilized the consolidation towards a functioning parliamentary system. The Arab unity movement connected with Arab nationalism in the 1950-1960s was only a short episode. The region faced a long time slow development, political instability, terrorism and religious extremism which put people in a constant state of conflict and turmoil. Today, the Arab-Islamic world fights for *democratic changes, economic development and opportunities to implement reforms against* the established political elite. Institutional democracies are designed to meet the expectations set by the majority of the electorate. After the 1952 Egyptian Revolution and the rise of Nasser's political influence, it affected the entire Arab world. *Arab nationalism targeted to free the Middle East from Western domination with a closer connection to the Soviet Union.*¹¹⁰ The Soviet presence grew by the use of active diplomatic means, the deployment of military and especially naval

¹¹⁰ Don Peretz: "Nonalignment in the Arab World", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, November 1965, Vol. 362. No. 36-43.

power, and the higher influence in certain states through arms deliveries, economic aid and political support.¹¹¹

Moreover, liberal philosophy was affected by what post modernists call the “*dialectic of enlightenment*”, which is a by-product of societies trying to maintain control by bureaucracies in times of crisis. In this regard, the perhaps most important part in our discussion will be the question how future bureaucracies have to be shaped to accomplish the goal of Arab liberal thought which includes especially the control of the territorial and political unity of their country, legal certainty inside of legitimate constitutional order with civic rights and the rule of law. For example Egyptian liberals played an important role in defending the democratic ethos against fascism in the 1930s. During the twentieth century Middle East was mostly divided between the Centralized States and Islamic Monarchies. Thus liberal ideas had included not only democratic institutions or individual rights, but also theories about national strength, unity and the powers of the governments. Arab nationalism on the one side and Islamists on the other side were both influenced by intellectual politics.¹¹²

¹¹¹ John C. Campbell: “The Soviet Union and the United States in the Middle East”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political Social Science*, 1972, Vol.401, No. 1.

¹¹² Meir hatina , Arab liberal discourse . old dilemmas , new visions , middle east critique, vol.20, no1, spring 2011.

Pan-Arabism ideology has lost its popularity after the lost Arab-Israel wars. Egypt and Israel signed the Camp David Accords in 1979. During the 1991 Gulf War the Arab World was strongly (such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) divided and many supported the U.S. led coalition against Iraq since Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait was not only violating UN Charter Article 2/4, but also national interests. However, after 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, many Arab leaders and the public opinion changed their positions to an opposition of US power in the region.

2. 2011 Revolution storms in the Middle East and the impact of new media

There's a joke that's been making the rounds in Egypt lately, and it goes something like this: "Hosni Mubarak meets Anwar Sadat and Gamal Abdel Nasser, two fellow Egyptian presidents, in the afterlife. Mubarak asks Nasser how he ended up there. 'Poison', Nasser says. Mubarak then turns to Sadat. 'How did you end up

here?’ he asks. ‘An assassin’s bullet’, Sadat says. ‘What about you?’ to which Mubarak replies: ‘Facebook’.”¹¹³

The Middle East is a region of considerable *importance for world peace and global economy*. Perhaps the best point to understand the current *remarkable wave of protest spreading across* the Arab world, would be the examination of the nomenclature used to describe or frame it. This question needs a reformulation as to “When and how will Middle Eastern countries be democratized?” I hope the current political turmoil triggered a systemic transition in political liberalizations and a movement to strengthen the weak economic conditions. What kind of political vectors can be identified in the new resistance movement against Arab authoritarianism and their cooperation with external actors? The possible search for “Regime change” in Arab street maybe result in “anti-democratic” legitimacy of democracy.

The Arab world has without doubt a deep history and culture. The Arabic language is influential and used in almost 25 countries located in the Afro-Asian region with a population of over 350 million. The region owns more than 65% reserves of the world’s oil

¹¹³ Blake Hounshell and Marc Lynch: “Revolution in the Arab World”, Foreign Policy, 2011, p.72.

resources, thus having a vital role in the international economic order.

Do people living in the *Arab Street really demand a change from autocratic regimes to stronger democratic institutions, values and political rights?* For example, even citizens in religiously conservative Saudi Arabia have favorable sentiments toward democratic governance, over 60-70 percent of the *Saudis support democracy*. In Kuwait, both Islamic and nationalist forces have sympathy for democratic principles.¹¹⁴ On the other side, there are some scholars such as Samuel Huntington's who argued that Islamic beliefs and practices are a barrier to democratization in and around the Middle Eastern communities.¹¹⁵

Does the current democratization process create a threat to the West such as new migration waves arrive to Italy, France and other EU member's borders? If conflicts turn to full-scale civil wars, will it create problems to international energy security concepts (such as the interruption of Libyan gas supply to Italy)?

I think that the best way to answer all these questions is to examine why the Arab people supported the new revolution waves.

¹¹⁴ See Katherine Meyer, Helen Rizzo, Yoosef Ali: "Changed Political Attitudes in the Middle East" *International Sociology*, May 2007, Vol.22, p.283-324.

¹¹⁵ Samuel Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations*, *Foreign Affairs*, 1972, Vol.22.

Considering this idea, inside of our academic analysis, we examined changes in the Middle East political behavior traditions and the effects of the modern media regarding international relations perspectives. On the wave of Arab Revolutions Bin Ali was removed from Tunisia and in Egypt's Tahrir square millions gathered after the resignation¹¹⁶ of Mubarak to celebrate victory and solidarity, the peoples of Yemen and Bahrain are on the streets to demand democratic reforms by reforming existing dictatorship regimes.¹¹⁷ Meanwhile after UN Security Council resolutions, NATO Air forces conducted aerial operations against Gaddafi's troops to prevent further attacks on the demonstrating civilian populations. Thus, centuries later, a similar series of uprising began in North Africa and Middle East. An only 26 year old Tunisian vendor burnt himself which triggered revolutions in many countries. The dictatorial regimes of Ben Ali and Mubarak have already been overthrown by the masses crying for democracy and freedom. Libya is now facing a civil war; the protests in some Arab

¹¹⁶ In Tahrir Square in Cairo and in other Egyptian cities, President Mubarak, who had been defiant to the last minute, stepped down on 11 February, probably at the behest of the Armed Forces command, and Egypt has embarked on a process of constitutional and electoral reform. Over 800 people were killed and over 6,000 wounded.

¹¹⁷ They point to the varying degrees of popular protest in almost every Arab country, including Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, Oman, Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Jordan, Sudan, the Palestinian Authority, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

countries such as *Syria, Bahrain and Yemen are becoming more violent*. Even though governments promised reforms, the citizens on the street are *fighting for their resignation and the end to the established authoritarian regimes*. However, the Arab Spring is the people's reaction to the oppressive governments of the region. According to Freedom House, the Middle East is the least free region in the world.

In that point, one question concerns the position of the United States. Consequently, realism and idealism have merged to a similar policy for the United States in the Middle East: *promote a regional transformation toward democratic development, liberal values, and open markets that will improve individual opportunities and living standards; enable the development of a more moderate political discourse; promote rational, efficient, and accountable governance; and integrate the region into the broader global network of Westernized, developing countries.*¹¹⁸ Considering these conditions, we can definitely say that Turkey's development might be an ideal role model for the Arab Countries.

On the other hand there are different views about the democratic movements' impact on the Middle East. For example,

¹¹⁸ Tamara Coffman Wittes, "The Promise of Arab Liberalism", Policy Review 125, June-July 2004.

Noam Chomsky says, “since they supported their favored dictators...US, UK and their allies’ readiness is not clear and Western powers are deeply fear the virus of Arab nationalism”.¹¹⁹ In the meanwhile, Francesco Zannini, Islam expert indicates that ongoing democratic movements are “interesting and positive” since; most “people did not demonstrate under the flag of Islam and with anti-Western sentiments,” also “the movements are still without leaders and the process towards democracy is still very long.”¹²⁰ Mwangi S. Kimenvi says, “Arab democratization movement reason results in an imbalance of socio-economic development and democratization.”¹²¹

We say that today we have a global system because all political and social units of the world are interconnected. There is no longer any region that is thoroughly isolated from the rest and with only some very minor exceptions, all societies in the world have been organized politically into states of one kind or another. Those

¹¹⁹Noam Chomsky: “Democracy, Arab Uprisings and Oil in the Middle East”, 16 March 2011, <http://chomskywatch.wordpress.com/2011/03/16/noam-chomsky-democracy-arab-uprisings-and-oil-in-the-middle-east/>.

¹²⁰ “Popular uprisings in Arab nations not tilting towards fundamentalism, Islam expert says”, Asia news, 18 February, 2011.

¹²¹ Amol Agrawal, The Arab Democracy Paradox”, Mostly Economics, <http://mostlyeconomics.wordpress.com/>

states and societies all mutually interact with each other.¹²² Despite some international relations specialists argue that 2011 Wikileaks¹²³ might have triggered the revolution among the Arab young generations, it is a matter of fact that information waves were already used for two decades in the region. As we mention above, the *Arab political spring was influenced by new information links which connected Africa, the Middle East and the European continent*. Indeed, since the late 1990s, Europe's satellite television landscape has been transformed, with European populations of non-European heritage increasingly watching television channels in their own languages. Thus, Euro-Arab interaction over Arabic-language satellite channels accelerated communication in the period 2003.¹²⁴

New media is using satellite communications and internet particular crossed borders to span democratic ideas and critical liberal ideological messages. In other words, new media shaped became important effective online revolutionary ideas currents.

¹²² K.J. Holsti, *International Politics*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1995, p.52.

¹²³ Wiki Leaks is a non-profit media organization dedicated to bringing important news and information to the public.

¹²⁴ Naomi Sakr, *Diversity and Diaspora-Arab Communities and Satellite Communication in Europe*, *Global Media and Communication* December 2008 vol. 4 no. 3, p.277-300.

They see democracy, based on a civil contract that *guarantees instrument modernism*, individual freedom and human rights bill.

We must remember that *Abdel Nasser used the radio for gain his people support*. Egypt also has the biggest percentage of Christian population and there are living critical problems with Muslim population. Arab community saw the internet *as open opportunity* for his political expression. In this context, according to Thomas Friedman, “The internet and globalization are acting like nutcrackers to open societies and empower Arab democrats with new tools.”¹²⁵ Between the 1950-1991 periods Saudi Arabia dominated radio, TV and written media were linked political windows to gate keepers. But after 1991 Gulf War, Arab people turned to CNN+BBC, Radio Monte Carlo. New media has dramatically reshaped the dynamics of Arab politics and conceptions of Arab political identity. Inside of the doctrinal framework Michael Hudson arguing that new media forums are (such as Al-Jazeera, Al-Quds Al-arabi, al-Hayat) beginning to exert a revolutionary force across the Arab world... transforming Arab political culture.” Also, Arab public opinion rise up to a revolution

¹²⁵ Thomas Friedman, The New York Times, 2000.

and to critics of Arab Regimes political legitimacy with greater impact alternative to political authorities in the Middle East¹²⁶

Furthermore, Islam is not inherently incompatible with the democracy; and that information and communication technologies have in the past, played a significant role in the institutional evolution of political culture in the Islamic world. The internet has had a notable impact on relations between peoples and nations. Information and communication technologies allowed these people to learn about each other, and often about themselves. The Middle Easterners use the internet for getting news and information, sometimes about the West, but more often about neighboring Islamic countries. Briefly, it is about discussing the personal politics of sexuality and relationships.¹²⁷ In the examples of the 1830 and 1848 Revolutions, the spread of revolutionary ideas and the people's internalization of these took decades. Today, we can definitely say that the internet has been playing an accelerataring role in dispersion of the Arab Revolutions.

In the years after 9/11, the *Bush administration repeatedly charged that the Arab media* are biased against the United States.

¹²⁶ March Lynch: "Beyond the arab Street: Iraq and the Arab Public Sphere", *Politics&Society*, Vol.31, No., p.55-91.

¹²⁷ Philip N. Howard, *the Digital Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy – Information Technology and Political Islam*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 14.

Arab journalists see their mission as that of driving political and social reform¹²⁸ in the Middle East and North Africa. ¹²⁹It is interesting that Modern Arab news organizations and the *modern Arab state were both born from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire*. Historically, Arab media has been a vehicle for the spread of Arab nationalism, Arab culture, and the Arabic language itself. ¹³⁰

In my opinion, one of the important questions for the Arabic protestor people is to see same political leaders images and their iron hands more than three or four decades without turning

¹²⁸ Iraq and Palestine fall well below such internal Arab issues as political reform, human rights, poverty, and education as priority concerns. Politically, half call themselves “democrats”. Arab journalists at the dawn of the twenty-first century see their mission as driving political and social change in the Middle East and North Africa. Arab journalists at the dawn of the twenty-first century see their mission as driving political and social change in the Middle East and North Africa. They most closely identify with the pan-Arab region and the broader Muslim world, not with an individual nation-state; they see political reform, human rights, poverty, and education as the most important issues facing the region; and while protective of the Arab people, Arab culture, and religion, they are not overtly anti-American. they most closely identify with the pan-Arab region and the broader Muslim world, not with an individual nation-state; they see political reform, human rights, poverty, and education as the most important issues facing the region; and while protective of the Arab people, Arab culture, and religion, they are not overtly anti-American. See, Lawrence Pintak and Jeremy Ginges: “The mission of arab journalism: creating change in a time of turmoil, *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 2008 13: 193.

¹²⁹ Arab journalists favor regional political and social change. “Encourage political reform” was the “most significant” job of a journalist, chosen by 75 percent of respondents (see Figures 1 and 2); “political reform” was at the top of the list of “most important issues” facing the Arab world,¹² followed closely by “human rights,” “poverty,” and “education” (see Figure 3). “Lack of political change” (32 percent) ran a close second to U.S. policy (34 percent) as the greatest threat facing the Arab world. (see Figure 4) . lawrance and ginges *ibid*, p.198.

¹³⁰ *ibid*. p.197.

direction to democracy reforms street which continue day and night on TV screen even at the street billboards. The youth of Egyptian opposing groups have been demanding strongly leaving not only against the “Kafaya-Enough Mubarek” regime, but also the living in the Middle East geography community which transform the all anti democratic political structures. They learned to use useful *communication tool- Face book* - which could bring together thousands of sympathizers online, as they fill streets with crowded protestors. Their using their cell phones camera is a kind of *Molotov cocktail which is a kind of new guerilla sniper...*

3. Turkey’s changing diplomacy parameters in the Middle East process

Of course, inside of the Arab states, democratic regimes ruling the experiences tell us which political elite decisions the Ottoman Turks were influenced by. Indeed, the Arab world comes (then gained autonomy and independent) in parts of administration under the Ottoman Empire Constitution in 1876. Also, second 1908 Ottoman Constitution had carried political impact and prototype modeling (provided balance between the parliamentary authority

with monarchy) on Arab constitutional history in that provided a starting point for balance of parliamentary authority with a monarchy, until the collapse the Empire end of the WW-I.¹³¹ My second important finding about this study title responded in the past is, Modern Arab news organizations and the modern Arab state were both born from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire which constructed on Arab nationalism, language and culture.¹³²

In Turkey, democracy had to wait in the beginning of the twentieth century until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and Atatürk generation accomplished to build a modern nation state. Traditionally, Turkey has been considered an *important country because of its geographic location between Europe, Asia and the Middle East*. Moreover, being a Muslim and secular country at the same time, Turkey stands as a bridge between Western and Eastern civilizations. In the age of Globalization, Turkey's strategic value has become more visible and consequently Turkey has come under the spotlight, especially after 9/11. As a result of these, Turkey and

¹³¹ Nathan J. Brown, Regimes Reinventing Themselves- Constitutional Development in the Arab World *, International Sociology, March 2003, Vol.18, p.33-52.

¹³² Lawrence Pintak and Jeremy Ginges, The Mission of Arab Journalism. Creating Change in a Time of Turmoil”, The International Journal of Press/Politics, Volume 13, 2008, p. 193.

its domestic and international policies started to receive crucial interest in the world politics.

During the Cold war period, *Turkish foreign policy did not pay too much attention on the Middle East*. While Turkish foreign policy had been active in the region, it was evaluated as an extension of the Western foreign policy orientation.¹³³

But since the late 1980s, Turkey has been following a more active foreign policy in the region. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and bi-polar international system collapsed, Turkey began to ask where and what her role is in the world politics. On the other hand, there were crucial events which let the interrogation of her role once more. The Gulf Crisis (1990-1991) occurred at a time when Turkey was uncertain of her new role in the international system. This crucial event let Turkey reiterate her strategic position such as the Cold war. At that time, Turkey had some difficulties with her neighbours such as Syria, Iraq and Iran, especially in separatist Kurdish movements. This was one of the most important threats for Turkey's security both domestically and externally. The Kurdish issue was also supported by Syria until 1998 and by Iran during 1990s. Therefore, Turkey felt that she

¹³³ Dietrich Jung, "Turkey and the Arab World: Historical Narratives and New Political Realities," *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 10 (2005).

must have active and clear foreign policy orientations in the Middle East. As a result of this, Turkey revised her national security document as Middle East becomes one of the main sources of threats. Throughout 1990s, Turkey had actively involved in Northern Iraq and tried to use all political and economic tools in order to diminish the main threats. At that same time, Turkey's relations with Iran and Syria were not so good because of that reason. While she had some tension at her relations with her neighbors, Turkey engaged in an alignment with Israel in order to balance her foreign policy in the Middle East.

Within the last decade, international system of states faced significant indications of revision in various manners. Unsurprisingly, there is a growth in the number of globally acting political actors or states with different amounts of leading power in the different areas of international activities or conducts. In 2002 Justice and Development Party (AK Party) came into power. Since then, there have been clearly crucial differences on Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle East. It was not only evaluated as "*Kurdish issue*" anymore but also became more opportunist and more active foreign policy. Especially, the policy of "*zero problem with neighbours*" let emphasize on Turkey's political and economic power in the region. It was not only evaluated as military

power. In the Turkish role in the Middle East, “historical and cultural” ties get attention.

Therefore, Turkey’s engagement in the region changes her framework. At the same time, the region had severe crisis during 2000s such as the collapse of Arab-Israeli Peace Process in 2000, Iraq invasion in 2003, rise of Iranian power in the international system, etc. Moreover some regional actors faced the collapse such as Syria. The socio-economic problems have been rising sharply in the region. According to the UNDP’s Arab Human Development Reports, there are important regime problems and social unrest in the Middle Eastern countries. At the same time, Arab world started to be fragmented such as Palestinian, Iraq and Iranian cases. Fragmentation of the Arab world let other powers intervene regional and also internal problems directly. There was a failure of Bush doctrine and invasion of Iraq was not concluded successfully. While Turkey and Iran are regional power, the US has also direct involvement in the region. Unlike Iran, Turkey has been supported by the West at some level and Turkey is able to talk with all parties apart from Israel.¹³⁴ Hence Turkey has increased her potential role

¹³⁴ Meliha Benli Altunışık, “The Turkish Model and Democratization in the Middle East,” *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No.s. 1 and 2 (Winter and Spring 2005).

and there have been new political, economic, social and strategic opportunities for Turkey.

Since 2002, Turkey's role in the Middle East has had two main objectives. Firstly, Turkey wants to resolve regional problems, thus she plays an active mediator in the Middle Eastern questions. She tries to build strong neighbor relations. Secondly, Turkey tries to reduce tensions in the region. There has been important progress in Turkey's bilateral relations with her neighbours.

Germany and France were enemies and they went to war many times throughout the history. But now they are in close co-operation in the European Union. This case is also good example for Turkey's relations with her neighbours. During the 1990s, Turkey and Syria had not enough friendly relations. But today they opened the borders and they have been rapidly increasing their relations. With Iraq, the economic relations are enormous. In the Northern Iraq, the Turkish business sector is seen almost in every sector in business. Also, political relations improved. For instance, the new consulate was opened in April 2009. Despite of all these positive developments, the water issue still remains as one of the biggest problems in Turkey's relations with her neighbours in the region. Turkey has a mediator role and she attempts to solve

conflicts in the Middle East. But it is still debatable if her *mediator role is a great success or not*.

Turkey faces several challenges, risks and opportunities in the Middle East. But most of the Turkish elites believe that *disintegration of the countries in the region could affect Turkey in a negative way*. That's why Turkey starts to pay much more attention on the region, not only in terms of foreign policy objectives, but at the same time for internal security and process. So what would be Turkey's foreign policy toward the region?

One view seeks that Turkey could and should be model for the region. Since the end of the Cold War, Turkey has become a pivotal country and regional power which has a great potential for solving conflicts in the region. Turkey has been a member of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development since 1948, of the Council of Europe since 1949, and NATO since 1952. And also she has been an associate member of the European Union since 1963 with Ankara Agreement. And since 1999, Turkey was recognized as a candidate country by the European Union. After the Cold War, the new multi-polar international system facilitated and enabled Turkey to pursue her active foreign policy. Moreover,

Arab nationalism has been decreasing in the region while there have been sharply increasing political and economic problems.

Turkey's modernization has continued and the Turkish Islamist movement has increased after 2000. For example, Turkey's refusal of letting US troops to use Turkey's territories and air bases proof that Turkey could decide her own choices without any other Western (mostly American) influence. This was welcomed by most of Arab countries. Turkey's policy towards Iraq showed a clear distinction from the traditional Turkish foreign policy. Turkey has capacity and opportunity to be a soft power in the Middle East.¹³⁵ Even though, Iran is another important power in the region, Turkey has only achieved considerable political and socio-economic development in the region compared to her neighbours. Turkey with AK Party government showed they can co-work both Islam and Democratization process at the same time. However, all these positive discussion, it is not also very clear that: "*what a Turkish model is*" and what it contains.

There are various approaches about whether Turkey can be a model or not in the Middle East, such as the forms of government

¹³⁵ Abdullah Gül, "Turkey's Role in a Changing Middle East Environment," Mediterranean Quarterly, (Winter 2004).

that may be a model for the Arab countries. Dr Sreeram Chaulia says Turkey's model is probably the best.¹³⁶

The other view on Turkey's role in the Middle East is that Turkey is largely ignored by the Middle Eastern countries because of her unique political regime. Although Turkey's new role in the region seen apparently enormous success, on the other hand, there have been severely discussion on the limitations of Turkey. Due to Turkey's dependent policies to the Western bloc during the Cold War period seen as a negative impact on the Arab countries most of the time. Since the rise of Arab nationalism, Turkey starts to be far away from the region. For example, Turkey recognized Israel in 1949 and *this let distrust to Turkey's policies* anymore in the most of the Arab countries. At the same time, Turkey started to claim herself as a Western country and she was not directly part of the Middle East. Even during the oil crises in 1970s, Turkey tried to increase her relations with Arab countries, but it was mainly economic purpose. After all these circumstances, it is not so easy to

¹³⁶ "I think the Turkish model is quite interesting because Turkey has managed to marry radical Islam with forms of western democracy, and I think it is a genuine model to aspire to for Egypt, Tunisia, perhaps even Jordan, Yemen, and others like Libya," he said. "The Turkish example is a modernizing one, but at the same time does not give up traditional social values and keeps the social base and the political structure in some kind of harmony."

be accepted that there should be “cultural and historical ties” between Turkey and the region. To sum up, especially during the Cold War, the regional countries largely viewed Turkey in a negative light. As a result of this, Turkey has a limited influence in the Middle East.

Whatever Turkey’s new role will be in the region, it has been seen that Turkey’s foreign policy decisions will have much more to offer Europe, Russia, the United States and of course Israel for Arab countries.

How European people define the Middle East and their people? As only oil production areas and crowded people, daily terror attacks and mass destructions of Sunni and Shia people in Iraq? Or recently divided Libya people fighting each other as a civilian war which NATO air power try to kill Kaddafi who was former best copartner of western democracies?

I would like to emphasize that the transformation factor within the historical development process should be questioned, inter alia, understanding political, religious and ideological approaches *to realize the development of Arab revolution*. As it is known, theoretically from the perspective of the logic of international relations, the issue, by approaching balance of power, dominantly realistic view, the Middle East and North Africa are the regions

where sharing struggle takes place violently. Indeed, the dominant system of Roman Empire was formed as *Pax Romana*. Subsequently Ottoman Empire, which controlled the balance of power of Europe, controlled the regime of *Pax Ottomana* approximately 600 years.

The changing began by the World War I in the Middle East replaced the perception of Colonialism by Arab nationalism. However, Great Powers supplied their oil requirements in this area in World War II. Just after the Cold war era, within the balance of power in bipolar system, the competition between the USSR and the USA caused the armament of the Middle East. Arab Israel Wars, politically, made secular ARAB NATIONALISM under the leaders Nasir and Yasser Arafat more violence. But, the collapse of USSR and 1991 Gulf War became the turning point of the changing in the Middle East. It resulted in Europe's supporting anti-democratic regimes in the Middle East as a balance of power to the acts of violence began in Iraq against the USA occupation, and to the radical Islamic wave that al Qaeda and Taliban sent out from Afghanistan after September 11.

When we reconsider the situation we see that looking for the democratization and reform in Arab public opinion caused two important results. First, the anger wave against Israel in the past,

this time turned into on a mass scale terror wave with growing opposition to the USA occupation and suicide attacks. According to us, the second radical development is that there are new young people who are against the dictatorship regimes of the Middle East and who support cooperation with the West for the liberal economy and democracy and that generation have been looking forward to changing the political system since 1990 and that would be considered as the turning point.¹³⁷

On this point as it will be discussed in details later on, it becomes important to ask a question whether Turkey, which both applies democratic constitutional system as economic growth and also has a secular law system in which women and individuals have equal rights, can be a model for the people of the Middle East. But it must be considered that if Turkey being a candidate to become a member of EU and also a member of both NATO and EU Parliament is accepted as a model, it should be taken into consideration of the efforts of the JDP government to have efficient role in the Middle East.

On the other hand it can be mentioned that it is important that the USA *supports the mediation role of foreign minister Davutoğlu*

¹³⁷ Mesut Hakkı Çaşın, Uluslararası Terörizm, Nobel Yayınevi, Ankara, 2008, p.469-517.

to solve the diplomatic problems in the Middle East among Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iran. Secondly, it has been observed that the Davos crisis between Turkey and Israel and then the attack on the blue of Marmara have increased the prestige of the Prime Minister Erdoğan on the Arab streets. It confirms our designation that *Erdoğan made a speech in Egypt's Tahrir Square* via teleconference and TV and it was extremely effective and supported by the people of Egypt. Another issue is that, the principle of zero problems towards neighbors has increased its effect on Iraq, Syria and Iran in the Middle East. Turkey as a strategic ally of the USA and member of NATO, voted "no" to UN Security Council's sanctions against Iran and it affected the relations with the USA and the West in a negative way. This situation was questioned whether there is a shifting axis on Turkey's foreign policy or not. Thirdly, Merkel's administration in Germany that has motor power among the members of EU – Sarkozy's administration in France are against full Turkish membership to the EU, and that's why Turkey had to have deep relations with the Middle east to develop ties on the grounds of economy just after the economic crisis in ANKARA in 2008.

Conclusion

In this regard, I hope we can evaluate the why US President Barack Obama's historical messages turned color to Mubarak: "*Egypt has changed, and its future is in the hands of people*". He is also telling Syrian leader Bashar Assad that he must either lead his country through a democratic transition or "*get out of the way*"_ which given an idea about new US side Middle East diplomacies.

Taking everything into account, politically, it is possible to think that it may be preferable for the Western democratic societies to accept democratic *Turkey as a model since it has had close historical, political and cultural relations with the Middle East*_for approximately 400 years. Otherwise it might be thought that radical Islamic wave against particularly Israel, the USA and the West will go from strength to strength and that might cause new separations and political tensions in the Middle East. Final message is, as I mentioned above my presentation, and diplomatic history about the revolutions such as in Europe continent 1789, 1848 which effected America and Russia 1905-1917- 1991 in Russia and Eastern Europe, recent winds may continue since it's impossible to stop Domino Effects in a one night in Arab Street. In other words, The

Arab Revolution is not over ,is just starting the transformation process in the Middle East from Maghreb to Basra Gulf same as the tsunami waves...Thus, if Arab revolutions could turn into uncontrollable mode, they may be turned to bigger conflicts and instability in the region with unpredictable results....

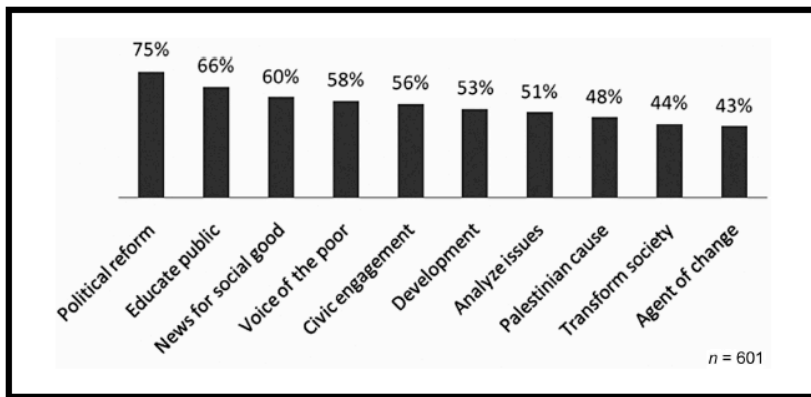


Figure 1. Journalist Roles

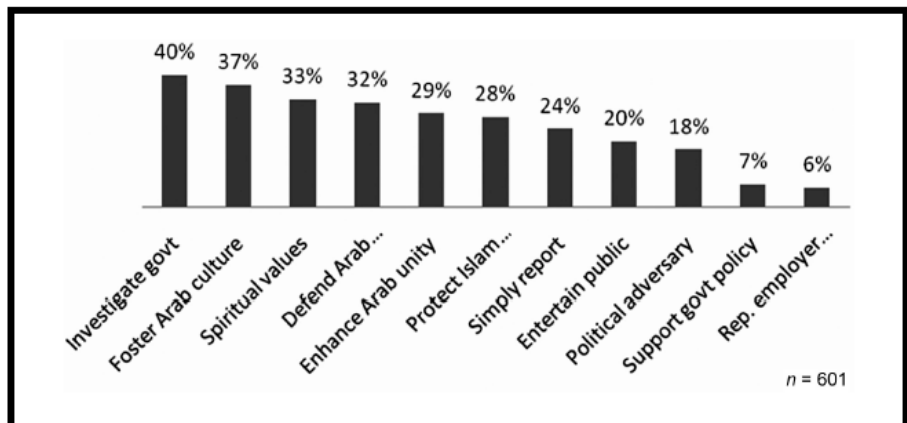


Figure 2. Journalist Job

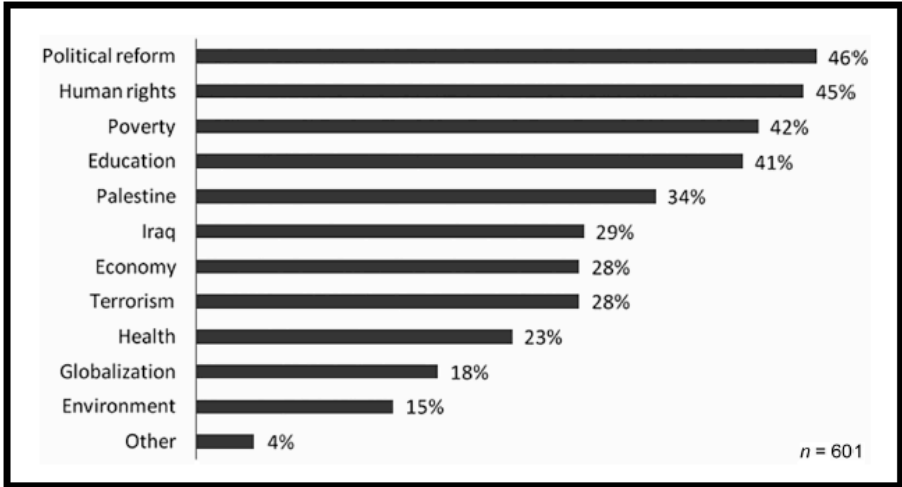


Figure 3. Most Important Issues Facing the Arab World

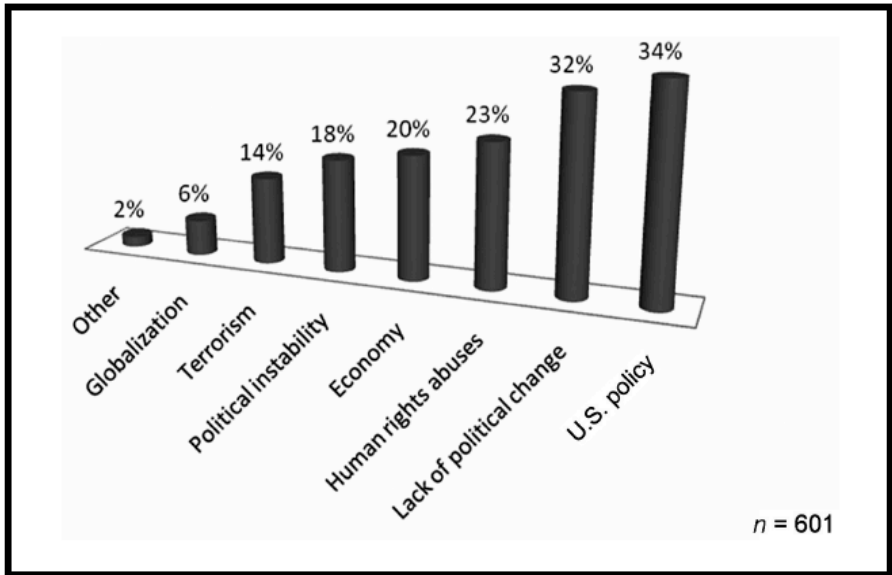


Figure 4. Greatest Threat Facing The Arab World Today

Social movements, Leaders and the Public Sphere

Bianca-Marina Mitu¹³⁸

Politics once meant ideas. Today politics means people, or rather characters, leaders. Each political or social leader seems to choose a function and assume a part. The porous borders of politics are also manifested in the relationship of social movements and their leaders to the public sphere. A large number of citizens show a growing dislike towards institutions, in general, and towards traditional forms of political participation, in particular. Dislikes have been conducive to the blossoming of social movements. The traditional political parties have lost a lot of credibility and have become victims of corruption and therefore in many countries the public activity has become synonymous with suspicion.

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The public role of social movement means that they and their leaders never simply address a confined constituency of “supporters”, they must always strive to reach across the boundaries to a wider public of potential participants. Social movements have found an important ally in new technologies in order to reach their objectives. These new social players struggle to make their niche in the public sphere. The Habermasian concept of public sphere needed to be updated. Therefore this article aims to find an answer to the following questions: Are social movements able to create an alternative public sphere? What instruments must social movements use in order to interact in the public sphere? Our hypothesis maintains that the outskirts of the public sphere have gone through some serious changes lately and that is mainly a result of innovation that has been introduced through modern technology. We also think that Habermas’ critical remarks about the fragmentation of the public sphere are still legitimate, but an alternative public sphere is about to be born. In order to keep democratization process in a society alive, there must be a space for a public discussion available and accessible to all those who are affected by political decisions.

Media and the Public Sphere

In the analysis of social communication, the concept of public space is an important framework. As social movements are a part of today's public sphere discussions, we find it appropriate for this study to develop and explain the concept of public sphere. The public sphere and public opinion have a history closely linked to the history of politics and media history. Jurgen Habermas argues that the reason and communication are the means to improve a society. For Habermas, the development of social communication and of rational political debate are the public support in the evolution of a society. Public area debate is called public sphere (and it is seen as opposed to the private sphere of home and family) (Habermas, 1987:390). But to be able to participate to the discussions from the public sphere people need free access to information and the television is the only one that can provide a new open and democratic access to information. In order to facilitate peoples' access to the public sphere, news must be useful, accurate, balanced and representative, because „the news narrative must contribute to public awareness about the reality” (Bignell,Orlebar, 2005:132).

Habermas' public space is an idealized version, as Thusu (2006:55) argues "this idealized version of a public space was characterized by greater accessibility of information, a more open debate within the bourgeoisie, a space independent of both business interests and state apparatus." Habermas' study of the public sphere has been subjected to intense critical argumentation which has clarified his earlier positions, led to revisions in later writings, and has fostered intense historical and conceptual research into the public sphere itself. Habermas' critics argue that he idealizes the earlier bourgeois public sphere by presenting it as a forum of rational discussion and debate when in fact certain groups were excluded and the participation to the public sphere was thus limited, only the educated bourgeois were allowed to participate to the public discussions. Therefore some social classes were not considered to be educated and did not have access to the rational discussions. Habermas (1987:391) concedes that he analyzed a "stylized picture of the liberal elements of the bourgeois public sphere". Though the idealized version of the public sphere has been criticized, the public sphere provides a useful concept in understanding democratic potential for communication processes (e.g. Calhoun, 1992, Dahlgren, 2003 and 2005). In recent years, with the globalization of the media and communication, there has been

many studies that argue about the evolution of a 'global public sphere' where issues of international significance-environment, human rights, gender and ethnic equality- can be articulated through the media, though the validity of such a concept is also contested (e.g. Sparks, 1998). Despite the limitations of his analysis, Habermas is right that in the era of the democratic revolutions a public sphere emerged in which for the first time in history ordinary citizens could participate in political discussion and debate, they could organize, and struggle against unjust authority.

The first public space where people used to discuss issues of general interest was the ancient Greek Agora. Therefore, Agora is a specific place where all the citizens come to discuss various issues, it is a "public sphere dominated by freedom, by free citizens with equal rights to participate directly in public affairs, while the private sphere space is dominated by goodman" (Reiffel, 2005:48). Klimowicz Gabriel (2006:5) believes that today's "agora is the television. (...) Television is essential to the modern state and to all democracies". In the seventeenth century in Europe, the public discussions moved to the literary clubs, academies and later, in press. The emergence of new public places of debate prompted Habermas to write about the emergence of the literary public sphere, "which will find its own institutions in cafes, in mess halls

and meetings” (Habermas, 2005:80). The essential function of the public space, as it was conceived by Habermas, was to generate the public opinion through participation and debate. Currently, this function of the public space seems to be altered. Marketing, trivialization and excessive personalization are the processes that have destroyed the authenticity of participation and the people involvement in the public debates. The public transformation, the mercantilism development, the increasing influence of marketing techniques, the development of modern communications networks, the television and the Internet are based on interactivity and that has changed the analysis of the public space and the influence of media on the public sphere. The public space is the result of a movement of emancipation which has facilitated the individual freedom and expression of opinions, allowing people to discuss, to debate on various topics and find answers to the problems of the society. Habermas’ account of the structural transformation of the public sphere despite its limitations, also points to the increasingly important functions of the media in politics. Habermas’ theory also reveal that corporate interests have tried to colonize the public sphere, and the global public sphere, using the media and culture in order to promote their own commercial interests.

Habermas sees the public sphere in three different manners, in

three different books:

1. The public space - a mode of communication and sociability

In his work *The Archaeology of the Public Space*, published in 1972, Habermas defines the public space as a mode of communication based on:

- the critical and rational dialogue between citizens
- the approach of the problems of the society
- the interpellation of the governors actions.

From the historical perspective these communicative practices were contributing to the government transparency, and to the emergence of acts of sociability between citizens. According to the German philosopher, the media is one of the causes of the degradation of the public space by promoting sensationalism, the lack of dialogue and direct interaction.

2. The public space as an interaction framework

In *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1987), Habermas' next major work, he insists less on the social and historical conditions that led to the formation of the public space and he theorizes more the deliberation mechanism, the possibility of dialogue between people who have different interests. A genuine public space excludes strategic communications and manipulation. In a public space, the social actors accept rational dialogue, which is not guided solely by

personal objectives.

3. The public space as a system of mediation

Subsequently, in his book *Between Facts and Norms* (1998) the German philosopher will review again the concept of public space. First, Habermas acknowledges the role of mediated communication in the establishment of the public space. In his previous works, the public space was seen only as a result of direct interaction. Secondly, Habermas believes that the media can build-up a new public space. Thirdly, Habermas discusses a wide range of legal and democratic theory, including a long discussion of the media and the public sphere, but he does not discuss the normative character of communication media in democracy. Habermas excludes the democratization of the media and does not envisage how new media and new technologies could lead to an expansion and revitalization of new alternative public spheres. Mediation is essential in a complex society. The media creates a new way of life, and it is defined according to the interests, aspirations, values of those involved in the public life.

Media, Leaders and Social Movements

Social movements began to exercise a special attraction for the specialists in social sciences in the last century. Manuel Castells (2003:31) defines social movements as “collective initiatives whose impact, in victory and defeat, transform society’s values and institutions”. Herbert Blumer (1993:199) states that social movements “can be viewed as collective enterprises to establish a new order of life. They have their inception in the condition of unrest, and derive their motive power on one hand from dissatisfaction with the current form of life, and on the other hand, from wishes and hopes for a new scheme or system of living.” Doug McAdam (1982:25) claims that social movements are “those organized efforts, on the part of excluded groups, to promote or resist changes in the structure of society that involve recourse to noninstitutional forms of political participation.” On the other hand, Sidney Tarrow (1994: 4) offers a different view by stating that “rather than seeing social movements as expressions of extremism, violence, and deprivation, they are better defined as collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities.”

Theorists have tended to define and redefine social movements therefore the wide-ranging definitions and typologies of social movements that currently exist complicate the possibility to offer one single definition for this concept. Analysis and synthesizing the definitions of the main social movements' theorists we detected two important different direction for defining the social movements. Therefore, social movements can be defined:

- a. Analytically – as a form of collective action that articulates a social conflict and ultimately aims at transforming a social order. Social movements claim a process of action and interaction involving as a fundamental element the construction of a collective identity. Therefore it is “us” sharing a set of values and norms, and “others”, the institutions, the politicians, the enemies.
- b. Empirically – social movements can have national, international, transnational or global dimensions depending on the territoriality of its different forms of collective actions. (e.g. Thorn, 1997; Melucci, 1996, Eyerman and Jamison, 1991; Cohen and Hrato, 1992)

Social movements can be divided into old and new:

- a. “Old” movements - they arose throughout the 19th century: the labor, agrarian, nationalist movements, etc.

- b. “New” movements - human rights groups, anti-racist groups, homosexual rights groups, etc.

Media has been historically resistant to social movements in Romania and all around the world. The media strategy has always rested on three basic pillars: obscuring, de-legitimization and assimilation. The implementation of each one of these tactics depends on the phase that the movement is in. Usually, in its beginning stages the movement is ignored and goes unnoticed. Media ignores it, arguing that it is not a legitimate movement, it lacks social relevance, it is not an official protest, or their leaders are not officially recognized or authorized. Media always needs something new, something shocking in order to manifest interest for a particular social movement.

Social movements need powerful leaders. Social movements' leaders are the ones that interfere in the public sphere. They have credibility because they are seen as being different from politicians. People perceive social movements' leaders as one of their colleagues and therefore they trust them. To achieve his goals and to determine people to follow the same cause, leaders should possess a few essential qualities. John C. Maxwell (2002:57-70) presents a top ten qualities of a good leader: Character, Influence,

Positive attitude, Excellent communication skills, The ability to work with people, persuade them to follow him, Excellent organization, Experience, Confidence, Discipline, Dissatisfaction towards the political system.

Study case: Strike at the Romanian Ministry of Finance

The economical crisis affected almost all the people regardless of their occupation. The austerity measures lead to major public strikes all around the world. Romania was not an exception. We have chosen to shortly analyze an unusual type of social movement, a spontaneous protest. The spontaneous protest started on Wednesday, October 13th, 2010, when several hundred employees of the Romanian Ministry of Finance stopped working. That day 1300 people have stopped working at the Romanian Ministry of Finance. They were unhappy because their salaries were cut off and they claimed the resignation of the Finance Minister, Gheorghe Ialomitianu and of the Prime Minister, Emil Boc.

Anthony Giddens defines social movements as “a collective attempt to promote a common interest or to achieve a common goal through collective action outside the scope of existing

institutions”. Giddens introduces two-factors of classification of social movements: the number of participants and the legal or illegal framework of the movement (2000:549). The analyzed protest started at Bucharest and spread rapidly across the country without any legal framework. Thousands of people have stopped working when they saw the amounts on the wage slips. The protest spread in 20 other areas of the country: Timis, Constanta, Alba, Iasi, Cluj, Buzau, Hunedoara, Arad, Satu Mare, Virginia, Brasov, Prahova, Galati, Suceava, Mures, Giurgiu, Pitesti, Dambovita, Bacau, Bihor.

People have chosen Vasile Marica to be their leader. Vasile Marica declared: “People can not work for 600 Ron (150 euros) per month.” (October 13th, www.realitatea.net). Vasile Marica claimed that about 30,000 people can come in spontaneous protests.



Vasile Marica turned out to possess only 5 of the top 10 qualities of a good leader proposed by John C. Maxwell and mentioned above. Marica had character, ability to work with people, experience, dissatisfaction towards the political system, but he showed total lack of organization, influence, discipline, and communication skills. He went alone and negotiated with the Finance Minister. After the negotiations he announced the people that their problems were solved. He showed the ability to persuade people to follow him when he persuaded the crowd to go home but he lost his credibility the second day, when the Finance Minister came on television and announced that Vasile Marica lied, therefore the austerity measure stay the same. Nobody knew who lied, because Vasile Marica went to the negotiations alone. The press could only speculate.

In order to understand how the Romanian media reflected this event, we analyzed the main political news from five TV channels, starting 13th till 20th of October 2010.

- ProTv and Prima Tv private Tv channels with content closer to yellow journalism characterized by a tabloidisation of the news' content.

- Antena 3 and Realitatea Tv, television stations for news,

- TVR, public television channel.

We analyzed only the news that focused on this particular protest. Therefore during the analyzed week, the number of occurrences of this subject is revealed by the next table:

	Number of occurrences					
News about the spontaneous protest at the Ministry of Finance	ProTV	Prima TV	RealitateaTV	Antena 3	TVR	Total number
	40	12	99	112	15	278

We can conclude that the media coverage of this event was huge. The event generated huge discussion in the public sphere and led to the implication of notorious representatives of the civil society. People shared the cause and revolted against the austerity measures imposed by the government. Media news discourse divided into two: pro austerity measures and against the austerity measures and also pro and against Vasile Marica.

Conclusion

Social movements struggle daily to construct a new public sphere model, “a place where alternative communication gains new ground” (Atton, 2002:152). This alternative public sphere is also imposed by the main streams of opinion emanating from the television, or media in general. The new social movements have found a new ally in the new technologies. Today, television increasingly informs us about how the world should be. The show is interwoven in the fabric of everyday life, dominating leisure time, shaping people’s political opinions and social behaviors and providing materials in which people build their own identity. Television, film and other products of culture industries create patterns. New technologies such as satellite broadcasting allow global audiences to access the television news and current affairs coverage, offering a new open and democratic access to information. Social movements demand their own place in the public sphere. Social movements obviously play an important part to the emergence of an alternative public sphere, a part that needs to be analyzed and discovered in the near future.

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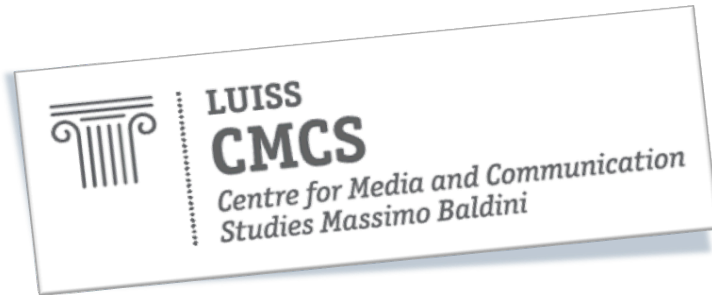
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